

THE AMERICAN BIOLOGY TEACHER



About Our Cover

The red fox kit on the cover was photographed in a wooded area in North Hero, Vermont, along the shores of Lake Champlain. North Hero is one of the many islands found in Lake Champlain, which is 120 miles in length and separates Upstate New York from Vermont.

Red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) can live in diverse habitats, including forests, farmland, grasslands, suburban areas, mountains, and deserts. They are lone hunters, and their diet comprises a wide range of foods, including rabbits, rodents, birds, fishes, frogs, fruits, and vegetables.

Red foxes mate during winter, and a female can produce a litter of two to 12 kits. The kit that is pictured on the cover was part of a litter of seven. At birth, the kits are brown or gray; within four weeks they typically grow a new red coat. The den for this litter of kits was dug at the base of a tree on the slope that went from the wooded area to the lakeshore. Both parents take care of their kits from spring until fall, as was the case for this family of kits. The photographer had the pleasure of watching this family (from a distance) on her property.

The average life span in the wild for the red fox is two to four years. They can weigh 6–24 pounds.

This photo was taken using a Nikon D3200 with an F stop of f/5.6, ISO of 3200, and focal length of 300 mm.

The photographer is Nancy L. Elwess, a Distinguished Teaching Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. She lives in North Hero, Vermont.

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