



## Canid Experts Recommend Coexistence as Best Strategy

### Effective, Long-term Solutions for Common Concerns

*Wild territory is shrinking, forcing wildlife to live closer to people. This fact sheet can help residents and ranchers prepare in the case of seeing a coyote in the neighborhood.*

Perhaps no other wild animal has endured the wrath of humans, while evoking such genuine heartfelt admiration, than the coyote. Some livestock owners curse their existence; many Native Americans consider them the smartest animal on earth, and others delight in seeing or hearing this vocal Song Dog.

Coyotes are extremely adaptable animals and quickly adjust to changing conditions. Canid experts have found that coyote populations can actually increase in response to lethal control, and agree that maintaining stable coyote populations is the best approach.

They are comfortable in the country, mountains, or in cities, as long as there is appropriate shelter and food. As a result, people must be aware of their presence and take precautions to avoid conflict with them. With a better understanding of coyotes and their habitat, people can coexist with these adaptable canines.

Coyotes are an important part of a healthy ecosystem. They do people an important favor by controlling rodents and insects, and are nature's 'clean-up service' removing carrion and preventing disease. But as people encroach on natural areas, coyotes are finding food sources that are not natural, and this may bring them (and other wildlife) into unwelcome contact with people. The good news is that there are proven long-term solutions for common concerns.

*Tips & tools, page 2*

### EDITORIAL

**Camilla Fox, Wildlife Specialist**  
Executive Director, Project Coyote

Coyotes are a new urban reality for many, but they are not new to North America. Wild canids have been a part of our landscape since the Pleistocene Era, and these adaptable survivors are here to stay. Our job as scientists and educators is to give you the best information plus a handy toolkit for feeling comfortable with coyotes. We hope you'll gain a new appreciation for what some Native Americans call, "God's Dog", and share this fact sheet widely. 🐾

### Tips & Tools

...for common concerns about living, working, or recreating near coyotes and other wild neighbors.

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## Top Scientists: Culling, Bounties "Don't Work"

By **Dr. Paul Paquet** and **Dr. Marc Bekoff**,  
Renowned Canid Biologists



*Trapping is not selective, and may injure or kill family pets and endangered species.*

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## Model Communities: Long-term Solutions Working!

### Comfort Up, Conflicts Down

Colorado, California & British Columbia report...

Have you heard that a good example has twice the value of good advice? We set good examples for each other all the time as responsible parents, good neighbors and effective leaders. Here are a few model communities leading the way by empowering its citizens and promoting educated coexistence.

**Denver, Aurora, Centennial and Broomfield, Colorado** (pop. > 3 million). **Policy:** Negative coyote/human interactions in suburban areas are easily preventable. **Quotes:** "Data clearly showed that human injuries from coyotes were extremely rare, and there were usually preventable circumstances if people had the right information about living in coyote territory." - Ashley DeLaup, Wildlife Ecologist, Parks and Recreation Department, City and County of Denver.

🐾 (Project Coyote thanks these community leaders for contributing to this fact sheet.)

"I have to say that sightings and observations -- really all of our reporting -- have pretty much decreased over just the last year," - Karen Strickland, management analyst, City of Centennial. **Actions:** Encouraging people to take an active role in keeping coyotes in their community wild by removing attractants, taking responsibility for pet safety, hazing coyotes in neighborhood or other community spaces; and teaching about coyote ecology and behavior. Education programs available in a variety of media, including video demonstrations of hazing techniques for children and adults.

**Vancouver, British Columbia** (pop. >600,000). **Policy:** Negative coyote/human interactions in suburban areas are preventable. **Quote:** "A fed coyote puts your community at risk. Never feed coyotes." - signs on trails and in neighborhoods. **Actions:** Reducing conflict between people, pets, and coyotes by providing accessible information through

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## Top Scientists: Culling, Bounties “Don’t Work”

Interview with Dr. Paul Paquet and Dr. Marc Bekoff,  
Internationally Renowned Wildlife Biologists

*For two hundred years, coyotes have been hunted, poisoned, and persecuted. Bounties and contest hunts are set for their pelts and paws, often for the only crime of being seen. Taxpayers have spent billions supporting federal killing programs, but does killing coyotes make our communities safer and healthier?*

Dr. Paul Paquet is one of many prominent wildlife biologists in North America advocating for effective long-term solutions to human-coyote conflicts. As a world expert on wild canids, respected author, and Adjunct Professor at the University of Calgary, Dr. Paquet tells us, “Coyotes usually have an orderly social structure, with the dominant pair of a group breeding once a year. If left alone, family groups and populations are stable, with 1st year pup mortality at 50%-70%. If we kill pack members, other members can begin breeding more often, and with more food now available for pup survival, the result is more coyotes. Over the years, we’ve been acting in opposition to our best interests because we didn’t consider how biologically and behaviorally adaptable coyotes are.”

