



Foxes

Description and habitat

The most common fox seen in Colorado is the Red Fox, however the Gray Fox has been spotted in our city as well. The Red Fox's coat is primarily a reddish-orange, while the Gray Fox ranges from silver to black. Both have a white tipped tail. The fox weighs anywhere from 8-15 pounds with the male being slightly larger than the female.

The Red Fox lives along wetlands and in heavily vegetated areas. They have become quite urbanized and it is not uncommon to see a fox traveling through a neighborhood, even venturing into a backyard looking for a place to sun itself.

Their home range can be anywhere from a quarter mile to 23 square miles in undeveloped locations. This also depends on whether or not there is an adequate food supply and shelter for them.

Behaviors

Foxes in Colorado produce a single litter every year, with a gestation period lasting between 7-8 weeks and typically producing a litter of 4 kits. Kits are

usually born between March and April and the den consists of both parents sharing the responsibility of raising their young. Around 3-4 weeks in age, the kits are ready to venture from the den, and in early fall the juveniles usually leave the parents. It is not uncommon during the daylight hours to see a female Fox out and about when feeding her young.

Foxes are omnivores, meaning they will pretty much eat anything. They will feed on domesticated animals if the opportunity arises, but mostly they feed on small rodents, rabbits, birds, eggs as well as insects, snakes and fruit. The fox are typically nocturnal and are commonly active at dusk and dawn.

Benefits

Small rodents are the fox's main food source, which keeps the population down. They will also eat dead animals.

Common Problems and Solutions

Foxes under a deck or shed

Foxes have been known to take up residency under a deck or shed. Make it so it is uncomfortable for them to be there. This can be accomplished by placing ammonia saturated rags at the entrance hole, place a radio on a “talk show” nearby (that will drive anyone away), make loud noises, and/or keep a light on such as a floodlight or a motion detector light. Eliminate all food sources such as bird feeders, bird baths, pet water bowls and food bowls, along with any pet food. Cover all garbage containers and keep all food containers securely fastened to prevent any smells or odors from escaping. Pick up and discard any fallen fruit from trees.

Foxes vs pets

It is not common for a fox to prey on small pets, but they will take advantage of any food source available, especially when the food supply is limited. Bring small pets indoors at night, close up doggie doors, and feed your pet inside rather than outside.

