



Published January 6th, 2021

## Coyote crime wave subsides over the holidays

By Nick Marnell

After three high-profile attacks on humans by a renegade coyote this year, reported coyote sightings diminished over the holiday season. One local resident caught sight of a coyote Jan. 3 running in downtown Lafayette, but no further attacks were reported.

A bloodthirsty coyote was determined through DNA evidence to have bitten three individuals in Lamorinda since July, with two of the victims reporting various wounds, but none considered extremely serious. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife continues to search for the coyote, and the animal will be killed when captured.

Capt. Patrick Foy of the department's law enforcement division offered tips if you encounter an aggressive coyote.

"No. 1, if you have small children or small pets, pick them up. Shout as loudly as you can, and stomp at the animal if it continues to approach. If it does bite, hit it as hard as you can with whatever you can find nearby," Foy said.

CDFW says that coyotes are by nature fearful of humans, but if the animals have access to human food or garbage, they lose their caution and fear.

"Wild animals don't need your handouts. They need your respect," reads a banner atop a page on the department website.

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