

Residents urged to report rise in coyote sightings

By Brock Weir

As winter turns into spring, Aurora has been seen a spike in coyote sightings.

According to the Town of Aurora, Town Hall has recently received a number of calls from residents about coyote sightings in the Aurora area, promoting the Town to remind residents on tips to protect property and pets from 'unusual wildlife behaviour.' 'Coyotes are usually wary of people and avoid contact whenever possible. It is unusual for coyotes to show no fear of humans,' says the Town. 'Coyotes displaying no fear of humans or exhibiting aggressive behaviours have likely been habituated to people through direct or indirect feeding. The Ministry of Natural Resources asks residents who have observed situations where coyotes are exhibiting no fear toward people or are aggressively approaching people or pets to report any incidents to their Aurora District Office at 905-713-7400. Residents may leave a message at that line or use the auto attendant to speak directly with staff during regular business hours.'

If you encounter a coyote, the Ministry reminds residents to keep their distance and the animal will most likely avoid you. If you encounter an aggressive animal, never approach or touch the wild animal, turn your back or run from it. Back away while remaining calm and standing tall. Wave your hands and make a lot of noise. Carry a flashlight at night and, if a wild animal poses an immediate threat or danger to public safety, call 911.

Tips to make your property unwelcome to coyotes include the use of flashing lights, motion sensors and noise makers, putting up a two-metre high fence that extends 20 centimetres below ground, as well as a roller system on top of the fence so animals can't gain a foothold.

Clean up after and keep your dogs in at night. Coyotes are attracted to dog feces. They are also attracted to, and can mate with domestic dogs that have not been spayed or neutered, so have your pets treated accordingly.