



Welcome, Bethany Yates

Animal Control Officer

Where did you work prior to coming to Dedham?

I worked for Zoo New England at the Franklin Park Zoo where I was a Zookeeper for about 6 years. My job was to care for all the animals in the Tropical Forest building. I worked with a large variety of animals from birds and snakes to primates and hoof stock.

How many years of experience do you have working with animals?

I have 6 years of professional experience, and a lifetime of personal experience. Before I worked with animals professionally, I grew up with many pets and always had a passion for animals.

What are your goals as the new Animal Control Officer here in Dedham?

My main goal is safety for both the human and animal residents of Dedham. Keeping the community free from diseases spread by animals, and safe from potentially aggressive animals is my main priority. I also want to be as accessible to the community as possible. I want everyone to feel that I am a valuable resource when they need one. If people have any questions of anything animal related, I am always happy to assist.

What aspect of this role are you most excited about?

I'm excited to be a part of this close-knit community! And wildlife. I love working with wildlife.

As we enter the warmer months and we spend more time outdoors, is there any advice or tips you would give the residents and visitors of Dedham when around animals and wildlife?

- Do not feed wildlife. This makes them more comfortable around people which can lead to human/wildlife conflict such as bites.
- If you see any "orphaned" animals, let them be. Their mother is likely close by. If you are unsure, call Animal Control.
- Never leave dogs, or any animal, in a car. Leave them home. Even when it is a lovely 70-degree day, after only 20 minutes it will already be 100 degrees in a car.
- Coyotes are common in Dedham. If they are close, make loud noises (clap, yell, bang pots and pans). This will tell them that humans are scary and to not get close, preventing any conflict with them.

Are there any programs or events you have organized in your past roles that you would like to start here in Dedham?

Once all the Covid madness ends, I would like to start some community outreach programs. Things like: Animal Training programs (come and get training tips from local animal trainers), Responsible Pet Owner programs, and other educational programs.

What are your hobbies/interests when not at work?

I enjoy hiking, kayaking, relaxing at the beach, and hanging out with my pets!

Do you have a mantra you often refer to or live by that keeps you motivated/energized?

Ya gotta live, laugh, love.