



Coyote Control - What a landowner CAN do in South Carolina

Hunting/Shooting: There is no closed season on coyotes. Coyotes may be hunted year ‘round on private lands with a valid hunting license. A free depredation permit can be issued to landowners that do not have a hunting license (see Depredation Permits). Coyotes may be hunted at night with an artificial light that is carried on the hunter’s person attached to a helmet or hat, or part of a belt system worn by the hunter. Coyotes may be hunted at night with: 1) a rifle no larger than .22 caliber rimfire; 2) a shotgun with a shot size no larger than size BB; 3) a sidearm of any caliber that has iron sights and a barrel length not exceeding nine inches; 4) a sidearm with a barrel of more than 9” in .22 caliber rimfire or less. Any weapon used to hunt coyotes at night may not be equipped with a scope, laser site, light, or light enhancing device (including night vision or thermal imaging). It is unlawful to have in one’s possession any shot size larger than a BB while hunting coyotes at night with a shotgun, and coyotes may not be hunted at night from a vehicle, unless specifically permitted by the department. (SC Code of Laws §50-11-710). A permit is required from a local DNR Law Enforcement Officer for anyone to hunt or shoot coyotes at night except as provided above.

- Electronic callers are legal for use when hunting coyotes

Trapping: The normal trapping season for licensed trappers is Dec. 1 - Mar. 1. HOWEVER, a property owner may obtain a free depredation permit to trap outside of the normal trapping season and/or without a trapping license (see Depredation Permits).

Legal Traps:

- **Snares:** The use of snares is *illegal* for use in land sets. All coyote sets are generally considered land sets.
- **Foothold traps:** Size must be smaller than 5 3/4” for land sets (see Figure 1 below). All coyote sets are generally considered land sets.
- **Live traps:** In certain situations coyotes have been caught in live traps, but in general these traps are large and generally much less effective.

Except for licensed trappers during the trapping season (Dec. 1 – Mar. 1 and 30 days after), the possession and relocation of live coyotes is illegal!

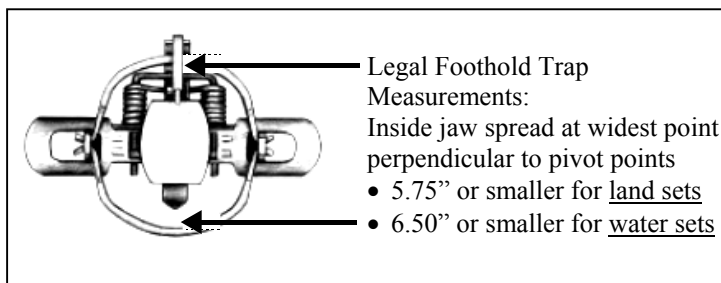


Figure 1. Measuring foothold traps

COYOTE

Biology and Control In South Carolina

Coyote (Canis latrans)
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
Furbearer Project
P.O. Box 167
Columbia, SC 29202

DNR publishes a separate Coyote brochure with biological information and additional control tips including trap preparation and trap set examples. This is also available online at:
<http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/coyote/coyoteinfo.pdf>

Depredation Permits: A depredation permit allows a property owner (or their designee) to trap or shoot damage-causing coyotes without any kind of license or season restrictions. The permit is FREE and available from any of DNR’s offices or conservation officers. These permits may also be obtained over the phone. This permit will be good for 30 days for a specific site (such as Mr. Smith’s farm).

The 100-yard Exemption: Within 100-yards of the property owner’s residence (so long as you are still on your own property), coyotes may be trapped or shot (if it is legal to discharge a firearm at the property’s location) *WITHOUT ANY KIND OF LICENSE OR PERMIT*. This exemption applies to the property owner or his/her designee (such as a friend, relative, or any other person designated by the property owner).

Depredation Permits to shoot at night: Except as provided under normal night hunting regulations as stated in the Hunting/Shooting section above, a depredation permit to shoot coyotes at night **MUST** be obtained from a local DNR conservation officer (check local firearms ordinances first). If you do not know a local DNR officer, contact the DNR at 803-955-4000 or 1-800-922-5431 and ask to have a local DNR officer contact you.

Non-Lethal Options: These options are for reducing coyote damage without removing the coyote.

- **Cultural Techniques:** Confinement of livestock and small pets – especially at night - can lessen predation problems. Cleaning up brushy and heavy grass and weedy areas that attract small mammals (rabbits and rodents – a coyote’s primary food source) can make your property less appealing to coyotes.
- **Guard Animals:** Certain animals have been successfully utilized as guard animals for livestock. Certain dog breeds (such as Great Pyrenees), donkeys, mules, and llamas have been used to protect livestock.
- **Wire Barriers:** Fences and fencing can prevent coyotes from entering an area if properly constructed. Buried aprons can prevent digging under a fence and overhangs or electric wires can prevent climbing over a fence. The DNR Coyote Brochure discusses fences in more detail.

Wildlife Control Operators (WCOs): For those property owners that wish to pay someone to trap coyotes for them, the list of Wildlife Control Operators is available from any DNR office or online at <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/nwco.html> . These companies and individuals perform wildlife control services on a contract-fee basis. WCOs are not DNR employees and are not affiliated with the DNR. It is important to ask for references before hiring a WCO. Have all fees and guarantees in writing.

Questions: For more information about coyotes, legal issues, control techniques, trapping advice, or anything else coyote-related, contact the DNR Furbearer Project at 803-734-3609.