

# INTERNATIONAL WOLF



A PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOLF CENTER  
WINTER 2002

**A Glimpse of How  
Wolves Solve a Problem, page 4**

**The Politics of Wolf  
Restoration Heat Up, page 8**

"Tundra Wolf" by Archie Beaulieu

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# INTERNATIONAL WOLF

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOLF CENTER  
VOLUME 12, NO. 4 WINTER 2002

## Features



Lynn & Donna Rogers/www.bearstudy.org

# 4

### A Pack Solves a Problem

Observations of wolves in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge provide an exciting look at how wolves interact and solve problems.

*Cathy Curby*



Lynn & Donna Rogers/www.bearstudy.org

# 8

### Wolves and Western Politics

As wolves near federal reclassification, the state of Idaho and counties in California, Oregon and Wyoming have all passed anti-wolf legislation.

*Liz Harper*

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## On The Cover

"Tundra Wolf" by Archie Beaulieu

Internationally renowned, D  n   artist Archie Beaulieu was born and still lives in the community of Fort Rae, on the shores of Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories.

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**International Wolf Center**

# INTERNATIONAL WOLF

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*International Wolf* is a forum for airing facts, ideas and attitudes about wolf-related issues. Articles and materials printed in *International Wolf* do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the International Wolf Center or its board of directors.

*International Wolf* welcomes submissions of personal adventures with wolves and wolf photographs (especially black and white). Prior to submission of other types of manuscripts, address queries to Mary Ortiz, publications director.

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PHOTOS: Unless otherwise noted, or obvious from the caption or article text, photos are of captive wolves.

## As A Matter Of Fact



Waverley Traylor

Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*)

### In the most recent assessment, what is the number of gray wolf subspecies populating North America?

There are five subspecies of the gray wolf in North America. The currently recognized subspecies are the Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*), the Great Plains or buffalo wolf (*Canis lupus nubilus*), the Rocky Mountain or Mackenzie Valley wolf (*Canis lupus occidentalis*), the eastern timber wolf (*Canis lupus lycaon*), and the arctic wolf (*Canis lupus arctos*). ■

### New Question

What year were wolves first reintroduced into Idaho?

**CORRECTION** The following information was omitted from the credit for the photo on the upper left of page 7 of the Fall 2002 issue of *International Wolf*: Image courtesy of Matthew and Leann Youngbauer.



## From the Executive Director

### Dispersing to New Territory

At our flagship interpretive center in Ely, Minnesota, and our Twin Cities office, we at the International Wolf Center have built a strong and impressive base. In 1985 came a cadre of volunteers who conceptualized an educational effort in support of wolves. They lobbied for legislative funding, oversaw construction of the Ely facility, opened it in 1993, and guided the development of a healthy, well-staffed infrastructure. We have a strong educational program supported by management, communications, development, retail and office functions. This heart of the International Wolf Center beats powerfully.



Walter Medwid

From this base, the Center is ready to launch a new strategic plan that says the existence of healthy populations of wolves will become one of our important measures of success. We also embrace as part of our mission the concept of wild lands and the importance they hold for successful wolf recovery and its sustainability. It is a revolutionary step, and one that takes us into challenging new territory.

In the Twin Cities we are searching for a new headquarters to house administrative offices and space to offer education, volunteer opportunities and other resources to the public. An outreach educator will join our staff to bring programs to our urban audience.

In support of wolf populations, we have helped found the Wolf Forum for the Southern Rockies. In this partnership with organizations based in Colorado and New Mexico, the Center will launch an educational effort about the potential to recover wolf populations in the Southern Rockies—the “next best hope for wolves.”

We are moving in these new directions in deliberate steps. An example is our recently formed partnership with retired National Park Service interpreter Norm Bishop, whose efforts in Yellowstone are helping to correct misinformation about wolves in the regional press.

Clearly this is an exciting, risky and rewarding time for the organization. We are challenged to wisely allocate our resources so that we can grow our base while we take on new outreach efforts. In Ely we will incorporate the importance of wild lands into our educational programs, renew our cornerstone *Wolves and Humans* exhibit and challenge ourselves to increase visitation and retail support. In the Twin Cities, besides bringing on a new educator, we will continue to take advantage of the financial, media and philanthropic resources concentrated in this area.

The International Wolf Center stands firmly on the remarkable creativity and commitment of our board of directors and staff. We will rely on them for our foundation as we reach out.

Our capabilities will be challenged, but we know that in rising to these new opportunities we will meet our mission, build our sustainability and really begin to make a difference to populations of wolves! ■

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The International Wolf Center advances the survival of wolf populations by teaching about wolves, their relationship to wild lands and the human role in their future.

Educational services and informational resources are available at:

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# A Pack Solves a Problem

by CATHY CURBY

I was stunned when I learned how well wolves interact to solve a problem. In the mountains of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, three of us were watching a wolf pack. We rotated six-hour shifts, watching the animals with a spotting scope from a tent three-quarters of a mile from their den. The pack included eight adults and four pups. All the wolves were brown except the mother, which was white. A wolf of great importance to the pack, we referred to her as Pearl.

*When the wolf pups became old enough to stay alone, Pearl taught them that if she walked away at the speed puppies could go, they were to accompany her, but when she moved at an adult pace, they were to stay where they were.*

A week before, Pearl had moved her pups a half-mile from the den. Scientists are not sure why wolves move their pups. Some suggest pups are moved away from filth around the den, or to where they can practice their hunting skills. Whatever the reason, such moves are common. Scientists call the new location a rendezvous site. The French word *rendezvous* means “all meet together.” During the week, as the wolves returned from their travels, they discovered the pups were no longer at the den. They searched until they found the rendezvous site and thereafter returned there from hunts.

Now that you know the background, come look through the spotting scope with me. It's morning, a week after the pups were moved. The puppies have been alone for many hours, lying quietly within an open patch of tall willows. I notice Pearl, heavy with milk, trotting steadily back home. The pups are certainly thirsty and hungry, but Pearl passes below the willows and arrives at the empty den.

Soon another wolf trots up to Pearl and lies nearby. Because I can't tell the brown wolves apart, I don't know if one is male or female unless it urinates. I never discover the gender of this new wolf, so I will refer to it as the babysitter.

Pearl and the brown wolf lie quietly. I don't notice any noises or body movements. Does Pearl indicate, “Bring the pups to me”? That is what the babysitter wolf attempts to do.

The babysitter trots north across low vegetation, over the steep, unstable, rough rocks of a talus slope (the fallen rocks at the base of a hill) and through dense, six-foot-high willows. When it reaches the rendezvous site, the pups run up to the babysitter wolf, their bodies wagging from tail to nose, and throw

**I don't notice any noises or body movements. Does Pearl indicate, “Bring the pups to me”? That is what the babysitter wolf attempts to do.**

themselves up toward the babysitter's face, pulling energetically on its jowls. Frequently they jump back and race around the adult wolf.

Wolves don't have hands to carry food to their young, so adults bring home chunks of meat in their mouths and stomachs. Pups indicate their hunger by mouthing an adult. The hungrier they are, the harder they mouth. If the adult has eaten recently, it regurgitates the meat onto the ground.

Eventually the puppies realize the babysitter wolf has no food, and they

calm down. The babysitter (does it remember it has a job to do?) trots back to the den. When it gets to Pearl, it turns to look behind, but the puppies aren't there.

When the wolf pups became old enough to stay alone, Pearl taught them that if she walked away at the speed puppies could go, they were to accompany her, but when she moved at an adult pace, they were to stay where they were. Being well trained, the puppies didn't follow the babysitter wolf. They remained at the rendezvous site.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



## I am bouncing with excitement. The babysitter tried repeatedly, learned new skills and finally led three of the puppies to their mother.

Do the two adults communicate again? I cannot say, but the babysitter trots back to the pups and is mobbed a second time. Soon the babysitter again moves toward the den. This time it trots only a few steps before it stops and looks back. The puppies scamper up, and the babysitter trots off again. They travel in this halting manner halfway through the willows, but then the babysitter no longer pauses. When it reaches Pearl again, there are still no puppies.

Within minutes the babysitter wolf walks back to the north. Now the puppies wag only their hips and jump less forcefully. Again the babysitter moves toward the den, but this time it s-l-o-w-l-y lifts one foot,

then s-l-o-w-l-y puts it down. The puppies may think this is odd, but they follow the adult wolf.

