

A friend at 17000ft

Cold. Gripping cold. Sleet filled landscape. A white carpet welcome at around 17,000 ft. As I immersed myself into the mountains of white, a handsome Red Fox rushed towards me. In the wild. A moment of thrill as the fox kept moving towards the vehicle.

I quickly moved to the other side of the jeep, ensuring a safe distance between both the fox and me. It was interesting to watch the curious fox that had nailed himself to the only vehicle surrounded by snow. Probably, the winter kept him hungry. He rushed for some meat. His leaps were a wonder to watch – measured, fun, and effortless.

The Himalayan Red Fox belongs to the order Carnivora. *Vulpes vulpes* has a vast distribution ranging from the Arctic to the African landscapes. Primarily this species feeds on rodents and other small-sized carnivores. It is found scavenging on birds and eggs. We also understand that foxes relish wild fruits as well.

Mostly solitary foxes are found residing in their dens, although some are found in pairs or mother and pups.

These dens are known to have more than one entrance. They co-live with other friends in the Himalayan landscape such as the Snow Leopards, Tibetan Wolves, and a wide range of antelopes! Though the lifespan of foxes is up to twelve years, in most cases they live up to five years.

Expansion of human habitat has been a cause of concern for their survival. However, since their food habits seem to be a mix of small animals and fruits, the fox community has been able to adapt to a changing environment.

<https://zoosprint.zooreach.org/public/journals/1/VIDEO-2020-06-19-17-24-56.mp4>

<https://zoosprint.zooreach.org/public/journals/1/VIDEO-2020-06-19-17-26-05.mp4>

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