

A photograph of four coyote pups in a natural, rocky environment. One pup is sitting on the left, looking towards the camera. Another pup is lying down in the center, partially obscured. A third pup is lying on the right, looking away. A fourth pup is in the foreground on the right, looking towards the camera. The ground is covered with small rocks and some sparse green vegetation. The text "Coyotes" is overlaid in the center, and "Song dogs" is overlaid below it.

# Coyotes

Song dogs

# Coyote families


Coyotes live in family groups, with an alpha male and female, other related individuals and sometimes non-related members. They are highly social communicating through vocalizations, body language, and scent marking. During denning season, they are protective of their pups and territory, and can be increasingly aggressive towards perceived threats



# Coyote life cycle

Coyotes breed in late winter, with a gestation period of about two months, giving birth to an average of 5-7 pups in a den. The pups are born blind and helpless. They open their eyes after about two weeks. They are weaned by six to eight weeks. Both parents care for the pups. The young become independent by fall.

**Keeping It Wild**  
**Curious About Coyotes**

project coyote 

In this lesson, students will learn that all living beings experience the life cycle stages of birth, growth, reproduction, and death. Survival depends on an animals' ability to meet their basic needs, and interactions with other beings are often important to help meet those needs.

**Grade levels:** 3-5

**Subject areas:** Science

**Time frame:** Three 60-minute lessons that can be divided into shorter lessons.

**Focus topics:** Animal life cycles, animal interactions, developing empathy for apex predators, and taking action to coexist peacefully with carnivores.

**Background:**  
Living beings share the same life cycle stages of birth, growth, reproduction, and death. These stages can look very different among birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, insects, and amphibians. For a species to survive, its individuals must reproduce. Interaction with other beings is often also essential for survival (e.g., helping each other find food and shelter, and sharing responsibility for caring for the young).

**Essential Questions:**

- What are the different stages of an animal's life cycle?
- How do animals change as they go through their life cycle stages?
- How are plants and animals interdependent?

**Enduring Understandings:**  
We can observe patterns in our natural world, including the life cycle patterns that all living beings experience. Living things have characteristics and behaviors that allow them to survive.




Photo by Sarah Klingsworth

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# Coyote behavior across the calendar

## January-March (Breeding Season):

- Coyotes are most active during the breeding season--peak mating activity in February.
- They form strong pair bonds and establish territories.
- Females prepare dens for giving birth.

## April-June (Pups are Born):

- Gestation lasts about 60 days--pups born in April--May.
- Both parents raise the pups and increase daytime hunting to feed the young.
- Pups emerge from the den after a few weeks and begin playing outside.
- Pup mortality can be high during the first year.

## July-September (Pup Rearing):

- Coyotes are very active as they continue to raise their young.
- Both parents continue to hunt and bring food back.
- Daytime activity may increase, in cooler periods or times of low human activity.

## October-December (Dispersal):

- Young coyotes disperse from family groups to establish their own territories.
- You see more coyote activity as coyotes search for new areas.
- Coyotes may move about the edges of settled areas.
- They prepare for winter, growing thicker fur.



# Coyote presentation for AAMN August 12, 2025 Karin and Roberto Saucedo

## SEASONAL MILESTONES

### COURTSHIP Nov - Dec

Lots of coyotes moving around. Coyotes born in April can look like mature adult coyotes in Nov. Increased sightings and vocalizations.

### MATING SEASON Jan - Mar

Hormones are raging, super focused. Mated pairs are inseparable and searching for safe den sites. Increased sightings and vocalizations.

### PUPS ARE BORN March - May

Mom stays in den nursing for 3 wks. Family works to bring mom food. Teenage coyotes can get into trouble during this time without supervision.

