



# COYOTE MANAGEMENT & RESPONSE PLAN

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH

**CONTACT**

City of Manhattan Beach Police Department, Animal Control  
(310) 802-5160

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	3
BACKGROUND ON COYOTES .....	4
INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN .....	12
INCIDENT RESPONSE TABLE.....	13
INCIDENT DEFINED .....	14
APPENDIX A – DEFINITIONS.....	15
APPENDIX B – HAZING OVERVIEW .....	18
APPENDIX C – YARD AUDIT CHECKLIST .....	21

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of this Plan is to support the community and provide tools to coexist with urban coyotes through education, behavior modification, and development of a tiered response to coyote behavior. The actions **prescribed in this plan are designed to increase citizens' knowledge and understanding of coyote behavior**, and make clear how this knowledge and understanding of coyote behavior can reduce or eliminate conflicts with coyotes.

Guidelines and provisions of this plan do not supersede federal, state and county regulations and policies. Furthermore, the provisions of this plan do not create regulations or requirements to Manhattan Beach residents, businesses or homeowner associations in pursuit of their legal rights in dealing with coyotes.

### STRATEGY

The strategy for managing coyotes is based on balancing respect and protection of wildlife and habitat without compromising public safety. It shall be effected through a four-pronged approach:

- ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY – Provide a safe environment for the public by limiting interactions with aggressive coyotes and potentially trapping where necessary to ensure public safety.
- ENHANCED COYOTE DETERRENCE EFFORTS - The goal of education is to decrease coyote attractants, increase pet safety, and reshape coyote behavior. Hazing methods, preventative measures, and housekeeping can alter coyote behavior.
- PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION - Education and coyote deterrents designed around co-existence. Communication with the community. Receiving and giving feedback among the community is essential for implementing the Coyote Management Plan.
- ACTIVE MONITORING AND DATA COLLECTION - Tracking coyote observations that include: confirmed coyote predations, unconfirmed coyote predations and coyote sightings.

THE COYOTE MANAGEMENT PLAN IS GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- Human safety is a priority in managing human-coyote interactions.
- Coyotes serve an important role in ecosystems by helping control the population of rodents.
- Preventive practices such as reduction and removal of food attractants, habitat modification and responding appropriately when interacting with wildlife are key to minimizing potential interaction with coyotes.
- Solutions for coyote conflicts must address both problematic coyote behaviors (such as aggression towards people and attacks on pets) and the problematic human behaviors (intentionally or unintentionally feeding coyotes and letting pets outside unattended) that contribute to conflicts.
- A community-wide program that involves residents is necessary to reduce coyote, pet and human interactions.

## BACKGROUND ON COYOTES

The City of Manhattan Beach does not own or have any control of wild animals found within its boundaries, nor is the City responsible for the actions or damage caused by them. These animals are a common and important part of our ecosystem, biosphere and the circle of life. The Manhattan Beach Police Department Animal Control Division was originally created to deal with problems arising from domestic animals and to enforce laws pertaining to them. To a small degree, wildlife has been included in the scope of their services, due to the proximity of natural habitat,, **which has occasionally resulted in wild animals' involvement** in distressed situations in which they require rescue.

In the middle part of 2016, the City of Manhattan Beach, along with other municipalities in Southern California, began to experience an increase in the amount of coyote encounters. While Manhattan Beach experienced only an increase in coyote sightings and the preying of free roaming feral cats in open public and private areas, other municipalities reported encounters that included attacks on pets that were on and off leash, a documented escalation of stalking and aggressive behavior displayed by coyotes, and an upsurge in sightings in areas populated by people (particularly during the day). The encounters have caused a general sense of fear among citizens and a desire to manage the increased coyote activity in neighborhoods.

Areas within and adjacent to the City where dense landscaping is prevalent (Manhattan Village parkways, Marriot golf course, Chevron refinery property, etc.) also provide locales where coyotes can safely migrate, hunt for food, build dens and reproduce. It is also believed that the prolonged drought has limited potential food sources for the coyotes and thus drawn the coyotes to residential neighborhoods in search of food and water.

Coyotes are opportunistic, versatile carnivores that primarily eat small mammals, such as rabbits, ground squirrels, and mice, to name a few. Coyotes tend to prefer fresh meat, but will eat significant amounts of fruits and vegetables during the autumn and winter months when their prey is scarce. Part of the coyote's success as a species is its dietary adaptability. This dietary elasticity, coupled with a lack of prey and closer proximity to residents, has led the coyotes to seek alternative food sources, including small pets, pet food, trash, fallen fruit and vegetables found in the backyards of homes. Generally, coyotes are reclusive animals who avoid human contact. However, with the urbanization of coyotes, the species is increasingly present in an environment with few real threats. This has resulted in more incidents of coyotes approaching people and even visiting yards when people are present.

