

Wolf Print

The UK Wolf Conservation Trust

Issue 54 Spring 2015

Walking with Wolves

*Exploring
bones and
beauty in
Bulgaria's
Pirin
Mountains*

Never to be silenced:

Celebrating the resilience of *Canis Rufus*, the Little Red Hiding Wolf

Lairds and Liars

Seeking the truth behind The Last Wolf of Scotland

■ NEWS ■ EVENTS ■ RESEARCH ■ MEDIA AND ARTS



Editor's Letter

Tala and Julia by Veda Kavanagh

Walking with wolves in woods around Beenham was my inspiring introduction to a life connected to lupines and as such, the Trust will always have a powerful place in my heart and mind. I remember the feeling of wolf fur and hard flesh under my fingers, the predator muscle beneath the skin and steamy carnivore breath huff-heavy in chilled air. Astonishing to think that 2015 means two decades of the UKWCT and equally, two decades since the reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone. In that time, there has been huge progress in wolf conservation internationally with many powerful, educated voices using science and reason to cut through emotion and rhetoric.

To the readers of Wolf Print and supporters of the Trust, the wolf is a symbol of wildness, of wilderness. To others it is a nuisance, a danger, an expense or a political pawn. The haters and the sceptics, those who may have never heard or appreciated the term *trophic cascade*, are the reason why wolves like the red wolf are still fighting for their survival. The red wolf is lucky to have many dedicated advocates for their continued survival, but conservation can be a frustrating process. News that there

is a grey wolf cull planned in British Columbia, using some extraordinarily cruel methods, makes us realise that there is a long way to go before *canis lupus* is tolerated, safe or appreciated as a benefit to the natural order (see *Wolves of the World* on page 27). Yet when all seems lost, human kindness, compassion and sheer grit wins through. Wolf Patrol documenting hunting behaviour on the outskirts of Yellowstone and the EnviroCare project in India demonstrate that with determination and a lot of ingenuity, great strides can be made with relatively simple but intelligent solutions.

We reported in our last issue that wolves have also been making great strides into Europe. Most recently, DNA results have now confirmed a wolf walking through North Rhine-Westphalia, east of Cologne. The last wolf inhabitant of the area was killed there in 1835, so will be interesting to see how that story develops and if the animal was passing through, or has intention to scout and settle.

In this issue, in our anniversary year, we have included a Bulgarian journey, a Scottish trek, impressions of walking with our wolves now and life as a Trust volunteer. We are being approached with so many good strong articles from

contributors and also from the wolf charities we are helping across the world, production of *Wolf Print* now often feels like over-stuffing a very beautiful teddy bear, which is wonderful.

I have been involved with the Trust for more than three quarters of its history and have seen it grow like the stretch of a yawning wolf – only with a lot more industry and purpose! It's exciting news that two of Tsa Palmer's children, Lara and Johnny, have been appointed as associate directors. In our next issue, we will celebrate the past, present and future of the Trust in a very special commemorative issue. In other developments: we will be at the Wolf Awareness Weekend in Edinburgh in September, when we will be alongside experts including Dave Mech, Bob Landis and Carter Niemeyer, with Kirsty Peake as our speaker. We will be proudly representing the Trust and by proxy, all the wolves of the world.

Julia Bohanna

Julia Bohanna
Editor

Cover picture: *Mosi*, by Mike Collins

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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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For the love of wolves: what a volunteer at the Trust actually does

By volunteer Paul Howell – Photograph by volunteer Neil Connolly

As a teenager, I was fascinated by wolves. When time from my hectic work-life permitted, I attended the open days. Eventually, I applied to be a volunteer.

The Trust has three paid members of staff who primarily work during the week. Most events are run by volunteers with busy lives and we can often be quite short on key grades of staff for an event. Volunteers assist with basic work around the grounds: picking up rubbish, weeding and general repairs.

Most weekends there is a scheduled walk or event. We aim to be on site from 08:30 to 10:30. Tasks include:

Cleaning hard standing and kennel areas

We check the wolves' sleeping areas to ensure enough bedding and water, but also to dispose of (or send for testing, if needed) any wolf scat found, then disinfect. This isn't any volunteer's favourite job but it's important it's done correctly.

Briefing

Volunteers are given instructions about what needs to be done for the day. No two days are ever alike!

Feeding

Food is prepared/weighed: raw meat including, beef, turkey, deer, rabbit... even fish!

Visitor preparation

The Observation Room is prepped to welcome visitors arriving for a walk with our ambassador wolves. Tea, coffee and washing up needed.

Every job is an important one for wolf welfare but also for the public who support us by coming to see our beautiful animals.

Walking

Volunteers escort the walks, answering questions about what the Trust does and herding people, ensuring that they don't spread out too far on a walk and that they stay safe.

From a wolf's viewpoint

Walking gives the wolves the opportunity to enjoy a change in sensory stimulation. They walk over new smells (wolves' olfactory senses are strong): other wolves, dogs and local wildlife. Human walkers can photograph wolves in as natural surroundings possible.

Ongoing hospitality

Afterwards, more tea and coffee. We man the shop and talk about the history, ambitions and aims of the Trust. Guests are invited to watch the wolves being fed whilst individual volunteers talk about various wolf groupings at the enclosures.

Training

Volunteers go on training walks before/after the day's main event, coached by the senior handlers. Volunteers are allowed to take the front position in a wolf walk but not (I hasten to add) when in close proximity to the public.

Training is ongoing, integral to the structured training programme (where specific training days are held) and the general daily informal transfer of information from more experienced volunteers to those less experienced. You never stop learning. Volunteers are encouraged to learn and understand wolf behaviour and reaction. If they can recognise this, wolf behaviour can be managed safely and effectively.

Senior Handlers monitor and observe all volunteers interacting with the wolves. They discuss and agree which volunteers should train under supervision to handle the wolves. There is no automatic right to handle a wolf but some new volunteers expect to be walking wolves within a very short space of time. It will be many months of work before a volunteer is allowed to walk with a wolf on a lead.

When the last visitors are checked off site, we are given the privilege to debrief in a wolf enclosure.

The senior handlers give their observations. Trying to concentrate on a debrief when a wolf has rolled on to its back at your feet for a tummy rub is hard – usually the wolf will win in those circumstances!

Being a volunteer is hard work, especially if (like me) you are naturally shy. For the enjoyment and fulfilment of being with the wolves you do what it takes, whether you are cold, soaked to the skin, exhausted or (in the warmer months) sunburnt. Volunteers quickly come to love the wolves and believe in what the Trust is trying to do. It's a very satisfying and rewarding way of spending a weekend.



Not your usual countryside walk...

Trust supporter Jessica Jacobs describes her walk with the wolves

MANY ANIMAL 'experiences' are fleeting. Luckily, I chose a wolf walk at the UK Wolf Conservation Trust, which was both the best part of a day and gave me extensive bragging rights. After all, how many of your friends have walked side by side with wolves?

Amongst my hefty membership pack was a list of recommended clothing, and to prepare, my husband and I bought new wellingtons. This will be relevant later.

When we arrived, a silvery silhouette glided up out of the grass behind the fence. It was Mosi, the former alpha female, and thanks to the centre's picture window and free hot drinks, we could have spent hours watching her and her mate Torak trot among the bushes, their ears pricked like arrowheads. But we weren't just spectators today: the Beenham pack, Nuka, Tundra and Tala, were to be our canine walking companions. Eventually!

Unlike dogs, wolves – even socialised ones – are not at our beck and call, and need only one experience to adjust to a new situation. Add to that the intelligence of a five-year-old child, and you have a group of visitors shivering in a field for twenty minutes while the unruly scamps are rounded up on their



Nuka enjoys a roll

leads. Here's another surprising fact: they were the ones walking us.

Tala, a vision of frosty cinders with sunset eyes, was the most tolerant of her close-ups via heavy lenses or slender camera phones. Nuka, the big male, seemed oblivious to his audience, sticking his head into troughs and rolling rapturously in fox leavings, allowing a fourth, invisible animal to accompany us with its raw gamey smell.

Tundra, the alpha female, hung back out of shyness or for an aura of regal mystery, at least until her younger sister needed scolding. Why? She did what we secretly hoped she would: howl.

Although it was Tundra who first hurled her voice into the air, Nuka and Tala joined in a haunting harmony. The boss lady checked Tala with a reproachful muzzle, but ever the cheeky sibling, she flung the air out of her lungs

again later. For his part, Nuka discovered another luxurious smell: brand new wellingtons.

This hulk of North American heritage lolled against my husband's legs for a full minute,

making him lurch backwards. Despite Nuka's strength, and being told that wolves have almost twice the bite pressure of a pit bull, we didn't feel afraid. The wolves were aloof or fleetingly interested, inspiring respect but none of the boot-shaking fear expected. And, with that understanding, came the request not to touch them – they were still wild animals, and didn't need humans clamping up their fur as well as getting under their webbed feet.

If their webbed feet weren't surprising enough, how about this – wolves can squeak. Later we passed the enclosure of Mai, the Beenham mother, who apart from a charcoal nose stripe was glittering blue snow to Tala's sparkling cinders. She rippled back and forth among the trees, creaking like a gate, aching to join us.

Back at the centre the wolves received their reward – feeding time! – and crunched up meat and bones like biscuits. Kicking off our heavy boots, we felt a weight of sadness: it was time to leave.

Before a pink champagne sunset we headed back to civilisation, where wolves are seen as vicious villains, not animals with quirks and emotions. After an afternoon by their side, I learned that they deserve respect, not fear, and are focused on each other, not human prey.

Just don't take them perfume-shopping.

Photos by Sandeep Murthy



Tala

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

from Tsa Palmer



This coming May marks the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the

UKWCT. In our next issue, due out in July, we will be printing a special supplement with photos of all the 24 wolves that the Trust has been lucky enough to look after during this time. There will also be a short history of the 20 years, focusing on the highlights and milestones the Trust has achieved during this time.

Despite the untimely death of Roger in 2004, the Trust has gone from strength to strength. Starting with two small enclosures at the end of the garden, we have made much progress. The wolves now live on their own separate site in four large enclosures. There have also been significant improvements in the facilities used by the public, including an observation room, observation platform, shop, education barn and more. In fact the popularity of the Trust has grown exponentially and we now receive up to 10,000 visitors a year.

However, before 1995 and the founding of the UKWCT, keeping the wolves in the smaller enclosures at Butlers Farm had been very much a family affair. Roger and our three children Zannah, Lara and Johnny (now 30, 28 and 25, respectively) thought it was completely normal to have wolves in the house and frequently took them for walks at the weekend around the village and down the local footpaths. A common sight was for Roger, Zannah

and Lara each to have a wolf while I would usually be either carrying Johnny or pushing him in a buggy!

As children, Zannah and Lara were particularly involved. Lara went with Roger to collect Kodiak and Kenai from Woburn Safari Park and then shared the responsibility of bottle-feeding and raising them; from this Lara fostered a particularly strong bond with Kodiak. Zannah however, being a little older, often accompanied Roger and a wolf to television studios. In one instance Zannah, about eight years old at the time, was tasked with dressing up in a red duffle coat to imitate Red Riding Hood with Kenai! But for Zannah and all the family, these were no big bad wolves, but central parts of family life.

With Roger frequently travelling abroad on business, we four cared for the wolves as well as a growing flock of



sheep. The young wolves played with the lambs, our Jack Russell terrier Digby or any beagle puppies that we looked after in the summer months. In the early days, all of the wolf cubs – Nokomis, Denali, Kodiak, Kenai, Dakota and Duma – came to us at six days old and were placed in a cardboard box in the airing cupboard with a hot water bottle. From here they progressed to a larger run in the basement before moving outside. Once out of the house the cubs first lived in the outdoor dog kennel, before moving into a nearby stable.

Family trips were often wolf-orientated too. In 1997 we all went to Europe for two nights in order to visit one wolf sanctuary and a couple of wolf parks to try and obtain some European wolves. A round trip of 1,200 miles

saw us in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Luxemburg. The trip's highlights were two meetings: one was with Werner Freud and his pure white Arctic wolves, the other with Erik Zimen – an encounter that eventually led to Erik supplying the Trust with Athena, Apollo and Luna in 1998. One summer holiday Nokomis, who must have been about three months old at the time, accompanied us to West Wittering. Travelling in a small trailer towed behind the car and living in the garage of the holiday house, she even spent time with us on the beach!

However, with changes to regulations, the wolves moving over to their larger present enclosures and finally with Roger's death in 2004, the children lost their day-to-day contact with the wolves in the same way. However, Lara made much effort to continue contact with the wolves, spending many a university break and summer holiday building and maintaining her relationship with them. She bottle-fed Torak, Mosi and Mai and helped wean Nuka, Tala and Tundra for the vital first three days. All the wolves, particularly Torak, have a strong bond with Lara and are always enthusiastic to see her. She has a very natural way with them, something instinctive from being around them all her life.