### DISPERSAL Sep - Jan

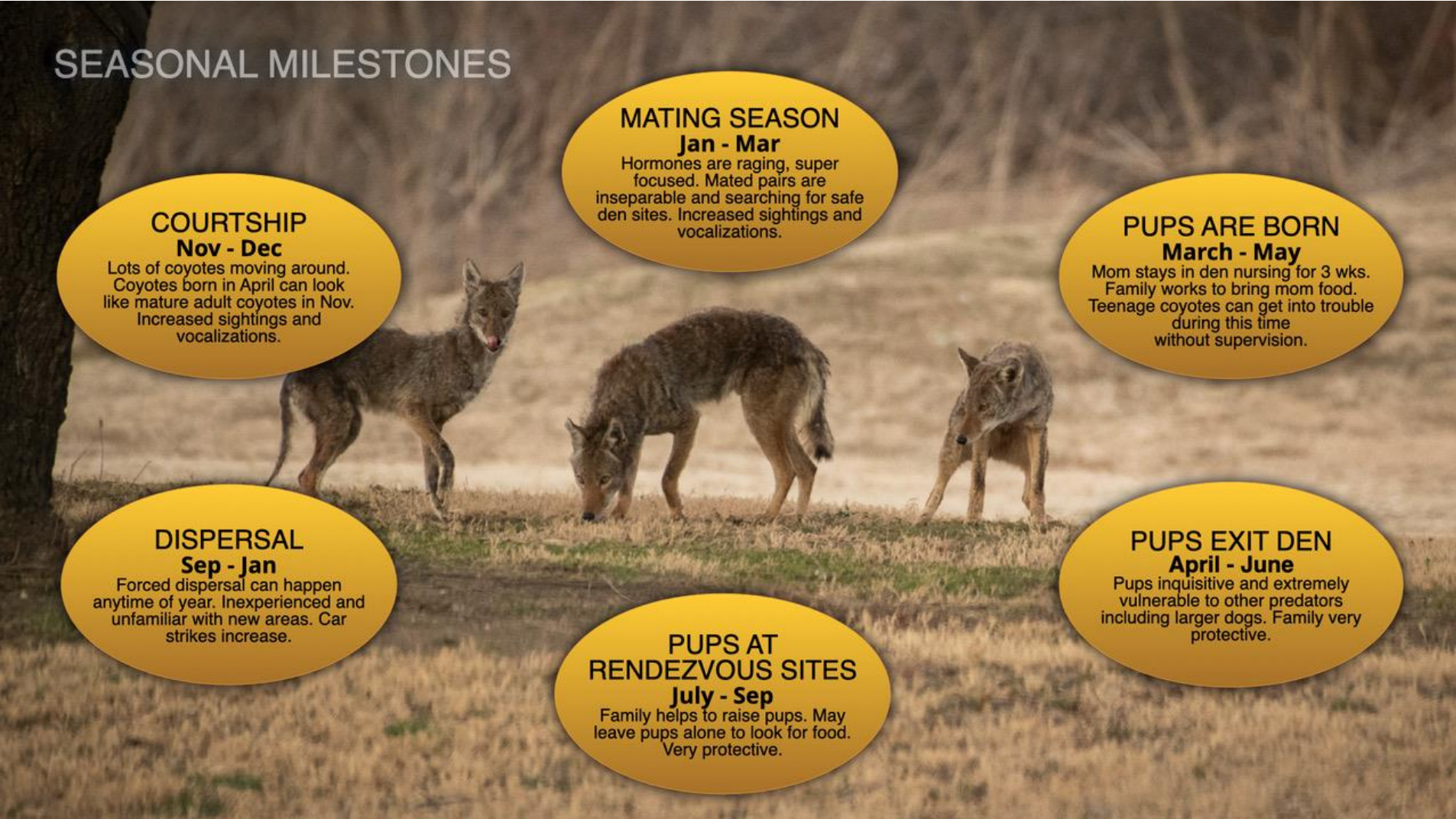
Forced dispersal can happen anytime of year. Inexperienced and unfamiliar with new areas. Car strikes increase.

