



U.S. Forces Europe Hunting, Fishing, and Sport Shooting Program Guide to Hunting in Germany

08I – PREDATORY GAME (*RAUBWILD*)

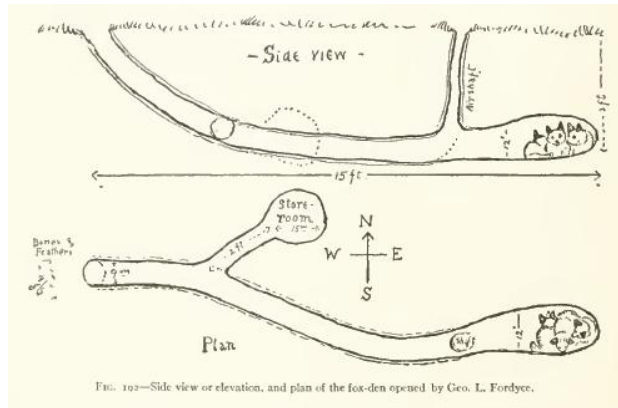
(1) Red Fox (*Fuchs*)



Red fox (*Rotfuchs*)



Red fox kit (*Rotfuchskitz*)



Fox den (*Fuchsbau*)

Young foxes wear gray sheep-like wool at birth which is then replaced by a gray-brown coat after about a month. In July or August they then grow the adult coloration.



Guide to Hunting in Germany

The Red fox changes their coat in April or May, when the thick winter fur is shed. The summer coat fully replaces the shed winter coat, and then the summer coat grows out into a winter coat in autumn.

Normal Red Fox coloration is not the only pattern found in this animal. The “Birkfuchs” has a yellow-red back, white throat and a very large tail. There is also a “Kreuzfuchs” which carries a dark spine stripe crossed by a shoulder stripe, hence the name.



Various Red fox color mutations

It is extremely difficult to differentiate between the genders of Foxes from a distance. Naturally during urination the Fox behaves like all canines, the male lifting his leg and the female squatting. Females may also be accompanied by and suckled by their young.

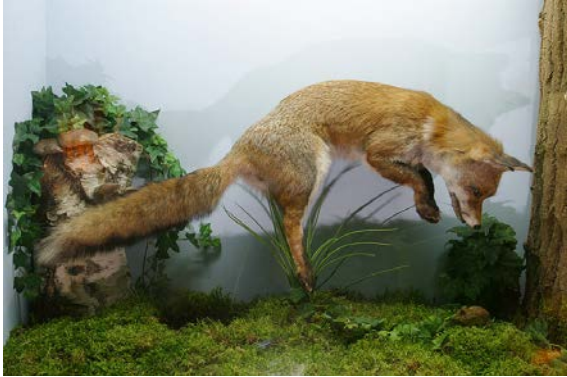
Traditionally during the winter and spring only the male animal was taken, however new studies have indicated that the male also plays a role in rearing the young. This means that hunting for Fox should be limited to those who are sure not to have offspring.

The best way is by observation of the den and trapping of all the young. Once the young are eliminated the adult animals may be taken. Although this sounds hard, the Fox presents a problem for all other small game, due to their increased numbers, and to man in the form of Rabies (*Tollwut*) and Fox band worm (*Fuchsbandwurm*).



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Guide to Hunting in Germany



Museum display of Red fox attacking prey



Diseased (Mange) Red fox

During the 1980s, intensive immunization against Rabies was carried out in the form of treated bait. This led to an explosion in the Fox population and a dramatic decrease in other small game. Pheasants were one of the hardest hit species with Rabbit and Hare close behind.

As one of the mandatory duties placed by law (*Bundesjagdgesetz*) on hunters for the protection of all game, Fox numbers must be reduced where problems occur.



Red fox with rodent prey

Feeding: Technically the Fox is an omnivore. However the vast portion of its diet is meat. It will consume about one kilo a day with Field Mice being the in majority of its feed. Rabbits and young hares are also easily caught and consumed. The Fox will prey on almost all small game, and even attack Roe fawn during lean years.



Guide to Hunting in Germany

Usually a good "Mouse year" is also a good "Rabbit year" and predatory damage is not as noticeable. In lean years, the Fox will consume birds, eggs, unprotected young animals, fruits, carrion, dung, larvae, bugs, fish and amphibians, (almost anything).

Foxes sometimes share the den with a badger. This presents a danger to earth dogs (*Erdhunde*) who must be trained to avoid Badgers. This is done by hooking a dead Badger to electricity and allowing the dog to nose/bite the dead animal.

The den is only carpeted with lichen and grasses during the birth and rearing of the young. Dens also usually have more than one exit. One form of hunting the Fox is to use the aforementioned dog to "spring" the foxes from the den.

Further means of taking Fox include during drive hunts and on the high seat where the Fox presents an opportunity. If you take a Fox from the high seat, and is known to be down, the hunter should stay in place quietly. It is not unknown, by any means, that after shooting one Fox, others will come by in a short time.

The Fox does not seem to be panicked by gunshots. A Fox's main sense of defense is its sense of smell, which is very acute, and its hearing. Vision is based on movement and there is a debate on the Fox being colorblind.

Tooth formula is: $\frac{3 \ 1 \ 4 \ 2}{3 \ 1 \ 4 \ 3}$ for 42 teeth.

Trophies from the Red fox are the pelt (*Fuchspelz*) and the canine teeth (*Zähne*), which are worked into jewelry.

