

Glossary

active submission: when one animal actively or intentionally acknowledges another pack member's higher status (as opposed to being forced to submit by a higher-ranking individual). The animal does this by wagging its tail rapidly and in low position and by lowering its ears and placing its body at a lower level than the higher-ranking animal.

adaptation: a change in an animal's **behavior** or body that allows it to live better in its surroundings. Some adaptations in wolves include having large feet with toes that spread which enable the animals to walk on snow and ice. Mexican wolves have large ears, an adaptation to help them regulate their body temperature in the extreme heat and cold of their Southwest **habitat**. The wolf's foot is also a marvelous example of **adaptation**. The large compact foot enables the wolf to travel long distances.

aesthetic: relating to or dealing with something beautiful or pleasing to the senses. An aesthetic value relates to the value placed on beauty.

agonistic pucker: the horizontal contraction of the lips showing aggression.

agonistic tooth snapping: usually a warning for other wolves to keep their distance. This behavior involves the ears being alternately flat and then erect, the lips being retracted and the teeth being bared accompanied by yelps and growls.

allele: alternative **genes** for a particular trait. For example, there are **alleles** for blue eyes and different alleles for brown eyes.

alpha: the top-**ranking** or most **dominant** animal in the **pack**. In wolf **packs** there is usually an alpha male and an alpha female.

anthropomorphism: the act of giving human characteristics, behavior, feelings, and/or motivations to animals or objects. Animals are frequently anthropomorphized in literature and in movies.

backcountry: land remote from human development.

behavior: what an animal does; its reactions or actions under specific conditions.

beta: the **second-ranking** animal in the **pack**.

big game (large game): term used to designate larger **species** that are **hunted**. Examples: bear, moose, deer, elk, caribou, bighorn sheep. In many states, **species** are legally designated as big game, **small game** (rabbits, squirrels, gamebirds), and **non-game** (songbirds, birds of prey).

biological diversity (also called biodiversity): the variety of insects, fish, animals, plants and other living things that share our planet and the essential interdependence of all living things.

biologist: a person who studies living organisms, life processes and/or the animal and plant life of a particular place. Biologists also study the relationship of living things to one another.

bite-intention signal: similar to the **agonistic tooth snapping**. The wolf will snap at the air when play becomes too intense as a means of increasing social distance.

bounty: a payment or other reward for removing certain **species** of animals designated as harmful. In the past, bounties were paid to people who killed wolves, thus helping to **extirpate** them from most of the lower 48 states. Use of bounties still exists in parts of the world.

breed: to reproduce; produce **offspring**.

buffer zone: an area between **territories** that are occupied by established **packs**. **Prey** species often flourish in these buffer zones. Wolves that have **dispersed** and who are alone often find relative safety and food in buffer zones with less risk of being attacked and killed by members of established **packs**. Buffer zones are, however, not necessarily neutral area and therefore safe havens. These zones are contested by **resident packs**, and supremacy shifts back and forth.

cache: *n.* a hiding place used for storing food if there is an abundance of meat from a kill; *v.* to store or hide

Canidae: the **family** of **mammals** that includes dogs, wolves, coyotes and foxes (more informally referred to as “canids.”)

canines: the sharp, pointed teeth (fangs) that **carnivores** use to pierce and tear the flesh of their **prey**.

Canis lupus: the scientific name for the **gray wolf**.

Canis lupus familiaris: the scientific name for the domestic dog.

