

Coyotes (*Canis latrans*) in Florida: the Good, the Bad, & the Ugly



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Coyote range expansion: eradication of wolves



Red wolf; photo curtsey of B. McPhee



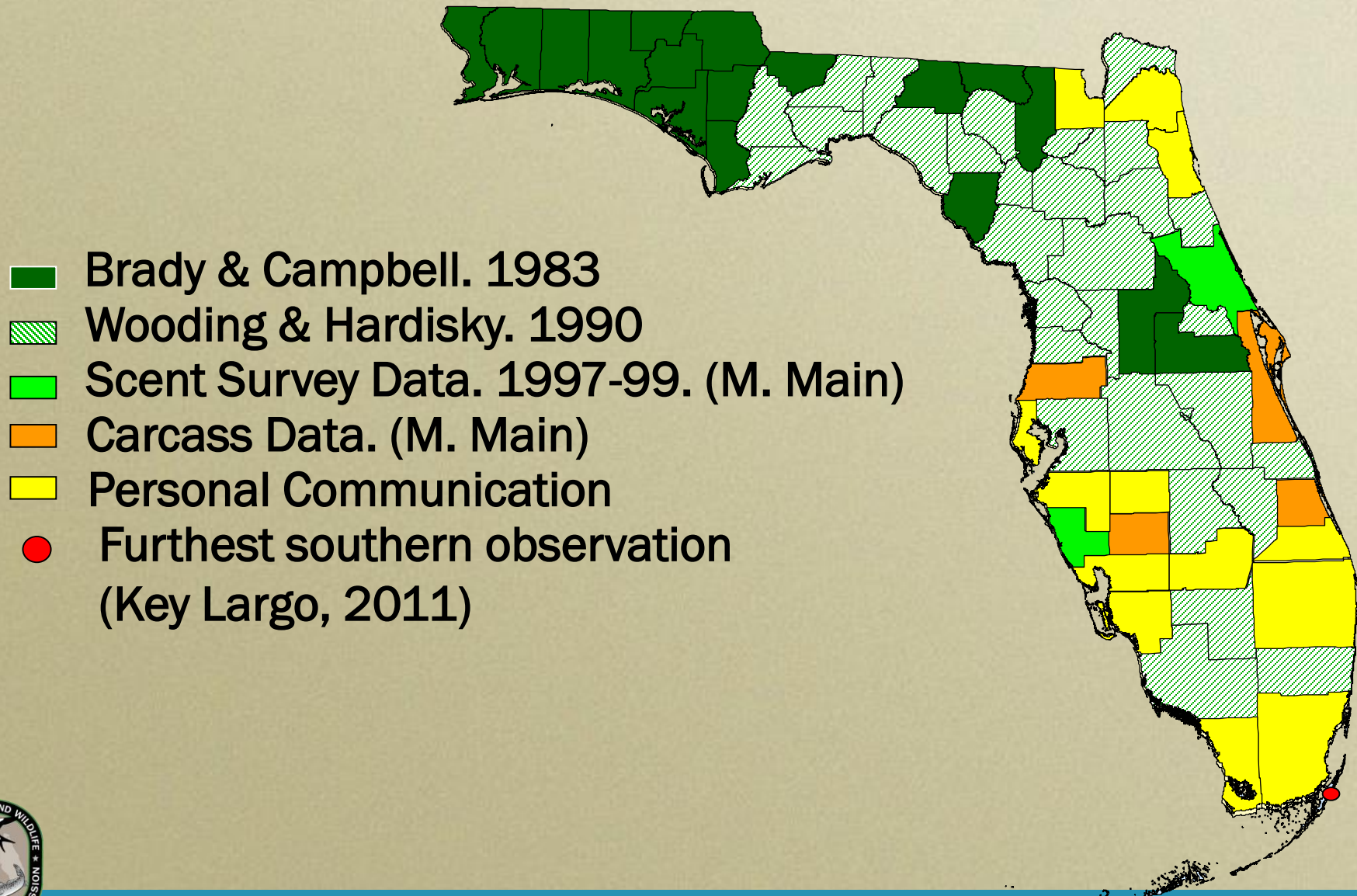
Gray wolf; photo curtsey of USFWS



Coyote range expansion- conversion to an agricultural landscape



History of the spread of coyotes in Florida



Coyote biology

- Omnivorous, highly adaptable
- Adults 25-40 lbs.
- Home range size: natural areas ~15 mi², urban areas ~3 mi²
- Mate in Winter
- Pups in Spring
- Litter size ~6 pups
- Both parents care for young