When the puppies reach the talus slope, however, they refuse to follow the adult farther. Already partway across, the babysitter turns to face the puppies, lowers its front shoulders, wags its tail, bounces up and down and yips. But it is unable to entice any of the puppies out onto the rocks, so it returns to the puppies.

Now the babysitter stands behind a puppy, lowers its head and gently pushes the puppy onto the rocks. But the young wolf stumbles and runs behind the others. Pushing doesn't work.

Next, the babysitter turns away from the talus, picks up a puppy and

turns back. The little animal's bottom bangs against the stones. The puppy yips, the babysitter drops it, and the puppy runs off the rocks. Carrying doesn't work.

Is the babysitter wolf out of ideas? It returns to the rendezvous site, followed by the pups, but now it walks at the proper pace for puppies.

Soon the babysitter wolf moves again, at the proper speed. The young wolves follow it through the willows and again halt at the edge of the talus slope. The babysitter walks out onto the rocks, faces the puppies, and jumps and yips for several minutes. Finally, one pup steps onto the rocks. The adult backs slowly away from the puppies. The puppy tentatively picks its way across the stones. A second pup moves onto the talus slope, and then a third pup follows.





U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Cathy Curby works as a Wildlife Interpretive Specialist at the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

When the babysitter arrives at the end of the rocks, it continues backwards, leading the pups. As soon as the pups see their mother, they dash to her and nurse.

I am bouncing with excitement. The babysitter tried repeatedly, learned new skills and finally led three of the puppies to their mother. But one pup remains back at the rendezvous site, lying inconspicuous in a shadow. Do the adults know a pup is missing?

Somehow, the adults communicate again, and the babysitter trots back to the lone puppy. When the adult arrives, the young wolf jumps and wags from tail to nose. Soon the two wolves walk to the slope, and the babysitter moves onto the rocks. As it did before, the babysitter faces the puppy and bounces energetically. It tries for many minutes, but the pup never walks onto the rocks.

Head drooping, the babysitter returns to the willows with the pup, where they lie quietly for fifteen minutes. This is the longest the babysitter has stayed while trying to move the puppies. Is it hoping Pearl will come? Is it thinking of something new to try?

The babysitter rises and wanders through the willows. Scattered among the shrubs are pieces of bone. The babysitter picks up a caribou leg

bone and shakes it. It looks like a dog playing tug-of-war.

The puppy bounds over, grabbing the other end of the bone. Sometimes the puppy lets go of the bone and leaps forward to grab it again. Playing this way, the adult moves backward pulling the puppy through the willows, but gradually they drift toward the talus slope.

When the wolves are halfway to the rocks, the babysitter changes the rules. Now when the pup leaps up, the adult moves the bone just out of its reach. As the babysitter backs slowly toward the talus, it continues to shake the bone in front of the pup. But each time the pup leaps, the babysitter moves the bone. The pup has eyes only for the bone above its head. In this way, the babysitter lures the pup across the rocks. When the pup notices Pearl, it abandons the bone and races over to nurse energetically.

I am stunned. Pearl seems to have set up this whole interaction. She waited patiently, confident that the babysitter would succeed. During the two hours it took to bring her puppies home, she never intervened. And the babysitter never gave up, stayed focused on the task and overcame each challenge. It even used a tool of sorts to distract the last puppy. This glimpse into the behavior of a family

of wolves taught me much about how wolves interact and solve problems. It taught me, too, that the qualities that make a good parent, or an effective surrogate, are not the exclusive property of any one species. ■

*This article is an abbreviated version of an interpretive program presented by Cathy Curby. The observations were made while conducting research through a partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service and the University of Alaska. The complete text can be found at <http://arctic.fws.gov/wolfstory.html>.*

Cathy Curby, a Wildlife Interpretive Specialist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has worked at the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge since 1976. She lives with her family in a cabin 25 miles outside of Fairbanks, Alaska.



Lynn & Donna Rogers/www.bearstudy.org

Pups indicate their hunger by mouthing an adult. The hungrier they are, the harder they mouth.

# Wolves and

by LIZ HARPER

*Information Specialist, International Wolf Center*

**A**s wolves near federal reclassification, the politics of wolf restoration are heating up. Within the past year and a half, the state of Idaho and counties in California, Oregon and Wyoming have all passed anti-wolf legislation.

Siskiyou County, California, and its sister county Klamath, Oregon, lie in an area of the West that contains prime wolf habitat, according to Defenders of Wildlife and other environmental groups. The Siskiyou-Klamath region is one of the most biologically diverse areas in North America north of Mexico. The region's wild lands and low human population give it great potential for wolf recovery. Additionally, a little-known state Endangered Species Act affords wolves in Oregon special protection and mandates that the state encourage wolf recovery on Oregon's state and federal lands.

This combination of prime wild lands and state protection has prompted action by people in the region who do not support wolf restoration. Anti-wolf activity in California and Oregon began to increase in late 1999 when Defenders of Wildlife announced they were going to co-fund a feasibility study for the potential restoration of wolves and other large carnivores to the Siskiyou-Klamath region. In April 2001, Defenders filed a petition with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, requesting that a portion of federal lands in western Klamath County along with other lands in Oregon and California be designated as a population segment for the gray wolf. Within a month, the executive director of the Siskiyou County Farm Bureau and Cattlemen's Association had proposed an anti-wolf ordinance for the county.





MasterClips

Monty Sloan/wolfphotography.com

Isaac Babcock

*Despite the claims of the Central Idaho Wolf Coalition, there is no evidence that wolves are destroying big-game herds in Idaho.*

# Western Politics

In response to the proposed ordinance, Defenders, along with the California Wolf Center, presented information on wolves and wolf recovery to the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors on November 6, 2001. In spite of Defenders' presentation, substantial press coverage after the meeting focused mostly on the views of those opposed to regional wolf recovery. At the board's next meeting, on November 13, 2001, members unanimously passed Resolution 01-231, opposing the introduction or reintroduction to Siskiyou County of "unacceptable predatory mammals" that are "potentially harmful to man as well as livestock."

Seven months later, a similar situation occurred in Klamath County, Oregon, when on June 4, 2002, the county commissioners enacted their own anti-wolf ordinance. The ordi-

nance prohibits the introduction of gray wolves to the county. In addition, several anti-wolf groups in Oregon have petitioned the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to remove wolves from the state list of endangered species, and Oregon lawmakers who oppose wolves are mobilizing to revise or repeal the state's Endangered Species Act.

**The combination of prime wild lands and state protection of the wolf has prompted action by people in the Siskiyou-Klamath region who do not support wolf restoration.**

Anti-wolf sentiment also arose in Fremont County, Wyoming, an area that covers portions of the southeastern corner of the greater Yellowstone ecosystem. The county commission announced that it was "drawing a line in the sand" when it came to wolf reintroduction. In March 2002, it passed resolutions banning wolves and other "unacceptable species" from the county.

All of these county-level resolutions and ordinances are unenforceable, however, as wolves are currently protected under the federal Endangered Species Act. Once wolves are removed from federal protection, the laws would still be unenforceable, as wolves would be under the state's authority. Despite their unenforceability, the ordinances are clear statements of what these elected officials think of wolves

inhabiting the counties in which they live.

Counties are not the only level of government passing anti-wolf legislation. On March 6, 2001, the Idaho House of Representatives passed the House Joint Memorial Bill 5. This bill demanded that wolves be removed from Idaho “by whatever means necessary.” The law does not supersede federal law, so no action will be taken, but like the county legislation, it is a reflection of how some Idahoans feel about wolves.

Anti-wolf groups were active again in Idaho this year. In May the Central Idaho Wolf Coalition bought newspaper ads throughout Idaho to publish its anti-wolf beliefs. The ads stated that the Coalition’s “sole objective is the immediate removal of the Canadian gray wolf from Idaho because of the catastrophic slaughter of our big game herds, serious livestock predation, loss of wildlife viewing—causing unnecessary and extreme hardship to ‘mom and pop’ businesses.” (Despite their claims, there is no evidence that wolves are destroying big-game herds in Idaho. Additionally, wolf depredation accounts for only a small portion of livestock losses each year.)

