



New York City's abundant wildlife

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NEW YORK (MYFOXNY) -

Talk a walk down any city block and many are noticing that New York City is becoming increasingly more jungle than concrete.

A fuzzy squirrel digging for nuts may be photo worthy for tourists but they're the norm for New Yorkers. And so are at least



75 different species of birds in New York City alone. It's no wonder birds have made themselves home in the most interesting places. And then there's the marine life, too. Whales and dolphins have been spotted in the Rockaways. And don't forget about the coyotes. They're also making frequent appearances in the city leaving many wondering "what's going on?"

Sarah Aucoin is the director of the Urban Park Rangers. She says that improved parkland and habitat make New York City appealing to wild animals.

So far this year, there have been at least half a dozen coyote sightings in the city as well as quite a few raccoon sightings.

Aucoin says many of these species coexist with humans by scavenging in our trash.

Coyotes aren't the only ones moving into the city. There have been sightings of snowy owls, red-tailed hawks, and even bald eagles.

Dr. Mary C. Pearl, wildlife biologist and provost at CUNY's Macaulay Honors College, says it's actually a

good thing the city has become more habitable for everyone.

So where are many of these animals coming from? From the wildest borough, of course: the Bronx. Pearl says because the Bronx is attached to the mainland of the United States, the animals migrate down the parkways into the city.

While it can be unnerving to come face to face with a wild animal, at times you could be witnessing history. Recently a bald eagle built a nest on Staten Island and that hasn't happened in New York City in about a century.

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