

FOX FACTS

Where do they live?

Both red and gray foxes dig dens mostly for raising kits, but also to use as shelter from severe winter weather.

Dens under porches, decks or sheds are not uncommon in urban areas. If you find a fox family in an inconvenient spot, consider allowing them to stay until the young are old enough to begin accompanying their parents on foraging outings. At this point they are nearly ready to say goodbye to the den site and move on for good.

Fox kits are born in the spring, usually in March or April, and you'll see them emerge from the den four or five weeks after birth.



At nine weeks, they will begin to hunt with their parents. That's the moment to watch for, as it is then safe to encourage them to leave the den site if there is reason to hasten their departure.

How can I Deter Fox from my Yard?

If you need a fox family to move on sooner rather than later, harassment may encourage an earlier move. Here are a few humane harassment options once the kits have emerged:

- Loosely pack leaves, soil, or mulch in the den openings to disturb the residents.
- Place urine soaked kitty litter, a sweat-soaked T-shirt, a pair of smelly sweat socks or old sneakers in or near the den opening.
- Mount shiny party balloons or 12-18 inch lengths of Irri-tape mounted on sticks or poles two or three feet off the ground, just outside and around the den entrance.
- Spread a non-toxic granular repellent that is capsicum based around the den entry.

These tactics are most effective when they are used in concert as part of a comprehensive plan to encourage the foxes to move on. The purpose of these techniques is to make the parents uncomfortable enough to move the litter to a more secure location. Once the den has been abandoned, make sure all the kits are out of the den before any permanent exclusion is put in place.

Repellents: No repellents are registered expressly for use on foxes, but the many products sold to repel domestic dogs from yards and gardens will have a similar effect on a passing fox. Examples include "Get Off My Garden," which is sprayed at or below ground level or directly on plants, and "Scoot," which is sprayed on lawns or foliage where a fox has been digging or leaving calling cards.



Michelle Santoro, Animal Control Officer
Bernards Township Health Department
262 South Finley Avenue
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
P. 908.204.3066 F. 908.204.3075
www.bernardshealth.org

Contractual Health Agency for:
Bernardsville Borough
Bernards Township
Chester Borough
Long Hill Township
Mendham Borough
Peapack and Gladstone Borough

Why are they out during the day?

Foxes have a natural fear of people. If you see one outside during the day, it's no cause for alarm. Sometimes a fox may have learned to associate people with food, and may exhibit a boldness or even approach you. These foxes can easily be scared away by making loud noises such as yelling or blowing whistles, dousing them with water hoses or squirt guns or throwing objects such as tennis balls toward them.



A fox cutting through your yard is probably just passing through on his way between hunting areas and no action is necessary on your part. Both red and gray foxes live among us in cities and towns, where scavenging for food makes life easy. They generally avoid people, but the lure of easy food, such as pet food or unsecured garbage, can result in backyard visits.

Do I need to Protect my Pets from Fox?

You may be concerned about your pets being outdoors when foxes are around. The precautions you take are the very same things that you should do for your pets even if foxes were not around.



Keeping cats safe: A typical adult cat is almost the same size as a fox and has a well-deserved reputation for self-defense, so foxes are generally not interested in taking such cats on. Kittens and very small (less than five pounds), however, could be prey for a fox.

The best way to avoid encounters between foxes and cats is to [keep your cats indoors](#)—a practice that will keep your cats safe from other hazards as well, such as traffic, disease and fights, to mention only a few.

What about dogs? Most dogs are not at risk from an attack by a fox unless they have threatened its young, but they still should not be left outside unattended for a host of safety reasons.



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