

# Living With Wildlife in Coyote Country

## Co-existing with Coyotes in Colorado

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Perhaps no other wild animal has endured the wrath of humans—while evoking such genuine heartfelt admiration—than the coyote. Some people curse their existence; Native Americans consider them to be the smartest animal on earth ("God's dog"), and many urbanites revel in opportunities to see and hear these vocal predators.

The coyote's success is attributed to the decline of wolf populations and the coyote's own ability to adapt. ***Coyotes have adjusted very well to human-disturbed environments, and now thrive in close proximity to people.***

Being Coyote Wise: Reduce risky behavior

Coyotes are opportunistic hunters, They prey on small mammals, domestic pets, livestock, and domestic fowl but will readily eat carrion and plants. A coyote will adjust its diet depending on the food that is available.

In Colorado, coyotes are classified as a game species and may be taken year-round with either a small game or a furbearer license. Landowners may kill coyotes, without a license, on their land if the coyotes threaten their property or livestock.

Humans can coexist with coyotes. The following guidelines can help you and your family to be *Coyote Wise* whether you live or recreate in *Coyote Country*.

### Coyotes are Active in this Area

Coyotes in populated areas are less fearful of people. They have been known to attack pets and approach people too closely.

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#### If a Coyote Approaches You:

- Do not run or turn your back
- Be as big and loud as possible
- Wave your arms and throw objects
- Face the coyote and back away slowly
- If attacked, fight back

#### Protect Your Pets:

- Keep pets on a short leash
- Use extra caution dusk through dawn
- Avoid known or potential den sites and thick vegetation
- Do not allow dogs to interact with coyote

**Be Prepared!**

If You Have Concerns About an Encounter With A Coyote:

- Recreate during daylight hours
- Walk with a walking stick
- Keep a deterrent spray handy
- Carry noise makers or rocks to throw

**Avoid Coyote Conflicts in Your Neighborhood**

All Front Range communities are home to coyotes!

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**Your Home & Coyotes:**

- Never Feed Coyotes!
- Remove attractants from your yard, including pet food, water sources, bird feeders, and fallen fruit.
- Secure trash in a container with a locking lid or put trash out on the morning of pick up.
- Deter coyotes with a 6 foot privacy fence.
- Never approach wildlife. If a coyote approaches, yell, throw rocks or sticks at it, spray with a hose, or bang pots and pans.

**Your Pet & Coyotes:**

- Keep pets on a 6-foot leash when walking.
- Never allow your pets to "play" with a coyote.
- Pick up small pets if confronted by a coyote.
- Always supervise your pet when outside, especially at dawn or dusk.
- Never leave cats or dogs outside after dark.
- Don't leave pet food outside.
- If you must leave your pet outside, secure it in a fully enclosed kennel.

**Additional Resources**

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[Coyote Conflicts Brochure](#)

[Protect Your Pets Flyer](#)

**Questions or Concerns?**

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If you are experiencing problems with coyotes, or simply have questions, contact us either by [phone](#) or [e-mail](#).

If you have an emergency situation involving coyotes, contact the nearest [Colorado Parks and Wildlife office](#), Monday-Friday, during regular business hours. Outside normal business hours, contact the [Colorado State Patrol](#) or your county's sheriff's office.

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## Living with Wildlife in Lion Country

### When Mountain Lions Meet People

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Mountain lions are generally calm, quiet, and elusive. They tend to live in remote, primitive country. Lions are most commonly found in areas with plentiful deer and adequate cover. Such conditions exist in mountain subdivisions, urban fringes, and open spaces. Consequently, the number of mountain lion/human interactions has increased. This increase is likely due to a variety of reasons—more people moving into lion habitat, increase in deer populations and density, presumed increase in lion numbers and expanded range, more people using hiking and running trails in lion habitat, and a greater awareness of the presence of lions.

### If You Encounter a Mountain Lion

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People rarely get more than a brief glimpse of a mountain lion in the wild. Lion attacks on people are rare, with fewer than a dozen fatalities in North America in more than 100 years. Most of the attacks were by young lions, perhaps forced out to hunt on their own and not yet living in established areas. Young lions may key in on easy prey, like pets and small children.

