

## Who are the *Friends of the Island Fox*?

We are concerned private citizens and conservation professionals working to create public awareness about the island fox and the California Channel Islands. FIF raises funds to support education, research, and conservation efforts to ensure the island fox's survival and to protect its island home.

**Find out more at  
[islandfox.org](http://islandfox.org)**

### The island fox's long-term survival depends on education

FIF provides education programs to community groups and schools from kindergarten through college. Contact us at [info@islandfox.org](mailto:info@islandfox.org).



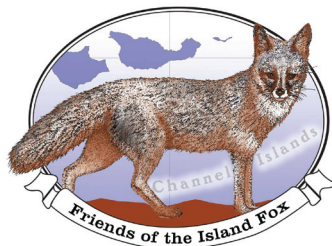
## Friends of the Island Fox



Photo by Mike Watling

*Working together to protect the island fox  
and the California Channel Islands*

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[islandfox.org](http://islandfox.org)  
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EIN# 84-5114320

## A rare local *treasure*

Island foxes (*Urocyon  
littoralis*) live on six of  
California's eight Channel  
Islands and nowhere else

in the world. They are one of the smallest members  
of the dog family, similar in size to a domestic  
Chihuahua.

Each island has a separate subspecies  
of island fox with different physical  
and behavioral traits. The two smaller  
islands—San Miguel and San Nicolas— typically sustain  
350 foxes, while the larger islands—Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa,  
Santa Catalina, and San Clemente—are each home to an  
estimated 1,000 to 2,400 individuals. At the best of times,  
island foxes are rare.

In 2000, island foxes on four islands nearly went extinct. The  
San Miguel and Santa Rosa populations fell to just 15 surviving  
foxes on each island. On Santa Cruz and Santa Catalina, the  
populations declined by over 90%. The four subspecies were  
federally listed as Endangered in 2004.



Photo by Eric Gotthelf

## Why did the island fox almost disappear?

Historically, bald eagles lived across the  
Channel Islands and kept other large  
birds of prey away. (Bald eagles eat fish  
and seabirds, not foxes.) By the 1960s,  
bald eagles declined because of high  
levels of the pesticide DDT in ocean fish.  
DDT caused thin egg shells, which broke  
before hatching. Fewer and fewer eaglets  
survived, until bald eagles disappeared  
from the islands and southern California.

The island fox knew no natural  
predator. It hunted openly during the  
day. Without bald eagles, golden eagles  
came to the islands to hunt introduced  
pigs. Tiny island foxes were an easy  
meal. Within a few years, golden eagles  
hunted island foxes to near extinction.

At the same time, canine distemper virus  
was introduced to Catalina Island and  
the island foxes were nearly wiped out.



## Why is it important to save island foxes?

The island fox is a “keystone species.” It interacts with many plants and animals. Without the island fox:

- Island deer mice populations skyrocket. Mice over-consume island plants and prey on the eggs and young of low-nesting birds.
- Island spotted skunk populations increase and prey on endangered sea birds.

With the island fox:

- Native island plants like toyon, redberry, and manzanita flourish because the island fox eats and disperses their seeds.
- Insects and birds that rely on these plants thrive, as do the reptiles and smaller mammals that depend on insects for food.
- Healthy plant communities reduce soil erosion and benefit kelp forests surrounding the Channel Islands.
- Fish and crustacean species use the healthy kelp forests as a nursery and provide food for other species like people and bald eagles.

## Your contributions support

- Radio-tracking collars to monitor island fox survival
- Vaccinating island foxes against distemper and rabies
- Research into island fox behavior, health, and connections with other island species
- “Fox-Saver” trash bins and other efforts to protect foxes from human impacts
- Educating the public to help this rare species
- Diagnostic efforts to safeguard island fox health
- Signage to alert motorists to slow down for island foxes

Island foxes have made a phenomenal recovery and were removed from Endangered status in 2016. The Catalina Island fox continues to be listed as Threatened because of its greater exposure to people and their impacts.

Extinction is no longer an impending threat, but the work continues to keep island foxes safe.

## Ready to make a difference?

**\$20** Can vaccinate an island fox

**\$50** Helps safely test an island fox for disease

**\$100** Supports a classroom presentation

**\$220** Can refurbish a used radio-tracking collar

**\$350** Can put a new radio-tracking collar on an island fox

**\$1000** Supports island fox research

**\$5000** Can vaccinate island foxes across an entire island for a year

### What are radio collars?



Photo by Mike Watling

Radio collars are a first alert system for introduced diseases, injuries, golden eagle attacks, and other threats to island foxes. A radio transmitter on a small collar lets biologists track individuals and respond quickly when island foxes are in danger.

## Donation

☐ I would like to help the island fox by donating \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I'm interested in volunteering to spread the word about island foxes. Please contact me with volunteering opportunities.

Please print:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to receive FIF's e-newsletter

☐ Check enclosed payable to Friends of the Island Fox

Please mail to:

Friends of the Island Fox  
2390 C Las Posas Road, Suite #120  
Camarillo, CA 93010

Donations can also be made by credit card or via FIF's secure web connection at **islandfox.org**.

*All donations are tax-deductible under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.*

