











# WOLF CHRONICLE

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### Editor's Letter

#### Dear members,

Thank you so much for supporting UKWCT which enables us to help projects abroad working to keep wolves in the wild.

As the new editor I am really looking forward to seeing you at this year's events and I hope that you will write to us to tell us about your visits, what made it exciting and who your favourite wolf is. It is always lovely to get your letters and we can put some in the magazine.

The last few months have been full of fun for the wolves and their visitors. The smaller open days every Wednesday are a huge success and the shyest of wolves is happy to come near the fence to see visitors. In the summer holidays Quirks Animal Roadshow will be in the bottom field – spiders and snakes included! There will be nature quizzes and other activities for all ages so do come and have fun AND, most importantly, see your favourite wolf. (Mine is Mosi).



Bring a picnic and stay to see the wolves have their food at 2pm.

The Beenham pack was very naughty recently and whilst trying to eat the frog spawn in the pond they noticed some pond liner and had fun tearing it up. Pond liner everywhere!!!

Mosi, Mai and Torak all had birthdays and were given fresh rabbits to eat from the local game shop as presents. They were very pleased. Easter egg hunts for both children and wolves were very popular and the wolves loved the ostrich and goose eggs bought for them.

Over the last few sunny days the wolves have been happily basking in the sun and enjoying meaty ice lollies made for them by visitors on wolf keeper days.

We hope that you enjoy this edition of **Wolf Chronicle** and don't forget to send the letters.

**Wendy Brooker**  
Editor





# News

After a very wet winter – complete with a Howling Christmas afternoon involving lots of food (for the wolves) and the annual Christmas Cracker event (more food) – the wolves have been enjoying the sunny Easter holidays. Read on to find out more...



## Cast and crew of Wolfblood visit



WOLFBLOOD is a children's fantasy/supernatural BBC TV series for teens. It was created after series creator Debbie Moon saw the words 'wolf' and 'blood' in a book shop, and blended the two words together in her head. The series focuses on teenage wolfbloods Maddy Smith and Rhydian Morris as they struggle to live their double lives as wolfbloods and keeping their secret concealed from the outside world.

The BBC have visited the Trust several times to film our wolves and cast members have walked with our animals to get a real idea of how wolves move and behave. As the cast of Wolfblood come and go, new cast members visit us.

This is Tala meeting Aimee Kelly, who plays Maddy Smith in the current series.



## TV presenter visits the Trust

Wildlife presenter Steve Backshall visited the Trust in November with a small BBC film crew. They had been filming wolves in Yellowstone earlier in the year and needed close-up shots of Steve with a wolf, so he could talk about wolf characteristics.

Usually when a new person goes in with the Beenhams they are either very cautious or try and jump all over them – but Steve is a natural with animals and when he walked into their enclosure not paying Nuka, Tala or Tundra any attention, but just walking quietly over to the nearest platform the wolves were immediately accepting and went up to him of their own accord.

Steve said that wolves are his favourite animal in the world, due to their intelligence, the co-operation they have with each other and their general social behaviour.

Nuka eyes up the visitors



## Visit Wednesdays

The UK Wolf Conservation Trust's new Visit Wednesdays (11am to 4pm) are a great success, with amazing photo opportunities – especially at the 2pm feeding time – and plenty of staff and volunteers around to answer visitors' questions about wolves.

Nuka and visitors, by Mike Collins

In May 2012 Steve wrote the first novel in a series entitled "The Falcon Chronicles". The first novel is called "Tiger Wars" and is about the adventures of a young boy and a girl on the run, against the background of the war on tiger poaching. The second in the series is called "Ghosts of the Forest" and the third is called "The Wilds of the Wolf" and will be released this summer. We hope that Steve will come to the Trust to launch this book with the wolves – watch out for news on our website!

Nuka and Steve Backshall by Tara Armstrong





# A howling Christmas

Mosi, by Tara Armstrong



Mosi gets cracking

Unfortunately, the Christmas Cracker afternoon took place on a torrentially wet and windy day. The Beenham

pack were too nervous of the high gusts of wind in the tree tops in front of their enclosure to investigate, or take their presents and crackers off the tree provided for them. The ever-hungry Arctics and the inquisitive Mosi and Torak provided the spectators with ample photo opportunities as they snatched their presents, unwrapping paper which was sealed with peanut butter to find their goodies: hard boiled eggs, pigs' ears, hot dogs, raw chicken wings, pâté and cheese were but a few of the treats that they were given.

