

RESOURCES:

Department of Fish and Game (707) 944-5531

For hunting, trapping and general advice contact:
www.dfg.ca.gov

County of Santa Clara (408) 355-2200

For county property damage and maintenance contact:
www.sccgov.org/portal/site/parks/

City of San Jose –Parks Dept. (408) 535-3570

For city property damage and maintenance contact:
www.sjpark.org/

City of San Jose – Animal Care & Services (408) 578-7297

For injured or sick animals contact:
www.sanjoseanimals.com

Little Blue Society (650) 365-8623

For human-animal conflict resolution contact:
mary@littlebluesociety.org



Order Artiodactyla : Family Suidae :
Sus scrofa Linnaeus



2750 Monterey Road
San Jose, CA 95111
www.sanjoseanimals.com

408/ 578-PAWS (7297)

FERAL PIGS



Animal Care & Services



Description: Feral pigs in California are descended from introductions of European wild hogs for sporting purposes, and from escaped domestic swine that have established feral populations. They are brown to blackish brown color, with grizzled guard hairs, a mane of hair (8-16 cm long) running along the back from the neck to the rump, a straight heavily tufted tail, and ears covered with hair. Characteristics of feral hogs are varied, depending upon the breed of the ancestral stock.

Habitat and food: Wooded areas close to water, and diverse forests with some openings, hills and mountainsides. The presence of a good litter layer to support soil invertebrates and/or the presence of ground vegetation affording green forage, roots, and tubers is desirable. Hogs are also fond of marsh.

Feral pigs eat a variety of items, including fruits, roots, acorns, mushrooms, and invertebrates, depending on the season. Feral pigs can have detectable influences on wildlife and plant communities as well as domestic crops and livestock. *Extensive disturbance of vegetation and soil occurs as a result of their rooting habits.*

Foraging occurs both during the day and night, but is most intense at night, especially during the summer. The tusks which may be used as dangerous weapons, function primarily in finding and harvesting food.

Feral pigs generally breed year round; litters range from one to seven. Their sense of sight is rather poor but their senses of hearing and smell are extremely acute.

Wild hogs are typically not aggressive and will retreat if approached. However, when cornered, wounded, or defending young, they may charge and are capable of inflicting serious wounds with their razor sharp tusks.

Predators: Young pigs are taken by a number of different predators, including, hawks, owls, eagles, foxes, coyote and bobcats. Adults are rarely taken because of their large size, but mountain lions occasionally kill and consume wild hogs.

Why should I be concerned? Property that is near open space, foothills, or water is particularly vulnerable to pig damage. Primarily, pig damage consists of the destruction of grass lawns. Because of their size and strength, pigs can also cause damage to fencing and irrigation systems.

Why can't we just get rid of them? Many thousands of pigs live in the foothills to the south and east of San Jose. It is difficult and costly to have a lasting impact on the pig populations in this area through trapping or hunting. It is illegal to relocate pigs to another area. It is dangerous to the community to hunt pigs that are in or near city areas. It would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to fence all of the areas exposed to the pig habitat (it would not be very attractive either).

What can I do? The one certain method that will protect your lawn is low, sturdy fencing. If this is not a practical or preferred solution, you may want to try the following:

- Use a biological or chemical application on your lawn that will reduce the number of invertebrates (snails, grubs, larvae) living under your grass. ~ The pigs aren't interested in your grass they are interested in what is *under* your grass.
- Consider a landscape that contains little or no grass.
- Water your lawn less, particularly during the summer and fall. This makes your lawn less attractive to the invertebrates, which makes your lawn less attractive to the pigs. Drought tolerant grasses are recommended.
- Use motion sensitive devices that will detect the pig's movement. These devices can be used to produce bright light, or even a water stream that will frighten the pigs.
- Hire a trapper. The Department of Fish and Game can advise you who the licensed pig trappers are in the area.

DO NOT EVER PHYSICALLY CONFRONT A FERAL PIG