

Foxes Beg for Food in Wildfire-Hit Siberia, Sparking Social Media Outcry

August 02, 2019



Artyom Fadeev / Instagram

Russian-speaking social media users fumed after a viral video showed red foxes begging drivers for food in an area of Siberia affected by widespread wildfires.

The wildfires cover 3.1 million hectares — an area the size of Belgium — of mostly remote, uninhabited forest, the Federal Forestry Agency [said](#) on Friday in what environmentalists have dubbed an ecological catastrophe. President Vladimir Putin has deployed the military to help extinguish the vast flames, while Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev ordered law enforcement authorities to look into arson as their possible cause.

Footage filmed in the smog-hit Irkutsk region shows several red foxes by the roadside appearing to beg drivers for food. One of them is then seen eagerly chewing on a chocolate bar thrown by the video's author as other foxes loiter nearby.

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Публикация от Artyom Fadeev (@artyom_fadeev) 31 Июл 2019 в 11:04 PDT

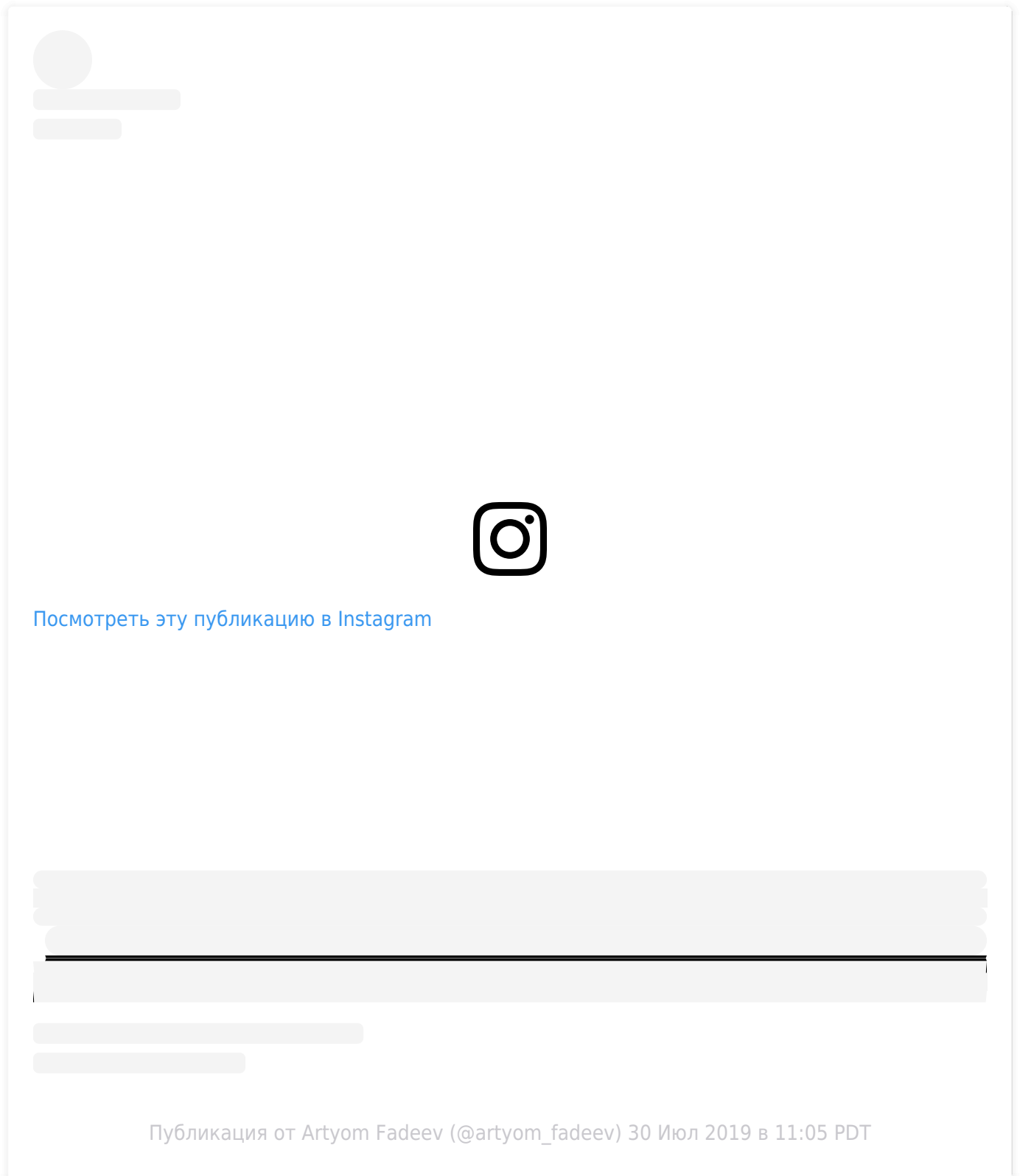
“We didn’t expect to see wild animals on the side of the road,” the video’s author, Artyom Fadeyev, [told](#) the Irkutsk edition of Russia’s Komsomolskaya Pravda tabloid.

“It wasn’t just foxes but also hares that ran up to us,” Fadeyev said, adding that the fires burned near the road at times. “We’ll make sure to bring meat and water for the poor animals on our way back.”

Firefighters tried to extinguish 62 fires across 89,500 hectares Friday but left dozens of larger

wildfires burning in hard-to-reach areas of the Irkutsk region, according to the Forestry Agency.

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Публикация от Artyom Fadeev (@artyom_fadeev) 30 Июл 2019 в 11:05 PDT

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