



A Fox that was rescued in Chatham and one month later after being treated with Bravecto

TREATING SARCOPTIC MANGE IN RED FOXES

These are the signs that usually indicate that a fox has Sarcoptic mange. The fox will often be around during the day, acting lethargic or un-fearful of humans. They will stay close to houses and will eat under the bird feeders, seek refuge under decks and often lay in the hay in barns. They will appear scruffy, thin, and be crusty around their eyes making it difficult for them to see.

Sarcoptic mange is the name for the skin disease caused by infection with the *Sarcoptes scabiei* mite. The spider-like mites are microscopic and can't be seen by the naked eye. Female *Sarcoptes* mites burrow under the skin and leave a trail of eggs behind. This burrowing creates an inflammatory

response in the skin similar to an allergic reaction. The motion of the mite in and on the skin is extremely itchy, as is the hatching of the eggs. This creates further allergic reaction and more itching, loss of sleep, and reduced immune response.

Loss of fur, scaly skin and a general unthrifty appearance is characteristic of a Sarcoptic mange infestation. The condition worsens as a skin infection sets in. The Foxes immune system is even more compromised and internal parasites (tape, hook and round worms) begin to take over and absorb any nutrients that fox may find. Mangy foxes are usually starving in the late stages.

These foxes are not a threat to people, dogs, cats, etc. They are close to people and buildings because there may be easy food such as cat or dog food left out in dishes, bird seed, garbage, insects, worms, roadkill and a mouse or two. They are also losing their ability to thermoregulate and need protection from wind, shade, sun, whatever the present need of the body is. Mangy foxes (and coyotes) often seek out a pile of hay to lay in. Hay seems to relieve the itchiness and provide a source of comfort.

Sarcoptic mange is treatable if the animal is treated in time before the process of organ failure begins.

A new drug, Bravecto, has been very effective in treating mange. Bravecto can be given to the fox in just one dose as a pill. It not only kills the active mites but also kills the eggs and protects the fox for up to 3 months. Because Bravecto is more expensive than Ivermectin (around \$27.00 per dose), you need to be sure you are giving it directly to the affected animal i.e. you are in it's company and you see it eat the food with the Bravecto buried inside the bait.

The other drug that treats mange is Ivermectin and this can be administered in several less costly doses.

Ivermectin is an inexpensive and easy to obtain over the counter medication. Although it is an "off-label use" according to the FDA, Ivermectin injection for cattle and pigs is a very effective cure for Sarcoptic mange in foxes. This injectable solution works orally and can easily be slipped into food. The ivermectin also treats a lot of the intestinal worms and any ear mites.

The catch is this: Ivermectin kills the mites living on the skin but doesn't kill the eggs. These eggs will hatch and reinfect the fox, so it has to be administered many times to kill the mange mites that hatch after treatment.

Sources strongly recommend treating Red foxes very aggressively, giving them the Ivermectin every three days for the first three weeks. After the first three weeks, you can dose them every five days. Be sure to treat them for at least 4-5 weeks - 10 doses total. A daily feeding station is essential.

Canned dog food, a hard boiled egg in the shell (for calcium carbonate), raw hamburger, a chunk of boneless cooked chicken or a section of hot dog can easily be injected with the ivermectin or have the Bravecto inserted into it.

You can cut a hot dog into three pieces. Then insert a drinking straw into the middle of an end and pull it out, creating an open core that the liquid ivermectin can be injected into. Then plug the core with some of the hotdog that was pulled out in the straw. Toss the pieces of hotdog out in areas where the foxes travel, at least 50 feet from each other.

Store Ivermectin at room temperature and add it to food the same day you are ready to treat the fox, not before. Once Ivermectin is added to food it slowly becomes less effective. The same is true if you use Bravecto - put it in the food just before giving it to the fox.

Ivermectin is fairly safe, and if a fox happens to get more than one dose in a day, it will be fine. Sources have found it easiest to inject the hotdog, hamburger, or boiled egg with the medicine. Sources recommend a leaf or a little grass over the baited food will lower the risk of it being seen and eaten by crows. Using hard boiled eggs will decrease the chances of the food being eaten by cats. Ivermectin is a pretty safe drug and won't harm most wildlife.

Some breeds of dogs can be very sensitive to it, particularly the collie family and Australian shepherds. Don't use ivermectin if there is a chance a collie breed might eat the bait. Use extra caution around domestic animals. They use Ivermectin in third world countries to treat different things, such as scabies in humans. Ivermectin is also used to treat dogs for mange. It is also a good wormer for many animals.

A topical product called Revolution can be obtained through your veterinarian and used to help prevent your domestic dogs from picking up mange in the

grass surrounding your property. Sources have found Revolution to be a very effective *preventative* for mange, but a very *ineffective cure* for mange, unless applied every two weeks during the month.

Can people get mange? You bet, but it won't live and reproduce on your skin. It will give you one heck of an itchy red allergic reaction if you are sensitive to mange mites though. It won't bother some people, and others it will. Please watch the beautiful short video on Youtube made by a gentleman on Long Island who was able to videotape his treatment of a Red fox with mange in his back yard. He used the treatment outlined above.

<https://youtu.be/AHe5ycjt-UI>

We are a group of concerned citizens and are not professionals in treating wildlife. The information provided here is advise we have found thru those with experience and expertise. We help with providing information about foxes.

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What foxes like to eat:

Frozen mice, ground beef, rats, chicks, hard boiled eggs, whole small fish, dry dog kibble, wet dog food, hot dogs, fruits especially berries, carrots, add brewers yeast, etc. Feed on a flat or low dish, foxes don't know what bowls are.

Supply plenty of fresh water all the time.

Where you can buy supplies:

RodentPro - <http://www.rodentpro.com/> - frozen mice, rats and chicks

Jeffers Pet - <http://www.jefferspet.com> - 1ml Luer Slip Syringe, 18ga X 3/4"

Alum Hub Needle, Ivomec Injection - Cattle & Swine 50m

Barnstable Farm & Pet 508-744-3232 - Ivomec

Link to Amazon where you can order Ivermectin

<http://tinyurl.com/y9fkj5o3>

Feed every day. Foxes in the wild eat about 2lbs of food a day.

Give 1 dose of .2 (not 2.0!) Ivomectin every 3 days for 3 weeks

Then 1 dose of .2 Ivomectin every 5 days for 2 more weeks

10 doses total

Keep Ivomec at room temperature. Do not refrigerate.

Other helpful links:

<http://www.thefoxwebsite.net>

<http://www.wildlifeonline.me.uk/mange.html>

General information about foxes from the Humane Society:

<http://tinyurl.com/h7jja7e>

Please tell us how you are doing and send us pictures of your progress. This pilot project, using a localized regional approach to help foxes in the wild can be a model for others as well as give our wild friends a helping hand when they need it most.