In response to the rise of more aggressive coyote activity in neighborhoods, City staff researched response from surrounding communities, analyzed the Coyote Guidelines from the Humane Society of the United States, and researched coyote ecology to better understand and to create an appropriate plan for Manhattan Beach.

This Coyote Management Plan enables the City to manage the amplified presence of coyotes with an emphasis on public safety, education, and contracting with a certified trapper on an as-needed basis. When notified, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) may provide guidance or take the lead in the removal process.

## DIFFICULTIES MANAGING WILDLIFE

A wildlife problem is defined as any situation that causes a health or safety issue to its residents. In cases where problems with wildlife are associated with human behavior (leaving garbage exposed or intentional wildlife feeding), ordinances and enforcement may be enacted to minimize conflict. In some cases, particular or traditional management tools are ineffective. For example, relocation of animals is not ecologically sound and is not allowed in California without permission from the CDFW. Generally, relocated animals do not survive the transfer. If they do, they rarely stay in the relocation area and tend to disperse to other locations where they may cause problems, be involved in territory disputes or introduce disease. In some instances, the dispersed wildlife, especially coyotes, will go to great lengths to return to its previous territory or adversely affect residents. For these reasons, the CDFW rarely allows relocation of wildlife.

It is not economically, ecologically or in other ways efficient to attempt to remove all coyotes from the urban ecosystem. Attempts made by local, state and federal agencies as well as private organizations over the past century to eradicate coyotes have proven to be ineffective. Moreover, during the past century coyotes have expanded their territories to include every continental state.

## WHAT ROLE DO COYOTES PLAY IN THE ENVIRONMENT?

Coyotes play an important role in the urban ecosystem. They are predators of geese, eggs, squirrels, mice, rabbits, rats, gophers and other small animals. Rodents make up a majority of their diet.

## HOW DO HUMANS PERCEIVE COYOTES?

People respond to coyotes in various ways. Some observe them with enjoyment, others with indifference and some with fear or concern. Personal experiences with coyotes may influence their perceptions. Experiences range from animal sightings without incident to stalking, killing of pets or, at the extreme, an attack on a person. Because wild animals conjure up fear, actual sightings and perceptions may become exaggerated or misconstrued (see Appendix A for coyote description encounters). The wide range in perceptions of urban coyotes from Manhattan Beach residents supports the need for strong and consistent educational messages to clarify management techniques.

## COYOTE REPRODUCTION AND FAMILY ACTIVITY

What is known is that coyotes can become habituated if they are intentionally or unintentionally fed, which can lead to bolder behavior when coyotes lose their fear of people. Coyotes - like all predators - will stabilize their populations if they are not constantly exploited. In general, coyotes regularly roam an area of about 2-5 square miles or whatever it takes to get enough food for the pack members. Normally, each pack

is a territorial family group that varies in number from 3 to 10 individuals. A portion of the area the pack inhabits is the pack's territory, which they defend from other coyotes. The number of mature coyotes in the pack is linked to the amount of food resources in the territory. The pack system keeps coyotes from getting too numerous because the packs defend the area they need to survive.

A coyote pack usually has one breeding (or alpha) female. This female produces more pups than are ultimately wanted in the pack. Young coyotes may leave the pack at about 9-11 months of age but dispersal patterns are highly variable. These coyotes become transients. Other types of transients include older individuals that can no longer defend their role as upper level pack members and leave the pack.

Transients move all over in narrow undefended zones that exist between pack territories searching for an open habitat to occupy or group to join. They often die before they succeed (many are hit by cars). It is largely because of these transients that coyote eradication programs are unsuccessful.

Removing a group of territorial coyotes will create an undefended area into which the transient coyotes may flow. At all times of the year, numbers of transients are immediately available to replenish any voids created by killing the resident coyotes. Further, if either the alpha male or alpha female in a pack is killed, the resulting effect may result in ovulation in other breeding-age females in the pack and an increase in the number of litters as well as the number of pups per litter.

## COYOTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The City of Manhattan Beach strategy for managing coyotes is based on balancing respect and protection for wildlife and their habitats without compromising public safety. The main strategy is comprised of a four-pronged approach consisting of public education designed around co-existence with coyotes, enforcement of laws prohibiting the feeding of wildlife and ensuring public safety by implementing appropriate tiered responses to coyote and human interactions. This plan requires active participation on the part of the entire community including residents, city employees, volunteers and Manhattan Beach Animal Control.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Although the City of Manhattan Beach places a high value on wildlife, some individual animals adapted to urban environments have the potential to cause problems and/or conflicts in specific situations. The City promotes policies supporting prevention and implementation of remedial measures that do not harm the wildlife or their habitats. However, human safety is a priority in managing human-coyote interactions.

