



Delta Discovery

Connecting Classrooms to Nature at the
Nueces Delta Preserve

Spotlight on a Species

Fact sheets discussing species found on the Nueces Delta Preserve

Coyote



Fast Facts:

Scientific name:

Canis latrans

Common name: *Coyote*

Habitat: *Large variety of habitats including neighborhoods and large cities*

Fun fact: *Coyotes are very strong swimmers*

The coyote is a very well known mammal across most of North America. Once common only to open prairies and deserts, they have adapted to live in the mountains, forests, and cities. Coyotes are very similar in size to many domestic dogs, ranging from 20- 50 pounds- they are much smaller than the gray wolf.

Coyotes eat a highly varied diet and are omnivorous. They prefer rodents and small rabbits, but will also eat snakes, lizards, eggs, fruit, grass and carrion. Coyotes in a pack may even work together to hunt larger prey such as white-tailed deer, though this is much less common.

Although many people are afraid of coyotes they do not pose a large threat to humans. There have only been 2 fatal attacks in the United States and Canada in modern history. Both attacks happened in areas where coyotes were being fed by humans and feeding was occurring during the time of the attacks.

The best way to prevent coyotes from being near your house or yard is to ensure there is no food for them. This means clearing out piles of wood or trash where rodents can live, not leaving out cat or dog food for your animals, and bringing in pets when they are not being supervised.

Sources for Further Reading:

<http://www.audubonmagazine.org/articles/nature/ghost-dogs>

http://www.urbancoyoteresearch.com/Coyote_Attacks.htm