

The smiles tell it all at Ski Cape Smokey



These young skiers were all smiles at season's end for Ski Cape Smokey. Thanks to the volunteers and funding partners who collectively gave the hill a chance to operate this winter, the young and the young at heart were able to get outside and enjoy the facility which had been idle for far too long. Everyone hopes it can happen again next year and who knows, mother nature may just cooperate and may even blow in a buyer for the community based asset.

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SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE – NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Keep coyotes wild and out of your area

Safety tips for outdoor recreation and around the home

Coyotes are permanent residents in our province. Seeing or hearing coyotes from time to time anywhere in Nova Scotia is not unusual. They have become an important part of the ecosystem as a top-line predator. Nocturnal by nature, coyotes tend to be most active and vocal in the evening and throughout the night. Occasionally they are vocal during the day.

Coyotes are normally shy and fearful of people. When this behaviour changes and they lose that fear, there is cause for concern. A coyote's loss of fear of people, called habituation, is nearly always caused by direct or indirect feeding by people or by the frequent presence of non-threatening humans in coyote habitat.

You can take steps to reduce the attractiveness of your property to coyotes and reduce the likelihood of a coyote encounter. Work with your neighbours to follow these steps.

Trim trees and ground-level shrubs to reduce hiding places for coyotes and for the animals they prey upon. Store bird feeders indoors at night. Clean up spilled birdseed to avoid attracting

rodents, small mammals, and other coyote prey. If you have fruit trees or berries, pick the fruit as soon as it ripens. You may also want to put up fencing to keep coyotes out.

Install motion-sensitive lighting around your yard to discourage coyote visits. Manage compost piles carefully to avoid attracting coyotes. Store garbage in tightly closing, or locking containers, that cannot be opened or tipped over.

Keep your pets safe. Cats and dogs that run free are easy prey. They may actually encourage coyotes to range closer to your property. Safeguard cats, rabbits, and small dogs by keeping them indoors. Larger dogs can be contained by outdoor kennels that are at least six feet high and preferably inset in the ground or in concrete. Never feed pets outdoors and bring dogs indoors after dark. Always walk your dog on a leash.

Fear of a coyote encounter should not stop you from enjoying outdoor recreation in your neighbourhood. Choose walking areas that are open, are well-lit, and have lots of foot traffic. Walk with a friend, use a walking stick, and



Safeguard your house by reducing hiding places for coyotes and reducing food sources.

carry a noisemaker, such as an air horn or whistle. Never intentionally feed coyotes.

They will quickly lose their fear of people and become aggressive. Feeding coyotes on purpose puts

the entire neighbourhood at risk of unwanted coyote encounters or attacks.

Facts About the Eastern Coyote

BEHAVIOUR

Canis latrans (Latin for "barking dog").
 Nocturnal; most active and vocal at night.

Vocalizations include high-pitched yelps, barks and howls. Normally shy and fearful of people.

TERRITORY

Anywhere in Nova Scotia; year-round.
 Territory ranges from 24 to 48 sq. km (about 9 to 18 sq. mi.).
 Travel an average of 20 km/day (12.5 mi./day).

Run at an average of 40 km/hour (25 mi./hour).
 Capable of reaching 64 km/hour (40 mi./hour) or the speed of a greyhound.

APPEARANCE

Average size of 15 kg (34 pounds) or the size of a border collie.
 Males can reach more than 23 kg (more than 50 lbs).
 Tawny, grey, or black fur, with long black guard hairs.
 Thick fur coat makes them look large.
 Muzzle, throat, legs, and belly colour ranges from yellowish to white.

Dog-like tracks but narrower, with pointy toes.

DIET

Carnivores, but will eat anything available including:

- small mammals, rodents, and snowshoe hare
- carrion (decaying animal carcasses)
- berries and fallen tree fruit
- garbage and compost
- deer, fawns, sheep, and lambs
- feral and pet cats, and pet dogs

Usually hunt alone or in pairs, occasionally in small family groups.

Reducing the Risks

Follow these steps to reduce the risk of an encounter with a coyote.

Walk or hike with friends and always be aware of your surroundings. Use a walking stick and carry a noisemaker such as a bell, a whistle, an air horn, or a personal alarm.

Do not feed animals in the woods or along paths and trails. Never discard food wrappers or waste in the woods. Coyotes that have access to human food or garbage soon lose their fear of people.

Always walk your dog on a leash. If your dog is attacked, never get between your pet and the coyote as the coyote may turn its aggression toward you.

Never approach a coyote. If a coyote approaches you, don't run as this can trigger a predator-prey response, causing the coyote to chase you. Instead back away slowly, act big, and make noise to scare it away.

If a coyote attacks you, fight back, shout, and throw stones. Use whatever is available to defend yourself.

Report unusual daylight sightings or aggressive behaviour such as coyotes that approach pets or people, to your nearest Department of Natural Resources office or by calling 1 (800) 565-2224.

For more information visit www.gov.ns.ca/natr