

## COLLECTING GENETIC SAMPLES

### Scat

- Collect scat in a plastic test tube.
- Identification:
  - Canine scat has tapered ends and can often be somewhat twisted or segmented. Mustelid scat also has tapered ends, but is very twisted and often folded back on itself. Feline scat from is segmented but blunt on both ends.
  - If it looks like canine and is a small enough diameter to fit into the test tube, assume it is fox (unless you have a good reason not to). If it is slightly larger than the test tube, there is still a chance it may be fox so collect it as well.
- Take a picture before you disturb it, be sure to include a ruler of something else for scale.
- Less than about 1-2 ml (about half a square inch) is needed. Take it from the ends and the edges, since those are the areas that contain epithelial cells that have rubbed off the stomach lining, which provide the genetic sample.
- Be careful not to contaminate the scat by touching it or allowing other animal matter such to touch it. Be careful, also, because scat may contain parasites.
- Record the date, location (lat/long from the GPS), whether the scat is wet or dry, and your initials.
- When you get back to the office, completely cover the scat with the alcohol provided (95%). DO NOT TOUCH ACOHOL CONTAINER TO SCAT VIAL! That will contaminate the whole container.

### Urine

- Scoop snow with urine into test tube. Collect the most concentrated area possible.

- Record the date, location (lat/long from the GPS), and your initials.
- Keep as cold as possible in the field, and store in the freezer.

### Hair

- Collect hair in a small paper envelope
- The best way to collect hair is by using sterilized tweezers. Do not use anything that has touched your skin or other animal matter to collect the sample with.
- Sterilize tweezers by holding them under under the flame of a lighter for a few seconds. Always sterilize before collecting a new sample.
- Hair that is frozen in a chunk of snow should not be pulled out, as that might strip off the hair follicle. Instead, cut away the piece of snow with the hair in it and place it all in the envelope. Try to collecting as little snow as possible.
- Several hairs collected from the same area can be placed in the same envelope.
- Record the date, location (lat/long from the GPS), and your initials.
- When you get back to the office, put the envelope in a container with desiccant. If envelope is very wet or if there is snow inside, air dry before placing with desiccant.

### Information to record

- When you collect a sample, record the date, location (lat/long from the GPS), and your initials.
- If is it scat, also record whether it is wet or dry.
- If you are not completely sure it is fox, collect anyway. Then note the what species you think it may be instead.
- Make sure this information stays with the sample! It can be written directly on the test tube with a sharpie marker.