

Coyote Awareness & Prevention

We have received inquiries regarding coyotes in Southgate. While Downriver Central Animal Control works closely with local authorities and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), it is important for residents to understand how to coexist safely with our native wildlife. Coyotes are part of our local ecosystem, and as with all wildlife, they are regulated by the Michigan DNR. Information regarding nuisance coyotes can be found on the [DNR's Website](#).

Coyote Facts:

- Coyotes typically weigh between 15 and 45 pounds, but their bushy fur can make them appear larger.
- They live in family packs, usually consisting of a breeding pair and their older offspring. These packs control their population by chasing off other coyotes.
- Coyotes communicate through howling, yelping, barking, or huffing.
- Their diet primarily consists of small mammals (such as rodents), fruit, insects, and carrion. On average, 78% of a coyote's diet is rodents, while less than 2% consists of human food.

Important Information:

- Coyotes are generally timid animals that avoid human interaction and do not pose a significant threat to people. While coyote attacks on humans are extremely rare, feeding coyotes or allowing them to become habituated to human presence can increase potential risks.
- **Never feed coyotes** or attempt to tame them. Coyotes that are fed may lose their natural fear of humans, which can lead to dangerous encounters.

Preventing Coyote Encounters:

To reduce the likelihood of coyote encounters, Southgate residents should take the following precautions:

- **Do not feed pets outside.** Leftover food or pet food smells will attract coyotes and other wildlife.
- **Limit bird feeding.** Birdseed can attract small mammals, which in turn attract coyotes.
- **Secure garbage.** Keep trash in tight-fitting containers to avoid attracting coyotes and other wildlife.
- **Remove woodpiles and compost bins.** These attract rodents, which coyotes hunt.
- **Keep yards clear of debris** and overgrown vegetation. Coyotes often seek cover in thick shrubs or tall grass.
- **Keep cats indoors** and avoid feeding outdoor cats, as this attracts both wildlife and can lead to health risks.

- **Supervise pets**, especially small dogs, when outdoors, particularly during dawn and dusk, which are times when coyotes are most active.

What to Do if You Encounter a Coyote:

If you come into contact with a coyote, remember that they are often more afraid of you than you are of them. Use hazing techniques to encourage them to leave the area:

- Yell and wave your arms to make yourself appear larger.
- Use noisemakers like whistles, air horns, or even banging on pots and pans.
- Projectiles such as small rocks or sticks can also be effective.
- Do not run from a coyote; this may provoke a chase.

Reporting and Removal

If you encounter a coyote or wildlife that may pose an imminent threat to humans or pets, please contact Southgate Police immediately at 911. Downriver Central Animal Control is not able to remove wildlife simply for being present in the area.

Any resident wishing to remove coyotes from their property may contact a licensed nuisance animal control company. Residents may also look into wildlife deterrent devices that are sold online or at hardware stores.

The Southgate Police Department and Downriver Central Animal Control is not involved in trapping or otherwise handling coyotes.

For more information on coyotes or other wildlife, residents are encouraged to visit the Michigan Department of Natural Resources website at www.Michigan.gov/dnr.

By understanding and respecting coyotes and all wildlife, we can live in harmony with the animals that share our community.