

Red Dog (Madadh-Ruadh)

Helen

I am a fox named Tod and I have a partner named Sionnach the Vixen and we live together with our three kits named Oisín (Little Deer) Aidan (Little Fire) and Roisín (Little Rose). We had a lovely warm cosy den in the Kilsyth hills. We were called rural foxes and loved the countryside with streams, fields, plenty of food to eat, freedom to roam with no worries, great smells, and loads of friends and family for company.

One day horrible machines arrived with a lot of humans, called Men, wearing bright orange clothes, white hard hats and only had two legs, two arms and no tail. Not like us, we had Russet fur coats, bushy tails and walked on four legs. These Men walked on two legs and appeared very tall and upright and didn't look very happy.

The machines were called Diggers and were very noisy. They started destroying the countryside and digging the ground where our den was, to build homes for the humans. Some people who used to live there called them Concrete Jungles, and they preferred, like us, the green fields and wild flowers.

We were very frightened and anxious not knowing where to go or what to do to keep our young kits safe. It became very cold, no home or food, no safe place. We rested for a while under an old derelict barn and when it got dark, Sionnach explained to our kits we were going on an adventure to find a new home. They were very excited.

We started walking along a road and the kits started chasing each other, playing tig, crossing back and forward across the road which was very

dangerous. There were fast cars with bright lights and noisy engines. Our kits had to jump into gardens and avoid them. “Oisin, Aidan and Roisin, be careful!”, we shouted. We had to explain to them, this wasn’t safe behaviour and had to stop their game to keep them out of harm.

We had walked for some time and we were all tired and hungry. We came to a big shop called a Supermarket and discovered they had discarded loads of unwanted food into big bins. Lucky for us, they had dropped some food, chicken etc., so we all had a great picnic. After eating we all cuddled together and fell asleep.

On waking we travelled on our way again, walking for miles, and arrived at a nice place called Shawlands. It had wonderful parks, big houses, friendly people and we felt safe and decided to make it our home. Some people had dogs which barked at us, but they also walked on four legs, had long tails and some looked like us. Are they maybe our cousins?

We have all settled into our new home and our kits have grown up and have made new friends with the city foxes. We get plenty of food from kind people, have a nice new den and we are now called urban foxes. One woman called us Madadh-Ruadh while she was feeding us, which means, red dog. We all miss the freedom we had in Kilsyth but changes take place and we have to adapt.

Our kits all have partners and we are looking forward to welcoming our next generation of foxes in the spring.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Scottish Gaelic	How to pronounce	English
Madadh-Ruadh	Mad-Uh-Rooah	Red Dog
Sionnach	Shun-Ukh	Fox-Vixen
Oisin	Uh-Sheen	Little Deer
Aidan	Ay-Den	Little Fire
Roisin	Roh- Sheen	Little Rose

Rural	Countryside
Urban	City