

PRESS RELEASE 12-15-03
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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38th RABID ANIMAL CONFIRMED IN LANTANA

LANTANA, FL—A fox that attacked a dog late Thursday in the vicinity of South 71st Lane was confirmed positive for rabies today. The dog, a bullmastiff, killed the fox but, had to be euthanized due to non-compliance with its rabies shots. There was no human exposure. This is the 38th rabid animal this year and extends the rabies alert into mid January 2004.

The rabies alert area continues to include all coastal regions with an eastern boundary of the Atlantic Ocean, and a western boundary along US 441 from Boca Raton to Lantana and west again to Flying Cow Road where the line goes north to Martin County. Animal Care and Control has distributed literature warning of the rabies hazard in the immediate area surrounding this incident.

The alert is the result of 38 rabid animal confirmations, mostly raccoons, this year. This latest incident represents the largest number of animal rabies since 1953. A total of 14 persons have come in contact with these animals and have had to take a series of rabies shots as a precaution.

Case 37 was reported late Friday December 12 when a second raccoon captured in Seminole Palms Park tested rabies positive. No other animal or human exposures were reported.

Animal Care and Control can be reached at 561-233-1200 if abnormal animal behavior is observed. If a person is bitten they should report to the nearest hospital for treatment and

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call the Palm Beach County Health Department at 561-840-4500. Rabies is a deadly viral disease that can be prevented but not cured. The virus attacks the nerves and brain tissue of warm-blooded animals including people.

Domestic animals, dogs and cats, over four months of age are required to be vaccinated against rabies and wear a current rabies license tag. Rabies shots are also available through a veterinarian or by calling Animal Care and Control at 561 233-1272.

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