

Coyote Management in Los Angeles

If resources are to be dedicated towards coyote management in the City of Los Angeles, we strongly support that they be used to educate the public (e.g., schools, homeowners associations, neighborhood councils, etc.) about how to safely coexist with coyotes in order to reduce potential conflicts and negative encounters

Managing coyote populations by lethal force, while seemingly effective in the short-term, are, counterproductive and, in fact, exacerbate the problem. Coyote populations that are managed by lethal force will actually grow larger than the initial population due to the "rebound effect," that is, a rapid increase in their reproductive rates and litter size.

(<http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/wildlife/template-coyote-management-plan.pdf>).

Despite the concerns of some community members, negative human-coyote encounters are relatively uncommon. Statistics from the Department of Fish and Game show that only about 1-5 people per year are injured by a coyote in each state, and that many of these have "been linked to feeding coyotes, defending a family pet, or attempting to touch a coyote". (<http://www.laanimalservices.com/about-animals/wildlife>).

As coyotes have a natural aversion to human beings, when rare negative encounters occur, they are more likely to do so when a coyote population is being fed by humans, either directly or indirectly through the feeding of other animals, improper disposal of human food and inadequate safeguarding of pets and animals raised for human consumption. Fortunately, these are all human activities that can be changed.

(<http://urbancoyoteresearch.com/sites/default/files/coyote%20fact%20sheet%20community%20action%20final.pdf>, http://urbancoyoteresearch.com/sites/default/files/WhiteandGehrt_CoyoteAttacks.pdf)

A widespread and effectively aimed education program could make great strides towards eradicating negative encounters with coyotes. Our recommendations are as follows:

1. A public outreach and education and program to help people decrease negative encounters, that includes:

- Posters that could be placed in parks, bus stops, grocery store windows, and other public venues
- Educational speakers for schools, organizational meetings, faith-based groups, neighborhood councils, etc.
- Training for professionals and government agencies most likely to be involved in coyote management in terms of education and outreach, research, response to conflicts, etc.
- Tabling events for fairs, festivals and other public events
- An information packet sent to local media outlets to encourage feature stories

2. Working with the feral cat rescue community to reduce the feral cat population through the program of TNR or Trap, Neuter, Release towards this goal.

3. Public Service Announcements to be shared on social media, racoyotedio and televisions stations.

In conclusion, studies show that coyote populations are determined by available resources, not by lethal control. If we can turn our focus to educating and empowering people protecting or limiting those resources the coyotes are looking for, we can make a difference in our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Dana Stangel and Suzanne Ferron

Teranga Ranch