

## A Message From Simsbury Animal Control Officer Mark Rudewicz



### Coyote Facts

In Connecticut, the coyote breeding season is from January to March and the gestation period is about 63 days. Coyotes are monogamous. The male and female usually maintain pair bonds for several years. The average litter is 7 pups.

As coyotes have become more common, public concerns about coyotes attacking pets and people, especially children, have increased. Although some coyotes may exhibit bold behavior near people, the risk of a coyote attacking a person is extremely low. This risk can increase if coyotes are intentionally fed and then learn to associate people with food.

Coyotes have a dog like appearance and they resemble a small German Shepherd, although several features distinguish it from a dog.

The coyote is one of the few wild animals whose vocalizations are commonly heard. At night coyotes both howl (a high quavering cry) and emit a series of short, high-pitched yips.

- **Howling** - communication with others in the area. Also, an announcement that "I am here and this is my area. Other males are invited to stay away but females are welcome to follow the sound of my voice. Please answer and let me know where you are so we don't have any unwanted conflicts."
- **Yelping** - a celebration or criticism within a small group of coyotes. Often heard during play among pups or young animals.
- **Bark** - The [scientific name](#) for coyotes means "Barking dog," *Canis latrans*. The bark is thought to be a threat display when a coyote is protecting a den or a kill.
- **Huffing** - is usually used for calling pups without making a great deal of noise.

Coyotes are Opportunistic predators. They often lie in wait for their prey to be vulnerable. Coyotes will attack cats and small dogs. Coyotes will sometimes try to lure dogs to chase them to a property edge line, usually in a wooded area. Usually, they will disable larger prey by injuring a back leg.

When walking your dog in an area where coyotes live keep your dog on a leash. Most dogs are curious of other animals, especially another canine.

Coyotes seen near homes or residential areas rarely threaten human safety. Homeowners should eliminate any food source that may be attractive to coyotes. Pet food, table scraps on compost piles, and decaying fruit below fruit trees.

If you encounter a coyote while in your yard or hiking, always remain calm. Make noise, coyotes will usually run away. Wave your arms to appear larger.

You can protect your pet by limiting their time outdoors. If possible, concentrate their activity to fenced in areas. Fencing may be the only method to completely eliminate coyotes from entering yards.

As always, please contact me at (860) 658-3110, if you have any questions or concerns.