It can be difficult to accept, but pets can be seen as a food source, threat or possible mate. Coyotes have taken pets from backyards, open spaces and even right off the leash. Keep pet vaccinations current. Vaccinations and reduce the risk to your pet by following these guidelines:

Cat Owners:
TNC recommends against allowing cats outdoors. The only way to guarantee your cat’s safety is to keep it indoors. Outdoor cats face potential death from cars, diseases, foxes, parasites, raccoons, dogs and birds of prey. Protect your cat and other wildlife.

Dog Owners:
- Always supervise your pet outside, especially at dawn and dusk
- Keep your dog on a short leash while recreating and avoid retrievable leashes
- Don’t allow your dog to interact with a coyote
- If possible, pick up your dog when coyotes are visible
- Avoid known or potential den sites and thick vegetation
- Like domestic dogs, coyotes will defend their territory and their young
- If you must leave your dog outside, secure it in a fully enclosed kennel.

The DEP reports an average of two dogs per year are attacked by coyotes in New Jersey. Attacks on dogs are not an indication that people are at risk, because coyotes do not view people, as a food source.

How can you protect your pet?

You have options when it comes to dealing with coyotes in your neighborhood:

- Do nothing.
  You might have no concerns about coyotes, however, we recommend you understand the possible risks to your pets and yourself.
- Be prepared and encourage coyotes to remain wild.
  Help both people and coyotes by taking action to instill them with a healthy and natural fear of people. If you have concerns about encountering a coyote, you may want to keep a deterrent handy. Deterrents can include rocks, pots and pans, vinegar in a water gun, paintballs, air horns or a repellent spray. Contact local authorities to ensure that you are using a legal method.
- Take steps to prevent conflict.
  Follow the advice in this brochure to eliminate attractants around your property and safeguard your pet.
  - Raise your arms and be as big and loud as possible
  - Wave your arms, stomp, clap, yell, honk an air horn, spray water from a hose, or throw small rocks or sticks when you see a coyote
  - Shout in a loud and authoritative voice
  - Back away slowly. Do not run (prey behavior) or turn your back on the coyote
  - Face the coyote but don’t try to stare a coyote down (antagonizing behavior).

Teach your children

- Never approach unfamiliar animals or dogs!
- If a coyote approaches you, wave your arms, stomping your feet and tell it loudly to Go away!
- Call for help
- If the animal doesn’t leave, walk out of the area, keeping the animal in your sight

Encourage coyotes to remain wild.
If you observe a coyote during the day that shows no fear of humans, or if a coyote attacks a person, immediately contact your local police and the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife at 908-735-8793. Outside of normal business hours, call the DEP Hotline at 877-WARN-DEP.

What you can do

Your Guide to Avoiding Human/Coyote Conflicts

The Tenafly Nature Center is a non-profit independent member-supported nature preserve. Our mission is to protect almost 400 wooded acres, all of its inhabitants and teach the next generations to do the same.

If you have any additional questions, please contact the Tenafly Nature Center at (201) 568-6093 or info@tenaflynature.org
Why are they here?

While coyotes are found throughout Northeastern woodlands, they are extremely adaptable and can also thrive in urban areas. They can and will be found in any neighborhood that provides their basic needs of food, water, shelter and space.

What do coyotes eat?

Coyotes are opportunistic mammals. Up to 70% of a coyote’s diet consists of small mammals (mice, rabbits, rats, squirrels, voles, etc.). The remaining 30% is a combination of fruits, vegetables, insects, fish, birds, eggs and other available items. In urban areas, coyotes also prey on rats, squirrels, garbage, fallen fruit/berries from trees, carrion and small pets.

When are coyotes most active?

Coyotes can be active any time, day or night, but are especially active at dawn and dusk. Conflicts with pets occur year-round and are more likely to occur during the breeding season (February-March). Because young are born in the spring, food requirements of the nursing females and growing young remain high until late summer. As people and their pets spend more time outdoors during this time, the possibility of a coyote encounter increases.

How do coyotes and wolves differ?

Coyotes resemble wolves, but wolves and coyotes have distinct differences. Most importantly, there are no wolves in New Jersey.

1. Wolves are larger.
2. Coyotes have bushier tails, and often hold them low to the ground.
3. Wolves hunt primarily in packs, while coyotes hunt primarily in pairs.
4. Coyotes are more adaptable to human altered environments than wolves.

How do coyotes and foxes differ?

Foxes have a coat that varies in color from, reddish-brown, golden, silver, and black. Coyotes have a black tip.

How many coyotes live at TNC?

How do coyotes feel?

Residential areas like Tenafly can provide excellent habitat for coyotes. With plentiful food sources, such as mice and rabbits. These small animals feed on birdseed, berries and garbage, which are commonly found and easily accessible. Shelter and water can be found in landscaped parks and yards. Space is plentiful throughout parks and natural areas. As coyotes adapt to the presence of humans, they can lose their natural fear.

What do coyotes look like?

Eastern Coyotes (Canis latrans) have wide, pointed ears; a long, thin snout; and weigh 30-50 lbs. They have a bottle brush-like tail, long-legged appearance, and look similar to German Shepherds. Unlike dogs, their tails stay down when walking or running. Their fur color varies from light (gray or red) to brown and black.

General coyote facts

- Have very good hearing and excellent eyesight.
- They are strong swimmers and can run ~40 miles/hour.
- In the wild they can live up to 10 years.
- Reproduce at the age of 2 with an average of 6 pups. A pup is fully grown at one year.
- Their home range in NJ, where habitat is favorable, typically averages 2,000 acres with approximately one coyote per 250 acres. An area of 2,000 acres can support eight coyotes, or one family group.
- They are solitary hunters and opportunistic omnivores.

Where did the coyotes come from?

Coyotes are native and live throughout most of North America. However, coyotes weren’t found in New Jersey before the mid-twentieth century. Pre-1700 their range was restricted to the prairies and desert areas of Mexico and central North America.

In New Jersey their numbers have grown, making them the western coyote. During this expansion some coyotes mated with gray wolves and moved eastward and down into the Mid-Atlantic States.