

# COYOTE MYTHS

The presence of coyotes in urban areas like the South Bay can bring about more questions than a science-based understanding of the elusive canine.

## WHAT ARE COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT COYOTES?

### **COYOTES ARE AN INVASIVE SPECIES IN LOS ANGELES.**

**INCORRECT.** Coyotes have made Los Angeles their home since before the Ice Age. Their extraordinary ability to adapt to changing conditions, such as food availability, helped them survive the Ice Age.

[Fact: Coyotes are the 3rd most common large mammal fossil found in the La Brea Tar Pits.](#)

**COYOTES OFTEN ATTACK HUMANS.** While it is true that coyotes have attacked people, it is a *rare occurrence and highly unlikely*. In California, between 1977 and 2015, there were 165 reported coyote attacks on humans ([Baker 2017](#)). Of those attacked, 73% sustained an injury. To put this in perspective, domestic dogs bite 4.5 million people each year ([The Centers for Disease Control](#)). Of those bit, 25% require medical treatment. Even though the risk of a coyote attack on people is low, it's important to practice safe measures to avoid being attacked. If you see a coyote, keep a safe distance and haze it.

**COYOTE STALKED ME AND MY DOG.** The answer varies case-by-case. Coyotes are curious canines. They may be intrigued by your dog because dogs come in different shapes and sizes. A coyote's curiosity and playfulness may quickly turn defensive or aggressive. Never allow a dog to engage in playful behavior with a coyote.

### **COYOTES ARE NOCTURNAL.**

**INCORRECT.** Coyotes hunt and forage day or night. In cities, they may prefer nighttime because there are fewer cars and people to interact with and disturb their activities. If you see a coyote in daytime, it is considered normal coyote behavior.

### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO DISPEL MYTHS?**

Understanding coyote behavior is key to reducing potential conflict. Discerning reality versus fiction can help guide better decisions to safeguard your pets and family.

### **PRACTICE WILDLIFE SMART SAFETY MEASURES TO REDUCE YOUR RISK OF COYOTE CONFLICT.**

- Supervise pet(s) and small children.
- Leash dogs while out for a walk on a leash shorter than 6 feet.
- Dispose of food waste properly.
- Never feed, touch, or allow your pet to play with a coyote.

Visit our website for a list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#), articles about safeguarding your family and pets, as well as a place to report coyote encounters.

[View Weekly Coyote Activity Report](#)  
**Learn. Prevent. Report.**

For coyote education resources and resident action plans, visit:

[TorranceCA.Gov/Coyotes](https://TorranceCA.Gov/Coyotes)



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