

School-to-Nature



Red Fox

Red Foxes are common on Conservancy lands. They are typically red-orange in color, with black legs, black-tipped ears, and a white-tipped tail. Their coloration turns a shade darker in winter. In the Red Fox family, there are “morphs” or mutations. The Silver/Black Morph is mostly grey and black, and the Cross-Fox Morph is orange and brownish-black. Arctic Foxes, members of the Red Fox family, are white in winter and brown in summer; Desert Foxes are mostly tan in color. These are useful mutations, to help foxes survive in any climate.



Foxes live in packs, with generations living and hunting together.

Foxes grow to about 20 inches tall and weigh up to 85 pounds. The Fox’s long, fluffy tail is used for balance, to wrap around themselves for warmth, and even for communicating warnings to other foxes. Foxes vocalize, making over 40 types of sounds including growls, howls, yips, chirps, and even owl-like hoots. They are good hunters due to their excellent hearing; a fox can hear a mouse under snow and will pounce successfully even if it can’t see the prey. Foxes are mostly nocturnal (nighttime) hunters, eating mice, squirrels, chipmunks, rabbits, voles, and birds. They also eat fruit, vegetables, fish, frogs, grasses, mushrooms, large insects, crayfish, and even worms. If they live near humans they will eat food waste from a garbage bag, pet food left outdoors, and chickens on a farm. Because they are prey for other larger animals such as coyotes, wolves, eagles, and humans, typically they survive only 2-4 years in the wild.



A male Fox is called a dog, rod or Reynard. The male fox has a natural musty scent that stinks to most people, coming from a gland at the base of the tail. The female Fox is called a vixen. Foxes use a den in the ground, in underbrush, or in a hollowed tree, to raise their young.

The babies are called kits or pups. The kits are fed by the mother and father, and also by older siblings and relatives, until they are old enough to hunt on their own.



Foxes are known to be very playful, and they can also be very clever in avoiding hunters and predators. There are many fables, stories, and videos about how clever and tricky and even fun they can be.

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