

## Foxes

The red and gray fox are economically important as predators and furbearers. Their appetite for mice and woodchucks greatly benefits farmers, and their pelts are valuable for making coats, hats, and other warm clothing. Foxes are primarily nocturnal, but it is not unusual to see one during the day. Daytime sightings are not necessarily a sign that a fox is diseased. Rather, they are responding to the abundance of food available during the day.

Foxes are the only species where hunting and trapping seasons are established at the county level. To see whether or not a county has a hunting or trapping season visit [ncwildlife.org/foxseasons](http://ncwildlife.org/foxseasons).

**What kind of damage is caused by foxes?** Foxes have been known to take poultry and small domestic pets.

**Can a WCA write a depredation permit?** Yes, if property damage has occurred a depredation permit can be issued by a WCA.

**Can they be relocated?** Foxes cannot be relocated in North Carolina. They must be released on site, euthanized at the capture site, or taken to a facility designed to humanely handle the euthanasia.

**What can I do with sick or injured fox?** Foxes cannot be rehabilitated in North Carolina. Advise individuals to leave the animal alone. A fox with a life-threatening injury or illness should be humanely euthanized and disposed of in a safe and sanitary manner.

**Are there any safety concerns?** Yes, foxes are considered a potential vector species for rabies. If someone or his/her pet has been bitten or scratched by a fox, refer the individual to their county health department. It's good practice to wear gloves while handling any animal.

### Non-lethal Options:

- Education
  - See the [General Considerations for Handling Wildlife](#) document for general ways to prevent damage from wildlife.
- Exclusion
  - Fencing can be effective at excluding foxes. Small livestock and poultry should be placed in a completely enclosed pen with 1-inch chicken wire over a sturdy wooden framework. Electric wire can be added to the enclosure for additional protection.

### Lethal Options:

- Foxes can be trapped during a county's established trapping season with a state trapping license. A landowner does not need to purchase a trapping license to trap on his/her own property.
- Foxes may be taken during the county's established hunting season with a state hunting license. A landowner does not need to purchase a hunting license to trap on his/her own property.
- Foxes caught in the act of causing property damage may be shot by the landowner without a depredation permit (where permitted by local ordinance).
- Outside of the trapping season, individuals can trap foxes under a depredation permit if property damage has occurred.