



Published November 10th, 2021

Animal Services and Fish & Wildlife agencies overwhelmed with calls from the public

By Vera Kochan

In October, Lamorinda Weekly received an email from a concerned resident wanting to draw attention to a dead deer that had been lying along the side of Moraga Road between Moraga and Lafayette for what she had determined to be approximately two weeks. Others on social media mentioned they had seen the animal within that same time period. The resident had apparently called public agencies for its removal - which did not come swiftly.

According to Contra Costa County Animal Services Department Information Officer Steve Burdot, "For quite a while we had only one person covering the entire county for deceased animal removal. The pandemic played a big part in that. We've recently added a second person." Typically animals are removed anywhere between four to 72 hours of receiving the call, but with staff shortages the times have lengthened.

The CCAS website (www.ccasd.org) states: "We prioritize all of our Field Service calls based on public safety. Deceased animal reports will be handled as quickly as possible, though it may take up to seven days for removal. Please note that CCAS will not perform deceased animal pickups in areas that pose a safety risk to our officers. These areas include crawl spaces, attics, cliffs, condemned buildings, creek beds, hillsides and other unsafe locations."

Despite the record-breaking rainfall from the "bomb cyclone" that recently hit the Bay Area, experts say that the drought is not over, and La Nina conditions are expected to continue this winter. This comes as bad news for creatures great and small, because wildlife will continue to come down out of the hills to forage for food and water within our neighborhoods.

Sightings of feral pigs tearing up lawns in search of grubs had been occurring in San Ramon, Lafayette and Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School during late September. While the term "feral" gives one the impression of porkers foaming at the mouth with a crazed look in their eyes, the definition refers to an animal that lives in the wild but is descended from domesticated specimens. They could have escaped from a captive environment and are now living as a wild animal.

During a September ABC7 News interview about the recent feral pig problem, California Department of Fish & Wildlife Information Officer Ken Paglia stated, "Their food resources will dry up, so they'll start to expand their search for food and water; and they'll end up in people's yards and gardens. If a wild pig or a group of wild pigs destroys your property you can file a Wildlife Incident Report on our website (<https://wildlife.ca.gov>), and one of our staff will reach out to you and discuss options."

In the summer and fall months of 2020, Moraga and Lafayette experienced an eight-month spree of coyote attacks by one animal, not to mention several others that were caught and later determined not to be the main culprit. The many sightings stemmed from the species' search for food and water, according to wildlife experts.

For anyone who has found an injured wildlife animal contact the Lindsay Wildlife Hospital Hotline at (925) 659-8156 or visit: <https://lindsaywildlife.org/found-animal/>. They accept and treat all native California wildlife with the exception of turkeys, red foxes, adult deer and a few others. They recommend that you call ahead to confirm.

Reach the reporter at: vera@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA