

## FOX SQUIRRELS

Common Name: fox squirrel

Other Names: Sherman's fox squirrel, mangrove fox squirrel

Scientific Name: Sciurus niger

Appearance:

length	- about 24 inches, including 12 inch tail
weight	- between 2 and 2 1/2 pounds
color	- rusty tan body and tail; dark head and white on nose and ears; dark forms occur, but white on nose and ears is still evident

Range: - dry sandy pinelands statewide; endangered south of Lake Okeechobee

Habitat:

- upland pine forests, usually dominated by longleaf or south Florida slash pine
- rarely found in urbanized area

Diet:

- mostly pine seeds in summer, acorns at other times
- rarely vegetation, bird eggs, nestling birds and insects

Reproduction: - 2 to 4 young per litter; up to 2 litters per year

Behavior:

- active during day, sometimes foraging on ground
- natural shyness can disappear when fed
- distinctive loping gait when active on ground

Problems:

- roosting in attics, crawl spaces, etc. in homes
- chewing on ornamental and potted plants
- eating fruit, nut and vegetable crops; digging in yard
- raiding bird feeders and other pet food
- damaging screens

Solutions:

- removing attractant (e.g., bird food) is effective when feasible
- repellents, scare devices and ultrasonics are not effective, although taste repellents may solve short-term chewing problems to non-edible objects

Continued...

Legal Aspects: - Fox squirrels are protected in Florida and may not be trapped or killed unless permitted by the commission or during legal hunting seasons.