Johnny did not initially spend as much time with the wolves as a child compared to his two sisters. Roger died when Johnny was 13 years old and he was then away at boarding school. However, he always maintained an interest in animals and ecology and studied geography at university. In his final year of studies he originally wanted to write his dissertation on the reintroduction of wolves into Scotland.



◀ However, upon learning beavers had made a surprise return to the river Tay he went up to study them and wrote about their reintroduction instead. In the past two years he has become increasingly involved in the Trust and has written in and helped edit Wolf Print, helped build the Trust's social media and has been getting to know the wolves much better by spending time with them on walks and in their enclosures.

Appointment as associate directors

Lara and Johnny are both keen to have more involvement with the wolves and the Trust more generally. Accordingly, the directors voted at the 2014 AGM to

make both of them associate directors, enabling their roles to be more formal and commencing a new chapter of their involvement. It seems fitting that they join on the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Trust. I welcome both of them and all the new ideas and input they will have. It is lovely for me to have them interested. Roger would have been very proud that the next generation is taking up the family tradition, helping the Trust move forward and continuing his vision.

Tsa Palmer

Photos

Opposite top left: a typical family day out

Middle left: young playmates

Bottom left: Johnny recently with Nuka

Below: Lara with Kodiak in the 1990s



The wolves entered into the spirit of **Christmas and New Year** with plenty of fun, being spoilt with foodie treats. Junior members enjoyed wrapping parcels and making crackers for all 12 wolves at our traditional Christmas Cracker event. Each wolf pack had a Christmas tree put in their enclosure, which was not only surrounded with parcels but also decorated with cooked spaghetti and crackers. Unfortunately, the Beenhams were slightly nervous and half-hearted about approaching the gifts, but Torak and Mosi in particular had a great time reaching up for the crackers on the tree that contained hot dogs, black pudding, boiled eggs and ham. They also loved ripping off the wrapping paper and eagerly tearing open the cardboard boxes to devour the contents. The most odorous delicacies induced lots of rolling behaviour from the excited wolves.

New Year's Eve was a truly magical sparkling frosty day as large numbers of visitors arrived to see the wolves being thrown a small turkey at feeding time! This was our first "turkey toss" event

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and will definitely be a regular annual event. Lots of children bought cuddly wolves from the shop with their Christmas money as a memento of their day out.

Shrove Tuesday, which fell in the February half term, saw more food fun for the wolves. They gobbled down pancakes stuffed with their favourite treats, which really gave them something to howl about! As February is in the middle of the breeding season, visitors could see bonded pairs Mai and Motomo, as well as Torak and Mosi, being very attentive to one another and sharing nicely!

The **Valentine's Walk** on 14th February was a particularly special and romantic walk, where afterwards walkers could watch the Trust's two pairs of wolves being affectionate to one other.



Easter will be our next busy time, followed by the **May Bank Holiday**, when the wolves will celebrate their combined birthdays with a special cake. Torak, Mosi and Mai will be nine years

old this year, which is hard to believe. Motomo will be seven, and the Beenhams and Arctics will all be four.

Our new **Ultimate Wolf Days** not



only gave the participants a walk with the Beenhams and another with the Arctics, they were also involved in preparing food trails and stuffing hessian sacks with varying types of meat. The days were very popular and a resounding success. The Ultimate Wolf Day is a magical lupine experience and nowhere else in the UK can you walk with two different species of wolves in one day. See page 32 and on our website for more dates and information.

We are, of course, open every Wednesday from 11am to 5pm. See further details on page 31. We look forward to seeing you in 2015.

Photos from top:

Mosi and Torak, by Mike Collins
Motomo and Mai, by Pat Melton
Nuka and Tundra, by Mike Collins

Update on the Trust Wolves

THE ARCTICS: MASSAK, PUKAK and SIKKO

At this time of year, I always look forward to the accompanying photos of our wolves looking at their most majestic! Spring brings with it breeding season and all animals want to look their best to entice a mate. The Arctic wolves are no exception and Spring is when they show their fabulous coats off at their best. They seem to almost double in size right before our very eyes as their soft winter coat fully develops and thickens. Anyone who thinks wolves must be very cold in their natural wintry terrain has never had the opportunity to plough their fingers deep into a wolf's coat (understandably!) For the handlers at the UKWCT this is a normal occurrence throughout winter when we want to defrost our hands, which also gives the wolves the benefit of getting a really great scratch through those thick woolly coats! Winter in the UK isn't much of a challenge for these guys and their coats will never become as thick as their wild cousins as they adapt comfortably to the environment they live in.

Our Arctic wolves are all now fully mature animals and maturity defines the pack dynamics even further. Massak, our dominant male (top right) has truly established his place as pack leader and spends plenty of time ensuring Pukak, our lower ranking male (below), knows

his place in the pecking order and stays there. Even as a mature and dominant male, Massak is still incredibly loving towards his favourite handlers and enjoys nuzzling us and receiving cuddles and pets for his efforts, so comfortable in his role as leader that he has little reason to try and exert any authority over his human companions. Providing we all show each other respect Massak is quite happy to act the fool and let down his guard around us.

Pukak for his part accepts his brother's leadership but as all siblings do, he will still try to get away with some minor infractions if he can. Sometimes Massak will let him unless Pukak just goes one step too far – then boy, does he know it! As the lower ranking male Pukak will always be the one to try it on with not only his brother but also his human friends. As he cannot seriously take on Massak's strong personality and physical size, Pukak contents himself with trying to test his human pack. A strong glare from one of his handlers is usually enough to stop

him in his tracks and reduce the testing to fairly strenuous licking by way of an apology!

Sikko, our female (below centre), tends to side with Massak and can be incredibly naughty towards Pukak. She knows Massak has her back but is still clever enough to show deference to both Massak and Pukak at the right time in order to keep both her brothers' support rather than be told off by either, which given the huge



difference in size between them, could be extremely daunting. As the only female in the pack Sikko has always exploited this fact and she knows neither

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a winning photograph

Matthew Hill's lovely photograph of Pukak was Highly Commended in the ZSL [Zoological Society of London] Animal Photography Prize 2013, for which he used a Canon 650D camera. Matthew is still very keen on photography and this year takes his GCSE exam in photography. He is also raising money for a conservation World Challenge style trip to Uganda in July and has sold several calendars featuring his photographs with all proceeds going towards the trip.

For further information about the this year's ZSL photography competition visit www.zsl.org/about-us/zsl-animal-photography-prize. And why not visit the Trust on one of our photography days or Visit Wednesdays for your chance to catch one of those 'jaw-droppingly good' photographs?





of the boys will become too boisterous or aggressive with her regardless what she does and as long as she shows submission at just the right time, she can wrap both boys around her little finger!

Winter through spring is always the most wonderful time to observe wolf pack interaction, in the wild or in captivity. Wolves look truly regal but also the intricacies of the pack dynamics become much more transparent. All too soon, the hormones have reduced and the coats are shedding as the wolves will prepare to move into the long warm lazy days of summer.

Linda Malliff

Photos: Massak (top) and Sikko (middle) by Mike Collins Pukak (in Trust News below): by Matthew Hill



Nuka, Tala and Tundra – the Beenham Pack – are now in their full winter coats, so the recent frosty days and snowfall have not worried them at all – indeed, they are in their element! Tala loves to roll about in snow, and Nuka has a fascination for ice: he will chew vigorously on the inch-thick slabs of the stuff we fish out of the water buckets in the enclosures. Or when we are out on walks in the top field he loves to have a friendly handler scoop a sheet of ice out of the cattle troughs so he can snap at it, crunch it up, and then roll on it in a state of obvious bliss. Tala will sometimes do the “rolling on ice” thing too but nowhere near as much as Nuka. Tundra generally watches these antics from a distance, with an air of detached derision.

Like their parents Mai and Motomo, the Beenham pack received some tasty Christmas festive treats – prepared by some of our younger visitors and hung on a Christmas tree which was then set up inside the enclosure. The wolves were cautious and nervous at first but eventually discovered that they were good things to eat! Turkey carcasses were also included in the festive feeding and although nobody remembered to bring the sage and onion stuffing, this didn’t deter the wolves in the slightest.

Behaviour-wise, during the day the Beenhams tend to hang around the part of their enclosure that allows them to get a good view of what is happening elsewhere on the site. When they go out on walks both Nuka and Tala are still happy to get involved with visitors, but

Tundra remains generally aloof and observes goings on from a distance. They are adept at flushing wildlife from the hedges and have worked out the hiding place of a local cat that is sometimes to be seen in the top field – they head straight for this spot in the hope of finding the cat in residence. Nuka can’t seem to keep quiet when doing this so if he gets to see the cat it’s invariably just the sight of a tail disappearing into the bushes. The horses in the bottom field by the stream are always a source of intrigue for Nuka and Tala – though my suspicion is that the wolves’ interest is rather more gastronomic than anything else.

As the breeding season approaches, there is clearly an elevation of tension within the pack, and this can sometimes lead to vigorous and noisy squabbles – which add to the excitement for the handlers who have to carry out creative “wolf maypole-dancing” to prevent the leads getting entangled. Another side effect of the season is that the Beenhams are rather more affectionate towards handlers – both Nuka and Tala are currently very “rubby” and will solicit tickles/head scratches or extended bellyrub sessions from their favourite people. Tundra is somewhat more reserved, but a minute or so of deep-tissue massage around her neck and shoulders will see her relax and adopt a rather goofy *eyes-half-closed* expression of happiness.

*Pete Morgan-Lucas
Photo: Andy Jones*

DONATIONS FROM THE TRUST TO WORLDWIDE CONSERVATION PRODUCTS JANUARY 2015

£5,000 for Mexican wolves at the Endangered Wolf Center

£3,000 for Indian wolves at the EnviroCare, Mumbai, India

Read the latest report from this project on pages 20–21

MAI and MOTOMO



Mai has been digging again. As winter moves towards its end her instincts are to prepare for the possible arrival of spring cubs, and so she has begun to excavate two dens in the mound in her enclosure. On occasions when she's been digging, her entire muzzle and front paws are brown from the clay, which contrasts interestingly with her normal grey and black pelage.

She remains deeply attached to Motomo – they are often to be seen lying close to each other at the edge of the copse at the rear of their enclosure, or together on top of the mound, depending on the amount of other activity occurring on site.

Motomo still likes to harass Massak in the adjoining enclosure – their fence-running being a great way to appreciate just how fast a wolf can move when it is motivated. Motomo does look impressively intimidating when he's walking tall, fully hackled up and has his tail raised. Massak sometimes tries to 'hide' and ambush Motomo during these fence-run sessions, but Massak forgets that a large white wolf is still rather easy to spot even when crouched down. If Mai happens to get in the way of the fence-running, Motomo is adept at doing a flying leap clean over her without slowing down at



all. It's great entertainment for participants and onlookers alike.

Over the Christmas/New Year period, as part of our 'enrichment' program both Mai and Motomo received meaty Christmas gifts prepared by some of our younger visitors. In the wolves' enthusiasm to get to these the front corner of the enclosure was soon covered with bits of chewed and discarded red and purple wrapping paper; fortunately it was biodegradable and within a couple of weeks it had all disappeared.

On New Year's Eve, during the open day, we gave Mai and Motomo their delayed Christmas lunch, in the form of an oven-ready turkey each! Motomo

had his lobbed into the enclosure whole (we did unwrap it for him) while Mai's was cut up a bit and fed to her in stages – we were concerned that Motomo might have tried to take command of all the food if they'd both been given a whole turkey. It took Motomo rather longer to eat his, and at one time he seemed to lose interest in it – at which point Mai came in and tried to scent mark it, eliciting a curled lips snarl from Motomo in response – he doesn't let matters of love get in the way when someone's after his food!

*Pete Morgan-Lucas
Photos: Mai, by Mike Collins
Motomo, by Pat Melton*

MOSI and TORAK

Spring is really making itself felt at the Trust now, with daffodils and crocuses brightening up the grounds and birds attending to their nest boxes. The height of the breeding season has passed and the wolves' hormones will be settling down – so life will be calmer for them. This means enrichment walks can begin again, which the wolves and handlers really enjoy. Breeding season doesn't lend itself to walking, as the wolves are much more interested in their mates and their heightened state makes them pricklier towards the others if they pass their enclosures.