Canis rufus: the scientific name for the **red wolf**.

captive breeding: **breeding** animals in such places as zoos. Captive breeding is a tool used to save critically **endangered species** such as the Mexican wolf. These captive **populations** are often used for **reintroduction** in many areas. The wolves that were reintroduced to Yellowstone National Park and to Central Idaho in 1995 were wild wolves, captured and brought to the U. S. from Canada.

carnivore: an animal that eats meat.

carrion: dead and decaying animal flesh. Not “fresh” meat.

carrying capacity: the total number of a **species** that a given area of a **habitat** will support at any given time; the ability of a given area to supply water, food and shelter to a **species**.

class: part of the **classification** system scientists use to help identify plants and animals. Wolves are in the class Mammalia. Other classes include birds, reptiles, amphibian and fish.

conservation: **protection** of natural resources from loss, waste, or harm; the wise and intelligent use of natural resources so that they will be available for future generations.

consumer: in an **ecosystem**, this is an organism that feeds on other organisms. An **herbivore** is a primary **consumer** because it gets its food directly from plants. **Carnivores** are secondary **consumers** because they get their nutrition from eating **herbivores**!

consummatory face: this expression is observed when wolves are involved in activities such as urinating or rolling around in a strange odor. Ears are partially flattened, and the eyes are either partially or totally closed. If they are open, the wolves tend to be staring off into space as if in a daydream.

courtship: the behaviors animals use to attract a **mate**.

data: the factual information used as a basis for reasoning, discussion or calculation.

delisting: removing a plant or animal from the **endangered species** list when it is no longer in danger of **extinction**.

den: the shelter wolves use to give birth and to raise their **pups**, usually a hole dug in earth.

depredation: refers to the damage done by **wildlife** to people’s crops and animals. Livestock depredation by wolves means the killing of cattle or sheep.

digitigrade: walking so that the toes touch the ground and the heel is raised. Some animals that use this form of **locomotion** include wolves, deer, horses and cats.

disperser: a wolf that leaves the **pack** and strikes out on its own. Some of these “lone wolves” have no social territory, and they live on the fringes of established **packs** or in the areas where several **territories** come together. Their solo status makes them more vulnerable to attack by other wolves and to malnutrition. Some dispersers are subordinates who leave when food becomes scarce, a phenomenon that sometimes causes increased aggression within the **pack**. Often, dispersers will hunt in unoccupied areas between **pack territories** called **buffer zones**.

Some dispersers are seeking partnership and unoccupied territory. These wolves will travel in a straight line, sometimes hundreds of miles from where they were born. Males and females will sometimes meet and form new **packs** if they find an unoccupied area with sufficient **prey**. All wolves are travelers, covering huge distances in a day, a week, a year.

documentary: A television or film presentation of factual events usually accompanied by the explanation of a narrator.

domesticated: refers to animals that people have **tamed**, kept in captivity and used for special purposes for many generations. Domesticated animals have lived among people for a sufficient number of generations to have **adapted** to humans and to human **environments**.

dominance hierarchy: a social order in which high-ranking individuals are at the top of the pyramid, and the **submissive** animals are ranked beneath. **Biologists** and researchers have observed wolves that seem to rank “second in command” to the **alpha** or alphas. These are referred to as “**betas**.” The lowest-ranking member of a wolf **pack** has been referred to as the “**omega**.” **Omeegas** often leave the **pack** and become **dispersers**, forming **packs** of their own.

dominant: one animal having a higher position or status than another. **Alpha** wolves are **dominant** to all other animals in the **pack**.

ecological niche: the role or “job” of a **species** in its **environment**. The wolf fills the niche of top **predator** in the **ecosystem**. Its job is to keep **prey** populations healthy by killing the weak and the sick **prey** animals. Because wolves are opportunistic **hunters**, they do **prey** on the young also. **Hunting** is a tough job, and finding a meal is critical, especially when the **pups** are waiting to be fed.

ecologist: a scientist who studies the interrelationship of living things to one another and to their **environment**.

ecology: the science of the relationships between plants, animals and the **environment**.

ecosystem: natural unit or area defined not only by its physical characteristics but by the complex links and relationships between the plants and animals that live there. It is important to remember that ecosystems are not static. Rather, they are dynamic, meaning that they are always undergoing change and alteration in response to many factors.

encounter: when a wolf meets its **prey**. Much has been learned about how wolves select a specific **prey** animal; much is still a mystery. Wolves are opportunistic; that is they look for opportunities to get a meal at the least amount of risk to themselves. This means they usually select vulnerable animals - usually the weak or the young. No one is really sure how a wolf detects weakness in a **prey** animal. Sometimes it is obvious, if the animal is lame, for example.

