



# PAW PRINTS

Fall 2003

Paw Prints is a publication of Timber Wolf Alliance, a program of the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute of Northland College, Ashland, WI

## Extra, Extra Read All About It!

Wolf populations are increasing! In Wisconsin, Michigan, and certain regions of the country wolf populations are doing so well that the federal government, with input from people like you, decided to take gray wolves off the Endangered Species list and put them on the Threatened Species list. Now that the wolves of our region are listed as threatened wolf biologists have more ways to manage wolves.



### ***So what exactly do words like endangered and threatened mean?***

***Endangered*** means that there are very few animals left in a species, and that they are on the brink of extinction.

***Threatened*** means there are more animals left in the species, but they could become endangered in the near future.

## Wolf Awareness Week 2003

Every year Timber Wolf Alliance chooses two pieces of art for the Regional and National Wolf Awareness Week education posters. This year the artists chosen are: Jerry Krejcha from Wisconsin and Jim Turgeon from Florida.

***Would you like a poster?*** Contact the Timber Wolf Alliance and tell us which poster you would like. We will send it to you for \$6 (shipping/handling).



*Waiting for Mom*

Jerry Krejcha



*The Glance*

Jim Turgeon

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# Wolf Signs

By, Jenni Webster

*Hi, I am a student at Northland College and part of the Wolf Research Team there. What is the Wolf Research Team? It is a college class that teaches about wolf behavior and biology, and how to track wolves. Most of the people in the class love wolves and really want to learn more about them. The class is divided into several teams that track different wolf packs in various locations in northern Wisconsin. There are three other people on my team, and every week we drive forest roads searching for wolf signs. Want to know what a day of tracking is like? Read on.....*

*It is a cold morning in January and there is fresh snow on the ground, perfect conditions for tracking. My wolf research teammates and I bundle up and set out into the woods in search of wolf signs. We drive slowly, our eyes glued to the snow that fell the night before. For a long time we don't see anything. Then, someone yells, "WOLF TRACK!" The jeep stops and we carefully get out (no one wants to stomp on a wolf track). I measure how long and wide the wolf track is and record it on a survey form: 4 ½ and 3 ¾ inches, a fairly large track. Back in the jeep we record the direction the tracks go and how many miles they stay on the road before they turn into the woods. We continue for another hour with no luck until -BINGO- a pile of scat (poop) smack in the middle of the road. I get out and carefully put a small sample in a plastic bag. Later, a student at the lab will find out what the wolf ate by looking at the bone pieces and hair hidden in the scat. There are tracks near the scat that are 4 ½ inches long and 3 ½ wide, a different wolf than the first one. We drive on and are about to go home when someone yells, "WOLF!" I catch my very first glimpse of a gray wolf loping across the road and into the trees.*

*After dusk we decide to do a howl survey (a human howls and then waits to hear if any wolves howl back). At the top of a hill in the woods we stop, and the best howler in the group gives a quiet howl. We wait a moment in anticipation...no response. He lets out a louder howl...nothing. He tries one more time, this one louder than the last. We wait in the cold night air and cross our fingers. Just when we are ready to leave, a single howl rings out from the east. A minute later the whole pack joins in, their clear voices getting stronger and then slowly dying away. When the night is silent again we all turn to each other and smile. That was beautiful. We quietly get back into the jeep, record our data, and drive home. Wow, what a great day of tracking!*



## Radio Telemetry (Another Way to Track Wolves)



Another way to track wolves is to use radio telemetry. This method requires that a wolf wear a radio-collar, which means the wolf must be captured and tranquilized (made to sleep using medicine) by biologists so the collar can be put on. The collar is battery-powered and weighs about a pound. The collar sends out a signal that can be picked up with an **antenna device** (looks like TV antennas that people put on their roofs) and a **receiver** (a small box attached to the antenna). The antenna can pick up a signal two to three miles away, but trees and hills are often between the wolf and the researcher and sometimes block the signal. When the antenna picks up a signal the receiver starts beeping, the louder the beeps the closer the wolf. If a collar doesn't move for a long time (because the wolf is dead, is a mother with pups in a den, or has chewed off its collar) the collar gives off a special pattern of beeps called a **mortality signal**.

A biologist tracks a wolf by standing in one location with the antenna and slowly turns it in a circle overhead. When they hear a beeping noise from the receiver they record the direction on a map. Then, they go to another location to do the same thing. The researcher can tell where the collared wolf is by drawing a line from both locations to the direction of the signal, and seeing where they intersect-BINGO-they've found the wolf!

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## You Be the Tracker!

Wolf biologists need to be excellent trackers! Test your skill as a tracker and follow each set of tracks below (from left to right) with a different colored pencil.



