

Science Time

Program Content for February 15, 2017

Read the article 'History on their side, coyotes settle happily into country - and city - life' on page A1 of the Saturday, February 11, 2017 edition of The Seattle Times.

Objective

- I can detail the ecological role coyotes have in the United States.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) connection

Disciplinary Core Idea - Ecosystem Dynamics, Functioning, and Resilience

- A complex set of interactions within an ecosystem can keep its numbers and types of organisms relatively constant over long periods of time under stable conditions. If a modest biological or physical disturbance to an ecosystem occurs, it may return to its more or less original status (i.e., the ecosystem is resilient), as opposed to becoming a very different ecosystem. Extreme fluctuations in conditions or the size of any population, however, can challenge the functioning of ecosystems in terms of resources and habitat availability.

Pre-reading and Vocabulary: Define each term and then use it in a sentence to demonstrate your understanding.

1. coexist
2. range
3. evolutionary tree
4. feral

Comprehension Questions

1. What does the scientific name of coyotes, *canis latrans*, mean?
2. How does the historic range of coyotes compare to their present day range?
3. Why does the author consider coyotes to be the "ultimate survivors"?
4. What is the typical weight of coyotes?
5. What 2 animals are most closely related evolutionarily to coyotes?
6. For how long have coyotes been in America?
7. How did coyotes respond to human impacts during the 19th century?
8. Why do coyotes typically "yawn" when they see a human?
9. What is the best way for humans to avoid contact with coyotes?
10. What happens to coyotes that have lost their fear of humans or become aggressive in neighborhoods?

Prompts and Extensions

1. Read the companion article, 'Coyotes resilient in face of eradication efforts' on page A5 of the Saturday, February 11, 2017 Seattle Times to the one you just completed to learn more about how the coyote population is being managed across the U.S.
2. [Listen](#) to a pack of coyotes howling. (Note: Be sure to turn your volume down).
3. View the West Seattle [Blog](#) mentioned in the article you read that keeps track of coyotes sightings.
4. View the [evolutionary tree](#) (see page 4) of coyotes and others animals in the dog family
5. Read the transcript of an [interview](#) with Dan Flores, the author of "Coyote America"
6. Learn more about urban coyotes and the work of the [Urban Coyote Research](#) project in Chicago.

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