The act of feeding wildlife is known to lead to an increase in wildlife activity. Feeding can attract coyotes and their prey to an area leading to an increased likelihood of creating a habituated coyote(s) resulting in increases in coyote and human interactions. California law prohibits feeding wildlife. The Manhattan Beach Police Department will enforce the State law(s) pertaining to this activity and any related county or municipal laws. Relevant regulations include:

## CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 14

### §251.1 - Harassment of Animals.

Except as otherwise authorized in these regulations or in the Fish & Game Code, no person shall harass, herd or drive any game or nongame bird or mammal or furbearing mammal. For the purposes of this section, harass is defined as an intentional act which disrupts an animal's normal behavior patterns, which includes, but is not limited to, breeding, feeding or sheltering.

## LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE TITLE 10

### §10.84.010 - Providing Food for Certain Rodents or Predator Animals Prohibited.

- A. Except as otherwise provided for herein, no person shall feed or in any manner provide food to a non-domesticated rodent or a non-domesticated mammalian predator.
- B. For purposes of this chapter: “Rodent” includes ground squirrels;
- C. “Mammalian predators” includes coyote, raccoon, fox and opossum.

## MANHATTAN BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE

### §9.68.020 - Public nuisance; substandard or dangerous property conditions.

(R) Feeding, or causing to be fed, any wild birds or other undomesticated animals, where such feeding creates any unsanitary condition, excessive noise, or property damage.

## ENHANCE COYOTE DETERRENCE & REDUCING ATTRACTANTS

While human attacks are very rare, urban landscape development, habituation through intentional and unintentional feeding, pet related incidents and media attention have led some urban residents to fear coyotes. It is important to note that attacks on free-roaming and unattended small pets are normal coyote behavior and do not necessarily indicate a danger for people.

Coyotes usually become habituated when they learn and associate people and/or neighborhoods with sources of food. We reinforce this behavior by not reacting appropriately when we see a coyote. Steps must be taken to address safety concerns and misconceptions and appropriate responses to potential threats to **human safety. It's important to keep in mind that coyotes have** been in and around Manhattan Beach (and other parts of Southern California) for a very long time.

Coyotes are drawn to urban and suburban areas for the following reasons and actions to deter coyotes should be taken:

1. **FOOD/TRASH** – Urban areas provide a bounty of natural food choices for coyotes that primarily eat rodents such as mice and rats. However, coyotes can be further attracted into suburban neighborhoods by human-associated food such as pet food, unsecured compost or trash, and fallen fruit in yards. Intentional and unintentional feeding can lead coyotes to associate humans with sources of food, which can result in negative interactions among coyotes, people and pets. To reduce food attractants in urban and suburban areas:



- a) Never hand-feed or otherwise deliberately feed a coyote.
  - b) Avoid feeding pets outside. Remove sources of pet food and water. If feeding pets outside is necessary, remove the bowl and any leftover food promptly.
  - c) Never compost any meat or dairy (unless the compost is fully secured).
  - d) Maintain good housekeeping, such as regularly raking areas around bird feeders, to help discourage coyote activity near residences.
  - e) Remove fallen fruit from the ground.
  - f) Keep trash in high-quality containers with tight-fitting lids. Only place the cans curbside the morning of collection. If left out overnight, trash cans are more likely to be tipped over and broken into.
  - g) Securely bag attractive food wastes such as meat scraps or leftover pet food before discarding in outside trash receptacles.
2. WATER – Urban areas provide a year-round supply of water in the form of storm water impoundments and channels, artificial lakes, irrigation, pet water dishes, etc., which support both coyotes and their prey. In dry conditions, water can be as alluring as food, so remove water bowls set outside for pets and make watering cans unavailable.
3. ACCESS TO SHELTER – Parks, greenbelts, open spaces, golf courses, buildings, sheds, decks and crawl spaces, etc., increase the amount and variability of cover for coyotes. They allow coyotes to safely and easily remain close to people, pets, homes and businesses without detection. In the spring, when coyotes give birth and begin to raise young, they concentrate their activities around dens or burrows in which their young are sheltered. Coyotes may take advantage of available spaces under sheds or decks for use as a den, bringing them into close contact with people and pets.
4. UNATTENDED PETS – Coyotes primarily eat small mammals such as mice and rats, but will also prey on slightly larger mammals such as rabbits and groundhogs. Animals that are approximately the same size as a groundhog or rabbit such as free-roaming unattended outdoor pets, especially cats and small dogs, may attract coyotes into neighborhoods.
- a) The best way to minimize risk to pets from coyotes (and the other dangers of outdoor life such as cars, disease, dogs and other wildlife) is to keep small pets indoors (or only let them outside in a secure enclosure or when accompanied by a person and under the control of a leash and harness).
  - b) It is important to either keep dogs on a leash six feet long or shorter when outdoors or to stay within six feet of them when outside. (Coyotes may view a small dog on a leash longer than six feet as an unattended free-roaming pet.) It is also against the law to walk a dog on a leash longer than six feet in public areas. (MBMC 5.01.040).
  - c) Although attacks on larger dogs are rare, coyotes will sometimes go after a large dog when they feel that their territory is threatened. This generally occurs during the coyote breeding season, which takes place from January through March. During this time, it is



