




# Wolf Print

*published quarterly*



*the magazine of the UK Wolf Conservation Trust*

*issue 1 summer 1998*



## Editorial team

### Editor

Denise Mottershead

### Editorial Team and Contributors

Beryl Debonnaire, Sue Hull,  
Sandra Littleproud,  
Chrys Livings, Roger Palmer,  
Gwynne Power,  
Dr Claudio Sillero-Zubiri

### Patron

Desmond Morris

### Board of Directors

Charles Hicks, Roger Palmer,  
Tsa Palmer, Colin Thorne,  
Nigel Toon

### Graphic Design team

Simon Bell, Stephen Cowen,  
Julie Kissane, Dean Weston,  
Jon Wood

(The UKWCT gratefully acknowledges the  
help received from Coventry University)

The opinions expressed in this  
magazine are not necessarily those  
of the publishers.

### Aims of the trust

To enhance the conservation,  
scientific knowledge and public  
awareness of the environment.

To stimulate greater interest in  
Wolves, their food, their habitat  
and their behaviour.

To provide opportunities for both  
ethological research and for  
people to interact with Wolves.

To improve the chances of  
survival of European Wolves in  
the wild.

To set up an education  
programme for Schools,  
Conservationists and Dog  
Trainers.

UK Wolf Conservation Trust  
Butlers Farm, Beehnam,  
Reading, Berks. RG7 5NT  
Tel: 01189 713330

### Subscription rates:

£10.00 + £1.50 P&P (non-members)  
£8.00 + £1.50 P&P (members)

# Editorial

Welcome to Wolf Print, a new quarterly magazine from the UK Wolf Conservation Trust dedicated to wolf conservation.

The aim of the magazine is to help the conservation of wolves worldwide through education, raising awareness and providing information, as well as giving our practical support wherever possible by raising funds and through campaigning for wolf conservation.

Topical feature articles, and up-to-date news about wolves and wolf conservation from all corners of the globe will be the cornerstones of the magazine. A lot is happening in the wolf world at the moment from the plight of one of the most endangered wolves in Ethiopia to the exciting reintroduction programme for Mexican wolves. And, as many of you will have heard by now, the future of the Yellowstone wolves hangs in the balance following a ruling by federal Judge William Downes that the reintroduction programme is illegal. You will be able to read about these issues and many more over the coming months.

We also have some new additions to our own wolf pack with the arrival of three yearlings from Europe. We will follow their progress as they settle into their new environment at the UK Wolf Centre in Reading, Berks.

The idea for a new magazine came after a meeting to discuss how we could reach a wider audience to help achieve the aims and objectives of the UK Wolf Conservation Trust. We could have simply developed the newsletter, but this only reaches our members, and so a decision was taken to launch a magazine which would be available to anyone who wished to subscribe. In this first issue we have retained some of what would have been the next newsletter to members. Our feature articles from Chrys Livings and Sue Hull are continued from the June 1997 Issue of the newsletter.

The magazine has already had quite an auspicious start. We have received offers of support from many people, including biologists and researchers out in the field. And as well as our resident graphic designer, Julie Kissane, Coventry University has very kindly donated the services of a graphic design team for the layout and artwork. I would also like to mention the many volunteers and supporters who give up their time and expertise week in, week out to support the work of the Trust, and who have previously contributed to the newsletter. As a relative newcomer to the Trust I look forward to working with you all to build the future success of Wolf Print.

We constantly receive updates from all over the world but if you come across any snippets of information about wolves or wolf conservation, then please let us know.

As with any new magazine we will be looking to receive feedback from our readers. Please send your letters to : The Editor, Wolf Print, 29 Falcon Avenue, Binley, Coventry, CV3 2ES, or E-mail : [denise.mottershead@btinternet.com](mailto:denise.mottershead@btinternet.com).

We hope you will like the new format and that you will subscribe to the magazine, or buy a gift subscription for a friend. You will find a subscription form in the centre of the magazine.

### Editor



# Wolf Print inside...

... every issue



Wolves of the world



Letters and Wolfie Websites



Wolf print next issue



Noticeboard



Wolf CubClub



... this issue



Iberian wolf recovery centre



Wolf hybrid – Separating fact from fiction



Wolf song



Visit to European wolves



Summer seminars



Mexican wolves



Rare wolves – report from Ethiopia



# Wolves of the world



## Yellowstone – USA

The reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone National Park in 1994 has been a great success despite the considerable amount of opposition. The first batch of wolves were captured in British Columbia and transferred to Yellowstone for release in the winter of 1994-1995. Another group were captured in late 1995 and released shortly after.

However, the future of the wolves now hangs in the balance. On 12th December 1997 federal judge, William Downes, ordered the removal of

wolves released in the northern Rockies on the grounds that all transplanted wolves introduced to the area in the last four years had been illegally released, violating the federal Endangered Species Act.

The judge ordered all non-native wolves to be moved elsewhere within the United States. He did emphasise the point that all native wolves to the area were protected by federal law and hunters were not allowed to shoot them under any circumstances.

Environmental agencies immediately started a campaign to appeal against the ruling, and the battle to safeguard the Yellowstone wolves rages on.

In a recent poll commissioned by the National Wildlife Federation average Americans overwhelmingly want the animals left where they are, with huge majorities rejecting any removal efforts that could mean death for the animals.



● Countries referred to

If you would like to support the campaign, please write to the following people, and urge them to do all they can to fight the court decision.

Secretary Bruce Babbitt  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240  
e-mail address:  
bruce\_babbitt@ios.doi.gov

President Bill Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500  
president@whitehouse.gov

You can also write to the Farm Bureau and urge them to drop their law suit against the wolves of Yellowstone. The address is:

Dean Kleckner  
President, American Farm Bureau Federation  
225 Touhy Avenue  
Park Ridge, Illinois 60068  
847-685-8600

## Mexican Wolf

This is an exciting time for the Mexican wolf or El Lobo (*Canis lupus baileyi*). On 29 March 1998 eleven Mexican gray wolves made history when they were returned to their homeland in the Ponderosa pine mountains of eastern Arizona's Apache



National Forest, twenty-eight years after the last wild wolf was seen in the American Southwest. We will follow their progress through a series of articles starting with details of the release in this issue.

