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Town of Canton, Massachusetts

The Animal Control Department has been receiving multiple calls regarding the presence of coyotes in Canton. Animal Control advises residents of Canton to keep their cats indoors and to not allow small dogs to remain outside for extended periods of unsupervised time. The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Wildlife has provided the following information to help residents better understand coyotes.

The eastern coyote moved into the central and western regions of Massachusetts in the 1950s and now lives in every town in Massachusetts, except for those on Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Therefore, almost all citizens in Massachusetts live in close proximity to coyotes. This phenomenon is not isolated to Massachusetts; coyotes are established throughout all of the United States.

Coyotes are naturally afraid of people and their presence alone is not a cause for concern. In the 50 years of coyotes residence in Massachusetts, there have been only three attacks on people by coyotes - two animals were rabid, the third was suspected to have been in the care of someone. Scare tactics such as banging pots and pans or other clanging objects, throwing things, and turning a hose on them can be effective. Yelling from inside a house or flashing lights or beeping a car horn is NOT effective. It's your actual presence that makes them nervous. Scaring coyotes on a regular basis keeps them wary of people.

Coyotes are the size of a medium-size dog, but with longer, thicker fur. A coyote is typically 4-5 feet in length and ranges in color from grayish-black to blondes, light tan, dark tan, to red or even all black. Coyotes can attain weights of 50-60 lbs. Coyotes will feed on whatever is most readily available and easy to obtain. They will scavenge on animal remains, including road-kills, as well as garbage and pet food left outdoors. In suburban areas they prey upon unprotected pets, including outdoor house cats and domestic dogs. For this reason, it is recommended to keep all cats indoors and not leave small dogs outside unsupervised. It is also recommended that all trash be secured and that it is brought out the morning pickup is scheduled and not the previous night.

Please contact the Animal Control Department at 781-575-6507 if you have any further questions.

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