Conventional wisdom suggests that coyote control efforts actually result in an increase in the number of coyotes due to increasing litter sizes and pregnancy rates among individuals that survive. New research published in the Journal of Wildlife Management demonstrates that while litter size and pregnancy rates tend to increase somewhat after heavy trapping pressure, overall reproductive capacity of the population declines.

The reduced reproductive capacity is due to an increased representation of juveniles in the population, which rarely breed, coupled with a concurrent decrease in adults, which account for most of the breeding. A high influx of immigrants, many of which are younger animals vying for territories, render coyote populations extremely difficult to control, however.

“This work sheds a little more light on how coyote populations are able to recover so quickly from heavy persecution—increased immigration seems to be much more important than increased reproduction,” said Dr. John Kilgo, lead author of the study.

Additional Information


About Journal

The Journal of Wildlife Management publishes manuscripts containing information from original research that contributes to basic wildlife science. Suitable topics include investigations into the biology and ecology of wildlife and their habitats that has direct or indirect implications for wildlife management and conservation. This includes basic information on wildlife habitat use, reproduction, genetics, demographics, viability, predator-prey relationships, space-use, movements, behavior, and physiology; but within the context of contemporary management and conservation issues such that the knowledge may ultimately be useful to wildlife practitioners.

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