



Raccoons are intelligent and highly adaptable mammals. Raccoons are usually attracted to your fish pond and the delicious fish within. Maintain a higher water level (at least 3 feet deep) and stack large rocks or ceramic pipes at the bottom of your pond to give the fish a place to hide.

Raccoons are bolder than most other wild animals. Instead of running, they may stay and watch you, to see what you do next.

FOXES are much smaller than coyotes and can be distinguished by their defined reddish-brown fur on their face and legs with gray fur on their back. In the City, cat food is a favorite food source; otherwise, they do a great job of keeping mice and rat populations down.

Keep areas under your house and deck secure so foxes cannot make a home under your home. Do not leave food sources out after dark or during the early morning.

BATS While many people are afraid of bats, they truly are beneficial to the environment. They eat a tremendous amount of bugs each night. For the most part, bats go about their job virtually unnoticed. However, injured or dead bats should not be handled and Animal Control should be called to pick up the bat and have it tested for rabies.

RATS and mice thrive in La Mesa and because of the abundance of lush vegetation, are able to make their home almost anywhere. Keep all pet foods and bird seed in containers with tight fitting lids. Keep vegetation and palm fronds trimmed. Close all holes into your home as small as ½ inch. Steel wool stuffed into small holes works as a good rodent deterrent.



BEES Bee swarms are most often seen during the warm days of spring. A bee swarm is the natural process of a hive out growing its existing hive. There can only be one queen per hive, so the new queen and many young worker bees take as much honey as possible and leave to find a new hive. Although swarms of bees should be avoided, in this state they are not as likely to sting. Many people are allergic to bee stings or have a heightened awareness due to the publicity of the Africanized honey bees. The Africanized bees are much more aggressive. So to be safe, stay away from bee swarms. Once the new queen has settled on an object, the entire swarm will land on that object and may begin to build the new hive that will receive the honey. At this point a bee keeper can safely remove the swarm and transfer them to an appropriate hive. For bee removal call the Dept. of Agriculture or a pest control company.

Agencies who may be of assistance with wildlife

La Mesa Animal Control 619-667-7536

Department of Agriculture
Coyotes 858-694-2518
Bees 800-200-2337

San Diego County Vector Control
Rats and Mice 858-694-2888
Dead Birds 877-968-2473

Injured Wildlife

La Mesa Animal Control 619-667-1400

Project Wildlife 619-225-9453



Urban Wildlife

Co-existing in harmony with the wildlife around us



La Mesa Animal Control

La Mesa Animal Control

At the La Mesa Police Dept
8085 University Ave
La Mesa, CA 91942
www.cityoflamesa.com

Tel: 619 667 7536

Living with Wildlife

The City of La Mesa is home to a variety of native California wildlife. While some people might think that wildlife is only found in the forests or deserts of San Diego, many wild animals are quite comfortable in our own backyards. The wildlife we encounter in urban settings is usually very adaptable animals that have learned to survive living in close proximity to humans.

There are many types of wildlife that live all around us. Most are nocturnal or timid so we usually do not see or notice them. Problems with wildlife can occur when they become too dependent upon us and look to us as a provider of food.

It is actually illegal to provide food to wildlife. La Mesa Municipal Code section 8.04.290 states,

“No person shall intentionally feed or place food out for any wild animal including but not limited to opossums, skunks, raccoons, foxes and coyotes.”

If you feed your dog or cat outside we encourage you to pick up the food at dusk so wild animals are not attracted to it. Some other ways to keep wildlife from making their home around your home are:

- Close all openings under your home, deck and out buildings.
- Make sure all trash is placed in proper receptacles with a lid.
- Keep your yard free of old lumber or piles of debris
- Keep ripe fruit picked from the tree and raked up off the ground.



SKUNKS

Skunks are one of the most misunderstood wild animals. People don't realize that the skunk is a very docile animal whose severe near-sightedness often gets them in trouble. Their odor is famous and strikes fear in everyone who encounters them.

Small “ice cream scoop” shaped holes in your yard are caused by skunks digging for grubs. Skunks have strong front claws for digging. These claws make climbing difficult, if not impossible, for skunks so they will enter your yard from under a gate or fence.

Ammonia is a good deterrent for skunks. Soak a rag in it and place the rag in the area the skunks like to frequent. To protect your fence line, apply half inch hardware cloth (wire) to the bottom of your fence. Bend it mid-way so a twelve inch wide piece is bent in a 90 degree angle. Dig a trench a few inches deep, bury six inches of the hardware cloth a couple inches under the surface; secure the other six inch portion to your fence.

WILD BIRDS

Many types of wild birds can be found in the City of La Mesa, from birds of prey to crows and ducks. You will also find many pigeons, which are technically an introduced species, being originally from Africa and Asia. In the City of La Mesa it is against the law to set out food for wild pigeons.

A concern we have with wild birds is the possibility of West Nile Virus. San Diego Vector Control monitors the spread of West Nile Virus each year. To assist them in tracking the spread of the disease, they ask that all dead birds be reported to their toll free number, 1-877-968-2473 or visit their website at www.westnile.ca.gov



Opossums

Originally native to the eastern United States, the Virginia Opossum was intentionally introduced into the West during the Great Depression, probably as a source of food. Opossums are the only North American marsupial. They carry their young in a pouch or on their back. Opossums adapt very well to the urban setting existing on snails, rats, wild birds, fruit, garbage, and cat food. They live under decks, houses and areas of dense foliage. Opossums use all four paws and their tail to climb. They will climb in trees and over fences.

To keep opossum populations at natural levels, eliminate all food sources and keep your yard free of fallen fruit. Close all entries under decks and houses. Ammonia is a good opossum deterrent. If you discover an opossum has made a home under one of your buildings, wait until just before sunset, then place or toss an ammonia soaked rag under the building they are living under. The ammonia will send them looking for a new home when the sun goes down.

COYOTES

Coyotes have always been part of California's and the City of La Mesa's wildlife population. In recent years and with the development of Eastridge hill, the population has spread further within the City. In the urban environment, the diet for coyotes consists of rats, birds, fruit, garbage, pet food, and cats and small dogs. It is these latter two that cause the most concern for residents. During the spring and summer, while rearing their pups, coyotes have immense appetites and hunt for a good part of the night and early morning. It is essential to eliminate food and shelter sources as a means to control the population. Keep your small pets indoors, especially at night or in the early morning. Keep your yard and shrubbery well trimmed. Additionally, any time a coyote is sighted the animal should be scared off in an attempt to condition them to avoid humans. Never feed or attempt to tame a coyote.

