



February 27, 2009

To: Residents surrounding the area of Neville Park Boulevard
Re: Coyote Update

As you may know, there have been three recent incidents of coyote aggression towards dogs in your neighbourhood, one of which resulted in the death of the dog. We are concerned because the incidents occurred in close proximity to the dog owners' homes. Toronto Animal Services has been working this week to determine the best course of action to address this problem.

Coyotes and other wildlife have adapted well to city life and many coyotes live in Toronto's plentiful green spaces and industrial areas. For the most part, coyotes and people are able to peacefully co-exist and many residents know that hunting small animals is part of normal coyote behaviour. Toronto Animal Services becomes concerned when coyotes show an unusual level of comfort when in very close proximity (within a few feet) to people.

It is normal coyote behaviour to be somewhat timid of people, but we have reason to believe that this animal is being deliberately fed by at least one person which may be contributing to a change in some of its natural behaviours.

Toronto Animal Services is working to encourage the coyote to move on from its current location. If these tactics do not work, we will attempt to capture the animal.

Please call Toronto Animal Services at 416-338-7297 if you see a coyote in Toronto with any of the behaviours on this list:

- approaching dogs or people within a few feet
- fighting or attacking pets
- appears sick or injured

Coyotes are not considered high-risk rabies carriers, but are still susceptible to the virus.

Tips for keeping your family and pets safe:

Coyotes are intelligent, adaptable and curious creatures. Coyotes are active during the day and at night. Normally, they are also shy, cautious and non-confrontational. To avoid a possible confrontation, never leave a young child or any pet unattended. Make sure you teach your children about animal safety and what to do if they should encounter various types of wildlife. Keep your dog on a leash and your cat inside or supervised while outside.

Coyotes are opportunistic and are drawn to places where they can find an easy meal. By using the preventative tips below you can learn how to discourage these animals from backyards and avoid the possibility of a negative interaction or conflict.

- Never feed coyotes! Do not leave any type of food outdoors for any animal, including food for house pets.
- Store garbage in a sealed steel container. Make sure you keep the container in a secure area until garbage day.
- Remember that bird feeders attract birds, squirrels and rodents, which in turn attract coyotes.
- Never compost meat products.

If you are walking in an area with known coyote activity, take note of the following safety tips:

- Carry a personal audible alarm (it will deter a coyote and bring attention to yourself in case you needed help)
- Carry a bright flashlight (bright light has been known to deter coyotes)
- Keep your pet leashed at all times
- Keep an umbrella in close reach (the action of opening/closing will deter a coyote)
- Avoid walking during key coyote activity hours (dusk and dawn)

If you are approached by a coyote:

- Make yourself appear larger and shout and/or clap your hands together
- Use your personal audible alarm, umbrella and/or flashlight
- Stay calm, never run