

# WOLF PRINT

The UK Wolf Conservation Trust

Issue 64 | Summer 2018



## Goodnight Sweet Print

Our last issue, as the Trust bids farewell

## Of Mines and Men

The wolf in the Middle East

## A New Royale Family

Will wolves be reintroduced on Isle Royale?

NEWS



EVENTS



RESEARCH



MEDIA AND ARTS



Cover image: Mai by Francesca Macilroy

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Butlers Farm, Beenham, Reading, RG7 5NT.  
Tel: 0118 971 3330, email: ukwct@ukwolf.org,  
website: www.ukwct.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

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**Associate Directors**

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**Specialist Advisors**

Alistair Bath, Garry Marvin, Kirsty Peake, Claudio  
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**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.

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**Issue 64 | Summer 2018**



**Editor's Letter**

Julia and Nuka

The end of anything, the difficult and emotional process of saying goodbye, is always a bittersweet process. So it is, as the Trust closes to the public, with our last issue of Wolf Print. The magazine has evolved alongside the organisation, but also followed the fortunes of the wolf worldwide, profiled projects we have supported and generally been a feisty voice for Canis lupus.

“Over the last decade and almost two in which I have been involved with the Trust, I have seen a shift in perception about wild animals and conservation in general, but more specifically the wolf.”

This is largely down to education, the sort of information that the Trust staff members have delivered on a regular basis to a hungry audience. There are now committed celebrity conservationists like Chris Packham and of course, our most beloved David Attenborough, who is a voice of reason, compassion and wisdom in an illogical world. Rewilding, reintroduction, ecology and preservation of species are all now familiar terms, even buzz words, for young and old. A very good thing.

In our last communication with you, our supportive readers, we have

appropriately played with a theme of sound, song and communication. We also have a fascinating article from the Middle East, a report from the dedicated researchers in Croatia and an interview with Song of The Wolf in Colorado. Appropriately too, one of our book reviews is called *The Rise of Wolves*. We do indeed hope the species will go onwards and ever upwards, epitomising wildness and wilderness forever.

In true weepy Oscar style, I would like to thank the wonderful Tsa Palmer and family at the Trust for giving me my various roles. Being editor of Wolf Print has been the best job in the world and I want to find an equally meaningful role in the near future. I would also like to thank my team – Assistant Editor Fran, Designer Brandon, Lynn in the Trust office and all the volunteers and staff who put so much love and dedication into helping with the production of Wolf Print. It has been a privilege to meet the wolf folk – the experts, artists, researchers and writers – who truly give me hope for the future. Good luck to our wolfkeeper Mike with his new role at Whipsnade, where he will now be working with elephants. Last but by no means least, I would like to thank the wolf for simply – being.

Enjoy the glorious summer. I will continue to have lovely lupine memories and to love the wolf and the Trust with all my heart.

**Julia Bohanna**, Editor

Julia Bohanna



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# A Great Journey



“We have donated a total of £360,000 to support worldwide research, education and conservation of the wolf.”



Duma and Dakota by Pat Melton

Alongside greater knowledge, the publication of international guidelines and increased government and EU funding for large carnivore conservation is now the driving force behind wolf recovery and expansion. Whilst I may not always agree with management methods, and there may be localised backlashes and culls but, as I say, I think the future is bright.

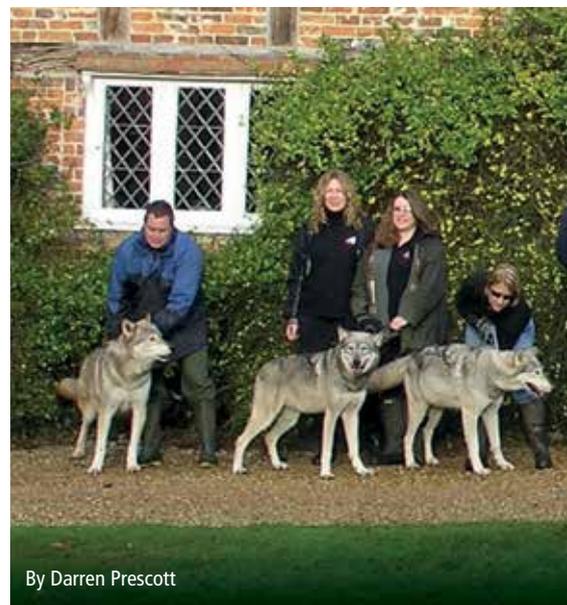
Obviously the USA is another matter, but with the reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone in 1995, there has been much positive progress in wolf conservation there too. As you may know it has been decided to reintroduce wolves onto Isle Royale later this year, which is good news.

The needs of our wolves come first every time, as you know – with Torak, Mosi, Mai and Motomo all reaching

**23** years of the UK Wolf Conservation Trust is drawing to a close at the end of August. Although this is obviously a sad moment for all of you who have visited and supported our work during these years, I do believe that the whole project has been a hugely positive one. Positive in respect of animal care and welfare and the contribution we have been able to make to wolf conservation. We have donated a total of £360,000 to support worldwide research, education and conservation of the wolf. We will continue to donate in the future years when we have funds available. We have enough set aside for the care of the wolves here at

Beenham, but any extra donations will allow us to continue to give to the projects we have supported annually.

In a sense the role of the UK Wolf Conservation Trust is not so relevant as it was 20 years ago, in terms of educating people about wolves. The perception of wolves has changed hugely since Roger and I first acquired 'My Lady' in 1974 – I believe the future of wolves in Europe is bright and they are here to stay. The success of the council of Europe Action Plan for the conservation of wolves in Europe, with its intention to produce management plans for wolves, as well as the move towards population level conservation is a positive move.



By Darren Prescott



Euros by Pete Morgan-Lucas

the twilight years of their lives, and our other wolves soon to be in their eighth year, it's time to give them the quieter life to which they are entitled. What started as one man's hobby in the 1970s, and through Roger's energy, enthusiasm and passion has allowed thousands of people to come and share our fascination and love for these charismatic canines.

I would like to thank Mike Collins our wolfkeeper for the past four years who has contributed so much to the Trust, particularly in his enrichment ideas for the wolves and for his deep love of them. We wish him well in his future looking after elephants at Whipsnade Zoo.

To Lynn who has been in the office for over 12 years, we owe a huge debt. She has been responsible for

the shop, merchandise and all the administration during that time. From having the one walk a weekend in the early years we now have five events a week, sometimes more to satisfy the demand!!

Fran Macilroy has been Lynn's able assistant in the office and helped Julia Bohanna produce Wolf Print and been a great member of the team. Julia has been responsible for Wolf Print's fantastic content.

Lastly my thanks to Lesley Emmett and Stephen Walker who work tirelessly for the Trust too.

I believe the Trust's highlights over the past 23 years in wolf achievement has to be the successful breeding of Lunca, Latea, Alba and Luana, the first European wolves to have been born in

the UK since wolves were extirpated in Britain in 1680. Secondly, giving a home to Massak, Pukak and Sikko in 2011, the first Arctic wolves to have ever been imported in the UK. However beyond this our contribution of an astounding £360,000 to worldwide wolf conservation has to stand out. We have achieved great PR for the wolf and through our work and our ambassador wolves overcome negative perceptions – for a genuinely misunderstood animal.

We will continue to put regular updates on the wolves on our website kindly facilitated by Darren Prescott and as I have said would be grateful for any donations which we can pass on to our projects.

**Tsa Palmer**

## EVENT NEWS

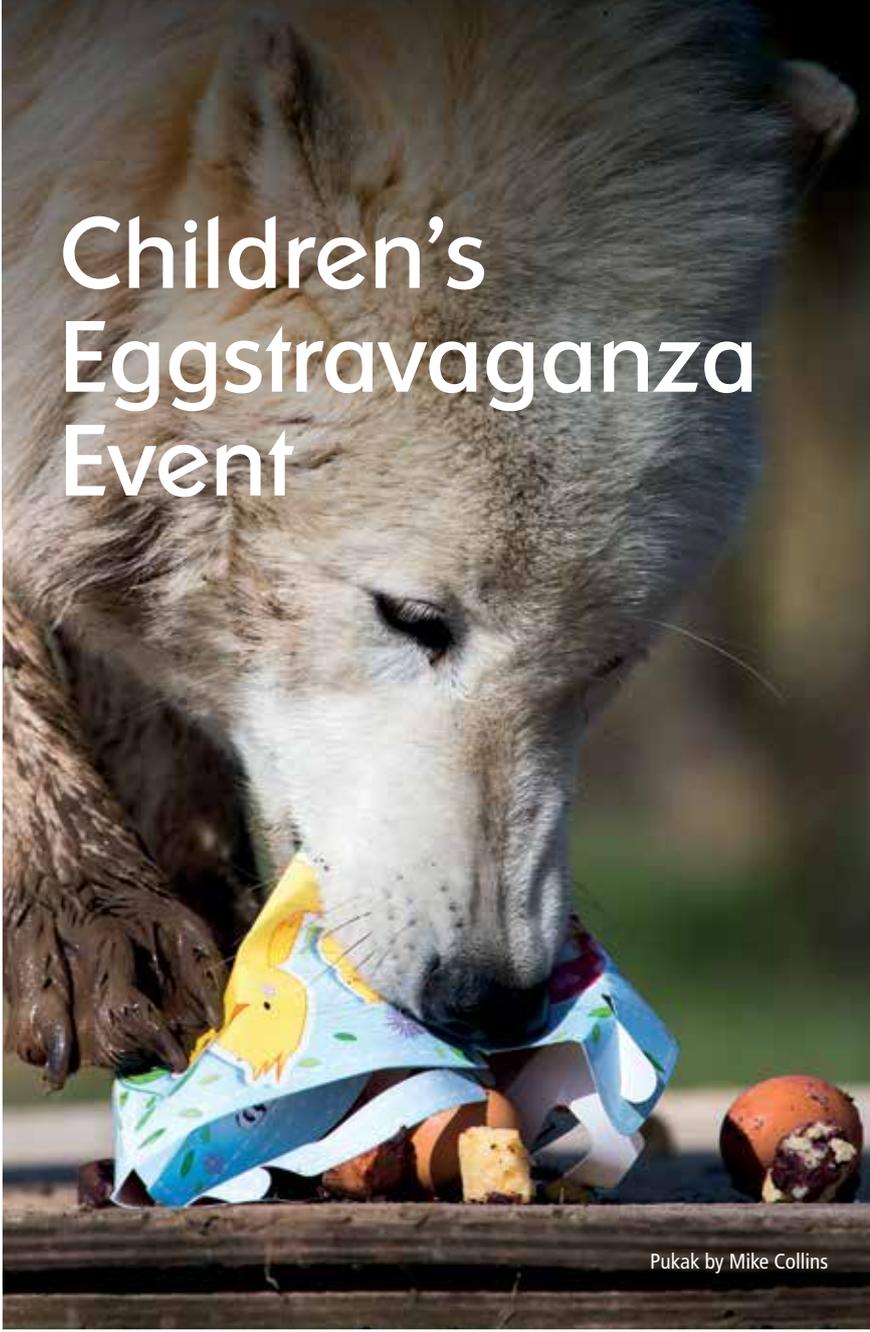
We are holding an exciting mini seminar on Saturday 25th August kindly organised by Ian Redman of Wolf HELP entitled *Grey Wolves: A Celebration*. This event is now sold out.

We also look forward to seeing you here this summer.





# Children's Eggstravaganza Event



Pukak by Mike Collins

**O**n a chilly but sunny day, 32 adults and children came to make their Easter treats for the wolves. The Arctics and the Beenhams were put in their side enclosures so that the children could put the tasty delights in their main enclosures and walk round to see how the wolves utilise their space. Torak decided that he didn't want to go into the side enclosure for the morning, so Mosi and Torak's eggs and bags were placed in their side enclosure and then the gate was opened for them to run in to get the food. Lots of children took photos.