especially important not to let dogs outside unattended and to keep them on leashes (six feet long or less) when in public areas.

- d) Other domestic animals kept outside (such as rabbits, hens, etc.) may also be viewed as prey by coyotes. Protect outdoor animals from coyotes (and other predators) with protective fencing and by ensuring that they are confined in sturdy cages.
5. FERAL/STRAY CATS – People who feed feral and stray cats are often concerned that coyotes might prey on the cats. These concerns are well founded, as coyotes can be attracted to outdoor pet food left for cats. Although there is no sure way to protect outdoor cats from coyotes, the following tips can be helpful:
- a) **Remove the “three essentials” (food, water and shelter). Clear brush, debris and junk** from around your house. Do not keep pet food outside, seal crawlspaces and attics, place fencing underneath porches, etc.
  - b) Spay and neuter your cat. This will reduce the number of unwanted litters.
  - c) Have your cat wear identification tags or a license (a license may be obtained from City Hall). Microchip your cat at your vet and follow-up with the microchip company to make sure your contact information is correct and current. This assures that you will be reunited with your lost pet.
  - d) Do not let your cat roam so they will not fall victim to outdoor hazards such as vehicles, predators, accidental poisoning, drowning, infectious diseases, parasites, starvation, abuse and weather.
  - e) Contact a local feral/stray cat rescue or the Humane Society of the United States, [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org) (202)452-1100, for help.

Haze coyotes seen on the property (see Appendix C). Making them feel uncomfortable may encourage them to stay out of the area.

Residents are encouraged to use the Yard Audit Checklist (Appendix D) as a tool to help recognize and remove attractants in their yards and neighborhoods.

## PUBLIC OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Education is vital for residents to make appropriate decisions regarding their safety or managing their property and pets. The goal of education is to decrease attractants, increase pet safety, and reshape coyote behavior through hazing and creating reasonable expectations of normal coyote behavior. Dissemination of information to residents, businesses and schools may be accomplished through the use of the City and Police Department websites, social media, local press, mailers, pamphlets and brochures.

Learning how to respond to a coyote encounter empowers residents and supports reshaping undesired coyote behavior. The public should understand what normal coyote behavior is when living in close

proximity with coyotes. For example, vocalization (howling) is normal acceptable behavior and does not indicate aggression.

The City is fortunate in having multiple communications platforms and organizations in place to disseminate training materials and conduct public outreach. Starting in the fall of 2022, the Manhattan Beach Police Department Animal Control will resume meeting with leaders of the Neighborhood Watch Program to inform the community of applicable coyote activity. Meetings of this nature had been common up until 2020 when meetings were suspended in response to the spread of COVID-19. Updates on sightings/activity, seasonal coyote information, electronic flyers, and handouts may be distributed to participants.

### TRAINING PROGRAM

Because coexisting with wildlife involves the community, initiating the hazing training programs and hazing activities by volunteers must be supervised by experts. Without this support, the programs will ultimately fail. Information should include basic training on background, coyote ecology information, and overview of hazing and examples of techniques. Materials should be provided such as handouts, contact information and resources when questions, comments and concerns come up relating to coyotes. Volunteers need to learn about coyote behavior and be aware of realistic expectations, understanding normal versus **abnormal coyote behavior and having a consistent response to residents' concerns and comments.** Behavioral change and hazing includes the following:

1. Pet owners need to protect pets. Off-leash and unattended dogs and unattended outside cats attract coyotes (as well as pet food).
2. Residents need to learn hazing effectiveness and techniques. A hazing program must be instituted and maintained on a regular basis.
3. Hazing needs to be active for a sustained period of time to achieve the desired change for the highest possible long-term success.
4. Hazing requires monitoring to assess its effectiveness and to determine if further action or more aggressive hazing is needed.

