

Coyote problems increasing on Aurora's west side

By Brock Weir

Alyssa Perretta didn't expect to see anything unusual when she, accompanied by a friend, took her German Shepherd for a walk in the Henderson Drive area last week.

But their ordinary

Monday constitutional took an extraordinary turn when they stumbled across a cat's severed head lying in the grass ? evidence, she says, of an increasing number of coyotes roaming hungrily through the neighbourhood.

?Once

we got to the grass land, we noticed the most unnerving scene,? said Ms. Perretta, 22. ?We took a closer look and it seemed we stumbled onto a severed cat's head. This area is a very open and public space, not forest land. The cat's head was black with white fur down the middle of its head and towards the nose and mouth area.

?Then, upon scanning the area

further we found a cat's front paw. This paw looked to belong to the same cat as it had white fur and black paddings on the bottom of the paw. There were no signs of blood around the area, there was no smell to the body part, there was no sign of struggle or fur scattered around the scene. The head looked completely untouched. We also noticed a rabbit pelt and ripped off tail.

?We immediately contacted By Law

Animal Control because of the news that the OSPCA is no longer taking animal abuse cases. Our only choice was either call 911 or bylaw. Luckily, Bylaw came within 45 minutes of the call. The officer was lovely in personality and told us how incidents like this have been reported all over Town. Stories about how dogs have been taken by coyotes, even large breeds such as a golden retriever. Everything from wildlife to family pets have been found in bad conditions.

?The Bylaw officer stated he

truly thinks it is a coyote attack. Either way, it is a danger to the Town's pets and children. The community needs to understand what is at risk and what is dangerous.?

Last week, The Auroran shared a story about increased coyote presence on Aurora's east side, particularly in the 2C development area adjacent to the Town's future wildlife park.

Area residents have reported a rise of increasingly brazen daylight coyote incidences and urged people to stay alert and safe.

At the start of this month, the Town issued a notice about an increase in coyote sightings and interactions and

urged residents to ?exercise caution? and follow safety tips offered by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry:

Make
your environment less attractive for coyotes:

Never feed coyotes or
other wildlife

Pick up your garbage.
Garbage and litter attract wildlife.

Use motion sensor
lights around your property.

What
to do if you encounter a coyote:

Keep your distance
and the animal will most likely avoid you

Never approach or
touch a wild animal

Do not turn your back
or run

Back away while
remaining calm

Stand tall, wave your
hands and make lots of noise

Carry a flashlight at
night

If the coyote poses
an immediate threat or danger to public safety, call 911

Keeping
your dogs safe:

Keep dogs
inside at night

Always keep
your pets on a leash

Do not leave
your dog or pet food outside

Clean up after
your dog ? coyotes are attracted to dog waste

Spay and neuter your pet ? coyotes are attracted to
animals they can mate with