Gruesome Indiana wildlife killing contest exposed

Investigators with the Humane Society of the United States captured the results of reckless slaughter of Indiana’s coyotes, underscoring the need for a state regulation to ban these cruel events.

FROM DEC. 4-6, 2020, participants in an Indiana wildlife killing contest gunned down scores of coyotes for the chance at cash prizes.

Undercover investigators with the Humane Society of the United States attended the contest weigh-in at the Williamsport Fire Department in Warren County, where teams brought in dead animals to be counted and weighed. Participants won prizes for killing the most, the heaviest and the smallest coyotes. The winning team for most coyotes bagged about 16 of the approximately 60 coyotes killed during the event. After prizes were awarded, participants gathered for a celebratory breakfast.

Wildlife killing contests take place all over Indiana. Coyotes and foxes are the most frequent victims. At another recent Indiana contest, the Coyote Showdown in Greenfield in January 2021, roughly 45 teams killed 109 coyotes and 10 red foxes, according to social media posts.

Wildlife killing contests are cruel, violate traditional hunting ethics and are counterproductive to sound wildlife management. They serve no legitimate wildlife management function—they do not reduce coyote numbers, prevent conflicts with farm animals or boost populations of game species such as deer or turkeys. Participants frequently use powerful custom-made assault weapons including AR-15 rifles fitted with night-vision and thermal scopes, along with digital “calling” devices to lure in animals for an easy shot.

The events can orphan dependent young, who are left to die from starvation, predation or exposure.

Fire departments, 4-H clubs, farm bureaus, chambers of commerce, veterans’ organizations, and even high schools and churches have hosted or organized these events across the country.

Coyotes are native to Indiana, and as a top carnivore they provide vital ecosystem balance. According to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, “Coyotes eat mostly small rodents and rabbits. This makes them an important member of the food chain.” Left alone, coyotes regulate their own numbers based on available habitat and food sources, and conflicts can be avoided using non-lethal deterrence techniques.

For more information, contact wildlife@humanesociety.org.
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Key investigative findings:

- Participants unloaded and dragged bloody, dead coyotes from their pickup trucks in the parking lot of the fire department. Some of the animals had gruesome injuries and were ripped apart by bullets.
- Contestants lined up approximately 60 or so coyotes for counting and weighing.
- Holes were then punched into the animals’ legs to hang the bodies upside down on the scale.
- A participant told investigators that he uses an AR-15 rifle with night vision to kill animals, adding, “I enjoy it.” A regular coyote hunter, he said he and his team killed 128 coyotes last season.
- Competitors watched closely as coyotes were weighed, one by one, with help from the Williamsport firefighters.
- The apparent winner of the contest—a four-man team dubbed “Midwest Predators,” wearing matching team jackets—killed about 16 coyotes.
- According to contest rules, participants could kill coyotes anywhere. Authorized killing methods included the use of electronic calling devices, which mimic the sounds of animals in distress, including cries of dependent young, to lure animals to their deaths.
- The contest was promoted on social media.
- Each contestant paid an entry fee of $25. The grand prize went to the team that killed the five heaviest coyotes. Jackpot prizes were awarded for three categories—most coyotes, “big dog” and “small dog” (“dog” referring to coyotes).
- While one participant claimed he occasionally sells coyote pelts for $8-$10, HSUS investigators witnessed gaping wounds that would have rendered the fur of most coyotes killed for this contest useless.

Several known 2021 Indiana wildlife killing contests include:

- Andrews Coyote Benefit Hunt, Montezuma, Jan. 8-10
- Coyote Showdown, Greenfield, Jan. 22-23
- The Fallen Outdoors Coyote Classic, Bargersville, Feb. 6-7

Indiana residents can contact the Indiana Natural Resources Commission and urge them to ban cruel, unsporting and ecologically destructive wildlife killing contests. Visit our website for more information.
For more information, contact wildlife@humanesociety.org.
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Example Two

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Example Three
5th ANNUAL COYOTE SHOWDOWN 2021

January 22nd 5:00 PM - January 24th 3:00 PM

Registration with cash/check/money order to Highsmith Guns by Friday, January 22nd (mail-in by 1/20/21)

Highsmith Guns 123 N State St, Greenfield, IN 46140

Tournament begins Friday, January 22nd at 5:00 PM with tagging requirements texted out before start
Check-in will be at Highsmith Guns on Sunday, January 24th by 3:00 PM, food and drinks will be provided!

RULES

This is a 1-3 person team event where teams must stay together during calling/hunting coyotes.
All coyotes must be tagged per tagging requirements in order to count, zip ties not provided.
Day and night hunting allowed - must obey all state and local laws with current licenses.
Limited to 50 teams - Cash prizes awarded. (Optional $25 Big Dog and $25 Small Dog Pool - winner takes all).

NO Trapping, NO dog running, NO road kills

$100 ENTRY

*All coyotes will be inspected at check-in for compliance of tournament rules. Any coyote with signs of trapping marks, road rash, missing limbs, etc. will be disqualified and not count towards team totals. See Rules and Regulations Form for full details.

