

## 5 Tips For Protecting Your Pets From Wildlife

**As communities grow and expand, wild animals are losing their natural habitat and are becoming acclimated to urban and suburban surroundings.**

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This encroachment of wild animals can be a problem for domesticated pets including cats and dogs. Wild animals can easily hurt, maim or even kill household pets that do not have the survival skills or temperament to defend themselves.

To help pet owners, Southeast Area Animal Control Authority has released a list of tips to help pet owners keep their pets safe from wild animals.

### 1. Don't leave food outside

Wild animals can be expert foragers. Leaving food outside (leftovers, pet food, trash or anything else) can be an invitation to wild creatures

### 2. Get your pet vaccinated

Wild animals can be a mode of rabies transmittal. Ensure your pet is vaccinated just in case he or she is attacked and infected.

### 3. Notify the authorities

If you notice a wild animal or animal tracks near your home, immediately contact your local animal control or wildlife service agency. They have the resources and skills to handle these situations and make your environment safer for your pet.

### 4. Protect your home/ Clear your surroundings

Make sure wild animals cannot get into your home through open doors or windows, including dog doors. Many wild animals roam in the nighttime, when you and your pets are sleeping. Lock and secure your doors and windows before you go to bed.

Excessive debris, vegetation, fallen trees and hillside brush and shrubs can be enticing hiding places for snakes and other wild animals. Clear the areas around your home to avoid un-welcomed surprises for you and your pets.

### 5. Keep your pet on a leash/ Don't let your pet roam outdoors alone

It is best to keep an eye on your pet when outdoors so that they do not become targets for wildlife. When hiking or walking trails with pets it is best to keep them on a leash. Excessively long leashes or no leashes at all, can allow your pet to explore hidden areas where they could possibly uncover snakes or other wild animals.

"As our population continues to grow and we encroach upon wildlife, we need to be extra vigilant about pet safety," notes SEAACA Executive Director, Dan Morrison. "With a few smart precautions, we can protect our much-loved pets from dangerous encounters with wild animals."