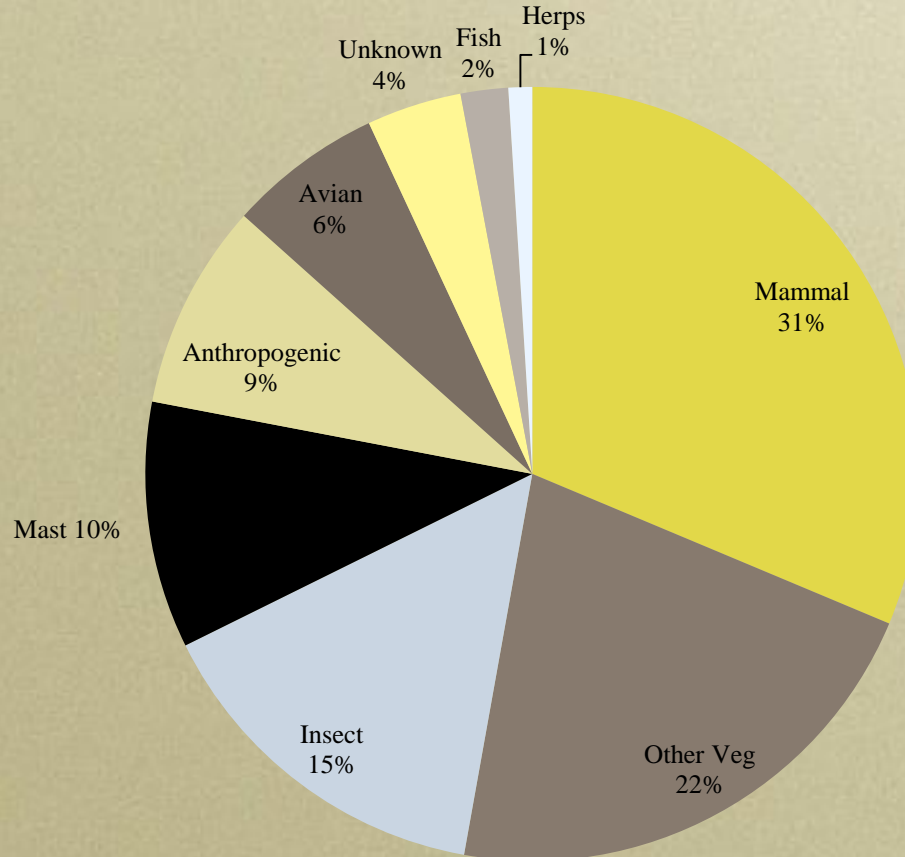


FWC trail camera photo- Big Cypress



Coyote diet study

- FWC stomach content preliminary results



Preliminary Findings
Frequency of Occurrence of Contents in Coyote Stomachs



Coyote diet study



Obvious dog food found in the stomach of coyote 1024 trapped in NAS Pensacola on 10/12/2011 (USDA)