As our only unspayed female, Mosi (above) really comes into her own during this time. Her feisty personality asserts itself and Torak is subjected to alternate bouts of intense affection and jealous grumpiness if she feels he isn't paying her the correct attention. Although they mate during this time, this does not result in any offspring, as Torak (below) is vasectomised, but it is important for



not something they encounter every day. This provides an opportunity for them to problem solve as they work out the best way to dismember the bird and keep another wolf from stealing the best bits. We did this on the New Year's Eve Open Day and it was fascinating to see how each wolf approached the turkey puzzle! Torak ate his in about three bites then went to sleep it off, while Mosi

although she has a way to go before she is as light as Mai. Due to the ongoing feud with her sister, she and Torak remain in the top enclosure, which suits Mosi as she is a very curious animal and likes to see what is going on. As the cars park outside before a walk, Mosi will patrol the front of the fence, greeting people with whines and squeaks. She can also be guaranteed to give a good howl, particularly on howl nights, so visitors who have always wanted to hear a wolf's unique voice don't go away disappointed. She is a great character and continues to be very popular with handlers and public alike.

However, if there was a popularity contest amongst the wolves, then Torak has a good chance to be the winner. Aloof and handsome, he was our most adopted wolf before Nuka stole his thunder. Torak has inherited the best attributes of his European father and North American mother with his strikingly marked coat, long legs and broad head. Although he is very tolerant of Mosi's attentions, he will put her in her place in no uncertain terms if she gets out of hand. He is quite something to see when he does this, growling fiercely with hackles raised, but it is only a scolding and Mosi will lick him enthusiastically afterwards so there is no harm done. Torak will usually take himself off to the highest platform afterwards and Mosi knows not to follow!



their ongoing bond for them to be able to indulge in this behaviour. They are not shy about it and it can sometimes be a challenge to talk about them outside their enclosure while they are in flagrante!

While Mosi and Torak are not going out on their walks, we make sure they are provided with other enrichment to keep them stimulated. Just after Christmas, all the wolves were given whole turkey carcasses to eat, which is

delicately removed the skin from her turkey before eating the rest. She took her time and Torak knew better than to try and approach her, although a cheeky robin that obviously hadn't got the message kept hopping right under Mosi's nose to snatch some scraps. She was too busy to notice this feathery snack!

Mosi continues to be a delight as she approaches her ninth birthday in April. She is turning a stately shade of silver

Nikki Davies

Photos: Pat Melton

Seminar report: Living in a World of Wolves, Wolfdogs and Wolf lookalikes

ON 14 SEPTEMBER, 2014, the Trust hosted a seminar about wolfdogs, hybrids and wolf look-a-likes. Cammie Kavanagh, who initiated the seminar, reports.

Since the law changed recently, it is now legal to own a wolf hybrid in the UK without the restrictions placed by the Dangerous Wild Animals Act, providing the animal is at least three generations away from a wolf. Hybrids are not to be confused with wolfdogs – a breed originated by breeding dogs with wolves. UK wolfdog breeds are the Czechoslovakian wolfdog (German Shepherd dog crossed with a Carpathian wolf) and the Sarloos Wolfhund (German Shepherd dog crossed with a Timber wolf). These breeds generally do not have recent wolf added but can be crossed with other domestic dogs of a wolf-like appearance such as Northern Inuits or Utonagans, to enhance the appearance of a wolf. A wolf hybrid is where a wolf and a dog are bred together.

We have had a number of people on walks coming to see our wolves and asking us if they think hybrids/wolfdogs make good pets. In America it has been legal in some states for a number of years to own hybrids. There are numerous sanctuaries with a high percentage of hybrids handed in at around 12 to 18 months old, when owners find them too difficult to handle. Sadly there are many more that are not taken in and are euthanised. Last year I visited the Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary in New Mexico which was full of hybrids. Sadly, they were turning away approximately eight requests a day, as they were full. Not wanting to be prejudiced by these facts, I approached our specialist advisor Kirsty Peake to supply more information.

In America it has been legal in some states for a number of years to own hybrids

Kirsty Peake (above right) and Jacqui Jones (above left) organised and ran the course through the Centre of Applied Pet Ethology. Most of the delegates were dog trainers, behaviourists and staff from rescue centres. They understandably have concerns that some of these animals may well end up with them at some stage and needed advice on how to deal with them. Both Kirsty and Jacqui have run dog training classes with wolfdogs in them but some trainers will not take them. They were also joined by Sue Hull, one of the Trust directors, who also owns two wolf hybrids imported from the USA.

Kirsty started the event by stating she was not anti wolfdog/hybrid, but just wanted to make sure people knew exactly what they were taking on. After showing some photographs of the wolves in Yellowstone that she spends many months studying, she talked about how advanced wolves are compared with domestic dogs of the same age. Wolves continue to learn up to the age of four but can function as a fully-

fledged pack member from the age of three. They play a very important role in maintaining ecosystems and also work as a family unit to survive and breed and keep the pack viable. Their play is deliberately purposeful – learning to survive. Unlike dogs, wolves only come into season once a year and the females' hormones start to change in December. Both sexes also produce prolactin, which ensures the males help to look after the pups as well as the females. It is important to know the motor patterns of an adult wolf, which is where the wolfdog/hybrids come from:

Orientate > eye> stalk> chase> grab> bite> kill> bite> dissect> consume

Dogs evolved and were shaped by environment. Research has been carried out into the genomic signature of dog domestication by Erik Axelsson and others.

Whole-genome resequencing has been carried out on dogs and wolves, to identify genomic regions likely to represent targets for selection during dog domestication. Of the 36 genes identified, more than half are brain-related, including some linked to



behavioural changes thought to be central to dog domestication. This helps to understand why wolfdogs are so different from dogs.

We are not going backwards with wolfdogs but a huge

no accurate DNA test which will determine what percentage of wolf is in the animal

step sideways into the unknown. With a wolfdog/hybrid, the body language is so important; their brain is bigger, as they have to make more decisions than dogs. With wolfdog rescue sites, "high prey drive and cyclic aggression" is frequently mentioned. As with wolves, the aggression can go on for some months. According to some some American newspaper articles, small children have been killed and even partially consumed by such animals.

The problem is that each animal parent passes on thousands of genes. Whether they receive the wolf half or the dog half is indeterminable; ancestry and genetics are not the same thing. Therefore breeders are playing Russian roulette. There is no accurate DNA test which will determine what percentage of wolf is in the animal and even if there was it still would not show which are the dominant genes are in terms of behaviour.

Kirsty finished her talk by admitting she had been tempted to get a wolfdog called Farouk, who had been bought back to his breeder for the third time. Then she realised that she wanted a life of her own. Her advice? If you want a wolf, get a dog. Dogs are wolves people can live with.

Lunch was followed by two walks. One with Sue Hull's wolf hybrids (pictured centre, below) and one with the Trust's

resident Beenham wolf pack. Most of the delegates commented that the wolves seemed more chilled than the

hybrids, but Sue did state that the

Beenham wolves had been socialised with humans as cubs (even before their eyes opened) – whereas she had not been able to do this with her dogs due to them being imported from Florida.

The afternoon was mainly a question and answer session with Kirsty and Jacqui, including insurance issues for wolfdogs attending classes and common behavioural issues of the breed. Also: *How to deal with destructive behaviour in the home, separation anxiety and escaping and aggression.* Sue Hull was mostly asked about her two dogs and although she clearly loves them, she did admit they are not for people who do not have a huge amount of time to spend with them and who cannot read wolf body language. She had to be careful where she walked them and make sure they did not come into contact with children's playgrounds, as it frightened them. Even recovering a food bowl after eating took more time than the average dog owner would be prepared to spend on their pets. She also thanked her husband for the support he gave her, as we learnt during the day that not all marriages had survived having a wolfdog/hybrid.

The day came to an end and we all left understanding more and being serenaded by our own wolves. I did ask some of the delegates whether they were considering purchasing a wolfdog

but most people felt that whilst they were beautiful animals that they were a bit too much hard work for most people's lifestyle.

Cammie Kavanagh

Seminar Feedback

The seminar was well received and the following comments were sent in afterwards:

"It was a fantastic day. thanks for all the hard work that went into it and for all the interesting information."

"Thank you from me too to all the organisers! Fantastic day all round. Learnt a lot about wolfdogs & hopefully will help when we get some more coming through the practice doors."

"I totally agree with how amazing it was having the doors open & seeing the Arctic wolf throw his head back into a howl – totally amazing!"

"I'd like to say a big thank you to Kirsty and Jacqui for the seminar today and Sue. really enjoyed it. very helpful information and it was really good to see everyone."

"The journey home was a mix of trying to work out why people wish to own a wolfdog with all the pros and cons and thinking what great planning on Kirsty and Jacqui's parts as the drive home was spent listening to Radio 2's Party in the Park and singing along – just as well I had no passengers! Time passed really quickly."



Kirsty Peake DIPCABT, CABP – Specialist Advisor with the UKWCT, Chair of the CAPBT, Senior Behaviourist with Pet Matters, www.petmattersdevon.co.uk.

Jacqui Jones DIPCABT, CABP, ChMIACE – Senior Behaviourist with Alpha Dog training based in the South West. Jacqui is an assessor with the APDT (Association of Pet Dog Trainers).

Sue Hull: Director of the UKWCT. Sue owns two wolfdogs: Aspen and Altai.

THE LAST WOLF OF SCOTLAND?

In 2014, Adam walked from Paul Lister's Scottish Alladale Wilderness Reserve to Killiecrankie, chatting to locals about the possibility of a future reintroduction of the wolf to the Scottish landscape. He encountered, as expected, attitudes that stretched from romantic to anti-introduction. Adam also had a strong curiosity for the so-called Last Wolf of Scotland, which he discusses here – Julia Bohanna.

“There have always been those that benefited in making the wolf a little more ravening than in reality.”

LAST MAY I walked across Scotland to research how locals would feel about a reintroduction of the wolf. Once on the verge of extinction in Europe, their numbers have quadrupled since 1970, and there is a growing call for their reintroduction here. It is something the government is at least obliged to consider under an EU Directive of 1992. For some this is a necessary re-evaluation of a once persecuted animal; for others it's yet one more scheme conceived by city folk who don't understand the countryside.

The final definitive record of a wolf in Great Britain is from 1621: a mention made in the diary of Sir Robert Gordon that “*sex poundis threttein shillings four pennies [was] gieven this year to thomas gordoune for the killing of ane wolf, and that conforme to the acts of the countrey*” (Rackham). It is an exceptionally high sum that suggests demand

was far outstripping supply. From this point on the stories cross over a threshold into the more shadowed place of myth.

I finished my walk in the village of Killiecrankie, where in 1680 Sir Ewan Cameron of Lochiel is reputed to have shot the last wolf in Great Britain. There is a heavily wooded gorge which seems ripe for the purpose. I had read the tale in J.E Harting's *British Animals Extinct Within Historic Times*. In 1818, he writes, the following came up for sale at the dissolution of the London Museum.

‘Lot 832 WOLF, a noble animal, in a large glazed case. The last wolf killed in Scotland by Sir E. Cameron.’

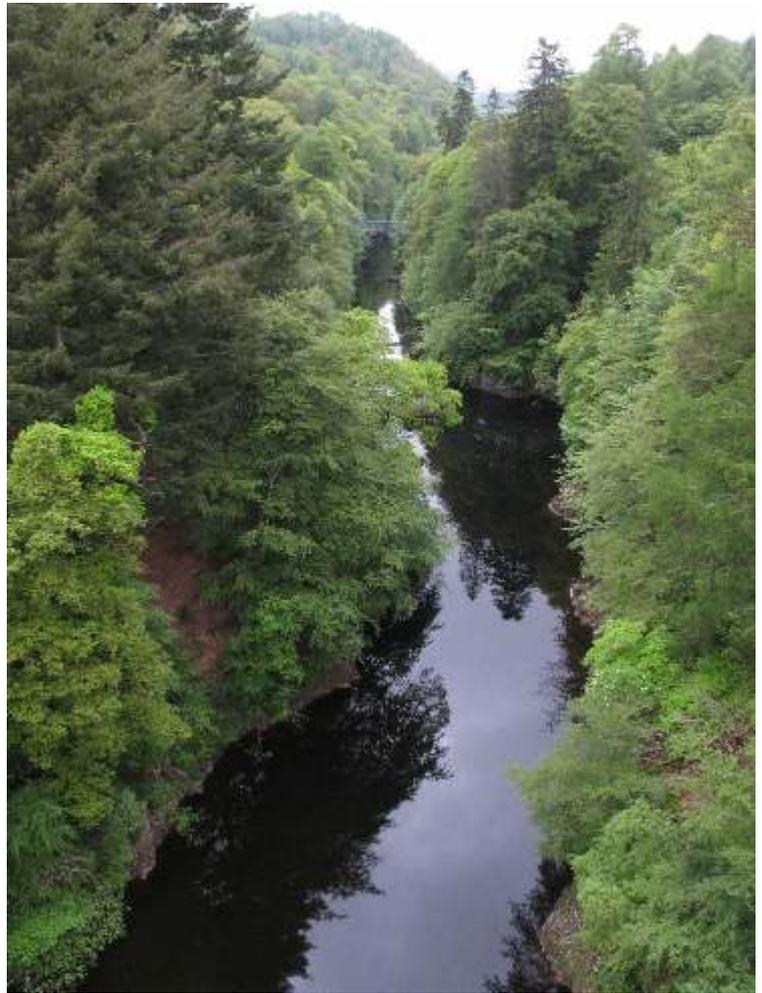
I pictured it in the bowels of some Scottish estate, moth-eaten, its glass eyes staring madly, or perhaps as the footstool of some English laird. And I decided that I wanted to find it. I began to dig through the archives of the Natural History Museum.

