



# Simsbury Police Department

*"In Partnership With Our Community"*



## Mange in Fox and Coyote

Sarcoptic mange is probably the biggest killer of red foxes and coyotes in CT. It is a highly contagious disease and can be easily spread. It is caused by an infestation of *Sarcoptes scabiei canis*, a burrowing mite, causing intense itching from an allergic reaction to the mite and resulting in hair loss. Secondary skin infection is also common.

The season of the year and weather conditions can influence how readily afflicted animals may succumb to the disease. If the animals have mange in the winter they typically do not (or rarely) survive. In late spring or summer they can survive the infection, and some might even improve if their immune system is not too compromised.

All red foxes and coyotes may have a few of the mange mites on their body, but the weak and stressed animals (young, old, injured, etc.) are the most susceptible. The mites are spread through contact with sites (dens, etc.) where the mites are present or through contact with infected animals (other coyotes or foxes). In that sense, it's a "social" disease. Although a healthy animal, well fed and non-stressed, may have the mites present on their body, their immune system fights off and overcomes any problems.

Gray foxes don't have a problem with mange. Domestic dogs can get mange by contact with an infected animal but are of course easily treated. Treatment of wild animals is difficult and not advised.



Coyote with mange –  
Note condition of normally bushy tail

Mange is a serious skin infection caused by parasites. These parasites take any warm-blooded animal as their host, and cause serious skin irritation. Coyotes are particularly vulnerable to parasites due to their dirty living conditions and frequent malnutrition.

Mange exhibits itself in hair loss and thick, crusty skin. Symptoms are common on a coyote's chest and face but may spread over its entire body. The coyote's coat will take on a patchy, moth-eaten appearance that develops into baldness with the progression of mange.

If an infected animal is observed acting sickly, contact Simsbury Animal Control (860) 658-3110, Simsbury Police (860) 658-3100, or the DEEP Wildlife Division (860) 424-3333.