

WILDLIFE TRENDS

SOUTHEASTERN EDITION

October 2001

Volume 1, Issue 10



Coyote Control — Part 1

by Doug Hall and Frank Boyd

Editor's Note: Since the information on controlling coyotes is needed by our readers in sufficient detail to be useful, this article is rather long and will be provided in two parts. The final portion will be published in a later issue of *Wildlife Trends*.

Every serious deer and turkey hunter in the South, probably in the whole U.S., has enough stories to share about this predator, the coyote, to monopolize campfire conversation most of the night. Unfortunately, most of it will be true. If you haven't heard about the hunter in his blind before dawn on opening day who called in another hunter lurking nearby, a coyote, you haven't listened to many turkey hunters. One of the writers of this article, in fact, sat in surprise one morning when a coyote ran in and grabbed the decoy hen he had set up; we don't have to say which one, but decoys are legal in Georgia and not Alabama. In other words, our interest in this predator is every bit as strong as yours.

So let's talk coyote. The animal's scientific name is *Canis latrans*. *Canis latrans* means "barking dog." Traditionally a species of the western plains, it has extended its range from Central America to the Arctic. Except for Hawaii, coyotes live in all the U.S., Canada and Mexico. This has been accomplished in spite of bounties, poisoning, shooting, trapping, snaring, aerial gunning, habitat destruction and the additional pressure of human population expansions. Certainly, when the world comes to an end it'll be the coyotes left feeding on the cockroaches.

Volumes have been written about the coyote but this will be somewhat of an overview of this fairly new resident to the South. Most of it has come from personal research, observation, field experience and the *Prevention and Control of Wildlife Damage Handbook* section on coyotes written by Jeff Green, F.R. Henderson and M. Collinge and published in 1994.

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