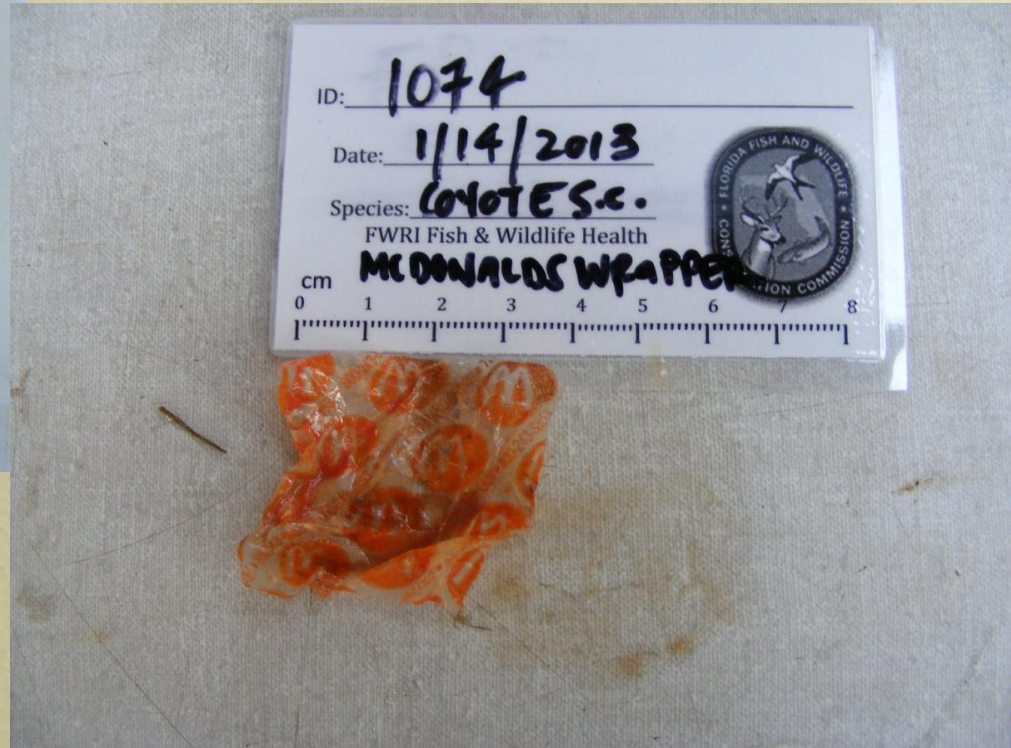
Cooked chicken found in coyote 1081 hit by car in Pinellas county, unknown date



Coyote diet study



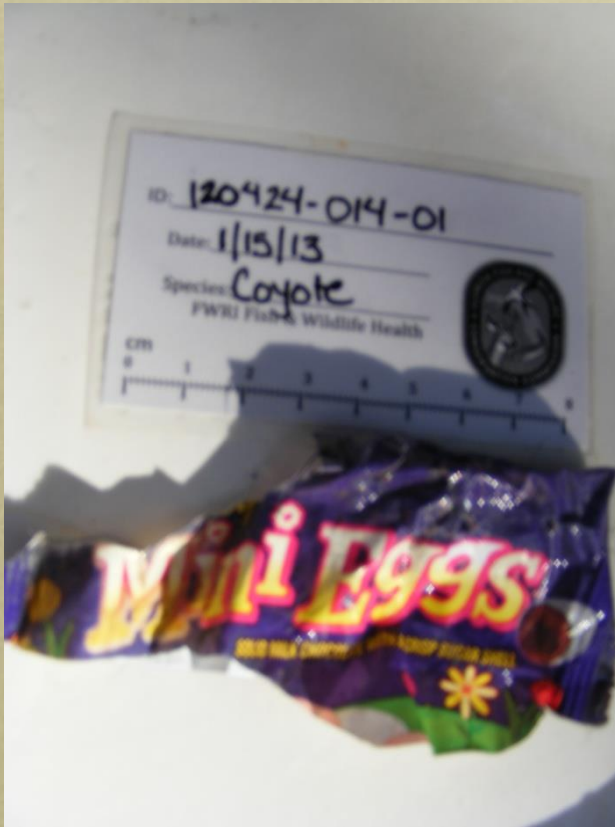
Stomach of coyote 1069 shot in Polk county on 9/18/2012 (D. Andrews, FWC) stained likely by American pokeweed