### Canada

In Calgary more than 450 wolves have been killed by a dozen or so native hunters. Nothing particularly unusual about wolves being hunted until you learn about the particular methods of hunting being used in the Northwest Territories. The wolves are being chased to death by hunters on snowmobiles. Manoeuvred onto open tundra the wolves then search vainly for somewhere to hide. They are chased until they collapse from exhaustion at which

point the hunters shoot them. What is particularly worrying about this is that there are no accurate data on the wolf populations in this region, and so the impact of these hunts cannot be fully assessed. This could have very dire implications for Canada's wolf populations. Send your letters of protest to:

The Hon. Don Morin, Premier  
Government of the Northwest  
Territories  
P.O. Box 1320  
Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2L9  
Telephone (403) 669-2311  
Fax (403) 873-0385  
don\_morin@gov.nt.ca

The Hon. Stephen Kakfwi  
Minister of Wildlife  
P.O. Box 1320  
Yellowknife, NT, X1A2L9  
Telephone (403) 669-2366  
Fax (403) 873-0169  
stephen\_kakfwi@gov.nt.ca

The Hon. Christine Stewart  
Minister of Environment Canada  
Centre Blk. Rm. 103-S  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Telephone (819) 997-1441  
Fax (819) 953-3457

### Croatia

Croatia is having difficulty with managing its compensation programme for livestock farmers. Fearing the Government might lift the protection status on wolves, the Croatian Wolf Group is creating a manual describing the requirements of the process. There is also a need to educate hunters who are under the impression that the wolf will kill all of the areas ungulate population.

### Estonia

Estonia is currently engaged in a battle against wolves. Hunters claim wolves are depleting the wild and domestic ungulate population. The region also is simultaneously experiencing an increasing problem of wolf-dog hybrids. The Estonian Government currently does not have a compensation plan for farmers who experience wolf depredation. It is, however, encouraging the destruction of wolves by supporting groups of wolf hunters including the provision of supplies worth up to \$22,000 in US dollars.



### Kazakhstan

Wolves were banned from being killed for the past five years, but now there are bounties of up to \$75 being paid by the Government. According to the Kazakhstan Institute of Zoology there are about 60,000 wolves in this country. The killing of wolves increased after reports surfaced in a local newspaper of wolves attacking people.

### Georgia

Since Civil War tore apart the former Soviet state of Georgia, the once healthy population of

wolves has been severely diminished because only six or seven adult individuals still inhabit this area. To increase survival of this species in this area a captive breeding and release programme is being set up by Dr John Badridze of the Noah's Ark Centre for the Recovery of Endangered Species.

### France

The French government is still monitoring the presence of two wolf packs in the Maritime Alps, which have caused unrest with the local sheep and goat herders. The wolves reappeared in the area

in 1992, coming from Italy where they number about 400. Compensation has been paid to farmers for livestock depredation, but opposition to the wolves still remains strong. There are many supporters, who recognise their presence in the Alps as a crucial step to getting them reintroduced into France after being absent for 60 years. The Bardot's animal rights foundation recently donated up to \$100,000 to a 50-acre preserve in south-eastern France, which will serve as a protection for the small wolf population.

O

Grunha and Lobinho share an enclosure of half a hectare, and are both shy, especially Grunha. Both of these wolves have been resident at the centre since 1990, having been rescued from bad and inadequate captive conditions. We saw Lobinho twice during our stay, once when he watched us from the shadows before disappearing into the trees, and again when he came for his feed, to stand perfectly still, one foreleg raised, motionless and intent, before taking his meat and melting once more into the shadows. Grunha herself remained an enigma to us.

I enjoyed tremendously our time spent with Manchas' and Carinhna's one year old hand-reared pups, in their own enclosure of one hectare. Watching and interacting with Nemrod, Orion, Aurora and Serena was enthralling. The boys are named after great hunters, whilst Aurora means "dawn" and Serena means "serene". The girls were rather deer-like and the boys somewhat leonine, with luminous-eyed Nemrod the emergent Alpha of their little pack, despite the size and weight of his lumbering 36 kilo brother, Orion, who really won our hearts, for his character and clumsiness.

We had spent regular time with the pups from outside the enclosure before finally entering, and being enthusiastically greeted with much tail-wagging and tongue-lapping, and playful, fascinating interaction between the foursome. It was notable that whilst the wolves would often choose to grace us with their presence, and interact with us,

their interaction with each other, even when regularly close to the perimeter of their enclosure, was not notably affected by our being there.

On our first visit to the pups' enclosure, they were relatively calm and accepted us readily, and Orion sprawled out for a thorough stroking and scratching. On our second visit, by contrast, they were very boisterous, especially Orion who this time satisfied himself by tugging at my jacket (different to the one I had previously worn) and jumped up to take a mouthful of my hair, and Aurora who also jumped up at me persistently. Determined to let the experience take its course, I walked around the inside of the enclosure with the four wolves; the Centre's Director; the Site Managers and the wolves' Vet. Diversion techniques were calmly employed with regard to the wolves' boisterousness such as scent distraction, which was particularly effective.

'Positive reinforcement' is used with regard to the wolf's behaviour with humans; in other words, rewarding a wolf for a desired behaviour. (Klinghammer/Goodman, 1995). This does not employ techniques to gain power over the wolves, but it seeks to establish a harmonious rapport between wolves and humans interacting together, so the humans concerned must take careful stock of their own actions. Therefore, one tries not to stroke and scratch the wolf immediately after being jumped upon by the wolf, but waits until a neutral moment for this when the wolf is showing relaxed behaviour, so there is

## Iberian Wolf Recovery Centre

by Chrys Livings



## “positive reinforcement” is used with regard to the wolf’s behaviour with humans’

no association formed by the wolf between excessive (to humans) boisterousness and a pleasurable scratch. Where possible, all parts of the wolves’ bodies are handled from a very early age, in neutral, relaxed situations, and objects such as syringes are similarly introduced, so the wolf becomes habituated to potentially strange objects and handling procedures. Then, when medical care and attention is needed it can be administered with the minimum amount of stress for the wolf.

I learned much from observing, and being involved in these periods of interplay between the wolves themselves, humans, and the environment which illustrated by our experiences with the pups - though the location was the same in each instance, yet the respective behaviour of the wolves markedly different - forces one to become much more instinctive and focussed as to various factors affecting the situation in hand. Simply speaking, it makes one learn from the wolves by adapting to them, their language, and their environment. In fact, it actually brings us closer to wolf-state ourselves by learning to use our senses in a similar way to theirs -giving us a panoramic rather than blinkered perspective. And this is the very nearest we can get to them and their own special world.

In September last year we returned to the Centre and had the pleasure of meeting Machas’s and Clarinha’s second litter of pups, born in May at the full moon. Five of them were hand-reared at 14 days, with the sixth, a female, Aura, remaining with her parents. The four males; Feno, Prado, Teixeira and Zinbro, along with their sister Murta, were introduced to the yearlings’ enclosure forming a lively pack of nine young wolves in all; the youngsters especially striking with three of them having one eye yellow and the other brown. Prado was the emergent alpha of the pups, even in spite of his, as yet,

diminutive size - instinctively sensing “procedure” and nipping Orion’s rump! I spent many hours watching their boisterous antics, noticing that the yearlings were now exhibiting a more ‘adult’ demeanour, while still indulging the frolics of their five-month old companions! Aurora especially was growing into a rather elegant looking wolf; Orion was still the focus of domination; Nemrod maintaining alpha status; and Serena was showing much active submission, deferring even to Orion, after having been ostracised. The dynamics of a wolf pack are forever in motion. I was moved by the constant fluidity of their behaviour; the switches between resting and interacting. The newcomers were forever clambering on top of each other and mouthing each other’s heads! Morena was also extremely energetic, and would play chase with me, crashing and leaping around in the ferns as I struggled to keep up with her on the outside of the enclosure. There were many more magical moments. At night, a cool wind howled through the valley, and sent clouds scudding across the huge, pale moon. As if in a wonderful dream, the young wolves rolled and tussled together under the stars. One evening at twilight a huge owl landed on the overhang of the yearlings’ and pups’ fence, suspended in silhouette right over my head for what seemed an eternity, then flew off noiselessly over the enclosure! In the mornings, the valley was strung with a tapestry of spiderwebs, glistening with dew, and the mist hung in low veils over the damp, creaking eucalyptus as the wolves howled to herald another new day.

**For further details on the Iberian Wolf Recovery Centre, contact:**

**The Site Manager, Centro de Recuperação do Lobo Ibérico, Apartado 61, 2665 Malveira, Portugal.**



## Separating fact from fiction

by Sue Hull

Children running around, screaming and yelling, tripping and falling while they play can trigger predatory responses in canids, be it wolf, hybrid or dog (many breeds of domestic dog have high prey drives too). The press then seize on these as unpredictable and unprovoked attacks.

However, what actually goes wrong is an owner fails to predict an attack because they did not understand this particular aspect of canine behaviour. The reason that most domestic dogs do not kill children is that this element of their behaviour has been reduced in the level at

Finally, a serious word on those animals that are currently being bred and sold as wolf hybrids in this country. The vast majority of such animals probably have very little or no recent wolf blood. This is also true of the majority of hybrids in the USA. True wolf crosses are usually bred from mixtures of wolf, Husky, Malamute and German Shepherd. Most members of the public think that these breeds of dog are very much like wolves and find it impossible to distinguish between them. In addition, the Huskies and Malamutes have many wolf-like behaviours, including howling rather than barking and a highly



‘There are many breeders who are making a lot of money out of selling animals that are just cross-bred dogs that look a bit “wolfie”’

which it is triggered and the intensity with which it is displayed. With wolves and hybrids the likelihood of these behaviours being triggered and the sequence being carried right through to the end is that much higher and this is one of the main reasons that wolves and wolf/dog crosses cannot be regarded as pets in the usual sense of the word. There is nothing wrong, in my view, with such animals being kept in captivity provided that they are kept in appropriate conditions and provided with suitable habitat and companions.

developed system of social signalling. Unfortunately, because of this, there are many breeders who are making a lot of money out of selling animals that are just cross-bred dogs that look a bit “wolfie” to the uninitiated. In some cases these breeders are just naive, in others they are out to make a quick profit out of the gullible. I know a fair bit about the background of the current hybrid population in the UK and believe me, nearly all of those animals have about as much wolf in them as your neighbour’s Spaniel.



There is another good reason why the wolf content in even the genuine hybrids is very low. Wolves breed only once a year, in the spring. Dogs on the other hand mainly have two heat cycles a year and breed at any time. This means that dogs are essentially twice as fertile as wolves and on average, probably a lot more, since they tend to have larger litters as well. Hybrids that are mostly dog i.e. half-wolf or less, will breed much more rapidly than those that have a higher wolf content and therefore follow the wolf reproductive cycle. An important and little appreciated fact is that, as well as female wolves coming into season only once a year, the males, too, are fertile only during the winter months, with their testes actually shrinking to the size of cherries for the rest of the year. This means that even males are not available for breeding

outside of these months. In addition to this is the fact that low content hybrids, or no-content hybrids, are easier to live with as pets and will therefore be bred from more than the true mid- or high-content animals, that may well have gone to meet their maker before sexual maturity! The upshot of all this is even if the whole situation was ignored there is a natural tendency for the more wolf-like animals to decline in favour of the low and no-content animals.

In the UK we have two pieces of legislation which could possibly be used to control the proliferation of wolf hybrids, namely the Dangerous Wild Animal Act (1976) and the Dangerous Dogs Act (1991). The trouble is that both of these pieces of legislation hinge on the well-published problems of identification and the problem with wolf

**‘In the UK we have two pieces of legislation which could possibly be used to control the proliferation of wolf hybrids’**

hybrids is that there is no definitive test that can be used to distinguish them from dogs. Genetically, wolves and dogs are so closely related that with the present state of the art you can maybe tell if a wolf has recent dog genes but you cannot do it the other way round. It seems unlikely that there will be any such test in the foreseeable future due to the fact that, as I pointed out earlier, domestic dogs have been known to mate with wolves periodically throughout the history of their domestication. Because the wolf is the ancestor of the dog, all the genes in all dogs are primarily wolf genes anyway. Wolves, on the other hand, are less likely to have the small number of recently mutated genes of their domestic cousins.



No one involved with dogs can have failed to have heard of the contention surrounding the identification of Pit Bull Terriers and the use of the word "type", in the Dangerous Dogs Act (1991). Now let us apply a similar wording to wolf hybrids, i.e. a dog of the "type" known as the wolf hybrid. Put your hands up all of you with dogs that have erect ears! Now, how about all of you who have dogs with grey or sable colouration or light coloured eyes. The hit-list is endless. Essentially we can effectively include all those medium and large size dogs that belong to the Spitz group, like the Huskies, Elkhounds, Akitas, etc., not forgetting any cross-breeds of these. Then, more numerous still, we have the German Shepherds, Belgian Shepherds, many Collie types and again the vast numbers of crosses of these and related breeds. In other words who is going to identify these animals. Anybody who wants a legal lever to rid themselves of neighbours that they don't like for whatever reason would be able to literally cry wolf if those neighbours own a dog that in the opinion of some dubious expert is a wolf/dog cross.

## 'There is a point at which one can say, yes, that animal definitely has recent wolf blood in it'

Identification can never be carried out with 100% accuracy and it takes a person with very considerable experience of not only different subspecies of pure wolves, but also of the breeds of domestic dog used in the crosses to have even a hope of making a reasonable estimation of whether an animal is part wolf. In particular, perhaps they need extensive experience with the Arctic sled dog breeds who to the uninitiated are so often mistaken for wolves both in terms of appearance and perhaps more significantly in terms of their behaviour. By the time these breeds are mixed up with German Shepherd, for example, it really is impossible to accurately distinguish them from low-content wolf hybrids. There is a point at which one can say, yes, that animal definitely has recent wolf blood in it, but at the lower end of the scale it is not at all possible to say that any dog definitely does not have recent wolf blood.

How, or if we attempt to control the breeding and sale of animals reported to be wolf hybrids, is not up to me. I do not have any answer to the question. The best that I can suggest with the present situation is perhaps to ban the sale of such animals (i.e. any use of the word "wolf") to the public. Although this would not entirely solve the problem it

would, I believe, reduce it very considerably because the present stock is sold almost exclusively through adverts in the press. Even if the breeders came up with other names for these animals that did not include the word wolf, it would severely limit the market and reduce their effectiveness. This could be claimed to be part-wolf by their owners. Even in the USA there has not really been any consensus on how to handle the problem.

I hope that this article goes some way to answering some of the questions that people have about these animals, and the situation in the UK. It is possible that the present, rather benign situation could change with the importation of genuine mid- or high-content animals, although bringing such genuine animals through quarantine would be tricky. Unfortunately we do stand the risk of an incident and the associated "knee-jerk" reaction for which our government is so famous! In my opinion, the dangers from the latter clearly outweigh the risk from the present population of so-called wolf hybrids.



# Wolf song

by Sandra Littleproud

**I**n the time between nightfall and the breaking of day  
My heart sings the song of the Wolf Family way.  
In quiet contemplation I roam the Great Plains  
Carried by the song like rippling waves,

**M**y heart song goes higher to the Spirit Land above  
And I seek the understanding of ancestors of love.  
They sit in Great Council each one a tribe  
And sagely nod at the songs of my life.

**M**y song reaches out in the quiet of night  
Gently encompassing the world and its plight.  
So if you hear me in the depth of your dreams  
Call back softly and unite in the call, because the  
Wolf Family lives in the hearts of us all.

**L**et your song lift you higher to Great Spirit above  
Giving honour and respect to our life and our love.  
Until the day when the song shall succeed  
Uniting us all, with all that has been.



A sunny morning saw Colin Thorne, Tina Bennett and Denise Drammis, accompanied by the Palmer family complete with children who are more boisterous than our own wolves, set off for Dover and the ferry to Calais. Two and half hours from Calais had both cars finding the hotel in Breda just north of Antwerp. Ten minutes away was the wolf sanctuary.

The highlight of our three day trip to see wolves in Holland and Germany was Werner Freund's snow white Arctic wolves and his European wolves.

The disappointment was the uncertainty over whether the wolves in Holland, destined for our Wolf Centre, were in fact of pure blood. This was a great shame as Theo von Hilst had been keeping them especially for us at his wolf sanctuary for over a year.

Essentially in his back garden he has three wolf enclosures. The largest, which is a little smaller than one of our existing compounds, houses a couple of hybrid Timber wolves. These are brother and sister and are particularly affectionate to everyone; our 12 year old daughter is allowed in with them too, but he never lets young children in with them in case they are knocked over. This was upsetting for Lara (age 11) who is the most keen on wolves, of our own children. These hybrids had German Shepherd blood in them.

The next enclosure contained three wolves, all of which are considered to be pure with one possible exception. Of these a pure female on offer to us was particularly shy.

In the third pen was Loopy, who was by far the most beautiful of all.

But she does not get on with any of the other wolves and therefore has to be kept on her own at present. She is very much a "ladies' wolf" and is particularly friendly to Theo's wife, Janet. Loopy is the main wolf taken to schools, even though she lost part of her tail when it was bitten off through the wire by one of the adjoining wolves. With very strong facial markings, she is reminiscent of eastern European wolves, though these also create uncertainty over the pureness of her genes.

Theo and Janet are doing great work for both rescuing wolves in Holland and helping spread the word through their own educational programme. They gave us a superb dinner in a lovely cafe in a clearing in the middle of a neighbouring wood. It was a very enjoyable evening and a nice introduction to Dutch food for some of our party.

# EUROPEAN W

'Werner Freund is clearly the alpha wolf of each group and enjoys the close interaction he has with all his wolves.'





# WOLVES

After a late night, next morning saw us bound for Gerolstein in Germany; this was the fourth country we had driven through after France, Belgium and Holland. Fortunately the driving was relatively easy as almost all of the 300 kilometres to the Wolf Park were on motorway. The Adler & Wolfspark Kasselburg is managed by the very friendly Axel Imdahl and his wife, Gaby. The Park is unusual for three reasons.

First, it has a pack of 19 black wolves which originate from the Yukon in Canada.

Second, it houses an extraordinary display centre where they fly a Golden Eagle, thus demonstrating the top of the food chain in both European mammals and birds.

Third, it is built inside and around an old castle, which provides a spectacular backdrop. It was almost impossible to

see the wolves even though we were allowed to go into the cages of some of the biggest eagles and buzzards found in Europe; despite these extra vantage points through the windows of the castle ramparts, no flicker of a black wolf was visible. (This in itself was a great privilege and a cause of not a little adrenalin being released since these wondrous birds with their gigantic beaks and huge talons were nesting in each flight and were none too pleased to have their area intruded upon by complete strangers). Fortunately a judicious number of dead chicks were sufficient to tempt some of the wolves into the open.

What a marvellous sight greeted our eyes as these black spirits of the forest literally flitted out, picked up a morsel and glided back from whence they came into visibility. We all fell for them. Of course we then had to stay on until the daily feeding of the wolves at

3.00 pm. This is the one time when they do all come out to collect their food which was mainly paunches and pieces of deer and probably goat. The sight of these splendid animals was more than we had bargained for and we remain very grateful to Axel for all his help and endeavours. (They do have cubs there, but these are born in the rocks under the castle and are impossible to get at).

Sadly we had to leave before the eagle display but there is enough here to provide a most enjoyable day for everyone.

Little did we know what a superb sight still lay ahead. From Breda to Gerolstein had been 305 kilometres; now 130 kilometres further on lay the highlight of our trip.

In Merzig is the home of one of the most remarkable wolf men in the entire world. Werner Freund has four different types of wolf at his "Naturbuch-Verlag" Wolf Park. Since he was leaving for Russia on the following Sunday morning where a film on his life is being made, we had to arrive on the Saturday if we were to see him. As one of the most eminent experts on wolves in Europe, many beat a path to hear his words of wisdom. He is often on the television and is consequently quite famous.

We arrived at 5.30 in the evening (after Colin had driven 650 miles in two days) coincidentally arriving just in time to see him feeding the wolves. They are all fed once a day, usually in the evening, but if a special group has booked in then one pack can be fed earlier so that that group can see them feeding and see the increased activity which results.

Werner Freund is clearly the alpha wolf of each group and enjoys the close interaction he has with all his wolves. For others it is purely a spectator participation as he will not even allow his own helpers into the wolf enclosures. It was fascinating to see the dominant wolves holding off the others until they had had their fill but there was ample food to go round.

For me there were probably two highlights. First, seeing the alpha male take a piece of meat and show it off, standing up with the meat in his mouth leaning against Werner and displaying it in his face. This is a very touching symbol of their relationship. But despite their affection for him, when I approached the fence, having been given special

‘...one of my lifetime dreams has been to see both black and white wolves and this was one of those times when your breath catches in your throat and you become very emotional.’

permission to go inside the barrier, the dominant male aggressively lunged repeatedly at the fence showing full aggression in an even more determined manner than we have ever seen with our male wolf Kodiak.

The other highlight was having the privilege of seeing Arctic wolves feeding which was a special, heart-stopping moment for me. For many people just to touch a wolf is a dream come true as that in itself is incredibly rare to find oneself being allowed to. But for me one of my lifetime dreams has been to see both black and white wolves and this was one of those times when your breath catches in your throat and you become very emotional. Werner reminded me very much of John Aspinall in terms of the special bond he has with his animals.

I hope that one day he may be able to squeeze in enough time to come and see our Wolf Centre but it was a real honour to see and meet him with his wonderful animals. (The Park contains not just Arctic and European wolves but also Indian and American Timber wolves). To have been effectively at three wolf havens in a day was a rare feat, but I would not recommend that pace of travel as one needs to have time to linger and savour the individuality of these beautiful animals.



Last summer the UK Wolf Conservation Trust held two seminars, both of which were well-attended and were a great success.

At the first seminar, in early summer, we were treated to entertaining presentations from Paul Aston, Deputy Carnivore Keeper at Woburn Abbey, and Andy Rouse, Professional Wildlife Photographer.

Paul stood in at the last minute for Head Carnivore Keeper, Steve Bauerfiend, and despite his nervousness at giving his first presentation, he kept the audience amused and

## s u m m e r



interested with his stories about the antics and escapades of the wolves at Woburn. Paul quite obviously loves the job he does (who wouldn't?) and his enthusiasm for his work, illustrated by the wonderful slides he had of the wolves in his care, more than made up for his lack of experience of public speaking.

Andy Rouse has been around a little bit longer than Paul, although given the nature of some of his expeditions, this is no small wonder. His photographs capture the wildness of his subjects beautifully, many of them depicting some sort of action or other: wolves running at full pelt, polar bears taking in the midnight sun and so on. The photographs speak volumes on their own, but, behind every shot is a story, and Andy is a born storyteller. His was a lively and highly entertaining presentation, again

demonstrating the same sort of enthusiasm for his work that makes the rest of us positively envious.

At the second seminar, on 31 August, we had the pleasure of listening to the increasingly well-known Ian Redman from Wolf HELP (Helping Education for Lobo Preservation) and Maureen Greeley from Wolf Haven in the USA

Ian Redman presented Wolf HELP's new talk "Savage Freedom: Wolves on the Hunt" which covered the many facets of this subject, including the gray wolf on the hunt in North America, the hunting techniques and the various relationships between predator and prey, Prey Search Imagery, prey defence mechanisms against wolf predation, the "tools of the trade". All these aspects and more were incorporated into three different scenarios of wolves on the hunt which included the High Arctic, Wood Buffalo National Park, and Isle Royale. Wolf HELP is in constant contact with many of the leading wolf biologists and researchers "out in the field". Such worthy notables as L David Mech, Diane Boyd, Jeff Haas, Steve Fritts, and Lu Carbyn (to name but a few) all back the work of Wolf HELP by providing slides and regular updates which enable Ian and his team to carry out their valuable work in the UK. Ian's presentations are always highly factual, and you don't get just the nice face of wolf conservation. He presents it as it is. Otherwise how can anybody make an educated judgement on this subject? Again, another lively presentation, imbued with great enthusiasm.

Maureen Greeley, Executive Director at Wolf Haven, came all the way over from the States to give a talk for UKWCT. To set the scene, and in true American style, Maureen started her presentation by getting the whole audience to howl. Having set the tone Maureen then regaled us with exciting stories of both wild and captive wolves in America and Canada. And exciting stuff it is too. Wolf Haven is one of only two centres that is currently preparing Mexican

wolves for reintroduction back into the wild. This follows the success of the Yellowstone reintroduction programme and the recovery programme for red wolves. We were also very privileged to be the first audience outside of Wolf Haven to see video footage of the Centre's Mexican wolves. To increase the odds of their long term survival it is necessary to instil a healthy fear of humans into the wolves. And this means an absolute minimum amount of human contact whilst they are in captivity. Despite this, Wolf Haven have managed to capture these wonderful animals on film and it felt good to know that these wolves will soon be as wild and free as Mother Nature intended. After her presentation, Maureen happily signed copies of her new book simply titled "Wolf".

During the afternoon sessions at both seminars delegates were split into three groups which rotated between walking with Kodiak in the fields, attending a Question and Answer session, and making the most of a photo opportunity with Kenai running free in a small meadow (Andy Rouse was on hand at the first seminar to impart some of his expert knowledge).

Sue Hull came along to the second seminar on 31 August to give a brief talk during the Question and Answer session about the differences between dogs and wolves. Sue is well known for her articles on this subject and was more than happy to share her thoughts with us using Timber, Sharon Loades' Malamute as a "model" to demonstrate this. Timber was as much interested in the audience as we were in him and thought nothing of plonking his wolf-like bulk across people's feet if this meant he would get a good scratch and tickle out of it. And, of course, in the interests of audience participation, we all willingly obliged.

Both seminars were a great success which is due to the organisers putting in a lot of hard work, the speakers for their interesting and entertaining presentations and to all who took the time and effort to attend. A big thank you to you all.

# Wolfie Websites

The world of wolves has generated countless sites on the Internet. Here are just a few of our recent favourites, starting with the UK Wolf Conservation Trust site obviously!

The UKWCT is in the process of being updated and we hope to include on-line articles from the magazine in the not too distant future.

<http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/1347/>

The US Fish and Wildlife Service site provides lots of information about wolves, and in particular the recent Mexican wolf release.

<http://www.fws.gov/>

Dr Ralph Maughan's homepage is an absolute must for anyone who has an interest in wolves. This site is packed with accurate and up-to-date information.

<http://www.poky.srv.net/~jjmrm/maughan.html>

If you managed to catch the programme "Wolves at our Door" recently aired by BBC, you will have seen Jim and Jamie Dutcher and the Sawtooth Wolves. Jim Dutcher founded the Wolf Education and Research Center whose website can be found at

<http://www.wolfcenter.org/>

Wolf HELP are becoming increasingly known in the UK for their wolf lectures. They now have their own website at <http://www.webfactory.co.uk/wolfhelp>

## HAPPY SURFING!

If you know of any websites which will be of interest to our readers then please e-mail them to us at: [denise.mottershead@btinternet.com](mailto:denise.mottershead@btinternet.com)

# Letters



(sent by e-mail)

February 1998

Dear UKWCT

We have unfortunate news to share with you. We need your help on this one.

### **wolf killed by poacher! your help is needed!**

She was a shadowy gray adult female, born in 1991 in the Ninemile valley near Missoula, Montana. Her family, the Ninemile pack, was made famous by wilderness author Rick Bass in his bestseller, "The Ninemile Wolves," published by Ballantine Books,



1993. The Ninemile pack was one the first packs to settle in Northwestern Montana. Their story was plagued with the difficulties of being among the first wolves to return to an area where many people feared and opposed the return of the wolf. Several pioneer wolves died but enough lived to give birth to pups and define their niche in this new wolf territory. Rick's book chronicles their re-establishment with the help of Mike Jimenez, a dedicated wolf researcher who has been the guardian of this pack since they first settled the Ninemile valley. This adult gray female was the daughter of one of the original settlers. She was nicknamed "Auntie" by biologist Mike Jimenez as she took over the role of primary caregiver for the pups of the pack. While the alpha female (the mother)

would hunt for food to feed her pups, Auntie would stay at the densite and stand guard over the youngsters. Wolf "babysitters" also serve as teachers for the pups who must quickly learn the essential skills for survival. In February of 1997, the pups of the year nearly full grown, Auntie and several of the pups she had helped raise left the Ninemile valley. The pack had grown to 12 members and wolves often disperse from their home pack to search for new territory to start new packs. As only one female (the alpha) typically breeds and produces pups, perhaps Auntie was searching for a mate to begin her own family. Tragically, before breeding season, she was illegally killed near the northern city of Moscow, Idaho. As there is no evidence to suggest she had been involved in the death of any livestock it appears her death was simply a random act of violence against a species long misunderstood in this region. The old "joke" among wolf opponents is "Shoot, Shovel and Shut Up." Often law enforcement officers find little evidence to convict wolf killers. Yet, this time they discovered the crime and, with our help, Auntie's killer may yet be brought to justice. The Wolf Recovery Foundation and the North American Wolf Association have pledged to assist the US Fish & Wildlife Service Law Enforcement officers with our help. Together we are building the Wolf Protection Fund to directly aid in the recovery and protection of wolves. Donations raised through this fund will help us post a reward for information leading to filing criminal charges against

Auntie's killer. In the long term, these funds will be strictly used to advance the recovery of wolves through public outreach, future protection, research, and efforts to restore wolves where they rightfully belong.

**For further details or to offer your support, please contact:**

The Wolf Protection Fund  
C/O The Wolf Recovery Foundation (a 501.C.3 Non-profit organization)  
P.O. Box 44236  
Boise, ID 83711-0236

Suzanne Laverty, Director  
Wolf Recovery Foundation  
(208) 321-0755  
P.O. Box 44236  
Boise, ID 83711-0236  
Email: WRFwolf@aol.com

Rae Henderson Ott, Director  
North American Wolf Association (281) 821-4884  
23214 Tree Bright  
Houston, Texas 77373  
Email: Nawa@nawa.org



Dear UKWCT

Would love to see your magazine once it's rolling. Good luck with your project! (Love the title!) Keep in touch!  
Lori

Membership Manager  
International Wolf Center  
Lori Longnecker,  
Membership Manager  
5930 Brooklyn Boulevard,  
#204  
Minneapolis, MN 55429-2518  
612-560-7374



## New European Wolves

Three new wolves arrived safe and well from Europe in early February. The yearlings (named Athena, Luna and Apollo) quickly settled into their new environment, and although their behaviour was very cautious at first, one of the female wolves, Athena, proved to be more inquisitive than the others. Soon all three were exploring their territory.

The wolves have had to be quarantined for six months which means restricting visits to the Centre, but we will keep you posted on their development and progress over the coming months through the magazine and through member newsletters.

# NEXT ISSUE...



## Savage Freedom -Wolves on the Hunt

Ian Redman, from the Wolf HELP team, has written an article based on one of his presentations: Savage Freedom. Read all about the hunting behaviour of wolves in the next issue.

## Slovakia

Robin Rigg has spent the past year and a half working with Lesoochsanasske zoskupenie VLK (Wolf Forest Protection Movement) and reports on the current situation of wolf populations in Slovakia.

These are just some of the articles to be featured. We will also bring you updates from the Mexican wolf recovery team, Ethiopia, Yellowstone, Calgary, etc. If you hear of any news which you think we should report, please let us know.



## MEXICAN WOLF RELEASE

As snow fell, and the late afternoon light began to fade, the first Mexican wolves cautiously made their way out of their acclimation pens, observed only by remote video recorders, and explored their new surroundings in the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area. For Wendy Brown, a Mexican Wolf Biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, it was “an incredible moment”.

This historic event is the culmination of a long and often difficult battle by a multi-agency team to bring the Mexican wolf back from the brink of extinction. It is hard to believe that after almost 40,000 years of inhabiting Arizona, Texas, New Mexico and Mexico it took just a little over a century to exterminate the Mexican wolf from its home range.



The first ranches were established in Arizona and New Mexico in the 1870s and by 1893 the first official bounties were offered on dead wolves. What followed was a systematic slaughter of *Canis lupus baileyi*, until 1976 when, almost too late, the subspecies was placed on the Endangered Species list. The last five wild Mexican wolves were captured between 1977 and 1980 and placed in a captive breeding programme at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum.

The captive breeding programme has been relatively successful and there are now twenty-four zoos and wildlife sanctuaries which house over 175 Mexican wolves. Although this has been a positive move, there's still a long way to go to safeguard their future. A viable population needs to be established in the wild, which will require at least 100 wolves to achieve this.

As with all wolf reintroduction programmes, the Mexican wolf recovery programme has attracted fierce opposition from the New Mexico Cattlegrowers, New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau and several other groups. It is a controversial subject and the issues surrounding it are complex and varied. The problems raised don't always have nice, neat solutions. How do you convince a rancher of the positive benefits of wolf reintroduction when it is his livelihood that is being threatened? Add to this the still-prejudiced view of the wolf and you begin to realise why emotions run high when wolf reintroduction is mentioned.

In a recent lawsuit it was contended that the genetics of the Mexican wolf are questionable; a contention which had already been refuted by 15 scientists. As well as testing Mexican wolf DNA, the genetic stock of the wolves has been carefully monitored throughout the captive breeding programme using a stud-book to trace the lines of ancestry.

Despite such opposition, however, on 29 March eleven Mexican wolves were released from their acclimation pens in three family groups, free to roam the

Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area; an area over four times the size of Great Britain. Pine-strewn mountains, spruce-fir forests, woodlands and tracts of gently rolling terrain once again reverberate with the howl of the wolf.

Prey species also inhabiting this area include elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, javelina, jackrabbits and cottontails and so there should be little need for the wolves to kill livestock. Even so measures have been taken to minimise this. The pioneers were released from the northern pens three months before the arrival of livestock to grazing allotments. The acclimation pens were also carefully

male and female, two female yearlings and two male pups.

The adult male from the Campbell Blue pack, a direct descendant of one of the last wild survivors, Don Diego, is known, sadly, only as No 166. An essential depersonalisation as programme teams must not attach themselves to individual wolves.

The Hawk's Nest pack, prior to their release, were at the captive breeding facility at Wolf Haven in Washington. As with all the other wolves on this programme, contact with humans was minimal to avoid habituation. (For those of

you who attended, these particular wolves were featured in Maureen Greeley's presentation at the seminar last summer when she showed us exclusive slides and video footage of Mexican wolves).

Since release the behaviour of the wolves has been encouraging. The wolves are being tracked using radio telemetry. So far they have shown a healthy aversion to humans, the Hawk's Nest pack has been seen chasing an elk demonstrating prey recognition, and each of the family groups has bonded. These are all attributes required by wolves for their survival in the wild. Until they have demonstrated they can hunt successfully, the wolves are being fed on supplemental road-killed deer and elk placed in the vicinity of the pens and throughout each pack's area of movement.

Within weeks the females are expected to dig dens and give birth to the first wild-born Mexican wolves in decades; another milestone in safeguarding the future of this link with the natural past.

*On Sunday 5 July we are privileged to have Wendy Brown as a guest speaker at the UK Wolf Conservation Trust's Summer Seminar. This will be a great opportunity to hear a first-hand account of the Mexican wolf reintroduction, as well as seeing exclusive slides and footage of the release itself. Don't miss it - reserve your places by contacting the Administration Office on 01189 713330.*



Map courtesy of Defenders of Wildlife

selected and located in areas where the wolves would not be exposed to livestock during their acclimation. In the event that the Mexican wolves do kill livestock, Defenders of Wildlife will compensate ranchers from a Wolf Compensation Trust fund which has been maintained since 1987.

The three family groups released comprise the Campbell Blue pack (named after the river): an adult male and female and a female pup; the Turkey Creek pack: an adult male and an adult female; and the Hawk's Nest pack: an adult



# Rare wolves

by Dr Claudio Sillero – Zubiri

Dr Claudio Sillero-Zubiri is making quite a name for himself in the world of wolf conservation, and beyond. Those of you who regularly watch BBC wildlife documentaries will be familiar with his video diary, which every few weeks gives an update on the Ethiopian wolves. He has also recently featured in numerous magazine and newspaper articles and has written the following piece for Wolf Print. We are keen to support his cause and hope you will feel the same once you have read this article

The Ethiopian wolf is considered the world's rarest canid. Fewer than 400 adult wolves now survive in the Ethiopian highlands in a half-dozen widely scattered populations. A close relative of gray wolves and coyotes, the Ethiopian wolf is a recent immigrant to the African continent, conquering the African highlands, where they thrive on an exclusive diet of Afro-alpine grass rats and molerats. Although they are solitary hunters the wolves live in closely-knit family packs of up to 13 adults, and all help in raising up the pack's pups.

A study of Ethiopian wolves in the Bale Mountains has proved what scientists had suspected for years: that domestic dogs are the most immediate threat facing the survival of this rare carnivores. Interbreeding between the endangered wolves and domestic dogs has occurred. Similarly, canid diseases such as rabies and canine distemper are worming their way into their wild relatives recently resulting in widespread mortality

Since 1995 the Born Free Foundation, of Elsa the lioness' fame, has spearheaded efforts to protect this critically endangered species. The Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme is lead by Dr Claudio Sillero, of the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit at Oxford University and a leading member of the IUCN's Canid Specialist Group.

Claudio and Edriss Ebu, a young man from the Bale Mountains, have been working for the Ethiopian wolf project since its inception 10 years ago, championing the cause of these rare wolves. They are now appealing for immediate action to save Africa's only wolf species. Recommendations include control and vaccination of the domestic dog

population in Bale Mountains National Park, a community education campaign and the initiation of a captive breeding programme to help preserve the genetic makeup of the species.

They also monitor the whereabouts of several wolf packs. During the breeding period (which spans from November



Geographic Distribution of the Ethiopian wolf, Canis Simensis.  
By Dr. Claudio Sillero-Zubiri

through to March) all members of a family pack centre their social life around the breeding den, where they assist the mother to feed and protect her pups, allowing the field workers to determine who is around.

Other members of Claudio's Team include Dr Karen Laurenson, of Edinburgh University, who monitors the occurrence of disease in domestic dogs and wildlife in the Bale Mountains National Park. Her work will help us to understand this process and vaccinate dogs to prevent transmission of disease.

**"Unless the above threats are dealt with, one of the most interesting creatures ever to inhabit the African highlands might soon become the next large mammal candidate for extinction."**

The Programme has received a timely boost from the Whitley Award for Animal Conservation, obtained last February. However, additional funds are needed to pay for the continuation of the wolf monitoring in Bale Mountains, the education campaign and to support an expansion in park surveillance.

With the current rate of habitat destruction, persecution, disease, and hybridization, a coordinated conservation operation for the Ethiopian wolf has become a critical priority. Action is needed now if we are to avoid a further Ethiopian wolf population decline and diminish the chances of these animals becoming extinct. Unless the above threats are dealt with, one of the most interesting creatures ever to inhabit the African highlands might soon become the next large mammal candidate for extinction.

#### **Note from the Editor:**

Ethiopian wolves need your support. Your donations will help to safeguard the future of Ethiopian wolves by providing funds to protect their ranges, pay for vaccination of domestic dogs and by helping to educate the people of the Bale Mountains on the benefits of wildlife conservation. Expenses include travelling costs, basic equipment,

vaccines, educational materials, horse maintenance, employment of a local field assistant, and park scouts.

#### **Please send donations to:**

Claudio Sillero-Zubiri  
Wildlife Conservation Research Unit  
Zoology Department, South Parks Rd  
Oxford OX1 3PS, UK

#### **or to the**

Born Free Foundation  
Coldharbour  
Surrey  
RH5 6HA

**Note:** *Since receiving this article, Dr Sillero has contacted us to tell us of a great new discovery. It has been confirmed that a new population of wolves has been found in a remote region of northern Ethiopia. The team found evidence of the wolves' presence in the South Wollo mountain range, an area largely unexplored. Before leaving the area, after their 10-day search, the team spotted a healthy adult male wolf.*

*This is encouraging news, but the campaign to safeguard the future of the Ethiopian wolves must continue. Please do all you can to help.*

## Noticeboard

**Summer Seminar Sunday 5 July 1998**

**Brockenhurst School - Near Newbury**

We have great pleasure in announcing the UK Wolf Conservation Trust's Summer Seminar.

Wendy Brown, wolf biologist with the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, will be the guest speaker for the day, and will be presenting a talk about the Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Programme. This is a topic we will be covering in Wolf Print as we follow the progress of the wolves recently released into the wild.

We will also be joined by Ian Redman and the Wolf Help Team who will be presenting an exciting new talk called Wolf Ways. Those of you who are familiar with Ian's lectures will know the treat in store.

Details of our third guest speaker will be announced in due course. To reserve places please contact the Administration Office on 01189 713330.

## Picture Credits

Don Adams: pg.2,16

Stephen Cowen: pg.9

Werner Freund: pg.10,11,12

Wolf Help: cover (back)

Sue Hull: pg.8

Chrys Livings: pg.4,5

Roger Palmer: pg.6,7

Andy Rouse: cover (front), pg.1,2,13,14

Jonathan Wood: pg.3,15

Dr. Claudio Sillero-Zubiri: pg.3

Find the 20 differences



Wolfie Wordsearch

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



- ADOPT

ALPHA

APOLLO

ARCTIC

ASIAN

ATHENA

BEENHAM

CLUB

CONSERVATION

CUB

ENCLOSURE

ETHIOPIAN

EUROPEAN

GREY
- HOWL

KENAI

KODIAK

LUNA

MANED

MEXICAN

PACK

PRINT

RED

TIMBER

TRUST

WHITE

WILD

WOLF

