Kit foxes are almost entirely nocturnal. They produce a series of alarm, fear or distress sounds, including barking, to alert other kit foxes of danger.

**Biology:** Kit foxes primarily eat small mammals (particularly rodents such as kangaroo mice, pocket mice and wood rats), but these opportunistic predators may prey on numerous species of mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. The number of kit foxes and the density of kit fox and prey populations fluctuate as a result of unreliable desert precipitation.

Kit foxes are almost entirely nocturnal. They produce a series of alarm, fear or distress sounds, including barking, to alert other kit foxes of danger. They growl to intimidate other kit foxes or other canid species.

The breeding season occurs during December and January, with three to six pups born during February and March. Pups are independent of their parents at 4–5 months of age. Pair formation begins during October and November, with pairs remaining together at least until young are weaned. Males seem to provide most of the food for females and litters during pup rearing. Females are very attentive to young pups.

Kit foxes may live to be 8 or 9 years old, but generally, 90 percent to 95 percent of a population is less than 5 years old. Their primary sources of mortality include vehicles, great horned owls, bobcats and coyotes. Juveniles typically have a lower survival rate than adults.

**Status:** Though kit fox populations have declined in recent years due to drought and local habitat disturbance, they are still common throughout their range in Arizona.

**Management Needs:** Kit foxes fill a unique niche in Arizona, inhabiting arid regions with sparse vegetation. These habitats have undergone extensive modification over the past century, and the abundance of kit foxes has declined substantially in many areas. As with other species that rely on fragile desert environments, the kit fox’s greatest management need is for humans to identify and preserve these habitats.