

*Naturel. Apprécié. Protégé.*

## Living with Foxes

Foxes are found all over Ontario, in forests and towns and cities. They are able to live in a wide range of habitats.

Although "red fox" is the accepted name for the species, not all members of the species are actually red. There are several common colour variations.

Foxes are usually, but not always, monogamous. Two or more males often court a single female, and scientists have records of one den where three adult foxes tended a single litter of cubs. Home ranges around den sites are four to eight square kilometres.

Foxes eat a wide variety of food including fish, beaver, reptiles, fruits of all sorts and garbage.

Foxes have been called bold, cunning and deceitful in children's stories. In fact, they are shy, secretive and nervous by disposition, and they appear to be very intelligent.

### Conflicts happen

Foxes find their way to residential areas where they sometimes live under decks or sheds, in gardens or in wooded areas.

Foxes may feed on fish in residential backyard ponds.



### Please keep in mind...

Wild animals have the same basic needs as humans – food, water and shelter. Sometimes, humans and wild creatures come into conflict when animals are trying to meet their basic needs. Often, conflicts can be prevented if we're willing to make small changes to how we think and act.

People and wild animals live side by side in Ontario. We all share responsibility for preventing and handling human-wildlife conflicts. If you must take action against wildlife, please consider all your options and follow all relevant laws and regulations.

### Did you know?

Red foxes are found across Europe, Asia, and North America, and the species is expanding its range in North Africa and Australia.

This fact sheet is one in a series about living with wildlife. The complete set is available at [ontario.ca/wildlife](http://ontario.ca/wildlife).

*Naturel. Apprécié. Protégé.*

## Conflicts with Foxes

### How Can I Prevent Conflicts?

#### Limit food sources

- Never feed foxes.
- Pick fruit as soon as it ripens.
- Regularly pick up fallen birdseed.
- Keep barbecues clean and covered when not in use.
- Secure garbage in durable plastic containers with locking lids.
- Store garbage indoors until collection day.
- Maintain compost in containers that keep foxes out while allowing for ventilation.

#### Make your property unwelcoming

- Cover the perimeter of decks, sheds and crawl spaces so foxes cannot create homes.
- Complete home repairs in the autumn. This will prevent mother and young being trapped inside.
- Keep indoor pet food and any other food away from a pet door.
- Use flashing lights, motion sensors and noise makers to deter foxes.
- Remove brush piles, weed patches, rock piles, and other debris where foxes or their prey live and hide.
- Put a fence around your property to make it less accessible. (A fence will need to be at least 1.8 metres high and will need to extend a minimum of 15 centimetres underground.)

### How Can I Handle a Conflict?

#### If a fox is living near your home

- Don't let foxes intimidate you! Don't hesitate to scare or threaten foxes with loud noises, bright lights, or water.
- If you find a fox burrow in your backyard, do not block it unless you are sure it is empty. To check, lightly block the entrances with loose twigs and sticks through which a fox can easily break, wait a few days and see if the twigs and sticks are disturbed.
- Local animal control agencies can be hired to safely and humanely remove foxes from under your deck or shed.

#### Lethal action is a last resort

- A landowner may humanely kill or trap foxes that are damaging or about to damage their property. Firearm regulations and bylaws must be followed.
- You may also hire an agent to act on your behalf.

### For more information and assistance...

#### To locate a local wildlife control agent...

- Speak with your neighbours, family, and friends. Look for "animal control" in your phone book or online.

#### To locate a licensed trapper...

- Contact the Ontario Fur Managers Federation at (705) 254-3338 or by e-mail at [furman@furmanagers.com](mailto:furman@furmanagers.com)

#### For information on foxes...

- Call your local Ministry of Natural Resources office or the Natural Resources Information Centre at 1-800-667-1940.
- Check out Hinterland Who's Who - <http://www.hww.ca/hww2.asp?id=102>.

#### For information on how to prevent conflicts with foxes....

- City of Toronto - [http://www.toronto.ca/animal\\_services/fox.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/animal_services/fox.htm)