Cardboard eggs were artistically coloured and Easter bags filled to the brim with eggs, sausages, cheese, hot dogs and black pudding. The children chose the wolf they wanted to give

the treats to and then carefully carried their eggs and bags to the appropriate enclosure. Once the children had hidden the treats and were safely out, the wolves were let back in so the children could watch them eat the food. Volunteers described the wolves' behaviour and talked about the wolves individually. They were asked lots of questions by both children and adults and some of the younger children were already extremely knowledgeable.

The Beenhams tore in and Tundra grabbed a bag and ran to the seclusion of the trees whilst Nuka tore round tearing bags to shreds with his teeth to get at the food inside. Tala was more ladylike and used her paws to open things and finally took a cardboard egg off to

bury it. Egg boxes and treats had to be thrown over to Mai and Motomo, as Motomo is unsocialised and cannot be moved to a side enclosure. He grabbed his bags as they fell and Mai wandered about hoovering up food that he had dropped.

The Arctics, looking more brown than white because of the mud after the last few days of rain, embraced the whole experience with gusto. Massak and Sikko loped around gathering up eggs and bags whilst Pukak jumped onto the platform to get at treats that were put up there. He soon discovered that if he knocked the eggs onto the ground they would open! The bags were demolished using his long nails in no time. Pukak does love his food!

Torak still wouldn't join Mosi who was weeing on bags in the side enclosure to claim as her own and was eating food rapidly. After everyone had gone, Senior Handler Pat Melton and I watched with amusement whilst Torak trotted into the side enclosure to fetch bags from the platforms and bring them into his main enclosure to eat. He must have made five trips and ate far more than Mosi in the end. He is certainly a very clever wolf!

All the children had a wonderful time and it was a delight to see even little three year olds so absorbed in the activities. It was a fun-filled day and an opportunity to dispel some of the myths surrounding wolves and explain how they need our help.

**Wendy Brooker**

On 18th June Mike Collins our wolfkeeper for the past four years, left the UK Wolf Conservation Trust to start his new role as an elephant keeper at Whipsnade Zoo. The Trust would like to thank him for his dedication, love and exceptional care that he showed for the wolves. We wish him all the very best for the future.

# Covéa Work Party

On 1st May, 12 enthusiastic staff members from the Covéa Insurance plc came to spend the day doing essential maintenance tasks at the Trust. They erected the large marquee ready for the summer events amidst much jollity and good spirits. Some helped mend benches whilst others painted wooden rubbish bins and picnic tables.

A wooden picket fence was expertly erected in front of the goats' summer enclosure. One lady commented how much good fun it was to work outside and away from the office and be able to do something useful for the Trust. After all the work was completed the work party watched the wolves being fed whilst the wolfkeeper talked about the wolves.

Everyone said what a great day it had been and that they would love to do it again. The Trust is extremely grateful to Covéa for letting us have such fantastic volunteers for the day.

Wendy Brooker

## Places where you can see wolves in the UK

- Blackpool Zoo
- Colchester Zoo
- Cotswold Wildlife Park
- Dartmoor Zoo
- Exmoor Zoo
- Highland Wildlife Park
- Howletts
- Knowsley Safari Park
- Longleat Safari Park
- New Forest Wildlife Park
- Paradise Wildlife Park
- Port Lympne
- Wildwood (Kent)
- Wingham Wildlife Park
- Woburn Safari Park
- Wolf Watch UK – Please see their website before visiting



## Grey Wolves: A Celebration 25th August



As our organisation draws to a close, the Trust is proud to host an informative day with conservationist Ian Redman – one of the co-founders of Wolf HELP. In four presentations, Ian will discuss the importance of *Canis lupus* and its place in the world today.



### PLEASE NOTE!

As of 31st August 2018 the Wolf Trust will not be receiving any more e-mails as it will be closed to the public.

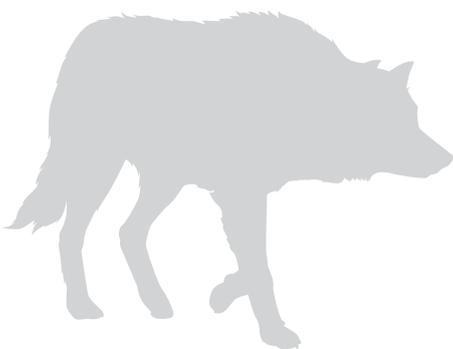
If there are any questions that you have about wolf conservation then please feel free to contact Richard Morley of the Wolves and Humans Foundation. His e-mail is: [info@wolvesandhumans.org](mailto:info@wolvesandhumans.org)

## DONATIONS MADE THIS QUARTER BY THE UKWCT

<b>CROATIA</b>	Zagreb Veterinary Institute – Josip Kusak	£5,000
<b>RUSSIA</b>	Chisty Les Biological Station – Vladimir Bologov	£3,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>£8,000</b>



# Updates for Mosi and Torak



“In the hot weather Torak likes to go in the pond to cool off.”

Mosi and Torak had their 12th birthdays in April and, despite a touch of arthritis in their legs, they can still playfully chase each other at speed around the enclosure. They have shed their grey warm undercoat fur and look a lot sleeker now, showing their powerful leg and neck muscles. Both are stunning wolves much admired by our visitors.

Torak spends more time at the front of the enclosure now giving visitors a superior glance as he lopes by on his perimeter checks. He can often be seen with splodges of mud on his nose indicating that he has dug up a piece of Mosi's cached food! Mosi is always in sight welcoming visitors as they come in and is more than willing to demonstrate a 'proper' wolf howl in response to a volunteer's inferior howl.

In the hot weather Torak likes to go in the pond to cool off, whilst Mosi prefers to snooze on the boggy grassy edge of the pond. Wolves' top guard hairs repel dirt and water, so when Torak comes out of the pond soaking wet he just shakes hard and is dry. Visitors often ask if we groom the wolves, as Torak has almost comb-like marks along his sides, but it is only the way his hair grows. I don't think a brush would stay with us for too long!

All the wolves shared fishy birthday cakes in May and as usual Mosi did a wee on the cakes whilst Torak found a large one to take off to the back of the enclosure to eat in private. Torak and Mosi had a big goose egg each at Easter which they thoroughly enjoyed.

When enrichment sacks filled with scented straw are thrown into the

enclosure Mosi will roll on them sideways ensuring a maximum coverage of whichever scent is used. Torak lies on his back whilst rolling on the sack and waggles his long legs in the air, which makes great photographs for onlookers. In the wild, wolves will often roll on the faeces of the prey they are hunting – hence the phrase ‘A wolf in sheep’s clothing’. Animals have an enhanced sense of smell, so it’s wise for the wolves to disguise their own scent.

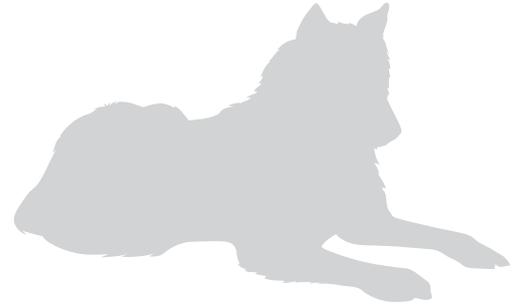
Enrichment is vital for captive animals and the wolves have a variety of regular enrichments to hone their cognitive abilities. Volunteers have to don rubber gloves and pick up old deer heads and legs, pieces of coconut shell and

melons and remnants of cardboard from children’s events. The wolves stand in their side enclosures watching and then enjoy tracking all the footsteps once they are back in the enclosure – more enrichment.

Torak and Mosi have enjoyed regular walks across the fields smelling new smells, over-scenting other wolves’ scents and rolling in fox, dog, or deer poo. Torak’s favourite smell is the traces of diesel on the grass left by the tractor. He has been known to try to get up into the tractor – obviously a frustrated farmer at heart!! They are such an endearing pair.

**Wendy Brooker**

“Mosi prefers to snooze on the boggy grassy edge of the pond.”



Torak by Mike Collins



Tundra by Charlotte Lorand



# Update on The Beenhams

All good things come to an end and so it is for Wolf Print and the public life of the UKWCT. Wolves worldwide are in a better place overall than in 1995 when Roger opened the Trust.

We are proud to have played our part in educating thousands about wolves, and contributing to projects that help keep them in the wild. We couldn't have achieved that without our wonderful ambassador wolves that have informed and entertained the public and volunteers alike over the years. We salute them all. One of the great pleasures of volunteering with these amazing animals is arriving early in the morning and hearing a howled greeting, usually starting with Mosi, then all the way down to the Beenhams in the last enclosure. Wolves howl for many

reasons: acknowledging a new presence on site, telling the other wolves where they are or re-establishing each pack's territorial rights. Once the wolves can see and smell you, you'll be treated to a rally, a rousing call of yips, squeaks and short howls, welcoming you into the fold. Wolves do this when coming together after being apart or before hunts, a way of bonding the pack together and acknowledging each wolf's place. The Beenhams celebrated their seventh birthday on 3 May, now middle-aged in wolf years. Only yesterday, they were tiny cubs! They are the last of our walking wolves and have fulfilled that duty admirably, allowing people to see a wolf up close. We've been lucky with Nuka; most male wolves older than four do not want to continue walking with strangers. Nuka has so far kept his calm, charming and laid-back character, a playful boy who enjoys any enrichment. On a recent hot day, we let hoses arch water into the enclosure and Nuka got very excited, play-bowing and jumping at the water before tearing off round the enclosure, then running back to repeat the process. He will often pick up sticks



Tala by Pat Melton

or bits of hessian sacking, play with them or try to encourage any visiting volunteers to join in. Unfortunately, we can't play with adult wolves – they can be quite rough. But we enjoy watching them. Recently the Beenhams found a coconut left over from a previous enrichment and knocked it about like a football. Perhaps they should be signed by Wolverhampton Wanderers! Another favourite Beenham pack pastime is waiting for their enclosure waterfall to be turned on when the first volunteers arrive. The wolves gather at the top of the feature, heads cocked, listening for the first trickle of water. One may even stick their nose into the gap between stones if they think things are taking too long. Once the water starts running the wolves bound down the waterfall, following the water as it gushes down the slope before drinking it – a game that never gets old! Tundra is still the pack's dominant female and things are mostly peaceful, although she can give Tala a hard time when the mood takes her. Tala takes it in her stride but has her limits and will occasionally stand up to her sister. When things get too heated, Nuka steps in to separate the girls before anything gets out of hand. It's funny to watch Tundra try to suck up to Nuka after she's been rebuked for harassing Tala, whining and licking his face. All good natural wolf behaviour and great to observe.

As we wind down to our closing date in August, the Beenhams will do their last walks before starting their retirement. They have been wonderful ambassadors for their species and we have been privileged to work with them and be a part of their lives. They will be well looked after by the Palmer family and the current volunteers until the end of their lives and we'll keep you updated on them via our website. Thanks for all your support.

Nikki Davies



Nuka by Mike Collins



# Update on Mai and Motomo

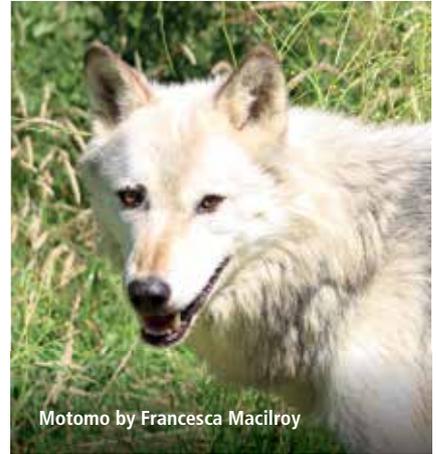
Mai and Motomo had an uneven breeding season – the wet, cold weather probably didn't help.