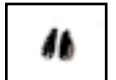
Now draw a line from the track to the animal that made it. (Answers on page 4)



White-tailed Deer



Black Bear



Raccoon

Wolf

Human

Mountain Lion



## Wolf biologists and trackers help wolves, and so can you!

Students at River Ridge Elementary School in Patch Grove, Wisconsin helped wolves! They learned about them during Wolf Awareness Week, and decided they liked wolves so much they had a penny competition. The school raised \$170.23 and sponsored this year's Wolf Awareness Week Kids' Flyer. By sponsoring the flyer they helped teach people about wolves, which is one way to protect them. Great job!!



*Had enough?*

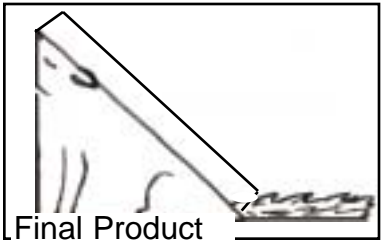
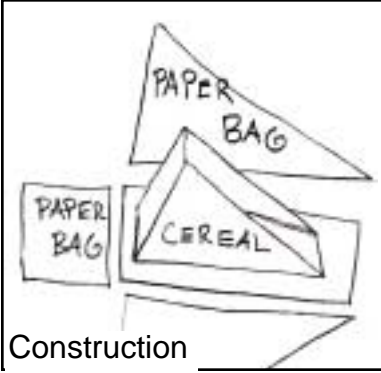


Here's one more tricky tracking task for you. See how many wolf tracks are in this issue of Paw Prints. The answer is on page 4.

## Create Your Own Wolf Organizer

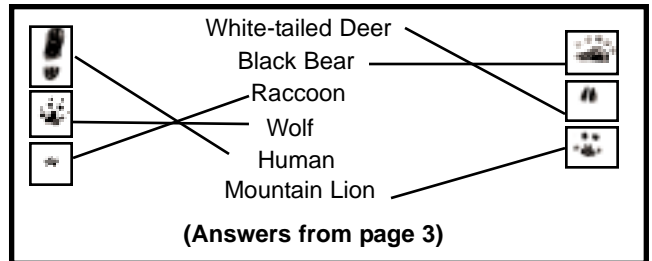
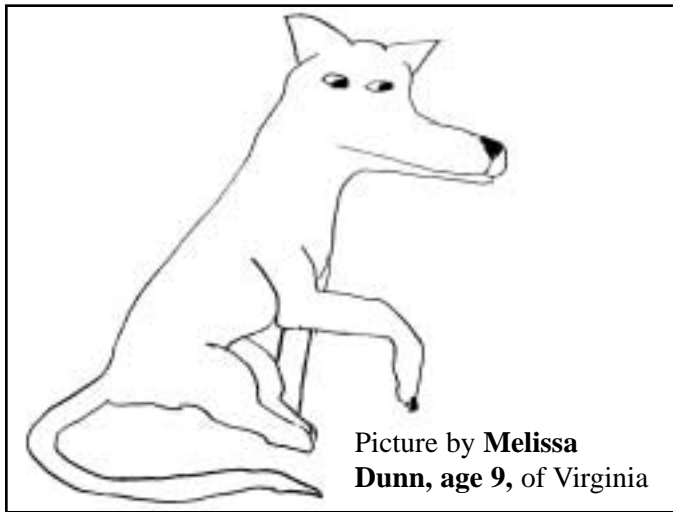
### Materials:

Paper Bag      Glue  
Cereal Box      Pencil  
Black Marker



- \* Cut a cereal box in half diagonally, to get two triangular pieces. One piece will be the wolf's body.
- \* Cut apart a brown paper grocery bag so it lies flat, plain side up. Use a pencil to first trace around the bottom, and then the side edge of the cereal box on the brown paper. Next, cut them out so that you have two pieces. Trace around the two flat, triangular sides of the box, and then cut (like the Construction picture).
- \* Now, glue all the paper pieces onto the outside of the box so it is covered.
- \* On another piece of bag draw a wolf tail and two wolfy ears, then cut them out.
- \* Glue the tail to the outside bottom of the box, and the ears to the sides so the wolf looks like the Final Product picture.
- \* Use a black marker to draw legs and feet on both sides of the box so the wolf looks like it is sitting. Then draw eyes on either side.
- \* Now you have a wolfy holder for all your magazines and papers!!

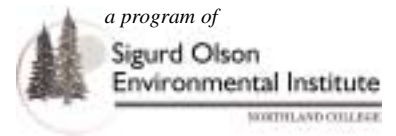
The idea for this project was from the San Diego Zoo. Their website is [www.sandiegozoo.org](http://www.sandiegozoo.org)



**How many wolf tracks?**  
**50**  
Answer to the page 3 question.

## PAW PRINTS

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# WANTED!

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*Have you written any stories, poetry, or book reports about wolves? Or have you drawn or painted pictures of wolves?*

***We would like to include your work in Paw Prints.***

Please send your original work to:  
**Paw Prints Artwork  
Timber Wolf Alliance**  
Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute  
Northland College  
Ashland, WI 54806