










# WOLF CHRONICLE

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## From the Editor

### Dear Members

Thank you for continuing to support us and with your help we have once again raised a lot of money for the projects abroad that work so hard to keep our wolves' cousins safe in the wild.

I do hope that you will be able to come and see our wolves at one of the planned events. Autumn and winter are always very exciting times. The Open days every Wednesday from 11am -4pm are really popular and the wolves enjoy seeing all the visitors, so do use your free entry ticket and come along. Mosi will be there to greet you as usual from her enclosure by the gate.



In the very hot weather Torak actually walked into his newly filled pond, briefly going under the water before coming out the other side gleefully shaking himself. A scuba diving wolf!!!

Do please continue to send letters and stories in as we love to see what you have done. Design a Christmas card for your favourite wolf and we will display them all in the Education room for the visitors to see.

We do hope that you enjoy reading this issue and that you all have a great time at

Christmas. The wolves will have their usual Christmas trees with crackers made by children at the pre-Christmas event. Hopefully mischievous Tala won't run off with the Beenham's tree again this year!



Wendy



# SQUIRRELS

Standing at the main UKWCT gate one morning I realised that I was being watched. Two little dark eyes were peering out of a leaf covered tree and then I saw a silky white upswept tail and realised it was a grey squirrel. Grey squirrels were first released in the U.K from North America by the Victorians in 1876 and it wasn't too long before it was realised that they had taken to their new home like ducks to water. Squirrels are one of the few mammals which can climb head first down a tree and their antics and acrobatics in the trees are a joy to watch.

There are two kinds of Squirrels in Great Britain-red and grey and there are only about 140,000 red squirrels left compared to over 2.5 million greys. The red squirrel is native to Britain, but its future is increasingly uncertain as the grey squirrel increases its range over the mainland. The grey squirrel has displaced the native red squirrel across most of England and Wales, though not Scotland and Ireland. I have been fortunate to see red squirrels on the Isle of Wight and in the Lake District and they are truly beautiful animals. Contrary to popular belief the grey squirrels, although bigger and have the reputation of being aggressive, do not kill the red squirrels.

The greys' success is because they are prolific breeders, having 3-7 kittens twice a year, and are better at obtaining food. They also carry the squirrel Parapox virus which is deadly to red squirrels. The red squirrels' decline is more due to loss of food, habitat and disease.

## The Red Squirrel

Red Squirrels usually have reddish fur, although colours can vary with some appearing quite grey. They are smaller than grey squirrels with ear tufts which are larger in the winter. There is little difference between males and females and being solitary animals only come together to breed in the spring and again in the summer if the conditions are right. They usually only have 2-3 kittens, but have been known to have up to 6 and of those only 20-50% survive to adulthood. They are weaned off their mother's milk at the first signs of teeth at 8-12 weeks old. The main predators of the red squirrel are domestic cats, road traffic in urban areas, and birds of prey. The normal lifespan of a red squirrel is about 6 years. Red squirrels spend most of their time in the tree canopy and prefer conifer forests. They build large nests, called dreys, often in the forked branch of a tree and during cold winter months will often share dreys with close family members to keep warm.



Info & photo's from Wikipedia



They are seed eaters and prefer nibbling on pine cones, but will also eat larch and spruce. Their varied diet includes fungi, shoots and fruits of trees and shrubs. They will sometimes eat birds' eggs. Both red and grey squirrels can tell a bad nut just by holding it in their paws.

Reds do not hibernate so store fungi in trees to eat in the winter months. They will eat more food when it is plentiful to store up fat for the winter months.

Reds weigh 280-350g compared to the grey squirrels' 500-600g.

Reds are 18-24 cm long and grey squirrels 30cm.

### The Grey Squirrel

Grey squirrels are typically grey with white undersides, although they can appear quite brown. In Bethersden Kent a pure white squirrel was photographed. Their bushy tail is almost as long as their body and their hind legs are bigger and more powerful than their front legs. They are much bigger and stronger than their red cousins and able to find more food and store more body fat for winter. Like their red cousins they do not hibernate but are less active in winter.

Greys can be found in a wide variety of habitats, including woodland, suburban parks and domestic gardens where they are renowned for stealing bird's nuts from feeders. They are superb climbers and move rapidly, if a trifle scarily to the watcher, through tree tops.

