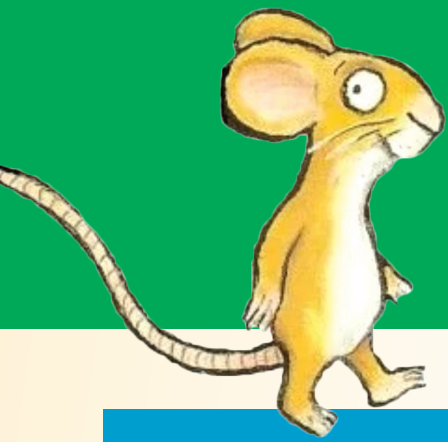




NORTH AMERICAN DEERMOUSE



WHITE-FOOTED MOUSE



MOUSE

Mice are rodents, meaning their incisors (the front pair of teeth, top and bottom) never stop growing throughout their lives. Therefore, they must chew on things regularly to keep their teeth sharp and small enough to fit in their mouth. Other common rodents include rats, squirrels, voles, and beavers. Hamsters, gerbils, and guinea pigs are also rodents.

THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES LISTS THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF MICE IN OHIO: House Mouse, North American Deermouse, Eastern Harvest Mouse, White-footed Mouse, Meadow Jumping Mouse, and Woodland Jumping Mouse.

If you have a mouse in your house, it's most likely a House Mouse or the North American Deermouse. Occasionally found in fields, house mice usually live in buildings in close association with humans. Deer mice are found in forests, grasslands, brushlands, agricultural fields, and deserts.

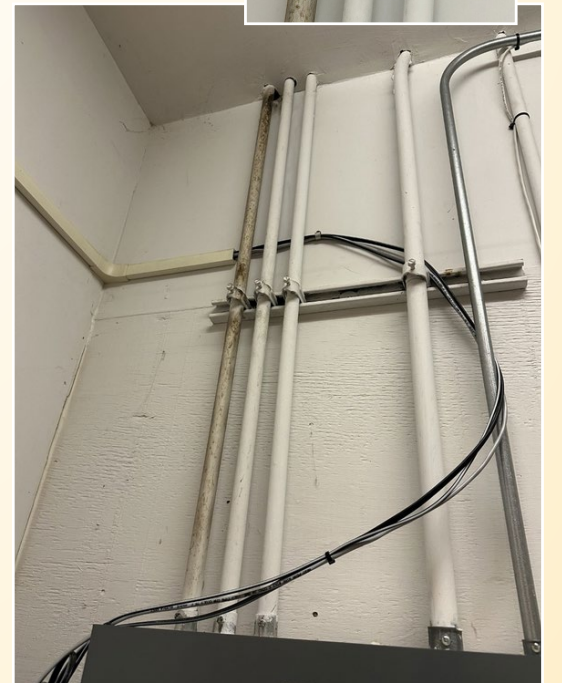
House mice can have several litters per year, with each litter usually producing 3-11 young. The gestation period (the time from conception to birth) is 18-21 days. Deer mice usually have 2-4 litters per year, averaging 5-6 young, but up to 11 young.

- **Baby mice are called pups.**
- Young mice can fit through a hole the diameter of a pencil.
- Adult mice can fit through a hole the diameter of a dime.

- **Mice can jump up to two feet high from standing still, and possibly higher from a running start.**
- A common house mouse can run up to 8mph, which is equivalent to a 5'10" human running 160mph!
- **Mice are excellent climbers.**

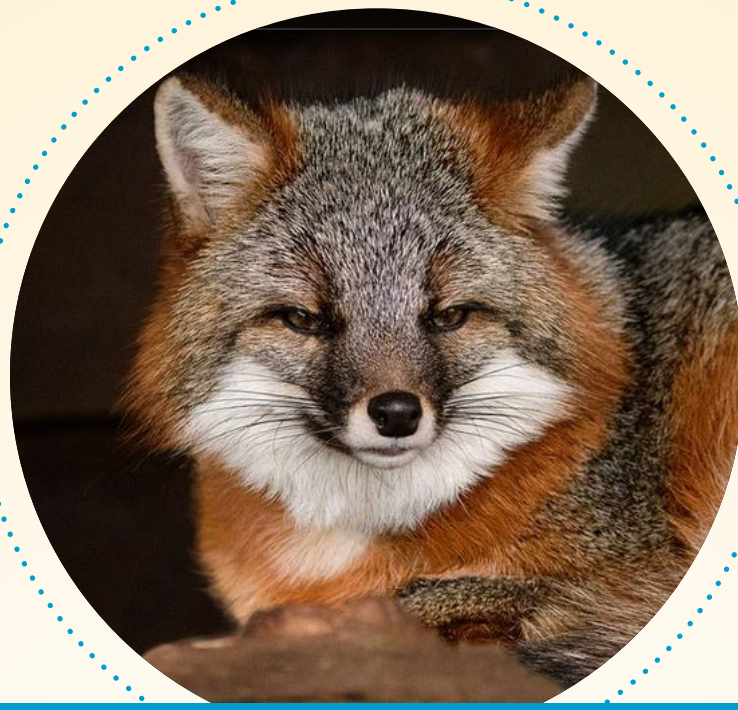
Mice are omnivores, meaning they will eat almost anything they can find in the wild, including seeds, grains, fruits, berries, fungi, acorns, nuts, insects, and other animals (alive or dead). If mice get into your house and discover your food, they'll eat that, too.

