

WOLF PRINT

The UK Wolf Conservation Trust

Issue 60 | Spring 2017

Protectors of a Mountain Marvel

An Update On The Ethiopian Wolf

The Hills Are Alive

Tracking the Elusive Wolves of India

Why Science Matters in Conservation

Solutions to Depredation in Russia



NEWS



EVENTS



RESEARCH



MEDIA AND ARTS



Cover photograph by lorenzfischer.photo

Published by The UK Wolf Conservation Trust,
Butlers Farm, Beenham, Reading, RG7 5NT.
Tel: 0118 971 3330, fax: 0118 971 0522, email:
ukwct@ukwolf.org, website: www.ukwolf.org

Editor

Julia Bohanna. Tel: 0118 971 3330
Email: editor@ukwolf.org

Assistant Editor

Francesca Macilroy

Editorial Team

Wendy Brooker, Mike Collins, Nikki Davies, Sue Fine,
Pete Haswell, Jessica Jacobs, Cammie Kavanagh, Lynn
Kent, Pete Morgan-Lucas, Rachel Mortimer, Lara
Palmer, Johnny Palmer, Tsa Palmer, Denise Taylor

Patrons

Martin 'Wolfie' Adams, David Clement-Davies,
Cornelia 'Neil' Hutt, Desmond Morris, Marco Musiani,
Michelle Paver

The UK Wolf Conservation Trust Directors

Nigel Bulmer, Charles Hicks, Sue Hull, Linda Malliff,
Tsa Palmer

Associate Directors

Lara Palmer, Johnny Palmer

Specialist Advisors

Alistair Bath, Garry Marvin, Kirsty Peake, Claudio
Sillero, Denise Taylor

The UK Wolf Conservation Trust is a company
limited by guarantee. Registered in England and
Wales. Company No. 3686061.

The opinions expressed in this magazine are not
necessarily those of the publishers or The UK Wolf
Conservation Trust.

All rights reserved throughout the world. Reproduction in any
manner, in whole or in part, in English or other languages, is
prohibited. The work may not be photocopied or otherwise
reproduced within the terms of any licence granted by the
Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd or the Publishers Licensing
Society Ltd.

AIMS OF THE UK WOLF CONSERVATION TRUST

- To increase public awareness and knowledge of
wild wolves and their place in the ecosystem.
- To provide opportunities for ethological and other
research that may improve the lives of wolves both
in captivity and in the wild.
- To provide wolf-related education programmes for
young people and adults.
- To raise money to help fund wolf-related
conservation projects around the world.

Download Wolf Print, including back issues, from
www.ukwolf.org



Design and artwork by BambooHouse
Publishing: www.bamboohouse.co.uk
Tel: 01225 331023

Printed by: Pensord, NP12 2YA, www.pensord.co.uk
on FSC paper from sustainable forest sources.

This magazine is fully recyclable. By recycling magazines you
can help to reduce waste and add to the millions of tonnes of
paper already recycled every year by the UK paper industry.
You can recycle paper through your home recycling collection
scheme or at your local recycling centre. Visit www.recyclenow.com
and enter your postcode to find your nearest site.

Issue 60 | Spring 2017

'Only the mountain has lived long
enough to listen objectively to the
howl of a wolf...' **Aldo Leopold**,
Thinking Like a Mountain,
A Sand County Almanac.

Editor's Letter

In terms of *Canis lupus*, there are
still metaphorical mountains to
climb in terms of conservation and
awareness. Mountains are the theme
of this issue and we have combed the
earth, contacting people we support
and follow at the Trust, to bring you
the iconic wolf in the mountains
that Aldo Leopold was so passionate
about. We have a wonderful article
about how wolves were once
perceived in the ancient mountainous
regions of Japan and the latest update
on the gloriously Titian-coloured
endangered Ethiopian wolf that
populates Africa's Bale Mountains.
Add in the enigmatic Himalayan wolf
and we have indeed transversed the
globe to bring you a variety of species,
in very different circumstances.

Nearer to home, as longed-for spring
arrives and we emerge from dark
early nights and gloomy mornings, we
are not the only species to celebrate
growth and hope. Wolves too become
more playful and frisky. Here at the
Trust we are in a privileged position
to observe their behaviour at close
quarters. Our handlers' updates are
always fascinating, particularly when
we offer the wolves enrichment and
then can observe how each distinct
character treats that enrichment. Or
even avoids it! Like people, animals
can have irrational likes and dislikes, or
base their 'quirks' on pack hierarchy.

I am also very pleased to include an
excellent and thought-provoking article
by Mike Collins, our wolfkeeper, on the
conservation work done by zoos.

Although human politics is not our
remit here at Wolf Print, any changes
to the political landscape, particularly
in large powerful countries, invariably
has an effect on the way animals



Julia and Nuka

are treated. The new US Trump
administration has therefore been
a worry to most conservationists,
particularly because there is talk of
reviewing the Endangered Species
Act. It is clearly an anti-green type of
government and it is not something
they have kept hidden. You can read
about the particularly corrosive 'War
on Wolves Act' in our Wolves of the
World section. The macho name says
much about its intention.

Many dedicated conservationists
keep repeating the phrase 'non-lethal
protection'. None more so than the
Centre for Compassionate Conservation:
<https://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/our-research/centre-compassionate-conservation>. In a new direction for
Wolf Print, we are supporting a young
researcher who is already in Israel and
intends to spend time with Bedouin
people in Jordan and report back
his findings, about how wolves and
predator control are treated in specific
region. After previously publishing
a piece about a wolf pack living in
minefields in Israel's Golan Heights, we
are excited to have someone directly in
that region of the world.

Let's not forget our arts and books
section, with an interview with 'friend to
the wolves' and artist Victoria Parsons.

But for now, let's celebrate spring, the
vibrancy of flora and fauna and for
a mountain-themed issue, the very
appropriate adage of 'onward and
upwards!' First used in 1817, it is still a
positive and pertinent expression. Our
next issue will be conflict-themed, so
prepare for some interesting debate.

Julia Bohanna

Julia Bohanna, Editor



Contents

REGULARS

Editor's Letter	2
Wolves of the World Lupine news worldwide	25
Making Tracks Book reviews and interviews	32
Merchandise New and exclusive gifts and souvenirs	36

NEWS FROM THE TRUST

Trust News News and Events	4
Director's Letter	6
Update on the Trust's Wolves	8

FEATURES

Hedge Laying at the Trust Traditional, Wildlife-friendly Borders at the Trust	13
Animal Symphony Chris Packham visits the UKWCT	14
Update on the World's Rarest Canid News from the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Project	15
Tracking Wolves in the High Himalaya Finding the Elusive Indian Wolf	18
Myth and Lupine Legend in Modern Japan A Mystical Journey to Japan	20
Why Zoos Matter Challenging Misconceptions in Captivity and Conservation	22
New Wolf Project in the Middle East An Introduction to a New Wolf Project in the Middle East	28
Walk 4 Wildlife The Trust Takes Part in Guinness World Record Attempt	29
Preventing Wolf Depredation in Russia A Study of Non-Lethal Methods	30

INTERVIEWS

Victoria Parsons A chat with the wildlife artist and teacher	32
--	-----------

EVENTS

All the upcoming events and activities	38
---	-----------



Sparsholt Conference Review

On 19 January, Wolfkeeper Mike and I attended a careers conference at Sparsholt College in Hampshire for animal management students. The aim of the day was to engage students in discovering future various career pathways and work experience opportunities. As representatives of the UKWCT we displayed pictures showing our wolves as well as information on the projects we support on our stall, along with

Wolf Print magazines. In between discussing the Trust with students, Mike also gave a couple of talks to a bigger audience in lecture theatres while I remained with our stall and continued to enlighten other students on my experience of being on placement at the Trust.

From a personal point of view just being able to share everything I have learnt and discovered about wolves in working with the Trust in such a short

space of time was quite rewarding, and along with Mike's presentations we managed to encourage 50 students to sign up for more information to becoming a future work experience student at the Trust. So overall it was quite a successful day, and we should hopefully be gaining many more students in the near future!

Hannah Stanton

Hannah is currently studying BSc Conservation Biology at the University of Plymouth. Hannah has been on placement here at the Trust for six months and finishes on 31 March 2017.



Sikko by Francesca Macilroy

Christmas Crackers For Our Wolves

As tradition here at the Trust, we celebrated Christmas 2016 with the wolves by giving them brightly wrapped gifts boxes (some of which contained frozen salmon or trout) and homemade crackers. Children came to our annual Children's Christmas Cracker event, where they helped stuff crackers with some of the wolves' favourite treats which included: black pudding, tuna, cheese,

and sausages. While the wolves were held in their holding enclosures, the children hid the crackers among their enrichment logs, in holes, on the mound and of course, some on the Christmas trees that were placed in each enclosure. Once the children were safely out of the main enclosures, the wolves were let back in, racing around in search of their hidden delights. With their incredible sense of smell it didn't

take them long to find their tasty titbits. Some of the wolves, like Tala and Pukak, carried as many crackers as they could, running to the back of their enclosure or high up on the mounds, hoping that the other wolves wouldn't try to steal them from them. Whereas others such as Mai would sneakily go and investigate Motomo's torn opened crackers just on the off chance that he may have left something behind! All the children and parents were fascinated by the wolves' behaviour as a well as the excitement of watching which wolf would find their cracker first.

Francesca Macilroy



Pukak by Francesca Macilroy



Pukak by Phil Cannings, Newbury Weekly News



Mosi by Phil Cannings, Newbury Weekly News

Hearts Lost to the Wolves on Valentine's Day

On 14 February love was in the air at the Trust. Children aged 4-14 came to celebrate Valentine's Day with our ten residential wolves. The children decorated the heart-shaped boxes for their chosen wolf, with drawings and of course their chosen wolf's name. Then they filled their boxes with tasty wolfy treats which included sausages, black pudding, carrots and some smelly cheese!

The children finished stuffing their boxes, as the wolves patiently waited in their holding pens observing the children hiding their boxes throughout

the enclosure. Some were hidden high up on the mound, others in holes and others were carefully placed amongst log piles.

Once all the children were safely out of the enclosures, the wolves were let out of their holding pens. The Beenhams, the first to receive their tasty titbits, were unsure of the strange packages, as this was the first time they had seen anything like it. After a while Nuka, Tala and Tundra eventually crept closer and closer as the tantalising smells were just too much for them to resist. Even Tundra ran off into her wooded area carrying one of the large boxes.

Mosi and Torak however, stole everyone's hearts on the day. Mosi who is never fazed, ran around the enclosure checking out all the best boxes to ensure that she got the best pickings, then weeing on them to claim them as her own. She did this with every box she came across, much

to the amusement of the public, but perhaps not so for poor Torak!

Francesca Macilroy



DONATIONS GIVEN IN THE LAST QUARTER

University of California – Davis Indian Wolf Project

£3,000

Balkani Wildlife Society

£3,000

Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme

£5,000

Israel/Syria - The Centre for Compassionate Conservation (CfCC) at the University of Technology in Sydney, Australia

£5,000

TOTAL

£16,000



The Origins of Wolves' Valley, Devon

Inspired by a recent trip to Woolacombe in Devon, which means, 'wolves' valley' in Anglo-Saxon, I decided to research its origins and the history behind wolf place names generally across England.

Wolves were still numerous and widespread when the Anglo-Saxons were naming our countryside. Most wolf place names derived from the old English language 'Wulf', or the old Norse language 'Ulfer'. There are around 230 wolf place names in England and unsurprisingly the most frequent are found in hilly or wooded areas including Devon, Cumberland, Westmoreland and West Yorkshire. Most counties have a few wolf place names whereas Huntingdon, Norfolk and the East Riding of Yorkshire, which are all low-lying, eastern countries, seem to have none. This establishes a clear link between wolf place names and habitat features.