As the breeding period came to an end, Mai was still pestering Motomo to play – pawing at him when he was lying down, or licking round his muzzle. Occasionally this would give rise to a brief chase but Motomo was generally rather indifferent to her advances and sometimes even snapped back at her. By mid April things had calmed down and their behaviour turned to digging out the den. Over the winter the wet weather had caused the roof to slump in, so some remodelling was needed. Both Mai and Motomo took to their task with enthusiasm – Motomo in particular got so involved that almost all the fur on his upper body became coated with a thin layer of mud, making him look distinctly brown rather than his natural straw-coloured with black/grey highlights. A few days later his fur had shed the mud and he was back to his normal colour.

Mai also got muddy, though she wisely seemed to choose to do most of her digging on days when things were drier. By the end of April the den had been reworked so it was easy for both wolves to disappear from sight while digging – onlookers would be treated to the sight of Motomo reversing out of the entrance while kicking the most recent dug earth backwards with his front paws so the soil shot out between his back legs.

Although the 'enrichment' walks with Mai were suspended during the mating season, in early April it was decided to see if she was maybe interested in going out again. The answer was: 'not sure!' When her favourite handlers opened the gate between the enclosure and the hardstanding area ready to put her collar on, she ran enthusiastically down to see them, but stopped a few feet short and looked round to where Motomo was standing – then after a few seconds wandered off to lie in her favourite spot in the upper corner of the enclosure (where she can see the whole site, particularly the food shed). We'll offer her the chance to go on walks again once any period of pseudo-pregnancy is over, then let her decide.

Both wolves continue to feed well, though their food preferences can vary. Some days they will prefer chicken over beef, other days it's the other way round. Deer is generally popular, though not all visitors are prepared for the crunching sounds as the wolves split their way through the bones, and we know from the little piles of feathers that they are still taking birds that land in the enclosure. Motomo in particular has developed a bit of an obsession with one particular magpie who hangs around the enclosure at feeding time in the hope of snatching some scraps; it's very cheeky and will get within a few feet of Motomo while he's eating,



Motomo by Francesca Macilroy

before Motomo makes a rush at the bird who usually flies off and perches on the enclosure fencing, the raised platform or a low tree branch, watching for the next opportunity. One day Motomo will probably get lucky though!

At the end of last year, Mai lost her howl – it came back in late winter/early spring but in the last couple of months her attempts at howling have reverted to producing only a hoarse croak, or sometimes a very high-pitched almost inaudible whistle. Why this happens we are not sure – it just seems to be a recurring feature of Mai's unique personality. Julian, the vet, has advised that so long as she shows no other symptoms (such as difficulty in swallowing) there's nothing to worry about and that further veterinary investigation is not warranted at this point. It could potentially just be a symptom of old age as wolves in the wild have also been documented as losing their howls.

The cold, wet spring has meant that neither Mai or Motomo are showing any signs of moulting. In previous years when the spring has been warm, Motomo has sometimes started moulting by the beginning of May. Mai, like her sister Mosi, is usually a late moulter – sometimes not really starting to shed until the middle of June.

As both wolves are now getting older (and in the wild would probably no longer be alive) they are now both receiving 'flexi-joint' food supplement, which should help with keeping their joints supple. Though they may be elderly they both are still healthy and full of life, and we will all continue to care for them in spite of the forthcoming changes to the way the Trust operates.

Pete Morgan-Lucas



All photographs by Francesca Macilroy

Pukak



Massak



Sikko

# Update on Arctics

As the breeding season passed for another year, Massak, Sikko and Pukak's seventh birthdays were celebrated with a Wolf Birthday Cake event. This sensory enrichment provided individual cakes made with the smelliest of fish, bound with eggs and a small amount of flour. The children attending the event topped the cakes with the wolves' favourite cream cheese and even decorated birthday cards for them. What more could a wolf ask for!

Moving the wolves into their holding pen gave the children the opportunity to enter their main enclosure and place the cakes around for our Arctics to sniff out. When the wolves re-entered their enclosure, the ever cheeky, food-loving Pukak was the first to run over and even managed to eat the majority on offer. After the first indulgence, he found more cakes on the high platform. However, Sikko our dominant female, decided she wanted some too. To indicate her dominance, she vocalised by growling and snarling, while Pukak guarded his cakes eagerly and began licking off the cheese. He defended his food well and at one point it looked like he might swallow one of the cakes whole! Both Massak and Sikko will also vocalise in this way with their tails held

high when its feeding time, as well as for food enrichment, to put the lower ranking Pukak in his place when he is seeking an opportunity to gain extra food.

Communication amongst wolves is developed through sound, scent and body language and is key to their survival. The most identifiable communication when observing our wolves is sound: howling, whimpers, yelps, snarls, growls and barks. Howling is particularly intended for long distance and is used to keep the pack together, to locate one another, rally together and on occasion, just for fun. Pack members will chorus howl to defend their territory and rally the pack together. Most howls heard in a pack are chorus howls (involving three or more wolves) and they will even howl in response to something that just sounds similar to a howl, like the church bells in Beenham, the ice-cream van that visits or even a human howling, as some of you may have witnessed at our Howl Night events.

Whimpering and yelp sounds indicate short range communication, seen frequently between our male wolves Massak and Pukak. You will hear a

whimpering sound when the cheeky Pukak decides 'I give up' whilst in a submissive position, when Massak is dominating him. Our dominant female, Sikko, can really hold her own and will take great pleasure to team up with Massak and dominate Pukak. If things do get too rough between the two brothers her petite frame can easily be protected behind Massak's size. This vocalisation can also be used for defence or to signal an attack. Barking is rarely used but can be heard as a warning/ alarm call in times of unease.

As August approaches why not take advantage of our last 'Visit Wednesdays' to pay a visit to our wolves and hear these vocalisations for yourselves.

Rachel Mortimer



# Endangered Means There is Still Time – America's Red Wolf

Once populating most of the vast region east of the Mississippi River, the red wolf (*Canis rufus*) is now one of the planet's most endangered mammals. Intermediate in size between the grey wolf (*Canis lupus*) and the coyote (*Canis latrans*), this uniquely American wolf's name is derived from the deep russet tones woven through its rich black and grey pelage and the splashes of red on the backs of the ears and the long legs. Although some 200 red wolves presently live in the 43 Red Wolf Species Survival Captive Breeding Plan nature centres and zoos throughout the USA, fewer than 40 wild wolves now inhabit the 1.7 million acres of coastal lowlands and forest known as the Albemarle Peninsula in northeastern North Carolina – the only place in the world where red wolves roam free.



Photograph Rebecca Harrison, USFWS

## FROM EXTINCTION TO RECOVERY

Like North American wolves everywhere in the 19th and 20th centuries, red wolves were shot, trapped and poisoned under government-sponsored extermination programs. By 1962, only a few wolves remained, living mostly in marginal habitat along the Texas/Louisiana Gulf Coast. In a desperate attempt to save the species, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) live-trapped the last red wolves and placed them in a captive breeding programme. In 1980, the red wolf was declared

officially extinct in the wild. Then in a bold experiment, red wolves raised in captivity were introduced into Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in 1987. Using innovative management strategies and multi-faceted coordination among scientists, managers, private citizens and conservation organizations like the Red Wolf Coalition, the long path to recovery began. It was a journey that ultimately became an unprecedented triumph for the red wolf. The restoration project was so successful that it later became a model for the grey wolf reintroduction in the Northern Rocky Mountains.



Over the ensuing years, the red wolf population steadily increased, peaking at a total of 130 known animals in 2006. But that year marked the beginning of a sudden uptick in illegal gunshot mortality. As a result, packs were fractured and destabilised with the loss of mature breeders. At the same time, USFWS administrators came under intense pressure from a few anti-wolf landowners and from the state wildlife agency (North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission - NCWRC), which had never embraced the Red Wolf Recovery Program. A handful of disgruntled landowners demanded and received permission from the USFWS to use lethal control on their private properties, and the NCWRC doubled down by petitioning the USFWS to terminate the Recovery Program and to declare the red wolf extinct in the wild.

Faced with diminished political support, the USFWS scaled back or rescinded the time-proven management strategies in direct violation of the agency's responsibilities under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). Gunshot deaths continued to increase, and as red wolf numbers plummeted, the wolves began to lose ground to coyotes. Hybridisation became a major concern. On behalf of the Red Wolf Coalition and two other conservation groups, the Southern Environmental Law Center filed a lawsuit in federal court against the USFWS for violations of the ESA. Review of the legal briefs is expected to be completed in late June 2018.

## AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE AND A CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM

In September 2017, the USFWS proposed shrinking the wolves' range from the 1.7 million acres of public and private land on the Albemarle Peninsula to two parcels of federal land in the most eastern of the five recovery-region counties. Although maintaining a small, representative population would be better than removing the red wolf from the endangered species list ("delisting"), the Red Wolf Coalition and other conservation partners contend that restricting the wild population to such a small area could doom the species in the wild. However, the USFWS says it plans to conduct a serious study of other places in the southeastern United States where red wolves could be reintroduced.

Although uncertainty over the future of the Red Wolf Recovery Program has caused deep concern among red wolf advocates, there is some good news. In early May 2018, the USFWS announced its intention to keep the red wolf listed under the ESA as an endangered species. However, future specific management plans will not be announced until the summer of 2018 when the USFWS will release a formal proposal for the red wolves of northeastern North Carolina. Pessimists continue to insist that a wild population is not sustainable because of the precipitous losses in red wolf numbers and because of the animosity causing the illegal killing. Others like the Red Wolf Coalition disagree. It will be a heavy lift, but if people work together to find compromise, the challenges can be overcome. Red wolves have a chance if the USFWS will resume the successful management practices from the past. It's a matter of finding the political will and of recommitting to the mandate of the Red Wolf Recovery Plan under the ESA.

One controversial aspect of future management is the ongoing taxonomic debate. Critics of red wolf restoration contend that the red wolf



Photograph Museum of Life and Science

“Over the ensuing years, the red wolf population steadily increased, peaking at a total of 130 known animals in 2006. But that year marked the beginning of a sudden uptick in illegal gunshot mortality.”

is not a distinct species but rather a recent (the past 200 years) grey wolf/coyote hybrid. Other geneticists hypothesise that red wolves evolved in North America separate from grey wolves that evolved in Eurasia. The debate over divergent scientific conclusions will continue, as it should. That is how science works. Meanwhile, those who value red wolves maintain that whatever the red wolf is, it is the legitimate wolf of the eastern USA, and thus it deserves every effort to preserve and protect it. Any animal that has been a keystone species in an ecosystem for hundreds of thousands of years (estimates range between 13,000 and 300,000) has a strong presumptive case for remaining in that ecosystem.

**Cornelia Hutt is the chair of the Red Wolf Coalition Board of Directors and a patron of the Trust.**

### A SPECIAL MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION FROM THE RED WOLF COALITION

The UK Wolf Conservation Trust has supported the work of the Red Wolf Coalition for many years. The Trust's belief in the Coalition's mission and in the value of red wolf conservation has helped to sustain education and outreach programs both regionally and throughout the entire USA. The Red Wolf Coalition's executive director and the board of directors are deeply grateful to the Trust for its loyalty both to the organisation and to the red wolves. We treasure our friends in the United Kingdom, and we encourage all of you to stay in touch on Facebook where we keep our followers updated on the latest news and developments: <https://www.facebook.com/redwolfcoalition>.



# End of an Era but a Lasting Legacy

The Trust's time is sadly coming to a close. The wolves that have been such great ambassadors will be getting a much deserved retirement. The Trust has been a part of my life for a decade. I will sorely miss its presence but look fondly upon all it has achieved and the legacy it leaves behind in those it aided and inspired.

## RESEARCH UPDATES

I'm hoping that readers have enjoyed my articles and are interested in how things have been progressing. Needless to say, good science takes time and it's not easy to make huge leaps around a busy teaching schedule. Nonetheless, I am finally coming to the end of many research activities and writing up the final chapters of my PhD. Over the past few years I've managed to be involved with six scientific publications

(all viewable on my website or ResearchGate); the two which I lead, being part of my PhD thesis. The process of publishing, having experts review your work, making multiple rounds of improvements and defending your decisions is arduous and time consuming. It is, however, how you know your work is of an acceptable standard and why we tend to put reasonable stock in such scientific works. So ideally it's been worthwhile and has added to the body of knowledge to help advise

managers and policy makers as well as further educational activities.

