

# Nature Notes

## Red Fox



Although they have a reputation for being bold and cunning, the red fox is in fact a shy, secretive animal. A member of the dog family, the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) looks like a coyote but is smaller and much



lighter in bone mass. There is some variation in their colour from red through to grey, but they all have black-backed ears, black lower legs, white underbelly and a white tail tip. Their tail is long and bushy being half their body length.

*Red fox in snow by Shiretoko-Shari Tourist Assoc.* Red foxes are omnivores with a highly varied diet that changes with the season but rodents are their main prey. Their auditory perception is acute, pinpointing the location of their prey by sound then leaping, steering in mid-air with their tails. They can hear a mouse squeak at 100 meters. Hunting times are early morning and late evening.



*Hunting fox by Andres Licona*

Solitary except for breeding season and kit rearing, they live in the open, preferring densely vegetated areas. The females come into heat in late winter when the pair will den. Dens are at the end of a long underground burrow. The kits are born two months later with five being the average number.

A few lucky people have seen foxes in the Kimberley Nature Park.

Visit [www.kimberleynaturepark.ca](http://www.kimberleynaturepark.ca) for a hard copy or more information about Nature Park events.