Habitat Features	Wolf place names
Hills	16%
Valley	10%
Woods	19%
Clearing	17%
Pits*	18%
Miscellaneous**	20%

The greater part of Devon, including Woolacombe, was blanketed by more or less unbroken forest during the early part of the Dark Ages (fifth to ninth century AD). The 25,000 Celtic and, later, Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of the county lived along the coast and river valleys in tiny settlements hemmed in by the dark

and threatening forest. This forest (or ancient 'wildwood') teemed with red and roe deer, wild boar, wildcats, martens, polecats and wolves.

During the long hard winters of the Dark Ages and especially January, (the Anglo-Saxon Wulf-Monat or Wolf-Month) packs of starving wolves

*There is ample evidence worldwide to suggest that a baited pit was a standard way to kill and therefore control wolf numbers.

** Some miscellaneous examples include Great and Little Wolford which were (lookout sites for wolves) and Ulf Edock, Ullock Moss and Ullock Mains (where wolves could be found playing), Wolsty (wolf-frequented path), Woolbusk (wolf bush), Wifstones (Wolf stones), Wolvey (wolf island/marsh), Wuffet Garth (wolf-haunted cottage enclosure), Antrum (wolves' cave), Wolvenden (enclosure to protect flocks from wolves). There are many more!



Woolacombe Beach, bigstockphoto.com

hunted through Devon villages in search of prey. Many names of Devon villages and farms can be traced back to this period.

For example:

- Wolborough (from Wulfa - Beorh) and Wooladon (Wulfa-dun) meaning wolves' hill.
- Woolacombe and Woolcombe (Wulfa - Cumb) meaning wolves' combe or valley.
- Woolley and Wolleigh (Wulf-Leah) meaning wolves' clearing.
- Woolwell meaning wolves' spring, a spring or drinking place frequented by wolves.
- Woolridge meaning wolves' ridge.



British wolf hunt

Of course we have no way of knowing precisely how many wolves there were in Devon in those far off days, but with the help of a few facts and figures of wolf ecology it is possible to make a well-informed guess. The area of Devon is 2,591 square miles of which some 80% was wild wood and the remaining 20% (above the 1,000 and 1,200-foot contours) on Dartmoor, were blanket bog or upland heath, moor and scrub. In wooded country with plenty of deer, wolf packs generally numbered between six and ten animals and hunted within territories of 30-60 square miles. So a simple calculation suggests a population of 75 wolf packs and between 500 and 700 wolves in Devon.

From about 805AD onwards the number of wolves in Devon and its adjoining regions began to decline. By 1120 wolves had disappeared from most areas, but there were still wolves a plenty and outlaws on and around Dartmoor and Exmoor. In 1150 there was still a Royal Wolf Hunter with responsibilities for Cornwall, Devon and Somerset. Ultimately the demise of the wolf was caused by the felling of the dense forests that had clothed Southwest England during the Celtic and early Anglo-Saxon periods. As the forests were felled, there were fewer and fewer inaccessible places where wolves could hole up safe



Wood engraving, Granger Historical Archives

from hunters. As the area of forest decreased, so the populations of deer and other wild game grew smaller. With its food supply disappearing, the Devon wolf was doomed.

The next time you visit the idyllic coasts and rolling hills of Devon try to imagine the dense forest teeming with wild boar, wildcats and wolves and how Woolacombe came to have its name!

Tsa Palmer



Mai and Motomo updates

Mild winter triggered Mai and Motomo's breeding cycle, earlier than usual. By mid-December both were showing subtle but distinct behavioural changes.

Motomo began doing perimeter patrols more frequently, urine-marking even when his bladder seemed empty. Fence-running with the Arctic wolves in the adjoining enclosure continued with a lot more vigour, the soil along either side of the wire turning sticky with wet mud. Motomo took greater interest in the den site situated

inside the enclosure's mound – the roof had slumped with the wet autumn, probably aided by Motomo's love of standing on top. At the end of December he was going halfway into the den (hard to know just how deep it is – Motomo being unsocialised, we can't take a look) and halfheartedly attempting to dig out the collapsed earth.

Mai's attitude also changed, treating Motomo with disdain, spending days almost entirely alone at the top of the enclosure, not even coming down for food. Other days she craved a tickle or ear-rub through the fence from her favourite handlers, gobbling food with great enthusiasm. Sometimes she was aggressive when Motomo tried to steal food. Like Motomo she'd been 'investigating' the den more often and howling from the upper deck of the recently installed raised platform.

Occasionally her howl comes out more as a croak, or sometimes nothing at all! She engages in short-duration howl sessions with her sister Mosi – one giving a brief howl of three or four seconds then waiting and listening for a reply. Given the history of sibling-rivalry between the sisters I doubt they mean anything friendly.



Motomo by Steve Carter

Motomo had also been using the platform to howl from but seemed reluctant to go up on to the top deck and instead liked to sit sphinx-like on the lower level.

Sitting with his front paws hanging over the edge, he looked most distinguished and regal, but with his entire face plastered with thick lumps of mud (after caching a pig's ear we'd given him as a treat) he looks less dignified. How does he stop all the mud going up his nose?

Interactions with the neighbouring Arctic pack continues to be feisty; Pukak, the lower-ranking Arctic male, buried a pig's ear at the base of the fence adjoining Mai and Motomo. He had his reasons: whenever Massak, the dominant Arctic male, tried to get too close to Pukak's cached food, Motomo would charge up and growl at Massak from the other side of the fence. Massak forgot about trying to take control of the food and would chase off Motomo. Cunning Pukak!

When we feed Mai and Motomo, Mai is fed through the wire in small portions, but we lob less finely cut food to unsocialised Motomo over the fence. He's remarkably adept at standing on his hind legs to intercept incoming food, usually swallowed before his front legs are back on the ground.

It's a shame that he's unsocialised – if the Beenham pack's temperament is anything to go by he might have been a biddable, though strong and feisty, wolf.

We have stopped taking Mai out on walks. We do not want to disrupt her bonding time with Motomo. It's also been difficult to get her out of the enclosure because Motomo comes close to the exit-gate. Motomo in the airlock with Mai could be problematic for the handlers, so for the next few months we'll let the lovers spend time together alone.

The peak of the wolf breeding season is alleged to be Valentine's Day, so they had some suitably tasty treats to celebrate with!

Pete Morgan-Lucas



Mai by Richard Whiteflock



Mai by Mike Collins



Massak by Rachel Mortimer



Sikko by Richard Bond

Updates on the Arctics

From pumpkins to seasonal changes and turkey tossing; the final few months of 2016 saw quite a variance in the range of enrichment for our three Arctic wolves: Massak, Sikko and Pukak, who are now six years old.

Enrichment is important in captivity to maintain a good standard of welfare. Taking advantage of Halloween, fresh pumpkins were prepared and filled with 'smelly' food items such as hot dogs, tuna and cheese. These were then placed within the Arctics' enclosure. However, caution was the most predominant behaviour observed amongst all three. These strange bright orange objects that were placed on their viewing platforms were enough for them to stay clear, except for Pukak braving to get a closer sniff. As seen in the wild, the lower ranking wolf would approach with caution to investigate while the dominants would remain safely in the background watching. After a few hours, Pukak dared to see what these pumpkins held inside, with Massak and Sikko soon following suit.

Although the weather remained quite mild for this time of year there have been frequent frosty mornings, meaning that the water troughs and buckets within the wolves' enclosures have become iced over. It's paramount for us to ensure our wolves have a fresh water supply and it is always the first job of the morning for our keeper.

For our three Arctics' however, this weather provided much entertainment for them in trying to gain access to the water below its frozen crust. By attempting to dig their way through the ice, this environmental enrichment provides stimuli that will build on their pack relationships, as well as an extra opportunity for claw maintenance.

Arctic wolves have long nails that continually grow. In the wolves' natural habitat the permafrost is so hard that these long nails are needed in order to be able to grip while walking on the harsh snow and ice. In captivity here in the UK, these conditions are not the same. Needless to say on the days we have had snow, they have enjoyed playing in it immensely.

Although the concept of Christmas was of course lost on the wolves, they still benefitted from our seasonal themed enrichment. During our children's event leading up to Christmas Day, crackers and salmon presents were given. Although they very much appreciated the hot dogs, sausages, black pudding, cheese and tuna filled crackers, the presents of salmon did not make a great impression.



Pukak by Trevor Goddard

Turkey crowns were also given to eat during our 'Visit Wednesday'. This enrichment provided a different problem solving opportunity as it is not something they are given regularly. While working out the best way to dismember the turkey crowns, kindly donated by the late Mr Pancott, the siblings also kept a watch on each other's movements to grab the best bits, which all three thoroughly enjoyed.

Recently, new logs have been added to the enrichment area of the Arctics' enclosure, providing a new viewing vantage point as well as for playing around, hiding food and chewing opportunities.

Rachel Mortimer



Torak by Pat Melton

Updates on Mosi and Torak

Spring has very nearly arrived – sadly so far this winter we have only had a couple of light dustings of snow. It didn't last very long but the wolves enjoyed the little that was there. When you think that wolves can tolerate temperatures down to -50°C, a little Berkshire snow is nothing to be bothered with, only played in.

Wolves thrive in the winter – in the wild it is the time when they have more successful hunts and build up toward the breeding season.

Torak and Mosi had a great Christmas, enjoying the crackers off the tree and also their large presents which were decorated cardboard boxes with salmon hidden inside. Mosi got to them first, ripping the paper off and then scent marking everything while Torak looked on. When Mosi had tired of her investigations Torak slyly crept in and finished ripping open the bright Christmas paper and got right into the boxes and ate the remaining contents.

Torak and Mosi are never fazed by extremes of weather as they've seen their fair share over the years. At the end of January they went on their last enrichment walk before the breeding

season. Although it was bitterly cold, they were not remotely bothered and thoroughly enjoyed themselves (the handlers were a bit chilly though!). As the wolves have aged, they are a lot calmer on their walks around this time - we always used to know when it was time to stop them as Mosi would get quite feisty and be very submissive to Torak, who would get irritated with her and warn her off with a growl. They so enjoy being out, searching out new smells and rolling in anything pungent. They know that when a certain group of handlers come on site that they are likely to go out on a walk, so they get very excited. It's nice to know that our retired wolves still appreciate going out on walks and benefit from the enrichment it brings.

Torak is always the first indicator that the breeding season is approaching. He starts to patrol the edges of his territory

in the enclosure with more frequency and howls from the mound a lot more. There are obvious physical signs too, but for the sake of Torak's modesty, I'll leave you to observe those for yourself! Once Mosi comes into season, she sticks closely to Torak's side, licking his muzzle and squeaking excitedly. They mated on the 22nd of February this year and were tied for seven minutes. Mosi soon started digging a hole, even though she won't have cubs. This natural behaviour is fascinating to observe and the fact they make no attempt to hide any of it is testament to how comfortable our wolves are with everything going on at the Trust.

Despite being nearly eleven, Mosi and Torak are still in excellent health and enjoying their lives at the Trust. Mosi's coat has lightened over the years from black to shades of grey and she looks every inch the elegant, quirky wolf that she is. She is always the first to the fence to see what is going on and greets visitors with excited squeaks. Torak is still his brindled beautiful self. Even though Nuka and Tundra now outnumber him in adoptions (he was our number one adopted wolf for many years), our grand old man is still very popular despite being aloof at times. No doubt the two of them will continue to beguile visitors to the Trust for a long time yet!



Mosi by Mark Rutley

Nikki Davies



Update on The Beenhams

Autumn/winter was warmer than average – so the Beenhams' thick coats were more hindrance than help.