Grey squirrels build large untidy looking dreys lined with moss, thistledown, dried grass and feathers in the tree tops or hollow trees. They mate twice a year and produce 3-7 kittens that are weaned at 7 weeks and leave the nest at 12 weeks.

They share the same predators as the reds (although they can be at risk from humans because of their invasion of gardens) and have basically the same lifespan.

Grey squirrels are mainly herbivorous, eating acorns and hazel nuts and similarly to their red cousins berries, fungi, buds and shots. On rare occasions when food is scarce they will eat insects, smaller rodents, eggs and nestlings. They collect nuts and seeds in the autumn and bury them for the winter. They have a highly developed spatial memory and acute sense of smell which enables them to find most of the caches months later.



Turn over for more!

Info & photos from Wikipedia







Any seeds not dug up will grow and help to maintain the woodland. (Owners of lawns are not quite so happy with the grey squirrel's food stores!!)

The introduced grey squirrel has been so successful in displacing its native red cousin because it is bigger and stronger and able to find more food and store more fat in its body for winter. This allows it to have an advantage over the red squirrel, which has lower survival and breeding rates. Another reason is that grey squirrels, although carrying the Parapox virus deadly to red squirrels, are not affected by it thus acting as a carrier and spreading the virus to any red squirrels in the area. How can the red squirrel be saved? The Forestry Commission is working in partnership with conservation groups

across Britain to develop a long-term conservation strategy that deters the grey squirrel and encourages the red.

This will be done by the design and management of conifer forests- the preferred habitat of the red squirrel. Hopefully this will ensure the survival of both the red and grey squirrel. They are both delightful animals. Meanwhile at the Trust we will continue to enjoy watching the little grey acrobats swing through the trees and steal the birds' nuts from our feeders!!

Turn over for more!



Info & photos from Wikipedia

# TEN INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT SQUIRRELS

1. A squirrel's 4 front teeth never stop growing. They are worn down by chewing nuts or tree bark.
2. Their hind legs are double-jointed which helps them to run up trees.
3. Some squirrels in the world can run up to 20 mph.
4. The word "squirrel" comes from the Greek word "Skiouros" meaning shadow tail.
5. The smallest squirrel in the world is the African Pygmy squirrel which is only 5 inches long and weighs 0.5-1 ounce.
6. The world's largest squirrel comes from India and is a massive 3 feet long.
7. Flying squirrels actually can't really fly. They simply extend their arms and legs and glide from tree to tree.
8. Flying squirrels can jump up to 150 feet.



9. The squirrel's 4 front toes are very sharp and this enables them to grip the tree bark when they are climbing.
10. The squirrel is a Native American symbol for trust, thriftiness and being prepared.



# Trust Wolves



## Mosi & Torak

The days are getting longer and chillier here at the UKWCT, and this triggers the growth of the wolves' beautiful thick winter coats.

At nine years old Torak and Mosi, along with Mai, are now our oldest wolves. Mosi takes wolf middle age in her stride - she is still a gregarious and mischievous animal, always investigating any new situation and keeping an eye on things happening on site. She has strong likes and dislikes and can be very vocal if something annoys or excites her. For reasons known only to Mosi, she has taken a dislike to the contractor who does building work at the Trust. She will go to the top of the mound in her enclosure and spend the whole time barking whilst he is on site. It is unusual for wolves to bark, but Mosi has learned to use this to express her displeasure.

In July we moved Mosi and Torak to the bottom enclosure in order to give them a change of scene. Mosi had excavated a huge amount of earth from the mound in their enclosure for a den making it unstable and liable to cave in.

Torak took all of this in his stride and was happy to explore his new surroundings or relax on the platforms. The wolves returned to their enclosure when everything had been made safe. It was obvious Torak was happy to be back - he loped around the enclosure and splashed in the pond, Torak has started to show signs of stiffness in his legs and he now has Flexijoint on his food to help his joints.