McDonald's butter wrapper found in stomach of coyote 1074 (H. Jones, FWC) hit by car in Ocala National Forest 11/18/2012



Coyote diet study



Candy wrapper found in coyote 1051, trapped in St Joseph Peninsula State Park (USDA) on 4/15/2012



A total of 47 small mammals were found in the stomach of coyote 1012, shot in Morriston on 2/7/2012



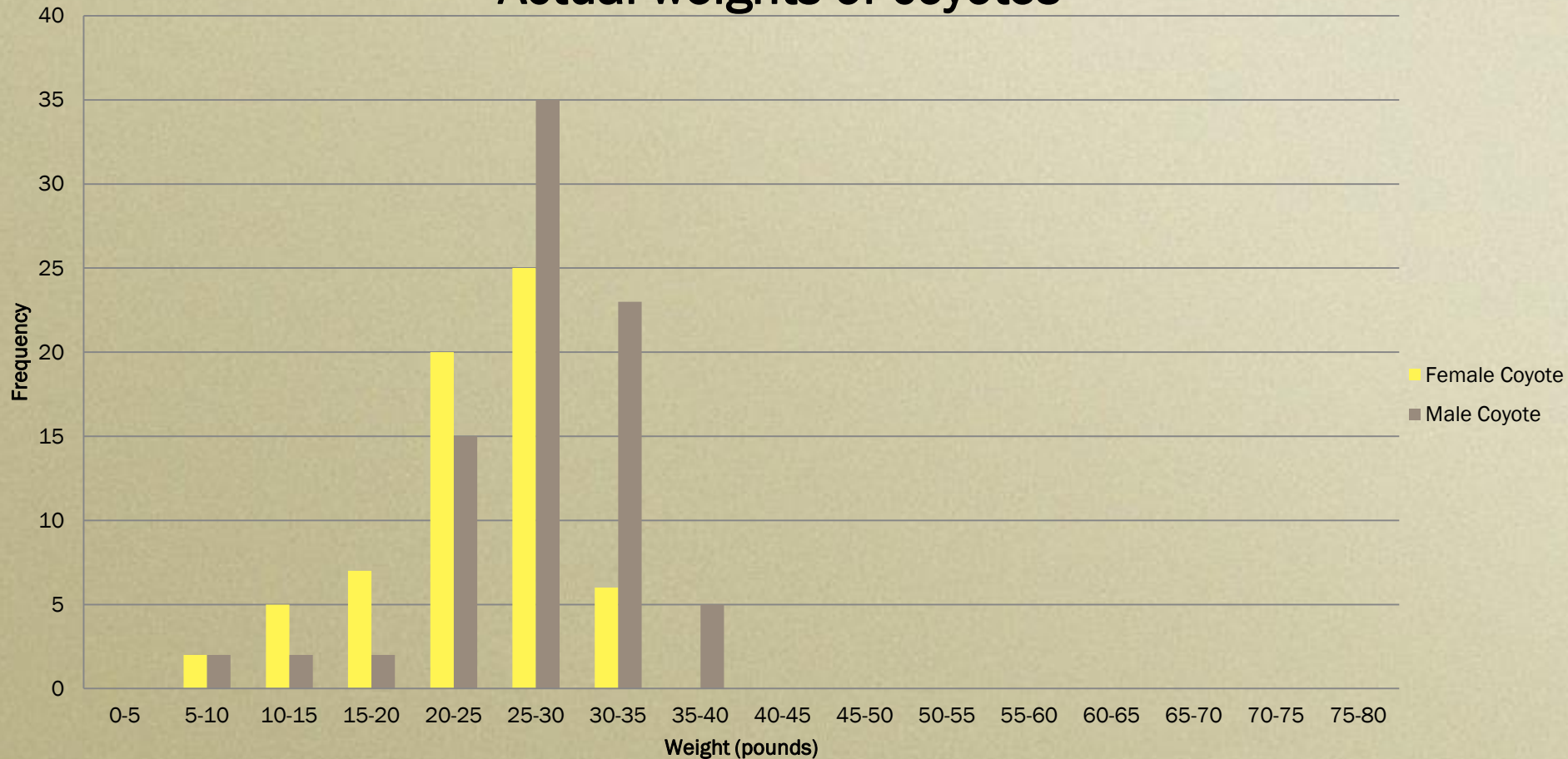
Coyote diet study



Substantial amounts of insects found in the stomach of coyote 1052, trapped at NAS Pensacola on 4/16/2012 (USDA)