In the midst of the anti-wolf sentiment in Idaho, however, have come important actions that support wolves and their presence on wild lands. On June 13, 2002, in a lawsuit against the U.S. Forest Service by the Western Watersheds Project and the Idaho Conservation League, a federal District Court judge ruled in favor of wolves. He stated that the 1972 law that created the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) in Idaho gave wildlife, and hence wolves, precedence over livestock that graze on the SNRA. The judge also stated that this law must be balanced with those established prior to the reintroduction of wolves in the state, which direct the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to

**For now, wolves are protected by the federal Endangered Species Act. But wolves have reached recovery goals and may soon be removed from the endangered species list. When that happens, wolves will be managed by the states, and the states must be ready to manage them.**

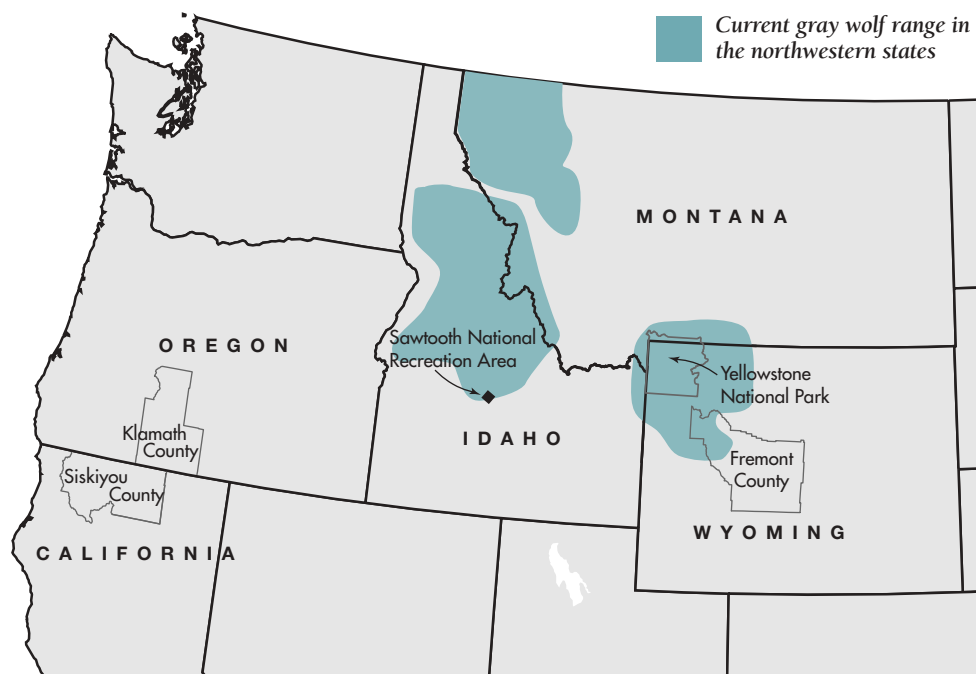
relocate and eventually kill wolves that repeatedly prey on livestock.

Additionally, the judge ruled that the U.S. Forest Service is in violation of the federal Rescissions Act, passed in 1995, which orders the service to create a schedule to conduct environmental analyses for each of the grazing allotments in the national forest system. The main result of the ruling is that the service must review all 28 of its grazing plans for the SNRA to determine whether they are adequately protecting wolves.

A subsequent ruling by the same judge on July 19, 2002, decreed that

wolves cannot be killed in the SNRA in summer 2002, even if they kill livestock within the SNRA. This latest decision follows a second lawsuit filed by the Western Watersheds Project and the Idaho Conservation League to close eight grazing allotments in the SNRA where wolves and livestock have had past conflict. While the judge’s decision does not close the allotments to grazing, it sends a message that wolves will have precedence over livestock in the SNRA.

For now, wolves are protected by the federal Endangered Species Act. But wolves have reached recovery goals and may soon be removed from the endangered species list. When that happens, wolves will be managed by the states, and the states must be ready to manage them. Idaho has completed a wolf plan, Montana’s is expected to be complete by the end of the year, and Wyoming expects its plan to be completed by March 2003. Once the plans are in place, the process for removing the wolf from the Endangered Species Act may begin. It will then be interesting to see how all the local anti-wolf sentiment plays out. ■





Marshall Helmberger, Ely, Timberjay



Mary Imsdahl and her father, Mark, paddled 200 miles in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness to raise money for the International Wolf Center.

## Father-Daughter Team Raises Funds by Paddling for Wolves

Mary Imsdahl wanted to make her father-daughter canoe trip across the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness “more special.” She certainly did—she turned the trip into a fund-raiser for an outreach educator position for the International Wolf Center. Mary is asking people to donate an amount per mile paddled. So far, she and her father, Mark, have raised over \$4,700. The money they raise will be matched by a \$5,000 grant.

The pair began their 200-mile journey at Grand Portage along the eastern border of the state on June 23, reaching Crane Lake, 125 straight-line miles west, on July 12. They paddled endlessly and trudged over long muddy portages, swatting masses of mosquitoes and blackflies, but according

to Mark, “that is all part of the experience.”

What inspired Mary, age 13, to give up part of her summer to raise money for wolves? Since the age of two, Mary has visited Ely, Minnesota, and the Center every year. “I have had a great time watching [the wolves].... I fell in love with them,” said Mary. When the government announced the gray wolf would be taken off the federal endangered species list, Mary decided she would help out. The educator position will inform the public about how wolves and humans can coexist.

If you would like to contribute to the fund, contact the Center at 1-800-ELY-WOLF

## Minnesota’s First Wolf Biologist Honored

Milt Stenlund was recently recognized for his lifelong conservation work. Stenlund, an early student of Sigurd Olson, carried out one of the earliest wolf studies in Minnesota and has been called Minnesota’s first wolf biologist. He worked with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for 35 years before retiring. Stenlund also served on the International Wolf Center’s board of directors for 6 years.

On June 14, the city of Ely, Minnesota, and the International Wolf Center dedicated the spur of the Trezona Trail, which leads to the Center, the “Stenlund Spur.” Gretchen Diessner, assistant director of the Center, said, “It was wonderful to watch Milt be honored with his family at his side. It seems appropriate that the hiking trail that brings the public to the International Wolf Center be renamed for Milt. After all, his early research helped to lay the groundwork for our mission of teaching the world about wolves.”

This was the second time Stenlund has been honored in the past year. In October 2001, Stenlund received the prestigious Judge John W. Tobin award from the Izaak Walton League (IWL) for his conservation work. Stenlund has been active in the IWL for many years, serving the league in many ways, including as the Grand Rapids, Minnesota, chapter president.



Nancy Jo Tubbs presenting Milt Stenlund with the proclamation naming the “Stenlund Spur”

## Gary Laidig Receives “Who Speaks for Wolves” Award

Evidence of Gary Laidig’s dedication to the International Wolf Center is everywhere—from the new wolf pond to the auditorium’s spacious seating. During his 28-year political career, the former state senator successfully labored for Center funding from the Minnesota Legislature. In April he earned this year’s “Who Speaks for Wolves” award for navigating the complex maze of the legislative process in support of wolves and the environment. Laidig courageously fought in an arena where politicians rarely make decisions based on biology.

In accepting the award, he said, “It is important to remind lawmakers that healthy wolf populations are a state responsibility.” Laidig, an avid outdoorsman, was captivated by the first wolf he met in 1987. He found the predatory animals fascinating and mysterious. Keenly aware that education was key to their long-term survival, Laidig realized that supporting the Center’s work was essential: “It is important to demonstrate that such projects can work, and that people no longer just come to Minnesota to hunt and fish but to learn about wolves.”

Laidig recently changed careers, but thousands of visitors to the Center will benefit from his tireless efforts and personal enthusiasm for wolves. A big congratulations to Laidig—he deserves it.

## The Truth About Wolves

“Are wolves actually ‘wicked’ and do they eat people? Of course not, but folktales like ‘Little Red Riding Hood’ perpetuate the misconceptions surrounding the endangered gray wolf.” These sentences began an article for *Science & Children* magazine, May 2002, written by Jean Mannesto, a reading teacher at R. J. Wallis Elementary School in Kincheloe, Michigan.

In December 2000 Mannesto received a fellowship to attend an International Wolf Center

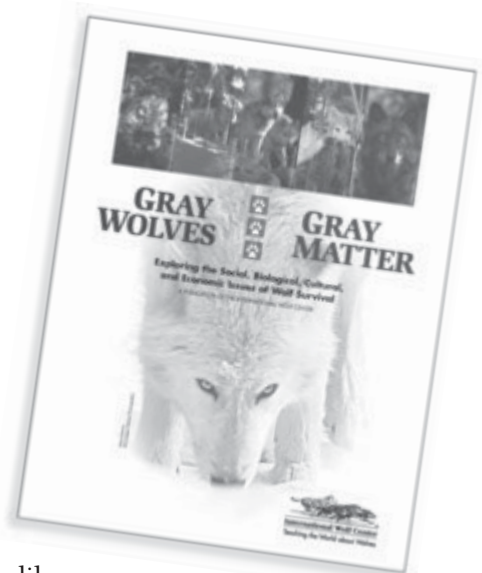
Wolf Educator workshop. “I will never forget the moment I saw a wolf at the Center,” she said. “The wolf pressed its nose against the glass, and I placed my hand there, too — just a small layer of material between us.”