Mosi and Torak have been taken out regularly during the summer for enrichment walks. On one walk, Torak managed to scare off two partridges, several pheasants and a deer! It shows that their wild instincts are still very much to the fore despite coming from generations of captive wolves. The walks are an important part of the wolves' welfare and they love to sniff new scents and roll in unpleasant smelly things





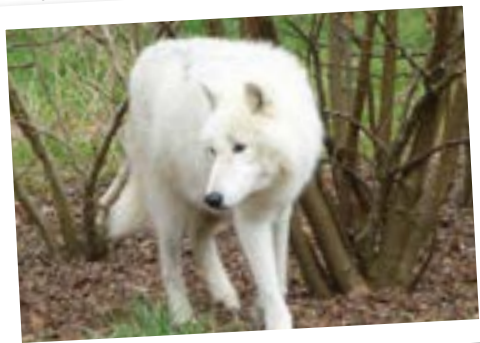


# Trust Wolves

**Massak** is a stunning wolf and the largest wolf of the Trust. He is a very soft gentle giant. He is very much in charge of his pack and doesn't like Pukak disobeying him. Massak stands on tip toes and rest his head on Pukak's back to remind Pukak that he is the dominant wolf. When Massak wants to play he bullies his siblings until they join in. He loves to roll in smelly things and in the hot days we soak sacks in garlic water for the wolves to roll on to help keep flies away.

**Pukak** is still the joker of the pack. He likes to eat everybody else's food and loves children's visits when they make him lots of tasty treats to eat. He tries to get Massak's as well because Massak is more cautious and takes too long to find his share. When Pukak gets over enthusiastic in games with Massak he is severely put in his place with lots of growls. He looks forward to his enrichment walks when he can roll in very smelly things.

**Sikko** is very photogenic but is still quite cautious of new things. As she is the smallest of the pack she needs to work out ways to get what she wants without using strength (unlike her brothers). This has led her to be a master of distraction. She takes her food and treats into the trees to hide from her brothers. She loves fence running with neighbours Mai and Motomo and sitting on top of the mound checking what is going on around both inside and outside the enclosure. She does not like Tundra and Tala walking by her enclosure and will make a funny "humphy barky" noises at them. She is definitely an extremely likeable wolf.



Turn over for more!



# Trust Wolves

The Beenhams are 4 years old and fully mature wolves.

Tala and her brother Nuka are both still very much "full-on" in terms of their exploratory behaviour and their interactions with visitors on walks; we have to be careful when they start investigating the hedgerows as there are sometimes pheasants which 'explode' from the undergrowth and can startle both handler and wolf.



**Nuka** gets more handsome each season and he is the very firm dominant male of the pack who intervenes when his sisters fight. He is still very playful though and loves to have his tummy rubbed by his human handlers. He's always shown an interest in molehills on walks, but recently realised that Mr. Mole was very much at home. A few swift strokes of his forepaws and the mole was caught! He played with it for a short time until the novelty wore off and it became something to roll on.



**Tundra** is a very gentle wolf who remains aloof from people on walks, but is very friendly with her favourite handlers. When they are sitting on the logs she will choose someone she likes, put her forepaws on their shoulders, and then use the underside of her muzzle, her neck and shoulders to give the person a very vigorous rubbing. Several handlers have been left with a wet head and sometimes green streaks in their hair because Tundra had been paddling in the pond and had managed to pick up some algae in her fur.



**Tala** is growing her thick winter coat now and it will be interesting to see if it is lighter and greyer like her mother Mai's. Tala is still mischievous, affectionate and full of life. She is always the first wolf to come up to handlers for a stroke, even if it means being told off by her sister Tundra, the dominant wolf in the pack.







# Trust Wolves

**Motomo** is now really bold and will readily come up to the fence to see people – though because he is not socialised we do not interact with him. He still does a lot of fence-running with the Arctics in the adjoining enclosure and Massak and Pukkak have yet to learn that if they crouch down at a point along the fence, trying to ‘ambush’ Motomo, they are large and white and fluffy so they can still be seen rather easily. His coat is much lighter than when he first came to the Trust, but he is still a stunning wolf and has a really deep melodic howl.

He enjoys teasing the arctic wolves by eating his food at the fence in front of them and racing cars down the drive. He does not like Mai going out for walks and will constantly howl to call her back. Mai will send howls back to Motomo from various points so that he knows where she is and sometimes will cut her walk short to go back to him. They are a very affectionate couple who dislike being parted.