Event picture by Tsa Palmer



Visit Wednesday

What's this? See page 10



## Fund raising is easy!



Our names are Imogen Quadling and Rosie Potter and we raised thirty pounds for the 'Red Wolf Coalition'! And made a lot of mess at the same time! School is boring. We had had enough of being bored and there being nothing for us to do at break and lunch and so fund raising is a chance to bake loads of cakes and make a mess... For a good cause! Seeing as I love the trust and had adopted a wolf in past years, Torak, It made perfect sense to raise it for them!

At Newlands Girls School, in Maidenhead, early this year, Rosie decided that fund raising would be fun; I of course, though, suggested the wolf trusts donation system. It was funny for I had in fact recently watched a documentary on wolves and had found that there were very few pure bred red wolves in the wild; this got us thinking. We wrote a few

letters to our head mistress and did a bit of browsing on the computer and arranged a few days in order to meet up. It was officially decided that we would do the

fundraiser and it would be in support of the red wolf!

It wasn't long till all was set up and it was the day. In the main hall we set up a table and lay out thirty-five freshly baked cakes, homemade! The games went out and the bell rang; business was storming, it was hard to keep up! All went quiet; the table lay empty the games played and the cakes sold... We packed up slowly! The fundraiser lasted one day but one day was exhausting enough! Thirty pounds was raised for Red Wolves everywhere that really needed our help! We loved the experience and hope to do more in the future!





# News

## Torak and the ostrich egg



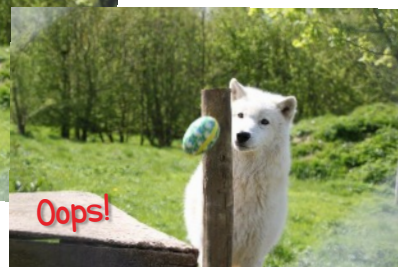
## Good Friday Easter Egg Hunt

Good Friday was a beautiful day and 17 children came for a wolf walk and afterwards with great excitement hunted for chocolate Easter hidden eggs hidden in the grass.

As the wolves cannot have chocolate, big goose eggs were hard boiled for the children to colour and give to the curious wolves. The wolves used their tiny front teeth to delicately peel off the shell or just hurriedly crunched them up. Cardboard Easter eggs and little Easter boxes were filled with hot dogs and cheese which all the wolves loved.

Two HUGE 2kg ostrich eggs, each the equivalent of 24 chicken eggs, were hard boiled for 2 hours for four boys and girls to paint with cake icing and give to Mosi and Torak. Impatient Mosi soon got bored trying to get into her egg and wanted Torak's open egg, but Torak growled at her and quietly continued to eat his egg. He then flopped on the ground with a very full stomach and slept.

It was a fun day for both children and wolves!







Massak, Pukak and Sikko

**The Arctic Pack** (above) are now three years old and have reached full maturity. They thrive in the cold and even wet weather with their wonderful thick coats. Even on the wettest days the rain cannot penetrate the outer guard hairs of their coats.

**Massak** remains in his dominant role and rules over his brother Pukak with an iron fist. He won't tolerate any unwelcome behaviour from his brother. Even though Massak and Pukak have been neutered, hormones in the brain still cause the wolves to change behaviour during breeding season. With his winter coat in full bloom, Massak is a very grand figure and uses his overall body size to show who's boss. He has always been very easy-going around people he knows and trusts and likes nothing better than to try and engage his handlers in a game of chase. The handlers of course know better than to do so and Massak will quickly turn his attention to his siblings to get what he wants, which results in lots of fun and some hilarious moments.

**Pukak** continually 'chances his arm' with Massak in the full knowledge that he won't win but like any brother thinks it's fun to try! He is the most loveable wolf with people he likes but will let others know in no uncertain terms that he doesn't accept them.

