



Hungry desert predators pose risk to pets

KVOA News Channel 4
Sandy Rathbum reports

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The ongoing drought is having a terrible effect on wildlife.

A lack of food and water is bringing more wild animals into the edges of urban Tucson.

As a result, emergency room veterinarians at the Veterinary Specialty Center of Tucson say they're seeing an increase in wild animals attacking domestic pets.

Nancy Beeunas, DVM, says, "We are seeing a lot of coyote and javelina attacks, and they seem to be much more vicious this year."

Beeunas blames the drought. She says, "Their (wild animals) food is very scarce so they are attacking domestic animals much more readily than we've seen in the past."

Myrna Ramirez says her family saw a coyote jump their wall and carry off their dog Slipper.

Ramirez says, "My husband saw the coyote just run with our dog in his mouth. My husband jumped the wall, chased him."

Eventually the coyote dropped the seriously injured dog. Dr. Beeunas says there are steps you can take to protect your pet especially if you live in a desert area.

- Don't leave pets unattended in your yard.
- Don't walk pets off their leash.
- Don't take pets out at dusk or dawn when wild animals are hunting for food.
- Don't leave your pet's food in the yard overnight.
- Don't feed wild animals.
- Take your dog to the Humane Society's snake avoidance training.