

## Kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*)



### **Taxonomy:**

Family Canidae. Formerly grouped with the Swift Fox (*Vulpes velox*) which occurs in mid-western plains region. Eight subspecies are recognized, including *Vulpes macrotis nevadensis* from the Park region.

### **Description:**

Distinguished from other canids by its small size, pale color, and long tail with a black tip.

Total length: 600-800 mm; Tail: 225-300 mm; Hind foot: 111-132 mm; Weight: 1.4-3.0 kg.



### **Distribution:**

Occurs in the intermountain region from southeastern Oregon south through the Great Basin and Colorado Plateau, southern California, southern Arizona, New Mexico, western Oklahoma and Texas, north-central Mexico and the Baja peninsula. Open habitat at lower elevations west of the Wasatch Front.

### **Ecology and diet:**

Kit foxes are most common in sagebrush, shadscale, and greasewood communities primarily at lower elevations where they dig underground dens in sandy soil. Their

diet varies seasonally, typically including small mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and insects, but also fruits and other plant matter.

### **Life History:**

Mating occurs during the winter. Following a gestation period of 49-55 days, litters of 3 to 6 pups are born in late winter or early spring. Pups emerge from the den when about one month old, and are independent by late summer or early autumn. Kit foxes are sexually mature at about 2 years of age. Maximum longevity is more than 15 years.

**References:** McGrew 1979; Zeveloff 1988