The first thick ice came in December. Nuka loves to play with ice – from the enclosure's water buckets or from the water-troughs on our visitor walking route. He loves extricating ice from the trough (sometimes needing a helpful handler), then chewing and crunching it, before finally rolling on the fragments in ecstasy. Tala is less interested in ice-play; Tundra doesn't get involved at all!

Nuka loves licking fresh dew off the grass when walking – trundling along with his head down and tongue trailing, then gulping every few yards. It's not thirst – the morning dew must taste good!

Tala still remains the second-ranking female below Tundra, happily sneaking contact with her preferred handlers. When getting intense ear-rubs she remains constantly vigilant in case Tundra gets jealous, and decides to tell her off, putting her back in her place. Spring is the breeding season and though the Beenham pack have all been neutered there is a noticeable increase in tension between them, so we try to minimise the potential for temper tantrums. Disentangling leads from squabbling, growling wolves is not an easy task.

Tundra – the dominant female – retains her sense of aloofness with unfamiliar people and things.

When we changed the route on one walk, she was distinctly unsettled. Close contact with familiar and confident handlers helps settle her. On one winter walk she wandered into bracken with a still-active wasps' nest, getting several in the 'ruff' of fur round her neck. She initially panicked, but once we moved away from the nest we calmed her down and flicked the offending wasps away. Quiet time and gentle backscratches calmed her further. We will now be avoiding the wasp-infested bracken!

On walks we regularly see roe and muntjac deer – the wolves' response to fleeing muntjac indicates they could catch one if really hungry. When Nuka chases things he pulls hard on his lead, his four-paw-drive and weight-for-weight twice as strong as an equivalent size dog. We occasionally encounter hares and off-the-lead dogs. To a labrador, the wolves just appear like any other dogs they meet on a normal walk: their urge to run up/sniff/bark is strong. The wolves are unimpressed; even Tundra will join in the threat-display, pulling on the lead, standing up on hind legs with hackles raised. Handlers have to be fit, and alert!

Over Christmas/New Year the Beenhams had Christmas crackers: cardboard tubes stuffed with hot dogs and black pudding, wrapped up by visiting children. The



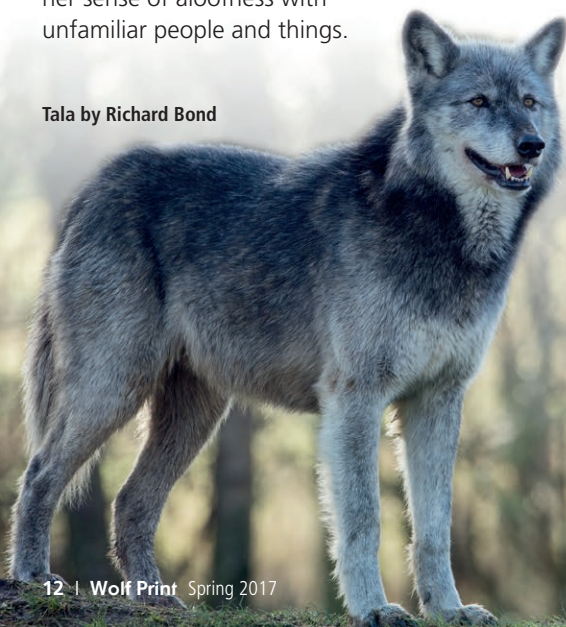
Nuka by Mike Collins

wolves loved snaffling the tasty treats inside, leaving a mess of coloured paper for wolfkeeper Mike and his work experience students to clear up. On the open day between Christmas and New Year we gave the wolves their Christmas dinner: raw oven-ready chickens. There were a lot of visitors on the day, so we fed Tundra part-way up the side of the enclosure where she felt more at ease. Nuka and Tala however, were happy to come and grab theirs in plain sight. Wolves crunching through bone is a most impressive sound if you listen carefully. If the wolves are hungry enough they will devour their food in minutes, showing visitors where the expression 'wolfing it down' comes from!

Now a new source of wolf entertainment/enrichment at this time of year is the Beenhams' pond, which is colonised successfully by pondweed, rushes and reeds – a breeding ground for a large number of frogs which the wolves love to chase. Advice? Frogs, don't croak too loudly when looking for a mate – you may become a wolf's supper!

Pete Morgan-Lucas

Tala by Richard Bond



Tundra by Pete Morgan-Lucas

Traditional Hedge Laying at the Trust

The wildlife in the Trust's grounds is greatly enhanced by the thick, species-rich hedges that border the fields. They provide excellent homes for nesting birds, shelter for a wide range of invertebrates and safe corridors for small mammals. However, as the hedges age, they thin out at the bottom and eventually become tree lines, resulting in a lowering of their biodiversity value.



In the past their primary function was to provide stock-proof barriers that last much longer than fences. Today, enhancing wildlife habitat is a

strong reason for maintaining thick hedges. Being a traditional craft, laid hedges also have recognised landscape value.

To renew the thick base the hedge is laid by cutting part way through the stems close to the ground, then bending them down to a shallow angle of about thirty degrees. These are staked and bound in place. The cut should ideally be smooth to avoid rot setting in and the stem should then vigorously sprout along its length. Older stems can be coppiced and most of these will sprout shoots, thickening the hedge base. The hedge is then staked to keep stems in place and these are bound along the top with long hazel or ash rods.

Conserve Reading on Wednesdays (CROW) has been laying sections of hedge at the Trust for several years - so the different stages of regrowth can be seen. These hedges are deliberately kept thick by retaining many of the stems, called pleachers, to enhance the wildlife value of the hedge, whereas a classic hedge would lay just a line of trimmed stems to give the hedge a new start. Members of CROW are proud of the results, so please have a look next time you visit. If we are there at the time, please talk to us and maybe even have a go at the laying or binding yourself.

John Lerpiniere

CROW work in and around Reading every Wednesday and are part of ECONET econetreading.org.uk



Chris Packham visits the UKWCT for 'The Animal Symphony'

It's not often you force a TV presenter to eat ice cream for breakfast, but one early August morning I bought Chris Packham more Mr Whippy 99s than he had room for.



Photograph by Tsa Palmer

We were visiting the Trust following a tip-off that the wolves can be set off howling on hearing an ice cream jingle. We asked local ice cream vendor Paul to attend, assuring him that we'd all eat a lot of ice cream to make his visit worthwhile.

Earlier in the year Chris had agreed to present our documentary, *The Animal Symphony*, studying why some animals respond to certain music. Chris was intrigued; his own dogs howl to very particular tracks, including the Lightning Seeds' 'Pure'. Other people's dogs howl to different tunes, including popular TV show themes. Captive wild wolves responding to an ice cream jingle? What could be going on?

For a long time humans - perhaps vainly - have set ourselves apart from other animals. We've put music on a very high pedestal of cultural achievement, imagining that no other creatures create symphonies

or appreciate piano sonatas. That may be true, but if we consider less highbrow music: whistling, singing in the shower, work songs, lullabies - then the line we've drawn between humans and animals blurs somewhat. Does animal song/communication have a similar function to the role music plays in ours? Think of a tiny baby mesmerised by its parent singing, or the reassuring role of the *Happy Birthday* song. Many animals use soothing, affiliative calls to connect with their infants or to welcome back family members. A group wolf howl may help unite the pack and reinforce a sense of kinship. So an ice cream jingle could be a trigger for a 'good old sing-along'.

We filmed the wolves howling, one of the most beautiful sounds I've ever heard. We were also interested to know whether the wolves would be intrigued by *new* musical experience. At the start of our project we asked world-renowned composer Nitin Sawhney to create a symphony. It was inspired by new research into the parallels between musical abilities in humans and other animals, including remarkable evidence that we're not alone in our sense of rhythm. Would it elicit a response from some

of the animal characters who appear in our documentary, such as our Schubert-loving starlings, or the parrot and sea lion who can boogie very accurately to a beat? Would the wolves at the Trust be impressed?

In fact the wolves looked nonplussed when it was played to them! However, Wolfkeeper Mike subsequently exposed them to humpback whale song, which, coincidentally, Nitin had woven through one of the movements within his symphony. This *did* trigger a howling response. Another intriguing question in a new and rapidly expanding area of research. One day we might just find a way of communicating with animals and, who knows, musical sound may be a starting point.

Chris found the experience magical. We were all enthralled by the wolves, and impressed by the way they're looked after. I just don't think any of us wants to see an ice cream for a while.

The Animal Symphony was premiered on SkyArts on 6 December, 2016.

Sue Western

Producer, Quickfire Media

Images copyright Quickfire Media



Chris Packham with Mike Collins, by UKWCT

Guardians of The Roof of Africa



© lorenzfischer.photo

From the Danakil depression, to the mystic lakes of the Rift Valley, the rock churches of Lalibela and the wild spaces with endemic plants and animals, Ethiopia is a land of wonders.

Sadly the country is often remembered by its droughts and famines, so it may come as a surprise to many that the fertile highlands of Ethiopia, once covered by forests, sustain one of the highest human densities of rural Africa. Over 80% of the people of Ethiopia, now exceeding 90 million, live in the highlands.

Between the two of us we have over four decades working in Ethiopia, and yet the wonders of this land keep enchanting us. Our travels from its cities to tiny villages in the most remote corners opened our eyes to the many dimensions of this country's uniqueness: Ethiopians have their own alphabet, use the ancient Coptic calendar (ticking along seven years behind ours), a different way to count the hours of the day, a bleeding heart gelada baboon, and a beautiful red wolf that eats rats!

At the peak of the last glaciation in the Ethiopian highlands, the ancestors of the Ethiopian wolf evolved into specialised hunters of rodents, the dominant mammals in the Afroalpine landscape. Warming up of the continent and the expansion of humans and agriculture, later pushed this marvellously adapted animal into mountain relicts where we find them today, like an archipelago of Afroalpine islands in a sea of crops.

We spent many years studying these exceptional animals, which combine solitary foraging with an intricate family life, putting to test the evolutionary meaning of sociality. In pursuing our academic goals, we became forever committed to protect these rare wolves from extinction.

With generous support from the Trust we continue searching deep



© lorenzfischer.photo

and wide for new knowledge and answers, exploring every mountain in search of wolves, comparing their genetic makeup and ecology, and in the process learning how wolves and people coexist in the highlands of Ethiopia. ►



All members of a wolf pack help in raising the pups (© lorenzfischer.photo)

The wolves are a flagship for the conservation of the Afroalpine ecosystems and the services they provide to the Amhara and Oromo people that share the mountains with the wolf. They need each other like never before.

The plight of the Ethiopian wolf

Claudio's early work in the Bale Mountains revealed to the world the fascinating life of this poorly known canid; he became acquainted with many wolf families and knew all the wolves by name, when precipitously rabies decimated his beloved animals in 1992. The perilous status of the species was then fully acknowledged

and formally recognised as Critically Endangered by the IUCN Red List.

As the Bale population was slowly recovering, and the political context becoming more stable, we embarked on a countrywide search for other wolf populations. Two years of expeditions served us to confirm the presence of wolves in mountains where they had been historically reported, to describe new populations and, sadly, some local extinctions. As a result, we estimated a global population of just under 500 adult and subadult wolves distributed in six populations – Bale, in the Southern Highlands, the largest with some 300 wolves.

The continuous recovery of wolf numbers in Bale prompted the downlisting of the species to Endangered, but our surveys had alerted us that the conversion of Afroalpine habitats to agriculture was putting most populations at serious risk of extinction (over 60% of suitable wolf habitats were now cropland) and that habitats and prey were degrading at a steady pace. In response to this crisis, we expanded the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme (EWCP) operations, until then focused in Bale, to the northern highlands at the turn of the millennium.

How can we save the world's rarest canid?

Rarely, there is a simple and unequivocal answer to this question in the world of wildlife conservation. For that reason, our work rests on various pillars, including monitoring, disease control, habitat protection, and education, outreach and capacity building.

