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## **Coyotes and coons and bears – oh my!**

### **Wildlife advocates remind residents spring weather means co-existence necessary**

**VANCOUVER:** Wildlife is on the move, but that doesn't need concern residents of Metro Vancouver. By utilizing simple co-existence methods and instituting feeding by-laws, humans and our wild neighbours can live amongst each other happily and safely.

“The basis of co-existence is understanding the roles of wildlife in ecosystems and how human activity impacts ecosystems,” says Lesley Fox, Executive Director of The Association for the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals (APFA). “Whether we're looking at Stanley Park or East Van, ecosystems will invariably have wildlife. It's critical that we learn to adapt to wildlife, as they already have adapted to us.”

In the vast majority of instances of wildlife conflict with humans or pets, food resources can easily be identified as the original cause. By instituting guidelines for waste management practices and creating a dual-prong approach to prevent the inappropriate feeding of wildlife, conflicts can be drastically reduced, if not eliminated.

Other co-existence measures stem from education - successful living with wildlife programs are already in place across the country, like the coyote program in Stanley Park and the bear program in Whistler.

It's also important to remember that babies are coming – and they should not be interfered with. If wildlife is found in the home, contacting a reputable, humane removal company is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. Check references and reports prior to contracting a company.

“Co-existence is the only sustainable, ecologically-sound and truly humane way to manage wildlife,” Fox says. “We cannot let an outdated mode of thinking overrule progress in environmental protection for animals and for us. We can protect wildlife and ourselves safely and effectively with co-existence methods not just for today, but for the future of British Columbia.”