The end goal of course is improved understanding, and better conservation of carnivores and ecological processes. These works have covered a mix of topics: from livestock protection to debates around how to improve trophic cascade research and how to advance behavioural research using automatic cameras. My main research has however continued to focus on the interactions large carnivores have with smaller mesopredators.

After pilot studies and time spent learning about and designing a series of foraging experiments I collected a good dataset on the foraging

behaviour of foxes in response to wolf urine. The research examined fear, foraging and olfaction and is available to read online as an open access publication\*. We used artificial feeding stations and a foraging model to control as many variables that might affect foraging behaviour as possible, except for a couple of things we had to measure (visibility of the patch, moonlight levels and soil consistency). We manipulated the aspect we were interested in (scent) in order to see if foxes behaved differently under a control scent or when a cue scent (wolf urine) suggested wolves had been at the sites recently.

The work established that foxes did perceive wolves as a threat in Plitvice Lakes National Park. Foxes responded to the wolf urine treatment by taking less food from feeding stations, spending less time at feeding stations and leaving at higher quitting harvest rates. A harvest rate is how much food an animal obtains per unit of time when foraging. When an animal quits a food patch at a higher harvest rate it suggests it isn't willing to stick around until the food gain becomes less profitable. This suggested that foxes expect a better food profit rate when the scent (wolf urine) suggested more danger. In addition, we also observed that foxes changed their behaviour during the wolf urine treatments, spending less time foraging and instead investing more time being vigilant (looking out for danger) or sniffing the ground (investigating the risk associated with the scent).

The work demonstrates that smaller predators like foxes may experience costs to their fitness due to the presence of wolves. This highlights an additional ecosystem service pathway from large carnivores and an impact to be considered when making management decisions or looking to natural regulation as a management tool. It has also illuminated some of the behavioural processes at play when carnivores co-exist. Just because two predators co-exist and share space does not necessarily

mean there are not costs involved for the smaller predator. There may of course be benefits from scavenging large carnivore kills too. It is often thought that interspecific aggression occurs least when niche and body size overlap between predators is small. This work shows that aggression is unlikely to be absent under such conditions but that smaller predators may cope with suppression through adapting their behavioural strategies.

## OUTREACH

I am fortunate that through teaching I have had chance to inform and include others in my work. Over the years I have hosted a couple of interns and numerous research project students at Bangor as well as sharing my experience during teaching activities. We've had some great zoology and conservation students conducting exciting projects looking at dietary and foraging ecology, interactions within predator guilds and conservation in the Anthropocene to name a few.

I've been speaking about my work at several conferences and events. I was fortunate enough to be invited to speak in Australia and help an old colleague (Suzanne Stone) with a livestock-predator co-existence event she hosted as part of the compassionate conservation conference in Sydney. The event was a great success with eager producers, scientists and managers all sharing tips and ideas. During the conference I discussed the use of various protection methods while also putting forward a foraging model that should provide a useful management framework for dealing with predation problems.

I was also lucky enough to have an idea incorporated into the renowned 'Scientists' Warning To Humanity' where Professor Ripple was kind enough to include me in the acknowledgements. A small but hopefully useful contribution to assist an excellent publication that should help achieve a more positive future for all. As a conservationist I think it's important to think holistically about



Golden Jackal Pup



Foxes likely scavenge large carnivore kills too



Wolf trail cam

“While it is sad to see the end of something so productive and positive, it is a fact of life that good things come to an end.”

sustainability and to live life in a way that minimises impacts to wildlife. It is this kind of broad thinking and collaborative attitude that I intend to carry forwards from my experiences with the Trust in order to maximise conservation success.

### TAKING THE LEGACY FORWARD

I still have much to finish writing. With Professor Josip Kusak and our collaborators in Plitvice lakes much monitoring with automatic cameras has occurred. I've almost finished analysing and writing up some research on spatial interactions between large carnivores, humans and foxes but I won't release any spoilers just yet. It is however looking interesting with things being not quite

as one might expect. I have plans to examine temporal activity patterns to further examine the impacts large carnivores have upon foxes and the strategies foxes may employ to cope with their presence. I have a publication on predator-livestock conflict management under review so hopefully that will be of future assistance too.

Beyond this I would like to be able to tell you exactly what I will be up to but like many things in life my future activities are uncertain. We have some interesting developments with golden jackals expanding their range and breeding inside the national park so I would love to continue my work there further. I'm fortunate enough to be visiting some fantastic research groups in Canada this autumn. I'm hoping



Krešo Wolf Collar

“The Trust has been an international voice of hope and compassion for wildlife, a legacy for all to carry forward and to celebrate.”

to gain some new skills and expand my collaborative network as well as ideally being of some use to research and conservation activities while I'm there. Not long after that the PhD will hopefully be finished and I can begin whatever my next venture will be. One thing I can assure you though is that whatever I do, it will no doubt involve conservation of carnivores and other wildlife. I am always in need of assistance so thank you in advance to anyone kind enough to help support my future efforts by using the donation link on my website.

While it is sad to see the end of something so productive and positive, it is a fact of life that good things come to an end. The Trust has helped establish and support many conservation efforts over the years, inspiring and helping myself and many others to progress to careers devoted to conservation. Helping countless people to understand, appreciate and co-exist with predators that often get an unfair appraisal. It housed and cared for its ambassador wolves impeccably and with your help it has

helped to give voice and assistance to animals often at risk. The Trust has been an international voice of hope and compassion for wildlife, a legacy for all to carry forward and to celebrate. I know I speak for more than myself when I say that I am very grateful to have been lucky enough to collaborate with the Trust.

**Pete Haswell**



Lynx



Lynx

### Acknowledgement

\* Haswell, P.M., Jones, K.A., Kusak, J., Hayward, M.W., 2018. Fear, foraging and olfaction: how mesopredators avoid costly interactions with apex predators. *Oecologia*. doi: 10.1007/s00442-018-4133-3.

Pete Haswell, BSc Hons Environmental Science (Biodiversity and Conservation), works at Bangor University <http://conservation.bangor.ac.uk/PeteHaswell.php.en> and is collaborating with Professor Josip Kusak on a project the UKWCT supports in Croatia. <http://petehaswellwolfresearch.wordpress.com/> [www.facebook.com/PeteHaswellWolfResearch](http://www.facebook.com/PeteHaswellWolfResearch)

# Report on the research and conservation of large carnivores in Croatia



This report details the last 12 months' activities related to wolf, lynx and bear research, conservation and management in Croatia, as well as international activities in Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Romania, Poland, Austria, Italy, Slovenia, Spain, and Ecuador. Project researchers were often invited to teach their work on large carnivores in Croatia: monitoring systems, emergency teams, trapping methods, health surveys, while Josip Kusak spent two months on a LC research project in Turkey.

In Croatia, considerable efforts were invested to collar new bears, wolves and lynx – resulting in the collaring of two bears, two wolves and three lynx. Supported with other data obtained by different means, the evidence of wolf population stagnation at the level same as during the last year was documented. **This finding led to the important management decision not to allow any hunting quota for wolves this year again.**

Using trap cameras is an important and demanding task – data processing is always time-consuming. Three contracts for large carnivore research (one for each species of LC) in the Plitvice Lakes National Park (PLNP) provided six

GPS collars (two for each species of LC) for telemetry tracking, free accommodation for field work and the opportunity to accept more students for field work participation/teaching during 2017.



## PROGRESS REPORT

1 March 2017-15 February 2018 (351 days), when we collected 149.72 work days. We continued capturing and radio-tracking of wolves, bears and lynx, collection and examination of dead carnivores and direct application of our study results in management and protection.

We also trained students, researchers and large carnivore management professionals from Italy, Germany, Portugal, United Kingdom, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Bulgaria.

Project researchers were invited to present project results in Montenegro, Macedonia, Poland, Austria, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Ecuador and Romania and participated in research project in Turkey.

## WORK OVERVIEW

Project researchers spent time doing field work, checking cases of wolf mortality, performing wolf necropsies, participating in workshops and meetings related to research and conservation of wolves and lynx in Croatia and other countries.

## WORK ACTIVITIES ON THE PROJECT IN THE PERIOD FROM 01 MARCH 2017 TO 15 FEBRUARY 2018

Đuro Huber and Josip Kusak continued to help research and monitoring of large carnivores in other countries. Đuro Huber consulted in nine different countries. Josip Kusak worked on a large carnivore research project in eastern Turkey (Kars region) from 15.05.2017 to 05.07.2017 and from 10.07.2017 to 26.07.2017 (16 days).

Our LC project continues to attract young people from Croatia and worldwide and continues to serve as training polygon for wolf-lynx-bear researchers, conservationists and educators. During 2017, we accepted eight foreign students/researchers/conservationists to work/learn about LC research and conservation, within various frames of engagement in the lab, in the field or both:

**Daniele De Angelis**, graduate MS student from the University of Rome. PhD thesis based on merged data from bear telemetry tracking in Italy and in Croatia.

**Tomas Meijer**, graduate student at the University of Amsterdam, working on a research project (internship) to build up some practical experience and broaden knowledge.

**Pavao Kusak**, graduate student of environmental sciences from the Faculty of Sciences Zagreb,

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE	N ACTIVITIES	N DAYS
Animal handling	2	2.74
LC Committee meeting	1	0.13
Telemetry	4	20.05
Trapping	8	124.13
Workshop	1	2.67
	<b>16</b>	<b>149.72</b>

participated in processing of data from automatic cameras.

**Joana Pereira**, Master of Science in biology, completing her internship at the Biology Department of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zagreb. Participated in trapping large carnivores, telemetry tracking, sampling dead animals and preparing samples for further analyses.

**Sarah V. Wallworth** used a grant from the Institute of Zoology, Zoological Society of London (UK), and prepared her diploma thesis: 'The effects of supplementary feeding on the body mass and population demographics of the Eurasian brown bear (*Ursus arctos arctos*) in Croatia and Italy'. Later successfully defended it at the Royal Veterinary College, University of London, UK.

**Michael Schutle**, earned his MS thesis at the University Bielefeld

University, Faculty of Biology, to become Master of Science Fundamental and Applied Ecology. Involved in field work and interested in working again as a volunteer.

**Vladimir Todorov**, PhD student from Bulgaria and from Balkani Wildlife Society, is finishing his thesis on bears at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

**Igor Trbojević**, researcher from the University of Banja Luka, B&H) and his wife **Tijana Trbojević**, a PhD student of ecology at the University of Banja Luka for basic information on some aspects of the field work on the lynx ecological studies.

**Josip Kusak** gave two presentations at the International Conference on Wind Energy and Wildlife impacts in Estoril, Portugal. He also worked on a LC research project in eastern Turkey (Kars region) 15.05.2017 – 5.07.2017 and 10.07.2017 – 26.07.2017, helping the continuation of the seven year project that has produced seven scientific papers and numerous media and online contributions about large carnivores, including three documentaries (Turkish national TV, National Geographic and BBC productions). The achievements of the project are the main driving forces for the establishing of the first wildlife corridor in Turkey.

### FIELD WORK

Josip Kusak and Michael Schulte spent 149.72 days on field work. Slaven Reljić, PhD student and veterinarian, was contracted to work on the bear part of our projects, spent 0.42 days, helping on the wolf and lynx work, while Đuro Huber spent 0.12 days



Tranquilized bear in Sarikamis forest, Eastern Turkey

on the field part of the project work when Josip Kusak was present.

During 2017, wolf and lynx work in PLNP and in Gorski kotar consisted of winter snow-tracking of wolves and lynx and counting of wolves in packs in and around of PLNP area, searching for wolf signs, howling testing of tracked packs, searching for wolf dens and proof of wolf reproduction. We did one aerial search for one dropped lynx collar this year too. Automatic cameras were used to check for the presence of wolves in the area and to document reproduction, presence of other wild animals, primary lynx.

