



# Coyote Control - What a landowner CAN do in South Carolina

**Hunting/Shooting:** There is no closed hunting season on coyotes. Coyotes may be hunted year 'round on private lands with a valid hunting license. A free depredation permit can be issued to landowners that do not have a hunting license (see Depredation Permits). The use of bait and electronic calls are legal for hunting coyotes. On private lands, coyotes may be hunted with any firearm during daylight hours at any time of the year.

Coyotes may be hunted at night with an artificial light or nightvision devices and with or without the use of bait under the following conditions:

Any time of the year with:  
1) a rimfire rifle (any caliber);  
2) a bow and arrow (but no crossbows);  
3) a shotgun with a shot size no larger than size BB; or  
4) a sidearm of any caliber that has iron sights (no scope or laser sights) and a barrel length not exceeding nine inches.

From the end of February to July 1 with notification\*  
Using any legal firearm, bow or crossbow. Any hunter using a centerfire rifle must be at an elevated position at least 10 feet from the ground, unless the hunter is using and only possesses *subsonic* ammunition. See [www.dnr.sc.gov/nighthunt](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/nighthunt)  
\*The landowner must notify DNR at least 48 hours in advance with the names and hunting license numbers of all participants. This is required once per season for each property.

Persons convicted of certain road hunting and night hunting violations during the previous five years are ineligible to hunt coyotes at night (SC Code of Laws §50-11-710). A permit is required from a local DNR Law Enforcement Officer for anyone to hunt or shoot coyotes at night except as provided above.

**Trapping:** The normal trapping season for licensed trappers is Dec. 1 - Mar. 1. HOWEVER, a property owner may obtain a free depredation permit to trap outside of the normal trapping season and/or without a trapping license (see *Depredation Permits* section below for more information).

**Legal Traps:** (A separate [Trapping Regulations](#) brochure is available)

- **Snares:** The use of snares is illegal for use in land sets. All coyote sets are considered land sets.
- **Foothold traps:** Trap size must be 5 3/4" or smaller for land sets (see Figure 1 below). All coyote sets are generally considered land sets.
- **Live traps:** In certain situations coyotes have been caught in live traps, but in general these traps are large and generally much less effective.

**Except for licensed trappers during the trapping season (Dec. 1 – Mar. 1 and 30 days after), the possession and relocation of live coyotes is illegal!**

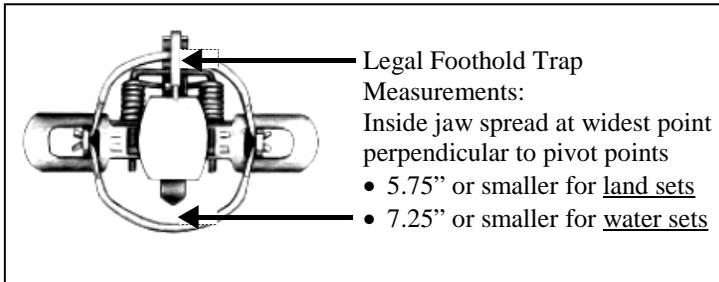


Figure 1. Measuring foothold traps

DNR publishes a separate Coyote brochure with biological information and additional control tips including trap preparation and trap set examples. This is also available online at:  
<http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/coyote/coyoteinfo.pdf>

**Depredation Permits:** A depredation permit allows a property owner (or their designee) to trap or shoot damage-causing coyotes without any kind of license or season restrictions. The permit is FREE and available from any of DNR's offices or conservation officers. These permits may also be obtained over the phone. This permit will be good for 30 days for a specific site (such as Mr. Smith's farm).

- **The 100-yard Exemption:** Within 100-yards of the property owner's residence (so long as you are still on your own property), coyotes may be trapped or shot (if it is legal to discharge a firearm at the property's location) *WITHOUT ANY KIND OF LICENSE OR PERMIT*. This exemption applies to the property owner or his/her designee (such as a friend, relative, or any other person designated by the property owner).
- **Depredation Permits to shoot at night:** Except as provided under normal night hunting regulations as stated in the Hunting/Shooting section above, a depredation permit to shoot coyotes at night **MUST** be obtained from a local DNR conservation officer (check local firearms ordinances first). If you do not know a local DNR officer, contact the DNR at 803-955-4000 or 1-800-922-5431 and ask to have a local DNR officer contact you.
- **Predator Management Permits:** A special depredation permit to trap coyotes *for wildlife management purposes* and not for traditional depredation issues such as livestock losses and problems around the home. *This permit is specifically for hunt clubs and other large properties primarily used for hunting.* Only valid outside of trapping season (Mar.1 - Nov.30). Year end harvest report required. Issued by the Furbearer Project in Columbia Office.

**Non-Lethal Options:** These options are for reducing coyote damage without removing the coyote.

- **Cultural Techniques:** Confinement of livestock and small pets – especially at night - can lessen predation problems. Cleaning up brushy, grassy and weedy areas that attract small mammals (rabbits and rodents – a coyote's primary food source) can make your property less appealing to coyotes.
- **Guard Animals:** Certain animals have been successfully utilized as guard animals for livestock. Certain dog breeds (such as Great Pyrenees), donkeys, mules, and llamas have been used to protect livestock.
- **Wire Barriers:** Fences and fencing can prevent coyotes from entering an area if properly constructed. Buried aprons can prevent digging under a fence and overhangs or electric wires can prevent climbing over a fence. The DNR Coyote Brochure discusses fences in more detail.

**Wildlife Control Operators (WCOs):** For those property owners that wish to pay someone to trap coyotes for them, the list of Wildlife Control Operators is available from any DNR office or online at <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/control.html>. These companies and individuals perform wildlife control services on a contract-fee basis. WCOs are not DNR employees and are not affiliated with the DNR. It is important to ask for references before hiring a WCO. Have all fees and guarantees in writing.

**Questions:** For more information about coyotes, legal issues, control techniques, trapping advice, or anything else coyote-related, contact the DNR Furbearer Project at 803-734-3609.