

# FOX

*Vulpes vulpes*

Seen passing through



The Red Fox is the most widely distributed and populous dog in the world.

**DESCRIPTION** – Foxes have a thick coat of orange-brown or reddish-brown fur on most of the tail and body. The jaws, underparts and tip of tail are white while the feet and backs of ears are black.

**VOICE** – The vixen screams just a few weeks of the year in the dead of winter. Adults will make barking sounds close to the den to warn cubs of danger.

**HABITAT** – The Fox is a remarkably resourceful creature, able to cope in a very wide range of different environmental conditions, from sub-tropical regions to icy tundra the red fox is able to find food and keep warm.

**FOOD** – In the UK the red fox feeds mainly on small rodents such as field mice, rabbits and voles but will eat almost anything it finds, often eating carrion or fruits and berries when available. And are successful raiders of rubbish bins. This resourcefulness is one of the main reasons they've been able to populate our towns and cities with great success. They are superb hunters, able to sprint, turn and jump with surprising ease for dog.

**BREEDING** – Red Foxes mate during the winter months with the pair staying together to act as parents to the new born kits after a gestation period of between 51 and 53 days. The kits are born blind and stay in the den for several weeks before venturing out to play and follow their parents, after three months the cubs are left to fend for themselves, helped by the abundance of food to be found during the long summer months, they receive sexual maturity roughly a year after birth.



**PREDATORS** – Man, either by hunting, shooting, poisoning.

**OTHER FACTS** – Foxes are considered a pest by many farmers although it is difficult to judge their impact on the land, they do provide a service in keeping rabbit and rat numbers in check. The banning of fox hunting in the UK could actually bring a downturn in foxes due to the potential for increasing numbers being shot or poisoned as hunting never took a major toll on numbers.