

Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)



Taxonomy:

Family Canidae. North American populations have been treated as a separate species, *Vulpes fulva*. Twelve subspecies are recognized in North America, including *Vulpes vulpes macroura* from the region.

Description:

Color variable, but most often bright red. Lower legs and back of ears are black. Tail is tipped with white

Total length: 900-1,250 mm; Tail: 350-400 mm; Hind foot: 145-17 mm; Weight: 3-7 kg.



Distribution:

Occurs throughout Alaska, Canada, and most of the lower US except for parts of the arid west. Common along the Wasatch Front. Their distribution in Utah is expanding.

Ecology and diet:

Red foxes are found in a wide range of habitats including forest, tundra, prairie, and farmland. They are primarily carnivorous, eating rodents, rabbits, and other small vertebrates, as well as insects, fruit, and carrion. They often store excess food in caches.

Life History:

Mating occurs in late winter (January through March). Females bear a single litter of about 4 pups in April or May each year. Gestation length is 59 days. Age at sexual maturity is about 10 months, and maximum lifespan is about 8-10 years.

References: Zeveloff 1988; Larivière and Pasitschniak-Arts 1996.