This is natural wolf behaviour; as the less dominant wolf, Pukak is always looking for a weakness he can exploit. He LOVES his food and continues to be the wolf that "eats all the pies"! He will challenge both of his siblings for food and sometimes even wins. He's the joker of the pack and keeps visitors and handlers highly amused with his antics. Many have compared him to a cuddly teddy bear but, like any wolf, Pukak is intelligent, formidable and very much aware of what he is doing!

**Sikko**, being the only female in the pack and much smaller than both her brothers, behaves like a "diva" with them. If this doesn't work, she is the wolf most likely to be pushed away by her bigger brothers. Sikko has very fine and delicate features and is an extremely pretty wolf. If a wolf could bat its eyelashes to get attention then Sikko would! When left to her own devices, Sikko is incredibly loving towards her human friends but can get carried away when she realises she has a handler's attention with no interference from her brothers. All the sloppy licks become little nibbles around your face as her excitement grows! Although Sikko is the smallest of the pack she can really hold her own in play and thinks it's great fun to team up with Massak to dominate Pukak. After all, with a brother of Massak's size she only has to hide behind him if things start to get too rough.





# News

The **Beenham Pack** have been enjoying their time in the top enclosure, which unlike the other enclosures has remained relatively dry throughout the rainy winter months.

**Nuka** continues to enjoy going out on walks with his sisters and interacting with visitors – he is particularly adept at sniffing out those visitors who are wearing rubber boots or who have pets at home and will often rub himself enthusiastically against their legs. He also enjoys sniffing round molehills in the hope of finding one which has a mole in residence – at which point he can easily dig down six inches in a matter of seconds, though he never seems to catch the mole! In the enclosure he sometimes takes on a rather more mischievous and bouncy nature: when it's dusk the handlers can easily find Nuka running at full speed towards them across the enclosure with his two sisters following behind – an awesome if somewhat unnerving experience!

Though she is the “alpha” female, **Tundra** still generally remains aloof and lags behind the visitors when on walks, preferring to watch events from what she considers a safe distance in the quiet company of a couple of her favourite handlers, who give her plenty of ear-tickles and belly-rubs. In the enclosure she is an entirely different wolf – confident, bossy and entirely able to keep her brother and sister under control, especially when food is involved. Though the smallest



Nuka and Tundra

and most lightly-built of the three Beenham wolves her lack of size is compensated for by her speed, agility, strength of character and persistence.

**Tala** (below) is enthusiastic about meeting new people on walks sniffing and rubbing in the same fashion as her brother – though her lifelong love of vigorous rolling in unpleasant stinky things like badger or fox dung means that both visitors and handlers are not always too happy to tickle or rub her back! She will occasionally initiate a howling-session with the other wolves when out on walks, but has to be careful not to overdo it or she risks being disciplined by Tundra. She particularly enjoys climbing up on the big log in the field where we walk, then spending five minutes posing for the photographers. In the enclosure she is playful and affectionate but given her rank in the pack she always needs to take care not to direct too much attention towards Nuka because that can easily trigger Tundra's jealousy.

Tala





## Mosi and Torak

**Mosi** and **Torak** are now eight years old and continue to live happily together as a bonded pair.



**Mosi** continues to be her usual boisterous self and is a great favourite with public and volunteers alike. She has such character and is very vocal. She is unusual in that she will bark continuously if something annoys or upsets her, which is uncommon in wolves, although Sikko has been heard to do it too on occasion. Perhaps she's taken her cue from Mosi! The feud with the next door pack, particularly with Mai, keeps Mosi busy – she can often be seen fence-running and taunting her sister, particularly after coming back from a walk. Although the intent is deadly serious, both wolves seem to get a sense of enjoyment and entitlement from the dispute, which is good enrichment for them. Motomo and Torak sometimes join in, but don't appear to have quite the same level of hostility as the girls. Mosi is curious and will always come down to the front of the enclosure to see what is going on. She particularly enjoys enrichment, such as the cracker-laden Christmas trees the wolves are given in December, and will take apart anything she is offered with great gusto to get at the treats inside.