Managing the threat of rabies remains a cornerstone of our work, as recurrent epizootics continue killing wolves in the Bale Mountains. We vaccinate domestic dogs in and around the National Park, conduct education campaigns, and also vaccinate



Vaccinating Ethiopian wolves (© Eric Bedin/EWCP)

Ethiopian wolves when an outbreak is detected. By creating a cordon sanitaire of protected wolf packs, we have contained disease epizootics from spreading widely across the Bale population. Our next challenge is to develop a more pro-active approach to managing disease, involving the oral vaccination of wolves - pilots to test the delivery and efficacy of the oral vaccine were very promising.

We also put emphasis on the protection of the smaller wolf populations in the northern highlands, where anthropogenic threats are greatest and wolf behaviour poorly understood. We are leading important new research into the drivers of habitat loss and degradation, the wolves' behavioural adaptations, and the needs and attitudes of local peoples. We are learning that rodent prey species respond differently to various land uses; that wolves adapt their foraging timetable to avoid people and livestock (a strategy potentially costly for a predator of small mammals); and that even though wolves sometimes choose to kill lambs, most local communities still maintain a positive attitude towards this endemic carnivore.

Another exciting component of our conservation work in these remote highlands involves the 'Wolf Ambassadors': selected by their own people, they are our eyes and ears in remote wolf ranges, building links with their communities and informing of serious problems as they happen – such as epizootics in dogs nearby wolf habitat and illegal encroachment.

The task of saving the wolves from extinction seems at times enormous, but the longevity of our programme is also bearing its fruits: we get to understand the wolves better, we



work with a more diverse range of partners and collaborators than ever before, and we learn from our failures and successes. Indeed, in the coming months, we will be assessing the strategic plan for the conservation of Ethiopian wolves that was delineated in 2011 by experts, governments, conservationists and members of the local communities gathered in the city of Lalibela. Together we defined our common mission: "to secure viable and ecologically functioning Ethiopian wolf populations and habitats, and to emphasise its role as a flagship for the conservation and sustainable use of the Afroalpine ecosystem, on which present and future generations of Ethiopians also depend". This mission reflects our dream, our personal motivation, and all that we want to achieve when we work to secure the future of the guardians of the Roof of Africa.

Jorgelina Marino & Claudio Sillero

The Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme (ethiopianwolf.org) was funded in 1995 as a partnership between the WildCRU at the University of Oxford, the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority and the regional governments, employing a dedicated team of over 40 Ethiopian nationals.

Jorgelina Marino, EWCP Science Coordinator and Claudio Sillero, founder and director of EWCP, are based in Oxford and travel to Ethiopia regularly to undertake field work and coordinate the many activities of the programme.



Wolf in the Web Valley (© Eric Bedin/EWCP)

ETHIOPIAN WOLF FACTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Canis simensis*

COMMON NAMES: Ethiopian wolf, Abyssinian wolf, Simien fox, Simien jackal, ky kebero (red jackal in Amharic), jeedala fardaa (horse's jackal in Afan Oromo).

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES: a specialist rodent hunter endemic to Ethiopia, with long legs and long muzzle, and a distinctive bright tawny rufous coat with black and white marks; mean mass ~16kg (14-20kg range).

HABITS: Solitary, diurnal foragers of small mammals with an intricate social life. They live in families of up to 18 animals which together defend a territory and help raising the pups of the dominant pair.

LIFE HISTORY: Typically long-lived, females tend to disperse, dominant females synchronise their oestrus and give birth to one litter of up to seven pups.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION:


Very localised endemic species, confined to Afroalpine grasslands and heathlands above 3,000m in Ethiopia.


STATUS: IUCN Red List: Endangered (C2a(i); D) – Protected by law in Ethiopia. Global population estimated at 450-500 adults and subadults in six populations; no captive populations exist.

For more information:

info@ethiopianwolf.org

ethiopianwolf.org

 facebook.com/ewolves/

 [@KyKebero](https://twitter.com/KyKebero)

The UKWCT has donated **£54,100** since 2007 to EWCP



Chasing Shanku: Wolf Research in the High Himalaya

Photographs by Lauren Hennelly

Dust scattered upward into the wind as we drove across the valley. To the west, undulating hills followed the flatlands along the Indus River, slowly rising to become snowcapped giants. Our rattling jeep disrupted the stillness of a valley so vast it seemed we'd never reach our destination – a small, nomadic settlement on the shores of a sacred lake, surrounded by two peaks over 19,000 feet high.

We were travelling through the Changthang, a high-altitude plateau stretching from Tibet into the northwest corner of Jammu and Kashmir, India. It is a harsh place – one of the harshest on the planet – with high altitudes, difficult terrain and winters nine months long. Still, this region has a wealth of biodiversity and has been home to the nomadic Changpa, a local ethnic group of Buddhist pastoralists, for more than 1,000 years.

Little is known about the wolves in this region and, generally, the wolves of India. The Himalaya harbours one of the oldest and most mysterious wolf lineages, thought to be isolated for 800,000 years. Due to their elusiveness and the challenge of conducting fieldwork in this region, research on these wolves is rare and genetic samples scarce. The Himalayan wolf is known to survive in only a few locations in India, Nepal and some regions of Tibet, and their distribution is largely undescribed in scientific literature.

It was there, in the Changthang of Ladakh, that I searched for wolves – seeking not just the opportunity to see a wolf; I wanted to hear them. With support from the Fulbright-Nehru Research program and the Wildlife Institute of India, I studied the acoustic structure of wolf howls. Over the course of ten months, I trekked to remote villages tucked into the high Himalaya, waited diligently for government permissions, weaved through traffic in rickshaws to access city zoos, and followed wolves as they wandered across the Central Indian grasslands. All with one goal – to record the howls of Himalayan and Indian wolves in hopes of understanding possible behavioural differences among India's genetically distinct wolf lineages.

Along the dust-covered road to my first field site, a white, nomad tent stood strong against a cold wind. As I walked up to the tent, a cheerful nomadic woman greeted me with a warm smile. Her weathered, wrinkled face reflected her life as a pastoralist



Lauren recording howls

enduring the harsh elements of the Changthang plateau.

Inside, the tent was cosy; colourful yak-wool rugs covered the ground, and the woman tossed cow dung into an iron stove. She poured steaming butter-salt tea into a cup embellished with dragons; I cradled it in my cold hands as Dawa, my local field assistant, asked the family in Ladakhi – the regional language similar to Tibetan – if they had seen any Shanku (wolf) recently.

'Wolves have killed two of our goats in the past three months near Tso Kar. But no, we haven't seen any wolf lately,' murmured the woman's elderly father in Ladakhi.



Packing donkeys for wolf trek

Having finished our tea, Dawa and I said goodbye and headed back to the jeep. Although this family hadn't encountered a wolf recently, livestock deaths caused by wild carnivores are a serious concern in the region. Depredation caused by snow leopards, wolves, feral dogs and Eurasian lynx can dangerously diminish a pastoralist family's income. Consequently, the locals still persecute wolves, mainly through retaliatory killings. Changdung, the local term for wolf pits, have been used for centuries to reduce the wolf population. The practice is believed to be abandoned today, but pastoralists still locate wolf dens during spring to kill the young pups, effectively eliminating the next generation.

Cold seeped into my five layers of jackets as nighttime approached. The brilliant turquoise waters of the lake, Tso Kar, lapped the salty shoreline, creating a sharp contrast to the earthy tones of the landscape. We set up our tents in a goat paddock, and for the next four weeks I searched for three wolf packs in Ladakh. Equipped with



Himalayan wolf

a microphone, a digital recorder and a speaker for playing recorded howls, I surveyed for wolves at their peak daily howling periods, morning and evening.

Each dawn, all the water in the camp was frozen solid. After drinking tea and warming our hands over a small fire, we began to survey. On most days, for four weeks, we saw no wolves – just a silent, treeless, empty landscape.

It's no real surprise it was difficult to find the wolves. In resource-scarce ecosystems such as the Mongolian steppe and the Arctic tundra, the home ranges of wolves can be huge, sometimes spanning more than 500 square miles. With no previous radio-collar studies on the wolves of this area, it is unknown how far these packs roam within their home range. Additionally, it is currently unknown how many wolves make their home in Ladakh, or even in India, as a whole. The wolves of India are considered an endangered species in a rapidly changing ecosystem, and baseline information such as population estimates and distribution are crucial to the development of effective conservation programmes.



Stanzin making tea after a morning howl session (Tso Kar Lake in background)

On the fourth morning in Tso Kar, we heard the hauntingly beautiful sound of wolf howls. I recorded their howls, and we watched the wolves gracefully climb to the top of a ridge, camouflaged to the earthy shades of the mountain and silhouetted against a sapphire sky. The wolves watched us as well, calmly observing at a distance before disappearing over the ridge to continue their daily activities across the vast valleys and high mountains.

As I studied this family of four, I thought about how remarkable these animals are. Their eloquent adaptations have allowed them to survive in this cold, high-altitude landscape for thousands of years, and yet their survival into the next century is not certain. This research will provide important data on the wolves, from possible behavioural differences across wolf subspecies to scat samples that reveal insight into food habits and genetics.

With all of our research and assistance – developing new tools for conservation, helping mitigate wolf-human conflict and educating the public – we hope that the wolf's elusive howl will continue to echo across the Himalaya for years to come.

Lauren Hennelly

Ph.D Student in Ecology at the Mammalian Ecology and Conservation Unit, University of California-Davis.

Since 2016 we have donated
£3,000 to this project.

Wolves and Wolf Gods – a Journey to Japan

(Note on pronunciation: the letter ō is pronounced like the 'o' in 'cola'; ū is pronounced as 'oo')



Japan was once home to two types of wolf: the Hokkaidō wolf, on the northern island of Japan, as well as the Honshū wolf on the Japanese mainland. The story of how the wolves came to be revered, deified and eventually culled spans the best part of two thousand years.

According to Japanese legend, around 1900 years ago, a prince called Yamato Takeru was returning from a battle in the east of Japan when he became lost along a mountain trail. A white wolf appeared from the forest and helped guide him safely across the mountains by its howls. In appreciation of the wolf, he named it 大日真神, Ōkuchi Magami: 'big mouth pure god'. In later years, this name was abbreviated to 'Ōkami', which to this day is the Japanese word for 'wolf'. He founded a shrine devoted to the wolf along the trail, at a point overlooking three mountain peaks. The shrine is called 三峰神社, 'Mitsumine-jinja'¹ (Three Peak Shrine).

The legend spread through the ages and wolves became seen by the Japanese as protectors,

guardians and wayfinders. Indeed, the Latin name for the Honshū wolf, *Canis lupus hodophilax*, derives from the Greek 'hodo' and 'philax'; the words mean 'guardian of the path'.

Further legends about wolves sprung up: 送り狼, Okuri ōkami, the 'sending wolf', guiding travellers safely home; stories about wolves being judges of character; tales of the 'wolf notification' whereby a wolf visits a traveller's home, howling mournfully, to notify the family that the traveller has died. The wolf was regarded as protection against fire and theft, with prayers offered to divine wolves to invoke their protection. As a result, respect and reverence for wolves continued unabated.

Wolves were said to leave their prey as offerings to villagers as a gift, however a portion of the meat was expected to be left for the wolf in return. Crop farmers were grateful for the presence of wolves as they saved their crops from deer and boar. Wolves were animals to be protected, with bad fortune said to follow for those who killed one.



Perceptions began to change in the 1700s, when a rabies epidemic spread across Honshū. The outbreak was initially carried by dogs and spread swiftly amongst the wolf population. Rabid wolves (described as 'mad wolves' at the time) started to attack travellers, culminating in widespread wolf-hunts to eliminate the problem. The once deified wolf was now seen as an enemy both to people and agriculture, with attacks on livestock increasingly reported. The majority of Honshū wolves were soon wiped out, although a few did manage to survive until the early 20th century.