The London Museum was opened by

Edward Donovan, amateur zoologist, in 1807. In the museum catalogue he gives short shrift of his wolf exhibit: “*Happily those rapacious creatures, once the scourge and terror of the country, exist no longer in a state of nature in Britain.*” It is in keeping with the parlance of the day. Diatribes against the wolf masquerading as biology were practically a genre of their own. One of my favourites is from the Comte de Buffon's *Natural History*, 36 volumes of which he published throughout the 18th century. Despite being a remarkable work of scholarship and research, when it comes to the wolf he cannot resist the following: “*In fine, the wolf is consummately disagreeable; his aspect is base and savage, his voice dreadful, his odour insupportable, his disposition perverse, his manners ferocious; odious and destructive when living, and, when dead, he is perfectly useless.*”

Donovan's *Natural History of British Quadrupeds* has a chapter on the wolf, along with an illustration. It is a fearsome beast with an unhinged look, a hint of slaver round its chops. With only one in his collection, I think we can assume that

Killiecrankie Gorge
Photo by Adam Weymouth



this is the animal he claimed to be the last in Britain. His description waxes, at times, almost Shakespearian. Canis Lupus, he tells us, “frequently commit[s] prodigious ravages.”

The museum had cost Donovan £15,000 to set up, and despite an enthusiastic public, by 1817 he was broke. He attempted to pique the public conscience: “That the dissolution of such a vast repository of the natural productions of Great Britain will excite the regret of every well-wisher to the promotion of knowledge, cannot admit of doubt.” No benefactor was forthcoming, and in 1818 his entire collection was auctioned off. I found the sale catalogue, but there is no record of the buyer for the wolf. I began to try and trace it backwards instead.

Sir Ashton Lever’s museum opened in 1775. It was widely recognised as the best natural history collection of its day, but Lever, like Donovan, was less interested by accounts than by collecting. In 1786, bankrupt, he disposed of all 28,000 exhibits with a lottery. The winning ticket was bought by James Parkinson, a law-stationer, who himself beset by financial difficulties, auctioned it off in 1806. Donovan bought more items than anyone else. On 30th June, along with “sea otter, young,” “large piece of timber,” “crab, with a number of oyster shells adhering” and “a curious water rat”, he paid five pounds for “the wolf in fine preservation.”

George Shaw made a study of Lever’s collection. There are notable similarities between Shaw’s and Donovan’s illustrations that lead me to think that they must be from the same specimen, the front left forepaw cocked in the same manner. Yet this beast looks closer to a collie: docile and pastoral.

Shaw is less hysterical, also, in his prose than Donovan, although he does admit that “the rapacity and gloomy disposition of the Wolf have... rendered it the aversion of mankind.” He continues: “the ferocity... is greatly mitigated by an early education; of which the individual specimen from which the present figure was taken, is a remarkable instance; having been rendered in a great degree tame and gentle by the assiduity of the late Sir Ashton Lever.” Donovan’s

ravaging wolf, it seems, the last wolf to terrorise Great Britain, was Ashton Lever’s pet.

One can only assume that, on the verge of bankruptcy and with no qualms about misleading a public who had failed to stump up the cash to save his life’s collection, he turned his wolf into The Last in the hope of a few extra quid. Maybe he coaxed those jaws into a snarl. There have always been those that benefited in making the wolf a little more ravaging than in reality.

The more one explores the story, the more it falls apart. Even Cameron killing a wolf in Killiecrankie seems to derive from no more than a footnote in a travel book of 1769, a story a century old that the author presumably heard while on the road. What is certain is that Cameron was at the Battle of Killiecrankie, in 1689, as one of the commanders in the Jacobite uprising against the Government, a spectacular victory one month before their rebellion was snuffed out.

There is another last wolf story, this one from 1743, involving a man named MacQueen at a place called Ballachrochin on the Findhorn. That one is close enough in time and place to the Battle of Culloden to ponder whether significant moments in the crushing of the clans and last wolf myths have a tendency to get conflated. The wolf has always been a potent symbol of wildness, and its extirpation could be an analogy for the English civilisation of the Highlands, whilst at the same time honouring the heroism of the last of the

clan chieftains, their bravery in the face of the ravages.

Who bought the wolf from Donovan and how they paid, remains a mystery. But although the specimen was not all that Donovan made it out to be, it is one that still fascinates me, mixed up as it is with the wolf’s myth and its demise. That final night I put my tent in Killiecrankie Gorge. I tried to imagine wolves out there in the darkness. It wasn’t easy, with two such distinct images in my head. If wolves ever are allowed back, I thought, we’ll first need to sort the facts from the fictions.

A shorter version of this piece appeared at www.theguardian.com/science/animal-magic/2014/jul/21/last-wolf where Donovan’s illustration can be seen.

Adam Weymouth lives on a narrowboat on the River Lea in London. He walks, he travels – to assess the social effects of climate change and resource extraction. He has written for a wide variety of publications, including The Guardian, The Atlantic and New Internationalist. www.adamweymouth.com

Return of a native.

Saving America's Endangered Red Wolves

by Cornelia Hutt



THE DAMP JANUARY cold in coastal North Carolina chills the bones and numbs fingers and toes. The people huddled together in the mist just outside the woodland wolf enclosure don't notice the bite of the wind. While Kim Wheeler talks about red wolves, children and adults alike watch intently as Betty and Hank, the two ambassador red wolves, move with silent grace through the fallen pine needles and wet leaves in their spacious habitat. "Shy shadow from the long past" Christopher Camuto calls the red wolf in his hauntingly beautiful book, *Another Country*.

Although they are 12 and 13 years old respectively, Betty and Hank are participants in the Red Wolf Species Survival Captive Breeding Program. This handsome pair produced a robust litter of pups four years ago, and Betty was a dutiful and careful mother. Hank should have been named father-of-the-year for his willingness to tussle endlessly with his rambunctious offspring, who often used their indulgent dad as a trampoline.

Kim, the Red Wolf Coalition's Executive Director, weaves stories into her talk about the red wolf's close brush with extinction and its triumphant return to the wild in 1987 on the Albemarle Peninsula in northeastern North Carolina – a tiny sliver of its historical range that once encompassed the entire eastern seaboard of the United States and stretched as far west as Texas. Kim is Betty and Hank's caretaker, and her treasure trove of lore about the Red Wolf Recovery Program is rich with details about the first reintroduction 28 years ago and the individual wolves that represent the resilience and toughness of these remarkable animals that rank among the world's most endangered mammals. She tells the wide-eyed children and

their parents, the clusters of students, the various civic groups, and the drop-by tourists about the brutally hard job of field work in the 1.7 million acre, five-county recovery region. She reminisces about the pioneering men and women who have devoted their lives to bringing the red wolf home to North Carolina – and to tackling the challenges of ensuring its future in the wild.

And challenges there are: some old, some more recent.

Coyotes, once absent from the landscape east of the Mississippi River, have expanded their range and filled the niches historically occupied by the extirpated wolves. If red wolf numbers are healthy, however, the wolves keep coyotes at bay in their pack territories. But red wolves (unlike gray wolves) are related to coyotes, and red wolf dispersers may breed with their small cousins if they cannot find mates of their own species. Thus, hybridization remains a concern for the recovery of the species.

Despite their greater size and distinctive coloration, red wolves are sometimes mistaken for coyotes by hunters, and this misidentification has led to an increase in red wolf gunshot mortality in the restoration region. Additionally, strong evidence exists that some wolves are being shot deliberately by lawbreakers for whom the only good wolf is a dead wolf. Because the red wolf is a federally listed endangered species under the Endangered Species Act, killing one intentionally is a felony. But catching these poachers is difficult in a rural region with miles of corporate row agriculture, dense forests and impenetrable wetlands.

Where does the Red Wolf Coalition go from here? How do we move forward, find solutions to the multitude of problems and coordinate strategies to ensure a bright future for the red wolf?

The Red Wolf Coalition's high-priority tasks include the following:

1. To monitor closely the recent Settlement Agreement in federal court between the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) and the plaintiffs (including the Red Wolf Coalition) in a lawsuit filed by the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC). The Settlement strongly favours red wolf conservation and includes several important directives:
 - The NCWRC is required to list the red wolf as a "threatened" species in North Carolina. This is a huge victory, as previously, NCWRC refused to do so, even though the red wolf is protected under the federal Endangered Species Act.
 - Coyote hunting is forbidden on public lands in the five-county restoration area, and permits will be required to hunt coyotes on private lands.
 - NCWRC will be subject to various requirements for reporting canid deaths and for hunter education and outreach.

These requirements will end the "open season" mentality that has, until now, surrounded coyote hunting and that, in turn, has led to so much harm being inflicted on red wolves.

2. To reinforce the message of the recent litigation, which demonstrated that red wolves have earned their place on northeastern North Carolina's landscape. The wolves belong there, and historically, always have. Our

responsibility is to make that clear to every person connected with red wolves and their future. We must also motivate honest and useful communication among local citizens, landowners and government agencies. Ultimately, to be the catalyst that brings together stakeholders with various interests and engages them in a cooperative council, to determine how the red wolf and its habitat can be managed to minimize conflict and to maximize the animal's value as a flagship species.

3. To work with the hunting community to convince ethical hunters that it's crucial to rid their ranks of unethical hunters and poachers and to urge hunters to adopt the notion that preserving predators and all wildlife is part of their hunting experience.
4. The Red Wolf Species Survival Captive Breeding Program (SSP) must be supported so that genetic variation in the red wolf population remains a priority. These accredited zoos and nature centers make a concerted effort to teach about the value of red wolf conservation. The RWC undertook a major fundraiser this past year to assist the SSP facilities by setting aside a substantial sum for their benefit. The zoos and nature centers can apply to the RWC for money to enhance various projects and needs.
5. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) must renew its commitment to red wolf recovery and to the long-term survival of wild

red wolves. In the fall of 2014, the USFWS conducted an internal review of the Red Wolf Recovery Program. At this writing, we are awaiting the outcome of that review and an announcement by the Service of its intentions for the Recovery Program. We hope it will include two additional reintroduction sites.

It is worth noting here that many of the Red Wolf Coalition's most devoted followers and supporters live in the UK. This heartening fact demonstrates clearly the role of the UKWCT in helping the RWC ensure a future for one of the world's most imperiled species. We are deeply grateful for the commitment of our friends and pack mates "across the Pond." We hope you will make the journey and visit us and meet our ambassador red wolves. There is something about them – a fierce wildness, a wariness – that makes us pause as we watch them and consider our role, our duty as stewards of wildlife and wild places.

Kim Wheeler delights the children at her programs by leading them in a group howl. She tells the youngsters and their parents that it's the howl of the red wolf that speaks to her heart and reinforces her determination. "It's that sound," she says, "and knowing that could have been silenced."

We will not let that happen ever again.

Cornelia Hutt is a retired teacher and the chair of the Red Wolf Coalition Board of Directors. She is a patron and member of the UKWCT.

For more information, visit the Red Wolf Coalition at facebook.com/redwolfcoalition or the website at redwolves.com. For reading: *The Secret World of Red Wolves: America's Other Wolf* by T. DeLene Beeland; *Another Country: Journeying Toward the Cherokee Mountains* by Christopher Camuto.

Photos:

Standing wolf: Chris Crowe
Sleeping pup: Brooke (Land Between the Lakes Nature Station)
Leaping wolf: Becky Bartel Harrison





TEN YEARS OF WALKING WITH WOLVES IN THE PIRIN MOUNTAINS

Report and photography by Denise Taylor

Zoritsa the wolf cub was excited to see us, wriggling up against the fence of her enclosure and squeaking excitedly, sensing that it was time to go for a walk. Her trusted keeper, Ivan Ivanov, the Large Carnivore Education Centre manager, let her out through the gate to join my son, Adam, daughter, Charlotte and me. After ruffling Zoritsa's ears and tickling her, we set off up the mountainside for an afternoon of exploration in the late October sun.

Zoritsa is an ambassador wolf for the Wolf Research Programme run by Balkani Wildlife Society, headed by Project Leader and biologist, Elena Tsingarska. Zoritsa is the granddaughter of Vucho, one of the project's first wolf ambassadors who sadly died last year. This 2014 wild walk was especially poignant for me; it was on these mountainous slopes that I first went for a walk with yearling wolf Vucho in March 2004.

