

Jennifer Rosado
Bryant Pond
LD 814

Coyote hunting needs to have a season like bear, deer and other large mammals. Hunting coyotes during their puppy rearing season is inhumane. Not only are adult coyotes being killed but many times this also causes the death of the puppies as well. Also, this constant hunting puts a great deal of stress on the animal. Coyotes, as a top predator in our Maine ecosystems, provide a very important service - keeping prey numbers down and preventing overgrazing. Without this important predator, smaller prey species such as snowshoe hare and other animals would struggle to find enough food to eat because of deer populations.

There is an excess number of deer in Maine and these animals, although beautiful are becoming a pest to landowners, farmers and fruit orchards. Coyotes keep our deer herds healthy and strong, eliminating sick or injured animals, and help keep the deer population in check. Plus, scientific evidence indicates that year long hunting of coyotes causes young adolescent pups to disperse early and these animals will likely become problem animals because they did not receive the necessary hunting skills/training from their parent coyotes to hunt their normal prey, such as snowshoe hare and deer. Instead these animals must choose easier prey such as small pets and livestock or eat garbage. Also, when coyote families are kept together, young coyotes tend to stay with their parents as a family group causing less dispersal. This keeps good coyotes in their territory which discourages problem coyotes to move into the area. There is an abundant amount of evidence supporting a limited coyote hunting season. For hundreds of years humans have persecuted coyotes, killing them by the hundreds of thousands and yet their numbers continue to increase. Perhaps it is time to listen to the ecologists and scientists on this issue. Killing coyotes only causes more problems. In this discussion/hearing you may hear individuals talk about the dangers coyotes pose to small pets, livestock and children. As with any wild animal, such as black bears, education on how to live with these animals is important. Simple precautions can prevent negative encounters with coyotes and other wildlife protecting livestock and pets. As far as a danger to children or adults, coyotes pose very little threat to people. The probability of a person being attacked by a coyote is very low. In fact, you are 500,000 more likely to be bitten by a dog than a coyote. In recorded history, only two people have been killed by coyotes. As far as coyote attacks on humans, there are approximately 10 attacks that occur annually in the United States. You are more likely to be killed or attacked a dog or even a human than bitten by a coyote. Please listen to the ecologists and scientists and limit the coyote hunting season to allow these amazing animals to raise their puppies in peace. Let's all learn to treat these animals humanely. Thank you.