Guess which conduit the mice climb

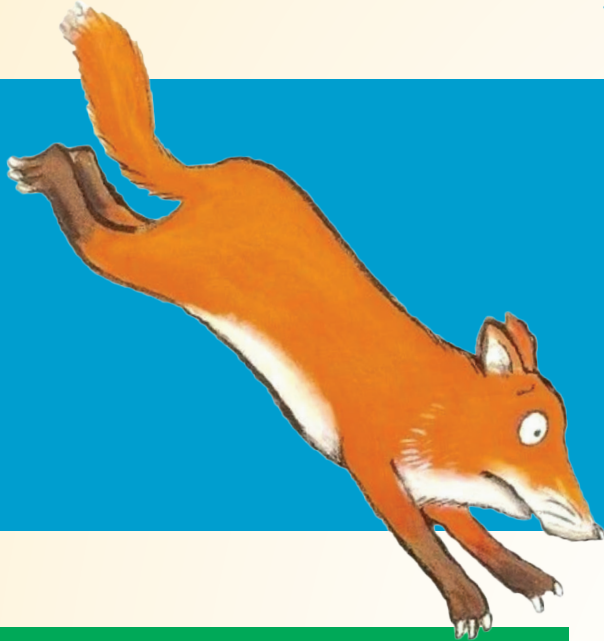




RED FOX



GRAY FOX



FOX

Foxes are canines, which also include wolves, coyotes, and domesticated dogs

- Canines tend to be slender, long-legged animals with long muzzles, bushy tails and erect pointed ears
- “Canine” can refer to any of the four pointed teeth behind the incisors in most mammals (also known as “eye teeth”).

Young foxes are called pups, kits, or cubs

- Foxes tend to be more solitary animals (unlike wolves, which travel in packs)
 - A group of foxes is called a “skulk” or a “leash”

Foxes eat small mammals, insects, and a variety of fruit, but will opportunistically eat available human food or garbage.

Foxes hunt like cats, stalking their prey, and often pouncing. They also have vertically oriented pupils (like cats) that help them see in dim light.

Normally nocturnal (most active at night) and/or crepuscular (most active dawn and dusk)

Foxes have moveable ears that help them locate prey

Foxes are found on every continent except Antarctica

Depending on the species, adult foxes weigh anywhere between two and 24 pounds

Female foxes are called “vixens” and males are called “dogs”

Some fox species can run up to 42mph

Foxes can jump three feet in the air and climb fences

Foxes are known to make up to 40 different sounds

OHIO IS HOME TO TWO TYPES OF FOX

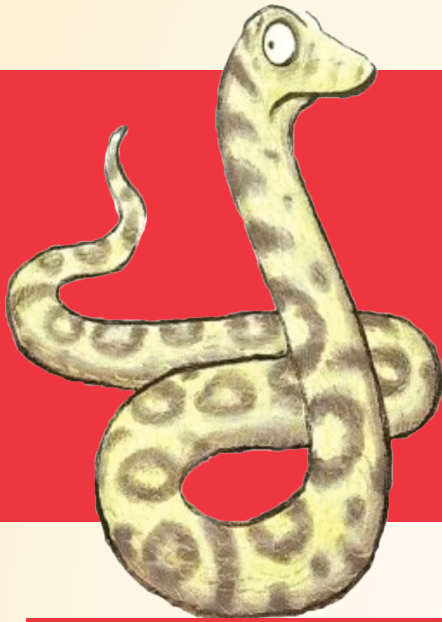
- **Red Fox**
 - Variety of habitats: mixed, cultivated, wooded, brush lands
 - Mating in winter; litter of up to 10 young born in spring
 - Young stay with parents about seven months before striking out on their own
 - Most common fox
- **Gray Fox**
 - Habitats: mostly wooded areas and partial brush land with little human presence
 - Mating in early spring; litter of up to four young born after 53-day gestation
 - Population appears to be declining in Ohio as more forested land is depleted (red foxes move in, as they’re more adaptable)
 - Have semi-retractable claws, which helps keep them sharp
 - Only species of canid (dogs) that can climb trees
 - Home range of 1-2 miles



COPPERHEAD SNAKE



EASTERN FOX SNAKE



SNAKE

Snakes are reptiles, meaning they are air-breathing, cold-blooded (they rely on the temperature of their surrounding environment to maintain body temperature), and have scaly bodies (instead of fur or feathers).

