

Living with Coyotes: Managing Predators Humanely Using Food Aversion Conditioning

Stuart R. Ellins

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The coyote may well be North America's most adaptable large predator. While humans have depleted or eliminated most other native predators, the coyote has defied all attempts to exterminate it, simultaneously expanding its range from coast to coast and from wilderness to urban areas. As a result, coyotes are becoming the focus of increasing controversy and emotion for people across the continent— from livestock growers who would like to eradicate coyotes to conservationists who would protect them at any cost.

In this thoughtful, well-argued, and timely book, Stuart Ellins makes the case that lethal methods of coyote management do not work and that people need to adopt a more humane way of coexisting with coyotes. Interweaving scientific data about coyote behavior and natural history with decades of field experience, he shows how endlessly adaptive coyotes are and how attempts to kill them off have only strengthened the species through natural selection. He then explains the process of taste aversion conditioning—which he has successfully employed—to stop coyotes from killing domestic livestock and pets. Writing frankly as an advocate of this effective and humane method of controlling coyotes, he asks, "Why are we mired in the use of archaic, inefficient, unsophisticated, and barbaric methods of wildlife management in this age of reason and high technology? This question must be addressed while there is still a wildlife to manage."



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