Talking about how she has used what she learned at the workshop, Mannesto said, “In Michigan, as in other places, many hunters shoot wolves because they think they eat all the deer. So I decided to use

my writing skills to teach others about this maligned animal. I am currently working on a persuasive essay for teachers on the wolf as a hero in literature. The International Wolf Center’s information has been extremely helpful in presenting the accurate, unbiased facts.” The Center’s “Gray Wolves, Gray Matter” online curriculum was one of the highlights of the workshop.

Mannesto has been doing wolf activities with her reading classes for about three years, and each year she continues to learn more. She encourages teachers, parents and adults everywhere to incorporate the wolf in their lessons and reading about endangered animals to help dispel the myths about this intelligent wild creature. ■

*Editor’s note: A “Gray Wolves, Gray Matter” student workbook for grades 6–12 can be found online at [www.wolf.org](http://www.wolf.org). The entire curriculum may be available online in early 2003.*



Gary Laidig, recipient of the “Who Speaks for Wolves” award, with Nancy Gibson, Center board member.





## INTERNATIONAL WOLF CENTER

### Contributors

*Thank You!*

## International Wolf Center Wish List

The International Wolf Center would like to thank members for their remarkable generosity in responding to our needs. We continue to need the following items. If you are able to donate, please call our administrative offices in Brooklyn Center at 763-560-7374. Donors who contribute any of the items listed below or the cash equivalent will receive documentation of their gift for their tax records.

### GENERAL

- ★ Luggage rack for a 15-passenger van
- ★ Portable compact disc player for the van
- ★ Child-size snowshoes
- ★ Closed trailer for hauling prey food
- ★ Spotting scope with tripod
- ★ Binoculars
- ★ Podium or small work station for concierge desk

### RETAIL

- ★ Free-standing mirror for store customers
- ★ Rolling display rack for clothing

### WOLVES AND WOLF CARE

- ★ Insulated coveralls for wolf-care duties
- ★ Travel crates for fire evacuation
- ★ Cosequin double-strength chewable tablets
- ★ Vita-Min Tabs Senior and Regular (multivitamins)
- ★ Fly-Off fly ointment

### AUDITORIUM AND CLASSROOM

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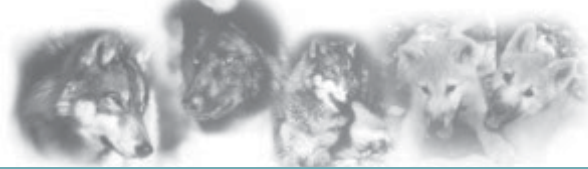
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Marty Sloan/wolfphotography.com



## Tracking the Pack

### The Return of the Omega Wolf

by Lori Schmidt, Wolf Curator,  
International Wolf Center

When we last left omega wolf Lakota in the Summer 2001 issue of *International Wolf*, she ranked at the bottom of the Center's pack. It was all downhill from there. Dominance toward Lakota increased as the arctic wolves Shadow and Malik matured. Thus, on February 19, 2002, the wolf management team decided to remove Lakota from the pack after she was the object of several aggressive attacks.

Lakota spent several months in an adjacent enclosure, receiving daily visits

from staff, getting her own deer carcass on feeding day and generally being treated like an alpha, instead of an omega. This intensive care seemed to improve Lakota's physical and psychological condition. After discussions with veterinarian Dr. Chip Hanson, the team decided to attempt to return Lakota to the pack. A reintroduction plan was formulated and implemented on June 23, 2002.

The reintroduction started by placing Malik in a special holding area with Lakota to determine if Malik would be aggressive toward Lakota. This introduction went well, beginning with Lakota running toward Malik in a submissive play bow. Malik showed dominant body postures toward Lakota and did a stand-over, resting his head on Lakota's shoulder.

At first Lakota was very intimidated but later uncovered a cached deer leg in the straw bed and proceeded to guard the leg from Malik. Students attending a wolf ethology (behavior) course at Vermilion Community College spent several nights observing the introduction in case of aggressive interactions.

On the morning of June 24, we lured Shadow into a holding area while we released Malik and Lakota back into the pack. Lakota behaved excitedly, swimming in the pond, running through the upper enclosure and interacting with Malik. She continued this behavior throughout the day. Shadow remained in the holding area overnight to give Lakota a full day to reacclimate to the wolves in the main enclosure.

The next day we released Shadow at 7 a.m. Malik initially approached to greet Shadow, but the alphas,

MacKenzie and Lucas, began dominating Shadow intensively for the first five minutes of the introduction, keeping Shadow away from Lakota. Although this reintroduction has been successful so far, dominance issues requiring intervention are likely to arise as hormones increase during fall. To stay informed about the actions of the pack, check the Wolf Logs on the Web site at [www.wolf.org](http://www.wolf.org). ■

As predicted, the fall brought increased aggression toward Lakota as well as MacKenzie, and both were moved into retirement in August 2002. The Center is currently fund-raising for a new retirement enclosure for Lakota, MacKenzie and, eventually, Lucas. To donate to the ambassador pack's retirement enclosure, send your donation to the

#### **Wolf Care Fund,**

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Ely, MN 55731-8129.

You can also donate by purchasing the video "Highlights of the Ambassador Pack at the International Wolf Center" (all proceeds will go to the retirement enclosure); go to the Web site at [www.wolf.org](http://www.wolf.org) and click on the Pack Page for information about the video.



Lakota is the omega, or bottom-ranking, wolf in the Center's ambassador pack.



Nancy Jo Tubbs



# Book Review

by Jakki Harbolick

## *Keepers of the Wolves: The Early Years of Wolf Recovery in Wisconsin*

by Richard P. Thiel  
University of Wisconsin  
Press, 2001

By the mid-20th century, survival had become a brutally difficult, odds-off proposition for the gray wolf. Once found throughout most of the contiguous 48 states, this true native of the American wilderness was now rare, day by day walking a thin line between fragile life and the human-made abyss of extinction. Remnant populations still lived in northeastern Minnesota, but in Wisconsin, this majestic predator seemed gone for good. And then Richard Thiel and his colleagues documented one of the great wolf recoveries of modern conservation. More than 300 wolves now inhabit Wisconsin.

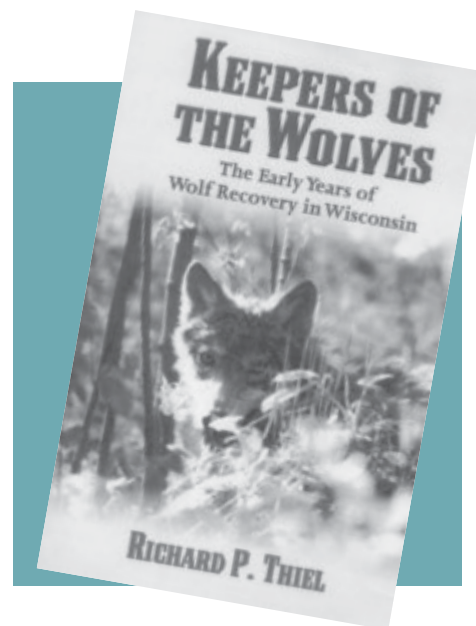
Thiel, however, is unfailingly modest about his work. In his latest book, *Keepers of the Wolves: The Early Years of Wolf Recovery in Wisconsin*, he is never boastful or self-aggrandizing, allowing a naturally compelling story to tell itself.

In 1978, when Thiel joined the Department of Natural Resources as an assistant biologist, resident timber wolves had been gone from Wisconsin for 20 years, victims of single-minded extermination and compromised habitat. As a college student majoring in wildlife biology, Thiel had searched tirelessly for signs

that wolves might still visit what remained of their former Wisconsin ranges. By 1974, he had collected enough evidence of their occasional presence to single-handedly convince the state to reclassify wolves from “extirpated” to “endangered.” Finally protected by the federal Endangered Species Act, their populations would now begin a slow, agonizing recovery. And this recovery would be monitored and protected over the next decade by Thiel.