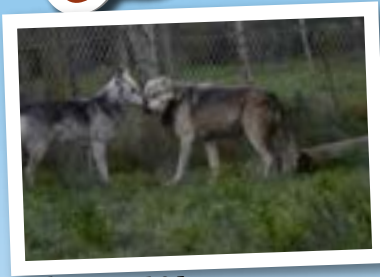
**Mai** is a delicate silver grey in her 9th year and is a very photogenic, wolf much admired by visitors and volunteers alike. She loves scratches from her volunteer friends at the fence. She is not so keen on people with umbrellas or the sound of gravel being scuffed by shoes.

She had a Phantom-pregnancy (thought she was having cubs) in the breeding season and dug a large den in their mound and defended it from Motomo who wanted to investigate. She didn't want to eat or interact with any of her favourite handlers and was seen “mothering” a whole dead chicken that had been given to her to eat.

Once her hormones returned to normal she started going out again for walks with her handlers and enjoyed being made a fuss of. She is a very popular wolf. The wolf keeper played a recording of Mai howling on a walk and Motomo didn't know what to think. He was turning his head from side to side listening with ears pricked up looking towards the room the sounds were coming from. Then he would look at Mai lying on the mound obviously oblivious to the sounds of herself and then listen again head cocked. He was obviously bemused—two Mais????

When wolf howls are played to the wolves they do not respond normally, so this must be excellent recording. The wolves still did not howl back though.





## MOTOMO & MAI HAVE A SHORT HOLIDAY



The wolf keeper wanted to cut the long grass and overhanging trees in Mai and Motomo's enclosure and make sure that all the old bones and scat was removed to make it hygienic. The perimeter fences and the platforms had to be checked for safety.

It was decided to move their Arctic neighbours to another enclosure and let Motomo and Mai have a "holiday" in their adjoining enclosure which has lots of exciting new things to explore—buried food to name just one!!! There is a large gate between the two enclosures, so the idea was to take Mai for a walk, put her in the side enclosure next to the main one and open the gate for Motomo to run towards her. Good plan in theory! Mai, having been hand raised will come to handlers easily, but Motomo is a problem.

As I am sure you all know, Motomo isn't a socialised wolf. That means he wasn't bottle fed as a cub and still has his fear of humans, so we cannot interact with him or go into his enclosure with only one or two people. We don't know how he would react. He is still a wild wolf that is very wary of humans, so we do know that if several handlers go into the enclosure at once he will probably run away. Wolves assess situations and will not take on a crowd of anything including their prey in the wild if they are alone.

So Mai as was planned was taken out for a walk and then put in the side enclosure. Then the difficulty and possibly the most risky part came—opening the gate with Motomo still in the enclosure. What would he do??

Two people stayed watching outside, a handler was with Mai ready to let her into the main enclosure once Motomo had run through and 5 handlers went into Motomo's side to open the gate. A handler carried a fire extinguisher to distract him. (The extinguisher is aimed at some undergrowth and the hissing noise is enough to make him run away). We wouldn't point it at him.

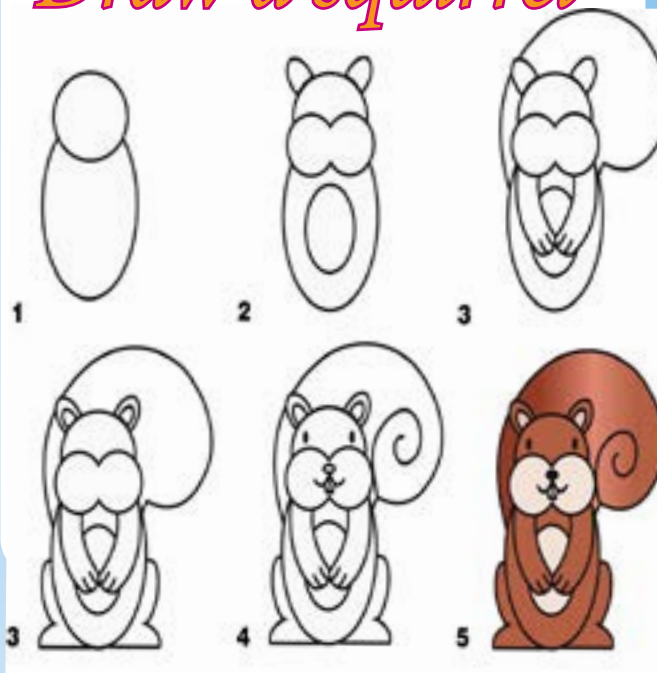
The gate was opened .the handlers withdrew and we all waited for Motomo to go to Mai—and waited—and, ah, he has run through-no, he has run back into his enclosure-ah there he goes-no-ran out again. He did this several times, each time going further in and investigating the area carefully for danger. Finally, having decided it was safe, he ran towards Mai who had been released and the handlers quickly closed the gates. The two wolves were so busy sniffing the new enclosure and each other to see where they had been that they didn't even notice the gate was shut.