Dr. Paquet adds up the benefits of leaving coyotes to do their ecological job. “We kill approximately 500,000 coyotes every year. Considering that one coyote will eat at least 5 rodents per day, that could amount to over 9 billion extra rodents *per year* that may be poisoned to match the organic rodent control that would have been provided for us, for free. If we also consider the sheer number of insects coyotes eat, the sick animals they remove from the gene pool, and carrion they clean up, it’s not a stretch to say we’re clearly working against ourselves.”

Canid ethologist, Dr. Marc Bekoff, editor of three animal encyclopedias and numerous books, and a former Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Colorado, reminds us that coyotes are no different from other animals - they go where food and shelter are.

“Expanding human development puts wildlife in a position of constantly looking for new territory and habitat, finding food that is less-than-wild, resulting in real or anticipated conflicts.” Dr. Bekoff states that it’s “ethically indefensible to wantonly go out and kill coyotes because they try to live among us”. He also confirms that, “Only rarely is the ‘problem’ coyote caught or killed. When any coyote is killed, another will take its place almost immediately, and that may not be the coyote you’d prefer as your neighbor.”

A last issue, commonly described by top scientists, is that killing coyotes indiscriminately - through bounties/contests, culls or trapping - prevents young coyotes from learning essential lessons from their parents, like how to forage wild foods and imparting a natural fear of humans. Dr. Bekoff summarizes the sentiment of many respected wildlife biologists, “Killing does not and never has worked. Community education and a willingness to coexist are the keys to eliminating human-coyote conflicts, and it’s surprisingly easy.”

### Model Communities...

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range of media, an extensive website with downloadable media, a dedicated hot line, and school/group presentations and walks. Developed in cooperation with the Vancouver Parks Board and B.C.’s Ministry of Environment.

**Marin County, California** (pop. <250,000). **Policy:** Promote active coexistence through non-lethal livestock and wildlife protection program. **Quote:** “...we couldn’t tell if the [loss] reductions were a trend or a blip. Now, we can say there’s a pattern...we’ll be a model without anyone questioning our success.” -Stacy Carlsen, Marin Agriculture Commissioner. **Actions:** Program provides cost-share funds to assist ranchers with coyote deterrent methods including livestock guard dogs and llamas, improved fencing, and night corrals. Designed by Marin County Department of Agriculture in consult with Project Coyote’s founder, Camilla Fox.

*If coyotes are present in your area, ask decision makers to take a look at how other forward thinking communities are empowering their citizens, bringing comfort up and conflicts down.*



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### MYTH BUSTERS

**TRUTH: Statistically, coyotes are not a significant threat to your safety.** *Lightning, cows and deer pose a greater risk, but acting responsibly is always the key to safety. Follow our ‘7 Easy Tips’.*

**TRUTH: You may see a coyote in the daytime.** *If you see coyotes during daylight hours, don’t assume they have rabies or are sick.*

**TRUTH: Coyotes are not a significant predator of pets and deer.** *While coyotes may occasionally take free roaming domestic animals and deer; diet studies show that in general, rodents, rabbits, insects, fruit, and carrion make up the bulk of their diet, depending on season and location.*



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### SIMPLE TOOLS

**Make a shaker - and shake it!**  
*Put 40 pennies inside an empty soda can, then wrap with shiny aluminum foil, and secure with duct tape. Easy and effective hazing tool.*

**Carry an umbrella - and pop it!**  
*This is a portable and easy solution. Animals don’t like surprises!*

**Carry a whistle - and blow it!**

**Look around - and improvise!**  
*Be BIG and LOUD, shout, wave your arms above your head, throw handy objects toward (not at) the coyote. Hazing is powerful and easy for all ages.*



### 7 EASY TIPS

Keeping coyotes wild is the key to successfully coexisting with these naturally shy animals. It’s easy when you know what to do.

- 1. Do not feed coyotes!**
- 2. Walk pets on leash.**  
*During spring and early summer pups are in dens and coyote parents may try to deter you and your dog.*
- 3. Supervise small pets and children & keep cats inside.**
- 4. Secure garbage, compost & pet foods.** *Make sure can lids are tight, feed pets inside, pick up fallen fruit, and prevent bird feeders from attracting rodents.*
- 5. “Haze” coyotes near homes & community spaces.**  
*Use one of our great tools (this page) or just act BIG and LOUD. You are doing everyone a favor by reinforcing a fear of humans.*
- 6. Talk to your neighbors.**  
*See a coyote in your neighborhood? Ask your neighbors to remove attractants, haze coyotes on sight, and share this fact sheet.*
- 7. Secure livestock.** *Ranchers who use proven tools, like guard animals and secure fencing report few or no predator problems.*

*“Successful coexistence with coyotes requires an understanding of how coyotes survive, as well as an understanding of how humans can shape coyote behavior.” - City of Aurora, CO*



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### Project Coyote

Project Coyote is a coalition of wildlife biologists using the most current science for promoting educated coexistence with North America’s Song Dog.

[www.ProjectCoyote.org](http://www.ProjectCoyote.org)