### Searches for signs of wolf and lynx presence

During winter, spring, summer and autumn of 2017, searching for signs of wolf presence was done inside PLNP, for wolf tracks in three packs in and around PLNP. The size of searched area was 603.6 km<sup>2</sup>, or almost twice the size of PLNP. However, very few signs of wolves were found during 2017, similar to the previous years.

Signs of wolf presence (footprints, scats, howling, and scratch markings) were found on 11 occasions only, while two lynx signs were found during the same period. For the second year in a row, we did not find evidence of wolf reproduction inside PLNP.

We were searching for wolf signs only in viable search areas. Around PLNP, there are three inaccessible areas. North of PLNP is one large (same size as PLNP) military training ground with forbidden access, west of PLNP is the area of Mala Kapela mountain still inaccessible due to land mines. At the east of PLNP, at the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina, is another military facility (Željava abandoned airport of Yugoslav army), where the access is also forbidden because of land mines around the airport. The study area has areas with intensive human use, which was already recorded during the previous years of the study: permanent settlements, roads, logging areas and in particular touristic area around

lakes, with 1.4 million tourists yearly. We believe that wolf packs were mostly using quiet areas (military and land mine areas) during 2017. We also documented (by automatic cameras) rather intensive human use of areas outside PLNP, where besides logging operations, other touristic activities occasionally happen.

### Wolf trapping in Plitvice Lakes National Park (PLNP)

First traps were set on 29.08.2017 and activated on 14.09.2017. Traps were active during six periods lasting until 31.10.2017, so 47 days for capturing and collaring of wolves in PLNP. Traps were set on 36 different sites, targeting all three packs previously recorded to use parts of PLNP area, but without recent signs of wolf presence in the same area.

Only five wolves visited traps, but two wolves were captured. One lynx was captured in a wolf trap, one jackal, one bear, one badger and three foxes. The most numerous visitors to traps were martens, which visited our traps on 30 occasions.

Three days after the activation of traps, a female wolf (age 2+ years, mass 32 kg) was captured in the territory of Plješevica pack. It was equipped with GPS-GS-VHF collar and named W32-Lika. Further tracking

will tell if it is a member of a pack or a solitary disperser.

Just before the end of trapping season, on 30.10.2017, a male wolf pup was captured, also on the territory of Plješevica pack. Clearly, it belonged to the Plješevica pack. It was fitted with GPS-GSM-VHF collar too and tracked since then.

### Lynx trapping in Gorski kotar

Lynx trapping with box traps at marking sites is less demanding than wolf trapping since box traps are set at marking sites with available GSM signal. During the winter 2017-2018, two lynx were collared in Gorski kotar, but only one captured in a box trap.

### Lynx trapping in Plitvice Lakes National Park (PLNP)

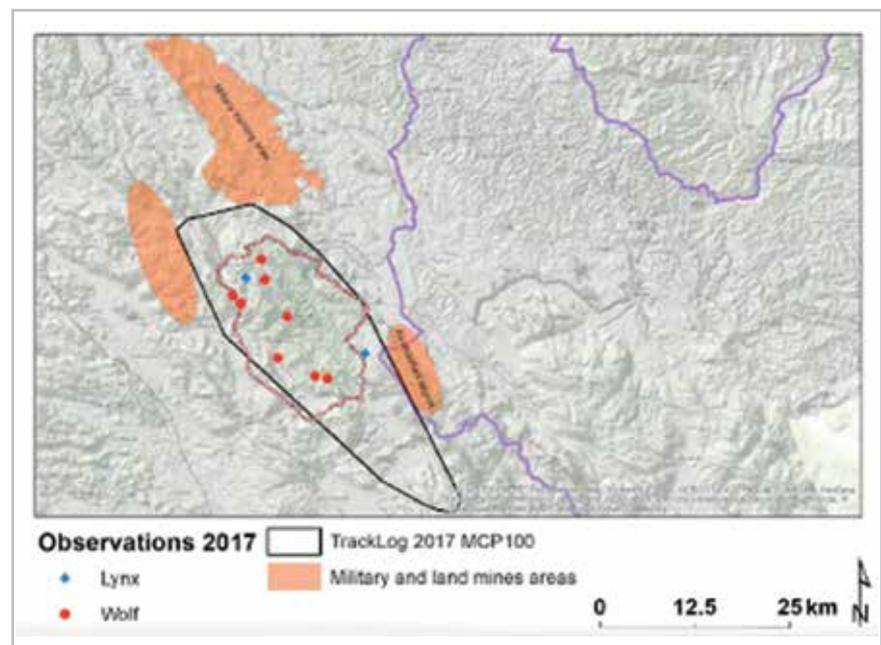
We moved one of box traps to new locations inside PLNP during the autumn of 2017. Lynx box traps were activated in PLNP area on 22.10.2017.

### TELEMETRY TRACKING

#### Wolf tracking

Two newly collared wolves were tracked since collaring. From 18.09.2017 to 29.10.2017, 167 location attempts were made. 165 were successful.

W32-Lika remained inside the Plješevica pack territory, but also



moved toward the north-west, outside of the known territory of Plješevica pack, reaching the Mala Kapela minefield. One howling attempt was without response, so it was not sure if W32-Lika was alone or with the pack. From 18.09.2017 to 29.10.2017 (41 days), wolf W32-Lika was located 152 times, moving inside the territory of Plješevica pack and inside PLNP, but also outside of PLNP and outside Plješevca pack territory. Unfortunately, the signal and the data of this wolf disappeared only 41 days after the collar deployment. The last location was in the managed forest and hunting area north-west of PLNP. W32-Lika could also be a lone disperser.

W33-Krešo was tracked from 30.10.2017 to 22.02.2018 (115 days) and a total of 1067 locations were collected. Soon after the capture, W33-Krešo had moved outside of PLNP and out of Croatia, to neighboring B&H, straight to the abandoned area of military airport, infested with land mines and inaccessible to humans. It stayed in the area most of the time, with occasional excursions along lower hills north-west of the 'area of residency'. Perhaps it has returned to the area where the pack was/is using during the last few years, since this wolf is a pup seeking the safety of his natal pack.

### Lynx tracking

Since the collars of L12-Burni-ZIP, L11-Čorak and L13-Stella stopped functioning prematurely and animals 'disappeared', there was a need to search for them. Aerial search was the best way to cover the whole Gorski kotar and Plitvice areas. The conclusion was that both animals were wearing non-functioning collars.



Captured and collared lynx in Sarikamis Forest (Turkey)



Setting trap camera on bear trail in Malo duboko in Gorski Kotar

### FIELD WORK ON BEARS

#### Bear trapping in Plitvice Lakes National Park (PLNP)

Traps were set 2-21 May 2017. On 14 different nights the traps were active for 52 site/nights and 208 trap nights, resulting in two bear captures/collared with GPS devices in the PLNP.

Camera traps were used in PLNP area for counting lynx, but also for the determination of wolf presence, the activity of ungulates and humans. Cameras were set on the area of 156 km, inside PLNP.

### WOLF MORTALITY

A mortality of 15 wolves was documented between 24.03.2017 and 7.03.2018. Prevailing causes of death was still traffic (n=9), then illegal killing (n=1) and intraspecific strife. Illegal killing of wolves is still present.

### BEAR MANAGEMENT

Đuro Huber and Slaven Reljić participated in the 'Committee for Bear Management in Croatia'. Based on the upcoming genetic bear count, that the 2018 action plan will be composed, including setting the hunting quota.

The bear hunting quota for the year 2007 of 120 bears have been fully accomplished plus 23 more bear mortality due to traffic (12 railroad +5 road) and intervention shooting (2+4).

### WOLF MANAGEMENT

Đuro Huber and Josip Kusak continue to participate in large carnivores management through the work in the 'Committee for Large Carnivores in Croatia' and through various other activities (organising and implementing monitoring, giving courses for damage inspectors and

intervention team for large carnivores, media appearances and statements).

We collected 400 wolf scat samples, expecting to get funding in 2018 to perform the genetic analyses and obtain the first ever genetic count of wolves in Croatia!

Wolf numbers since the beginning of the implementation of wolf management plan from 2005 was for the first five years positive and declined during the last five years. The most serious drop happened in 2014, with the number staying well below 200. The negative trend in wolf numbers and the presence of illegal wolf killing presents two main arguments against any legal quota on wolves in 2016 and 2017.

In 2018 the new (revised) Croatian wolf management plan is to be worked on. We expect to have a major role in that process.

### LYNX MANAGEMENT

The Croatian lynx management plan will be revised in 2018. Also the LIFE Lynx project started, so the increase of activity on the lynx side will surely follow.

For our work in 2017 UKWCT generously donated a total of 5,000 GBP (42,650.35 HRK, after conversion). The fund was spent on field work, car fuel and food for field workers with some minor expenses for the consumable equipment like receiver batteries and refilling prepaid SIM cards for trap alarms. Josip Kusak, Michael Schulte, and other volunteers carried out the entire wolf and lynx related field work.

**Josip Kusak**, Associate Professor at the Department of Biology at the University of Zagreb



# Wolves in the Southern Levant: Is it safe to get used to humans?

In the Southern Levant region of the Middle East, the living situation for wolves varies across an intricate mosaic of contrasting conditions, based on various human attitudes and landscape use.

I introduced these conditions and their influence on wolf populations in issue 61, conceptualised as a 'landscape of fear' made up of varying degrees of risk towards both humans and wolves. For the last year and a half, I have been monitoring the movement and behaviour of wolves in this region and studying their interactions with humans, other predators and prey across this diverse, severely human-affected landscape.

The Southern Levant includes Israel, Jordan and Palestine; a geopolitically tense region where ideals of the local peoples can differ significantly across and within country borders. Until recently, wolves in this region shared their roles as apex predators with two big cats: the Asiatic cheetah and the Arabian leopard. Cheetahs have now been absent for over half a century, but leopards had been spotted in Israel up until a decade ago. A small

number of leopards are thought to exist in the country's southern deserts, but the likelihood of the population surviving is sadly far from a reality. Another large carnivore – the striped hyena – remains, but is primarily a scavenger.