Their " holiday" had begun with little or no stress to Motomo and complete safety for the handlers.

Can you spot the five differences!

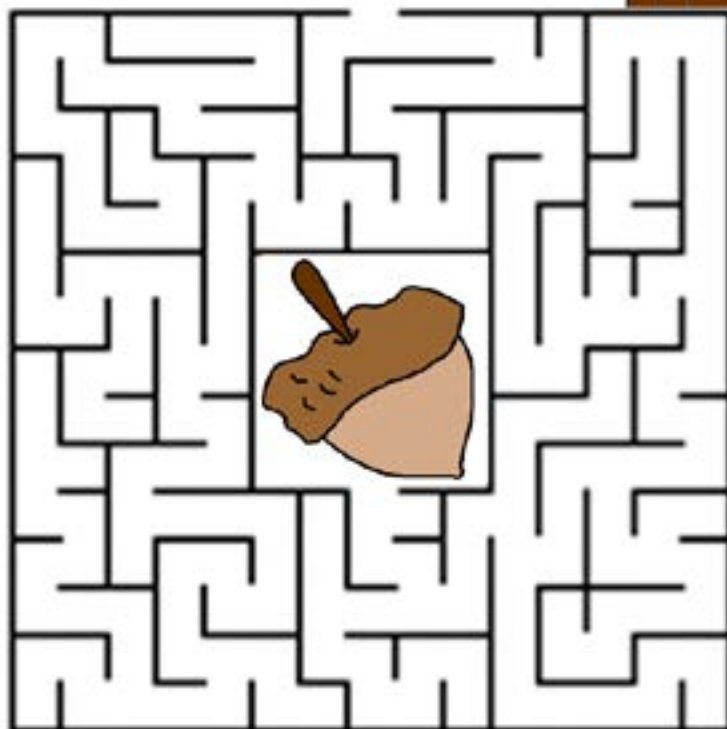


## Draw a squirrel



## Autumn Maze

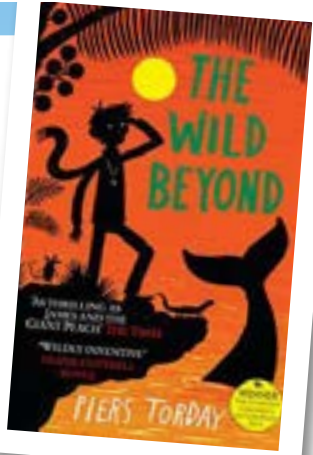
Help the squirrel find his acorn.







# Book Reviews



## The Wild Beyond by Piers Torday

This exciting instalment of the Dark Wild trilogy takes Kester and his loyal friends Polly and Aida on another heart stopping adventure to save the world. The book is thrilling from beginning to end and the characters have you thoroughly believing in them. In the previous books Kester has led the last wild animals to safety, and saved the city of Premium from total destruction. Then the last blue whale brings a terrible message about the future and Kester realises that time is running out. Kester and his friends make a brave decision to journey to a wild beyond their own to save the world. They must find the brave mouse that guards the secret to the future. Will they be too late to save the world from destruction? This is a truly memorable book with a strong message for us to protect our planet, its wild life and their habitats and not destroy them with greed and pollution. Price £9.99



## Mission Wolf Rescue-A childrens' National Geographic Publication.

by Kitson Jazyanka with National Geographic explorer Daniel Raven-Ellison.

