

School-to-Nature



Coyote

Coyotes are canines, like dogs and wolves. They are native to the North American continent. A coyote's fur color varies by where it lives, a mixture of gray, white, tan or brown colors. There is a coyote in the Caledonia area that looks almost black. The eyes of a coyote are a golden-brown color. Coyotes are very smart animals, with excellent hearing, smell and sight. In the wild, coyotes can live 10-14 years, but due to human encroachment on their territories, the majority do not live past 3 years.

A male coyote can weigh between 18 and 44 pounds, and the female between 15 and 40 pounds. Their local habitat in North America plays a part in what they weigh. Those in northern areas like Wisconsin are larger. There are between 3-12 pups born to a litter, usually in spring. The male, female and other members of the pack all take care of the pups until they are old enough to live on their own, when they join the pack to hunt together. The males and females stay together for their entire lives.

They usually hunt birds, rabbits, deer, fish, and other small to medium sized mammals. They have been known to sometimes kill very small dogs and cats; but they are NOT a danger to humans or to most pets, especially if the pet is supervised while outdoors.

If you see a coyote running, you can tell it is not a dog as its tail is down by the back legs, whereas a dog's tail is up when it runs. Coyotes can run up to 40 miles per hour. The pack talks to each other, usually at night, by howling. You may hear them if your windows are open at night.

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