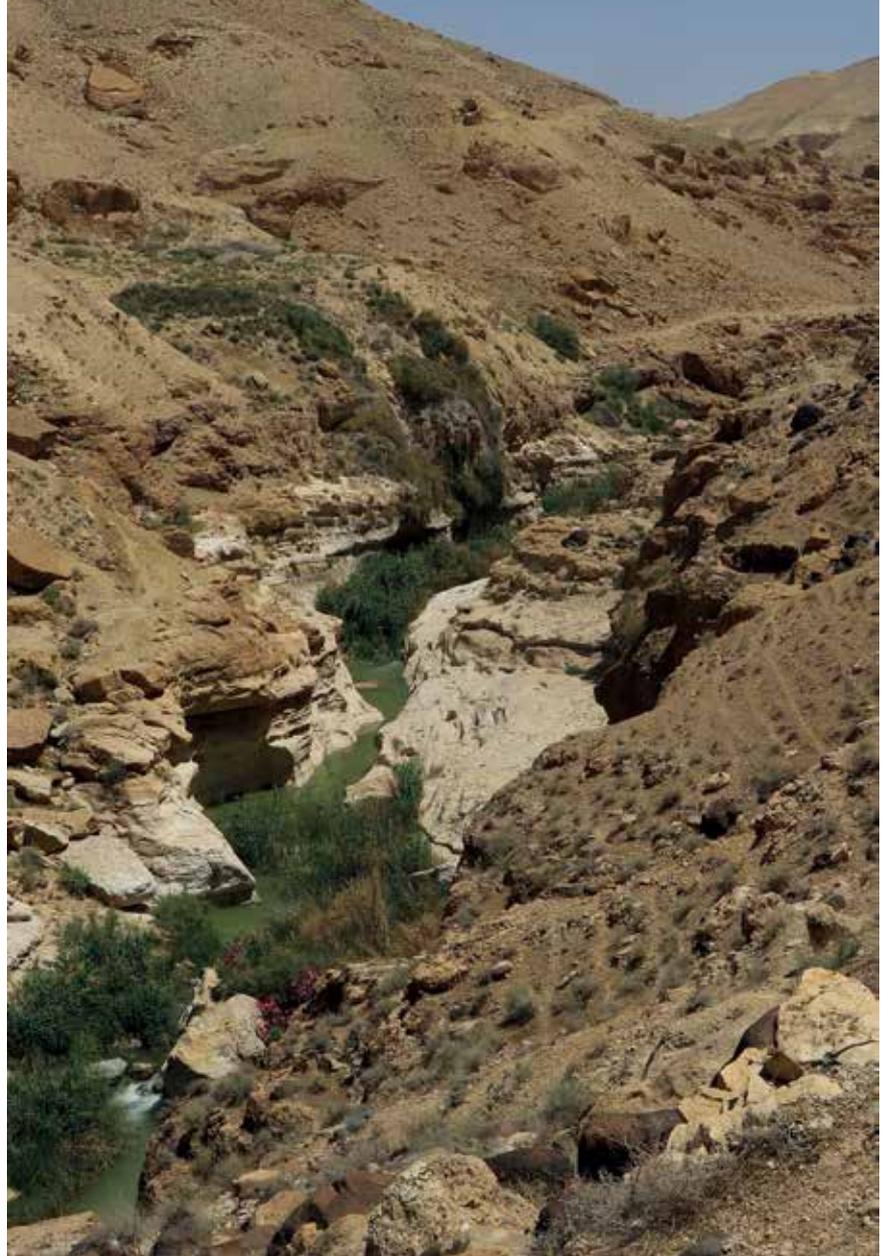
Today, with little competition from other natural predators, wolves prosper in areas with considerable protection and adequate access to resources. Israel's governing body in charge of nature and wildlife, the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA), are very active in providing safety for wolves – albeit only in certain jurisdictions. Wolves in the region must be very careful about the directions and distances they choose to wander and the kinds of people

that are safe to get used to. Actually, in certain parts of Israel, wolves have become almost completely habituated to humans, rarely travelling more than a few kilometres from human settlements.

On the border of Israel and Syria, the hilly pine forests and grasslands of the Golan Heights would seem the ideal setting for a grey wolf. High in elevation, with a temperate Mediterranean climate; snow covers the ground in winter while the summer heat is bearable compared to the deserts in the south. Mountain gazelle and wild boar – among the wolves' favourite prey species – are also common. With this combination of environmental conditions, one would expect the Golan to be prime real estate for a wolf. However, wolves in the Golan are forced to live in fear, but not from the region's geopolitical tensions. In fact, the Golan's minefields are possibly the safest strongholds that the predators are offered.



In efforts to appease livestock farmers, the Golan Heights has been demarcated into three management zones, with a goal to lower the wolf population in core agricultural areas. Being among the greenest parts of the entire Southern Levant, free-range livestock farming is a common occurrence. Owing to the perceived threat of livestock depredation, wolves are systematically shot by farmers and INPA rangers in large parts of the Golan. Inside a minefield, wolves are



free from human pressures. Once outside, they run the risk of being shot.

On the other end of the 'habitat-suitability spectrum', a hyper-arid desert is not the most likely environment one would imagine as ideal habitat for grey wolves. However, Israel's Arava Valley possibly holds the most flourishing wolf population across the entire Middle East, with wolf numbers estimated to be in the hundreds. The valley is the lowest place on Earth in altitude and is home to a unique subspecies of grey wolf that has adapted to the extreme heat and aridity of the Middle Eastern deserts: the Arabian wolf (*Canis lupus arabs*).

In the Arava and adjacent Negev Highlands, vigilant INPA rangers strictly enforce the country's wildlife

“ Today, with little competition from other natural predators, wolves prosper in areas with considerable protection and adequate access to resources.”

protection laws, affording wolves almost complete safety from persecution. Rare exceptions include isolated incidents of illegal poisoning in the Negev's sparse patches of free-range livestock herding. Rangers often decline farmers' requests to self-manage 'problem jackals' as they fear the indiscriminate control methods of the farmers would pose a threat

to the local wolf population. Still, as wolves are unwanted by local farmers, they show a higher level of vigilance in areas with free-ranging livestock.

In other parts of the desert, wolves have become so accustomed to human habitation that they spend the majority of their time foraging around agricultural settlements. Prey densities are low in this arid environment, driving wolves to search for food elsewhere. As a result, Israel's desert wolves are largely omnivorous, getting much of their nutrition from rubbish scraps and organic produce such as dates, melons and peppers.

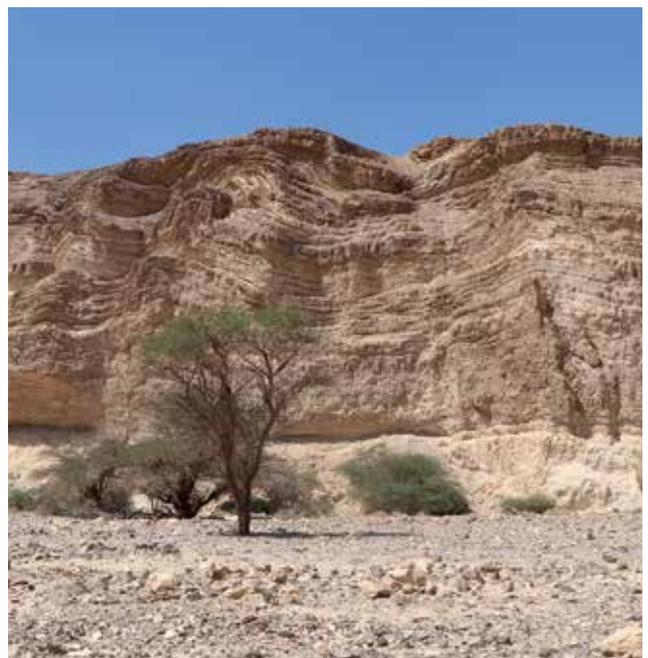
There is no doubt that the pioneering agricultural practices in the Arava have facilitated the success of the region's wolf population. Food is provided to wolves with little adversity; crop damage is minimal as fruit and scraps

are usually pilfered from the ground. On top of this, livestock are kept enclosed and safe from predation. The little conflict that exists between wolves and farmers is usually caused by damage to irrigation pipes as these have become the primary source of drinking water for wolves. Many farmers now recognise that wildlife can't be blamed for such damage as most of the natural springs have become dry as a result of the agriculture. Thus, many have resolved this issue by allowing a pipe to drip over a bucket of water, offering wildlife constant access to drinking water.

Of course, this habituation to humans can undoubtedly bring many dangers. With wolves considering humans as an important food source, aggressive encounters have become an occurrence. During the latter half

“There is no doubt that the pioneering agricultural practices in the Arava have facilitated the success of the region's wolf population.”

of 2017, ten encounters between wolves and humans were reported in one small area by the western shore of the Dead Sea in Israel. Tourists camping inside a nature reserve and visiting the nearby village would often intentionally feed wolves or leave scraps at campsites within the reserve. Unsurprisingly, wolves that became comfortable with approaching humans found themselves in situations where unlucky people were bitten – *though perhaps even more unlucky were the wolves that inevitably took the blame and were removed*. An uproar ensued, with some locals suggesting the entire wolf population be eradicated. Fortunately, as Israel is quite conservation-minded, education around the importance and hazards of nature has intensified and the wolves are being left alone to a large degree.





Nevertheless, Israel's Arabian wolves don't need to travel far to become at risk of persecution. The Israel-Jordan border transects the entire length of the Arava, from the Dead Sea in the north to the Red Sea in the south. In Jordan, free-range livestock farming is common; shepherds travel for days on end without securely protecting their flocks. Naturally, large predators like wolves can significantly impact these shepherds' livelihoods through livestock loss. Needless to say, wolves are considered a threat and are viewed with great hostility. Views around wolves being nasty killers that endanger human lives are also commonplace. Such beliefs were once common throughout the wolf's global distribution, but public education has dramatically shifted these perceptions. Fortunately, education around nature

conservation is also growing in Jordan, however, it is yet to become a priority. With things as they stand, one step across the border from Israel, wolves are again at risk of persecution.

Of course, it is important for wildlife and humans to find a comfortable coexistence. It is also important that each recognise the dangers of the other. For the time being, wolves in the Southern Levant need to be careful about the people they choose to coexist with. Where human-

predator conflict is low, wolves appear comfortable and confident around human habitation. Where wolves are perceived as threatening, they respond to adversity by increasing their vigilance.

This appears clear for wolves as a whole across the landscape. However, it would be interesting to see if an individual wolf is able to distinguish between 'friendly' and 'unfriendly' people and adjust its behaviour accordingly. A wolf's home range will often cover a range of different human conditions; is this wolf able to understand whether it is welcomed or not by the people?

**Gavin Bonsen**

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*Centre for Compassionate Conservation, University of Technology Sydney, Australia. Gavin is a doctoral candidate and the first-ever recipient of JNF Australia's Arava-Finkel Scholarship*

<http://www.compassionateconservation.uts.edu.au/>

# Cross-species Communication

Wolves communicate with each other through sound, scent and body language. But what about with other species?

**W**hen two predators meet, not all parties will emerge unscathed, but this was not the case in these incredible stories.

In his book *A Wolf Named Romeo*, Nick Jans tells of a wolf who befriended the dogs and townsfolk of Juneau, Alaska. When the wolf first approached Nick and his wife Sherrie, one winter day in 2003, their labrador charged towards it. Expecting the worst, Nick and his wife were astounded when, after a brief sniff, both canines parted ways peacefully. A week later, a skier was out in the snow with her dog, and the wolf once again bounded up. This time, both animals began to play, and over time, the wolf was nicknamed "Romeo" for his flirtatious body language with the other dogs. Over the next six years, Romeo came and went, frolicking with the dogs while still keeping his distance from the humans.

Due to competition for food and territory, dogs and wolves do not usually tolerate each other, and coyotes even less so. Except in the case of the red wolf, where the results are just as disconcerting.

One reason this species is under threat is interbreeding with them. This could be because of too few potential mates,

but a recent Cambridge University study on wolf howls also discovered that the "dialect" used by red wolves was very similar to that of coyotes. Classified as "type three" - high and whining - the howl of both species sounded alike, and this could help explain why they were cross-breeding.

Survival can also encourage cross-species communication. Although fatalities between bears and wolves are low, and the two animals prefer to avoid each other, photographer Lassi Rautiainen was nonetheless surprised at what he saw in Finland in 2013. A young she-wolf and male brown bear were not only seen sharing prey, but meeting up with one another every night to wrestle and play. Wolves are of course social animals, and although bears are seen as solitary, they occasionally have alliances with other sub-adults to catch prey, which may have opened the way to their friendship.

In each of these stories, wolves and other species were able to communicate their intention to play or breed, despite both sides usually being evasive, or at worst, antagonistic. There are certainly upsides to being an intelligent and social animal!

**Jessica Jacobs**



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# The Future of Wolves on Isle Royale

**Y**ou may remember the article I wrote in issue 59 (2016) about the future of the wolves on Isle Royale, in Michigan – part of Isle Royale National Park. Researchers carried out the 57th annual winter study of wolves and moose on the island during late January to early March in 2015. Between January 2014 and January 2015, the wolf population had decreased from nine wolves down to three. At the time I wrote the article it was believed that only two were left. According to the 2017-2018 annual report there were indeed still two wolves on the island, the lowest ever recorded since the studies began back in 1959. These two remaining wolves are believed to be a nine-year-old male and a seven-year-old female pair which are very closely related to one another as father-daughter, that both shared the same mother and therefore are also half-siblings. Without intervention the wolf population will go into extinction onto the island.