Wolf statue outside the Mitsumine shrine



The Mitsumine shrine

Depending on which source you believe, the last Honshū wolf was shot in 1905 or 1910.

Things were worse for the Hokkaidō wolf: although these too were deified, by the 1800s conflicts with farmers led to widespread poisoning (with strychnine) and even dynamite was used against them. The Hokkaidō wolf was extinct by 1889.

Since extinction there have been many reported sightings of alleged wolves, but as yet no proof they still exist. There are photos of wolf-like animals (some

as recent as the 2010s) but without DNA evidence it's impossible to prove they are wolves rather than dogs. An experiment of playing recorded wolf howls in the hope of encouraging any wild wolves to reply ended with silence.

Today, we know through scientific analysis of mitochondrial DNA that the Hokkaidō wolf was closely related to the North American wolf, whereas the smaller Honshū wolf was more closely related to the European wolf. The wolfless isles of Japan now have an overabundance of deer, with farmers resorting to all sorts of creative methods to deter them from their crops.

In the absence of wild wolves, the nearest you can get to them are the mounted specimens displayed at various museums around Japan. The National Museum of Nature and Science, in Ueno, Tokyo, has the best-preserved specimen of the Honshū wolf, while the Hokkaidō wolf can be seen at the Hokkaido University Museum. The wolf shot in 1905 is in possession of the Natural History Museum in London.

The various wolf shrines of Japan remain open and still attract many worshippers. Mitsumine shrine is a popular destination and is noted for its colourful buildings, ornate torii (entrance gates) and guardian wolf statues. These statues are often seen wearing yodarekake, or 'votive bibs', attached by devoted worshippers, while a shop sells protective talismans and other items inscribed by the shrine. Mitsumine also contains a museum dedicated to the shrine and the Hokkaidō wolf, with one exhibit being a wolf pelt discovered as recently as 2000 in nearby Chichibu.

Closer to Tokyo, the tiny Miyamasu Mitake shrine² also enshrines the wolf. Its guardians, as in Mitsumine, are wolves – this is unusual, as most Shinto shrines feature 'komainu', or guardian lion-dogs.

Darren Prescott

Darren Prescott has been a volunteer at the UKWCT for 13 years. His holidays all involve wolves to some degree!



Wolf statue outside the Miyamasu Mitake shrine

1. Mitsumine shrine is less than three hours from central Tokyo. You can reach it by taking the Seibu-Chichibu train from Ikebukuro station in Tokyo. A bus runs several times a day from Chichibu station to the shrine, with superb mountain views on the way.
2. The Miyamasu Mitake shrine is a few minutes away from the Hachiko entrance to Shibuya station in Tokyo.
References: The Lost Wolves of Japan, Walker 2008. Waiting for Wolves in Japan, Knight 2006.
Mitsumine and Miyamasu Mitake shrines visited in December 2016.



Captive Animals

Photographs by Mike Collins Photography
mikecollinsphotography.squarespace.com

Wild animals in captivity has always been a contentious subject, as it evokes emotional, reactionary, and often polarising views from a diversity of people. In the past few years, animal collections have made worldwide headlines, often accentuating the negative. More positive stories are often ignored, not considered newsworthy – which is frustrating. I would like to highlight some positivity surrounding captive animals, to enable people to develop a more rounded opinion.

Keeping animals in captivity is an ongoing science; we have much to learn still about each species. Technological advances and further observation of wild and captive behaviour has to be guided by what is ethical, our limitations. In most animal collections, enclosure design has become more sophisticated, with more space, temperature-controlled environments and advanced environmental enrichment such as automated feed-foraging systems or even auditory enrichment. Not all places have sufficient funding or support but regulation ensures that improvements and changes are made.

We have progressed a great deal and now we ask: 'Are all species able to live a healthy life in captivity?' 50 years ago, this never would even have been asked. I welcome this new way of thinking.

Negative media portrayal and outspoken groups that are often unqualified to discuss the subject means that there needs to be a more informed discussion, with all the facts available.

Education/Raising Awareness

UK zoo legislation includes points on education and conservation. At almost every event with the wolves at the Trust, people are impressed by what they see/experience.

Captive animal collections educate an estimated 175 million people across the world annually, ranging from primary school children to the elderly. 'In the flesh', visitors are enthralled by witnessing incredible feats of evolution in animals such as camouflage, communication, locomotion, behaviour, smell and sounds etc – not all these aspects can be experienced via a television. Close contact motivates people to ask questions: 'What does it eat?' 'Why do they climb trees?' 'Where do they live?' Ultimately the experience turns into a living puzzle. Notes around the site and knowledgeable staff and volunteers then inspire further learning.

It has been suggested in studies that if an establishment does not provide educational awareness about climate change and habitat loss, people may leave a zoo without a drive to make a difference. The right kind of education is paramount and is the key to conservation.

Conservation:

Raising awareness/fundraising for projects working with wild animals in their habitat and local communities is the most efficient and significant way animal collections can directly support conservation and make a difference to wild populations. At the Trust, we have donated over £300,000 to wolf projects worldwide since 1995. We have financially supported the three currently recognised species of wolf: red, grey and Ethiopian, along with many individual sub species of grey wolf (Iberian, European and Mexican).

Although expensive and time-consuming, some places have captive breeding programmes, where they 'stockpile' and release species back into the wild. However, such programmes have to be carefully managed, with correct genetic lineages but also a suitable future habitat, with protection if needed. Habitat loss and destruction is a huge problem, particularly with near-extinct species.

The red wolf was declared extinct in the wild by 1980, and there were only a handful of individuals left in captivity. Having faced years of heavy persecution, scientists noticed a dramatic drop off in their wild numbers. A decision was made to take in as many wild genetically viable red wolves as possible and introduce a captive breeding programme to increase numbers. Between 1973 and 1980, over 400 individuals were caught, yet from this only 17 were genetically considered to be red wolves. Over the next six years, the first pair of red wolves being born in captivity at the endangered wolf centre in Missouri in 1981. By 1987 enough red wolves had been bred to start a reintroduction programme in the Alligator National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina.

Red wolf numbers climbed until 2014 when the estimated population in the wild was roughly 100 individuals. Unfortunately, in 2016 it fell to the lowest in about 20-30 years to just



between 45-75 individuals left in the wild. However, without the captive breeding programme, this species wouldn't have survived beyond 1980. This was the first attempt to restore a carnivorous species, considered extinct in the wild, back into the wild.

The Mexican wolf is considered the most endangered sub species of grey wolf. Commonly referred to as 'El lobo', there were once thousands. Hunting and heavy persecution wiped them out of the Americas by the mid 1970s, leaving only a few left in zoological collections and in the wilds of Mexico. From this captive population, a breeding programme was set up and in 1998, the first Mexican wolves were reintroduced back into the wild.

Many other species have been reintroduced after being declared extinct in the wild, thanks to funding and dedicated captive breeding populations. Last year, the scimitar-horned oryx, considered extinct in the wild since the mid 1980s, was reintroduced into the wild in Chad. Some may argue that these success stories could be misleading to the public, suggesting the fight against extinction is being won. However, with full education and awareness accompanying these reintroduction stories, it inspires conservation and highlights the need and urgency to protect a whole ecosystem, not just a handful of selected species. The fight is not over!





A white Rhino by Mike Collins

Should Captive Animals Be In The Wild? Poaching, Greed, Ignorance, Human-Animal Conflicts

I often hear people say: 'I would rather animals lived free in the wild, than spent their lives kept in captive situations'.

Obviously, in an ideal world all creatures should be free, but this is not an ideal world. Many species are under threat globally for different reasons, particularly habitat destruction. The world is changing faster than many species can adapt to and those that do adapt, run the risk of moving into urbanised areas which increases human-animal conflicts. For example, as the ice caps melt in the Arctic due to global warming, polar bears have been seen foraging further south, increasing the likelihood of encountering humans. In the tropics, pristine rainforest is being cleared to make way for palm oil plantations. Burning and destroying the forest means species such as orangutans are caught in the destruction. Those who

escape may have nowhere to live. This is not climate change, but large industries mass-producing oil for quick profit.

For every large iconic mammal that has lost its home, there are numerous amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, birds and fish. These are often unsung losses, the ones media often ignore. Stories about polar bears struggling reach many more people than those about beetles going extinct. Yet every species has its place in our complex ecosystems and removing one can alter the balance of many more. Having ambassador animals in captivity raises awareness of the more obscure species.

Aside from the loss of habitat, if an animal is seen as a purely profit-generating machine, this could become a major cause as well as other factors for extinction. Take a look at the White Rhino for example, whose numbers had rapidly decreased as a result of poachers, killing the animals for their horns.

Ignorance and myths also have a part to play. Old fairy tales of the big bad wolf, outdated belief systems and even fear have all resulted in the mass persecution of *Canis Lupis* throughout the centuries. Greed is almost impossible to tackle on a high level scale but ignorance is not and can be tackled through education, whether this is by sharing scientific research, following documentaries or even by giving and listening to educational talks about a particular species. It's all about sharing knowledge and learning to understand animals and their importance within the ecosystems. If we had educated people in the past about the beauty of the dodo, it might never have been wiped off the planet.

Conclusion:

Zoos and animal collections worldwide contribute over \$160 million yearly to conservation projects, supporting well over 2500 conservation projects regarding in situ (inside its natural habitat) and ex situ (outside its natural habitat) populations. This is combined with the potential educational value of over 175 million visitors annually. Not all collections are equal and some have a negative reputation, such as circuses and parks where animals perform. The negative publicity mars the whole industry. As a qualified and experienced animal behaviourist, I have an issue with animals being made to perform unnatural behaviours for financial benefit.

Most captive animal collections only use training to further medical treatments and procedures. Enclosure design takes on board animals' natural behaviour and enrichment has developed enormously over the last few years. Most captive animals come from a captive line of breeding – except in the case of some aquariums – not from the wild.

Every keeper I have ever worked with will happily spend time answering questions from the public. If you have any questions about captivity, why not visit a collection and ask questions?

Mike Collins

Wolfkeeper



A backward move for wolves in Italy, as cull is threatened



In a move that WWF Italia has admitted would 'take the country back 40 years in relation to the protection of the species,' Italian government ministers want to introduce a wolf management plan that will also include a 'limited cull'.

It follows incidents of wolves being killed, mutilated and even displayed for all to see in villages. For example, a decapitated wolf was dumped near Pitigliano in Tuscany, one of several protests by local farmers.

Massimo Vitturi from LAV told Wolf Print:

'In the 60s wolves were almost extinct in Italy because of large scale hunting. Since 1971 Italy has implemented a

strict protection regime through the introduction of a dedicated national law and later on by implementing European Legislation on fauna (EU Habitat Directive) with the strictest interpretation. The implementation of the legislation secured the growing of wolf packs in the Alps and Apennines, although illegal hunting kills approximately 300 years a year. Italy today constitutes an ecological crossroads for the Iberian and Balkan wolf population.

Human-wolf conflict arose, especially in certain Italian regions such as Toscana, Piemonte and Emilia Romagna where free-range livestock rearing is widespread without any special surveillance.

Tuscany holds the record for illegal killing; dead wolves are often exposed as trophies in villages despite the act being against the law. Livestock breeders are already

financially compensated for losses but constantly demand more government intervention, a legal licence to kill wolves.

LAV and other NGOs have been actively campaigning in favour of maintaining the strict protection regime in Italy, but the Government recently proposed a national plan to legally kill wolves for the first time in 46 years. LAV has also commissioned a technical report from experts to demonstrate that the killing of wolves would make no impact on the protection of the livestock population and that preventive non-lethal measures are the solution.

