

Eastern Coyote

A resident since 1944; filling the niche left behind after the wolf was wiped out

Describe the eastern coyote? Some eastern coyotes have a broad muzzle like a wolf and others have a narrower one like the western coyote. They look like a medium size dog with erect ears and a relaxed tail; their color ranges from tan to mottled brown and gray. They are larger than the western coyote but smaller than the eastern wolf, weighing only 30-50 pounds. Lifespan is 4 years on average in the wild.

How large is their territory? Territories of the eastern coyote are 1-2 miles squared. We all live in coyote territory that is occupied by a mated pair and offspring – a family unit. They mate for life and defend their territory against other coyotes, foxes, and dogs.

Are coyotes a threat to farm animals? NH Fish and Game states that the great majority of coyotes don't prey upon livestock; a resident coyote may be an asset to the farm by removing rodents and prevent problem coyotes from moving into the area*.

How to prevent conflicts with coyotes?

- Properly dispose of livestock carcasses
- Use guard animals and electric fences
- Keep expectant and newborn animals safely confined
- Keep pets and pet food inside at night*

Other measures to consider: fence in backyards for pets and never use bait at camera traps.

Are coyotes a danger to humans? Coyotes pose little risk to people*. If you see a coyote, stand your ground, make noise and wave your arms. Never run away. Coyotes are active day and night so there is no cause for alarm if you see one during the day.

Does year-round hunting reduce coyote populations? Most coyote management attempts have been designed to reduce their population numbers, however, due to their fecundity, behavior and adaptability, those attempts have failed*. In a stable pack the alpha female only breeds. If the pack is disrupted by her death the other females breed and so there are more litters.

How many pups per litter? 4-6 pups once a year. High mortality rate of 50-60% means only 1 or 2 survive.

How long until pups are weaned? 5-8 weeks. At one year of age pups may leave the pack to establish their own territories; most remain with parents for 2 years.

How do coyotes benefit the ecosystem? Coyotes help to regulate the population of rodents that carry diseases such as Lyme, as well as small mammals that damage crops. Also, top predators, such as coyotes, cull weak and sick larger prey which makes for a healthier ecosystem.

What if there is depredation or an attack on a pet?

HB 422 will not interfere with a landowner's right to remove any offending wild animal.

See [RSA 207:26](#)

Non-lethal methods dealing with conflict can be found on the Project Coyote website:

www.projectcoyote.org

NHFG also recommends using non-lethal methods first*.



***NH Fish & Game Website - <https://wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/profiles/coyote.html>**