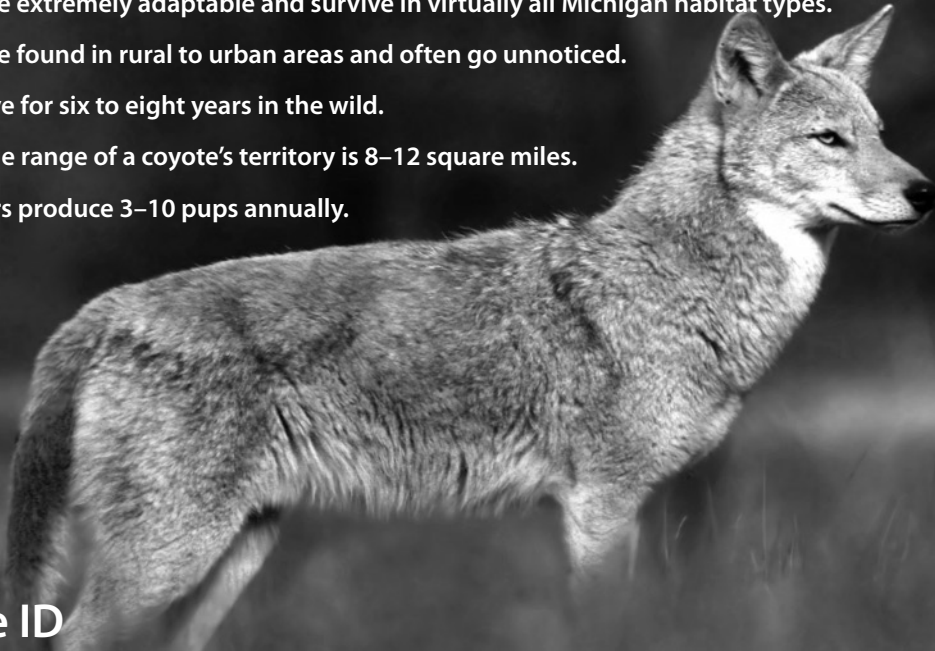


# Michigan Coyote Facts

*Coyote (Canis latrans)*

- Coyotes are a member of the dog family. Translation from Latin *Canis latrans* means barking dog.
- Coyotes are extremely adaptable and survive in virtually all Michigan habitat types.
- Coyotes are found in rural to urban areas and often go unnoticed.
- Coyotes live for six to eight years in the wild.
- The average range of a coyote's territory is 8-12 square miles.
- Mated pairs produce 3-10 pups annually.



## Coyote ID

Coyotes can be difficult to distinguish from a medium-sized German shepherd dog from a distance. There is a wide variation in the coyote's color, but generally their upper body is yellowish grey, and the fur covering the throat and belly is white to cream color. The coyote's ears are pointed and stand erect, unlike the ears of domestic dogs that often droop. When observed running, coyotes carry their bushy, black-tipped tail below the level of their back.

## Coyote Diet

Coyotes are carnivores (meat eaters), but are also opportunistic foragers. The majority of their diet is derived from small mammals such as mice, voles, shrews, rabbits, hares, and squirrels. They will also consume insects, berries, birds, frogs, snakes, plants and seeds. In urban areas coyote are attracted to garbage, garden vegetables, and pet foods. In areas with high deer numbers coyote may prey on young, injured, or sick deer.

## Viewing Coyotes in the Wild

Coyotes are most active at sunset and sunrise and during their breeding season, which in Michigan runs from late January to March. Motorists may sometimes see them crossing the road during daylight while stalking small mammals. Coyotes are typically timid and suspicious in the presence of humans.

## Do Coyotes Present a Threat to People?

Fewer than 1% of coyotes become nuisances to people. Coyotes rarely attack humans. Bites from snakes, rodents, and domestic dogs are a far greater possibility than coyote bites, according to public health authorities. It is in the best interest of both coyotes and humans if coyotes retain their instinctive fear of people. Coyotes that are fed become accustomed to people and present a human safety risk. People should never intentionally feed or attempt to tame coyotes.

## Keeping Coyotes Wild

The following important points can help keep coyotes wild, and minimize potential conflicts with park users and pets:

- Never approach or touch a coyote
- Observe coyotes from a distance
- Report aggressive, fearless, or sick coyotes immediately to available park staff, or contact Oakland County Animal Control 248.391.4102.
- Do not run from an aggressive coyote; if followed by a coyote, shout or throw something in its direction
- Never intentionally feed a coyote
- Eliminate all outside food sources; properly dispose of food waste in park trash receptacles.
- Observe the six-foot leash rule when outside of designated, fenced dog parks

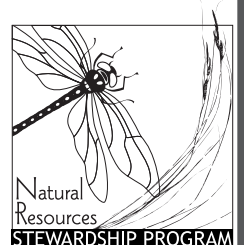
## Visitor Safety

Park management practices minimizing human-coyote conflicts:

- Provision of covered garbage receptacles.
- Provision of secure fencing in dog parks
- Enforcement of six-foot leash rules outside of designated dog park enclosures
- Use of wildlife cameras to detect and assess coyote presence & activity patterns

For questions contact: Natural Resources Planner: 248.858.1726 [birdb@oakgov.com](mailto:birdb@oakgov.com)  
Oakland County Animal Control: 248.391.4102

**DestinationOakland.com**



## For More Information on Coyotes:

- <http://www.michigan.gov/dnr>
- <http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu>
- <http://enature.com/fieldguides/>
- Michigan Mammals by Rollin H. Baker

**OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS**