

INTERNATIONAL WOLF

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Wolves Use All Their Senses to Find Prey

By Kyle Mrak

Wolves are constantly searching their **territory** for their next meal. Territories can be very large—anywhere from 25 to more than 1,000 square miles in size! How are wolves supposed to find their prey in that huge area? By using their ears, noses and eyes, of course!

Wolves have very good hearing. They can hear other wolves howling from up to six miles away. They can swivel their ears to point in different directions, which helps them know what's going on in their surroundings, even if they aren't looking and listening in the same direction. Sometimes their prey can be very quiet, especially a little mouse or a snowshoe hare trying to hide. The wolf's strong sense of hearing can help it find that prey!

Not only can wolves hear well, but they have a sharp sense of smell, too. They often use their noses when they communicate with each other, but their noses also help them hunt. Wolves can smell prey from 300 yards away—that's the length of three football fields—but when the conditions are just right, they can pick up scents as far as one-and-a-half miles away! Their noses also help them find prey that is **camouflaged**.

Wolves follow the scent and sounds of their prey to get very close to them, and that's when their eyes become most useful. Wolves' eyes work very well in low light. This is important because wolves are **crepuscular** (they hunt mainly around dawn and dusk), so they need to be able to see in the dark. ■

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Meet Grizzer—the Oldest Wolf in the Exhibit Pack

Grizzer is 15-and-a-half years old, making him the oldest wolf ever to live at the International Wolf Center. He currently lives in the retirement enclosure—a separate area that’s a little quieter than the exhibit pack environment. He was one of three pups that came to the Center in 2004, along with Nyssa and Maya. He currently weighs about 125 pounds.

Grizzer

Vocabulary

Territory The area that an animal defends from others of its own kind.

Camouflage Special coloration to help an animal blend into its environment.

Crepuscular Most active in the morning and in the evening.

Who am I?

I am a large, primarily nocturnal, semiaquatic rodent.

I am known for building dams, canals, and lodges.

I am the second-largest rodent in the world.

I am a secondary food source for wolves.

Activity

Connect the dots to discover the identity of this animal.