

Strategies to Reduce Red Foxes in Urban Areas

Red Foxes are a widespread and inescapable urban pest. While not dangerous to humans, they can be a threat to small backyard pets including rabbits, guinea pigs, poultry and aviary birds. Foxes also pose a threat to many species of native wildlife.

Trapping and poisoning foxes are not feasible or effective in urban environments. There are, however, some simple strategies that can be utilised to reduce availability of resources to foxes. While foxes are very difficult to exclude completely, implementing these strategies concurrently can help to reduce fox numbers and density.

Reduce access to shelter sites

- Remove dense, bushy vegetation with complex structure, such as Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*) and Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)
- Remove piles of vegetative debris, such as branches and cuttings, or hollow logs
- Seal off areas where foxes might get under or between houses or sheds
- Cover large drains with wire or a steel grate
- Stack piles of building materials neatly or for short periods to reduce piles that may provide shelter for foxes.



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Reduce access to food items

- Keep rubbish bins secure
- Remove access to food scraps. This can include: Fallen fruit from trees, blackberries or other fruiting weeds. Pet food bowls, bones or scraps
- Foxes are opportunistic so remove anything that may be a type of food
- Control rodents on your property, preferable through trapping and disposal to prevent secondary poisoning of avifauna that may prey on poisoned rodents
- Keep external aviaries and chicken coops secure, preferably enclosed. Fences should be at least 2 metres high and with a 30cm overhang at the top. Foxes are good diggers, so ensure the fence is buried at least 50cm or install a wire skirting.

References

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Photograph Reference

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