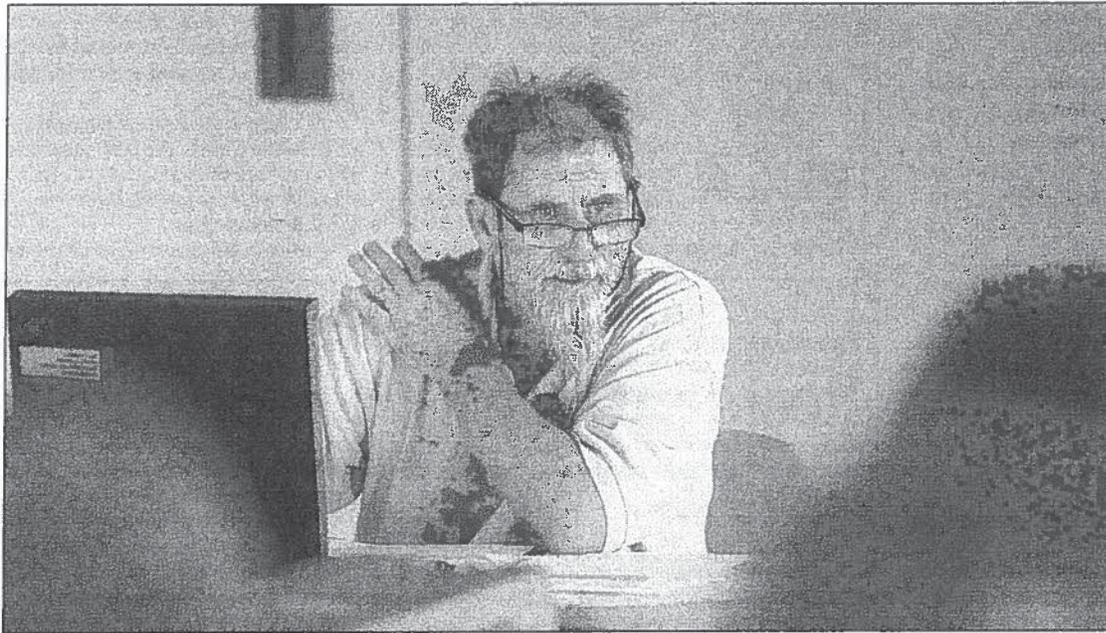


**A CLOSER LOOK**



**DuPage County Forest Preserve Naturalist Jack MacRae host a forum on the growth of coyotes in the region.**  
TERENCE GUIDER-SHAW-FOR SUN-TIMES MEDIA

# Experts share tips about keeping coyotes at bay

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Contributor

**NAPERVILLE** — Coyote sightings are up in the region, and residents want to know what to do about it.

A number of residents showed up at a special community forum last week headlined by naturalist Jack MacRae of the DuPage County Forest Preserve District.

MacRae responded to reasons why coyote-related calls were this summer easily eclipses totals from either 2010 and 2011 for the entire year.

"As I've said before, I think awareness has increased throughout the area and we've had these animals living with us for years," MacRae said. "The facts are that suburban and urban areas provide more resources for these animals than rural places, so we're more liable to see them as conditions get harsh."

Dry weather and heat have impacted the animals' need for food and water, MacRae said, a fact confirmed by MacRae's colleague, Steph-

## TIPS ON COYOTES

Here are some tips for dealing with coyotes:

**Do not encourage coyotes by feeding them**

**Keep pet food and water dishes inside**

**Keep barbecue grills clean**

**Do not keep garbage cans outside, if possible**

**Clear away bushes and**

**dense weeds that coyotes might use to seek cover**

**If you see a coyote, make loud noises to scare them off. Do not be submissive, turn your back or run**

**Never leave dogs or cats unattended in a yard and always keep them inside at night**

**Keep yard well illuminated**

nie Touzalin, who works with MacRae at the Willowbrook Wildlife Center.

"With this drought, the coyotes are looking for resources and with the breeding season, either before or after it, the animals are forced to spread themselves further looking for the resources they need," Touzalin said. "People seeing them should not avoid the situation as these animals quickly learn if something frightens them or not. People need to be aggressive towards them to discourage their being around."

MacRae said increased media coverage of coyote sightings has likewise increased the number of reports to local officials.

"Whenever the amount of media coverage goes up, so does the awareness, which is a good thing in that it can be beneficial for those who don't know," he said. "My hunch is that the number of coyotes hasn't increased that much, given the normal cycle of animals that rise and fall."

MacRae's presentation included a history of coyotes in the Chicago area, followed by tracking data on animals

tagged with radio collars along with tips on what to do if residents encounter a coyote.

Some area residents generally expressed a desire to know more about the animals as well as how to deal with them. Pam and Wayne Szczspornik of Naperville said they have spotted a coyote at least half a dozen times already this year.

"My dog, who is a big lab, must have smelled him as we were walking by the Naper Library," Pam said. "His tail went between his legs and his ears went down and he didn't want to move. We want to learn about the coyote's behavior and find out if it is a threat."

Andy Arrigo of Geneva said he was interested in questions provided by the audience.

"There's no question in my mind there are more of them in the Chicago area than there used to be," Arrigo said. "My wife and I don't have pets or concerns of that nature, but we are interested in getting information."