At the time of writing their 2017-2018 annual report, The National

Park Service (NPS) announced that it had decided to restore the wolf population on Isle Royale, but they had yet to receive a signed Record of Decision (ROD), nor had they received a projected timetable for the wolf reintroduced.

On June 7, 2018 the NPS announced that they had released a ROD to introduce wolves at Isle Royale National Park. It was announced that around 20-30 wolves would be reintroduced to Isle Royale over the next three to five years. This number is expected to have an immediate effect on the island's moose population. There have been fears that without an apex predator such as the wolf, the moose population could double in the next four to five years. With a booming ungulate population and no natural predator to bring down their numbers, there is the risk that there will be a large forest/vegetation loss across the island. This could have a major impact on the island's ecosystem. With such large numbers of moose on Isle Royale, without intervention they are likely to eat

their main food source till there is not enough food left to sustain the population. Without sufficient food, combined with the possibility of future harsh winters, the population will starve and eventually collapse.

Wolves have been present on the Isle Royale for more than 65 years. David Mech has told Wolf Print exclusively:

*“The Isle Royale wolf-moose study has provided much valuable and varied information about wolf ecology. Thus from a scientific standpoint, the value of a wolf reintroduction to the island, now that the current population is bound for extinction, would be very valuable.”*

Only time will tell of course if the reintroduction will be successful, but at least something is being planned to create a new and healthy wolf population on the island.

**Francesca Macilroy**



Rock Harbor Lighthouse, Isle Royale National Park © Shutterstock



Moose skull © Shutterstock

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# A Conversation in Conservation

In April, guest speakers Esther Conway and Crissie Constantinou from WildCats Conservation Alliance came to talk to a full house about tigers and Amur leopards.



**W**ildCats, a programme of the Zoological Society of London in partnership with Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation, provides grants to conservation projects across Asia. We heard how tigers in the wild now number fewer than 4,000 and face threats from poaching, habitat destruction, disease and conflict. Amur leopards, though the population was on the increase, counted fewer than 100 individuals. These leopards shared an area of tiger habitat in the far east of Russia. WildCats' conservation priorities are themed around these threats and focus on anti-poaching, population monitoring, wildlife health, conflict mitigation and education.

The story of wild Amur tigers rescued from conflict and released after rehabilitation which went on to have two litters of cubs showed successful intervention was possible. Beautiful but inhospitable and inaccessible landscapes in Sumatra were the location of a conservation project that carried out wildlife crime investigations, as well as anti-poaching patrols in the second largest protected area in Indonesia. This long-term project has seen a reduction of snare placement in the heart of the forest to levels not seen since 2008. Population monitoring in Nepal, India and Russia took on similar aspects with camera trapping used to get an idea of

population numbers. Snow tracking tiger footprints added an additional element to monitoring in the Russian Far East and the teams were able to plot long distance movement on maps to get an idea of movement across the winter months.

The speakers left us under no illusion that the survival of the tigers and Amur leopards were on a knife edge and conflict between humans and tigers, whether in the Russian Far East, Sumatra or Nepal, was on the increase. WildCats Conservation Alliance are galvanising support to raise more money to provide a future for these key umbrella species. Thank you to everyone who attended this event for making it so successful.

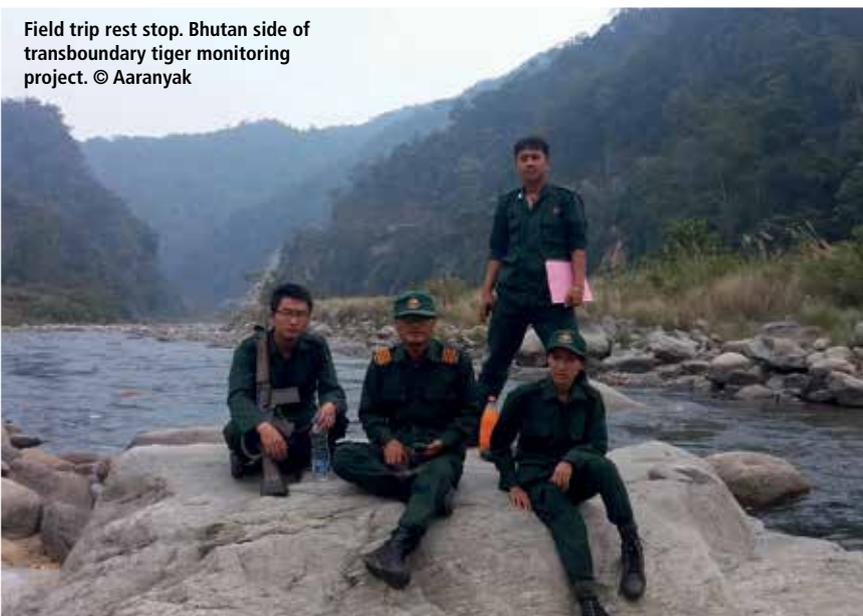


Amur leopard camera trap image © WCS



Sumatran tiger © KSNP/FFI/Panthera

Field trip rest stop. Bhutan side of transboundary tiger monitoring project. © Aaranyak

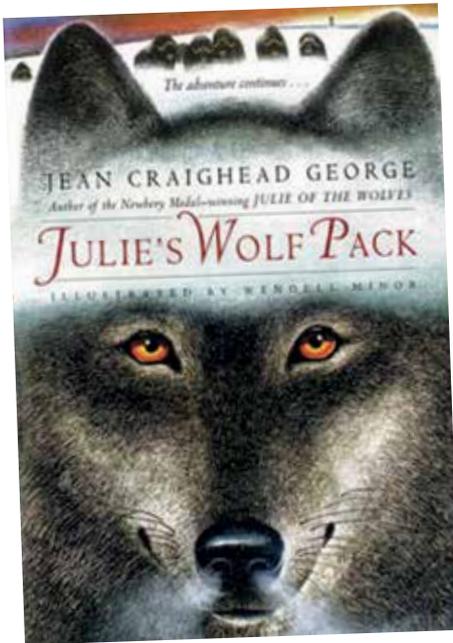


[www.conservewildcats.org](http://www.conservewildcats.org)



# Julie's Wolf Pack

Jean Craighead George  
Published by HarperCollins  
PB 208pp RRP £4.43 ISBN-13: 978-0064407212



to the pack. She would respond with *stay away all is well*. When she visited the pack she was greeted as his half-sister and then used all her wolf body language to retain her bond with the pack, so whenever she howled to warn them of danger they understood and reacted.

Kapu has now taken over the Avalik pack with his mate Aaka after the death of his father. Kapu is strong but inexperienced and he has to face many challenges for leadership from Rawbone, an alpha male that had joined them from another pack and taken Kapu's mother Silver as his mate. Rival packs, disease, famine and humans test the young alpha, as

his power in the pack grows and he becomes more confident.

Against Kapu's orders Silver has cubs, but because she is weak from lack of food she cannot produce enough milk, so the last two cubs are dying. The pack allows Julie to take them to rear at home, leaving Kapu and the pack wondering whether they will ever return. A neighbouring pack harbours rabies and a female carrier joins the Avalik pack despite Kapu sensing something is wrong – a strange sweet smell surrounds her. Can Julie persuade her pack to be inoculated in time to save them? Months later an even bigger danger threatens Kapu that will change the life of the pack forever.

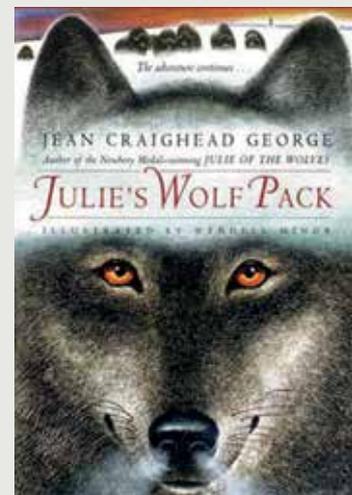
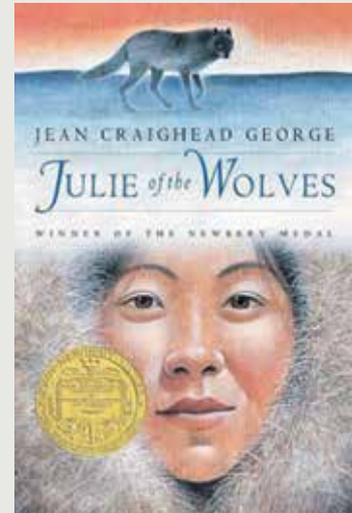
The story has a poignant but realistic ending. For people that love wolves, the trilogy is a must for their bookshelf and is certainly suitable for early teens to learn about the Inuit culture and how wolves live and survive in the wild.

Wendy Brooker

The final book in the trilogy is told from the Avalik Wolf Pack's perspective. The pack saved the life of Inuit girl Miyax (Julie) when she was lost on the Arctic tundra, welcoming her into their pack and teaching her all they knew. In return, she led them to a new source of food and protected them from the hunters of her village. The Inuits called them 'Julie's wolf pack'. This is a powerful story about the loving bond between wolf and human, drawing you so realistically into the magical world of the wolf that, as you read, you become part of it and see the world through a wolf's eyes.

Julie's life is about to change as her relationship with her friend Peter progresses and she once more has to battle to save her beloved wolf pack. Kapu, the young wolf Julie nursed back to health on the Arctic tundra, remembers his parents nurturing the lost girl-pup who had learnt to speak wolf: posturing, howling and whimpering whilst sharing his food and play. He would often stop out of sight of her home to call her back

## Read the trilogy...



## The Wisdom of Wolves: Lessons from the Sawtooth Pack

Jim & Jamie Dutcher

Published by National Geographic

Hardback 224pp RRP £16.99 ISBN-13: 978-1426218866

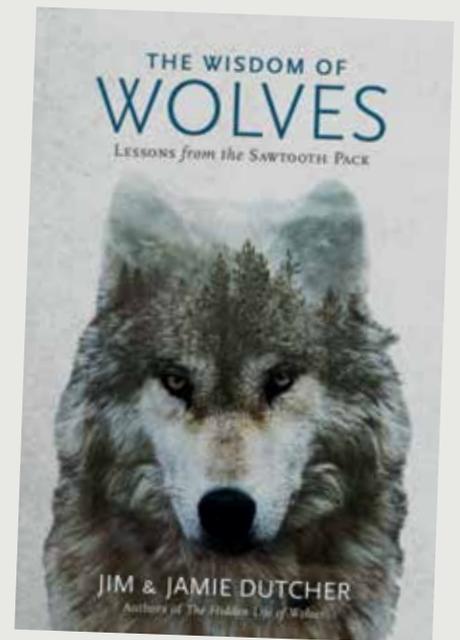
Jim and Jamie Dutcher take you on an incredible and fascinating journey in *A Wisdom of Wolves*. This book is not only a personal reflection on their lives but also the lives of the Sawtooth Wolf Pack who they lived with for six years.

Both Jim and Jamie have a beautiful writing style that enables you to forget that you're reading a book but rather has the effect that they are sitting down with you, having a cup of coffee, and there you are enjoying the stories they have to tell about the Sawtooth Pack. In this book the chapters are written alternately by Jim and Jamie, allowing their own voice to flow throughout, allowing you to

feel their own emotions, thoughts and feelings.

What I loved about *The Wisdom of Wolves* is the incredible detail that the Dutchers go into when describing the wolves' behaviours and their interactions with each other. Jim and Jamie show us the lessons and values that they learned from the Sawtooth Pack as they observed their behaviour on a daily basis.

Throughout, you see the compassion that the wolves have for their pack mates, wolf and human alike. See how they watch out for each other, and even experience grief when they lose a pack mate and how it affects



them. A truly exceptional book and great insight into the life of a wolf pack. I highly recommend this book to anyone who has an interest in wolves.