Link to the report: <http://bit.ly/2jujJ8S>



The Italian Government has not replied to our demands for clarifications about the scientific base of the proposed plan which we have challenged. Some Italian regions oppose the proposed plan but did not manage to make an impact on the process. LAV wrote to Head of Government, Mr Gentiloni, asking him to remove the possibility of killing wolves from the proposed plan.'

www.lav.it





‘War on Wolves Act’ bad news for lupine populations

In January this year, senators passed a self-explanatory bill in Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin and Wyoming called the ‘War on Wolves Act’. It will also deny people the right to challenge it in court. Along with a proposed review of the Endangered Species Act, this is a

deeply troubling time for conservationists who work hard to advocate for many different species.

Full story here: <https://www.outsideonline.com/2151411/trumps-presidency-means-end-wolves-american-west>

Possible reintroduction of wolves on Isle Royale

After much discussion and controversy, there is now a distinct possibility that 30 wolves may be reintroduced to Isle Royale in Minnesota. Our Assistant Editor Francesca Macilroy has previously highlighted the island’s needs and problems in an article in Wolf Print (Summer, 2016 - Issue 58). There was of course earlier talk of allowing nature to take its course and allow the existing two wolves there to be the last. It will be interesting to see where this leads and how public opinion may shape the population of Isle Royale.

Full story here: <http://www.timberwolfinformation.org/nps-may-send-pack-of-wolves-to-isle-royale/>



Rock Harbour Lighthouse, Isle Royale

Non-lethal methods of livestock protection in Mongolia

Spearheaded and part personally funded by biologist Bruce Elfstrom, nomadic herdsman in Mongolia are receiving help with livestock protection through the Mongolian Bankhar Dog Project. These large and athletic native dogs are now being breed to play their part in protecting horses, camels, yaks, sheep and goats from wolves, snow leopards and lynx. Elfstrom has said that ‘It’s a Mongolian solution for a Mongolian problem, based on ancient Mongolian tradition.’

Full story here: <http://www.timberwolfinformation.org/mn-guardian-dogs-serve-ecology-of-mongolian-steppes/>

<https://www.bankhar.org>



Illegality breeds contempt: the hybridisation of wolves and Czechoslovakian wolf-dogs in Italy

A four-year investigation by the Public Prosecutor of Modena has uncovered an illegal trade in wolf hybrids.

To mitigate bone and hip problems in the breed, and create a more 'wolf-like' appearance to impress dog show judges, unscrupulous breeders have been crossing Czechoslovakian wolf-dogs with wild wolves. But if wolf-dogs are descended from German shepherd and a Carpathian wolf, where is the problem?

To begin with, breeding domesticated and wild animals is now against the law in Italy, and since wolves are a protected species, animals up to fourth-generation cannot be kept in captivity without proper authorisation from CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). In addition, Czechoslovakian wolf-dogs are already a high-maintenance breed requiring plenty of space and exercise. As their popularity has grown, some owners have discovered that they are more than they can manage, and abandon them. A specimen crossed with a 'pure' wolf would pose an even bigger problem.

These wolf-dogs may then mix with wolves again, exacerbating the problem of hybridisation in the wild. As mentioned in *Wolf Print* #59, hybridisation can effectively 'breed out' an endangered species, and this is especially relevant because Montana et al's *Mammalian Biology* study (2017) suggests that the Italian wolf may be a distinct subspecies in and of itself, *Canis lupus italicus*.

The first illegal hybrid was discovered in Modena in 2013, but over the next few years the investigation, or *Ave Lupo* (Hail the Wolf) found that up to 54 Italian provinces were implicated. Sold for as much as €5,000 each, the hybrids were traced to wolf pups smuggled into Italy from the Carpathian mountains, Scandinavia and even North America. At the time of writing, over 200 illegal specimens have been discovered.

So far, two breeders have been convicted of illegally importing a protected species, issuing false pedigrees and fraud, and seven others are currently under investigation. However, some of them have argued that *Ave Lupo*'s research is baseless or linked to commercial rivalry.

Environment Minister Gian Luca Galletti has called for tighter controls, and a 'Wolf Conservation Plan' - involving both wolf culling and protection against hybridisation - was confirmed in February.

Jessica Jacobs

'Lupi selvaggi o cani cecoslovacchi? L'inchiesta agita gli allevatori.' 2017. *Quotidiano.net*. <http://www.quotidiano.net/animali/animali-lupi-inchiesta-1.2819127>

Montana, L. et al. 2017. "A new mitochondrial haplotype confirms the distinctiveness of the Italian wolf (*canis lupus*) population." *Mammalian Biology*, 84: 30-34.

Signorile, L. 2017. "I Lupi italiani sono unici nel mondo. Ma si possono abbattere." *National Geografica Italia*. http://www.nationalgeographic.it/naturali/animali/2017/01/31/news/lupi_piano_gestione_caccia_abbattimenti-3403733/

Squires, N. 2017. "Italy cracks down on illegal sale of dangerous wolf cross-breeds after four-year investigation." *Telegraph.co.uk* <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/16/italy-cracks-illegal-sale-dangerous-wolf-cross-breeds-four-year/>



An Introduction to a New Wolf Project in The Middle East

Situated at the convergence of three continents, the Middle East is a biodiversity hotspot that links African and Eurasian flora and fauna.

With such a diverse array of species, there is a vast uniqueness to the natural world of the Middle East. In Israel alone, there are two subspecies of grey wolf, the Indian wolf in the north and the Arabian wolf in the south, and these animals are rife in areas where there is considerable protection.

With ongoing socio-political conflicts in these areas, where governments seal their borders and fragment entire regions, it is hard to imagine what the situation might be like for wolves, or whether wolf populations in fact exist. In the Arava Valley, in the southern Negev Desert of Israel, wolves are protected and they often localise

themselves around human settlements where there is plentiful food, mainly left as scraps by humans. In contrast, across the border in Jordan, wolves are offered no legal protection and are frequently shot, as they are seen as a threat to free-ranging livestock.

In the north of Israel, there are varying levels of protection towards wolves. In areas where livestock are allowed to roam free, wolves are systematically shot, and sometimes illegally poisoned, as a method of preventing livestock depredation. In this region, minefields that have been left as a consequence of conflict with neighbouring countries, act as 'safe havens' for wolves, as wolves in

these minefields are safe from human persecution.

The Centre for Compassionate Conservation (CfCC) at the University of Technology in Sydney, Australia is conducting worldwide research on canids as part of the International Wolf Project. The aim of this project is to assess the ecological importance of canids, such as wolves, and the ways in which they shape ecosystems. With the involvement of the UKWCT, CfCC is working alongside the Dead Sea & Arava Science Centre in Israel to investigate the ways in which human activities and legislations in different areas influence wolf movement and behaviour, and how the interactions between people and wolves impact on ecosystems at multiple levels.

Gavin Bonsen

*UNIVERSITY of Technology Sydney (UTS)
doctoral candidate and the first-ever recipient
of JNF Australia's Arava-Finkel Scholarship*

<https://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/our-research/centre-compassionate-conservation>

We have donated **£5,000** to this project for the purchase of a vehicle

Editor's note: We will be following Gavin's project with great interest here at Wolf Print and hope to bring you a full-length report in our summer issue. It's new ground for us – so it will be fascinating.



WALK 4 WILDLIFE

The Trust is participating in a large organised event that is taking place across the UK called Walk 4 Wildlife. Hundreds of thousands of primary school children will be taking part in an attempt to break a Guinness World Record this year on Friday 19 May at 2:15pm, in a mass sponsored walk. Currently, the world record is set at 231,635 people all walking at the same time!

Walk 4 Wildlife has also attracted and received support from some well-known TV personalities such as BAFTA-winning Wildlife Cameraman, Television Presenter, Director and Producer Simon King OBE who said: *'I wholeheartedly support this initiative. It is a great opportunity for kids all around Britain to step up to nature.'*

TV presenter Chris Packham has also shown his support for Walk 4 Wildlife stating: *'I am pleased to support Walk 4 Wildlife and I hope that as well as raising money for your favourite animal charity, the events help to highlight some of the issues facing many of our planet's most vulnerable species.'*



As one of the beneficiaries from monies raised at this event, the Trust wanted to get into the spirit of things by organising our own sponsored walk with our local school, Beenham Primary. Other schools are in the process of being contacted by Walk 4 Wildlife to see if they wish to raise funds for wildlife protection and conservation by organising their own event, in order to attempt to break the world record.

If any of our members would like to encourage their own school to take part by organising their own walk then please look at Walk 4 Wildlife's website: <http://www.walking4wildlife.com/schools-walk>, which will provide information on how your child's



Simon King – Simon King Wildlife



Chris Packham – David Foster Management

school can take part. Or ring me for details on 0118 9713330 or e-mail at fran@ukwct.org.uk

Francesca Macilroy
Walk Co-ordinator



Preventive Measures of Wolf Depredation Methods and Perspectives

Overview: The main aspects of wolf human conflict in the region are:

- Local people's fear of wolves as predators
- Damage caused to domestic livestock

Over five decades in the Tver region there has been only one verified attack on a human by a wolf; the wolf was rabid. Over the same period, Tver, as one of the 64 regions of the Russian Federation, has sustained livestock damage of several thousand dollars per annum. Although much livestock depredation could be attributed to human carelessness/lack of adequate livestock protection, many other factors contribute to depredation.

Many consider livestock depredation occurs 'accidentally'. However, wolves utilise the full resources of their territory and do not segregate territory into human or wild areas per se. They consider their territory in totality, even if humans contribute an increased danger. If the wolf retains control of the environment, it still feels safe.

Single wolves and family groups hunt preferred prey species. The scent of domestic cattle strongly attracts wolves. Shooting 'problematic' wolves does not solve the problem; new animals quickly emerge and their behaviour develops according to environmental specificity.

Traditional techniques used to protect domestic animals are based

predominantly on 'wall' (fence) construction, ignoring the specificity of wolf behaviour. Viktor Bologov effectively protected livestock in various locations across Russia by placing artificial objects to deter activity. However, tame wolves adapt quickly, so approximately every fortnight the object location was changed, to selectively reduce wolf activity on the definite part of the family area. Several preventive measures, involving aural/olfactory stimuli and motion, were used. This provided adequate irritation, further deterring activity.

Historical Observations

Wolf-human analysis of relationships in the Western part of Tver oblast, Russia used longitudinal naturalistic observations (1975-2005). Data collected helped conclude that wolf attacks on cattle/domestic animals occur on the minor portion of wolf family grounds only (not more than 10% of the occupied area). Attacks differed by victim number, species, time and season, landscape of attack region and area in respect to the centre of family grounds. These attacks occur with variable periodicity, but look similar in pattern.

Preliminary investigations suggest that if psychological discomfort is created, changes in the animal distribution over the whole family area follow. Knowledge concerning wolf psychology and behaviour suggests that it is possible to evaluate how wolves perceive the environment and which strategy will be optimal to change this perception, to create a situation where wolf/human conflicts do not occur.

Tame wolves are cautious with any new artificial sensory stimuli, over time assessing the possible threat. If they feel a sense of control over their environment they can still be active in those areas. Affecting multiple senses increases their anxiety, removing that control. Ultimately, this may reduce/stop the wolf utilising some territorial areas. Humans are best as multi-sensory deterrents, but artificial or new sounds, sights or smells could be used to assist with livestock protection when a human presence is not available/feasible. Or any stimuli perceived by the wolf as falling outside the environmental norms. Wolf reaction to these stimuli varies from increased caution to avoidance.