- Most reptiles lay eggs.
- Some reptiles, including certain species of snakes, give birth to live young

THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES LISTS 26 SPECIES OF SNAKES IN OHIO.

Largest snake in Ohio is the Gray Ratsnake, which can grow to over six feet long.

Snakes are carnivores, meaning they eat meat. Depending on the size and species, their diet may include insects, amphibians, birds, eggs, mammals, reptiles, worms, slugs, fish, etc.

Snakes do not chew. They grab prey with their mouths and swallow their prey whole.

- Most snakes have teeth, but not all snakes have fangs
 - Only venomous snakes have fangs

Snakes can swallow prey that is larger than their head

Snakes have strong digestive juices that enable them to dissolve fur, feathers, bones, and even teeth!

Snakes move by shifting their scales in different configurations

In Ohio, and other areas with cold winters, reptiles and amphibians brumate over the winter.

- Brumation – As temperatures drop, snakes stop eating, their metabolism slows, and they look for subsurface (underground) areas to hide from surface temperature changes, preferably below the frost line
 - A **hibernaculum** is an area where possibly hundreds of snakes are brumating
 - Several species of snakes might share a hibernaculum
 - If snakes can't find natural areas underground, they might brumate in rotting logs, mulch piles, or even buildings
 - Snakes are less active in winter, but they might come out for water if the temperature rises enough. They still won't eat until spring.

Most snakes depend on their sense of smell to find food

- A snake smells the air for prey (live food) by flicking its forked tongue out into the air, then drawing it back into its mouth where receptors, called the Jacobson organ, pick up any of the scent molecules its tongue caught from the air. A snake's nostrils pick up some scent, but are mostly used for breathing.

Snakes cannot blink because they don't have eyelids – they have a spectacle (or “eye cap”) to protect their eyes

- Before shedding a snake sheds its skin, new lenses grow into place and the old spectacles are shed with the rest of the old skin

Most snakes are defensive, rather than aggressive, meaning that if you don't bother them they won't bother you



EASTERN SCREECH OWL



GREAT HORNED OWL



OWL



Owls are raptors – birds of prey that have sharp hooked beaks, strong talons (claws), very good eyesight, and a carnivorous diet (they eat meat).

THREE SPECIES OF OWL ARE CONSIDERED COMMON IN OHIO: Eastern screech owl; barred owl; great horned owl. Nine other species appear in Ohio, but are considered far less common.

- For instance, Snowy Owls don't nest in Ohio, but each year a few appear here. They nest in the Arctic tundra, with the closest nesting site nearly 2000 miles to our north.
 - There are only 19 regularly-occurring owl species in North America

Owls have exceptional and specialized hearing

- Some species of owl have offset ear openings that better allow them to triangulate the origin of a sound (figure out from exactly where the sound is coming)

Owls cannot chew

- Small prey is swallowed whole
- Larger prey is ripped apart using the owl's powerful sharp beak
- Indigestible parts (bones, fur, etc) are regurgitated as "owl pellets" a few hours after a meal

Owls have specialized vision

- Their eyes are enormous relative to their body size
 - Allow them to more efficiently process light, which is especially important for the majority of species that hunt at night
 - Might be as much as 5% of the owl's total body weight (human eyes make up 0.0003% of our weight)
- Owl eyes can't rotate like yours because owl eyes aren't round – they're elongated
 - Their eyes are forward-facing only – to see something on the side, an owl must turn its head
 - The owl can turn its head 270 degrees (almost all the way around!) because owls have 14 vertebrae in their necks (humans only have seven)
 - Owls have the most forward-facing eyes of any birds
- Owls have nictitating membranes – clear "third eyelids" they can close to protect their eyes when they swoop down to grab prey
- Owls can dilate and contract the pupil of each eye independently to control the amount of light hitting the retina of each eye

Owls wings have specialized feathers which muffle their sound during flight, making them almost completely silent and allowing owls to better ambush prey