

Protect your pets

The best way to protect your pets is to keep them indoors or provide a safe dog run in your backyard. Even in a fenced yard, you should keep an eye on your pet while it is outside.

Female dogs in heat may attract their wild canid cousins like wolves, coyotes and foxes. If your dog is in heat, keep her inside or well-supervised outside, away from areas where she may attract unwanted mates of any species.

Foxes, coyotes and wolves are territorial and could consider your dog a threat. Coyotes and wolves may try to entice your dog away and attack it to eliminate the threat. Keep your dog on leash while you are walking it.

These animals may consider your dog a tasty meal. Immediately pick up your small dog if you spot a wolf or coyote. Back away slowly and leave the area immediately.

Be aware that diseases can be passed easily between domestic dogs and their wild canid cousins. Lice and mange can be spread by direct contact. Intestinal worms can be transferred if dogs come into contact with feces from an infected animal.

Safer on a leash

*Fox on a Riverdale shed
Cover Photo: D. Villesèche*

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Photo: D. Villesèche



Photo: C. Eckert

Wolf roaming around the city

Keep your pets safe outside

Because foxes and coyotes can climb and dig well, and wolves can jump high, a typical residential fence will not protect your pet. Be sure to bring your pets indoors at night. Most attacks on pets happen overnight.

Think twice before you chain your dogs or tether livestock in wolf country because they can not escape or defend themselves against attack.

Build a dog run

A properly constructed dog run can help keep your pets safe, whether your yard is fenced or not. Use six-foot high fences with extenders (available at local fence dealers) facing outward at the top of each post. Install two or three strands of plain wire along the extenders, out about 14 inches, completely around the fence.

Your fence should also have a galvanized wire apron buried at least 4 to 6 inches deep in the ground, extending out from the fence at least 15 to 20 inches. The apron should be securely attached to the bottom of the fence.

Greenbelts and clay cliffs are well traveled

Be BIG, be LOUD and DON'T RUN

If you meet a fox, coyote or wolf...

- Respond to an animal's presence aggressively by making yourself appear large; wave your arms overhead, or thrust long objects like a walking stick toward the animal. Do not approach a wolf.
- Throw rocks, sticks or other nearby objects.
- Make loud noises. If you're at home, bang pots and pans together. If you're out walking, carry a whistle and blow it to startle the animal.
- Shout in a deep voice while maintaining eye contact.
- If the animal continues to approach, back away slowly and move toward buildings or human activity.

Do not turn away or run. This may encourage the animal to chase after you.