This is one of the most exciting books I have read in a long time. The back cover of the book explains to children that their mission is to learn all about how wolves live, the challenges they face, and what they can do to help rescue them. Mission Rescue does precisely that using amazing adventure stories, breath-taking photography, superb graphics, and exiting hands on rescue activities all tied together with educational information and fun facts. The book lists additional resources in print and on line for children wanting to explore further. Famous Scientists and explorers are interviewed and myths and legends explored.

Price £7.99



## Fund Raising

Ella Wood (9) & Emilie raised £16 by setting up a stall at school for the school disco. Ella writes 'We sold sweets, toys and bracelets. In total 13 people came and bought items. The majority of pupils bought toys for their siblings. We hung posters of wolves with captions like: "help the wild" or "buy more help more" Soon after we started shouting to get people's attention. We sold all the toys but lots of sweets were left. We soon got rid of those (yummy!). We hope the money helped the wolves. We will try to visit the Trust over the summer holidays.

Kind regards,

ELLA.W & EMILIE.D

Lucy Thirkell visited the Trust on Wednesday 12th August & gave us a magazine she had produced & another model, she had made. We love to meet our members when they visit, so if you produce any artwork please bring it along to show us.



# Quirk's Animal Roadshows

Luke Quirk graduated with a degree in Animal management and in 2011 he had a dream to set up an organisation and use the many animals he already had to go round to schools, clubs and events to encourage a passion for animals through education. He wanted to share his love and knowledge of these unusual and possibly less lovable animals with others and create an interest in conservation and the urgency to protect endangered animals and their habitats before they are lost forever. Luke already had a specially heated room in his house set aside for the many vivariums for the snakes, lizards, scorpions, spiders, giant snails, stick insects, frogs, tortoises etc. Most tanks have Ultra Violet lamps and heated mats, so his electricity bill is enormous (About £1,000 a year!!). He forages for food for those that are vegetarians and breeds food for the chameleons and other insect eaters. It is a full time job looking after all these exotic animals. Thus Quirk's Animal Roadshows was born. Quirk's provides educational talks and fun handling sessions for all ages and abilities. Children and adults alike nervously hold the large, very mobile, tarantula, or the creepy African millipede .

The various patterned lizards, gecko and skinks are cute, as is the monster giant rabbit straight out of Alice in Wonderland. (Your Editor loves to handle the snakes and frogs). It is great to be able to get up close to and handle so many strange creatures. Do come along when Quirk's Animal Roadshow is with us on an open day and have fun with the animals whilst learning all about them. N.B. Nuka, Tala and Tundra were very intrigued by the giant rabbit in the tent next to their enclosure!! Wishful thinking Beenhams !



Emperor scorpion





# Events

## Visit Wednesday

Every Wednesday 11am - 4pm

Adults £8, children 3-12 £5, under 3's free. Additional children's activities will be held including pumpkin activities on 28th October & turkey toss on 30th December

## Creative Writing Workshop & wolf walk with Michelle Paver

 Tuesday 27th October 11am - 3pm

Michelle Paver will talk about writing & ideas to get the children inspired to write a short story. There will then be a walk for you to join the wolves around the fields at the Trust. The children will then write a short story which Michelle will look at & give feedback followed by a tour of the Trust to look at all the wolves. Packed lunches required. Maximum of 1 adult per child. £23 Adult, Junior Member £18.40



## Creative Writing Workshop with Piers Torday

 Friday 30th October 11am - 2pm

An opportunity to get tips on writing articles/stories with Piers Torday (Author of The Last Wild, The Dark Wild & latest book 'The Wild Beyond') tour of the Trust & then the children will then write a short piece for Piers to look through. Parents can either take part at £10, wait in shop area or children can be dropped off & collected later Junior Member £8.



## Christmas Cracker

 Tuesday 22nd December 10.30am - noon

Come and help us get the wolves Christmas presents ready and join us in celebrating a very wolfy Christmas. We'll give them their delicious surprises early and you'll be able to watch them all enjoy the treats that you have prepared. You will also get to see them being fed. £10 per person.

**Please note:** Any dates here on after will no longer have wolf contact, i.e. no "meet and greets". This is due to the Ambassador wolves having matured now that they are 4years old. Walking with the wolves will still take place and there will be plenty of photographic opportunities and chances to observe them up close enjoying their walk.

COLOUR ME IN

