

Emboldened wild animals venture into locked-down cities worldwide

Level 1 • Pre-intermediate / Intermediate

1 Warmer

Match the animals with their descriptions.

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1. raccoon | a. a large bird similar to a chicken that has no feathers on its head |
| 2. turkey | b. a small wild dog that lives in North America |
| 3. boar | c. a small animal with a black and white face and a long tail |
| 4. coyote | d. a wild pig |

2 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text. The paragraph numbers will help you.

uncommon

quarantine

boldly

deserted

lockdown

- A _____ is when people are not allowed to leave their homes. (para 1)
- _____ is when a person or animal that might have a disease is kept separate from other people or animals so that they do not catch the disease. (para 1)
- If a place is _____, there is no one there. (para 1)
- An _____ sight is a sight that people do not see very often. (para 3)
- If an animal behaves _____, it is confident and not afraid of people. (para 5)

species

subtle

drive away

adjust

urban

- If you _____ a person or animal, you make them want to leave a place. (para 5)
- An animal _____ is a group whose members all have similar general features and can produce young animals together. (para 5)
- _____ is an adjective usually used before a noun and meaning *relating to towns and cities*. (para 6)
- If you _____ your behaviour in a new situation, you change the way you do things. (para 6)
- A _____ change is one that is not obvious and therefore difficult to notice. (para 8)

3 Find the information

Where have people seen these animals during the coronavirus lockdown? Find the answers as quickly as possible.

- sika deer
- raccoons
- wild turkeys
- wild boars
- monkeys

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Maanvi Singh

22 March, 2020

- 1 Coronavirus has brought lockdowns, quarantines and social distancing in cities around the world. So, people are looking for good news like social-media posts showing animals wandering through deserted cities. Sadly many of these posts are fake – there were no dolphins in Venice's canals or drunken elephants in Yunnan province in China.
- 2 But as city life changes as a result of the crisis, there are some early signs that animals are starting to explore. In Nara, Japan, sika deer wandered through the streets and underground stations. Raccoons were seen on the beach in San Felipe, Panama. And turkeys have appeared in Oakland, California.
- 3 "Normally, animals live in the parts of our cities that we don't use," said Seth Magle, of the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago. Groups of wild turkeys aren't an uncommon sight in parts of the Oakland area, but now they've got a bit more room to wander through neighbourhoods they might not normally visit. Boar have visited European cities in the past – but in Barcelona, they are now wandering through quiet, deserted streets. In American cities under lockdown, walks and jogs are one of the few excuses for people to go outside. "It's going to be a really cool time to see wildlife," Magle said.
- 4 In San Felipe, where restaurants and bars have closed, Matt Larsen, the director of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama, has noticed some new visitors on the beach near his home. "There were three raccoons, just playing right at the edge of the water," said Larsen. "I've lived here six years, and it was something I had never seen before." The beach, which is right by the president's palace, is usually kept clear by security guards, said Larsen. "But normally, there are people all around. The streets are almost always crowded with foreign visitors and Panamanian tourists," he said.
- 5 Quarantines could continue to affect wildlife in unexpected ways, said Paige Warren, an ecologist at the University of Massachusetts. "I'll be interested to see whether creatures like coyotes and foxes start acting more boldly in American cities," she said. At the same time, fewer people in the streets could drive some species away, she said, especially those who eat food that humans give them.
- 6 That happened in Nara Park, where the sika deer – which look like Bambi – have become used to tourists feeding them rice crackers. Now that the park has no human visitors, the deer have begun wandering into the city looking for food. They've been seen crossing city streets and walking through underground stations. In Lopburi, Thailand, the absence of tourists and their snacks made local monkeys fight over a cup of yogurt. But just as many urban animals have adapted to humans, they'll find ways to adjust during the quarantine, said Warren.
- 7 Magle agreed: "As they said in *Jurassic Park*, life finds a way." His team in Chicago has been working from home and practising social distancing, but Magle said they were trying to find a way to set up equipment around Chicago for their yearly study of urban wildlife and see how the coronavirus crisis may change animal behaviour.
- 8 The changes will probably be subtle, the researchers said. Urban foxes and coyotes might come out of their hiding spots a bit more. Birds might look for new places to find food. But wildlife populations will not increase and take over cities. "These times should remind us that animals have always lived with us," Magle said. "We may not think of our cities as a part of nature, but they are."

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4 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings to make statements about the text.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Unfortunately, there ... | a. ... allowed to go outside to walk or jog. |
| 2. Wild animals usually live ... | b. ... the coronavirus crisis may change animal behaviour. |
| 3. Americans under lockdown are ... | c. ... have not been any dolphins in the canals of Venice. |
| 4. Animals that humans normally feed have ... | d. ... wildlife populations will increase and take over cities. |
| 5. Researchers are interested in finding out how ... | e. ... in parts of our cities that we don't use. |
| 6. But it is not true that ... | f. ... started wandering into cities looking for food. |

5 Chunks

Rearrange the words to make phrases from the text.

- around cities the in world
- the a result crisis of as
- had before something never I seen
- places to food new find
- cool going to it's time a be really
- his beach near home on the

6 Prepositions

Complete the phrases from the text using these prepositions.

with

on

from

at

through

around

- _____ the world
- wandered _____ the streets
- _____ the beach
- crowded _____ visitors
- _____ the same time
- working _____ home

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7 Word stress

Put these words from the text into two groups according to their stress.

wildlife
palace

dolphin
tourist

raccoon
canal

crisis
species

appear
adapt

explore
increase

A o o	B o o

8 Discussion

- Should we make it easier for wild animals to enter our cities? Why? Why not?