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## Police: Beware Of Coyotes

### Dog Killed, Two Mauled, Apparently By Roaming Animals

By DAVID OWENS  
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SOUTH WINDSOR -- Police are warning citizens, especially pet owners, to be wary of coyotes and other predatory wildlife in town.

Two dogs were mauled, and one was killed, by coyotes, police said. A bichon frise was attacked in the area of Cliffwood Drive about 11 p.m. Thanksgiving night. A veterinarian examining the dog after the attack attributed the wounds to a coyote. The attack occurred in a fenced-in yard.

A Maltese was killed Dec. 10 on Stedman Circle, police said. The dog was allowed to go into the backyard and was there a brief time, police said. When the dog did not return after about 90 seconds, its owner went outside and saw two coyotes over it.

Robin Bond, a community service officer with the police department who is also the town's animal control officer, said people should not panic, but they should be vigilant about protecting their pets.

"If you value your pet, you need to use common sense and supervise your pet," Bond said Wednesday.

Cats have always been potential coyote victims, but smaller dogs are at risk, too, Bond said.

And the coyote population is growing as more open space is preserved in town.

Bond said she contacted state Department of Environmental Protection Wildlife Biologist Chris Vann, who she said told her the attacks are probably not occurring because the coyotes are hungry, but because they are protecting territory.

DEP urges people not to let cats roam, especially at night; keep dogs leashed and keep an eye on them while they're outside, and be cautious when walking dogs. Coyotes can be territorial and may aggressively approach people who are walking dogs, especially in the spring and summer when they are with their young. If people encounter a coyote, they should remain calm, Bond said.

"It's important not to run," Bond said. "They have to stand and should make noise and make themselves [appear] big - act aggressive and act brave and calmly walk to a safe spot and call police."

People are also urged not to feed coyotes. Any coyote acting aggressively toward people or pets should be reported immediately to police, officials said. The police department's phone number is 860-644-2551.

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