

Fabulous FOX Facts

The red fox is one of Britain's much loved mammals, but how much do you know about it?

- **The red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) is the most widely distributed wild carnivore.** It naturally occurs across North America, Eurasia and Japan, even as far north as the Arctic Circle.
- **Foxes are highly adaptable,** living in habitats as diverse as tundra, forests, deserts, wetlands and cities, and eating a huge variety of food types.
- **Foxes have strong family ties.** Young foxes often stay with their parents for a few years and help raise future cubs.
- **The dominant male and female fox form a pair that often lasts for life.** Although they hunt and feed separately, they regularly meet to groom each other and play.
- **Foxes mate in mid-winter and females give birth between March – May.** The 4-5 cubs are born deaf and blind, relying on their mother for warmth and their father for food. Cubs leave their parents in early autumn and search for their own territory.
- **Foxes use 28 different types of calls to communicate with each other.** They also use facial expressions and body postures similar to domestic dogs, like wagging their tail when they greet family members.
- **Their hearing and sense of smell are much better than ours.** They can hear a watch ticking 120 feet (36 metres) away and smell food that has been sealed in a bag or buried underground.



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We work to expose and end the cruelty inflicted on animals in the name of sport

Busting FOX Myths

Foxes are often made out as pests by those who want to persecute them, but the facts don't support the demonisation of this iconic British species. Here we bust some common fox myths...

Foxes are one of Britain's most popular mammals – according to a recent Mammal Society survey. And despite the media hype, only 8% of people dislike urban foxes while 66% of people are fans.

Foxes are farmers' friends. By feeding on rabbits, the staple diet of rural foxes, they save British crop farmers around £7 million every year. In its lifetime, one fox is worth up to £900 in extra revenue to farmers.

Fox numbers in the UK are stable. Annual surveys show that rural numbers have remained around 225,000 adults for the past decade. Urban numbers are holding steady at 33,000, although bad human habits may be causing an increase in boldness.

Foxes are often easy scapegoats. According to Defra, 95% of lamb losses are due to poor farming practices, with confirmed losses to foxes less than 1%.

Killing foxes does not control fox numbers. A dead animal leaves an empty territory that is filled by a new fox within 2-3 days. Fox numbers are controlled by food and territory availability.

You can help dispel the myths surrounding foxes by becoming a fox defender. Talk to people about the facts, challenge them when they come out with fox myths, make sure you sign up to our campaign to keep cruelty history and be ready to take action to defend the Hunting Act.

Find more fox facts at www.league.org.uk/foxfacts

Sign up to our e-campaigner list at www.league.org.uk/register

