

In due course a number of these unusual foxes came to be bred by a limited number of Norwegian ranchers. They are distinguished by their white noses, white necks, white throats and white paws, very light under-fur, and by the absence of any black pigment (which has been replaced by greyish-blue) in the guard hairs.

The principal producers were persuaded to sell only a few first-class specimens of the new variety which was christened "platina" in order to distinguish it from silver fox. These platina foxes, or "platinum" as they are called in Canada, were fortunate in their debut. In 1938 a South American buyer, realizing the publicity value of his purchase, bought the skins at the very high price of \$350 per pelt and immediately the attention of two continents was focussed on these platinum foxes. In January, 1940, 400 platinum pelts were auctioned off at New York and averaged \$548 per pelt; the top price for one pelt was \$11,000 while the lowest was \$250.

The immediate effect of the high prices paid for these pelts was to send the value of breeding animals of this type soaring to great heights. As a rule the puppies in a litter when a platinum male has been mated with a silver vixen are in the proportion of about half silver to half platinum.

The great interest aroused in this new type of fox and the high prices paid both for breeding stock and for pelts naturally puts a premium on the puppies if they show signs of possessing the characteristics of the platinum fox. However, prices are now showing a tendency to decline as a result of the increase in production.

Of some importance in regard to platinum-fox pelts is the fact that they are more likely to be imitated than those of silver fox. In fact, nobody has yet succeeded in producing a satisfactory imitation of a good silver-fox pelt, whereas white-fox pelts are being used increasingly by fur dyers to create tolerably good imitations of the platinum variety.

In addition to silver and platinum fox the ranching of other types, such as platinum silver, white marked, pearl platinum, cross fox, and blue fox, is of growing importance.

The rapid expansion of world supplies of silver-fox skins due to the development of fur ranching is too well known to require further elaboration. It is sufficient to state that whereas before the First World War the total number of skins available for the world market was approximately 2,000, the figures for 1939-40, so far as they have been reported, total 1,280,000, apportioned as follows:—

Country	Pelts	
	1938-39 No.	1939-40 No.
Norway.....	400,000	550,000
Sweden.....	110,000	160,000
Finland.....	25,000	35,000
Canada.....	320,000	260,000
United States.....	175,000	275,000
TOTALS.....	1,030,000	1,280,000