

# ***HAZING: AN INTERVENTION TECHNIQUE***

Hazing is an activity or series of activities conducted to change behaviors of habituated coyotes and/or to re-instill a healthy fear of people in the local coyote population. Being highly intelligent animals, coyotes who are hazed quickly learn to avoid neighborhoods, people and pets. But simply seeing a coyote at a distance is no cause for alarm. **DO NOT haze** the coyote if it is a comfortable distance from you. Coyotes have adapted to residential and urban environments and may be seen during the day and at night moving to and from wooded habitats in search of food. A curious or bold coyote is not necessarily an aggressive coyote, but it is important to make sure that coyotes don't learn to get too close to humans or pets in our neighborhoods.

When hazed for the first time, a coyote may not respond at first or may only run a short distance away. If this happens, it is important to continue hazing (and intensify the hazing if possible) until the coyote leaves the area. Otherwise, the coyote will learn to wait until the person gives up. Inconsistent hazing will create an animal more resistant to hazing instead of reinforcing the notion that “people are scary” and that coyotes are not welcome in our residential areas. Consistency over time is the most effective means to establishing appropriate human/coyote interactions.

**If a coyote appears sick or injured, do not attempt to haze the coyote. Contact the Sanibel Police Department at (239) 472-3111 for immediate assistance. For a life-threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1.**

## **Basic Hazing (Be Coyote S.M.A.R.T)**

**Do Not Run. Be as “big and loud” as possible. Stand tall, wave your arms, and yell at the coyote.**

- **S:** **Stop.** Do not turn your back, run away, or retreat. Face towards the coyote.
- **M:** **Make yourself appear tall and large.** Raise or waive your arms above your head.
- **A:** **Announce yourself!** Shout and make loud noises such as clapping your hands, stomping your feet, or use a sound making device such as a whistle, airhorn, megaphone, soda can filled with pennies, or bang pots and pans. Throw projectiles such as sticks, small rocks, cans, tennis balls, or rubber balls in the direction of the coyote. Squirt water from a hose, water gun, or spray bottle (with vinegar water), pepper spray, or bear repellent.
- **R:** **Repeat** these steps until the coyote retreats.
- **T:** **Teach** your neighbors how to haze a coyote. Community-wide hazing programs are effective at deterring coyotes in your neighborhood. Report coyote activity to the Sanibel Police Department.

## **High-Intensity Hazing**

High-intensity hazing should only be carried out by trained professionals such as police officers and licensed animal control personnel. High-intensity hazing should be used in specific areas and only in response to more egregious incidents. Methods include approaching the animal quickly and aggressively, throwing projectiles, paint balls, pepper balls, sling shots, clay pellets or pepper spray at the coyote.

## **Additional Hazing Guidelines**

- Hazing is most effective when an individual coyote is consistently hazed by the community using a variety of tools and techniques. Using a variety of different hazing tools is critical because coyotes can become desensitized to the continued use of just one technique, sound, or action.

- Hazing efforts should be exaggerated at the beginning of a hazing program, but less effort will be needed as coyotes learn to avoid people and neighborhoods. Coyotes learn quickly, and their family members and pups will emulate their behavior, leading to a ripple effect throughout the local coyote population.
- Certain levels of hazing must always be maintained so that coyotes do not learn or return to unacceptable habits.
- The coyote being hazed must be able to recognize that the potential threat is coming from a person. Therefore, hiding behind a bush and throwing rocks or hazing from inside a car or house (for example) isn't effective.
- Make sure to provide an escape route for the coyote. Do not corner the coyote or chase the animal in the direction of traffic or other people. Do not haze a coyote when pups are present.
- Never run from or ignore a coyote that has approached too closely. Running from a coyote can initiate a chasing instinct, while ignoring a coyote creates habituation and negates the positive effects of hazing.
- It is important to identify and remove possible coyote attractants in conjunction with hazing. Hazing will be less effective if food attractants are plentiful in a neighborhood. See Page 11 for the "Coyote Yard Audit Checklist".

City of Sanibel Natural Resources & Police Department personnel are specially trained to assist residents with hazing technique training. If you or your group are interested in receiving this training, email [coyote@mysanibel.com](mailto:coyote@mysanibel.com) or call (239) 472-3700.