No studies have been done to determine what to do if you meet a lion. But based on observations by people who have come upon lions, some patterns of behavior and response are beginning to emerge. With this in mind, the following suggestions may be helpful. Remember: Every situation is different with respect to the lion, the terrain, the people, and their activity.

**Photo above:** A bobcat. Similar in some ways to a mountain lion, but what is the most obvious difference? (Photo courtesy of the USFWS.)

- When you walk or hike in mountain lion country, go in groups and make plenty of noise to reduce your chances of surprising a lion. A sturdy walking stick is a good idea; it can be used to ward off a lion. Make sure children are close to you and within your sight at all times. Talk with children about lions and teach them what to do if they meet one.
- Do not approach a lion, especially one that is feeding or with kittens. Most mountain lions will try to avoid a confrontation. Give them a way to escape.
- **Stay calm** when you come upon a lion. Talk calmly yet firmly to it. Move slowly.
- **Stop or back away slowly**, if you can do it safely. Running may stimulate a lion's instinct to chase and attack. Face the lion and stand upright.
- **Do all you can to appear larger**. Raise your arms. Open your jacket if you're wearing one. If you have small children with you, protect them by picking them up so they won't panic and run.
- If the lion behaves aggressively, throw stones, branches or whatever you can get your hands on without crouching down or turning your back. Wave your arms slowly and speak firmly. What you want to do is convince the lion you are not prey and that you may in fact be a danger to the lion.
- **Fight back** if a lion attacks you. Lions have been driven away by prey that fights back. People have fought back with rocks, sticks, caps or jackets, garden tools and their bare hands successfully. Remain standing or try to get back up!

Check out the ["Mountain Lion Safety" video](#) for more tips on dealing with lion encounters.

## Who do You Call?

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The Colorado Division of Wildlife is responsible for managing, conserving, and protecting wildlife. Your concerns about wildlife are our concerns as well.

**If you have an encounter with a lion or an attack occurs**, immediately contact the Division of Wildlife, Monday through Friday, 8am-5pm, as listed below. Before or after these hours, contact the [Colorado State Patrol](#) or your local Sheriff's department.

**To report a sighting**, please contact the Division during normal business hours. Your information is very valuable to us.

Division of Wildlife Headquarters (Denver): 303/297-1192, or  
Northeast Region CPW Office (Denver): 303/291-7227  
West Region CPW Office (Grand Junction): 970/255-6100  
Southeast Region CPW Office (Colorado Springs): 719/227-5200  
Southwest Region CPW Office (Durango): 970/247-0855

## If You Live in Lion Country

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We can live with these incredibly efficient predators if we respect mountain lions and their habitat. To reduce the risk of problems with mountain lions on or near your property, we urge you to follow these simple precautions:

**Photo above:** A mountain lion peering from behind a boulder. What is the most obvious difference in the faces of mountain lions and lynx? Or a bobcat? (Photo courtesy of the USFWS.)

- Make lots of noise if you come and go during the times mountain lions are most active—dusk to dawn.
- Install outside lighting. Light areas where you walk so you could see a lion if one were present.
- Closely supervise children whenever they play outdoors. Make sure children are inside before dusk and not outside before dawn. Talk with children about lions and teach them what to do if they meet one.
- Landscape or remove vegetation to eliminate hiding places for lions, especially around children's play areas. Make it difficult for lions to approach unseen.
- Planting non-native shrubs and plants that deer often prefer to eat encourages wildlife to come onto your property. Predators follow prey. **Don't feed any wildlife!**
- Keep your pet under control. Roaming pets are easy prey and can attract lions. Bring pets in at night. If you leave your pet outside, keep it in a kennel with a secure top. Don't feed pets outside; this can attract raccoons and other animals that are eaten by lions. Store all garbage securely.
- Place livestock in enclosed sheds or barns at night. Close doors to all outbuildings since inquisitive lions may go inside for a look.
- Encourage your neighbors to follow these simple precautions. Prevention is far better than a possible lion confrontation.

Download and print the [Living With Lions brochure](#) and share it with your family, friends, and others in your neighborhood. It contains much of the information from this page and the next, and is a handy reference and reminder for anyone living in lion country.