

# IT'S ALL CONNECTED

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## Time To Usher In The Symbiocene

Warner Bros had it right to name their character "Wile E. Coyote." Coyotes are intelligent and adaptable, but are also maligned and misunderstood creatures. Just the name conjures all kinds of misconceptions based on unfounded fears. It is worth taking a brief moment to

better understand the [importance coyotes have in all ecosystems](#), even urban and suburban environments.

Coyotes are considered a keystone species, an apex predator, and their presence is important to maintain a healthy ecosystem. They prey on smaller predators (skunks, racoons, foxes) as well as small herbivores like gophers, squirrels, hares, etc. Many of which are considered unwanted pests. In urban areas, coyotes and birds of prey **provide us a free service curbing rodent populations** which could easily overwhelm if these predators weren't present. In a 2022 Nature's Archive [podcast](#), Dr. Peter Alagona shared detailed insights about coyotes and other animals using our urban environments.

The adaptability of coyotes is impressive when you consider that they inhabit all parts of North America in all types of biomes. Coyotes historically ranged in the prairies and deserts of North America. Their [distribution expanded immensely](#) as European settlers moved in and extirpated other large carnivores, such as wolves and grizzly bears.

Sometimes we forget that we humans are part of nature, not exempt from it. The idea of the **symbiocene**, put forth by philosopher Glenn A. Albrecht, is to reinforce the need for humankind to rekindle their connection to the natural world...something native peoples hold dear.

Since [coyotes are here to stay](#), we need to learn how to co-exist. Knowledge is power and knowing that coyotes pose little threat is important. A coyote encounter in nature should need no response unless the animal approaches you. If that happens, haze the animal by yelling, waving arms around, and clap your hands, until it retreats. Within our urban neighborhoods, don't hurt the animals, but make sure they [stay wild](#) and do not become accustomed to foraging in our backyards.



As humans continue expanding into wildlife habitat, our interactions with wild animals will inevitably increase. [Listen here](#) regarding ways the city of Reno, Nevada helps citizens navigate issues of living with wildlife. [Project Coyote](#) strives to help people embrace the existence of coyotes and other predators. All wild animal encounters are wonderful moments to observe beautiful creatures and should be treasured. Keep in mind that wildlife are way of humans and will avoid chance

meetings as long as they stay wild.

**Wild** is the key:

- don't attempt to befriend a wild animal
- don't feed them
- give wild animals space allowing them to continue on their business

It's easy to get caught up in the moment and get too close for the ultimate photograph. If the animal reacts to you, you are too close. These recommendations for wildlife interactions help protect both humans and the animals. Feeding wildlife and otherwise providing creature comforts can habituate animals to people. This level of tameness may lead to an incident where a human is hurt and then the animal must be trapped, removed, and/or put down.

Depending upon where you live, other large wildlife have also adapted to live near humans and it's vital to understand how to [coexist with all mammals](#) such as bobcats, bears, bison, wolves, panthers, and more. Apex predators truly keep a balance in our ecosystems keeping rodent populations in check. Of course, the system only works if we refrain from using deadly methods to control other unwanted visitors to our yards, parks, and other outdoor spaces.

## Unintended Consequences

### The Rippling Impact of the Poison Chain

What is the poison chain? The poison chain represents the unintended effects of using rodenticide to rid your home or yard of unwanted rodents. Unfortunately, rodenticide doesn't only kill rats and mice. Many other animals, even pets, are often affected by it. Rodenticide doesn't kill right away and animals that have ingested it soon become a meal of a larger predator, such as



foxes, owls, coyotes, bobcats, and mountain lions. In fact, the beloved big cat of Griffith Park in Los Angeles, P-22, was suffering from rodenticide poisoning among other ailments which led to his demise. According to the National Park Service, a whopping 83-94% of the 3 large carnivores in Southern California [tested positive for rodenticide](#).

There are many more [humane options](#) to keep unwanted animals away and, while you're at it, don't forget that coexisting with wildlife actually helps maintain a balance that will keep animal populations in check.

[Raptors are the Solution](#) is a Northern California-based organization working hard on education campaigns about the harmful effects of rodenticide that go way beyond the intended use. Creating better habitat for birds of prey is one of the best solutions for controlling rodent populations. Take a moment and watch this [short video](#) about a Massachusetts bald eagle poisoned by rodenticide.

**Help spread the word** about the harmful and unnecessary use of rodenticide. [Download this pdf](#) and share it at work, at school, around the dinner table, and in your neighborhood.

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## Quick Connections

Books, websites, documentaries, podcasts, events, quotes, and more



New York Times bestseller, [Coyote America](#) by Dan Flores, delves into the success of this ubiquitous carnivore across the United States and beyond. Hats off to the coyote which has flourished despite extensive eradication campaigns across the centuries.



### Quote we're pondering

*"The love of wilderness is more than a hunger for what is always beyond reach; it is also an expression of loyalty to the earth, the earth which bore us and sustains us, the only paradise we shall ever know, the only paradise we ever need, if only we had the eyes to see."* - **Edward Abbey**



### Family Matters

In honor of Father's Day, we salute some of the [best dads of the animal kingdom](#).



### Who makes that melody?

Many insects can be identified by their songs and [Singing Insects of North America](#) can help you do just that.

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## Community Connections

We want to connect with you. If you could impart one piece of nature, climate, environmental knowledge on everyone, what would it be?

We read each and every response and will share selected reader stories in upcoming newsletters.

## Share With Us

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Your feedback is important. [Tell us](#) how we are doing and what you would like to see covered in future newsletters.

***Every connection counts!*** Please help us grow our community of everyday heroes by sharing this newsletter with a friend or colleague.

*Thank you,*

*Michael Hawk, Founder*

*Laura Schare, Editor*

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### **Jumpstart Nature**

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