



GAME COUNCIL

New South Wales

CONSERVATION HUNTING

Procedures for taking fox scats

The Tasmanian Fox Eradication Branch requires fox scats for training tracker dogs as part of their five-year campaign to eradicate the introduced red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) from the island state. Fresh fox scats will be an ongoing requirement for the next three months.

Taking samples

Samples from hunted foxes are best obtained via the rear of the fresh carcass. Scats should be as fresh as possible. A specimen jar or sample bottle with a water-proof lid is ideal for storing the scats. Where this isn't possible some other closed container such as a seal-locked bag could be used. The scats should be kept refrigerated once collected. If they are to be forwarded to Game Council NSW within a couple of days, refrigeration will be fine. If the scats are to be kept for more than three days, they should be frozen. Contact Program Coordinator, Chris Lane, at the NSW Department of Primary Industries' Vertebrate Pest Research Unit on (02) 6391 3897 for details on how specimens should be sent if you are not in the Orange district of NSW.

Safety

Fox scats, as well as containing large amounts of organisms and bacteria, can also carry Hydatids; a tiny tapeworm (*Echinococcus granulosus*). Hydatids are most common in the sheep-farming areas of New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, southwest Western Australia and eastern Queensland. Hydatids form cysts in the organs of infected humans such as the liver, lungs, and kidneys with toxic shock caused by the cysts bursting having proven fatal in a number of cases. It is therefore recommended that hunters, use latex or other rubber gloves when taking fox scats and dispose of the gloves afterwards. Also observe normal hunter hygiene when in contact with foxes and wash-up thoroughly after contact.

For more information, contact Chris Lane at NSW Department of Primary Industries on (02) 6391 3897 or Game Council NSW on (02) 6360 5111.

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