**Torak** is a stately, aloof wolf and extremely handsome, particularly at this time of year when he sports his winter coat. He has enormous patience which he needs living with the volatile Mosi! Now that he is retired from public walks, he has become more confident and will often come down to see the public when they pass the enclosure and, more often than not, will happily feed in full sight of them. He is picky about which handlers he will tolerate but with those he is relaxed with, he is a wonderful animal to watch as he goes about his enrichment walks. He thoroughly investigates new scents and likes nothing more than a good roll in something pungent. If Mosi gets too annoying, he tells her off in a firm but dignified manner. They are a well-matched pair and continue to delight visitors with their contrasting behaviour.



## Mai

**Motomo** has grown a really impressive winter coat and looks most handsome!

As our only non-socialised wolf, he continues to gain confidence around people, and will now come right up to the enclosure fence to carry out rush-and-pounce threats against any of the handlers' dogs that are around, and to take food from those handlers he likes. He is still adept at catching items of food thrown over the fence and swallowing them without chewing. He remains very attentive towards his mate Mai and they both often indulge in extended howl duets.



## Motomo

**Mai** (who is also now eight years old) remains very friendly with the small group of long-term handlers she grew up with, and loves to come out on enrichment walks when she gets the chance. On her walks she will vigorously scent-mark over any places where the other wolves have marked as a way of advertising her status, but she will make it clear when she's had enough and wants to return to the enclosure with Motomo. She still spends a lot of time running the fence against her sister Mosi who lives in the adjoining enclosure: the two wolves growling and snarling "wolf obscenities" through the mesh. Running at full speed with her tail held high and her hackles raised, Mai presents a most impressive spectacle!



# Feature



Fieldfare

## Birds at the Trust

This year we will also be encouraging native wildlife. We have Mike Collins, who has a degree in Animal Behaviour from the University of Aberystwyth, as our newly appointed site manager and Pat Melton, a bird expert. The Trust is already home to many different species of birds and bat. In January, we undertook the RSPB Big Birdwatch Weekend and recorded 14 different species during an hour. The following birds have been seen at the Trust in the last year:

- Barn Owl
- Blackbird
- Black Cap
- Black Headed Gull
- Blue Tit
- Bullfinch
- Buzzard
- Carrion Crow
- Chaffinch
- Coal Tit
- Collared Dove
- Crow
- Cuckoo
- Dove
- Dunlin
- Dunnock
- Fieldfare (top right)
- Goldfinch (far right)
- Greater Spotted Woodpecker
- Great Tit
- Greenfinch
- Green Woodpecker
- Grey Heron
- Grey Wagtail
- Herring Gull
- House Martin
- House Sparrow
- Jackdaw

- Jay
- Kestrel
- Lapwing
- Linnet



Merlin

- Little Owl
- Long Tailed Tit
- Magpie
- Mallard
- Marsh Tit
- Merlin (left)
- Mistle Thrush
- Moorhen
- Nuthatch
- Partridge
- Pheasant
- Raven
- Red Kite

- Redwing
- Reed Bunting
- Robin
- Siskin
- Skylark
- Snipe
- Song Thrush
- Starling
- Stonechat
- Swallow
- Tawny Owl

- Tree Creeper
- Tree Sparrow
- Turtle Dove
- Willow Warbler
- Wood Pigeon
- Wood Warbler
- Wren
- Yellowhammer



Goldfinch

We have a book in the Observation Room to record any new sightings. Please let us know if we have missed any!







# Interview

Artist and designer Lisa Parker visited the Trust with her husband Andrew recently when they adopted Tundra and Nuka. We took the opportunity to interview Lisa about her work.

## Artist and designer Lisa Parker

*You work in a variety of ways. What do you find the most challenging and which do you enjoy the most?*

“Everything has its own challenges but the initial idea and composition is definitely the hardest part, however, being the most difficult makes it also the most rewarding. My artwork is licensed to many companies, they add the artworks to their own products so the image has to appeal to a wide market and be able to fit a variety of sizes. Just recently my artwork has been added to super king size duvets and room dividers so I’ve had to work to a much larger size. Although I’m traditionally an oil and watercolourist, to get the artwork to the size required, and to be able to get it to all the various companies I need to work digitally. I use the same technique digitally as I do with watercolour. It’s all hand drawn, layer upon layer.”

