

YOU CAN HELP

Some backyard activities actually attract foxes. You can make changes in your backyard to reduce the damage caused by foxes.

- Never feed foxes
- Feed pets inside or clean and remove outside pet bowls immediately after use
- Stop feeding native wildlife including birds
- Cover your compost heap
- Compost fruit which has fallen from fruiting trees
- Remove environmental weeds like Blackberry, Honeysuckle and Asparagus Fern as foxes eat their berries potentially spreading the seeds far and wide (ask Blue Mountains City Council for information on removing weeds)
- Fox proof chicken pens and other pet enclosures (ask for the *Pest Proof Your Backyard* fact-sheet)
- Note and report all fox sightings in the Blue Mountains to National Parks or Council (contact numbers on back page)
- Educate your family and friends about how they can also help to reduce fox damage
- Organise an educational activity by a Discovery Ranger for your group, 02 4784 7300
- Become a Wildlife Monitoring Volunteer (contact numbers on back page)
- Support local fox research and control programs.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The Blue Mountains Urban Fox Steering Committee prepared this brochure. Other information produced by this Committee includes:

- 'Pest Proof Your Backyard' factsheet
- Blue Mountains Urban Fox Program Strategy
- Blue Mountains Urban Fox Program Public Survey
- Blue Mountains Urban Fox Program Ecological Review / Discussion Paper

For further information please contact one of the government agencies on the Blue Mountains Urban Fox Steering Committee. The committee has representation from:

- National Parks and Wildlife Service, part of Department of Environment and Conservation (NSW), (02 4784 7308)
- Blue Mountains City Council (02 4780 5000)
- Sydney Catchment Authority (02 4782 9132)
- NSW Agriculture (02 6391 3804)
- Rural Lands Protection Board (02 6331 1377)
- Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute
- Blue Mountains Conservation Society
- the community
- a local veterinarian



INFORMATION

FOXES in the Blue Mountains



Foxes are not native animals. They are a major pest to wildlife and agriculture across Australia.

In the Blue Mountains foxes are found from national parks to suburban backyards. More foxes are found in urban areas than large bushland reserves because they can find more food such as food scraps, pet food, insects, berries, road-kill animals, chickens and wildlife in these areas. Foxes are found at rubbish tips, golf courses, school grounds and backyards in the Blue Mountains. They are usually active at night, so some people have never seen them.



FOX IMPACTS ARE COMPLEX

- Few studies on foxes have occurred in the Blue Mountains, so not much is known about the effect of foxes on native animals in this area.
- Foxes are most likely to affect particular wildlife populations including medium sized mammals that live on the ground such as bandicoots and birds that live or nest on the ground such as lyrebirds.
- Even though foxes are known to eat a wide range of native animals not all wildlife populations may be affected by foxes.
- Foxes can cause other problems such as spreading weeds (eg Blackberry), spreading disease (eg mange) and attacking pets (eg chickens and guinea pigs).
- Foxes may also help in keeping down numbers of other pests such as wild rabbits and feral cats.
- More research is needed to better understand the effects of foxes in the Blue Mountains.



FOX CONTROL IS COMPLEX

- Good pest control is about controlling damage rather than simply removing pests.

If you remove a fox another fox may

simply move into it's territory and the problem continues. Good fox management needs significant planning and on-going monitoring to ensure that it is effective.

- By removing food sources attractive to foxes you can lessen damage caused by foxes to your property. Be sure to protect chickens in fox-proof pens, feed your pets inside and cover your compost.

- Where fox control is necessary, the poison called "1080" is widely used in Australia. 1080 does not accumulate in the environment, however it has no antidote. "Best practice" guidelines for 1080 fox baiting have been developed to protect wildlife - especially Spotted-tailed Quoll populations. These guidelines include burying baits that are not poisonous to check if anything else is eating them, checking baits daily, burying baits over 500 m apart and only burying poisonous 1080 baits where quolls are not active.

- Other control measures such as trapping and shooting have been shown to have limited success.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS REGION?



Fox management programs currently running in the Blue Mountains region include:

- Protection programs for the threatened brush-tail rock wallaby. Localised fox baiting using 1080 is undertaken at brush-tail rock wallaby sites by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. This program is part of the NSW *Threat Abatement Plan for Predation by the Red Fox*.
- Wild dog and fox baiting programs using 1080 are undertaken to limit the movement of these pests in the boundary areas between national parks and private agricultural lands by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- Educational material for residents by the Blue Mountains Urban Fox Steering Committee. The Committee includes community representatives, community groups and government agencies.