Francesca Macilroy

## The Rise of Wolves

Kerr Thomson

Published by Chicken House

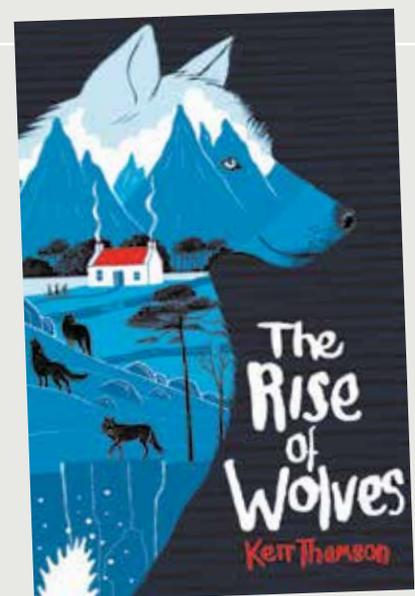
PB 304pp RRP £6.99 ISBN-13: 978-1911077695

Why have wolves mysteriously appeared on the Scottish island of Nin? Or indeed, have they? Nothing is what it first appears in this pacy Scottish adventure story as Innis and his best friend Kat race to save their beloved island from the encroach of wind turbines and the subsequent light pollution that will invariably follow. Clearly there is a passion for Nin, but who is going further and sabotaging the workman's equipment?

I cannot reveal too much of the plot or I would spoil the surprises, but ultimately our main protagonist feels forced to take on a dangerous challenge that could cost him his life. The prize if he

succeeds is incredible and will mean that he will never have to worry about the island again, or fret that he and his poorly grandfather will have to leave. In admirably realistic dialogue, we also see young teen hero challenge the feisty, unapproachable young Lachlan and continually ask him the truth behind his uncle's wildlife sanctuary.

The wolves are beautifully drawn – mysterious, ephemeral and strangely heroic. When you discover why they are really there, you may develop goosebumps. It's an immensely satisfying book for young teens that entwines mythology, history, the love of wildness and nature. There may be the odd dramatic licence or two – for



example, what parent would ever allow their son to intentionally risk his life, even where there is so much at stake? But it is a very accurate portrait of how teenagers interact, how they face risk, reward and the bonds of friendship.

Julia Bohanna



# Finding Hope and Healing in Wolfdogs

Interview with Ozzie Cabral, co-founder of *Song of The Wolf* Healing Center in Colorado



All pictures by *Song of the Wolf* Healing Center

## How and why did you start *Song of the Wolf*?

Mary Ann McCain and I (Ozzie) met about three years ago. We both work in mental health/addiction treatment and met at a treatment centre. Realising that we had worked with wolfdogs previously (I have owned wolfdogs and she worked at a sanctuary), we both had a desire to start a rescue/sanctuary that could somehow be incorporated into mental health/addiction work. We started talking and things just started happening.

## What are your backgrounds?

I have worked in mental health/addiction treatment since 2002 and Mary Ann has worked in the field since the 80's. My experience with

wolves and wolfdogs comes from the private sector. Owning wolfdogs and having friends who own them. Mary Ann worked and lived in a sanctuary.

## Why specifically the wolf? What has the animal always meant to you? Do you house wolves as well as wolfdogs? What is the mix?

For me, I am indigenous and my native roots tell me that I am a relative of the wolf. I see them as my relatives who have been marginalised, killed off and misrepresented. I grew up learning about the importance and significance of wolves and have held them as sacred animals.

We only house wolfdogs. However, if we get a licence for a pure wolf we will definitely house them as well.

Currently our inclusion criteria is that they should be high content wolfdogs (so 80% or higher content). We see so many sanctuaries and rescues with low content animals that could be adopted out and are taking the place of a high content animal that will be euthanised because there is no placement. We want to make sure we can provide placement for that high content animal.

## What initial reaction did you receive from people – positive or negative?

So far we have only had positive reactions. People are excited about *Song of the Wolf*, about our mission, the land, as well as our hope to integrate therapeutic services with some of our animals. The mental



down what you've told yourself or learned from others about wolves and wolfdogs and what is true and false, then write down things that you've told yourself or others have told you about who YOU are and now what is true and what's false, etc... different exercises like that.

health and addictions community has embraced us and many treatment centres have had their clients come up to *Song of the Wolf* to help build enclosures, place dig guards and help out with what we need done. It's been great!

**How does the healing work and what kind of people can you help?**

It starts with a discussion of the importance of wolves, their contribution to the ecology and how they are being killed off. We then give a tour of the facility as well as a safety lecture/orientation. We will take a small group into the enclosure and do some mindfulness practice. The clients have to be very mindful, present and aware which is something they are unfamiliar with and a practice they

need to strengthen. The client then has to pay attention to a different form of communication. They have to pay attention to the animal and communicate in a different way. This brings awareness to their own communication styles and how their body language plays a part of that. As well as what needs to be changed for effective communication. For some reason, the animals will come to the people who are vulnerable and/or are holding trauma. Once that happens, we see a catharsis of emotions from the person. We then hold a therapeutic session and/or debrief the experience.

We also have a lot of exercises that we do. Examples are: paying attention to dynamics of the pack and identifying your own family dynamics; writing

**What plan do you have for the future?**

We want to build two more enclosures then stop. We don't want to be a very big rescue and really only want 10 to 12 animals. We will incorporate more native beliefs and ceremonies into *Song of the Wolf* and really work with the indigenous population. We're hoping to build a sweat lodge on the property and then let the universe do it's work and move us in the direction that we are supposed to be. Our plan is to trust the universe to guide us and to always try to do what's best for the animals FIRST.

[www.songofthewolf.org](http://www.songofthewolf.org)

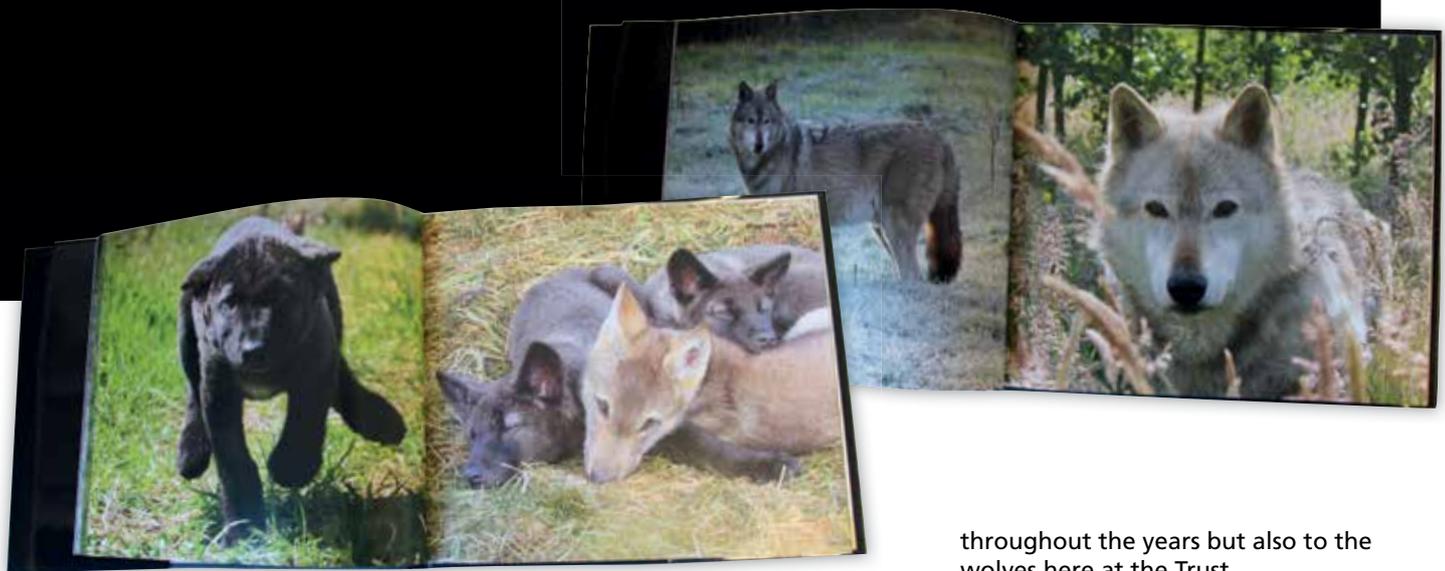
**Interview by Julia Bohanna**



MERCHANDISE



# Wolf Photo Book



**The UK Wolf Conservation Trust started in 1995 founded by Roger and Tsa Palmer here at Butlers Farm.**

Their aim was not only to share their passion but also help educate members of the public and allow them to see for themselves what wolves really are like, and not the mythical, demonised, devilish, and sly creatures from ancient stories or folk fairy tales.

The Trust has been home to more than 20 wolves, from our earlier wolves Denali, Luna, Apollo, Athena, Mika, Kenai, Kodiak, Dakota, Alba, Latea, Lunca and Duma, and to our current resident wolves, Mosi, Torak,

Mai, Motomo, Massak, Sikko, Pukak, Nuka, Tundra and Tala.

Sadly all good things must come to an end and at the end of August 2018 the Trust will be closed to the public. The wolves will remain on site as they will be looked after by the Palmer family and the volunteers that have cared for the wolves for many years and know them best. This book is a thank you to all those who have visited and supported us

throughout the years but also to the wolves here at the Trust.

**It has been a privilege to work with these amazing animals, who have been exceptional ambassadors for their wild cousins. It is because of them that we have managed to donate over £360,000 since the Trust started in 1995.**

**The book is available to buy (£26.99) via <http://www.blurb.co.uk/b/8845151-wolves>**



# Grey Wolves

## A Celebration

Ian Redman was one of the co-founders of Wolf HELP, a British wolf conservation team who have very successfully educated the public about the nature of wolves and their behaviour.

There will be four individual talks throughout the day which are:

### **Savage Freedom: Wolves on The Hunt**

A dramatic insight into the realm of predator/prey dynamics as seen through the eyes of various wild wolf packs in the High Arctic, Wood Buffalo National Park, Isle Royale National Park and Denali National Park.

### **The Incredible World of Wolf Research**

An interesting insight into the world of wolf research biologists and the advancement of wolf research methods through the years.

### **The Mexican Wolf Captive Breeding Programme at Wolf Haven International**

This unique presentation shows the arrival for captive breeding of the Mexican wolves brought over to the Wolf Haven International Centre between 1994 and 1997, whose offspring were later released into the wilds of Arizona and New Mexico.

### **A Howling over Yellowstone**

The reintroduction of the grey wolf into Yellowstone National Park and Central Idaho in both 1995 and 1996 were incredible events that, at that time, symbolised the way human beings wanted to try and redress the balance of nature in these two very distinct areas.

Featuring the work of Dr Steven H Fritts, Jeff Haas and other notable research biologists.

**Saturday 25th August 2018**  
**10am to 4pm**

£30 per person

Tickets available at [www.ukwct.org.uk](http://www.ukwct.org.uk)  
or via telephone on 0118 971 3330

**TICKETS MUST BE PRE-BOOKED AS  
THERE ARE LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE**



**THIS EVENT  
HAS NOW  
SOLD OUT!**



# UKWCT Wolf Centre

## ‘Visit Wednesdays’

### Visit Wednesdays Open from 11am to 4pm

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 – with our knowledgeable volunteers behind the barriers at each enclosure to tell you all about them. 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 the wolves 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 free parking.

**Quirks’ Animal Roadshows** will be here on Wednesday, 25th July, 1st, 22nd and 29th August with a variety of reptiles, invertebrates and much more.

Come and see **Animal Magic** on the 8th August, with eight different species of animals, and finally **Berkshire Reptile Encounters** will be bringing a variety of reptiles on the 15th August.

### 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.



**PLEASE NOTE!**  
**AUGUST 29TH**  
**WILL BE THE LAST**  
**DATE WE ARE**  
**OPEN TO THE**  
**PUBLIC**