Back then major plans for building a Large Carnivore Education Centre in Vlahi (pronounced Vlacki) were still in their infancy. In that crisp spring of 2004, the centre was still just an idea; the site was a derelict roofless stable block with tumbledown walls. Elena's vision was for a two storey building with seminar halls, accommodation for 18 and a bar and restaurant overlooking breathtaking mountain views. Sister project, BBPS Semperviva, run by the Sedefchev brothers Sider (Elena's husband), and

Attila, was already establishing itself at its chosen base in Vlahi, having previously been formed in 1997 in Pernick. Semperviva is a rare breeds' project aimed at protecting and conserving the Karakachan breeds of livestock guarding dogs, sheep and horses as well as the Kalofer goats. The two projects complement one another perfectly: Semperviva provides breeding pairs of Karakachan livestock guarding dogs to farmers and shepherds, to foster tolerance for large predators through better livestock protection, while simultaneously breeding and rearing ancient breeds of hardy sheep and goats particularly suited to the mountain conditions.

Today, despite numerous and seemingly overwhelming challenges, the Large Carnivore Centre is complete; the distinctive landmark building stands proud, overlooking the village. Open to schools from all over the country, it hosts regular seminars and workshops, and is now in the early stages of planning international large carnivore conferences.

Over a decade, I have been involved in different aspects of Elena's work. One element involved collecting tissues and other samples for genetic analysis from wolves, dogs and hybrids to assess what the animals had eaten before they died. As with previous visits, this was going to include dissecting carcasses. As we sat drinking homemade rakia in the Education Centre, Elena received a call from a vulture sanctuary that had been given three wolf carcasses recently killed by local hunters. Samples had to be taken before the carcasses were thrown to the vultures. Dimitur Velin, a villager from Vlahi and long time supporter of the Wolf Research Programme, jumped at the chance to find some donkey bones to carve. Apparently, these bones have a dense composition and are often referred to as "poor man's ivory".

The next day we took the scenic route through the mountains to the vulture sanctuary, to be greeted by centre

assistant, Hristo Peshev, who laid out the three wolf carcasses from the freezer on the ground: three young female cubs, roughly the same age as Zoritsa, around five months old. They had been horribly mutilated, scalped for their ears and their tails removed. It was a shocking and emotional moment as we each reflected on the brutality meted out to these poor creatures. Elena had work to do; she wanted to make the most of a very bad situation in her continued quest to push for the conservation of wolves in Bulgaria, backed by scientific research and education.



While Elena and Ivan carried out the initial preparations for analysing the dead wolves, Adam and I went to see the vultures with Hristo. As we drew up to the acclimation pen, several wild vultures on top of it immediately took flight. The caged birds were griffon vultures being prepared for release into the wild just above the beautiful Kresna Gorge. They had been translocated from Spain to help boost the population in Bulgaria, previously wiped out in the mid 20th century. The species did start to make a comeback from 1970 onwards, but conservation measures are now in place to restore numbers and stimulate

breeding. The site overlooking Kresna Gorge is ideal vulture habitat and they also thrive where wolves are present.

As we walked past the acclimation pen, Dimitur became excited at the prospect of finding his donkey bones and set off with Hristo to dig through the rotting piles of animal carcasses for his treasure. The stench was

overpowering from a boneyard of vulture food, with an array of carcasses in varying stages of decomposition, from a relatively fresh dead cow to the bleached skulls and bones of long dead ungulates. After Dimitur had finally found his donkey bones, we all headed back to help Elena with her dead wolf cubs' analysis. Tissue samples had to be sent away for genetic analysis, stomachs from the wolves were removed to examine and identify their last meals. It is important to gain detailed knowledge of the prey base of wolves and whether or not they are preying on livestock, which helps with plans for their future management and conservation.

Although the wolf has never been extirpated from Bulgaria, as a large predator it has had a rough ride; until recently there had been an open season on hunting, with a bounty offered for every wolf killed. Elena and her conservation colleagues at Balkani Wildlife Society have worked tirelessly for decades to redress this, and their efforts have culminated in the formulation of a national Wolf Management Plan. This process has taken many years involving numerous scientific experts from around the world and has brought together all the stakeholders: farmers, foresters, livestock owners, hunters, policy makers, conservationists, and local communities. A series of workshops, facilitated by Professor Alistair Bath, aimed to arrive at a consensus on the "management" of Bulgaria's wolf populations. When we arrived in Sofia last October, the final stages of the plan were being implemented with Elena and



her team organising the public consultations. Although our visit this time was mainly social, we soon found ourselves caught up in the activity, spending our first afternoon and evening at the offices of Balkani Wildlife Society in Sofia while Elena worked with her colleagues to send out public consultation notices to all the municipalities.

It was great to see the Wolf Management Plan in its final stages of preparation. In the ten years I have been "walking with wolves" in Bulgaria, I have seen a small group of people achieve many amazing things for conservation, not only of indigenous wildlife but also rare breeds of livestock.

Pastoral farming is still a way of life in Bulgaria and it is as important to conserve and protect this as it is to conserve and protect wild species. The two are very closely interlinked and interrelated. There have been some gains on wolf protection, with the breeding season being closed to hunting, and dialogue has been opened up between polarised groups. What this will mean for wolf conservation has yet to be seen, especially as the wolf is not as revered as other species such as the brown bear. This makes any management programme more problematic but some conservation goals are not insurmountable; a lot of lessons are being learnt all round.

Now that the Large Carnivore Centre has been completed, I am looking forward to what the next ten years will bring and to getting involved in the first international conference there.

Wolf supporters – watch this space.

How the UKWCT has supported Balkani Wildlife Society

The Trust has had strong links with the project in Bulgaria for over ten years, supporting wolf research as well as the work we undertake for the Wolf Management Plan by sending regular donations. Over the years, this financial support totals £51,985. The UKWCT has also helped vital research and field work by funding student placements, such as that of Wolf Print contributor Pete Haswell.

Denise Taylor is a Specialist Advisor for the UKWCT





The Stuff of Life: How water and ingenuity to conserve the Indian wolf

Report by Ashwin Aghor

Raosaheb Kasar is a teacher at a private school at Parner in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra, India. Wildlifer to the core, Kasar has set up makeshift waterholes for wildlife at many places in the forest surrounding his village.

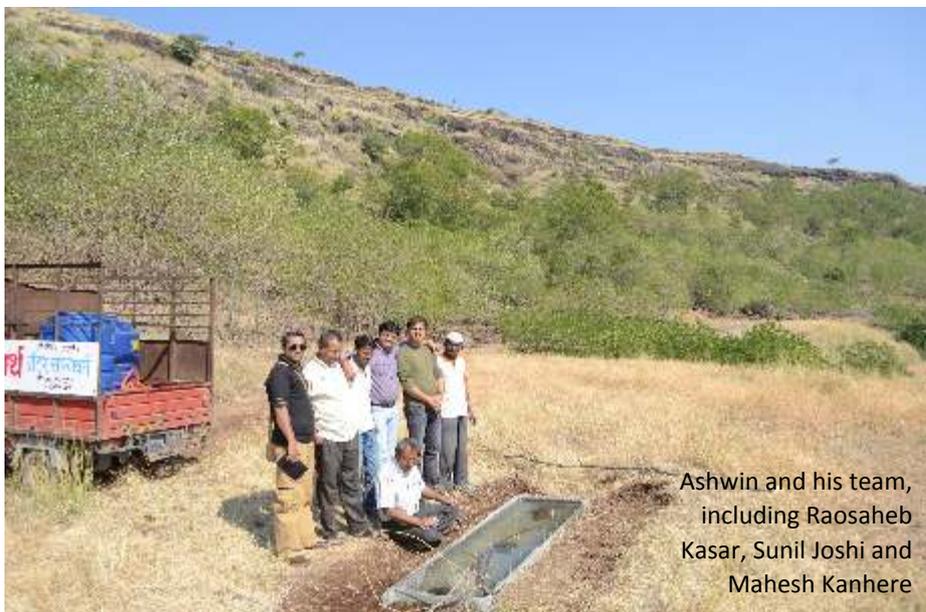
He had put up plastic tanks and would fill them with water as and when required. These waterholes soon became regular drinking spots for wildlife like wolves, black bucks, hyena and jackals. Sometimes even leopard would pay a visit or two to quench its thirst. Kasar and his friend Santosh Gandhi had just begun to feel the satisfaction of doing something for the wildlife. Their joy was shortlived as one day when the duo went to the waterholes with cans of water, the plastic tanks set up as makeshift waterholes were missing. Initially they thought that only one was missing. But when we visited other spots, they were shocked to notice that all of them had been stolen. After the thefts, the duo somehow managed to keep the

waterholes running by spreading plastic sheet in the trenches made for plastic tanks, covering it with soil and filling it with water. They soon realised that this will not help in the long run, as the water-holding capacity of these trenches was very low and the rate of percolation was very high. When I learnt about them from a friend, I decided to join them in the cause to protect the Indian wolf.

We began the work on the ground with the resources available and simultaneously started looking for organisations that would extend financial and logistical support. Given the vastness of the area and scope of the project, I requested fellow environmentalists at Vanashakti to support in terms of expertise, such as wildlife biologists. D Stalin, Director of Projects at Vanashakti gladly agreed to help EnviroCare Welfare Society on the project and wildlife biologist Kavita Mallya worked meticulously on the intricacies of the tasks to be undertaken on the ground.



While we were exploring various avenues to generate financial and logistical support, UKWCT gave a pleasant surprise with their financial support. It was the major boost to the project and real encouragement for everyone at EnviroCare Welfare Society and Vanashakti to go that extra mile. After the funds were received, the first thing we did was to get the cement tanks made to be set up as waterholes. Once we identified the manufacturer who would make the tanks at economical rates, six tanks with a water-holding capacity of 1,000 litres each were made and set up at strategic forest locations. All of them were filled with water. With these cement water holes, the risk of theft has been completely eliminated. The response from the local residents as well as forest department to the project was overwhelming. Local forest department officials gladly spared manpower to help in loading, transportation and unloading of the tanks. Dattatray Ambule, local farmer and builder, spared one of his trucks and also



Ashwin and his team, including Raosaheb Kasar, Sunil Joshi and Mahesh Kanhere



ity is helping

of EnviroCare Welfare Society, Mumbai, India



arranged for additional manpower needed for transportation of the tanks. According to Ambule: "It is our duty to protect and conserve the nature and wildlife. We must learn to coexist with them."

Since this was the first time such tanks were setup as waterholes, keeping the domestic animals away from it was a big task. People from villages in the forest take their cattle for grazing across the grassland. The cattle graze on grass in the forest and drink from the water sources there. The waterholes we set up would come handy in for these cattle. To avoid cattle consuming the water, it was decided to fill them in the evening when all the cattle go back and wildlife, especially carnivores, become active. After much perusal, the local shepherds agreed to keep their cattle away from the waterholes.

Now that waterholes have been set up and got running, it's time to monitor wildlife movement in the surrounding areas.

Photos by Rajesh Pardeshi

AN INTERVIEW WITH A MEMBER OF WOLF PATROL

by Julia Bohanna



Wolf Patrol is 'working to document and prevent wolf hunts in the face of the removal of federal protection for these important and vital predators in North America.' They use non-violent and non-intrusive methods around Yellowstone National Park.

How did Wolf Patrol come about and when?

Wolf Patrol was something that was born out of a lecture tour I did early this year where I spoke of the need for a citizen monitoring campaign to document bad wolf management policies that are returning to the West. It was a response to frustrations felt when following their delisting from the Endangered Species Act, gray wolves became subject to highly unregulated killing including trapping and the hunting with hounds.

Who initiated it?

A local professor and I initiated Wolf Patrol when we went out and photographed Michigan's first wolf hunt in 40 years last fall.

Was this something that you (and the group) perhaps anticipated when wolves were originally reintroduced to Yellowstone – i.e. that wolves would not stay in Yellowstone and would create conflict and hunters claiming them as fair game?

I'd say the return to state controlled management and the sport hunting and trapping of wolves was something we thought we'd never see. An entire generation in America was raised believing that the eradication of wolves from the West was a mistake, one we had learned our lesson from. But what is being seen is still an antiquated view of apex predators by competing human forces. Sportsmen and agricultural interests determine how wildlife will be treated outside of national parks. What we wanted to

see was the formation of a different structure of worldview, where an economy was built around wolf tourism more than wildlife killing. But there's always going to be that clash of world views when people who appreciate animals like wolves for their role as healthy components of an ecosystem, run into those who see wolves as competition.

Do you have any contact with Yellowstone biologists?