A new approach

The essential idea is to deter wolves utilising rural localities and traditional pasture areas which are important for human rural activity, making it unpleasant, arousing wolves' psychological discomfort. Equally, the remainder of the wolf family area should stay accessible and provide animals with all necessary resources (food, shelters, places for rest) and possibilities for free social relationships.

We should allow for wolves:

- Knowing territory well/having highly developed navigational capacity.
- Having strongly territorial family groups (packs).
- Easily discovering changes in the environment of anthropogenic origin and adapting.
- Possessing well-developed individual long-term memory and reasoning capacity.
- Easily modifying their food preferences.

The scientific aim is to study regional wolf behavior in the wild where wolves have historically coexisted with humans, such as Central-Western Russia. Deterrents include:

Motion

Motion can further increase the effect of visual stimuli, wind-powered or by internal mechanism, designed to exhibit random behavior and not constant motion easily adapted to, and recognised at around 50-150m. Hunters observed that recognition of new objects is best at about 1-2m and that wolves can identify small motions equally well during night and day.

Scent

Any unnatural scent could be used, such as car air fresheners. Dependent on wind conditions, these can be detected by wolves 500-1,500m away.

Sound

Unnatural sounds (for that environment) such as bells or chains in the forest may be recognised by wolves from several kilometres away. All these sensory stimuli can be used in differing combinations and/or densities, to create boundary lines or create areas/points of discomfort, to protect required areas and prevent travel routes across/nearby these areas. Sounds and motion do not necessarily invoke psychological discomfort if the wolf can adopt these conditions into its environmental norms. In 1999 a wolf pack denned only 300m from a major highway in the Neledovo district routinely crossed the highway to prey upon domestic dogs in a nearby village. Additionally a wind generator placed at the Biological Station from 2001-2006 caused no difficulties for wolves using village roads, only 50m away. Audio and visual cues that cause only minor environmental changes, inconspicuous to humans, could be perceived as more dangerous by wolves; difficulty in detecting the cue may imply problems escaping the perceived threat.

Psychologically, livestock predation has three different phases:

Travelling to human areas

Even if the wolf intends to find food in human areas, at this stage it has



low levels of anxiety. It may encounter alternative food sources beforehand; the animal's motivation could be changed by introducing only minor increases in anxiety.

Searching for food in human areas

During this phase the wolf has higher levels of anxiety, displaying higher levels of caution. It needs to retain a sense of control of the situation to continue searching for food, an ideal situation to use appropriate sensory cues to alarm it into leaving the area.

Actual Attack

Only humans can stop an attack. Wolves, while attacking prey, often appear oblivious to their environment, even losing fear of humans. Several factors concerning viability of any proposed solution include depredation cost, depredation causes (lack of wild prey, ease of livestock depredation), purpose of wolf activity in the area (hunting, travel or hunting while travelling through the area), geography and human activities in the area. Artificial objects or devices to provoke anxiety could be mechanical, electrical, chemical or technical in origin, provided they impact upon wolf sensory perception – perhaps simple aural and visual cues to more complex devices or chemicals, such as scents artificially designed to cause olfactory discomfort. Many already exist, such as insect/rodent repellants. Devices can be categorised into three main groups, identified by wolf reaction:

Cautionary

Cautionary devices such as wind chimes and small bells should identify the proximity of a protected zone and discourage further incursion of wolves

into the area by raising anxiety. Some devices only work within a certain environmental context, e.g. bottles in an area with a lot of refuse will have little impact, but located elsewhere, such as from a tree, would be effective.

Alarming

These devices are to disorientate the wolf or provide multi-sensory anxiety on the boundary of the protected zone; the wolf loses any sense of environmental control and experiences difficulty in hunting behaviour, thus encouraging evacuation. Combinations such as scent devices coupled with motion sensor lights, also cause no annoyance to humans.

Discomforting

Examples include particular high frequency sound generators or specific scents disliked by wolves. Such devices would cause discomfort to humans.

Conclusion

Based upon 30 years of field experience, techniques that utilise psychological rather than physical barriers to reduce human/wolf conflict remain theoretical. Additional research is still required to establish the most effective stimuli, parameters of their use, a practical and cost effective way to implement and maintain them. If successful, the benefits would be significant in the reduction of wolf-human conflict, helping wolf survival, assisting with the viability of wolf restoration projects and making significant economical benefit for livestock farmers. Some techniques could be transferred to other large predators, such as brown bear or lynx.

Vladimir Bologov

<http://lupuslaetus.org>



A kiss from Kaya

A chat with Victoria Parsons, wildlife artist and teacher

I was born and brought up in rural Warwickshire; nature was just a way of life. Our house was surrounded by woods and fields. Every day a family of foxes raided the dustbins in our garden. I would watch out of the window to catch a glimpse. Pond-dipping and playing with frogs, grass snakes and slow worms was normal. Like most young children, I had an imaginary friend, a wolf who inhabited my playhouse at the bottom of the garden. As I got older 'wolf' stopped visiting, but made his appearance along with other animals and wildlife in my drawings, the beginning of my ongoing journey as a wildlife artist and teacher.

I often visited zoos and wildlife parks with my children, but sadly animals were often too far away or hidden from view. The wolf was the only animal I was unable to see close up. In 2010 I visited the Anglian Wolf Society (AWS) and returned for wolf walks, wolf experiences, Halloween Howls and open days. As these visits had set times I had to rely on my photographs for reference for my drawings and paintings. One day I was invited to have coffee with the

volunteers while Codirector Caroline Elliot did her talk to visitors about the work of the AWS. Later, I was thrilled to be offered a regular weekly shift - they had been checking me out!

In 2012 I began my first solo shift and was there for almost a whole day each week, to study and draw wolves. Soon, I was helping out on Saturdays

and Sundays when we had public visits, learning a lot about wolves from the other core members and those who had been involved with the AWS from the beginning. During that first winter, I ran art and photography day workshops to help raise funds for wolf conservation. These workshops soon attracted many leisure artists.

Has your hands-on experience with wolves helped you as a wildlife artist?

Definitely. Spending many hours observing and recording animals gave me a unique insight into their life in captivity. It changed the way I looked at my animal painting, made me realise how important it is to study from life to get a greater understanding of character, physical body and the relationship of one area to another - how the spine twists and turns when they move. You don't have to do what I do, but there is much to learn from observing, drawing - before you paint.

What is your process?

I use my onsite drawings and colour studies as a starting point. Once I have drawn out and worked from these drawn and written notes, I use my photographs to complete any detail such as eyes, nose and whiskers. I have developed a type of 'drawing shorthand' to capture on paper their



Partners



Cheza

movement and mannerisms. I often have at least three or four drawings on the go on one page, as wolves are constantly on the move. I could move from one image to another, adding on more information to the drawings each time they repeated a movement, rather than waiting or hoping the subject would get back into the original position I had first started drawing. You just cannot waste time, as each moment gives something that you may not have noticed before. I might only have a few odd lines down, but I know what they mean as I have experienced the 'moment'. Several times I covered an overnight shift as the site was manned 24 hours a day, every day. Evenings and early mornings was the best time to capture the wolves, when they were most active. You saw things that the public didn't see. When I first witnessed them playing together I was spellbound; I couldn't take my eyes off them, let alone draw, but I was ready with my pencils for the next time.

The best time of the year to observe

the physicality of wolves is in the summer when they have shed their coats; you can see the skeletal system and develop the understanding of what goes where and why. In autumn and winter they have their full coats and are wonderfully photogenic but for me they were beautiful all year round.

What animal have you found the trickiest to capture on paper?

All creatures are tricky to draw initially. Best to draw quickly, not worrying about making a mistake. Throw the eraser away, don't waste too much time rubbing out and looking for perfection. Get to understand your subject by recording what you see. Detail comes later. Giraffes on the move are hard to capture on paper, you have to get that long neck and head in absolutely the correct place and with the correct leg co-ordination when they are moving otherwise the drawing doesn't look convincing if their body is not balanced in the correct way. Butterflies and dragonflies are difficult - they don't

hang around for more than a few seconds. Butterflies are sleepier in late summer so stay a little longer on the flowers - a good time to get a few action drawings.

Tell us about 'Cheza' and your awards

One of my first wolf portraits 'Cheza' was our alpha male, awarded the Best Public Vote in 2010 in the United Kingdom Coloured Pencil Society, of which I am still a member. Cheza and his family were to become a very important part of my life. In 2011 a painting called 'The Alpha' won a Gold Citation for depiction of behaviour typical of a wild animal at The Wildlife Art Society International Exhibition, (TWASI). 'Fight for Alpha' received a highly commended in Wildscape Magazine's Wildlife Artist of the Year 2012. In 2013, 'Portrait of the Wolf' received a 'Commended' in the BBC Wildlife Artist of the Year (in World Mammal category) - a montage of the Anglian wolves. In 2014 I had two



works shortlisted for the David Shepherd Wildlife Artist of the Year - a painting of a chimpanzee and called 'Looking at me Looking at you' and a tiger one entitled 'Indonesian Prince'. All of my paintings have been worked in coloured pencils. I do use oil paint and watercolour and have been experimenting with coloured inks and pencil.

Future ambitions?

I would love to study and record the behaviour of wolves in their natural environment. I am interested in wolves worldwide, but I would like to study the critically endangered red wolf and the Mexican grey wolf to record their physical differences, body language and postures, how they relate to their environment. I would also like to paint

the wild Arctic wolf; painting white wolves on white landscape would be quite a challenge.

Some of the problems being faced in the lupine world are associated with myths, legends and lack of correct information. Parents read fairy stories to their children about the Big Bad Wolf coming down the chimney to eat the little pigs, and the wolf dressing up as Grandma to eat Little Red Riding Hood. This puts fear into children at a very early age. Films on werewolves and wolves as killing machines then continue to instil fear into adults. Wolves need large areas of land on which to live and raise their families, and with the world's growing population, humans are destroying precious wilderness. The wolf continues

to face an uphill struggle for survival. Wildlife organisations and conservation groups like the UKWCT are actively changing people's opinions on wolves, but there is still much work to be done.

We all rely on each other for our existence on this planet, and for this reason I continue to work, in hope that my art will, in some small way, help and encourage others to be aware and treasure not only wolves, but all the other animals and diverse life and habitats on earth.

www.victoriaparsons.net
www.anglianwolf.com

The Anglian Wolf Society after 17 years is now closed for visits and memberships as their last wolves died in December 2016

Interview by Julia Bohanna

Wolf Journal

By Brian A. Connolly

Published by Virtualbookworm.com Publishing

Paperback 168pp

RRP **£9.82** ISBN-10: 1589397940

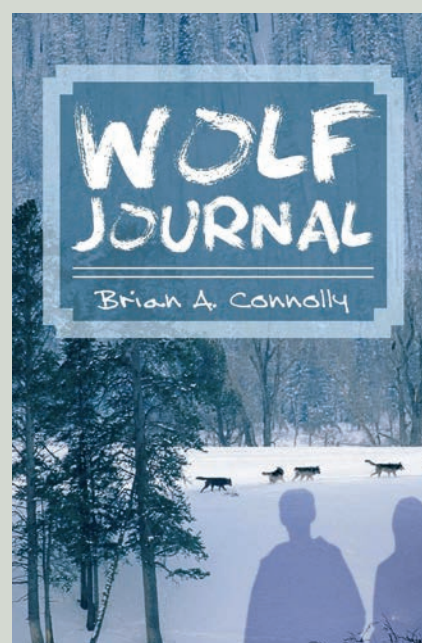
'It has been a hundred years since the wild wolf's voice has been heard in the Allegheny Mountains' – narrator Jimmy, talking about how wolves used to roam the upper Allegheny Valley north and south of his village.

