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LIVING WITH CARNIVORES 2001: THE WOLF

	<u>Narrative</u>
Slide 1 Wolf	Gray wolves (scientific name <i>Canis lupus</i>) were once common throughout North America, including Oregon. They are the largest of the three wild canids (members of the dog family) native to North America, the others being the coyote and the fox. They are thought to have once had the largest distribution of all carnivores other than humans. Wolves were eliminated from most of the West, including Oregon, by the 1930s.
Slide 2 Map	Wolves have been listed as an endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act since 1973, giving the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service authority to manage them.
Slide 3 Reintroduction	Wolves have been reintroduced into Yellowstone National Park, and the wilderness of central Idaho, in an effort to “recover” the species and remove it from federal protection. Although no wolves have been reintroduced into Oregon, and none of the agencies have plans to do so, the success of the Idaho effort has resulted in wolves appearing in Oregon.
Slide 4 B-45	During the winter of 1998-1999 a radio-collared wolf wandered into Oregon from Idaho. It was captured and returned to Idaho. Since then there have been many reported sightings in eastern and northeastern Oregon, and two wild wolves have been found dead. One of these had been hit by a car; the other had been illegally shot.
Slide 5 Coyote and wolf	<p>Wolves have a similar appearance to another Oregon canid, the coyote. Because of the wolf’s protected status, it is very important to know the difference. Coyotes are common throughout Oregon, and can appear to be wolf-like from a distance. There are a few distinct differences between coyotes and wolves, though.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The coyote is about one-third to one-half the size of an adult wolf. 2. Unlike wolves, coyotes tend to be only shades of grayish brown and tan. 3. Coyotes have very distinctive long pointed ears, and a long pointed muzzle relative to their head size. 4. Coyotes typically weigh 20 to 30 pounds, with the male being slightly larger than the female, and they have long spindly legs

Slide 6 Wolf	Gray wolves are the largest wild canid in the world, and are larger than the other species of wolf found in the southeastern U.S., the red wolf <i>Canis rufus</i> . Adult male gray wolves average about 100 pounds and the average adult female weighs approximately 80 pounds.
Slide 7 Wolf	At the shoulder, adult males are about 26 to 38 inches high, and they are about 53 to 78 inches long from nose to tail.
Slide 8	Despite their common name, gray wolves vary in color from all shades of brown and gray to pure black or white. The term gray wolf comes from the gray color of the thick undercoat, which is the same for all wolves of this species, and insulates them in the winter.
Slide 9 Wolf pack	A wolf pack or family can consist of 2 to 25 animals and can occupy a territory of anywhere from 20 to 1,000 square miles, depending on the availability of prey and the presence of other wolves. Wolf packs are territorial and will defend their territory against other “trespassing” wolves and any other canids such as the coyote or domestic dogs. Such invaders are usually killed or driven away. Wolves are most active at dusk and dawn, but can hunt at anytime.
Slide 10 Pack interaction	Wolf packs have a rather strict social structure, which maintains order and discipline within the pack. This enables them to cooperatively hunt the large ungulates they prefer: moose, elk, and deer. Wolves will also eat beavers, rabbit, marmots and small rodents.
Slide 11 Wolves	Within a wolf pack there are typically two dominant wolves, or leaders, a male and female who are called the alpha pair. Usually the alpha pair are the only wolves in the pack to mate and have pups. The rest of the pack is usually made up of relatives of the alpha pair and offspring from previous years, and fit somewhere into a descending social order.
Slide 12 Wolf with pups	The female wolf breeds once a year, somewhere between early January and early March. Like dogs, the gestation period is about 63 days. The female will dig a den, or enlarge the den of another animal to prepare for the birth. Den sites are generally located near water, on a south-facing slope in well-drained soil. The average litter size is about four pups and the entire pack assists in raising them.

<p>Slide 13 Wolf pup</p>	<p>Pups may stay with the pack their entire lives, or they may choose to disperse from their pack as yearlings or when they reach sexual maturity - which is usually around two years of age. Wolves in the wild live to be about 8 years old while those kept in captivity commonly survive to their mid teens.</p>
<p>Slide 14 Pack chasing moose</p>	<p>Wolves are coursing predators: that is, they will chase and test their prey, looking for weaknesses. They are opportunistic and will take down whatever they can catch, most often the injured, sick, old and very young. Hunting in this manner helps to improve the overall health of their prey population by reducing the spread of disease and competition for browse, and leaving the healthiest animals to reproduce. Wolves also take healthy adults.</p>
<p>Slide 15 Wolf with German shepherd</p>	<p>Wolves can sometimes be confused with common domestic dogs such as the German Shepherd or Husky. Again, regardless of size, wolves tend to have longer legs and bigger feet than their domestic cousins. Most breeds of dogs that resemble wolves, like Malamutes and German Shepherds, have tails that tend to curl over their backs, while a wolf's tail will never curl upward and their ears never flop over. Other than appearance, behavior is the most identifiable difference between wolves and dogs. Wild wolves are not normally aggressive toward humans by nature, and are in fact extremely wary of humans. Dogs however are normally not afraid of people, and actually have more of a tendency to be aggressive.</p>
<p>Slide 16 Wolf-hybrid</p>	<p>People sometimes breed wolves and dogs, creating wolf-dog hybrids. As you can see here, hybrids may easily be visually mistaken for wolves. These unpredictable animals can be extremely aggressive and often do not possess the wolf's inborn fear of people.</p>
<p>Slide 17 Wolf</p>	<p>Guidelines for avoiding conflict with wolves are similar to those you would follow for other large carnivores. However, there are a few precautions that should be emphasized when living or recreating in wolf country.</p>
<p>Slide 18 Wolf rolling</p>	<p>Wolves have an excellent sense of smell and are attracted to interesting and unusual odors. Special consideration should be paid to the guidelines that apply to the proper storage of food, garbage and other odorous items, both at home and while camping. That means keeping human, pet and livestock food out of reach by hanging it (when camping) or storing it indoors.</p>