DOOR PRIZES & GUN GIVEAWAY

*Each person will receive 1 ticket at check-in*
*Must be present to win

MOST COYOTES BONUS PAYOUT!!!

CASH PAYOUTS!!!

1st $1,000 2nd $500 3rd $300
*Based on 30 teams

Thank you to our sponsors!

Rules and Registration form available on Facebook at Coyote Showdown event page and at Highsmith Guns
Please contact Coyote Showdown Facebook page or Highsmith Guns with any questions

For more information, contact wildlife@humanesociety.org

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VFW
POST 2459
COYOTE CLASSIC
SULLIVAN INDIANA - December 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} & 4\textsuperscript{th}

OPEN REGISTRATION
2-PERSON TEAMS
$50 ENTRY/TEAM
$10 BIG COYOTE (OPTIONAL)

CASH PRIZES (60% PAYOUT)
1\textsuperscript{st} 70% - 2\textsuperscript{nd} 20% - 3\textsuperscript{rd} 10%
BIG COYOTE 100% PAYOUT

TAKING T-SHIRT ORDERS NOW!!
THROUGH NOVEMBER 16\textsuperscript{TH}

PLACE T-SHIRT ORDERS AT THE SULLIVAN VFW POST 2459

THREE DAY COYOTE HUNTING CONTEST
SIGN UP FRIDAY, DECEMBER THE 2\textsuperscript{nd} BETWEEN 6 PM & 8 PM AT (LARRY COX’S BARN)
200 W. COUNTY RD 600 S. CARLISLE IN, 47838
WEIGH IN BACK AT THE BARN SUNDAY DECEMBER THE 4\textsuperscript{th} 12:00 P.M. SHARP
WINNERS WILL BE BASED OFF OF TOTAL WEIGHT HARVESTED

HUNT START: 12.02.16 AT 8 PM
HUNT ENDS: 12.04.16 AT 12 PM
10 COYOTE LIMIT (COYOTE ONLY HUNT)

1 OR 2 MAN TEAM
TEAMS MUST HUNT TOGETHER
YOU MAY TAKE COYOTES BY ANY LEGAL MEANS EXCEPT FOR USE OF DOGS, TRAPS, OR SNARES

ALL TEAM MEMBERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FOLLOWING ALL FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL LAWS. THE VFW IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR ACTIONS IF YOU CHOOSE TO NOT FOLLOW THE LAWS. IN CASE OF A TIE YOU MUST TAG YOUR LAST COYOTE WITH THE TIME OF KILL. WHOMEVER KILLED THEIR LAST COYOTE FIRST WILL BE DECLARED THE WINNER. ALL DECISIONS ARE FINAL
FOR MORE INFO OR DIRECTIONS CONTACT CURT MCCRARY AT 812-564-0612

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Fundraiser event - 50% payout
1st place- 30%
2nd place- 15%
3rd place- 5%
$30 per man
2-3 man teams
MOST coyote and fox combined
WINS
$20 big dog sidepot winner take all
no trapping, snaring, or roadkill
Meal provided at check-in

FEB 28TH, 29TH, MARCH 1ST
Check-in Sunday from 2p-4p SHARP.
No late kills can be accepted.
Check-in address:
8Mile Camp
8989 SR. 26 E
Lafayette IN 47905
All State hunting rules and regulations apply

For more information, contact wildlife@humanesociety.org.
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Example Seven

1st Annual USDS Coyote Callout!

- Starts Friday March 13th at 5pm and ends Sunday (March 15th last day of yote season) at 3PM! No late yotes will be counted! Check in is at U.S. Defense Solutions gun store at 5329 Mount Pleasant N. St Greenwood, IN 46142

- $100 per team (4 people per team max) (We take Paypal or Cash only). If paying by Paypal you must send this info with your payment or you will not be entered! Paypal info is: paypal.me/usds7 or usds.mike@gmail.com

1. Team name

2. Names of all members on team, main contact name as well.

3. Cell phone numbers of all members on team

4. What side pots you wish to enter

- We will also do a big dog side pot (biggest yote tagged) at $25 per team with 100% payout, also a small dog pot (smallest dog tagged) at $25 per team, also 100% payout. Lastly we will do the a side pot for the most yotes tagged at $25 per team and also 100% payout. Last day to enter is March 11th.

- Winning team will be the combined weight of your top 3 largest dogs (so you only need 3 dogs to win!) no matter how many dogs you bring in. In the event of a tie, the team with the heaviest dog of their 3 will be the winner. No foxes this year.

- Payout amount will be to the top 3 teams. Payout amounts will be announced after the last day we accept teams (March 11th).

- Of course all state and local laws must be followed. No trapped, roadkill, or dog ran coyotes will be accepted at check in. Also yotes with shot off limbs will not be counted.

- Tagging information will be sent out via text and Facebook March 13th in the AM (hunting doesn’t start until 5PM!) but will involve zip ties (provided by yourself). Yotes that are not tagged properly will not be counted!

For more information, contact wildlife@humanesociety.org.

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