

## VILLAGE OF TARRYTOWN FACT SHEET ON COYOTES

There has been a considerable amount of reporting in the local press on coyotes in the City of Rye. However, coyotes are present throughout the Westchester County area and are not restricted to the Sound shore area of the County. Coyotes have been observed in the Rockefeller State Preserve in the Town of Mount Pleasant.

Coyotes are hunters and primarily feed on rodents, insects, and small animals, including rabbits, squirrels, and small deer. They are normally timid around humans but some coyotes in suburban areas have lost their fear of people, which can be dangerous. It is important if you come in contact with a coyote to act aggressively to maintain that natural fear.

### *WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:*

- If you encounter a coyote, be aggressive. Loud noises and forceful behavior will normally scare the animal away. Wave your arms and throw sticks or stones.
- Do not feed coyotes.
- Do not provide food sources that may attract them, such as outdoor pet food or bird seed. They may be attracted by the birds and rodents drawn to bird feeders.
- Make garbage inaccessible.
- Do not allow pets to run free. Coyotes can see cats or small dogs as prey. (Coyotes' average weight is 35 pounds; they will usually yield their territory to mid-sized or larger dogs.) Conflicts are most frequent in March and April, when coyotes are establishing their dens.
- Small children should be supervised by an adult while outdoors.

Coyote attacks on humans can happen, although they are rare (for example, in an average year in New York State, 650 people are hospitalized and one killed in dog attacks vs. a handful of coyote attacks nationwide.) The mere presence of coyotes in our community is part of the ecology of the area and not dangerous in itself; however, the animals' behavior should be monitored to ensure that they are not acting dangerously or aggressively or exhibiting a lack of fear.

Unusual coyote behavior should be reported to the Village of Tarrytown Police Department at (914) 631-5544 so sightings can be recorded and officers dispatched if necessary. Attacks or emergency situations should be reported via 911.

Additional information on coyotes can be found on the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's website, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/6971.html>