

Increased Fox Sightings in Elmhurst



The City of Elmhurst recently asked a representative from Scientific Wildlife Management to observe an area in town where an increase of fox sightings have been reported. Scientific Wildlife Management is a consultant which the City has used to monitor coyote activity in the community. The following information includes the consultant's report.

FINDINGS

- Scientific Wildlife Management did not see evidence of dangerous or aggressive foxes.
- Foxes weigh about 10-13 lbs and are not a danger to people, children, or pets (unless extremely small).
- Foxes are a good sign, as it means coyotes are likely not present in the area.
- Scientific Wildlife Management does not recommend trapping foxes as "leg-hold" traps would be needed in the neighborhood, endangering other animals/pets.
- Scientific Wildlife Management only recommends removal of foxes if rabid or with mange, which was not observed.
- Scientific Wildlife Management agrees an abnormal number of foxes are present in this area, likely because of feeding or food left outside by humans in the area, causing fox concentration.
- If the unnatural food sources are removed, the foxes should distribute themselves away from the area to find natural food sources.

FOX FACTS

Foxes, especially red foxes, commonly live in close association with human residences and communities. They frequently inhabit yards, parks, and golf courses, especially areas that adjoin suitable, undeveloped habitat. Healthy foxes pose virtually no danger to humans. Foxes can grow accustomed to human activity but are seldom aggressive toward people. Many homeowners do not realize that their lawn may be a more attractive habitat to foxes than surrounding mature forest. Eliminating healthy foxes is not warranted based solely on human safety concerns. People uncomfortable with the presence of foxes should remove attractants, exclude foxes with fencing and employ scaring techniques. Trapping and relocating foxes is not recommended.

MITIGATIONS

Foxes that travel into residential yards should be harassed or scared with loud noises to prevent them from becoming habituated. During the spring, disturbing a den site with unnatural odors such as moth balls, may prompt foxes to move to an attractive den which may be farther from yards and houses. Outdoor human food sources, such as pet food, water bowls, meat scraps on compost piles, and fruit below fruit trees should be removed.

For more information, contact Scientific Wildlife Management through ScientificWildlifeManagement.com.

