

Teaching Resources

Wolves for the Classroom: The Wolf as a Keystone for Teaching Essential Skills

compiled by Neil Hutt

Bookstores, libraries and online sources offer an almost limitless array of books and films about wolves. Wolf Web sites compete for attention. What are the best resources? Below are some suggestions for all audiences—teachers and students, parents, the general public. These selections are most appropriate for middle school, high school and beyond. In addition to teaching about the wolf, many of these resources encourage students to examine their individual and collective responsibility toward animals and the ecosystems that sustain them.

Through these books, videotapes and Web sites, the wolf becomes a collaborator in helping young people to practice active stewardship of the earth. Invite the wolf into your classroom to help students develop essential skills such as

- reading for information and pleasure
- organizing information
- learning by listening, viewing
- reflecting on learning
 - using technology to discover information
 - thinking logically, critically and creatively
 - asking questions
 - distinguishing between fact and opinion
 - building vocabulary
 - conducting research and crediting sources
 - taking responsibility for the earth and its resources.

 Denotes items available for purchase online at www.wolf.org.

Books

These books contain accurate information and are fun and fascinating to read. Some are out of print, but they can be purchased from used-book vendors on selected Web sites for a fraction of the original price.

GENERAL INFORMATION

 *Wolves: Behavior, Ecology, and Conservation*,

edited by L. David Mech and Luigi Boitani, University of Chicago Press, 2003.

The ultimate resource for anyone interested in wolf ecology, environmental science or conservation dynamics.

The Way of the Wolf,

by L. David Mech, Voyageur Press, 1991.

 *Wolves*,

by Nancy Gibson, Voyageur Press, 1996.

Return of the Wolf,

by Steve Grooms, NorthWord Press, 1999.

The Wolf Almanac: A Celebration of Wolves and Their World,

by Robert H. Busch, Lyons Press, 1998.

 *The Company of Wolves*,

by Peter Steinhart, Alfred A. Knopf, 1995.

 *The Great American Wolf*,

by Bruce Hampton, Henry Holt and Company, 1997.



 *Of Wolves and Men*,

by Barry Lopez, Scribner Classics, 2004.

 *Wolves of the World*,

by Todd Fuller, Voyageur Press, 2004.

HISTORY OF THE WOLF IN NORTH AMERICA

War Against the Wolf: America's Campaign to Exterminate the Wolf,

edited by Rick McIntyre, Voyageur Press, 1995.


Wolf Wars: The Remarkable Inside Story of the Restoration of Wolves to Yellowstone,

by Hank Fischer, Falcon Press, 1995.

A Society of Wolves: National Parks and the Battle over the Wolf,

by Rick McIntyre, Voyageur Press, 1996.

ARCTIC WOLF

 *The Arctic Wolf: Ten Years with the Pack*,

by L. David Mech, Voyageur Press, 1997.

Wolves of the High Arctic,

by L. David Mech, Voyageur Press, 1992.

RED WOLF


Journey of the Red Wolf,

by Roland Smith, Cobblehill Books, 1996.

Another Country: Journeying Toward the Cherokee Mountains,

by Christopher Camuto, Henry Holt, 1997.

UPPER MIDWEST

 *The Wolves of Minnesota: Howl in the Heartland*, edited by L. David Mech, 2000.

Keepers of the Wolves: The Early Years of Wolf Recovery in Wisconsin,

by Richard P. Thiel, University of Wisconsin Press, 2001.

Wolves of Minong: Isle Royale's Wild Community,

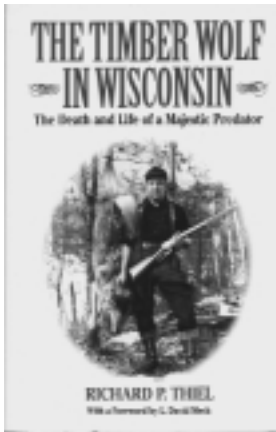
by Durward L. Allen, University of Michigan Press, 1993.

***The Wolves of Isle Royale:
A Broken Balance,***

by Rolf O. Peterson,
Willow Creek Press, 1995.

