

# PETS &

# WILDLIFE

In Morton Grove we often encounter local wildlife such as deer, raccoons, opossums, skunks, coyotes, and foxes, in and around our community.

It's important that we, and our pets, respect wildlife and create minimal disturbance to their habitat.

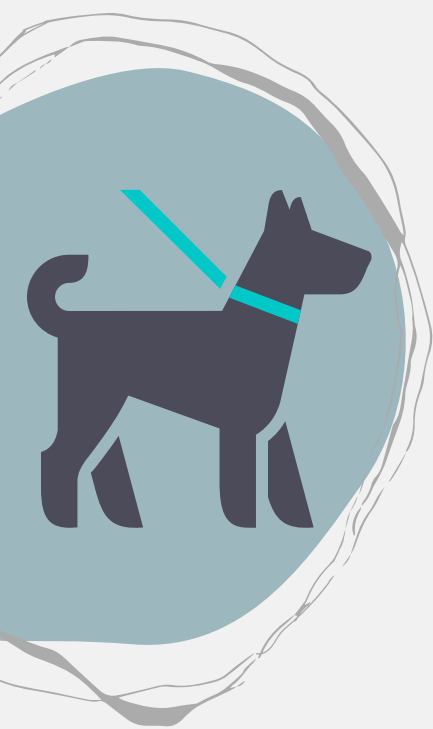
## 1 ARE DOGS ALLOWED?

- While we want to bring our pets with us on adventures, they might not be allowed on certain trails or in parks.
- To Do: Make sure your dog is actually allowed to be there before you go.
- There may be an ordinance in place limiting access to pets, made to help protect the environment & your pet.



## 2 KNOWING & FOLLOWING LEASH LAWS

- Properly leashing your dog protects your pet and wildlife too!
- Leashing your pet is one of the easiest things that you can do to help minimize your impact on the environment.
  - Whether it makes you more aware of the waste that your pet leaves behind, or
  - Gives you better control of your pet for when you do encounter wildlife.
- Keeping your pet properly controlled is vital in ensuring that they won't harass, harm, provoke, or even kill wildlife that they may encounter.



## 3 CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PET

- Leaving a plastic bag behind, or leaving your pet's waste behind, is not good for the environment.
  - Bag your dog's waste & properly dispose of it.
- Dog waste is filled with supplements and fecal coliform bacteria that can be unnatural/harmful to the environment.
  - Impacting: waterways, plant life, and native animals.
- Before venturing outdoors, ensure that you have a doggie poop bag with you for proper cleanup.



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## 4 IMPACT ON WILDLIFE & THEIR HABITAT

- When a pet chases wildlife, it can result in a serious stress response to native animals.
  - Example: Migrating birds will use unnecessary energy in order to avoid an uncontrolled dog, which would otherwise be used for scavenging or traveling.
- When dogs run off-leash, they widen the area of disturbance.
  - Therefore, it's not just the trail, but instead a much wider area of the forest, where wildlife and plants are impacted.



## 5 UNDERSTANDING WILDLIFE BEHAVIOR

- Depending on when you venture outdoors with your pet, your dog could play a big role in disturbing wildlife animals during:
  - The winter, when they are in hibernation.
  - The spring, when they are giving birth.
  - The fall, when it is mating season.
- Be conscious of the time of year, so that you can better predict how wildlife will react to encountering your pet.
- Prey animals (ex: rabbits & squirrels) will typically run away from your pet.
- Some wildlife may try to defend themselves by various means:
  - Like a skunk with its spray, or a porcupine with its quills.
  - Mother deer or geese may charge if you or your pet gets too close to their young.



## 6 MINIMIZE YOUR PET'S CONTACT WITH WILDLIFE

- Don't leave food out that may attract wildlife, including:
  - Pet food, low-hanging bird feeders & suet cakes, unsecured garbage bins, and vegetable composts.
- Keep your pet properly leashed at all times.
- Avoid hiking with your dog at dusk/dawn, when wild animals are most active.
- If you do encounter a wild animal, stay focused and calm.
  - Give wildlife their space.

