

Seely Place School
Greenville School

January 27, 2010

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We are aware of recent coyote sightings on or near the Greenville School grounds and the report of an attack on a woman in Travis Hill Park that occurred yesterday. Upon hearing about sightings, it has been our practice to contact the Greenburgh Police Department's Animal Control Division and to hold recess indoors.

In light of these recent incidents, we have asked our teacher aides to be extra vigilant when outdoors, to keep the children close to the buildings and to direct the children not to approach wooded areas. In the event that a coyote is spotted while the children are outside, the aides have been directed to bring the children inside immediately and to inform us as soon as possible. We will then contact the Greenburgh Police Department's Animal Control Division.

We spoke to a representative from Animal Control this morning who emphasized the importance of not approaching the animals and contacting her office (682-5300) if a coyote is sighted. The representative also stressed the fact that coyotes are typically afraid of humans and that the attack in Travis Hill Park took place in an extremely heavily wooded area.

For more information we suggest that you refer to the article on the reverse of this letter; this article was originally published in the BackPack News in November of 2009.

Sincerely,



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Our New Edgemont Neighbors: Living with Coyotes

Coyotes – Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if a coyote approaches me?

The most successful method of frightening a coyote is to appear as large and threatening as possible. Maintain eye contact and use a loud, authoritative voice to frighten the animal. By making aggressive gestures toward the animal such as moving arms and legs, throwing rocks, sticks or other objects, the coyote will either flee or end the encounter.

What should I do if the coyote keeps approaching me?

Even if the above methods do not seem to work, continued to exaggerate them. Keep constant eye contact with the coyote while moving toward other people, buildings, or other areas of activity. Do not turn away or run.

Why are coyotes moving through my yard a lot?

Regular sightings of coyotes in your yard maybe a result of a nearby food source, either in your yard, a neighbor's yard or a home in your development. Talk to your neighbors about identifying and removing these items. Some things to look for are pet food stored or fed outside, accessible garbage bins and compost, and fruit from fallen trees. Total cooperation among neighbors and elimination of any food source is essential.

What can I do to make a coyote leave my yard?

If you see a coyote in your yard, it is important to make it aware that it is not welcome. Coyotes are frightened by aggressive gestures, loud noises and large forms. Waving sticks or brooms, clanging pots and pans, or throwing objects at the coyote will usually scare it off. Home-made deterrents such as the Can Clanger and Coyote Shaker are effective means of scaring coyotes.

The Coyote Shaker: a juice tin containing forty pennies wrapped in aluminum foil and sealed with duct tape.

The Can Clanger: A group of different sized tins and cans connected to each other by a string.

The combination of the light reflecting on the foil and tin, the noise made by the clanging of the tins and the aggressive gesture of shaking/throwing the tins provide deterrents which affects the coyotes visual, aural and motion senses simultaneously there by encouraging the animal to move on.

How do I keep my pets safe?

Keep cats indoors permanently. Cat-size or smaller dogs should be supervised at all times when outside. If your pet is off leash, make sure it is in a completely enclosed area. There have been reports of coyotes not only taking dogs from the vicinity of their owner, but directly off the leash. If you observe a coyote when walking your dog, gather your dog in your arms if possible, or keep it close to you while using some of the deterrents listed above, and continue to move toward an active area. Be sure that your dog, of any size, has immediate recall response. This will aid in eliminating potential contact or conflict with coyotes.

How can I prepare my child for an encounter with a coyote?

Although attacks on humans are extremely rare, there have been cases where coyotes have attacked young children. Small children should be supervised at all times. Keep your children informed about all of the dangers of living in an urban society. Children should be made aware of what deterrents to use if they come in contact with a coyote. It is important to keep the risk coyotes pose in proper perspective.

Aren't coyotes a nocturnal animal?

Generally, they are nocturnal and sometimes diurnal. When coyotes are in close association with man with no disturbances such as trapping or hunting, they are less timid and are frequently seen during the day.