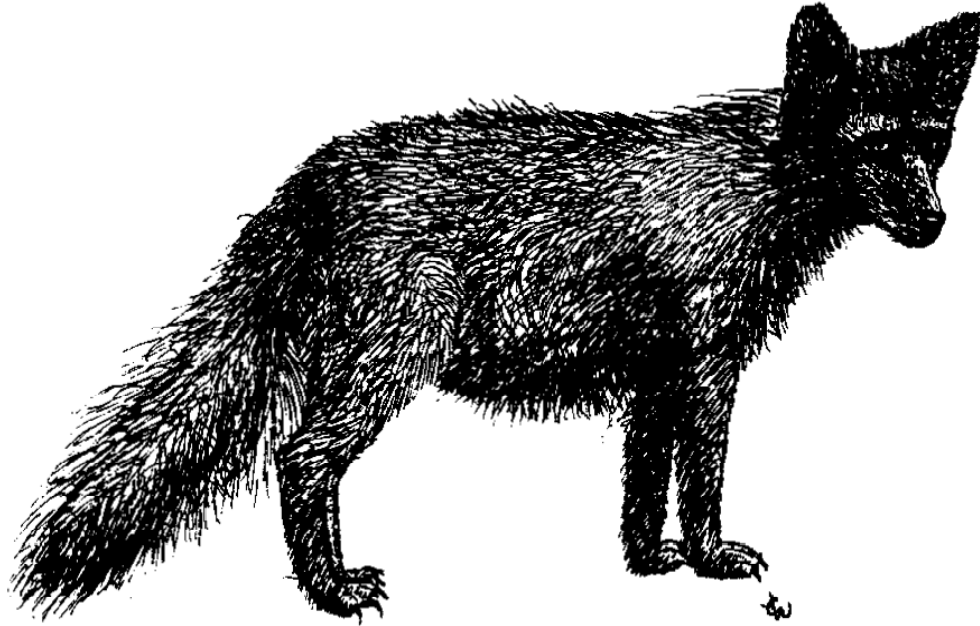


SUMMARY OF INTRODUCED ARCTIC FOX ERADICATION EFFORTS AT LITTLE
TANAGA ISLAND, 1989 TO 1996.



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As with so many islands in the Aleutian Islands, Little Tanaga Island was stocked with arctic foxes for fur farming purposes in 1922 (Bailey 1993). In an effort to restore native biodiversity, the staff of Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge began an effort in 1989 to try to remove the foxes by working there during short visits from Adak. The summary information presented below documents the trapping effort, results, and ultimately the clearing of Little Tanaga of introduced non-native foxes by 1996. The bulk of the take occurred in 1989 and 1990, but it was difficult to remove the last few foxes with this intermittent trapping approach, and ultimately foxes were found in 1994 on the high ridge at Cape Azamis in atypical habitat. These foxes may have been the source of the few animals that remained for so long.

Outline of trapping activities by year. AMNWR AIU Bio files refers to unpublished biological records of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Aleutian Islands Unit, archived in Homer Alaska.

1989

August 7-14. John Fink and Bob Bruff were on Little Tanaga. There were 11 foxes caught.
(Bruff 1999)

October 11-December 28. Adak personnel made at least 11 day trips to Little Tanaga between these dates. They caught a total of 22 foxes. (AMNWR AIU Bio files)

Total fox kill - 33

1990

April 9. There were 2 foxes were found dead, one in a cage trap at West Scripts and 1 in a leg-hold at Chisak (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

June 28. There were 2 dead foxes in cage traps, 1 in Piper Cove and 1 at East Scripts (AMNWR AIU BIO. files).

June 29. One female caught at Chisik (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

July 18. One male caught (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

July 28. Two dead foxes in Scripps Bay (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

Total fox kill – 8

1991

June 4. Jeff Williams and Jeff Lewis made a day trip to the island they rebait traps, no foxes are caught (AMNWR AIU BIO. files).

June 18. Vern Byrd and Geoff Beyersdorf made a day trip to the island. There was 1 male caught at Cape Azamis (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

June 22-27. Vern Byrd and Dan Boone rebaited traps that were already on island and set an additional 35 leg-hold traps. One nursing female was caught. (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

September 4. Jeff Williams and Jeff Lewis go to the island. They saw sign but caught no foxes (AMNWR AIU files).

Total fox kill - 2

1992

June 15 to 8 September. A crew trapped Umak, Igitkin and Little Tanaga in the summer of 1992. A total of 16 days were spent on Little Tanaga. About 67 traps were set and rebaited at intermittent checks, including 22 cage traps, 31 snares and 14 leg-hold traps. Seven foxes were taken including 2 males and 1 female fox that were caught at Narrows Bay on 22 June and 9 July, and the remains of 3 others caught in the winter at Midden. Other areas checked include West Scripts, East Scripts, Azamis, Chisik Bay, and the Scripps to Chisik trail (Fischer 1993).

Total fox kill - 7

1993

November 4. Jeff Williams and Greg Thomson go to the island and set 11 traps between Narrow and Scripts Bay. No foxes are killed or caught (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

November 14. Jeff Williams, Jeff Lewis and Greg Thomson go to Little Tanaga and check Scripts and Narrows Bay. The take for the day was 1 male in a cage trap and 3 females, one in a cage trap and 2 in leg-holds (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

November 18. Williams, Jeff Lewis and Greg Thomson go to Little Tanaga and check Scripts and Narrows Bay and set 6 leg-holds at Chisik Bay. A male fox was caught in a cage trap (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

Total fox kill - 5

1994

June 13-18. Vern Byrd, Matt Byrd, Jeff Williams camped on the island. They pulled 5 foxes out of traps: 2 from cage traps, 3 from leg-holds, at Narrows, Piper Cove, Scripts Bay and Tana Bight (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

August ---. Jeff Wraley and Toby Burke are camped on the island. They hike and boat all areas of the island and catch 4 foxes, all on Cape Azamis (J. Wraley, pers. corresp.).

Total fox kill – 9

1995

May 26-27. Working from M/V Tiglax, six trappers spent one evening and one morning on island. Ten areas of the island were searched. One beach with possible sign was observed; there was no sign on any other beaches. Traps were left near the sign (Ebbert 1995).

Total fox kill – 0

1996

June 24. Vern Byrd checked beaches at west Scripps Bay, trails to Chisik Bay and the beaches at Chisik Bay. No scat, tracks, fur or other fox sign was found on August 28 (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).

August 23. Jeff Williams surveyed for fox sign East and West Scripps Bay and Narrows beach. The island is deemed fox-free (AMNWR AIU Bio. files).
Total fox kill – 0

TOTAL fox kill at Little Tanaga 1989-1996 = 64 (9 male, 7 female, 48 unknown gender).

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