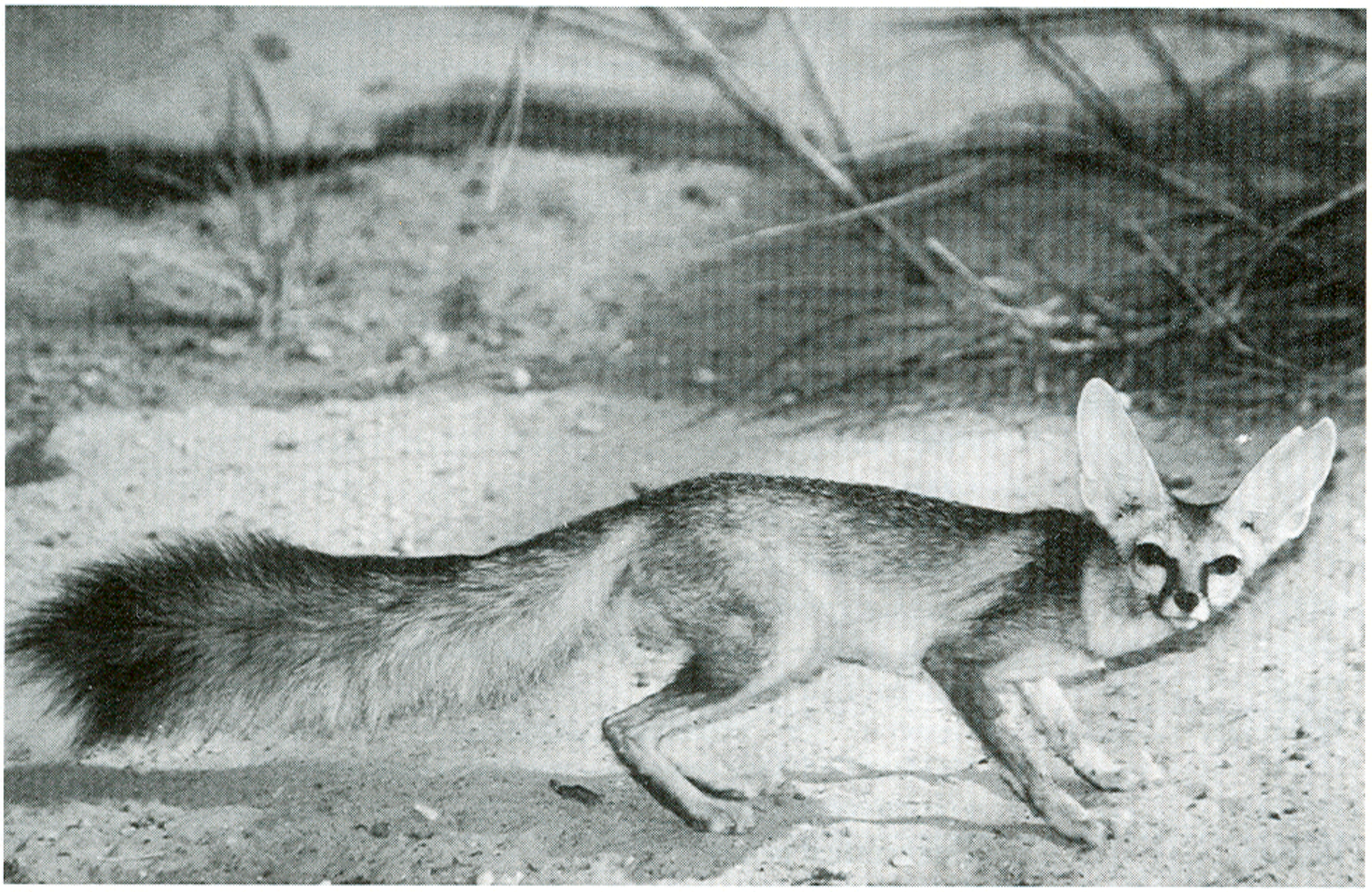

Fig. 3. Blanford's Fox (*Vulpes cana*) with a distinctive black tail tip from the UAE (Photo: K. J. BUDD).

all faecal samples analysed in Israel. Other references to insects included in their diet are few with locusts and dung beetle being mentioned (ILANI cited after AL-KHALILI 1993, HARRISON & BATES 1991, ROBERTS 1997).

Fruit remains of *Capparis cartilaginea*, *Ficus salicifolia*, *Grewia* sp., *Olea europea*, *Prunus arabica* and *Ziziphus spina-christi* was recovered from the analysed faeces during this study. Other references to fruit eaten by *V. cana* include melons, grapes and Russian Olives, *Eleagnus hortensis*, from Pakistan (ROBERTS 1997) while it is estimated that *Ziziphus spina-christi* fruit (when available) make up 90% of their diet in the UAE (ANONYMOUS 1997). GEFFEN et al. (1992a) state that the frequency of occurrence of plant material in their faeces in Israel ranged between 60-70% with the Caper bush *Capparis cartilaginea*, a favoured source of food.

Although they are also known to feed on reptiles, birds and small mammals (KINGDON 1990, HARRISON & BATES 1991, ROBERTS 1997, ANONYMOUS 1997) only one item of each (unidentified reptile pelvis, Gerbil incisors and unidentified feather) was collected from the analysed faeces during this study. In Israel, 12% of their diet consisted of vertebrate remains (GEFFEN et al. 1992a). It is accepted that the small sample size of analysed faeces during this study could contribute to the lack of vertebrate remains found.

Another issue that warrants discussion is the colour of the markings on the tip of the tail. According to ROBERTS (1997) the tip of the tail is generally black, but may be white in some specimens. Of the ten Blanford's Foxes caught in the UAE, seven had black tail tips and two white tips (Figs. 2–3). One is unknown, as it was not noted at capture (STUART & STUART 1995). Two Blanford's Foxes, which were bred in captivity, had a black and white tail tip,