But *Keepers of the Wolves* is more than mere chronicling of this incredible recovery project, because Thiel is also, in the best tradition of James Herriot, a gifted storyteller. Understated, utterly lacking in pretension, *Keepers* is informative, heartbreaking and indescribably funny—Thiel’s account of his first “flight” in a Piper Cub borders on comic genius.

Thiel evinces as well an unusual ability to balance resolute objectivity with unfailing generosity of spirit. He is equally unwilling to romanticize the wolf or to vilify humans. Even those whom Thiel might be expected to deplore on the basis of attitude or behavior are treated with respect,



humanity and humor, from grumbling hunters hunkered around the bar at the local tavern to the blowhard politician ever seeking to further his self-interest. Thiel gives full credit, too, for willingness, where it exists, to revise long-held misconceptions and beliefs.

In his dedication, Thiel thanks his wife, Deborah, “who has allowed me to live my dream and who has shared with me the trials and triumphs of this life’s journey. . . .” We, in turn, owe Thiel for sharing his journey and its riches with us. The recovery of the Wisconsin wolf population is a worthy legacy. ■

*Jakki Harbolick is a language arts and writing teacher. She lives in Leesburg, Virginia, with her husband, Pete, and their two children.*

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# Wolves of the World

## WOLVES IN EUROPE

### The Action Plan for Wolf Conservation in Europe

by Jay Hutchinson

Wolves, brown bears, wolverines, and two species of lynx once roamed Europe's broad mosaic of forests, plains and mountains. Humans, ever increasing, came to dominate Europe's landscapes, depleting these large carnivores and forcing them to survive in small pockets and on the fringes of the human landscape.

Wolves were exterminated from most of western Europe during the past

two centuries. Yet, small but healthy populations have survived in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Scandinavia and Greece. Larger populations have survived in Romania, the Balkans, Poland and neighboring countries to the east. In some cases remnant groups are isolated and still decreasing.

In a few areas, such as the Alps and Scandinavia, wolves are returning to where they were earlier exterminated. Wolves from

some eastern countries have also expanded westward into Germany, while some Italian wolves have migrated northward into France.

Wolves in Europe prey on animals ranging from large ungulates to domestic livestock to rodents. Some even subsist on garbage,

having adapted to living amazingly close to humans. Wolf predation on livestock has been the historic reason for the elimination or control of the predators.

Wolves are now protected in most European countries, although enforcement in some countries is very weak.



B. and C. Promberger



B. and C. Promberger



In others, especially in eastern Europe, wolves are considered a game species. Whether wolves are protected or hunted, poaching is widespread.

During the 1990s, public interest in saving wolves spurred a unified effort among Europeans. In 1995, experts from 17 countries (all countries west of the former Soviet Union except Turkey) and the World Wide Fund for Nature launched plans to save Europe's large carnivores. Action plans for each species were drawn up. For the Wolf Action Plan, questionnaires were sent to at least one wolf expert in each country, and

the resulting draft was commented on and revised by the experts.

The Wolf Action Plan was meant to guide each country in implementing a national plan in conformity with its own laws. Because wolves can disperse widely and many European countries are relatively small, the plan also stressed coordinated continental efforts: each national plan had to consider strategies being adopted by neighboring countries. After extensive collaboration, the plan received wide consensus and was recommended by the Bern Convention. Each country is supposed to draft its own national action plan and adopt legislation to accommodate the provisions.



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*Wolves, brown bears, and two species of lynx once roamed Europe's broad mosaic of forests, plains and mountains. These large carnivores now survive in small pockets and on the fringes of the human landscape.*



B. and C. Promberger

*Wolf predation on livestock has been the historic reason for the elimination or control of wolves in Europe.*

The overall objective of the plan is to "maintain and restore, in coexistence with people, viable populations of wolves as an integral part of ecosystems and landscapes across Europe." Specific goals are:

1. Allow the wolf to recover and live throughout Europe wherever it is biologically and economically feasible;
2. Ensure wolf-human coexistence and a sustainable compromise by limiting the conflicts; and
3. Achieve a Pan-European perspective in managing wolf recovery and help ensure wolf conservation and management on a continental scale.

Factors to be considered are habitat restoration, travel corridors, ensuring food supplies (such as possibly reintroducing natural wild prey), human attitudes, problem wolves and damage to livestock, compensation to farmers and shepherds, and wolf-dog hybrids.

The plan discusses ways the wolf can be made economically profitable to

communities, including guided tours, howling sessions, selling plaster casts of tracks, wolf logos and labels on tourist goods, and interpretive centers with captive animals. The plan also stresses that education, media contacts and public involvement are necessary to win acceptance by the local community.

Lastly, the plan acknowledges the need for applied research, especially on European wolf genetics, dispersal, mortality and the interesting tolerance of wolves to human disturbance to an extent unknown in North America.

For more information, see



*Action Plan for the Conservation of Wolves (Canis lupus) in Europe, April 2000, compiled by Luigi Boitani, at [www.large-carnivores-lcie.org](http://www.large-carnivores-lcie.org).*

*Jay Hutchinson is a writer and editor, retired from the U.S. Forest Service's North Central Forest Experiment Station, in St. Paul, Minnesota. Between travels, he enjoys writing about various natural history subjects, including wolves.*

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## WOLVES IN GERMANY

# Outlook for German Wolves Positive in Spite of Livestock Losses

by Neil Hutt

*The attitude toward wolves is extremely positive, but we all know how fast this can change to the extreme opposite.*

— Oliver Matla, president,  
German Wolf Association,  
*International Wolf*, Winter 2001

The excitement over the return of the wolf to Germany and the birth of the first pups (spring 2001) in more than 150 years has been tempered by recent livestock losses. In late April 2002, a new pack believed to consist of three 2-year-old wolves, killed 27 sheep in the Lausitz region of Saxony.

Following the attacks, shepherds lost no time in employing a number of deterrents, including flare pistols, electrified fencing and 24-hour vigils by teams of volunteers. Oliver Matla, president of the German Wolf Association, reported that although a couple of shepherds demanded the wolves be killed, no organizations or individuals have

called for a wolf hunt. The state of Saxony compensated the owner of the sheep at 100 percent of the market price. The law calls for 80 percent compensation in the future, but some shepherds want wolf organizations to pay the remaining 20 percent.

The attacks surprised Saxony's Agriculture and Environment Ministry. The area has abundant prey, including wild boar and deer. Matla, cautious from the beginning about naive presumptions regarding wolves and domestic animals in proximity, expressed regret at the depredations. "We hoped it wouldn't happen that early," he said, "but you know how wolves are."

Nevertheless, Matla expressed admiration for the shepherd, whom he characterized as "very considerate" despite the loss of his sheep. This shepherd related a close encounter with the wolves after the volunteers stopped guarding his flock. The wolves returned to the pasture, where, Matla said, the shepherd noticed the



pack in the distance. He hammered on the engine hood of his tractor, but that seemed to attract the wolves rather than scaring them off. The shepherd said the wolves approached and came very close to him. He tossed a lighter at one of the wolves, but this had no effect. He then climbed back onto his tractor, and the wolves moved away.

Christoph Promberger, director of the Carpathian Large Carnivore Project, observed that in Romania, shepherds have noticed that wolves living near to livestock are less fearful of humans. Yet in spite of the attacks on sheep and the encounter reported by the

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Annette Mertens

*In April 2002, a wolf pack killed 27 sheep in Saxony, Germany, but in spite of these attacks, the outlook remains positive for wolves repopulating eastern Germany. No other losses have been reported as of August 2002.*





## WOLVES IN BULGARIA

# Wolves Make Steady Gains in Bulgaria

by Neil Hutt

*Whenever I talk to foresters or hunters, they invariably offer to pay me to bring in a dead wolf; I offer to buy them a drink for each wolf they do not kill.*

— Alan Wittbecker, Ph.D.,  
ecologist, Balkani Wildlife Society

shepherd, the outlook remains positive for wolves repopulating much of eastern Germany. No other losses have been reported as of August 2002, and monitoring of the wolves in the original pack indicates that they have continued to hunt only moufflon (wild sheep), wild boar and deer.

Matla hopes humans and wolves can coexist in a region where wolves reappeared after being extinct since the 19th century. With that objective in mind, the Society for the Protection of Wolves initiated an information weekend for hunters and shepherds following the attacks. Attended by members of the German Wolf Association, the session included lectures by wolf biologists Gesa Kluth, Erik Zimen and Christoph Promberger. Meanwhile, in Saxony, where wolves are legally protected, nonlethal measures are being taken to help the region's shepherds deal with the threat.

