

Marauding Coyotes Stir Controversy

BY LEE AUSTIN

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Periodically, coyotes, the traditional enemy of farmers and ranchers, become a problem for Glendale and Valley residents.

Two years ago, mounting complaints about coyotes in the La Puente Hills, spurred Industry's city officials into a live trapping and relocation project. Last summer Sierra Madre city officials received numerous calls about coyotes killing cats and dumping garbage cans.

And last fall, Glendale city officials got a flurry of complaints from the Chevy Chase area residents.

This spring, the coyote controversy centers in Bradbury and adjoining parts of Monrovia and Duarte where the animals have been seen singly and in groups on the streets and yards, even in the daytime.

Coyotes live wild in Glendale's uninhabited areas of the San Rafael Hills, Verdugo Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains, but "we feel there isn't a heavy concentration of them," says Nelson Van Wormer, general manager of the Glendale

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Residents Argue Threat of Marauding Coyotes

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Humane Society.

"We receive periodic complaints as small pets are occasionally taken by coyotes for food from the backyards of hillside residences," he said.

"There are coyotes in the Chevy Chase and Scholl Canyons of the San Rafaels, particularly the latter where the landfill program is operating.

"A recent tracking survey throughout the higher undeveloped areas of the Verdugos indicated no overpopulation of coyotes there. We found one interesting canyon above Verdugo Park and near Alcade Drive where there was a concentration of the animals.

Unusual Spot

"It seemed unusual for them to be in a canyon where there was little other animal life to feed on. Observing with binoculars, we found that someone had been leaving soup bones out for them.

"We applied pressure to the pack, caving in their holes and scaring them off by our presence. We never discovered who was putting out the soup bones, but once news spread around the neighborhood, whoever did quit doing it.

"The coyotes left the canyon."

Van Wormer said hillside residents with small pets should not let them run at large in the hills "because coyotes catch them easier than rabbits."

"A problem in the Glendale area," he said, "is that we are fencing wildlife by the new freeways. Freeways are difficult to cross if they want to migrate from one range of hills to another after dark as occurs occasionally."

Don't Like Each Other

Van Wormer said coyotes generally do not like each other and rarely are there more than three or four together.

"They don't like humans and stay clear of us which is why they roam at night," he said. "Whenever we find a heavy concentration of coyotes, we apply pressure by caving in their holes and scaring them. It usually spreads them out which is the ideal situation."