



Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

Order: Carnivora **Family:** Canidae

SIZE: Weight, 17-35 lbs.; length, 40-52 inches. Height at shoulder 23-26 inches.

DESCRIPTION: Grizzled gray or reddish-gray with buff belly and chest. Bushy tail with black tip. Long legs ending in 4 well-padded toes with nonretractible claws for running. Excellent binocular vision and sense of hearing.

LOCOMOTION: Can run 25-30 mph and up to 40 mph for short distances. The coyote is the best runner among the canids. Able to leap 14 ft. Strong swimmers and will enter water chasing after prey.

COMMUNICATION: Researchers have identified eleven different vocalizations. Messages are encoded with the modulation and combination of whines, growls, yips, barks, and howls. The dominant coyote initiates the group yip-howling which is primarily a territory advertisement, whereas howling is used in group reunions.

HABITS: Extremely diverse, found in desert, plains, mountains and tropics. Are very adaptable to changing conditions and food sources and this allows them to exploit many habitats. May hunt individually, in pairs, or in groups. In areas where prey is larger and/or in areas of harsh seasonal changes, coyotes are most likely to form and endure packs during the winter. In the spring, pack structure loosens as more small prey becomes available and as individuals or mated pairs go off on their own.

DIET: Coyotes eat a varied diet that may include rabbits, rodents, deer, elk, birds, lizards, fish, insects and carrion. They also eat plant material, including grasses and fruits. Analyses of coyote predation on large mammals generally indicates that most of the individuals taken are immature, aged or sick.

RANGE: Found in every state except Hawaii, south and west Canada, and Central America.

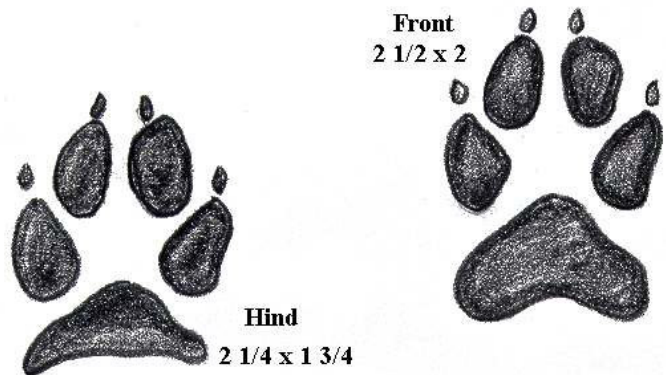
FAMILY LIFE: Several males may court a female during mating season, but she will eventually select one for a lasting relationship, often for life. The pair then live, hunt and raise their young together. Births usually occur in April or May after a gestation period of 60-65 days. Litter size ranges from 5-10 pups. Within three weeks after birth, they are eating meat that has been regurgitated by both parents. Coyotes mature sexually during their first year and many leave their family soon after that.

NESTING: Typically a concealed, underground den with a 5-20 ft. tunnel leading to multiple chambers, including an enlarged nesting chamber. The female may dig her own den, or enlarge a vacant fox or badger burrow. Also, a cave or log may be used as a den.

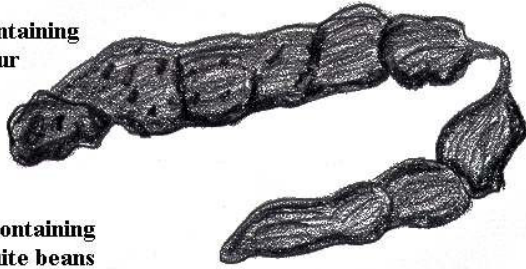
DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- Man is the major enemy of the coyote.
- A coyote lives approximately 12 years in the wild and eats up to 25 rodents a day, which amounts to 109,500 rodents in its lifetime.
- The coyote has the ability to adjust its reproductive output dramatically from season to season, depending on the population size.

Track



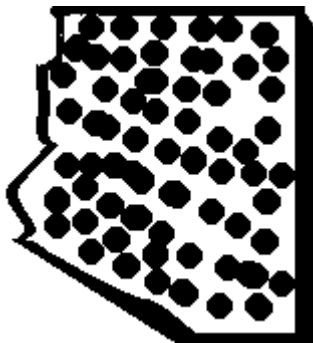
Scat containing
rabbit fur



Scat containing
mesquite beans



Scat



Range

Found in every state except Hawaii.

Also found in west Canada
and Central America.