We nurture contacts with anyone and everyone in the wolf debate. We have met some of the principle biologists in Yellowstone, but a lot of people are shy about associating with us publicly. Gardiner, Montana is a very small community and there's people there who are there for the park and there's folks there who love the hunting. But we are not trying to unify elements of the pro-wolf camp; we are simply about documenting wolf policy on public lands. I've told hunting guides that we were opposed to the wolf hunt, but we weren't there to interfere with it either.

What is your ultimate goal?

Wolf Patrol's ultimate goal is to see the end of recreational hunting and trapping of wolves in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Minnesota and Wisconsin. We also would like to see wolves return to all areas of suitable habitat, and wildlife corridors outside of national parks closed to hunting.

www.wolfpatrol.org

TRACKING THE WOLF

after Cormac McCarthy

the boy his brother their father
(not yet awake) the horse
the dog behind the gate watching him go

the she-wolf the snow the blood the gun
the traps the calves
aborted before term

pale unborn still warm milk blue
near translucent (like beings miscarried
from another planet)

the boy will follow her all day find signs
grass pressed down
still warm from the sun or from her body

a heifer lying on its side in the shadow
of the woods where she had killed it
begun to feed on it (eaten the liver
dragged the intestines
over the snow)

he will find her already in the trap her paw
crushed pad white matchsticks
of splintered bone
poetry of manhood

blood-marred
the bone the boy the poet
who against reason
will take the wolf's side
not knowing
what everyone must surely know

that no one can ever
save the wolf
that the poor wolf cannot be saved

Wendy Klein

Tracking the Wolf won the Cinnamon Press Single Poem Competition 2014.

You can hear Wendy read her poem here:
www.wendyklein.co.uk/Tracking_the_Wolf.html

Retired psychotherapist Wendy Klein was born in America but has lived most of her life in the UK. Her early interest in wolves was inspired by Jack London (*Call of the Wild* and *White Fang*). She encouraged her daughters to raise their consciousness about wildlife concerns with books like Jean Craighead George's *Julie of the Wolves*. Wendy has also enjoyed reading Barry Lopez's *Of Wolves and Men* and the "Borders Trilogy" by Cormac McCarthy. The narrative in this poem evolved from the second book of this trilogy: *Crossings*.

Photo:
Vladimir
Bologov

Making

wolves in the media and the arts,

ANDREW HOOD, THE BA

YOU WORKED IN food technology before you were made redundant – how do you change tack and learn to sculpt stone – or was it something you had always done?

I used my severance pay to actually do something. I had always wanted to go to art college and would always look up and salivate at stonework. As an older student perhaps I took a little while to understand things. But when I did at Weymouth College, it stuck.

WHAT WAS THE very first thing you carved?

Architectural mouldings – things that had to be so precise they could slot into other student's work. I had enough money for a year and then it got tough. But I am not unhappy that the path was unconventional – I did not develop a "formatted way of learning".

YOU WANT TO make "proper feisty, upsetting art." Can you explain in more depth?

I am intent on slavishly following my manifesto. Life depends too much on technology. I would rather make living a bit raw and fight against our growing laziness, so compromised by depending on marketeers, people not engaging with themselves. That's why do I do barefoot running, begun initially because my running shoes fell apart.

TELL ME MORE about the barefoot running.

This was in part inspired by time spent at the Trust when sketching the wolves. I love the efficient way a wolf moves, how it runs. I wanted to lollop, pad – not hammer down hard. Barefoot, your feet learn to think for themselves. They obtain a better grip, particularly in mud. We are too comfortable, trying to avoid pain. Or we don't like being 'splashed by the rain'. We luxuriate. Why not plunge yourself into a freezing lake? People and wolves are similar – we are all being marginalised, after all.

HOW DID YOUR connection with the Trust come about?

My daughter was doing work experience at the Trust and kept talking about these wonderful wolves. I went for a walk and spent one day a week up there for six weeks. (For a study of a wolf).

HOW DID YOU study of the wolf? Photos, observations, contact? Or memory?

Sketching is my predominant way of working. But photos, even a toy wolf – they all help.

Tracks

brought to you by Julia Bohanna

REFOOT SCULPTOR

ARE THERE ANY stones that you have not got along with?

Slate. The material does not lend itself to freedom of expression; unlike the 'freestones' such as limestone, it is layered and flaky. Portland stone is the king of stones, does exactly what you want. It's strong and fine enough to accommodate the most elaborate of fine art sculpture. I prefer Portland to all other limestones and marble.

WHICH SCULPTORS INSPIRE you the most?

Michelangelo of course – also Gustav Vigeland (1869–1943) a Norwegian sculptor. My work is all representational but I want eventually to explore the abstract.

HOW DO YOU maintain a balance with teaching and your own work?

I received funding in 2013 and was able to teach last year from May to October. Now it's one third teaching,



I want my sculpture from now on to champion the man who is of the world – not one who has chosen (through timidity or devotion to a lifestyle that is cosseted by technologies) to separate himself from it. To be unafraid of our spirituality. I want to study ancient tribespeople who luxuriate in their physical efficacy and engage wholeheartedly with their spirituality.

Andrew Hood is sculptor in residence at Englefield Garden Centre, Theale, Berkshire. He runs courses and is available for commissions.

<http://mcalistairhood.artweb.com>
www.Englefieldgardencentre.co.uk

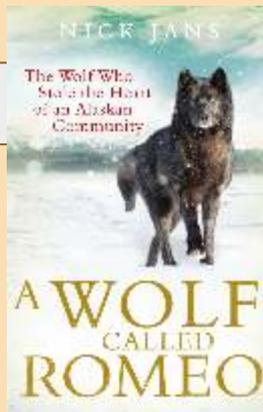
Interview by Julia Bohanna

one third commissioned pieces and one third my own work. 95% is reclaimed stone – that's very important.

IN THE MANIFESTO you talk about a 'cunning creature that can run with the beasts.' Please elaborate.

A WOLF CALLED ROMEO

Nick Jans, Virgin Books, ISBN: 978-0753540886
Paperback, 288pp, 19.8cm x 12.6cm, RRP £7.99



A WOLF CALLED Romeo is the story of a lone black wolf that appeared one day in Juneau, Alaska. Many theories began to develop to explain Romeo's presence. For example: a pregnant female black wolf was hit and killed by a taxicab in the area in March 2003. This may therefore have been his mate, in which case he may well have initially been searching for her. Whatever the truth, Romeo developed some amazing friendships with the locals' dogs and the people of Juneau over six years.

This is wildlife photographer Nick Jans' personal story sharing those first early meetings with Romeo out on the frozen lake and the surrounding area. News of Romeo's presence in the area could not be kept a secret for long and before anyone could say Jiminy Cricket, he was a full-blown local celebrity. Initially, the community were

suspicious of this lone wolf and some people's instinct was to shoot first, ask questions later. Soon, that suspicion turned to curiosity and eventually, protectiveness. Romeo should have run for the hills; yet it appeared that he was seeking companionship with the local dogs. Not in the sexual sense either, despite some obvious eagerness that some females showed towards him.

Jans communicates perfectly that the events unfolding before him were indeed special; rather than missing out on the opportunity to observe Romeo while he could, he cancelled his holiday in order to catch any opportunity to

spot this distinctive black wolf, before Romeo moved on to new territory. In one of these extraordinary encounters, one in particular left Jans flabbergasted. Playing ball with his dogs, Romeo was sitting just on the shoreline of the frozen lake. The ball hit a hard surface and bounced in his direction. He then pounced on the ball and played with it, just as Jans' dogs had done moments before.

This story is not just an account of Jans' personal experience with Romeo over their six-year friendship, but also Romeo's relationship with the local community both positive and negative. At one point, hunters even set up illegal traps.

Beautifully, Jans merges his personal experiences with historical and current opinions of wolves, whether held by the American public or those who are considered outsiders. Jans discusses others' inbuilt irrational fear, natural curiosity and admiration – to eventually the issue of wolf management. The latter can lead to heated



INTERVIEW WITH LORENZO GUESCINI

Lorenzo has been a supporter of the Trust for many years and has recently produced a deck of meditation cards (see page 30) featuring our wolves. Julia Bohanna asked him some pertinent questions about his life, art and future plans.

When did you first come to the Trust?

In 2002, having received a 'Wolf Walk' as a gift, a small group of us met up at the woods not far from

the Trust. We stood in line and out of the back of a van emerged Duma and Dakota, two beautiful North American grey wolves. The handlers led the wolves down the line to get our scent and inspect us, to be accepted as part of the pack. There was something magical and slightly surreal about strolling through the woods on a damp, misty spring morning in the company of these two stunning wolves.

I've been back to the Trust frequently since; I get a real sense of the passion for the work there. These beautiful, social and highly intelligent creatures have been so ruthlessly persecuted over the years, often portrayed as the villain in popular culture, particularly in films and video games.

It's so important that there are places like the Trust to re-educate and remind us of what we risk losing.

You have adopted some wolves – which ones and why?

Duma and Dakota were two of the first. I really connected with Torak and Motomo through photographing them; they have stunning markings and are extremely photogenic. Adopting wolves adds another dimension; you get some

fascinating insights into their personalities and history. When the Arctics arrived, I just had to adopt one. **You taught yourself photography and computer technology? Are you a very disciplined person?**

Pretty disciplined, but also very fortunate that I spend most of my time doing things I really enjoy. Discipline is easy when you're doing what you love. I have a passion for learning, particularly when it allows me to expand my creativity.

My sister and I as children on holiday in Italy, took our toys out into the yard on our family's farm to create little scenes to photograph (think four extremely animated toy monkeys apparently rambling through the farmyard). Through the camera lens, the fantastic can be made to appear real (and vice versa). By my teens, I was developing and printing my own pictures.

At school I loved drawing, but was actively discouraged by my teachers. Artistic pursuits were considered to detract from 'serious' academic studies. Later, I looked for 'a good job with prospects' but today, pretty much everything I do is about expressing my creativity: photography, artwork, writing or designing for web and print. My business partner, Sharon and I are now blessed to share what we have learnt and help others bring their own creative visions to life.

We have your cards for sale at the Trust – how were they created?

In 2006, Sharon asked me to help her create a card deck. I had just got hold of some 3D software to create some interesting images with it. There was a very steep learning curve, but over the next 18 months the Crystal Skull Message cards were born. We set up our own publishing company and published them ourselves. By happy coincidence they were launched just a few weeks before *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. The cards have a very unique look and feel, and proved to be incredibly successful – selling internationally, almost exclusively by word of mouth. Then came a book, a CD and another card deck.

For the next project, I wanted to create something very personal to me. I had already amassed quite a library of wolf photographs, the perfect place to start. The first image I created was called 'Stargazer' and featured Duma. One of my favourite images was completed a few weeks before she passed away, so all the more poignant.

I also wanted to combine the wolf photos with the 3D artwork, placing the wolves any scene I could imagine. There was hardly any picture that couldn't be improved by adding a wolf! It took about two years to come up with the 39 images of the Wolf Life Path cards.

This is a unique way to introduce people to the wolves, but also to spread awareness of the Trust's work.

disagreements, especially when you throw hunters' "big-dollar sport-hunting" industries and politicians into the mix. Jan explores each opposing argument, illustrating one of his many points beautifully by quoting ex-governor Walter Hickel condemning the interference from the pro-wolf lobby, stating that "You can't just let nature run wild".

Although the book is beautifully written with an informal approach, as if Jans is telling his tale from his Alaskan home, at times the language used grated on me as a reader. I then found

it irritating and it gave the impression that Jans was ranting rather making a serious argument; at which point I found it hard to take him seriously. While I am on the subject of language there were words that made no sense to me. For example the word "fuggedaboutit" meaning "forget about it" only later revealed its meaning after a quick search in Google. This may be common knowledge or local slang in Alaska; therefore to the locals it has some meaning, but to anyone outside Alaska, it may have been useful to have a glossary for

clarification.

Despite some misgivings, I would still recommend anyone to read the book. It contains a good variety of wolf research that becomes a great educational read without too much jargon thrown in to put the reader off. Other than my own issues with the language used, I thoroughly enjoyed it. It is an extraordinary true tale that is filled with wonderful memories and of course, one truly amazing black wolf called Romeo.

Review by Francesca Macilroy

GATEKEEPER

Kay Sexton, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
Paperback, 14cm x 21.6cm, 350pp, RRP £8.06, ISBN: 978-1503116429

"She would not let the wolves down. They would come here, they would be free..."

All novels are *whatifs* by definition but whereas some literary plot concepts are relatively insular, others contain bolder and more challenging *whatifs*. *Gatekeeper* is the latter, exploring – in a cerebral and vivid way – the fantastical possibility of wolves being covertly freed, for the purpose of reintroduction, into Scottish countryside.