### MONITORING AND COLLECTING DATA

Monitoring and data collection are critical components of an effective coyote management plan. The purpose of monitoring human-coyote interactions is to document where coyotes are frequently seen and to identify human-coyote conflict hotspots. Gathering specific data on incidents will allow for targeting of educational campaigns and conflict mitigation efforts, as well as the ability to measure success in reducing conflicts over time. This is best accomplished with input from both residents and the Manhattan Beach Police Department. Manhattan Beach Animal Control records and tracks coyote sightings or incidents, (See Appendix A for definitions), by monitoring calls for service. It is important that residents immediately notify Animal Control when a coyote encounter occurs so that responding officers can properly note observations, monitor the area and take appropriate actions. Coyote sightings and/or incidents can be reported by:

1. Calling Animal Control dispatch at (310) 802-5159, Monday-Sunday 6:00 AM to 11:00 PM every day (non-emergency and emergency reporting);
2. For after-hours non-emergency reporting: Email Animal Control at [AnimalControl@manhattanbeach.gov](mailto:AnimalControl@manhattanbeach.gov); or
3. **Utilize the City's GoReach app to submit a coyote sighting** (for after-hours EMERGENCIES call 911).

## INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN

The Manhattan Beach Police Department's Animal Control Division will respond to calls which involve a sick or injured coyote(s) or if there is a public safety issue, such as a coyote(s) threatening people or resting in an area frequented by people, such as a yard, park, playground, school, etc.

If a human is attacked and physically injured by a coyote, the Manhattan Beach Police Department will work with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, which will be the lead investigating agency, to thoroughly investigate the incident, identify and potentially remove the responsible coyote(s). Such removal will also be considered as a last resort if there is a public safety issue (such as a coyote(s) threatening people or habituated to an area frequented by people, such as a yard, park, playground, school, etc.) only after a thorough investigation and identification of the offending coyote(s). Since coyotes are considered "non-game wildlife" by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, any resident or Homeowner's Association Board of Directors can initiate, at their own expense, action to protect themselves and their private property from coyote nuisances. Residents or Homeowner's Associations taking action (such as hiring a licensed trapping company) should notify Manhattan Beach Animal Control of their activity.

A detailed tiered response plan has been developed to provide a mechanism for identifying and classifying different levels of human and coyote interactions. Definitions of coyote encounters are provided in Appendix A and the table below, detailing coyote behavior, behavior classification and recommended responses.

## INCIDENT RESPONSE TABLE

COYOTE ACTION		RESPONSE/ACTION BY CITY	MITIGATION / RESOURCES / ENFORCEMENT
Heard (howling)	WHITE	Monitor coyote activity	Public education on typical coyote behavior
Seen moving or resting in public areas with no people or pets present			
Seen resting in public area with people present	GREEN	Monitor coyote behavior Report possible attractants Hazing if necessary	Pet safety information / Yard audit  Remove possible attractants
Entering a private yard with or without unattended pets			
Entering private yard and injuring or killing unattended pet (with attractants present)			
Biting or injuring unattended free roaming pet or pet on leash longer than 6 feet (with attractants present)			
Following or approaching person with or without pet (Stalking / Shadowing)			
Entering private yard or home with people and pets present			
Entering private yard and injuring or killing unattended pet (without attractants present)			
Biting or injuring unattended free roaming pet or pet on leash longer than 6 feet (without attractants present)			
Biting or injuring attended pet	ORANGE	Attempt to identify and track responsible coyote. Monitor behavior and location.  Report incident to California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Potential lethal removal or capture unless attack is provoked by human harassment pending investigation.  Neighborhood Watch / social media alert
Aggressive, showing teeth, back fur raised, lunging, nipping w/o contact			

Biting or injuring person	RED	Report incident to California Department of Fish and Wildlife and L.A. Health Department	Coordinate with California Department of Fish and Wildlife; lethal removal or capture unless attack is provoked by human harassment.
---------------------------	-----	--	--

## INCIDENT DEFINED

An incident is described as a conflict between a human and a coyote where the coyote exhibits the following behavior: coyote approaches a human and growls, bares teeth, or lunges; injures or kills an escorted/on-leash pet. This includes attended pet loss, but not human injury. When human injury occurs, it is **defined as an “attack.”** The CDFW will investigate the incident if a human is physically injured.

### CIRCUMSTANCES DETERMINE THE RESPONSE

If an attack is unprovoked indicating a continued threat to human safety, Manhattan Beach Animal Control will determine a course of action based on the incident response table, potentially including notifying CDFW.

