

Encountering coyotes and other wildlife on JBLM

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A coyote pup stops to drink some water from a bowl left in the backyard of a home on Joint Base Lewis-McChord July 15. *(Photo Credit: Lauren Finnegan, JBLM Garrison Public Affairs)*
VIEW ORIGINAL [<https://www.army.mil/e2/c/images/2019/07/23/559820/original.jpg>]

JOINT BASE LEWIS MCCHORD, Wash. -- Joint Base Lewis-McChord is home to many native species including coyotes, raccoons and black bears. As Washington's human population expands into their traditional habitats, these creatures may cause problems and can be dangerous to both humans and domesticated animals.

The top three reasons for conflict between humans and wildlife are; trash, birdseed and pet food. Below are some tips to help minimize hazardous situations.

Never leave pets or small children unattended where coyotes are frequently seen or heard. If there are coyote sightings in your area, prepare your children for a possible encounter by explaining the reasons why coyotes live there. These include; habitat, food sources and species adaptability.

If a coyote does approach, don't run and be as big, mean and loud as possible. Teach children to shout "go away coyote" when encountering one to inform nearby adults of the coyote's presence.

Family housing residents are encouraged to avoid leaving food -- including dirty barbecue grills, trash cans, pet food and bird feeders -- outdoors overnight to discourage bears, raccoons, coyotes and other wildlife from entering housing areas. Always be sure to feed dogs and cats indoors.

Never pet wildlife. A wild animal can inflict serious wounds or cause rabies, and it's best to admire from afar.

Coyotes are curious but timid animals and will generally run away if challenged. Sightings of coyotes are most frequent right after sunset and before sunrise. However, never instigate a close encounter. Remember that any wild animal will protect itself or it's young.

Please report any wild animal that does not exhibit normal avoidance behavior to your Lewis-McChord Communities Housing office. They'll be able to reach out to the correct authority.

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