Claire, an ex-member of the Animal Rights Collective, is charged with gatekeeping by The Project, to protect the small pack of wolves when they are released. A strong and complex woman with her own inner demons that relate to her family, the places she visits for lupine research are also evoked with a Hardy-esque flair and emotion, without ever becoming overly lyrical. One location – Rome, is the birthplace of Romulus and Remus and so forms an appropriate base for to hone the skills for her mission. The writing sings; I could feel the buttery warmth of Italy on my skin as sensuously as I could later smell the heather-peppered earth underfoot in Sexton's fictional Glenfail.

The *Gatekeeper's* task feels momentous – as important as mythological Ancient Egyptian Aker's protection of the Underworld. Yet this is real; it is happening. The training is long but Claire emerges able to defend herself, to fight, to shoot, to some extent manage her secret mission with more confidence and knowledge. Every character we encounter is solidly three dimensional, whether it be the volatile Liam, Ansel, invariably everybody's friend, insightful Mala or a strange man Claire nicknames Blaine. Claire has to be astute, cunning – establishing who is friend or foe. She takes lovers but learns rather than leans. As she watches the released wolves through binoculars, her purpose feels both privileged and burdensome.

Overall, there is much light and dark in the writing, as difficult choices have to be made by 'good' characters that may alter our allegiances, or at the very least, our perceptions of them. In the wolves' hope for survival, the needs of the many must

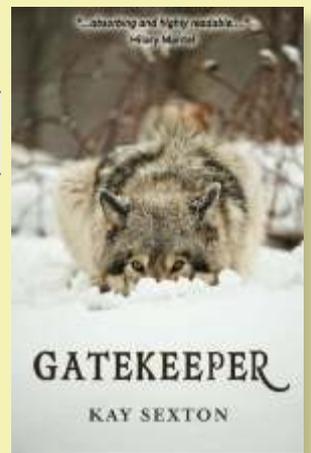
outweigh the needs of the few. Unpleasant sacrifices are made. However, I can't reveal any of them here. One late twist had me grinning in an *I knew it* sort of way. The members of The Project are on a crusade but who to trust? Who is part of the plan and who is intending to disrupt and derail the whole project? As we watch our gatekeeper in her secondment, as the wolves, first numbered, then named, we learn how animals and humans adapt and that "changing tribes was as easy as changing mobile phones".

One clever concept of the book was that like Claire, we wait to see the wolves and when we do, it feels sublime and acutely spiritual, as if we have to hold our breath and then exhale in wonder. This is a novel that takes its time but rewards us well. Sexton has captured the essence of the animal: the physicality, the shyness, the depth of family complexity, that mercurial and mesmerising look in their eyes but most of all, their capacity for play and even mischief. Glimpsed in shadows, surviving, vulnerable – a true metaphor for the state of the wolf in the modern world. But the ultimate question is: how will the community deal with the revelation that must come, that their landscape now is changed forever? There may be a level of dramatic licence in the conclusion but overall, there is a lot of wisdom about what it is to be human and our responsibility to the creatures with which we share a planet.

Julia Bohanna

Kay Sexton has been a finalist for several writing awards including the Sunday Times Short Story Award, the Willesden Herald Fiction Contest and a winner of the Fort William Festival Contest.

Before turning to writing, her jobs included charity chief executive, tree-planter, glamour model, and mortician's receptionist. She has had several hundred short stories and articles published, as well as two non-fiction books.



How do you see the wolf, what does the animal mean to you?

The wolf is such an iconic animal, revered in many traditions. Truly captivating. As totem animals they are seen as 'guardians' and associated with intuition, loyalty and discernment (linked to their incredible sense of smell). To me, they symbolise courage, strength and free spirit.

Photographing wolves is like a form of meditation. When I look through the viewfinder it creates a very intimate perspective – the rest of the world is gone; there is just the wolf... and me. The incessant mental chatter of daily life ceases and I become intensely present in the moment. I can lose myself completely in the experience.

What future projects are you considering?

I have been asked to adapt some of the images to create greetings cards for the Trust. I'm working on my second novel and I'll hopefully be working on a series of children's stories with my sister (some wolves probably in there somewhere). I will definitely be doing more with the wolf images.

I am working on a book exploring the place of the wolf in folklore and legend, incorporating more of the photographs and images.

www.wolf.cards

NEXT TIME IN WOLF PRINT

Although intended originally for this edition, we will now be including an in-depth review of *Wolves on the Hunt, The Behavior of Wolves Hunting Wild Prey* by L. David Mech, Douglas W. Smith, and Daniel R. MacNulty (The University of Chicago Press), in our bumper summer edition.

There will also be an interview with Kay Sexton, author of *Gatekeeper*, which is reviewed here.

wolves of the world

KAZAKHSTAN: Villagers use 'guard wolves' for protection



The KTK television channel reports that wolf cubs can be bought for just £320 and that the hunters that sell the cubs are adamant that they can be tamed, so villagers in Kazakhstan are turning to wolves to guard their lands from wolves. An interesting if disquieting concept!

One of the land owners, Nurseit Zhylykshybay, told the channel that he had bought a wolf cub from hunters three years ago, and that the wolf is perfectly happy wandering about the yard of his house. He maintains that the animal is never muzzled and rarely chained. No-one is scared of him. He added, "If a wolf is well fed and cared for he won't attack you". That may be so in

theory, but in practice confining a lone wild wolf is psychologically cruel and potentially dangerous.

Wolf expert Almas Zhaparov is also not convinced. He says that wolves are far too dangerous to keep in a home environment. He told KTK "A wolf is like a ticking time bomb that can go off at any minute". He warned, if nothing is done to stop this trend, the fashion could spread to wealthy Kazakhs who might try to keep wolves in the grounds of their houses, with possible deadly consequences.

The government has been blamed for failing to manage wolf populations in the first place. Education is the answer here, not random slaughter!

Editor's note: We would like to reiterate that this is, for many reasons, a misguided concept. Wolves are not dogs and confining them without a mate or family in a domestic human environment is ill-advised and cruel.

CARNIVOROUS MICE THAT HOWL LIKE WOLVES

These innocent looking little mice only 6½ inches long stand on their hind legs, put their heads back and actually howl like a wolf, claims Carter Crouch, wildlife biologist at Cesar Kleberg Research institute in Kingsville U.S.A. "The piercing high pitched howl actually hurt my ears," he added.

Native to this part of Texas, the northern grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys leucogaster*) is rather squat and blocky, has a white tummy and a white tip to its short tail. They're not fast runners but are very agile – able to twist and turn to subdue prey in their longer-and-stronger-than-average jaws.

Rodents, as a rule, are herbivorous. They feed on grain, seeds and gnaw on nuts. However, northern grasshopper mice are carnivores named for their favourite summer food: grasshoppers and other insects. Analysis of their stomach contents showed 89 percent of their diet is meat – insects, other invertebrates, small mammals (for example, other mice and voles), reptiles



and small snakes. They're "veritable tigers among mice," hunting prey (especially their larger prey) much like a cat, or a weasel. They stalk, then rush in,

seize the prey and kill it with a bite to its head. Their longer jaw and adapted jaw muscles allow them to achieve crushing bite strength at a larger gape – jaw opening greater than 40 degrees. The bite force of seed-eating mice declines after 40 degrees.

It is unclear why they howl and several theories have been suggested. Are they like wolves and howl to attract a mate, establish territories or just for fun? A more logical explanation is that they howl to paralyze the prey before a kill.

Source: Karen Benson (Master Naturalist) reflectionstexas.com

First published: The Bee-Picayune Newspaper, Beeville Texas

<http://bit.ly/1unIAeV>

Image: Carter Crouch

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION MOVES TO PROTECT ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

President Eisenhower established what later became Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in 1960 "for the purpose of preserving unique wildlife, wilderness and recreational values." Now, 55 years later, President Obama is recommending that Congress add nearly 12.3 million acres of refuge land to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Protection of this spectacular, pristine and wildlife-rich landscape will ensure that land managers can address the growing challenges faced by the refuge and keep fulfilling Eisenhower's vision. The Service recommended the wilderness designation in a revised plan for the refuge released today. If Congress acts, it will be the largest ever designation in the Wilderness Act's 50-year history.

Source: www.doi.gov

Idaho has 22 breeding wolf pairs, an estimated 1,000 wolves

BOISE in Idaho: wildlife officials say the state has about 1,000 wolves and at least 22 breeding wolf pairs. Idaho Fish and Game biologist Jim Hayden made the comments shortly before giving a presentation to the Idaho Fish and Game Commission in Boise. Hayden says Idaho is in no danger presently of falling below 15 breeding wolf pairs and having to turn over wolf management to federal authorities. There are likely more breeding wolf pairs in the state as biologists this winter have gathered information on only 30 of the 107 known wolf packs in Idaho.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service requires the state to maintain at least 15 breeding wolf pairs or Idaho wolves could again receive protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Keith Ridler, Associated Press

CANADA'S WOLF CULL SHAME

Canadian Government wants to shoot 184 wolves from helicopters over the next two months in the South Selkirk and South Peace regions.

AN INHUMANE slaughter of wolves is occurring at the hands of the Alberta government. This unscientific and unethical wolf cull is a consequence of oil and gas development, and industrial logging, which have endangered woodland caribou. Government and resource industries have transformed the caribou's boreal habitat into a landscape that can no longer provide the food, cover, and security these animals need to survive. Rather than address the real problem, i.e. the destruction of life-sustaining caribou habitat, Alberta has chosen to scapegoat wolves, many of which are now using an extensive, industry-generated network of new roads and corridors to reach dwindling numbers of caribou. For a decade, the government has hired biologists to kill more than 1,000 wolves via aerial gunning from helicopters, poisoning with strychnine, and strangling with neck snares. They also trap, collar, and create so-called 'Judah' wolves, which are used to betray the location of other pack members. After killing all the members of the pack except the collared wolf, the 'Judah' wolf then leads the gunners to more wolves and watches as they too are slaughtered.

Many other species that incidentally eat poison also die excruciating deaths. In the Little Smokey region of Alberta, neck snares (primarily) killed a minimum of 676 other animals in addition to wolves, including caribou. In November

2014, the province issued a Request for Proposal to contract "helicopter services for caribou tracking, captures and radio-collaring, and for wolf tracking, captures, radio-collaring and lethal control activities until March 31, 2015." Standing out among the project objectives stated in the RFP is "wolf lethal control – euthanizing wolves from the air, using firearms. Requires specialized skills to track, locate and kill both radio collared and non-radio collared wolves from the air."

Raincoast Conservation Foundation large carnivore experts Dr Heather Bryan and Dr Paul Paquet, along with colleagues at the University of Calgary and Bar-Ilan University, Israel, have authored a seminal scientific paper, published in the British journal *Functional Ecology*, which suggests wolves that are heavily hunted or subjected to intensive lethal control (such as the Little Smoky cull) experience significant social and physiological stress. The scientists used tiny tufts of hair to measure the hormones cortisol, testosterone, and progesterone in wolves subject to different hunting pressures in Canada.

Although the long-term effects of chronically elevated stress and reproductive hormones are unknown, there are potential implications for wildlife health, welfare, long-term survival, and behaviour. The effects of stress are often subtle, but the ensuing

harm can be acute, chronic, and permanent, sometimes spanning generations.

The slaughter of wolves in Alberta is emblematic of an anachronistic and harmful wildlife management paradigm all too prevalent across Canada. It also reflects and is the result of our society's choice to stay the course with the unsustainable industrial scale fossil fuel extraction that is the root cause of the Alberta wolf cull.

The macabre exercises in futility represented by the Alberta and B.C. wolf culls mask the obdurate refusal to acknowledge the ultimate cause of caribou decline in both provinces. "Governments and the industries most accountable for the demise of Canada's natural environment have perversely and consistently diverted responsibility and accountability to others, including grey wolves," said Raincoast senior scientist Paul Paquet.

Edited article. Original source: Chris Genovali, Executive Director, Raincoast Conservation Foundation

Gary R Allan, Director of Wolf Awareness Inc. (WAI), a Canadian wolf education & advocacy group, told *Wolf Print* 'We are trying to get international pressure on the BC Government to stop this horrific act.'

Full article here: www.huffingtonpost.ca/chris-genovali/wolf-cull_b_6494770.html

Gary will pass on comments: meshach915@gmail.com



Vladimir Bologov

SUCCESS FOR RUSSIAN CANIS LUPUS

The socioeconomic shocks following the collapse of the Soviet Union also affected the region's wildlife, researchers have suggested

A study of large mammal species in Russia found that most experienced a sharp decline in numbers from 1991. The authors said likely reasons for the declines were poaching and the erosion of wildlife protection enforcement. Writing in *Conservation Biology*, they suggested international support was needed during such times.