In a provoked attack, Manhattan Beach Animal Control will determine if circumstances indicate a continued threat to human safety. Manhattan Beach Animal Control will determine initial response which may range from targeted education up to contracting with a certified trapper or notifying CDFW of the need to potentially remove the involved animal.

Continued response will depend on specific details of the attack. The level of threat to human safety will determine if continued action is needed. Continued activity may include increased educational materials such as flyers, mailers or press releases, public meetings, and/or hazing by Animal Control.

If there is immediate danger that requires using a firearm to protect the public, Manhattan Beach Animal Control will support and coordinate with the Manhattan Beach Police Department first responders. No private individual will be authorized to discharge a firearm within the City of Manhattan Beach.

If a coyote is removed by **the City’s certified trapper** or CDFW, Manhattan Beach Animal Control will evaluate and determine what educational measures and hazing techniques need to be modified in order to decrease any reoccurrence. The assistance or guidance of coyote experts may be utilized.

## APPENDIX A – DEFINITIONS

**ACTIVE COEXISTENCE:** Humans and coyotes exist together. Communities decide on community space, such as open spaces, where coyotes are appropriate and do not haze, feed, or interact with them in these areas. Humans take an active role in keeping coyotes wild by learning about coyote ecology and behavior, removing attractants, taking responsibility for pet safety, and hazing coyotes in neighborhood or community spaces (except for predetermined coyote appropriate areas).

**ATTACK:** A human is injured or killed by a coyote.

**PROVOKED:** A human-provoked attack or incident where the human involved encourages the coyote to engage. Examples include dog off-leash in an on-leash area; dog on leash longer than six feet in length, or a human intentionally approaches or feeds the coyote.

**UNPROVOKED:** An unprovoked attack or incident where the human involved does not encourage the coyote to engage.

### ATTRACTANTS:

**FOOD/TRASH:** Intentional and unintentional feeding can lead coyotes to associate humans with sources of food, which can result in negative interactions among coyotes, people and pets.

**WATER:** Urban areas provide a year-round supply of water in the form of storm water impoundments and channels, artificial lakes, irrigation, pet water dishes, etc., which support both coyotes and their prey.

**ACCESS TO SHELTER:** Parks, greenbelts, open spaces, golf courses, buildings, sheds, decks and crawl spaces, etc., increase the amount and variability of cover for coyotes. They allow coyotes to safely and easily remain close to people, pets, homes and businesses without detection. In the spring, when coyotes give birth and begin to raise young, they concentrate their activities around dens or burrows in which their young are sheltered. Coyotes may take advantage of available spaces under sheds or decks for use as a den, bringing them into close contact with people and pets.

**UNATTENDED PETS:** Coyotes primarily eat small mammals such as mice and rats, but will also prey on slightly larger mammals such as rabbits and groundhogs. Animals that are approximately the same size as a groundhog or rabbit such as free-roaming unattended outdoor pets, especially cats and small dogs, may attract coyotes into neighborhoods.

**FERAL/STRAY CATS:** People who feed feral and stray cats are often concerned that coyotes might prey on the cats. These concerns are well founded, as coyotes can be attracted to outdoor cats or pet food left for cats.



**CONFIRMED DEPREDATION:** Predation (preying) on domestic pets.

**ATTENDED ANIMAL LOSS OR INJURY:** When a person is within six feet of the pet and the pet is on leash and is attacked, killed, or injured by a coyote.

**DOMESTIC ANIMAL LOSS OR INJURY:** A coyote injures or kills an unattended or free roaming pet and the attack was witnessed, recorded and/or determined by Animal Control. Also includes “depredation” - predation on domestic pets. Unattended animal loss or injury is normal behavior for a coyote searching for food sources.

**UNATTENDED ANIMAL/PET:** Pets or animals that are free roaming, without a human present/nearby in a private yard or on a leash six feet or longer.

**UNCONFIRMED DEPREDATION:** A coyote is an opportunistic feeder and may feed on deceased animals (carrion), especially animals that were previously killed by cars or by natural causes. The remains may be found and show indications that the animal was consumed by a coyote. In cases where Animal Control Officers respond to these calls, without knowledge of an actual attack, the incident will be recorded as an unconfirmed depredation.

**ENCOUNTER:** An unexpected, direct meeting between a human and a coyote that is without incident.

#### **FEEDING TYPES:**

**INTENTIONAL FEEDING:** A resident or business actively and intentionally feeds coyotes including intentionally providing food for animals in the coyote food chain.

**UNINTENTIONAL FEEDING:** A resident or business is unintentionally providing access to food. Examples such as accessible compost, fallen fruit from trees, left open sheds and doors, pet food left outdoors, among others.

