

## JUNE 01-14, 2022, NATURAL HISTORY NOTES

By Dick Harlow

### GRAY FOX



**Gray Fox, *Urocyon cinereoargenteus*,**  
© Paul Sundberg

Generally, EastView residents do not have the opportunity to see the normally secretive Gray Fox, *Urocyon cinereoargenteus*. As a matter of fact, I believe I have only seen an actual wild Gray Fox three times in my life. However, on May 11, 2022, at about 1645 both Cindy and I observed a Gray Fox hunting the far shore of South Pond. He/she looked like it was stalking a prey item, it crept along ever so slowly down the far bank toward emerging new cattail plants. It was an absolute delight to be able to see this behavior of an otherwise secretive animal!

This species is a native to Vermont. It was considered quite abundant before the Red Fox was brought over from Europe. The Gray Fox general range is throughout the United States. It is a woodland fox. However, it has another name known as the flying fox for its ability to climb trees because it has semi-retractable claws.

Because of its dense woodland niche and its preference of stream and riverbanks it will locate a den site near such habitat. You may wonder if it is a woodland fox and also is comfortable in trees why would we see it here at EastView?

Even with its love of dense woodland, the Gray Fox will use overgrown fields for foraging like the fields we have in back of Deer Meadow Drive and Kestrel Lane.



**Gray Fox, *Urocyon cinereoargenteus*,** Apple iPhone on EastView property, May 9, 2020.

This fox tends to hunt as dusk approaches and throughout the night until dawn. Due to the territorial nature of this species, and the fact that its territory is usually only a square mile, we

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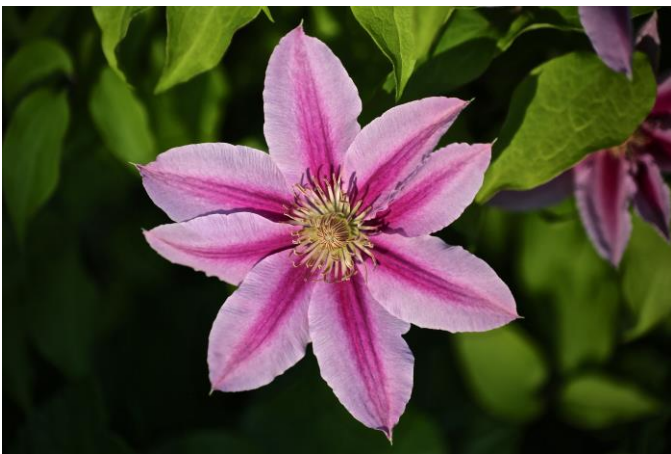
can rest assured that the Gray Fox we saw has staked out EastView as being in its territory!

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As mentioned, this fox has the ability to climb trees. It is the only canid that can climb trees. It is very adept at climbing, coming down either frontwards or backwards and has the ability to jump from limb to limb.

The Gray Fox is like the Red Fox relative to its diet. It is considered an omnivore. It will eat a wide variety of food, from plant based such as apples, berries, and corn, to rodents such as rabbits, voles, and even birds and insects.

### CLEMATIS



**Asian virginsbower, *Clematis florida***, flowering for about two months. © Dick Harlow

Asian virginsbower is a deciduous vine that flowers in early spring into the Fall. Clematis as a vine has some species that are quite prolific.

### WILD COLUMBINE



**Wild Eastern Red Columbine, *Aquilegia canadensis***, © Dick Harlow

Wild Columbine is a native Spring flowering perennial that will flower throughout May producing new plants that give the impression that it flowers longer than a month. Also, this columbine is known by several common names, Canadian, Canada columbine, Wild columbine or Eastern Red Columbine or just wild columbine. This species is in the buttercup family.

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**OBSERVATIONS**

**MAMMALS**

Eastern Cottontail Rabbit – 2

**REPTILES**

Garter Snake

**BUTTERFLIES**

Cabbage White

Black Swallowtail

Monarch – appeared first week of June.

Viceroy – several 2<sup>nd</sup> week of June.

*All Measurements taken at solar noon  
(1230 EST).*

**PRECIPITATION**

**Average June Precipitation for  
Vermont = 3.6 inches.**

**Total precipitation for the first two  
weeks of June was 53.4 mm or 2.1  
inches. We need 1.5 inches in the  
last two weeks to remain even for  
the month.**

**Overcast Days 1-14: We had 7-days  
of overcast skies. Of those overcast  
skies 6 days produced rain.**