

August 19, 2015

## FOX TESTS POSITIVE FOR RABIES WESTERN LANTANA



**Contact:**

Public Information

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**PALM BEACH COUNTY, FL-** Florida Department of Health Laboratory confirmed today that a fox picked up after fighting with a dog in Western Lantana Saturday, August 15 by Animal Care and Control was positive for rabies.

Animal Care and Control responded to a complaint on Fearnley Road in unincorporated Palm Beach County about a dog fighting with a fox. When the officers arrived they found the deceased fox lying in the yard. The property owner's dog named Pistol, a 1.5 year old American Bulldog, had fought and killed the gray fox and had minor bite wounds on his paw... Pistol is current on his rabies vaccine and will be placed in home observation for 45 days as a precaution. At this time there is no human exposure.

According to the Florida Department of Health in Palm Beach County this is the fourth confirmed rabid animal this year in the county. Residents in the area east of Florida's Turnpike, west of Jog Road and North of Lantana Road should be aware that rabies is in the wild animal population and take all of the necessary precautions to avoid contact.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies-specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure will protect an exposed person from the disease. The following advice is issued:

- Keep rabies vaccinations up to date for all pets.
- Keep your pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals. If your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact Animal Care & Control at 561-233-1200.
- Call your local animal control agency to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood.
- Spay or neuter your pets to help reduce the number of unwanted pets that may not be properly cared for or regularly vaccinated.
- **Do not** handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or litter.
- **Never** adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- Teach children **never** to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.
  
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas where they might come in contact with people and pets.

For further information on rabies, go to the Florida Department of Health website:

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html>

or contact the Florida Health Palm Beach County, 561-840-4500. Animals exhibiting signs of sickness and aggressive behavior should be reported to Animal Control at 561-233-1200.

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