

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 9, 2010



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### **ANIMAL CONTROL INVESTIGATING FOX ATTACKS**

SUFFOLK, VA (May 9, 2010) Suffolk Animal Control are investigating two reports of a fox chasing and biting children Friday evening. Both incidents occurred in the 3800 block of Pughsville Road, and Animal Control believes the fox was killed by a neighbor's dog on Saturday.

Police were called to the first incident at approximately 7:30 p.m. They were advised that a seven year old little girl and two other children were playing in a small pool behind a residence when the seven year old was bitten twice on the chin by a fox. The child's mother heard her screaming and observed her being chased by the fox. The fox then began to chase the child's mother and bit her pants leg. The child's mother yelled to let the family dog out and she ran to a vehicle. The canine chased the fox away. The child was treated for her injuries at a local medical facility and released.

Police received a call to a second fox bite in the same area at approximately 9:30 p.m. The victim in this incident was a thirteen year old boy. The teen advised that he was standing outside with another child when a fox attacked and bit him. He advised that he yelled and kicked at the fox but it continued to come at him. When a neighbor came outside the fox ran away. Police and Animal Control responded. The child was treated for his injuries at a local medical facility and released. Animal Control placed out traps in efforts to catch the fox.

Saturday at approximately 1:00 p.m., a resident in that same area heard her dog growling and barking in the front yard of her residence. When she went outside she found that her pet Sharpei, Thunder, had killed a fox. The canine sustained scratches to both front legs in the effort.

Animal Control responded and they believe this to be the same fox that attacked neighboring children. The fox is being tested for rabies but results will not be available until later in the week.

Animal Control has issued some safety tips for dealing with wild animals:

- Vaccinate all pets against rabies and keep their shots up to date.
- Feed pets indoors and keep them on a leash or fenced in. Pets allowed to roam, especially cats, are more likely to contract rabies and expose you and other pets in your home.
- Animal-proof your home and yard. Cap your chimney, block openings in attics, cellars, decks, and under sheds to discourage wildlife from nesting.
- Store garbage in secure containers. Garbage attracts animals looking for an easy meal.
- **DO NOT FEED WILD ANIMALS OR STRAYS.** Wildlife are meant to live in the wild. Feeding them disrupts their natural life cycle and encourages dangerous contact with family members and pets.
- **DO NOT HANDLE WILD ANIMALS OR STRAYS.** If contact is unavoidable, use heavy gloves, sticks, or other tools to prevent direct contact.
- If wildlife (raccoons, foxes and opossums) is seen during the day, report to Animal Control. Also, contact Animal Control if there is an exposure with wildlife to humans or animals.

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