*How did you hear about the Trust?*

“I first heard of the UKWCT on Facebook. I was friends with and supported Wolf Angels, a



Lisa with Nuka and Tundra

group dedicated to stopping wolf culls in America.”

*What particular challenges does the wolf present?*

“Every subject has its own challenges, I’ve been drawing wolves for a very long time now. It’s not specifically the wolf itself that provides the most challenge but in fact the composition. There are so many wolf images on the market so trying to come up with a totally unique picture is the hard part.”

*Where do you hope to go with your designs and do you have pieces that you are most proud of?*

“I feel very fortunate to be able to earn a living doing what I love, I get to draw exactly what I want to draw and spend time with animals that I love! I’ve recently started working with The Mountain t-shirts which is very exciting!”

*Lisa Parker studied Natural History Illustration at Bournemouth and Poole Institute of Art and Design. She then worked successfully for many years as a freelance artist and has staged many one-man and two-man shows, as well as exhibiting work in prestigious locations such as The Mall galleries in London and Madison Avenue, New York..*







# Feature

## Wildlife Factfile: Frogs

Visitors are walking with the wolves near the bottom pond of the Trust Suddenly the grass stirs and a frog hops by. It has woken from its winter hibernation and is heading for the pond to find a mate. Like all amphibians, frogs are cold-blooded, meaning their temperatures change to suit their environment. They have been around for 190 million years thanks to their amazing ability to adapt. In the winter they hibernate in burrows, under rotting leaves, in wood piles or in the mud at the bottom of a pond scarcely breathing until February or March depending on the weather. The Trust has several ponds and shallow, watery areas and they are all used by frogs for breeding in the spring. Even the ponds in the wolves' enclosures have frogs and toads in at times!! (Frogs secrete a nasty tasting fluid onto their skins when frightened so that the wolves don't like eating them).

The very brave frogs and toads in the Beenham pack's pond had a bit of excitement earlier in the year! The heaps of frog and toad spawn in their pond caught Nuka, Tala and Tundra's eyes and they waded in to investigate. Then they noticed the pond liner under the mud and spent a happy time ripping some of it to pieces. The water in the pond sunk rapidly and the handlers had to go in and move the mischievous wolves to the side enclosure. The pack was moved to the bottom enclosure and the calmer more well behaved Arctic wolves were put in the top enclosure. The spawn was rescued and put into tanks. Some was relocated to a safer environment and some was left in the big tanks so that visiting children could study it and watch the tadpoles develop into frogs. No doubt the frogs will still return to the wolves' pond next year to lay their eggs! They are very territorial animals.

Contrary to popular myth, frogs are mainly land animals and usually only go into water for long periods at breeding times. They meet up in shallow



water and ponds around February to March when the males compete for the females. The familiar croaking goes on all day and little heads pop out of the water to look around. Spawning usually takes place after dark and 1,000s of jelly coated eggs are laid which float to the surface of the water and cling to a weed or the bank. After about four weeks the wriggly black tadpoles emerge. They are at the mercy of predators such as fish, water fowl, dragonfly larvae etc. The tadpoles are vegetarians at birth and breathe through gills which are absorbed after four weeks. They soon become carnivores as they grow older. (Try floating a piece of beef amongst them – it is scary.) At 12 weeks old they are miniature versions of their parents, all too often victims of lawnmowers or the wolves on walks! It is amazing to watch the tiny froglets hopping amongst the long grass around all the ponds and streams.

Frogs are at the mercy of a variety of predators such as crows, ducks, cars and even our wolves!! Frogs eat insects, slugs, snails and worms so are great to have in a garden. They have transparent inner eyelids to protect their eyes under water and a webbed foot in each of two worlds. Hungry predators on land? Dive into the water. Not enough to eat in the pond? Hop out and forage on shore.