### PUPS AT RENDEZVOUS SITES July - Sep

Family helps to raise pups. May leave pups alone to look for food. Very protective.

### PUPS EXIT DEN April - June

Pups inquisitive and extremely vulnerable to other predators including larger dogs. Family very protective.



# Coyote myths and facts

## Myths:

- Coyotes are inherently dangerous in urban area.
- Coyotes only live in rural areas.
- Coyotes are always a threat to pets.
- Coyotes are always nocturnal.
- Coyotes are only interested in human food.

## Facts:

- Coyotes are adaptable.
- Habituation leads to conflict.
- Conflicts are preventable.
- Coyotes have an important role in the ecosystem.
- Making yourself look big and threatening can encourage a coyote to retreat.

Yes, generally coyotes are shy and reclusive animals, generally crepuscular. They adapt to all environments and try to avoid humans and confrontation. Their instinct is to maintain distance and go unnoticed.





# Coyote role in the ecosystem

Coyotes help regulate populations of smaller predators and rodents and contribute to biodiversity and ecological balance. They are a keystone species, significantly impacting the surrounding community. Their role in controlling disease vectors like rodents is beneficial.

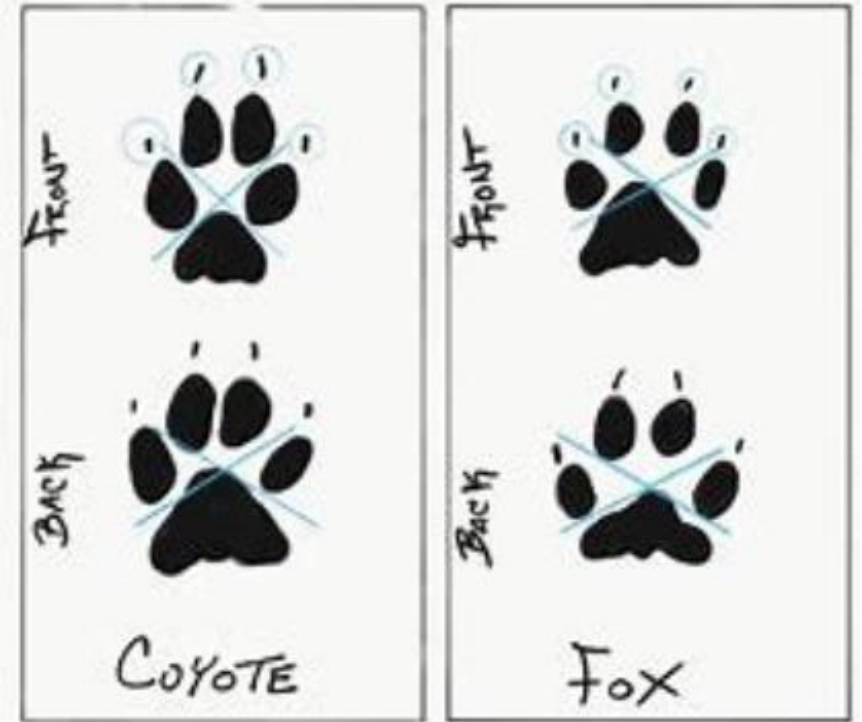


# Canines to *Clementine*

We are canines predatory, and  
we're hunting for our prey, (hand  
at forehead)

Claws non-retracting, and  
nocturnal, (2 fists)

Coyotes sometimes out in day.  
(pointing to sun)





# Coyote coexistence

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Coyote coexistence:

- Reduce food sources
- Remove attractants
- Make travel through residential neighborhoods difficult
- Keep pets inside, in fenced yards, or leashed
- Intentional hazing



Can you design a coyote coexistence poster, or a poster of what coyotes' favorite urban foods are?



This book  
explains  
coyote life.

# FACTS ABOUT THE COYOTE

A PICTURE BOOK FOR KIDS



Lisa Strattin