***The Timber Wolf in Wisconsin:
The Death and Life of a
Majestic Predator,***

by Richard P. Thiel,
University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.



ALASKA

The Wolves of Denali,

by L. David Mech et al.,
University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

The Wolves of Mount McKinley,

by Adolph Murie, University of
Washington Press, reprint, 1985.

**NORTHERN ROCKIES AND
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK**

The Wolves of Yellowstone,

by Michael K. Phillips and Douglas
W. Smith, Voyageur Press, 1996.

***The Yellowstone Wolves:
The First Year,***

by Gary Ferguson, Falcon Press, 1996.

***The Return of the
Wolf to Yellowstone,***

by Thomas McNamee,
Henry Holt, 1997.

The Ninemile Wolves,

by Rick Bass, Houghton Mifflin, 2003.

Yellowstone Wolves in the Wild,

by James C. Halfpenny,
Riverbend, 2003.

SOUTHWEST

***The New Wolves:
The Return of the Mexican Wolf
to the American Southwest,***

by Rick Bass, Lyons Press, 1998.

***The Return of the Mexican Gray
Wolf: Back to the Blue,***

by Bobbie Holaday,
University of Arizona Press, 2003.

NORTHEAST

***The Return of the Wolf:
Reflections on the Future of
Wolves in the Northeast,***

edited by John Elder, University Press
of New England, 2000.

EASTERN CANADA

***Wolf Country: Eleven Years
Tracking the Algonquin Wolves,***

by John B. Theberge with
Mary T. Theberge,
McClelland and Stewart, 1998.

WESTERN CANADA

***The Buffalo Wolf: Predators,
Prey, and the Politics of Nature,***

by Lu Carbyn,
Smithsonian Institution Press, 2003.

STORIES

***Tales of the Wolf: Fifty-One Stories
of Wolf Encounters in the Wild,***

compiled by Denise Casey and Tim W.
Clark, Homestead Publishing, 1996.

***Wolf Songs: The Classic Collection
of Writing About Wolves,***

Robert H. Busch, editor,
Sierra Club Books, 1994.

The Mountain Wolf's Gift,

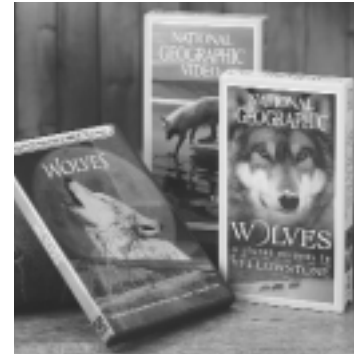
by Kevin Strauss, audio recording, 2003.

***The Wolf, the Woman,
the Wilderness:***

A True Story of Returning Home,
by Teresa Tsimmu Martino,
New Sage Press, 1997.

Hungry for Home: A Wolf Odyssey,

by Asta Bowen,
Simon and Schuster, 1997.



Videotapes

Because these great predators are among the most elusive animals, good documentary films are vital components of any education program about wolves. Each of the following films depicts wolves in the wild. They bring to the viewer the reality and complex nature of these flexible, intelligent and tenacious animals. Most are available for purchase, either online or in bookstores.

***Wolves: A Legend
Returns to Yellowstone,***
National Geographic, 2000.

Wolf Pack,
National Geographic Television, 2003.
(Not produced for public sale at this time. Watch for televised reruns.)



**Canid Cinema: The Good,
the Bad and the Misleading**

Overview:

Students compare and assess film portrayals of wolves.

Directions:

Many people will never have a chance to see a wolf in the wild. Thus, many people learn what wolves look like and how they act by viewing films about wolves. Because of cost, time and other factors, different films reflect differing levels of realism in their portrayals of wolves.

View several films (or film clips) about wolves with students. You may wish to use some of the videotapes listed in the resource section on this page. Have students discuss and write about the effects of these films on the viewing public.