They can leap 20 times their body length – that would be about 100 feet for us!!! Their long back legs have tremendous strength. Their smooth skin has a moist feel and can be anything from greeny





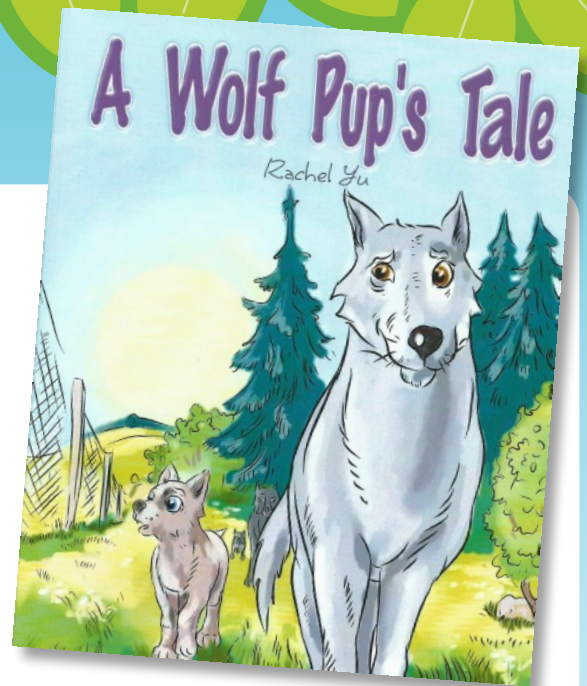
# Review

**A WOLF PUP'S TALE** by Rachel Yu (£4.96, paperback, 28 pages, 25.4cm x 20.3cm )

Rachel Yu was 14 years when she transformed a school writing assignment into this delightful, beautifully illustrated children's book for young readers and it is also short enough to be used as a bedtime story for under-five-year-olds. The book has enchanting colourful three-quarter-page illustrations and is about a young wolf cub whose curiosity leads him into discovery, danger and a strange friendship with a bird. I fell in love with this little grey wide-eyed cub and I am sure that any child would too.

The last two pages are "spot the difference" relating to various sections of the story. Great for older children.

This talented teenager has also written two other books: "A Dragon named Dragon" and "Fly high Hammie hawk".



brown to dark brown covered with dark blotches. The underbelly is white or yellowish. Their beautiful prominent eyes are brown with horizontal pupils.

Sadly, because of changes to our environment, the use of insecticides which depletes their food and loss of habitat, the common frog is becoming rarer. Frogs play an important part in the eco-system and act as little bio-indicators. This is where we at the Trust do our best to help by creating amphibian-friendly habitats and providing places for the frogs to hibernate.

Information sheets for school visits are proposed for this year.

The Trust's work experience students have made frog 'houses' by sinking two bricks into earth and putting a slate or slab on top. An upturned large clay flower pot makes a safe environment for hibernation and there are plenty of wood piles nearby. All our ponds have shelved edges and plant-covered banks so that the frogs can climb out easily. Most of the ponds have water plants in and the wolves "help" to keep them under control when they go in the ponds on their walks!!

Conservation and education are at the top of the Trust's list of priorities, whether it is wolves in the wild or our own humble frogs on site. Every animal has an important role to play in maintaining a healthy ecosystem.

## Wolf Walks

- Thursday, 10th July
- Thursday, 17th July
- Thursday 24th July
- Thursday 31st July
- Thursday 7th August
- Thursday 14th August
- Thursday 21st August
- Thursday 28th August

11am to 2pm



Join us on a walk with a wolf/wolves followed by a tour of the Trust and lots of photo opportunities

Bring a picnic to enjoy at one of our picnic tables outside the wolf enclosure

\*Junior members accompanied by one adult one walk free per year as part of membership. Additional children age 6-12 £13 each. Sorry: only one adult per booking.

To book call the office  
on 0118 971 3330







# Quiz

## Word Find

Can you find these words hidden in the wolf's head?

- |             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| ALPHA       | MOLLY    |
| BETA        | OMEGA    |
| COMMUNICATE | PACK     |
| DEN         | PREDATOR |
| GREY        | PREY     |
| HOWL        | SCENT    |
| MAPLE       | TAIL     |
| MAYA        | WOLF     |



## How big is your 'paw'?

Place your hand over this wolf paw print and trace around it. Is the wolf's paw larger or smaller than your hand?

Their large, snowshoe-like paws help them move through the thickest forests and the deepest snow most efficiently.



## VISIT WEDNESDAY

### FREE ENTRY FOR A JUNIOR MEMBER

Please bring this ticket with you to the Visit Wednesday

