

Fox Information Sheet

Foxes are wild animals and we never say never or never say always but in almost all occasions the following applies.

The Fox population in the Washington D.C., Suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia areas has dramatically increased within the past (20) years. As the Fox population increases fox sightings have also been significantly more highly reported by property owners, including being seen during day light hours, and will probably continue to grow. Fox sighting are not necessarily a dangerous situation. Due to the lack of hunting and trapping activity that was more common in previous decades. Many foxes are not fearful of humans, in addition some people actually think they are fascinating and enjoy feeding them. Therefore many foxes feel they are much more likely to get a free lunch from humans as opposed to possible harm from us. Foxes are fairly timid around humans and are much smaller than they appear. Their heavy coats of fur make them appear to be 2-3 times there actual size. A twenty pound fox is actually very large and most are 12-15 pounds. They will almost never attack animals or pets larger than a rabbit, unless they are defending themselves, their young or if they are ill. Trapping foxes is generally not that difficult with the appropriate traps but there can be quite a bit of liability involved. The best traps for foxes are leg hold traps and snares. Great care and discretion should be used to avoid potential problems with pets, children or even adults who are unaware of there use. These traps do not normally cause permanent harm to the foxes, but due to state laws in Maryland and Virginia all foxes that are caught cannot be relocated and must be euthanized. Leg hold traps and snares are illegal for use in Washington, D.C.. Live cages can on occasion catch foxes. We have used cages successfully on the grounds of the U.S. Capital Grounds, and down town D.C., but success with cages is the exception to the rule. Relocation is permitted within Washington, D.C., but is not advised since foxes will likely return and are mostly solitary animals except when breeding and while raising their young. Trapping Programs can range from \$400.00 for a single fox to \$1,200.00 for an entire family. We have removed up to Twelve animals from ½ acre single family homes. Prices are typically higher for large commercial, private properties or community wide programs as more than one family can occupy the territory. Feeding pets, wildlife or birds outdoors should be discontinued as this will concentrate animals that serve as prey for foxes on your property. Thinning or tapering of trees and bushes around perimeter of the property can reduce cover and security for foxes and their prey and make them less comfortable on your property. Scare tactics are frequently successful such as setting up an oscillating type sprinkler (the type that shoots a stream of water) in areas the foxes seem to frequent. There are also motion activated sprinklers such as the scare crow that are available online. Noise makers or even radios set at a fairly loud level may also discourage them.