

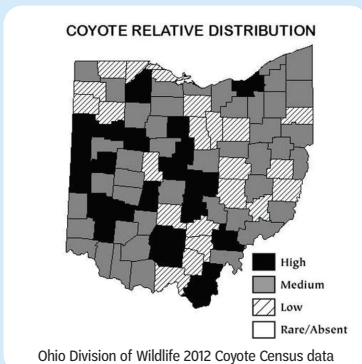


# Coyotes at Girl Scout Camp

## General Tips for Coyote Encounters from the Ohio Division of Wildlife:

- **DO NOT** feed or attempt to tame a coyote
- **DO NOT** turn your back on a coyote
- **DO NOT** run from a coyote
- **DO** be big and loud
- **DO** move slowly toward active or populated areas
- If necessary, throw small sticks or stones
- If its handy, use a bucket of water or a hose to scare a coyote away
- Keep yourself between small children or pets and a coyote
- Change your walking schedule (coyotes tend to use the same trails at the same time of day)

*As you would with all wildlife found at GSNEO camps, observe coyotes from a distance and enjoy this special wildlife moment if you happen to encounter one!*



Coyotes have been sighted at all three GSNEO Camps for the last 10 to 15 years. While a sighting is uncommon, these animals are certainly not rare. According to The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, there is no official estimate on how many coyotes Ohio has statewide, but they are found in all 88 counties and are so numerous and such a nuisance to livestock farmers that state officials encourage hunters and trappers to bag them without limit year-round.

Coyotes have shown a preference for making their homes in hilly farmland mixed with wooded areas, but have adapted to most every setting in the suburban and urban landscapes. The coyote is a nocturnal animal, mostly active from dusk to dawn. However, when it is less threatened by people, like at the GSNEO camps, it may hunt and move from place to place during the day. You may catch a glimpse of a coyote as they move from one part of their territory to another in search of prey. Coyotes are omnivores, which means they eat both meat and plants. The coyote diet consists mainly of small mammals including shrews, voles, rabbits and mice. The coyote will also eat fruits, vegetables and insects. Ample food can also be found in dumpsters or garbage cans in urban areas.

Observing a coyote (even during the daytime) does not mean that the coyote is sick or aggressive. If the coyote is scared away by your presence, they are exhibiting natural behavior, and this should not be cause for concern. Coyotes that live or pass through GSNEO camps do not usually travel and hunt in packs. A group of coyotes is usually a family, in which the young are not yet mature enough to survive alone. Coyotes are shy and cautious animals; they will avoid people whenever possible. The exception to this rule is when a coyote has been conditioned to come to people; perhaps people provided food for it when it was young, and it learned to approach a home. The only recorded coyote bites against humans have been by habituated (conditioned) coyotes. That is why it so important to never feed a coyote either purposefully or accidentally by leaving trash behind at your campsite or not disposing of it properly in a metal container.

## What Should I do if I see a Coyote?

Coyote attacks on people are very rare. More people are killed by errant golf balls and flying champagne corks each year than are bitten by coyotes. An encounter with a coyote at any GSNEO Camp is a rare event, even where coyotes are found in large numbers.

A coyote who does *not* run away when encountering humans has, most likely, become accustomed or habituated to people. This generally occurs when a coyote has been fed (in the form of handouts, pet food left outside, or unsecured garbage).

Coyotes who come too depend on these sources of food may begin to approach humans looking for a handout and may begin to exhibit what's perceived as "too tame" or aggressive behavior.