Actual weights of coyotes



FWC diet study-149 coyote carcasses
collected statewide from 2011-2013



Coyotes in Florida: the Good?



Aesthetic values of wildlife



Control of smaller predators



Effects of coyotes as predators



Coyotes in Florida: the Bad?



FWC trail camera photo- Miami

Competition with native predators?

Florida panther (*Puma concolor coryi*)



FWC trail camera photo



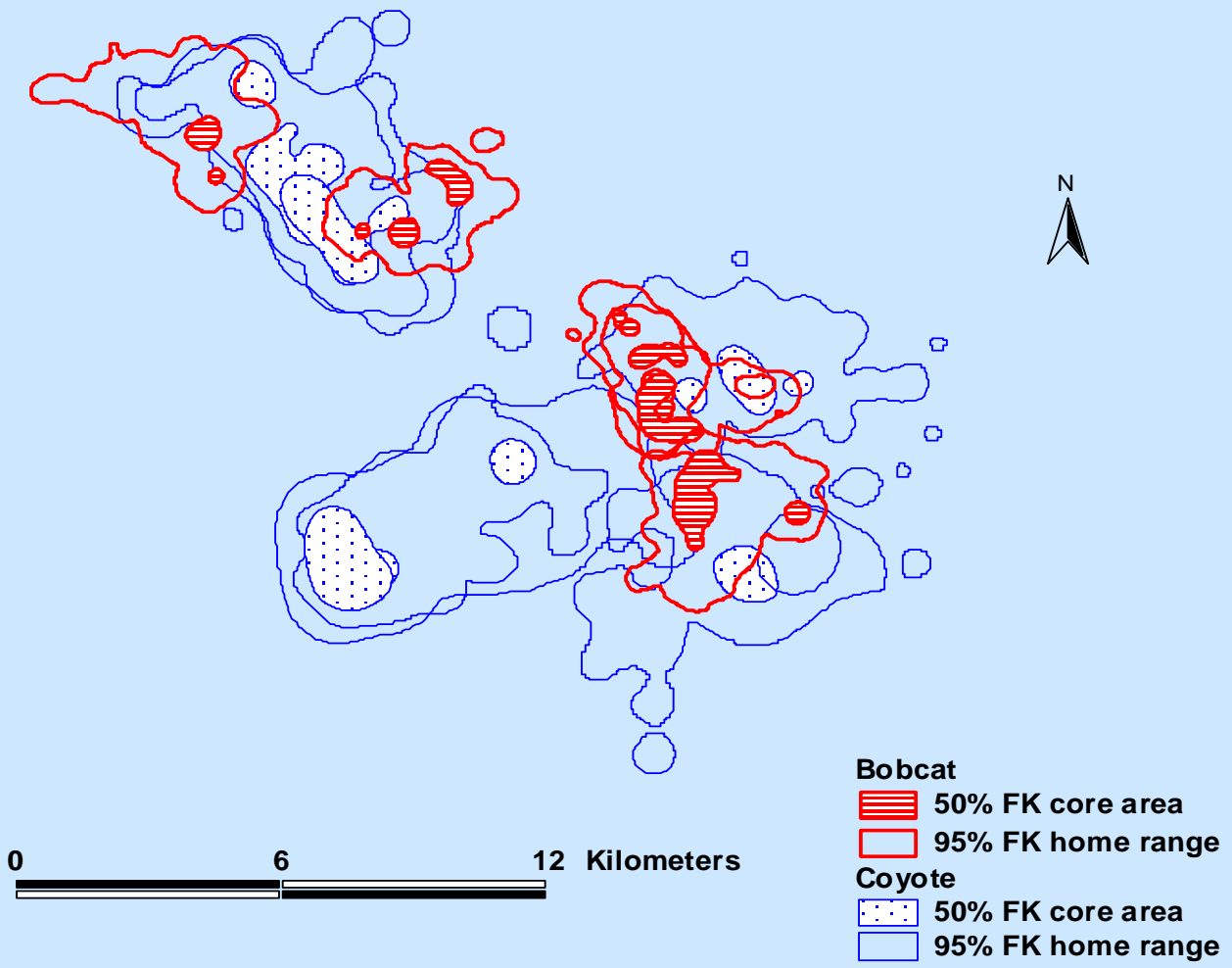
Competition with native predators?

Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)



FWC trail camera photo- Riverview





Coyote predation upon rare & endangered species



Coyotes in Florida: the Ugly?

...human conflicts



Photo courtesy of Beverley Batts- Panama City



Coyotes in Florida: the Ugly?

Coyotes have an undeserved public reputation

Common myths and misconceptions:

- Size
- Packs
- Coy-dogs/ Coy-wolves
- Disease
- Hollywood
 - Wiley coyote



Coyote depredation of livestock



Urban coyotes and pet loss



Photo courtesy of Dan Muccie- Estero



Dog attacks vs. coyote attacks

- Coyotes (USA and Canada during 1960-2006):
 - 3.5 attacks/yr.
 - 2 fatalities/46 yrs.
- Domestic dogs (USA):
 - 1,000 emergency room visits/day
 - 5 million cases/yr. require medical treatment
 - 176 fatalities during 2010-2014



www.dogsbite.org



Can we get rid of coyotes?

NO

- Eradication efforts
- Breeding dynamics
- Territorial with high replacement
 - Adaptable and intelligent
 - Here to stay



Trapping Options and Definitions

- Live/Cage Trap – Any box style trap where the animal is completely contained within the trap (Have-A-Heart)
- Snare – A trapping device consisting of a noose designed to capture wildlife.
- Steel trap – Any mechanical device (other than a snare, household mouse traps or devices commonly used to take household and lawn nuisance rodents) designed and used to capture wildlife by seizing and holding a part of the body.



Prevent problems with coyotes-

Secure Attractants

- NEVER feed coyotes!
 - Anything that can attract a dog, cat or raccoon can attract a coyote
- Secure garbage
- Clean up pet food, fallen fruit & bird feeders
- Keep cats indoors
- Keep dogs on leashes & supervised outdoors (especially small dogs)



Prevent problems with coyotes-

Hazing

- Human Dominance
- Rocks & sticks
- Whistles
- Pots & Pans
- Car & air horns
- “Coyote shaker”
- Motion sprinklers
- Water pistols
- Motion lights
- Firecrackers
- Bear spray



Coyotes in Florida: some facts

- Adult coyotes weigh 25-40 pounds
- Coyotes occur in every state and nearly every large city in the U.S.
- Attacks by coyotes on humans are exceedingly rare
- Coyotes will kill cats and small dogs
- Coyotes can carry rabies, but it is rare



FWC trail camera photo- Riverview



Coyotes in Florida: some advice

- Never feed coyotes or any wild animal
 - It is illegal to feed coyotes in Florida!
- Prevent access to garbage and pet food
- Keep cats indoors, have small dogs on a short leash or in a well fenced yard
- Follow hazing recommendations to consistently frighten coyotes away
- If a coyote approaches, lift small pets and children off the ground and be prepared to defend yourself (never run)



Photo courtesy of Reinier Munguia- Lakeland



Coyotes in Florida: who should you contact when there is a problem?

- FWC SW Regional Office (863) 648-3200
- Nuisance Wildlife Trapper
<http://myfwc.com/trappers/>



Good?

Bad?

Ugly?

**...or just
trying
to make
it in a
tough
world?**

