



Halton Hills resident Mike Vukovic believes his beagles Snoopy (pictured) and Daisy were attacked by coyotes near his property last Wednesday. Daisy was killed, but Snoopy is expected to recover from the attack.

Photo by Ted Brown

Homeowner blames coyotes for attack on beloved beagles

A Halton Hills man is urging area residents to keep a close eye on their pets after one of his beloved beagles was killed and another injured by what he believes were coyotes last week.

Although neither he nor his wife saw what killed their dog Daisy, Eighth Line resident Mike Vukovic has no doubt coyotes were responsible.

"I would bet my house on it," said Vukovic, who added, "I don't want anybody to go through what I went through."

He said his wife Mara was walking Daisy and her seven-month old puppy Snoopy behind their home at about 11 a.m. last Wednesday when the dogs ran into a nearby bush.

His wife lost sight of the dogs for about 20 minutes and, "she was looking for them and couldn't find them," said Vukovic.

"She heard screaming, she didn't know what was going on," he said.

He arrived home shortly afterward and said he found Daisy dead in a field. She had been bitten on the neck, chest and stomach, and Snoopy, covered in blood from a bite on his neck, had run to a neighbour's home.

He rushed the pup to the vet where the dog spent a day on intravenous medication and is expected to recover.

Vukovic, who lives south of 5 Sideroad, said he sees coyotes near his home a couple of times a week, especially in the early morning.

A Ministry of Natural Resources spokesperson said they don't know how many coyotes are in the area, but they are

well established throughout the agricultural and developed areas of Ontario.

She added it is believed their numbers are actually down now because they have suffered a bad case of mange over the past few years.

"They are well adapted to urban environments," she said and have even been reported in Toronto.

She said coyotes, which are relatives of the timber wolf, generally eat mice and other small rodents, but "on occasion will eat a small dog or cat."

"In general people aren't at risk," she said.

She provided some tips on preventing coyote problems.

- keep all pets on leashes or confined to their yard.
- secure garbage and pet food
- do not approach or feed coyotes
- use motion-sensitive lights in yards or gardens
- use fencing low to the ground and high enough to prevent coyotes from jumping over
- whistles, personal alarm devices or commercially available pepper sprays to frighten an approaching or threatening animal.

She added that coyotes can be trapped or shot by landowners if they feel their property has been or will be damaged. However, municipal bylaws could prohibit this in some areas.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

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