

House Bill 863

Coyotes were originally found west of the Mississippi, they are now found from Central America to the Arctic and in all states except Hawaii. Coyotes are one of the most adaptable animals in the United States. They can live in practically any habitat, including deserts, the northern tundra, prairie grassland and forests. They have also adapted to live in suburbs and cities such as Ocean City and Hagerstown. They are opportunistic hunters who prey on wildlife, livestock, family pets, pet food and garbage. Most sightings of coyotes occur sunrise to sunset but they are mainly active during the night. Most weigh around 30-40 pounds, though they can reach more than 60 pounds. When people first see coyotes, they believe they are seeing someone's pet dog because of their size and coat colors. Coyotes have a high reproductive rate and there can be as many as 6 pups to a litter. Coyote pups grow quickly and can be independent by 9 months of age. Because of the growing population, conflicts between coyotes and people are becoming more common. As coyotes have adapted to urban areas they have become more brazen and target family pets that are in yards and even outside with owners. During regular hunting seasons, hunters normally harvest coyotes when they see them, however this only accounts for a small percentage of the coyote population. Hunting competitions encourage the management of coyote populations throughout the state of Maryland.

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