



Information on Wildlife in Acworth

One of the many benefits of living in the City of Acworth is the access to over 10,000 acres of undisturbed U. S. Army Corps of Engineer property surrounding Lake Allatoona and Lake Acworth and access to an additional 800 acres of city park space. These natural areas offset the impact of development in the city and provide residents natural recreation opportunities not offered in other parts of the Metro Atlanta area. With the abundance of natural resources around us, comes the occasional human interaction with wildlife.

It is common to see deer, rabbits, raccoons, opossums, squirrels, and snakes in Acworth. While it is not as common to spot other wildlife such as bears, coyotes, and foxes in a heavily populated area like Cobb County, it is not unnatural either. Higher number of sightings of these animals can create increased concerns for residents. Over the years, the city has received both unconfirmed and confirmed reports for each of these various forms of wildlife.

Specific to Coyotes, they look very similar to domesticated dogs. They have pointy ears and snouts, long and thin legs, splotchy fur, and a bushy tail. Coyotes can adapt to pretty much any environment as long as there is an adequate food supply. Coyotes prey on small animals such as small dogs, cats, rodents, and also find food supplies in trash. According to the Georgia Department of Natural Resource's wildlife fact sheet Coyotes are timid and shy by nature and tend to avoid human interaction and do not pose a threat to us.

There are several preventative measures that one can take to protect themselves, their family and their pets from wildlife they may feel poses a threat to their safety:

- It is extremely important that anyone who spots an animal that raises concern does not approach, feed, or attempt to harm the animal.
- Immediately report any animal that appears aggressive, disoriented, or is foaming at the mouth to Cobb County Animal Control at 770-499-4136.
- Keep your yard clean, free of trash, keep grass well maintained, and keep garbage in a container that cannot be easily accessed by the animal.
- Clean up around birdfeeders. The seed may attract small rodents that other animals may prey upon.
- Do not leave small pets unattended during the day or evening in a fenced area or allow any pet of any size to roam free of a leash per Cobb County Ordinance. Small pets may serve as a food source and larger pets may pose a threat to the animal.
- Keep compost in enclosed bins, versus open piles.

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Specific to Coyotes:

- Bring pets inside overnight; this is the prime hunting time for them.
- If you must keep your pet outside, fencing 6ft. tall and above is recommended or shorter fencing with a top that is not smooth may deter the coyote. Gaps should not be left at the bottom of fencing.
- Small livestock and poultry should be kept in an enclosed or sheltered area.

Our biggest challenge as residents is to become educated on the wildlife that surrounds us and to understand the things we can do to minimize any risk of interaction with it. Generally, the city and other local authorities are very limited in their ability to remove an animal from its natural habitat unless it becomes aggressive or demonstrates signs of disease. For more information on wildlife in the state of Georgia contact the Georgia Department of Natural Resources at www.gadnr.org or call 770-918-6400. Cobb County Animal Control can be contacted at 770-499-4136. As always, in an emergency situation dial 911 immediately. The Acworth Parks and Recreation Department can be reached at 770-917-1234.