- **BIRD FEEDERS:** A resident or business with bird feeders that may provide food for coyotes, e.g. birds, bird food, rodents, squirrels. Bird feeders must be kept high enough from the ground so a coyote is unable to reach the feeding animals. The area under the bird feeder must be kept clean and free of residual bird food.
- **UNSECURED TRASH:** Trash that is accessible to wildlife, e.g. individual garbage cans, bags or uncovered or open dumpsters or trash cans over-flowing or where scattered trash is outside the receptacle.

**HAZING:** Training method that employs immediate use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage an undesirable behavior or activity. Hazing techniques include loud noises, spraying water, bright lights, throwing objects, shouting. Hazing can help maintain a coyote’s fear of humans and deter them

from neighborhood spaces such as backyards and play spaces. Hazing does not damage animals, humans or property.

**THREAT INCIDENT:** A conflict between a human and a coyote where the coyote exhibits the following behavior: approaches a human and growls, bares teeth, or lunges; injures or kills an attended domestic animal. A human is not injured

**STALKING INCIDENT:** A conflict between a human and a coyote where the coyote exhibits the following behavior: follows a person with or without an attended pet on leash. A human is not injured

**OBSERVATION:** The act of noticing or taking note of tracks, scat or vocalizations.

**SIGHTING:** A visual observation of a coyote(s). A sighting may occur at any time of the day or night.

## APPENDIX B – HAZING OVERVIEW

Some coyotes can **become too comfortable in the close proximity of people**. To safely coexist, it's important to modify this behavior and attitude in local coyote populations. Habituated coyote behavior needs to be reshaped to encourage coyotes to avoid contact with humans and pets.

Hazing – **also known as “fear conditioning”** - is the process that facilitates this change and is by necessity a community response to negative encounters with coyotes. The more often an individual animal is hazed, the more effective hazing is in changing coyote behavior.

Hazing employs immediate use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage undesirable behavior or activity. Deterrents include loud noises, spraying water, bright lights, throwing **objects and shouting**. Hazing can help maintain a coyote's fear of humans and discourage them from neighborhoods such as backyards and play areas. Hazing does not harm or damage animals, humans or property. Behavioral change also involves human activities such as how to identify and remove attractants and how to responsibly protect pets.

### FOUNDATION OF HAZING

1. It is not economically, ecologically or in other ways efficient to try and eradicate coyotes from the urban ecosystem.
2. Hazing is one piece of a long-term plan in creating safe and acceptable living situations, increase understanding and reduce conflict between coyotes and people.

### GOALS OF HAZING

1. To reshape coyote behavior to avoid human contact in an urban setting. Human behavior can shape animal behavior, in either a negative or positive manner. People living in close proximity to coyotes can remove coyote attractants, identify potentially dangerous situations for their pets and themselves, and respond in a manner designed to change coyote behavior.
2. To provide residents information and tools to actively engage in reshaping coyote behavior and to support feeling safe in their parks and neighborhoods. This can be accomplished by teaching residents hazing techniques.
3. To model hazing behavior and share accurate information about coyotes among other residents, friends and family.
4. Monitor hazing to assess its effectiveness and determine if further action or more aggressive hazing is needed.
5. Develop long-term community based hazing programs.

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Hazing must be more exaggerated, aggressive and consistent when first **beginning a program of hazing. As coyotes “learn” appropriate responses to hazing, it will take less effort from hazers.** Early in the process, it is extremely common for coyotes not to respond to hazing techniques. Without a history of hazing, they do not have the relevant context to respond in the desired outcome (to leave).
2. Techniques and tools can be used in the same manner for one or multiple coyotes. Usually there is a dominant coyote in a group who will respond - others will follow its lead. DO NOT ignore, turn your back or avoid hazing because there are multiple animals instead of a single individual.
3. The more often an individual coyote is hazed by a variety of tools and techniques and a variety of people, the more effective hazing will be in **changing that animal’s future behavior.**
4. Hazing must be directly associated with the person involved in the hazing actions. The coyote must be aware of where the potential threat is coming from and identify the person.
5. Coyotes can and do recognize individual people and animals in their territories. They can learn to avoid or harass specific individuals in response to behavior of the person and/or pet.
6. Coyotes can be routine in habit. Identifying their normal habits can help target which habits to change. For example, the coyote patrols the same bike path at the same time in the morning three to five days a week. Hazers should concentrate on that time and place to encourage the animal to adapt its routine to decrease contact with people.
7. Certain levels of hazing must always be maintained so that future generations of coyotes do not learn or return to unacceptable habits related to habituation to people.
8. Human behavior must change to support hazing and continued identification and, if necessary, remove possible attractants.
9. Education about exclusion techniques including how to identify and remove attractants, personal responsibility in pet safety and having reasonable expectations are critical parts of a coyote hazing plan.
10. Coyotes are skittish by nature. Habituated behavior is learned and reinforced by human behavior. Coyotes as a rule DO NOT act aggressively towards aggressive people. The one exception is a sick or injured animal. Engaging a sick or injured animal can result in unpredictable behavior. If this is suspected, people should not engage and remove themselves from the situation, then immediately contact Manhattan Beach Police Department Dispatch at (310) 802-5159 or dial 911.

