

# **Bluebird and the Coyote**

Native American Lore

A long time ago the Bluebird's feathers were a very dull ugly color. It lived near a lake with waters of the most delicate blue which never changed because no stream flowed in or out. Because the bird admired the blue water, it bathed in the lake four times every morning for four days, and every morning it sang:

There's a blue water.

It lies there.

I went in.

I am all blue.

On the fourth morning it shed all its feathers and came out in its bare skin, but on the fifth morning it came out with blue feathers.

All the while, Coyote had been watching the bird. He wanted to jump in and catch it for his dinner, but he was afraid of the blue water. But on the fifth morning he said to the Bluebird: "How is it that all your ugly color has come out of your feathers, and now you are all blue and sprightly and beautiful? You are more beautiful than anything that flies in the air. I want to be blue, too."

"I went in only four times," replied the Bluebird. It then taught Coyote the song it had sung.

And so Coyote steeled his courage and jumped into the lake. For four mornings he did this, singing the song the Bluebird had taught him, and on the fifth day he turned as blue as the bird.

That made Coyote feel very proud. He was so proud to be a blue coyote that when he walked along he looked about on every side to see if anyone was noticing how fine and blue he was.

Then he started running along very fast, looking at his shadow to see if it also was blue. He was not watching the road, and presently he ran into a stump so hard that it threw him down upon the ground and he became dust-coloured all over. And to this day all coyotes are the colour of dusty earth.