

Canids ID Guide

Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*)

Gray wolves are apex predators found in mostly northern parts of the US. While their coats are typically a mix of gray, black, and brown with a black tail tip, they can range from pure white to solid black. They can be differentiated from coyotes by their larger size, thicker legs, smaller and more rounded ears, and broader, shorter snouts.



Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

Coyotes are common throughout North America and have a diverse diet that includes fruits and small to medium-sized prey. Their coloration is varied, though typically gray or reddish-brown with a pale throat and belly. They can be distinguished from the foxes due to their larger size, stockier build, longer ears, and longer snout. Coyotes have expanded their range following the persecution of gray wolves in the US and are common in all types of habitats, including urban areas.



Domestic Dog (*Canis familiaris*)

Domestic dogs can come in so many different shapes, sizes, and colors, that they can occasionally resemble a coyote in appearance. In most cases, domestic dogs will show up on camera traps in the daytime accompanied by a human. If not, some useful traits to help distinguish a domestic dog from a coyote are the shape of the snout, color of the coat, and shape and size of the ears and tail.



Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

Red foxes are medium-sized omnivores that prey on rodents, rabbits, birds and other small game. Although they are called “red” foxes, they are usually orange and can be silver, gray, or black. They can be distinguished from gray foxes by their larger size, usually white tail tip, longer and black “stocking” legs, and black ear tips. Red foxes are found throughout Canada and most of the United States where they prefer landscapes with a mixture of open fields and brushy or forested areas.



Gray Fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*)

The gray fox is a medium-sized omnivore, eating fruits as well as small mammals, birds, and amphibians. Their fur is gray and orange and they have a distinctive black stripe down their back that ends in a black-tipped tail. They differ from the red fox in their smaller size, shorter legs, lack of the black “stocking” legs, shorter and darker snout, and more cat-like appearance. Gray foxes are found throughout most of the United States and into Mexico.