*The author thanks Oliver Matla for providing regular updates on the wolves in Germany.*

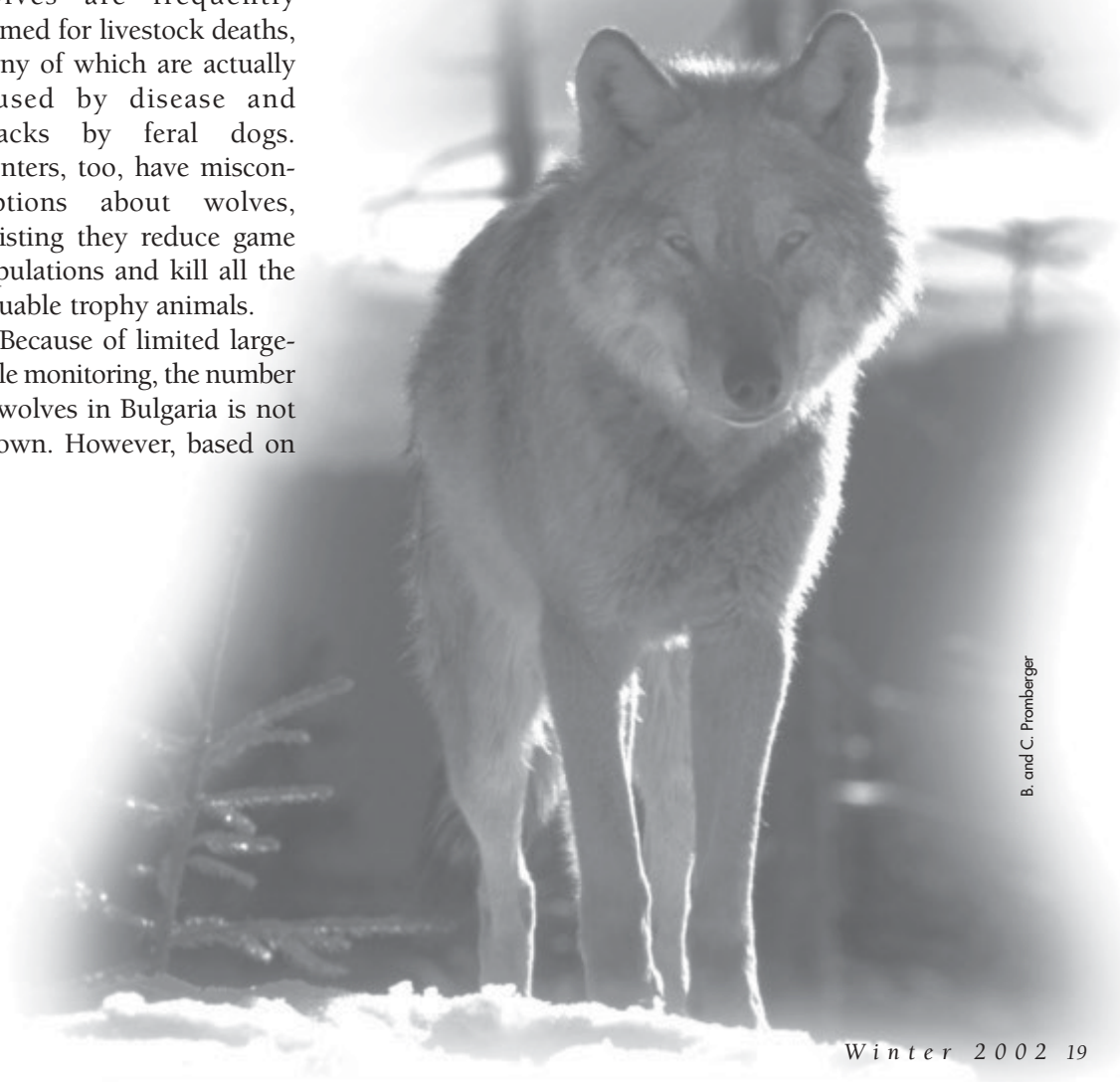
In Bulgaria public attitudes toward wolves are often negative, especially in rural areas, where many people believe wolves prey on humans. Moreover, wolves are frequently blamed for livestock deaths, many of which are actually caused by disease and attacks by feral dogs. Hunters, too, have misconceptions about wolves, insisting they reduce game populations and kill all the valuable trophy animals.

Because of limited large-scale monitoring, the number of wolves in Bulgaria is not known. However, based on

harvest data, questionnaires, surveys for sign (tracks, scat, fur and snow urinations) and incidental sightings, the *Action Plan for the Conservation of Wolves (Canis lupus) in Europe* (April 2000) estimates that perhaps 800 to 1,000 wolves survive in Bulgaria's fragmented habitats. The population trend is stable, according to the plan.

This is encouraging news. In 1980, an estimated 100 wolves existed only in

the most remote and inaccessible regions of Bulgaria. As in other parts of the world, including many areas of North America, wolves have been the victims of habitat reduction, encroaching human settlement and relentless extermination. Gradually, however, wolves have increased, and surveys to determine accurate population numbers are now being conducted by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Balkani Wildlife Society. The cost of radio-collaring and aerial tracking is often prohibi-



B. and C. Promberger

tive; however, some money has been obtained from the Ministry of Environment and Water and from several NGOs and private donors.

In addition to public education and outreach initiatives, conservationists are pushing hard for legal protective measures. For example, last year the Balkani Wildlife Society and the Semperviva Society challenged specific articles in a federal hunting and game management regulation. In May 2002, the High Administrative Court of Bulgaria decided that contrary to the government regulation, traps cannot be used for hunting predators. The judgment also states that traps and poison should

not be used for hunting game. Additionally, the court issued a decision that wolves killed by hunters must be recorded, a reversal of the regulation article stating that no recording is required.

Research is needed to understand both the status of wolves in Bulgaria and the extent of the threats to their long-term survival. The Balkani Wildlife Society is exchanging data with other carnivore projects, and the Carpathian Large Carnivore Project, under the direction of Christoph Promberger, assisted with radio-collaring Bulgarian wolves in May 2002. Information and outreach efforts and management



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

of predators need to be increased. To this end, education sessions have begun in selected schools, and the Balkani Wildlife Society has launched a program to provide shepherds in southern and western Bulgaria with Karakachan guard dogs.

Researchers are determined and hopeful. "Whenever I ask children if they want to live near wolves, they say, yes," Alan Wittbecker reports. "I agree. I would not want to live in a wolf-less Bulgaria much less a wolf-less world."

For more information, see:

- Action Plan for the Conservation of Wolves (*Canis lupus*) in Europe, April 2000, compiled by Luigi Boitani, at [www.large-carnivores-lcie.org](http://www.large-carnivores-lcie.org);
- The Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe (LCIE), News and Events, May 8, 2002, [www.large-carnivores-lcie.org/news70.htm](http://www.large-carnivores-lcie.org/news70.htm);
- and report by Alan Wittbecker, Balkani Wildlife Society, April 11, 2002, <http://forums.delphiforums.com/Wolfseeker/>.

Neil Hutt is an educator and International Wolf Center board member who lives in Purcellville, Virginia.

## WOLVES IN THE UNITED STATES

### Adaptive Management: A Success Story for Red Wolves?

by Shauna Baron

Interbreeding (hybridization) between red wolves and coyotes has long been a threat to the survival of the highly endangered red wolf. In 1999, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists partnered with other scientists to conduct research and design an Adaptive Management Plan to better understand the interbreeding phenomenon. Estimates showed that if interbreeding could not be controlled, the red wolf would be unrecognizable as a distinct species within as few as three to six generations (12 to 14 years).

Today the Red Wolf Recovery Program field team is demonstrating that interbreeding can be managed successfully in eastern North Carolina. By early 2001, the field team had created a coyote-free and hybrid-free

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zone known as Zone 1 of the red wolf experimental population area (see map). Immediately to the west in Zone 2, any known hybrids have been sterilized so they cannot produce offspring. These sterile animals hold territorial space until wolves can take their place. Additionally, the number of hybrids in Zone 3, the most western zone, has been reduced.

In 2001 three hybrid litters were found in the management area, all on the western edge of Zone 3, where interface with coyotes was expected. However, at the beginning of the denning season in spring 2002 only one hybrid litter, also at the edge of Zone 3, was found. The boundaries of Zones 1 and 2 are, therefore, being extended to reflect the expansion of the coyote- and hybrid-free zone.