When I first started reading *Wolf Journal* I was uncertain what to expect. However, it soon turned into a fantastic read that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. Set in Pennsylvania, the story is about Jimmy, a young boy obsessed with wildlife and, of course, wolves. After being given an English assignment by his teacher to write a journal about any subject of his choice, Jimmy very quickly decides that he is going to write about wolves. He is extremely knowledgeable when it comes to tracking and identifying wildlife, which he describes in great detail in his journal entries; it is these details in the story that really make this book come alive and capture the

imagination of a younger audience.

On discovering that wolves may have returned to his home town, Jimmy feels he has a duty to protect these misunderstood creatures, with the help of carefully chosen family and friends, who keep his closely guarded secret.

I fell in love with the alternating styles in which the book was written, one chapter might be a narrative of Jimmy's life, the next would then be Jimmy's wolf journal, where he talks about his adventures with his friend Hawk, an old Indian Susquehannock storyteller. Hawk tells him stories and legends from his own culture, for example: how the wolf is seen as a brother among men or a protector, rather than an enemy or something to be feared. Jimmy treats these beliefs/stories with the upmost respect, and also respects nature and the beliefs/ways of others. *Wolf Journal* isn't just about a boy who has a love for these beautiful creatures



but it's a rite of passage through childhood, and the experiences that will shape him as a person. This gives an element of beauty to the book. Finally throughout *Wolf Journal* you really get the sense of love that the author has, not just for wolves, but for all wildlife. Perhaps Jimmy is a younger version of the author himself, and who knows; perhaps *Wolf Journal* isn't a complete work of fiction at all?

Francesca Macilroy

Wolven

By Di Toft

Published by Chicken House (3 Aug, 2009)

Paperback 304pp

RRP **£5.99** ISBN-13: 978-1905294909

When you buy a child a puppy, what traits might you look for? Cuteness? A calm nature? Character? Nat's family are shown their 'puppy' by a rather twitchy farmer and his grandfather immediately comments: 'It's so big our Nat could ride the beggar home.' It's certainly a strange creature that *sort of* looks like a German shepherd, but with wolf in there somewhere. Long past puppyhood, with its 'crusty, sparse fur and strong smell of cow dung', it most certainly has character.

Nat is thirteen, so he knows his own mind. The wolfy dog intrigues him, even if it does have a tattoo that says *Proteus* on the back of his neck. There will be even more strangeness when his new dog Woody changes into a boy in the middle of the night and

can at least explain who and what he is to his new friend. He is *wolven*, a shapeshifter and definitely not a werewolf (or 'werewoof' as Woody calls it). He intends no harm to the human race and in dog years, he is actually the same age as Nat. He has learnt about the human world from 'telly and telepathy' which often makes for some funny imitative behaviour.

Woody is not safe; there is a strange government animal project involving werewolves – although in the book it is considered politically incorrect to call them that – they are lycans, thank you very much. The worst of the crew from the Ministry of Defence is the horrible Lucas Scale. Luckily there are less malign forces on Woody's side, such as the formidable Ophelia, the farmer's

wife. Can anyone protect Woody when he is framed? What goes on in Helleborine Halt? Luckily there are clever witches to help. There is also a little nod to An American Werewolf's pub The Slaughtered Lamb in the name of the pub in *Wolven: The Slaughtered Sheep*. *Neat.*

It's lovely to see such a 'romantic' wolf character in Woody. He is benign of course, but also charming and vulnerable. He stands up to bully Teddy Davis and his gang, to protect Nat. This is truly a wolf/boy bromance of strong, solid proportions.



Wolvens are a noble species, the King's wolven are 'golden-eyed white wolves' who originally rode with Richard the Lionheart (not entirely a good man to revisionist historians now but that point is made by the author). It's also good that some little wolf facts such as lupines having webbed feet are added to the mix.

This is a book rich in characterisation, such as Nat's interesting family and two sharply suited Italian werewolves. It does 'wry' splendidly, such as when 'Gabriel Gruber stood up and expressed his displeasure through the medium of dance'. It has wit, great pacing and peril that makes your heart race. There are also a few drops of the red stuff – and I don't mean wine. A pre-teen would love it and I'm surprised that a TV company hasn't picked up on its very beautifully conjured visual appeal. Will Woody escape Scale's clutches? Is he the last werewolf? Great to see that this is the first in a series. I may not be the target audience, but I loved it enough to buy some more and discover more adventures with Woody and Nat. In a troubled and turbulent world, fantasy has never been so attractive! Highly recommended.

<http://www.ditoft.com>

An actor reads from the book: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01cjdsd>

Review by Julia Bohanna



Gifts, clothing and wolfy souvenirs



Tundra Laptray £18.00

A black-edged laptray inset with picture of Tundra with olive green padded cushion. Size 408mm x 308mm x 90mm.

Wolf Tealight Holder £4.75

A glass-frosted tealight with two wolf prints on it. Size 8cm height x 7cm. Designed by Nature Planet.



Dog Tag £3.50

Dog tag with wolf & paw print. Adjustable interlink chain. Designed by Nature Planet.



Moon Wolves Howling Hoodie £27.50

Moon Wolves Howling hoodie designed by Wild Collection. Featuring a Blue Moon with 34 wolves howling and four wolves below.



Wolf Sunset Hoodie £27.50

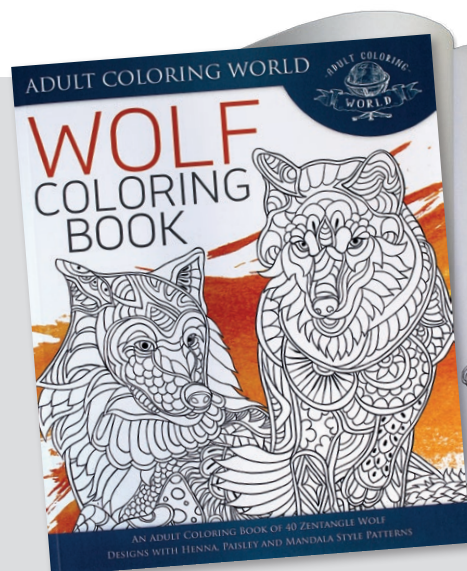
Wolf Sunset hoodie designed by Wild Collection. Featuring a wolf's head with the sun setting behind.



Wolf Family Hoodie £27.50

Wolf Family hoodie designed by the Wild Collection. Featuring a wolf's head with four full body wolves in a moonlit forest. *Wolf image is not true representation of colour and has light green and tan highlights.*

Hooded zip front top with high quality silk screen printing on the front, back, down the sleeves and two front pockets. 100% heavy cotton. Hoodie sizes – Chest Size Medium 92cm, Large 102cm, XLarge 107cm, XXLarge 117cm



Adult Wolf Colouring Book **£6.75**

An adult wolf colouring book. 40 wolf design pictures that are printed single-sided so can be framed/removed if required.



Wolf Stationery Set **£4.00**

A wolf stationery set includes two wolf pencils topped with rubbers, 15cm ruler, rubber & wolf notebook.



Padded Wolf Tail **£4.00**

Make playtime fun with a clip-on wolf tail. Made of short pile fabric. Length 68cm. Designed by Nature Planet.



UKWCT Baseball Cap **£15.00**

The exclusive UKWCT baseball cap with a black high quality design, with orange bordering along the cap edge and orange and white stitching. The cap features the initials of the Trust (UKWCT) along with the slogan: *Working to keep wolves in the wild*, with the founding date of the Trust.



Soft Wolf Magnet **£2.50**

A 6cm soft wolf magnet that attaches to metal by its tummy. Designed by Nature Planet.



Black Wolf **£9.00**

A plush black and grey wolf designed by Nature Planet. Height 18cm. Not suitable for under three years of age, as has detachable eyes.

Wolf Flashing Bouncy Ball **£2.75**

A 6.5cm ball with a wolf pictured inside. When tapped or bounced the lights flash and glitter moves inside ball. Designed by Nature Planet.



To view and order any of these items and our other stationery, clothing, books, gifts and souvenirs, visit our online shop at www.ukwolf.org or call 0118 971 3330.

Please note: all UK orders are subject to a minimum P&P charge of £4.50. For overseas orders, please contact us.



Howl Nights

Feel your backbone tingle and your ears vibrate with the sound of the wolves howling. The evening starts with a presentation on wolf communication; you will then go on a tour of the Trust and have the opportunity to let out a howl and see if the wolves respond! (Don't forget to dress up warmly for an evening under the stars). The event usually finishes from around 9 to 9.30pm.

12th May, 2nd June, 8th September
7pm to 9.30pm

Check website for future dates

£10 per person. Age 8+ – BOOKING ESSENTIAL.



UKWCT Wolf Centre 'Visit Wednesdays'

Visit Wednesdays give you the opportunity to come and see the Trust without pre-booking, unlike our other events. You will be able to observe our ten very charismatic wolves – from our three Arctics with their amazing white coats, to our enigmatic black Canadian wolves – and have a guided tour with one of our knowledgeable volunteers. There will be fantastic photographic views of the wolves in their large, natural-looking enclosures and you'll have access to the raised photographic platform on site. Hear them howling during the day and watch them being fed at 2pm. We have picnic areas for warmer days, a gift shop for you to browse for books and souvenirs, and plenty of free parking.

Wednesdays – Open from 11am to 4pm

ADMISSION: Adults – £8; Members, children (age 3-11) & OAPs – £5; Children under 3 – FREE. Tickets on the gate only. Sorry, no dogs on site.





Arctic Amble

Enjoy a walk with our magnificent Arctic wolves and the wonderful photographic opportunities they provide. View all of the Trust's wolves and spend time getting to know the handlers who work with these amazing animals. Afterwards, there will be time to shop for a wolfy souvenir!

**Check website for future dates
9am to 11am**

**£60 per person. Maximum 16 people.
Age 18+ – BOOKING ESSENTIAL.**

Photography Day

Each of the four wolf packs can be photographed from an adjoining enclosure where there are specially made holes for cameras, giving great results. Expert handlers will encourage the wolves to stand in the best position in their enclosures. You will also be able to use our special raised photography platform. During the day the handlers will give a tour of the Trust, seeing all of wolves and learning about each individual.

Refreshments available but not lunch included, so please bring your own

**Check website for future dates
10.30am to 3pm**

**£80 per person (no wolf walk included).
Suitable for all abilities.
Age 18+ – BOOKING ESSENTIAL.**





Wolf Discovery Day

Spend the whole day studying in-depth wolf behaviour close up by observing and getting involved with the welfare of our ten resident wolves. Learn about wolf pack structure, our wolves' personalities and take close-up photos.

You will have the opportunity to:

- Listen to a presentation about wolf behaviour
- Learn personal information on our ten resident wolves
- Prepare their food and feed the wolves
- Take part in our enrichment programme for the wolves, which differs daily, and observe the behaviours shown. Learn how we keep our wolves healthy and happy
- Have a tour inside one of our enclosures whilst the wolves are in a different holding area and learn about the habitat in which we keep our wolves
- Undertake wolf tracking and learn how to use our telemetry equipment with our Wolfkeeper Mike, who has tracked wolves in the wild
- Have a howling session to encourage the wolves to howl back
- Watch a wrap-up presentation about the projects we support. Learn what needs to happen for wolves and humans to coexist in the future
- Take close-up photos throughout the day

Make sure to bring your own lunch, tea and coffee will be provided.

Check website for future dates – 10am to 4pm
£90 Per person. Age 18+ – BOOKING ESSENTIAL.



Wolf Viewing & Bat Walk

- Tour the Trust and see the wolves up close
- Wolf photography opportunities and howling session
- Presentation by an expert on the life of bats in the UK
- Walk round the Trust at dusk to see long-eared bats flying

The Trust is home to many bats, many of which live in nesting boxes on trees.

**20th May, 17th June,
15th July, 19th August,
16th September**

£15 per person.

Age 7+ – BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Note: Please check the website for start times as they vary throughout the year.

