

Interview 923

Q: Please tell me a story about an experience you've had with coyotes in Vermont.

A: Sure! I can tell you a couple. Most of my stories are centered around, I'm a hunter so obviously I'm in the woods, and that's generally when I interact with them. I can tell you one time specifically I was in a tree stand and I was using deer calls. I saw some movement from quite a long ways away, and thinking I had a deer coming I was excited and looking forward to what was coming and then it turned out to be a coyote. And amazingly from just a couple of calls from, I have no idea how far away it was, but it came literally through the brush to the base of my tree. Which I thought was pretty incredible. I mean I don't know how they're able to just hone in and pick out that one little sound like that from however far away and come I mean inches of where that sound came from. To me that was kind of cool. Another time, I was always under the impression that, cause y'know you always hear the stories that they're going to be meat eaters but really that is not true. That is not the case, they're opportunists they'll eat just about anything. And I've seen, again one time deer hunting, when I was hunting near some apple trees and a coyote came in and was eating apples off the ground. Which I thought was pretty wild, I've seen them eating corn in cornfields which is pretty wild. They're just incredibly adaptive, and don't stand still for very long, they're on the move constantly. So those are just a couple of interactions with them, usually my interactions are very brief, they can smell like no other so if the wind isn't right they're out of there. They can smell you whether or not you think you stink or not, they're going to smell you.

Q: Can you explain why those stories were meaningful to you?

A: I mean, I love being in the woods, just absolutely love it. Every experience is different and I think that, and I try to convey this to people whether or not they hunt or not, when you're in the woods you just never know what you're going to see. It's cool to me, it's like, you don't get to see that driving down the road, you don't get to see it when you're watching TV. What you get to see in the woods is just... cool. And so, seeing nature being nature and doing what they do, I love it.

Q: Now let's talk about coyotes more generally. Can you rank your experience of coyotes in Vermont on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very negative, 3 being neither positive nor negative, and 5 being very positive?

A: Good question. Generally speaking, I am not typically a fan of them. Based on, my family primarily, our meat source is venison primarily and they are my competition for that! So I generally view them in a negative light based on that. I do understand that they are part of nature and so they're just doing what they do. Probably a 1 or a 2 as far as like, negative thoughts towards them.

Q: Think back to the coyote stories that you shared. Can you tell me where they took place?

A: The first one as far as it responding to a deer call was in a heavily wooded area, probably a mile deep in the woods near an old clear cut where they had done some foresting, some logging. And I had no idea how far away it was when it first heard the calls but it was fairly deep in the woods. The other one near the apple trees was actually not far from some houses. It was probably within 150 yards of a house or so. We've had them in our backyard, you've had them in your backyard. It's not that they're terrified of us, it's just y'know, if opportunity for food is here they'll be here.

Q: And, can you tell me what year your coyote stories took place in?

A: The responding to the calls 2019, and the eating apples I think was 2017 I believe. Actually, surprised I can remember that but for some reason... Yeah. It was 2017 I'm pretty sure.

Q: What kinds of things do you do outside, for work or for recreation?

A: Funny that my job is recreation! I'm outside all the time whether or not it's y'know hunting, fishing, hiking, out in the boat on the river, playing sports with the kids or coaching sports or swimming. Just about anything we can do outside we try to do.

Q: How long have you lived in Vermont?

A: 40 years

Q: What town do you live in?

A: I live in Vernon, Vermont.

Q: What year were you born in?

A: 1981

Q: What is your gender?

A: Male

Q: What is your race or ethnicity?

A: I'm white.