

Know Before You Go



Coyotes are a natural part of our county’s ecosystem. These members of the dog family are very adaptable and rapid development has led to increased encounters throughout McHenry County. Coyotes are usually most active from dusk to the early morning hours but may be seen at any time of day.

What should you do if a coyote approaches you? Coyotes are typically frightened off by aggressive gestures, such as moving towards the animal while waving your arms and shouting in a loud, deep voice. Throw stones or sticks in the coyote’s direction. If you are walking with a pet, pick it up or shorten the leash so that it remains close to you. If the coyote refuses to leave the vicinity, maintain eye contact and move away from the area. Do not turn away or run.

The best solution is prevention. Do your part to coexist with the site’s wildlife. Never feed or offer food to a coyote. Stay on marked trails and keep your dog securely leashed and with you at all times.

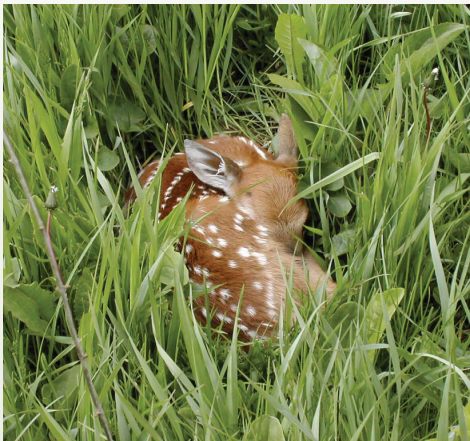
Report any incidents of aggressive coyote behavior to the McHenry County Conservation District Police at (815) 338-6223.

For more information contact the Wildlife Resource Center (815) 728-8307.



Mosquitoes are prevalent in the summer, especially around areas where there is water. Some mosquitoes can carry and

transmit West Nile Virus, which can be harmful to humans. Protect yourself by wearing insect repellent on all exposed skin and wear long sleeved shirts and pants when possible.



Fawns
If you find a fawn lying in the grass — LEAVE IT ALONE!!! Mother deer hide their babies to protect them from predators. MOM WILL RETURN. Enjoy the sight, but please don’t disturb the fawn.



Western Fox Snake or Rattlesnake?
A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY
The Western Fox Snake is a common non-venomous snake that lives in McHenry County. It is often mistaken for a rattlesnake because of its coloration and markings. This snake also imitates a rattlesnake by shaking its non-rattled tail, causing a buzzing sound as it hits against the grass and leaves. Fox snakes can get quite large (up to 6 feet) but will not attack pets or people. Leave it alone and it will leave you alone!



Poison ivy is a tri-leaved plant that can cause an allergic skin reaction or rash in some people. The best way to be safe is to know what poison ivy looks like, stay in the center of trails and wear long-sleeved shirts and pants. The old saying is true: “Leaves of three, let it be.”



Wild parsnip can cause skin irritation or burns on people who are sensitive to the plant. Be careful not to touch the leaves or sap, especially in the presence of sunlight. Take care to wear gloves, long sleeves and long pants when in contact with this plant.

Feeding wildlife is not allowed on District property. Removal or introduction of any plant or animal on a District site is also prohibited.



Bees and Yellow Jacket Wasps are attracted to sweet and brightly colored things. If you are picnicking, cover your sweet drinks. If you encounter a bee or wasp, slowly move away and do not make any aggressive movements (example: swatting).



Ticks live in wooded and tall vegetated areas, and can be carriers of Lyme and other diseases. Avoid ticks by walking in the center of trails, using insect repellent, and wearing long sleeved shirts and pants. Always check yourself, your children, and your pets for ticks after being outdoors.