



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth Parks and Recreation Division

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SUBJECT: Park Point residents, visitors asked not to feed wild foxes.

BY: Amy Norris, Public Information Coordinator

Park Point residents, visitors asked not to feed wild foxes.

Residents and visitors of Duluth's Park Point are asked not to feed the wild foxes that have become a more common sight in that area in recent months, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) said.

DNR wildlife managers are receiving increasing numbers of calls from area residents concerned about habituated foxes approaching people and homes.

A city ordinance prohibits feeding deer and bears, but not other wildlife specifically. Despite the absence of a city ban on feeding wild animals, wildlife managers advise against the practice.

"Feeding wildlife may appear harmless, but it leads to a number of problems for the animal and can create conflicts with your neighbors who may not be comfortable having wildlife close to their children, pets and homes," said DNR assistant wildlife manager, Martha Minchak. "We've received complaints of nearly tame foxes stepping over people on the beach, and attempting to follow people into their homes. Some people enjoy the interaction, but others are quite upset by it."

Wild foxes are not generally considered a threat to people, but can be carriers of canine diseases such as mange, rabies, parvo virus and others that can spread to domesticated pets, livestock and people. Problems can be exacerbated when human-fed animals concentrate in feeding areas, or their population is unnaturally inflated by feeding.

People can discourage foxes from frequenting their property by:

- Removing food sources such as pet food, from decks and other outdoor areas.
- Store trash indoors or in a shed or garage, until removal day.
- Haze or yell to frighten the animals and discourage them from returning.

As a general rule, the DNR does not provide trapping services to relocate nuisance animals. Habituated animals that have lost the ability to hunt for their own food are less likely to survive elsewhere, create similar problems in a new location, or interrupt other animal's home ranges. The best solution is to not create the problem by feeding wildlife.

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