To establish a healthy and viable population, the red wolves must defend their territories against non-wolf canids. Recent observations suggest that red wolves are beginning to displace coyotes and hybrids, though confirmation of this requires further investigation.

The red wolf field team has extraordinary plans for 2003. One effort will focus on removing sterile hybrids from Zone 2. This measure will allow red wolves to acquire territories in that zone through natural dispersal. In addition, two red wolves from a program where wolves were raised naturally on an island will be released into the wild. Finally, plans call for the insertion of captive-born pups into wild litters, a method also known as fostering. These three methods will augment the wild population and increase genetic diversity, thus enhancing the long-term survival of red wolves.

The fostering of captive-born pups into wild-born litters was first attempted in May 2002. The North Carolina Zoo donated two pups, a male and a female, from a litter of six born at the zoo. Microchips were implanted in the pups for identification, and the animals were transported to the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. The pups were placed into a den containing two wild-born pups. All four pups were the same age. The 6-year-

old mother, Wolf 978F, had raised six pups the previous years, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologists were optimistic that she could manage a litter of four. Frequent monitoring of the den site using radio telemetry showed that 978F had accepted the new pups as her own. The biologists reported that all was going well as of September 2002, exciting news indeed.

If it continues to be successful, the fostering method may help the Red Wolf Recovery Program continue to build the world's only wild red wolf population. Research in genetics and exciting new techniques such as fostering

*Photo far left: (Left to right) Chris Lucash, John Weller and Barron Crawford weighing a red wolf pup*

*Middle and right photos: In May 2002 two captive-born red wolf pups were placed into a den containing two wild-born pups. Frequent monitoring of the den site showed that the mother wolf had accepted the new pups as her own.*

nurture hope for achieving milestones in red wolf recovery and for increasing the chances that this rare and beautiful predator will survive in the wild. ■

*Shauna Baron is the Education and Outreach Coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Manteo, North Carolina.*



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

*The North Carolina red wolf experimental population area. Zone 1 of the area is coyote- and hybrid-free. In Zone 2 any known hybrids have been sterilized so they cannot produce offspring, and in Zone 3 the number of hybrids has been reduced.*

# Personal Encounter

## Calls in the Night Howling with Red Wolves

by Hugh Biggar

*A version of this article originally appeared in the Washington Post, Wednesday, August 7, 2002.*

At just past 8:30 in the evening, I find myself surrounded by the inky dark of the Carolina night, the only sounds the hum of crickets and croaking of bullfrogs and the scuffling of feet on a gravel road. Light from a half-moon reflects off black waters bordering the road. Members of the small group I have traveled here with huddle close together, not too eager to stray close to those waters or the neighboring piney woods. Many vacationers in North Carolina's Outer Banks are likely mini-golfing, walking along the beach or enjoying some nice seafood or a summer action flick. But we're in an altogether different place, outside the boundaries of the traditional beach experiences. High-pitched yelps interrupt the quiet.

We're just 20 minutes west of Nags Head—but a world removed from the Outer Banks' beaches, rolling dunes, strip developments, Wright Brothers and Lost Colony landmarks. This is the flat, swampy heart of the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, surrounded by fields and scrubby woods. The 152,000-acre refuge is home to 200 species of birds, overly friendly black bears, the country's northernmost alligators and the source of those yelps, the red wolf. Somewhere in the surrounding forest is one of the East Coast's few populations of wild wolves. We have gathered here for a low-key foray into the wilderness, to get in touch with

our inner wolf and to learn more about this endangered animal. And to have a little howl.

Aubrey White, executive director of the Red Wolf Coalition, is our guide for the evening, along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Shauna Baron. The two groups sponsor the frequent red wolf howling safaris. "It is a really good opportunity for people to make an emotional connection to the wolves and realize they are in our backyard," says Baron, the service's red wolf outreach coordinator. "Not many people know they are here, and that only 250 exist in the world."

At 8 p.m., we meet at the entrance to the Creef Cut Wildlife Trail, just past highway signs reading "Please Don't Stop to Feed the Bears." As this is very much a user-friendly wilderness experience, our group of 20 is



Barron Crawford, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



diverse, ranging from young children to seniors. Baron passes around a red wolf pelt, generating excited oohs and aahs, and points out the long ears and reddish heads characteristic of red wolves.

While we swat away mosquitoes and yellow flies in the gathering dusk, White provides some facts about the red wolf, the first carnivore declared extinct in the wild ever to be reintroduced to its native range. They once roamed throughout the southeastern United States. But by the early 1970s the animals—like their larger cousin, the gray wolf—had been made nearly extinct by centuries of trapping and hunting and deforestation. At that time, the few remaining wild wolves were captured and sent to zoos to prevent the species from being entirely wiped out. From this small band, four red wolves were reintroduced into the wild in 1987. The Alligator River refuge was chosen for its isolation and lack of development. (A similar effort in the Great Smoky Mountains failed.)

Since 1987, the red wolf population in the refuge has grown to roughly 100 wolves, almost halfway to a goal of 220. At that, they are spread thin, with packs of six to eight wolves stretched across this broad

patch of eastern North Carolina. Even so, the future looks promising. Although at one time wolf bounties were paid in the state, locals have mostly come to accept the animals, and programs are now in place to prevent interbreeding with coyotes, the biggest threat to their future as a species.


With all this in mind, and eager to escape the bugs and stretch our vocal cords (which several of us have been warming up, sounding like wanna-be Tarzans), we climb into cars to caravan six miles over dusty, wash-board roads into the refuge.

We park and step out into the paludal, black night. A few of the children move forward, led by White. Soon, they let out high-pitched yells, which elicit no response from a pack of seven wolves located roughly a half-mile away, but will likely keep

*continued on next page*

For more information about wolf howling safaris and red wolves, contact:

 The Red Wolf Coalition,  
P.O. Box 2318  
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948  
phone/fax: 252-441-3946; e-mail:  
redwolf@coastalnet.com  
Web site: [www.redwolves.com](http://www.redwolves.com)

 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's  
Red Wolf Recovery Program,  
Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge,  
P.O. Box 1969,  
Manteo, NC 27954  
Web site: <http://alligatorriver.fws.gov/redwolf.html>



Barron Crawford, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Barron Crawford, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

*Since 1987, the red wolf population in the Alligator National Wildlife Refuge has grown to roughly 100 wolves, almost halfway to a goal of 220.*



Barron Crawford, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

any friendly bears away. White then takes over and lets out an ululating call that might send a chill down the spine of the unknowing—or even the knowing.

It certainly captures the attention of the red wolves. Immediately, yelps come floating back, sounding more

like distant city sirens than the doleful howls of the gray wolf. When the calls fade, White encourages us as a group to respond. We let out a collective noise that sounds more like the shrieks of large mammals being slowly devoured by bugs than anything wolflike. The only response

we get is the heckling of bullfrogs. Perhaps we've made it all too clear we're just humans crying wolf. As Baron explained earlier in the evening, the already-shy animals have learned from hard experience to be deathly afraid of humans.

White then takes the lead again, sending out another deep, piercing call. The red wolves respond in kind, their calls barely rising above the crickets and frogs. We all pause before heading back. It's a nice note to leave on, one that reminds us of what brought us here and away from the nearby beach playgrounds in the first place—the call of the wild and a sound like no other on the East Coast. ■

*Hugh Biggar is a Washington D.C.-based writer. He has published articles in the Washington Post, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, Defenders magazine and the Environment News Service.*

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## The BBC Natural History Unit is looking for footage for a documentary about gray wolves.

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fax: +44 (0) 117 9747687  
e-mail: [wolfbattlefields@bbc.co.uk](mailto:wolfbattlefields@bbc.co.uk),  
or send your vhs tapes to Kathryn Jeffs,  
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BBC Broadcasting House,  
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We will endeavor to return any tapes sent provided you pass on your full address details. Those whose footage is selected for inclusion in the final program will receive payment.



# News and Notes

**WOLVES IN SPAIN** are featured in a new book in Spanish by Juan Carlos Blanco and Yolanda Cortes titled *Ecología, Censos, Percepción Y Evolución Del Lobo En España*, published by Sociedad Española para la Conservación y Estudio de los Mamíferos in Malaga, Spain.