Discuss:

What is anthropomorphism? How does giving human characteristics to wolves or other animals enhance or detract from a film? Peter Steinhart says in his book *The Company of Wolves* that "we will always have difficulty separating what killing means to wolves from what killing means to humans." What do you think Steinhart means? Many documentaries on wolves do not show the close-up details of wolves killing prey. What decisions would you make in that regard if you were a filmmaker?



Was That a Wolf?

Produced by Bruce Weide and Patricia Tucker, Lonewolf Productions, 1992.

 **Wolves,**
IMAX, 2000.

Wild Wolves with David Attenborough,
PBS Home Video, 1997.

Following the Tundra Wolf,
narrated by Robert Redford,
Peace River Films, 1975.

 **White Wolf,**
National Geographic, 1988.

Wolves in Yellowstone,
an animated tale for children
based on the book by Randy Houk,
Alan Weiss Productions, 1995.

Web Sites

The wolf resources in cyberspace cover every topic from biology and ecology to recovery and management issues and back again. Some sites are informational while others are maintained by wolf advocates and political activists. Many of the sites will open windows on the world of wolves and other species and to endangered habitats as well. Some of the Web sites listed are “wolf specific,” while others deal with biodiversity, species conservation and other environmental issues. Some contain teacher guides and activities.

www.wolf.org.

International Wolf Center. A great resource for students and teachers, this site includes online wolf tracking! Its site also includes access to hundreds of scientific articles about wolves. Be sure to check out the curriculum *Gray Wolves, Gray Matter*.

www.projectwild.org.

An interdisciplinary conservation education site.

www.kidsplanet.org.

Defenders of Wildlife's online wolf curriculum.

www.fieldtripearth.org.

The North Carolina Zoo's interactive Web site. Click on “All Field Trips” on the home page. This will take you to “Red Wolves of Alligator River.”

www.searchingwolf.org.

Contains a comprehensive list of videos, books, articles, wolf education materials and more.

www.sinapu.org.

Native Carnivores in the Southern Rockies.

www.forwolves.org.

The Wolf Recovery Foundation.

www.northland.edu/soei/timber_wolf.asp.

Timber Wolf Alliance.

www.timberwolfinformation.org/kidsonly/kidsonly.htm.

Timber Wolf Information Network kids' site.

www.wolfsongalaska.org.

Wolf Song of Alaska.

www.redwolves.com.

The Red Wolf Coalition.

www.californiawolfcenter.org.

California Wolf Center.

www.defenders.org.

Defenders of Wildlife.

www.nywolf.org.

Wolf Conservation Center.

www.usgs.gov/education.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) education page.

www.fws.gov.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Click on “Kids/Educators” for activities and a comprehensive list of links to environmental education sites.

<http://endangered.fws.gov/kids/heyteach.htm>.

USFWS endangered species activities.

<http://mexicanwolf.fws.gov>.

Mexican Wolf Recovery Program reports.

www.r6.fws.gov.

Western gray wolf status reports.

www.yellowstone-natl-park.com/wolf.htm.

Yellowstone Wolf Report Page.

www.nps.gov/yell/nature/animals/wolf/wolfup.html.

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Wolf Pack Territories. Click on “Kids' Stuff” for activities.

<http://www.windowsintowonderland.org>.

Electronic field trips in Yellowstone National Park. ■

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www.wolf.org
the world's best
resource for
wolf information



Crunch the Numbers

Overview:

Students calculate wolf population predictions.

Directions:

Instruct students to imagine a hypothetical situation in which 10 wolves are introduced to a large island with 1,000 deer. For both species, students can assume a 50/50 split male and female.

Assuming no reproduction or deaths from other causes, how long would it take for the wolves to eat all the deer? (Students will need to research average kill rates.)

Assuming average reproduction rates and no deaths, predict the number of wolves on the island in three years? The number of deer? (Students will need to research average reproduction rates.) Accounting for both average kill rates and average reproduction

rates, predict the total population numbers for both species after 10 years.

Discuss:

Brainstorm the many factors that could influence the wolf and deer numbers on the hypothetical island. How can you measure those influences to factor them into the calculations? In what ways could humans influence the populations if they also lived on the island?