"What we did was to prove there was a simultaneous decline for wild boar,

brown bear and moose in most regions of Russia at the beginning of the 1990s, which was right after the collapse [of the Soviet Union]," explained co-author Eugenia Bragina from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, US. "All three species are very different and have different habitat requirements," she told BBC News, indicating that the declines were not the result of a disturbance to one particular habitat.

"For example, moose prefer successional forests where there are young trees that they can forage on. Wild boar really love agricultural crops, ▶

◀ which people in the Soviet Union used to plant for this species.” Dr Bragina observed that despite very different ecological histories, all three species recorded a decline and these declines coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

She added that as a result of the socioeconomic shock that was felt throughout the region, each species probably felt it in different ways.

“For wild boar, it was probably the loss of crops as forage because hunting managers did not plant these crops any more.”

The team noted that the study of populations of eight large mammal species in Russia between 1981 and 2000 did show that there was one exception.

Dr Bragina said: “What was interesting was that only one species recorded an increase: the grey wolf. In the Soviet Union, they controlled the population of the grey wolf. There were incentives to hunt the wolves – such as free licences for ungulate species – but, of course, during the turmoil of the collapse, people had other things to worry about.” She added that the team suspect that the increase in the wolf population, which grew by 150% during the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union, probably contributed to the decline of the moose population.

Brown bears show a decline at the beginning of the 1990s. Based on their findings, the team hypothesised: “Likely reasons for the population declines in the 1990s include poaching and the erosion of wildlife protection enforcement.”

However, the data indicated a change in fortune for some of the species’ populations a decade later.

“The second part of the story is good news, which is quite nice as it is not all doom and gloom,” said Dr Bragina. “We now see that the wild boar population in Russia is now larger than it was in 1991. It had collapsed and we lost about half of the population in the 1990s. However, it is a very adaptive species. So after a few years, it found new sources of food, somehow managed to survive and now it is doing well.”

Other species like roe deer and brown bear are also showing positive signs of recovery. But there are other species are still in decline, such as the Eurasian lynx.

GREAT DANES:

Only a matter of time before wolves settle in Denmark



“The many wolves are found in collaboration between volunteers and scientists. A lot of Danish people want to help. It has been a pleasure to assist in documenting the Danish wolves. There has been walked many miles cross country collecting samples. The Danish wolves are scattered across Jutland and it is really exciting to follow and help. Since 2012 when the first wolf was identified, it has boomed, and the new results are amazing!” Kim Moeller – www.ulvetracking.dk

Senior Scientists Liselotte Wesley Andersen and Thomas Secher Jensen have announced the results of the latest DNA analysis from wolf samples taken in 2014, at the recent Biodiversity Symposium held at Aarhus University.

Results shows that as well as the 11 known wolves known to have been present from 2013, there is now evidence of six new wolves in Denmark. No evidence of these 11 known wolves was found in these new samples, which would indicate that the new wolves have only been in Denmark for a shorter period of time. However, there is still no evidence of any female wolf presence.

Surprisingly two samples from Djurland, showing two different animals, were found six months apart,

demonstrating that those animals were only passing through. But in central Jutland, evidence of one particular wolf has been found seven times in the period from March to July, indicating that it may be settling into a territory.

Fundamentally, the DNA analysis shows that Jutland, as the primary frontier for north European wolves, is very much a corridor for wolf activity. Scientists expect that it is only a matter of time before traces of female wolves will be found, therefore laying the foundation for lupine breeding pairs in the region.

Original source: research from Aarhus University and published in Kristeligt Dagblad newspaper: tiny.cc/kmtstx

Photo: Vladimir Bologov

However, the team noted that this was a long-term trend and could not be linked to the social and economic consequences of events in the country at the beginning of the 1990s.

Dr Bragina said that the study highlighted that a sudden shock to a nation’s socioeconomic infrastructure was likely to have an impact on the country’s wildlife as well.

“When something like that happens we do need to pay close attention to what is happening to the wildlife,” she

suggested. “Of course, when poverty increases rapidly like it did in Russia in the 1990s, there are no resources for people to pay attention to the management of wildlife. I think that is the moment when international conservation groups should pay attention and consider ways to preserve the wildlife. Otherwise we may find that important or iconic species are put in jeopardy.”

www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-30886952

Gifts, clothing and wolffy souvenirs



EXCLUSIVE

'WHERE'S WOLF?' CHILDREN'S T-SHIRT £12.00

T-shirt designed exclusively for the Trust. Find the wolf amongst the sheep! The Trust's Wolfwear logo is also featured on the back of the shirt. Beige only.

100% pre-shrunk cotton. Machine washable.
Ages: 5/6, 7/8, 9/11, 12/13



'THE ORIGINAL SIX PACK' T-SHIRT £16.00

Grey t-shirt designed exclusively for the Trust with six wolf drawings beneath 'The original six pack'.

The Wolfwear logo is on the back. 90% cotton, 10% polyester. Pre-shrunk. Machine washable.

Sizes: S – 34/36in, M – 38/40in, L – 42/44in,
XL – 46/48in, 2XL – 50/50in.



WOLF SCARVES

£16.00 each

Soft, chiffon silky-feel scarves available in two of Lisa Parker's popular designs: *Wolf Song* (above) and *Quiet Reflection* (right). Fuller image shown on the cushions.

100% polyester.
165 x 70cm.
Hand wash only.



WOLF CUSHION COVERS WITH PADS £13.00 each

Add a stunning wolf feature to your home with these polyester satin-feel cushions featuring Lisa Parker's *Wolf Song* (left) and *Quiet Reflection*.

The washable covers are printed on both sides and have a zip fastening for removing the polyester hollow fibre-filled inner pads (included). Size 38cm x 38cm approx. Supplied vacuum-packed.



MISSION: WOLF RESCUE £7.99



This book from *National Geographic Kids* features:

- real-life animal stories and fun facts
- field reports and adventure tips from National Geographic explorers
- hands-on rescue activities and challenges
- photographs, maps, artwork and infographics

All this to help you learn how to save the wolf! Paperback, 128 pp, 21.6cm x 27.4cm.

QUIET REFLECTION METAL TRAY

£16.50

A sturdy, rectangular metal tray featuring Lisa Parker's design *Quiet Reflection*. Handles in each end. Size 48cm x 30cm. Supplied boxed. Boxed weight 1.7kg.



WOLF SONG COMPACT MIRROR £7.00

Metal-framed, glass-topped double compact mirror featuring Lisa Parker's *Wolf Song*. 7cm diameter. Image on lid only. The compact, which has both standard and magnifying mirrors, is supplied in a foiled and internally padded presentation box.



'WOLF LIFE PATH' MEDITATION CARD PACK £16.95

A boxed pack of 39 illustrated cards featuring the wolves at the Trust. As well as the pictures, each card has a title and an inspirational text to explore and meditate on. Cards designed by Lorenzo Guescini. Published by Mystic Mouse Publishing. Cards measure 9cm x 15cm. See our interview with Lorenzo on page 24.



WOLF FACE COAT HANGER £5.50

A simulated antler-effect coat hanger with wolf's face. Moulded resin. Metal hook. Size approx. 38cm long x 19cm.

Net weight 0.4kg, dispatched boxed (total weight 0.55kg).



ALASKAN TUNDRA WOLVES GREETINGS CARD £2.20

This card features three playfully submissive wolves greeting each other. There is information about this subspecies on the back of the card. Printed in the UK using vegetable-based inks and blank inside for your own message. Size 16cm x 16cm. Recycled paper envelope.

SALE! 2015 UKWCT A4 PLANNER/CALENDAR – WAS £8.50 NOW ONLY £3.00



- A4 calendar opening to A3
- Features pictures of all ten Trust wolves
- Planner with key dates and holidays
- Supplied with mailing envelope



WOLF CUSHION COVER £8.00



This soft cushion cover features a beautiful photograph of a wolf printed onto fine polyester fleece. Zipped for easy insertion of your cushion pad (not supplied). Dry clean only. 100% polyester. Size: 43 x 43cm. See website for matching duvet set.

WOLF FACE GREETINGS CARD £2.20
Printed in the UK using vegetable-based inks and blank inside for your own message. Size 15cm x 15cm. Recycled paper envelope.

Gift Certificates

Give a certificate for an experience with the wolves (see pages 31–32) and let the recipient choose the event.

~ £5, £10, £20 ~

ORDERING & DELIVERY

To view and order any of these items and our other stationery, clothing, books, gifts and souvenirs, visit our online shop at www.ukwolf.org or call 0118 971 3330. Please note: all UK orders are subject to a minimum P&P charge of £4.50. For overseas orders, please contact us.

OPEN

UKWCT WOLF CENTRE '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 – and have a guided tour with one of our knowledgeable volunteers. There will be fantastic photographic views of the wolves in their large, natural-looking enclosures and you'll have access to the raised photographic platform on site. If you're lucky you may even hear them howl!

We have picnic areas for warmer days, a gift shop for you to browse for books and souvenirs, and plenty of free parking.



Meet birds of prey

Come along on 8th April and meet Kookie the kookaburra, Fergie the ferruginous hawk, (both shown here), Mollie the Siberian eagle owl and more. These birds also feature in our **Predator Day** (see page 32)



Children's Activities

There will be additional activities for children on 8th & 15th April and 27th May, including pond dipping and a nature trail.



ADMISSION: Adults—£8; Members, children (age 3–12) & OAPs—£5; Children under 3—FREE
Tickets on the gate only. Sorry: no dogs on site

Arctic Ambles

25th April, 9am to 11am 🐾

🐾 Enjoy a walk with our magnificent Arctic wolves and the wonderful photographic opportunities they provide.

View all of the Trust's wolves and spend time getting to know the handlers who work with these amazing animals.

Afterwards, there will be time to shop for a wolfy souvenir!

Maximum 16 people. Booking essential.
£60 per person, age 18+

Please check our website for other dates

Wolf Keeper Experience Days

Thursdays, 10am–4pm

Please check website for dates

Maximum 8 people per day

See behind the scenes at the Trust and shadow the keeper in tasks including cleaning out the wolf enclosures, preparing food and feeding the wolves. Learn more about the Trust and the worldwide wolf conservation projects it supports. Get involved in our wolf enrichment programme, walk with wolves, snap up great photo opportunities, watch our resident kites circling overhead at feeding time and receive a souvenir event certificate of your day.

£150pp – booking essential

Check our website for full details and to book

THE ULTIMATE WOLF DAY: a magical lupine experience

Sunday 14th June, Saturday 11th July, Saturday 22nd August – 10am to 3.30pm



- Spend an amazing day at the UKWCT in the company of our ten wolves •

- Walk with **both** the Arctic and Canadian wolves •

The day involves **two** walks, allowing you to get up really close and watch the wolves investigate the countryside around the Wolf Trust

- * Photograph the wolves as they interact with each other, investigate various scents, paddle in the pond or stream and howl to the other wolves left behind

- * Together with our experts, you will then feed the wolves and get involved with our wolf enrichment programme

- * See close up how we care for these magnificent animals

- * Learn about the support the UKWCT has given to worldwide wolf conservation in the last 20 years



£175 per person, £300 for 2 people • limited spaces • for adults 18 years and over

WOLF VIEWING & BAT WALK

16th May at 7.30pm, 20th June and 18th July at 8pm,
15th August at 7.00pm, 19th September at 5.30pm

• £15 • Booking essential

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

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



PREDATOR DAY

12th September, 10am to 4pm

The ultimate experience for animal and wildlife enthusiasts:

Spend a whole day with the world's most powerful and enthralling predators... wolves and raptors.



The morning includes a two-hour walk with wolves around the Trust in beautiful Berkshire countryside. There will be ample opportunities for photography on the walk as well as handling and flying the birds of prey in the afternoon. There will also be time to see and photograph all the wolves at the Trust including the UK's first Arctic wolves.

Our **Predator Day** is the only way in the UK to walk with wolves in the morning and fly a hawk in the afternoon.



£120 per person. Minimum age 16
Booking essential. Please bring a packed lunch

20th March, 24th April, 15th May, 5th June, 11th September – at 7.00pm

Friday Night is Howl Night!

Feel your backbone tingle and your ears vibrate with the sound. The evening starts with a presentation on wolf communication; you will then go on a tour of the centre and have the opportunity to let out a howl and see if the wolves respond!

£10 per person. Booking essential. (Don't forget to dress up warmly for an evening under the stars).

The event usually finishes from around 9 to 9.30pm



MOTH TALK & WOLF VIEWING

Moth talk presented by Les Finch of the Berkshire Moth Group

Monday, 17th August

- Welcome and introduction
- Tour the Trust and see our wolves up close
- Presentation on moths
 - See moth lights in action
 - View live moths

Minimum age 8. **Booking essential.** Time and cost to be advised.

Please see our website nearer the date for further information and to book