## DEFINING HAZING

Individuals involved in hazing need to be trained in explaining hazing to residents who witness the process. They also need to explain the difference between hazing and harassment of wildlife and goals of appropriate behavior for coexistence.

Human behavior can shape animal behavior, in either a negative or positive manner. People living in close proximity to coyotes can remove coyote attractants, identify potentially dangerous situations for their pets and themselves, and respond in a manner designed to change coyote behavior.

- Hazing is a process whereby individuals and volunteers respond in like manner to make a coyote uncomfortable and choose to leave a situation where their presence is unwanted.
- Basic hazing consists of standing your ground, never ignoring or turning your back to a coyote(s), yelling and making unpleasant and frightening noises until the animal(s) choose to leave.
- More aggressive hazing consists of approaching an animal quickly and aggressively, throwing projectiles, spraying with a hose or water gun, or creating fear of contact so the animal leaves the situation.
- Hazing must continue once it begins until the animal leaves, otherwise, the coyote **will learn to “wait” until the person gives up.** Not following through with hazing will create an animal more resistant to hazing instead of reinforcing the image that **“people are scary.”**
- Hazing should never injure the animal. An injured animal becomes less predictable versus a normal, healthy one who responds in a consistent and predictable manner to hazing.
- Hazing should be conducted in a manner that allows the coyote to return to its normal habitat in a direction that would minimize harm to the animal. Hazing the animal in the direction of other houses and busy streets should be avoided.
- Hazing uses a variety of different hazing tools. This is critical as coyotes get used to individual items and sounds.
  - Noisemaker: Voice, whistles, air horns, bells, “shaker” cans, pots, pie pans
  - Projectiles: sticks, small rocks, cans, tennis balls, rubber balls
  - Deterrents: hoses, spray bottles with vinegar, pepper spray, bear repellent, walking sticks

A common concern with hazing involves potential danger to the hazer. A coyote’s basic nature is very skittish and the nature of the species is what makes this technique successful. A normal, healthy coyote will not escalate a situation with an aggressive person. Hazing is NOT successful with every species of wild animal because different types of animals have different traits.

## APPENDIX C – YARD AUDIT CHECKLIST

We encourage you to take steps to eliminate attractants on your property in order to minimize conflicts with coyotes. We also urge you to share this information with friends and neighbors because minimizing conflicts is most effective when the entire neighborhood works together.

CHECK	OK	FIX	WAYS TO MIGRATE
FOOD SOURCES			NEVER had-feed or intentionally feed a coyote
PET FOOD			Never feed pets outdoors; store all pet food securely indoors.
WATER SOURCES			NEVER feed pets outdoors; store all pet food securely indoors.
BIRD FEEDERS			Remove water attractants (Such as pet water bowls) or decorative ponds/bird baths.
FALLEN FRUIT			Clean up fallen fruit around trees.
COMPOST			Do not include meat or dairy among compost contents unless fully enclosed.
BBQ GRILLS			Clean up food around barbeque grills after each use.
TRASH			Secure all trash containers with locking lids and place curbside the morning of trash pickup. Periodically clean cans to reduce residual odors. Avoid overfilling trash cans.
LANDSCAPING			Trim vegetation to reduce hiding places and potential denning sites.
STRUCTURES AND OUTBUILDINGS			Restrict access under decks and sheds, around woodpiles, or any other structure that can provide cover or denning sites for coyotes or their prey.
*FENCING			Enclose property with a 6-foot fence with an additional extension or roller-top; to deter coyotes. Ensure that there are no gaps and that the bottom of the fence extends underground 6-inches or is fitted with a mesh apron to deter coyotes from digging underneath. *Must comply with Manhattan Beach Municipal Codes.
PETS			NEVER leave pets unattended outside. NEVER allow pets to “play” with coyotes. Fully enclose outdoor pet kennels. Walk pets on a leash no longer than 6-feet in length.

MANHATTAN BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT  
 ANIMAL CONTROL  
 OFFICE: (310) 802-5160  
 CALLS FOR SERVICE: (310) 802-5159