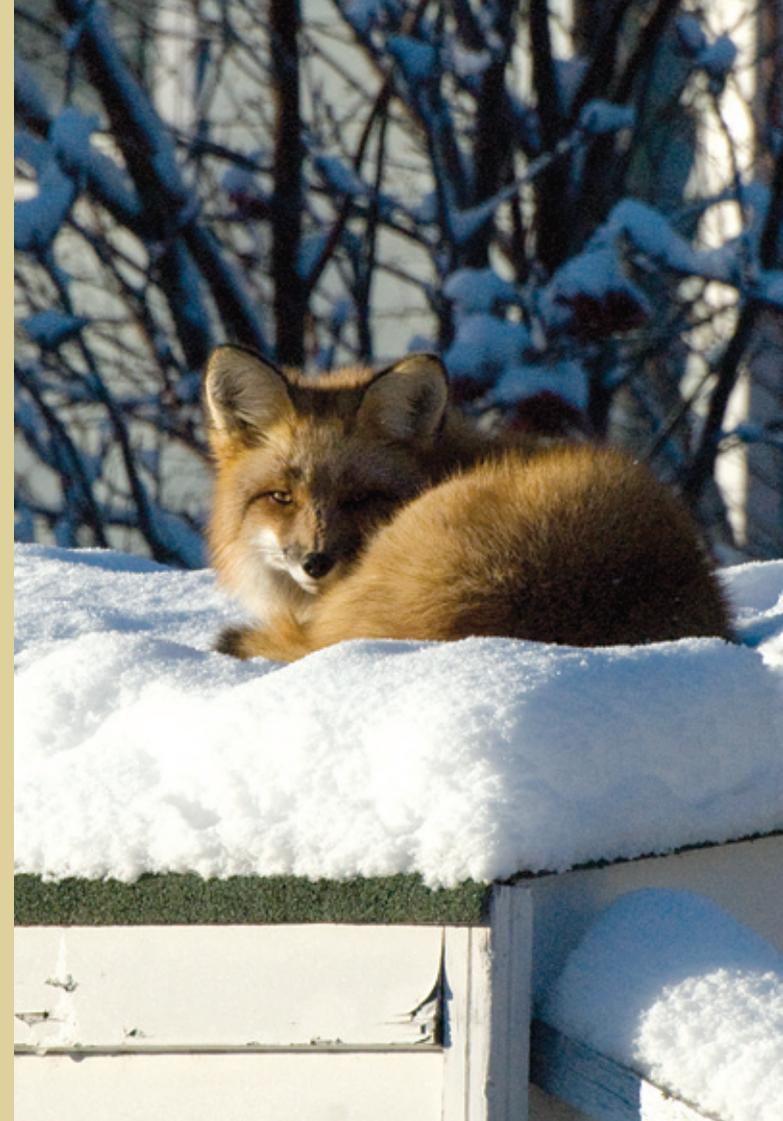
Contact us

If you suspect someone is feeding foxes, coyotes or wolves, or if you see a wild animal acting aggressively, call your district Conservation Officer to investigate. You can also call the TIP line at 1-800-661-0525.

Join your friends and neighbours in keeping urban wildlife wild and alive.



Photo: C. Eckert



Keep Urban Wildlife Wild & Alive

Yukon
Environment



Photo: C. Eckert

Watching traffic in Marwell

Urban wildlife

Urban environments provide good habitat for many species of wildlife. In Yukon this commonly includes coyotes and foxes which adapt easily to new situations and are not picky eaters. Even wolves may take advantage of habitats close to people in years when their usual prey is hard to find.

All these canid species are important for the proper function of ecosystems, even urban ecosystems, because they help regulate populations of many other species, such as squirrels, mice, voles, beavers and hares.

Serious conflicts between people and wolves, coyotes or foxes are rare. Left to their natural ways, they pose little risk to people, even in an urban environment.

But sometimes we don't leave wild animals to their natural ways. Some well-intentioned people feed foxes and coyotes by leaving out scraps or throwing food to them. Others are simply not careful enough about handling garbage, compost, pet food, bird seed and other attractants.

Being relocated from the neighbourhood

Once an animal comes to expect people to be a source of food, it can become aggressive when it doesn't get food. These animals are "human-food conditioned" or "habituated." They pose a risk to pets — and occasionally even people.

Removing foxes, coyotes or wolves is not the solution to human-wildlife conflicts. Traps and snares can pose risks to other animals and children. And the resulting imbalance in the ecosystem would simply create room for more predators to move in.

Look around your yard — without realizing it, you may be providing these animals with a regular food source.



YG Photo



YG Photo

Urban coyotes often become roadkill

What you do matters

Here's how you can avoid attracting wolves, coyotes and foxes to your neighbourhood:

- Dispose of garbage and compost materials in animal-proof containers with secure lids, and put them in an area that is inaccessible to wildlife.
- Take your garbage out the morning of collection day. Do not leave it out overnight.
- Keep a clean and tidy backyard. Clear brush and dense weeds. While this may force a mouse or two to relocate, it will eliminate the prey and reduce visual cover for coyotes.
- Bird feeders should be positioned so that foxes and coyotes can't get the feed or the birds and rodents that come to the feeders.
- Avoid leaving pet food outside.
- Pick up dog feces. Dog urine may also attract wild canines.
- Keep your cat(s) indoors.
- Walk your dog on a short leash, particularly in areas used by foxes and coyotes.

It is illegal under the *Wildlife Act* to feed or attract dangerous wildlife. Fines range from \$100 to \$50,000.

Thickets make good cover

What to do if a fox, coyote, or wolf approaches you

Generally, foxes and coyotes will only approach people when they lose their fear. This may happen if the animals are fed intentionally or unintentionally, or are able to feed undisturbed in areas with people and then lose their natural fear.

While wolves are usually shy and avoid contact with people, they can be attracted by areas with livestock, garbage dumps, by dogs that run off-leash, by pet foods, or by their natural prey species that are habituated to people. Wolves that are habituated may attack if they feel threatened, or if they are sick or injured but this is exceptionally rare.

If you encounter a fox, coyote or wolf, make the experience unpleasant for the animal. Make it feel unwelcome in your neighbourhood. Even if you are not concerned about encountering a wild animal, be proactive. They should not feel comfortable around us or our homes.



YG Photo

Protect your children

Encourage your children to enjoy the outdoors, but make sure they know what to do if they encounter a wolf, coyote or fox. Teach them not to approach wild animals. If you think that wolves or coyotes are in the area, supervise small children when they play outside.