



NEWS RELEASE

May 22, 2023

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AKRON ZOO AND SUMMIT METRO PARKS PARTNER ON COYOTE RESEARCH PROJECT

The Akron Zoo and Summit Metro Parks have partnered together on a research project to better understand the behaviors of coyotes in urban settings.

Zoo staff contacted the Summit Metro Parks team about partnering on the project to learn more about how coyotes are using zoo property outside its perimeter fences. This gave Summit Metro Parks biologists an opportunity to continue their ongoing research on coyote behavior to better understand how the animals operate and coexist with humans in an urban environment.

In early spring, two coyotes were humanely collared for research purposes. While in the brief care of zoo staff and Metro Parks biologists, the male and female coyotes were also examined, treated for minor injuries and vaccinated for common canine diseases, such as distemper and rabies. Afterwards, both coyotes were released back into the same habitat that they were collared.

Data from the tracking collar shows that the coyotes' range extends through much of downtown Akron. The two coyotes are believed to be part of the same family unit and travel mainly at night, using green spaces like the canal and railway for travel. The two are spending time around bodies of water, like the canal, and are believed to be assisting with goose control.

The female appears to be nursing a litter of puppies in a den, although the exact location is unable to be shared for the safety of the animals. It is in a location that will minimize human-coyote interaction.

The coyotes are not a threat to humans, but experts at Summit Metro Parks recommend keeping a respectful distance, staying on designated walkways and trails and keeping pets on leashes. Remember to never feed wildlife and to lock away any pet food or trash at home.

“Coyotes are an amazing species that has gone out of its way to adapt to humans and live among us peacefully,” said Mike Johnson, chief of conservation at Summit Metro Parks. “With a little bit of respect and understanding, we can enjoy and benefit from their presence within our urban ecosystem.”

“Working with the team at Summit Metro Parks has been a mutually beneficial experience for learning more about the native coyotes using zoo property,” said Shane Good, senior director of animal care at the Akron Zoo. “While coyotes might not be endangered, we can learn a lot about how they have adapted to coexist with humans and possibly apply it to protecting other species here locally and around the world.”

This project will be ongoing, with the Akron Zoo and Summit Metro Parks planning to collar more coyotes this fall.

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The Akron Zoo is open 361 days a year. Summer hours are 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission is \$14 for adults, \$12 for seniors (ages 62+) and \$11 for children (ages 2 – 14). Children under two are free and parking is \$5. For more information visit www.akronzoo.org or call (330) 375-2550.

Founded in 1953, the Akron Zoo is a non-profit, world conservation zoo with over 1,000 animals from around the world. Located just west of Downtown Akron, the zoo strives to connect your life to wildlife while inspiring lifelong learning and conservation action. The Akron Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). With its more than 200 accredited members, AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation, and your link to helping animals in their native habitats.

In 2023, Summit Metro Parks is celebrating the benefits of native plants through Wild Back Yards. The park district manages more than 15,000 acres throughout 16 parks, three nature centers and over 150 miles of trails, including 22 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Annual attendance is approximately 5.5 million visits. Find us online at summitmetroparks.org.



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