<p>Slide 19 Hiking with dog</p>	<p>Due to the close genetic relationship between wolves and dogs, there is a heightened possibility for conflict with your pet dog, especially during the wolves' breeding season. As mentioned earlier, wolves are very intolerant of other canids in their territory, and may view your dog as a competitor. If you live or recreate in an area where there may be wolves, keep a close watch on your dogs, including hunting and herding animals, during the day. If they must be outside at night, be sure they are kept in an enclosed kennel or covered dog run. It is best to leave your dog at home while camping and hiking in wolf country, but if you must bring them with you, keep them on a leash at all times and sleep with them in your tent at night.</p>
<p>Slide 20 Den site</p>	<p>When choosing trails and campsites, be aware that during the spring and summer, wolves may be occupying dens in elevated rocky areas that provide them with a view of the surrounding land and are close to a source of water.</p>
<p>Slide 21 Cows</p>	<p>While wolves generally prefer to hunt wild ungulates, some do prey on livestock. While wolf predation on livestock is minimal, it may be a learned behavior. A wolf may be exposed to the carcass of an animal that died from other causes, or discover that livestock are easy prey. Also, wolves that become habituated to human activity may be less likely to avoid livestock areas. One of the best ways to avoid depredation is to practice clean ranching techniques. If possible, animals that die should be buried, burned, or rendered in order to avoid attracting opportunistic carnivores. Special attention should be paid to livestock during calving or lambing season, and whenever possible it is best to pen small livestock inside at night.</p>
<p>Slide 22 Guard dog with sheep</p>	<p>The use of guard dogs and a human presence also help reduce depredation, but guard dogs can have their own problems with wolves. Other measures to discourage wolf depredation are being tested, such as scare devices, triggered by radio collars on wolves. If you believe there is a wolf on your property, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and report it. Specialists will then be able to offer suggestions specific to your location. If you find livestock that you believe may have been killed by a wolf, treat it like a crime scene – just like on TV. As soon as possible cover the carcass with a tarp and protect it from further feeding by scavengers. Contact the Fish and Wildlife Service and request that the kill be evaluated to see if it is a wolf kill, or something else. Confirmed wolf kills will be reimbursed by a special fund established and maintained by Defenders of Wildlife.</p>

<p>Slide 23 Control Action</p>	<p>A new Defenders of Wildlife program works with livestock producers on methods to prevent livestock losses, helping ranchers pay for actions that reduce the likelihood of wolf conflicts such as temporary additional ranch hands and scare devises. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also has options to deal with problem wolves, including relocation of problem animals and lethal removal by federal officials. Killing a wolf without appropriately documented permission from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may result in fines and imprisonment, unless it can be shown that the act was committed to protect the life of a person. Wolves encountered in Oregon are fully protected under the ESA and Oregon State law.</p>
<p>Slide 24 Wolf</p>	<p>Close conflicts between humans and wolves are very rare. If you do encounter a wolf that does not immediately run away, it's a good idea to pick up any small children and control your dogs. As with the other carnivores discussed here today, stop, stand tall and definitely do not run. It is a predatory instinct for canids and other carnivores to chase an animal that is running from them. Back away slowly, standing tall, and be careful not to trip and fall. Keep your eye on the wolf, but avoid maintaining direct eye contact.</p>
<p>Slide 25 Snarling wolf</p>	<p>If the wolf does not retreat and appears to be acting aggressively -- its tail held high, the hair across its shoulders (its hackles) raised, barking or bark-howling and if it's coming closer, your best reaction would be to yell and throw things at it while continuing to back away. Try to make the wolf feel that you are too dangerous to attack and it will probably give up and leave you alone. If there is an attack, fight back. While it is legal to use lethal force to defend a person's life from a wolf, it is rarely necessary. It is a personal choice.</p>
<p>Slide 26 White wolf</p>	<p>I would like to stress that wolves are not aggressive toward humans by nature, but that they are wild animals and should be treated with both caution and respect. Wolf attacks are the rarest of all large predators. Evidence from the few recent cases of humans who sustained injuries from wild wolf encounters indicated that these were animals that had lost their fear of people. In these cases it is believed that the wolves had been fed by people prior to the attacks, causing the wolf to associate humans with food. When humans feed any wild carnivores, the likelihood of dangerous encounters with these animals increases. By following the guidelines presented today, along with your own common sense instincts, we can learn to live with, and appreciate wolves and other wild animals.</p>

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