**WOLF AND COUGAR CONTROL** on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, is being considered by the B.C. Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection, according to the *Vancouver Sun* (August 14, 2002). The proposal is to reduce the estimated 400 cougars and 150 wolves by a third to help increase the deer herd. Wolf advocates disagree that this effort would be effective.

**A WOLF HUNTING BAN?** That is the question around Banff National Park in Alberta. As around most national parks with wolves, some wolves live both inside and outside the park. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has reported that Parks Canada officials have asked the Alberta government to reevaluate wolf hunting around the park, but that Alberta plans no change for now.

**WOLF SIGHTINGS** in Yellowstone National Park have been made during 580 consecutive days as of September 11, 2002, according to park naturalist Rick McIntyre. McIntyre himself has spent 822 consecutive days attempting to observe wolves in the park and has actually observed them on 388 consecutive days.



William Rideg, Kishenehn Wildlife Works

**A NEW WOLF PACK**, called the Halfway pack, has been found near Avon, Montana. The pack of eight had killed a domestic calf in the area and was reported by a local sportsman to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which then confirmed the report.

**WOLF DUCKS UNDER FLADRY.** "Fladry," or flagging, is being tested around a number of ranches for its effectiveness in keeping wolves out of pastures. However, at one such plot in Montana, a black wolf was seen ducking under the fladry, showing that it does not always work.

**WOLF REINTRODUCTION** has been mentioned as a possible method of reducing elk in Estes Park, Colorado. According to a September 2, 2002, article in the *Denver Post*, elk numbers have "exploded" in the Estes Park area, and wolf reintroduction could be one way of controlling them.

**WEST NILE VIRUS HITS WOLF.** This mosquito-borne virus, new to North America, has killed a dog and a wolf, according to a CBS news report from the

University of Illinois. What the virus's effect will be on wolf populations is unknown.

**WOLF DELISTING** is being urged by a group of Montana state legislators. Calling wolves "killing machines" and "breeding machines," the group fears that the increasing wolf population will reduce the state's elk population. Montana harbors an estimated 120 wolves and tens of thousands of elk.

**WOLVES IN UTAH?** Based on sightings, howling and depredated sheep, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials have concluded that at least one wolf has recently made it far into Utah. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported this new record in its September 14, 2002, edition.

**WOLF INFORMATION** and information about other canids will soon be published online by the IUCN/SSC Canid Specialist Group at <http://canids.org/canidnews/>. The journal *Canid News* will be peer-reviewed and will be edited by Claudio Sillero and David MacDonald. ■

# Wild Kids

## Let's Play Categories

by Tamathy Stage, International Wolf Center Intern

Every year Mrs. Chapman's fourth-grade class looks forward to its visit to the local zoo. There, a naturalist teaches them about the different animals they see. Some of the students notice that the jackals and the foxes look a little bit like wolves, but the coyotes look a whole lot like them.

The naturalist tells them, "That's because all those animals are in the same family, the Canids, while wolves and coyotes are in the same genus." "What is a genus?" asks one of the students. "Genus is one of the words scientists use in taxonomy," the naturalist explains. "It helps us say how much alike different species are."

Taxonomy is the study of organizing living things into different categories. Describing and keeping track of species is easier if they are put into categories based on what they have in common. Taxonomy can be compared to your mailing address. Parts of your address are more general, like the state you live in. Another part is very specific, like your street and house number. Each plant or animal species has its own taxonomic "address." The different parts are kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus and species. Kingdoms are the largest category. Each kingdom can be divided into several phyla (plural for phylum),

and each phylum contains different classes, and so on down the line.

Here are all the groups that the gray wolf belongs to:

**KINGDOM:** Animal (all animals)

**PHYLUM:** Chordates (animals with a spinal chord)

**CLASS:** Mammals (animals that have hair and feed milk to their young)

**ORDER:** Carnivores (animals that eat meat)

**FAMILY:** Canids (doglike animals)

**GENUS:** *Canis* (wolves, coyotes, jackals and domestic dogs)

**SPECIES:** *lupus* (gray wolf)

Usually scientists refer to an animal by its genus and species. That way even if they speak different languages, they still know they are talking about the same species. Different languages may have different common names for a



Menthy Sloan/wolfphotography.com



Amy Kay Kerber

The wolf (left) and the coyote look a lot alike because they are in the same genus.



species. For example, the word for wolf in French is *loup*. In Finnish, the wolf is called *susi*; in Spanish, *lobo*; in Swedish, *varg*. The taxonomic names are in Latin and can be hard to remember, so common names are easier to use in everyday conversation.

Once you learn how the different categories fit together, you can have fun learning what animals belong together, and what makes them different. ■

### Suggested Activity:

Think about the blocks that you probably played with as a child. How would you organize them—first by shape, by color or by size? Try more than one way of organizing them, and see which one you like.

## TAXONOMY WORD FIND

See if you can find the words listed below. Words may be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, forward or backward!

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| E | Z | Z | M | V | W | O | Y | V | E | S | A | D | P | Q |
| N | R | G | P | U | P | M | N | K | T | S | N | I | G | T |
| S | R | O | Q | S | O | V | A | Y | A | Z | I | N | V | A |
| G | P | F | V | N | K | I | N | G | D | O | M | A | Z | S |
| M | K | E | O | I | V | P | L | I | R | H | A | C | S | O |
| W | U | X | C | K | N | I | Y | N | O | J | L | A | A | P |
| O | A | L | N | I | F | R | J | C | H | J | L | K | M | S |
| T | R | Y | Y | A | E | U | A | J | C | C | F | H | M | F |
| H | J | D | M | H | Q | S | Z | C | L | A | M | M | A | M |
| M | Q | I | E | L | P | T | R | M | T | Q | D | I | B | L |
| L | L | F | Z | R | E | E | T | N | F | F | D | Z | H | Y |
| Y | L | Y | E | E | S | U | P | U | L | S | I | N | A | C |
| F | N | C | Q | H | X | B | P | A | C | Q | U | J | Y | U |
| J | O | L | G | R | C | C | V | K | N | X | F | Y | A | G |
| G | E | N | U | S | W | F | W | E | F | E | F | W | F | K |

ANIMAL  
CANID  
CANIS LUPUS

CARNIVORE  
CHORDATE  
CLASS  
FAMILY

GENUS  
KINGDOM  
MAMMAL  
ORDER

PHYLUM  
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# A Look Beyond

## Wolf Predation and Elk in the Greater Yellowstone Area

by Ed Bangs

In response to rumors that elk herds in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) have been severely affected by wolves, I asked to review the data collected by Montana and Wyoming about their ungulate herds. Studies in the GYA show that 92 percent of wolf kills are elk, and worldwide research has demonstrated that predation can affect prey populations.

No scientific information indicates that elk populations in Wyoming have been significantly reduced by wolves. With a total population of 34,255, all six herds of wintering elk in the GYA were larger than the state's management objective. Calf/cow ratios have been lower (low 20s/100 cows) recently than they were in the early 1980s, but Wyoming still uses liberal hunting seasons to manage elk populations and has not made any changes in hunting because of wolves.

All Montana elk herds in the GYA, except one herd south of Bozeman, contain populations larger than state objectives. Northern range elk, the largest herd, have fluctuated between 9,000 and 19,000 in the past 20 years. The ratio of 14 calves/100 cows counted in 2002 was the lowest in over 20 years, but the ongoing regionwide drought is thought to be the major cause of the lower ratio, although wolves and other predators undoubtedly contributed. Montana also uses winter cow hunts to reduce elk populations. Annual harvests range from hundreds to thousands

depending on how many elk leave Yellowstone National Park because of snow depth.

Wolf predation can accelerate prey population declines or slow increases, but herd size is most often determined by a combination of other factors, primarily habitat conditions, weather, and human hunting of adult females. Wolf predation can affect ungulate populations, and that issue remains a legitimate concern of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state fish and game agencies and hunters.

Ongoing long-term cooperative research by the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Nez Perce Tribe, Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming and various universities will be able to clarify the potential effect of wolf predation on elk and other ungulate species. At this time the drastic impacts of wolf predation

on GYA elk populations claimed by some are not supported by field data. The experimental population rules for wolves in the GYA provide specific management options should wolf predation significantly reduce ungulate populations. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in cooperation with the states, will not hesitate to relocate wolves should the need to reduce wolf predation on native ungulate herds arise, but currently it appears premature to "cry wolf." ■

More information can be obtained at <http://northerngraywolf.fws.gov/>.

Ed Bangs is the Northwestern Wolf Recovery Coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.





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