Often, however, weakness is not obvious to a human observer. Wolves pick up cues that are too subtle for humans to discern.

endangered: an “endangered” species is one that is in danger of **extinction** throughout all or most of its **range**. Wolves are listed as endangered in all of the lower 48 states except for Minnesota, where they are listed as “**threatened**.” Minnesota is now considering “**delisting**” wolves.

environment: the external conditions, including sun, air, water, soil, and plants that make up an area where an animal lives.

estrus: the period in which a female is ready to **breed**.

exaggerated looking away: a **behavior** to get other animals to play - a pre-play response. A wolf approaches another wolf with ears partially flattened and lips retracted. Then the wolf suddenly jerks its head around as if to look over its shoulder.

extinct: no longer in existence. An animal or plant facing extinction is one in danger of vanishing forever from our world.

extirpate: to exterminate or wholly destroy a **species** in an area.

fact: something that is supported by evidence; a truth.

family: part of the **classification** system scientists use to identify plants and animals. Wolves are in the family Canidae, along with coyotes, foxes, and **domestic** dogs. A family is a subgroup of an **order**.

feral: **domesticated** animals that have gone **wild**; e.g., wild burros, goats, cats, dogs. There is an important distinction between, for example, a feral dog and a **wild** dog. Sometimes **livestock depredations** are blamed on wolves when, in fact, the killing was done by a feral dog or a **hybrid**.

fertilization: the beginning of a pregnancy; when a sperm fertilizes an egg.

fiction: something invented; a literary work whose content is based on the imagination and not necessarily on fact. Fictional stories are ones with imaginary stories and characters.

food-begging: a behavior which **pups** and subordinate wolves use to get food from **dominant** members of the pack. The **pup** or subordinate lowers its body posture and licks around the muzzle of the wolf with the food. It may even whine. Sometimes, the **dominant** wolf can be enticed to give up some food to the subordinate. **Pups** induce the adults to give them food by this behavior. Pups also induce the adults to **regurgitate** food by engaging in food begging.

food chain: the transfer of food energy from one organism to another as each consumes a lower member and in turn is **preyed** upon by a higher member.

food web: an interlocking pattern of food chains. For instance, a green plant, a leaf-eating insect, and an insect-eating bird would represent a simple food chain.

Forest Service: the branch of the United States government which controls **public lands** in the **national forest system**.

game animal: legal name for animals that may be regulated and **hunted** under regulations and laws.

gene: determines the characteristics (such as eye color and height) of living things.

genus: part of the **classification** system used to identify plants and animals. Wolves are of the genus *Canis*, along with **domestic** dogs. A genus is a subgroup of a **family**.

gestation: the time from **fertilization** of the egg to the birth of young; the period of pregnancy. Wolves have a gestation of approximately 65 days.

guard hairs: the long outer hairs of an animal's coat which keep the downy **underfur** from getting dirty or wet. The **underfur** keeps the animal warm by preventing heat loss from the body.

habitat: the type of **environment** in which a plant or animal usually lives. Forest, deserts, and lakes are examples of habitats.

hackles: The **guard hairs** along the back of an animal, especially on the neck and shoulders. The hackles are often raised as a form of communication, especially to indicate aggression.

hard release: One method of wolf recovery is the **reintroduction** of wolves to areas from which they have been **extirpated**. In a hard release, wild wolves are brought from another area and released immediately without a period of time to acclimate to their new surroundings. The hard release method was used in Central Idaho in 1995 when wild wolves were brought from Canada and released without spending a period of time in "holding pens." **Reintroduction** of wolves to Yellowstone was, on the other hand, done by the **soft release** method.

harvest: the intentional gathering of plants, animals, and natural resources. In **wildlife management**, **hunting** is a form of harvesting in which animals are killed.

Haudenosaunee: the people of the Long House (see **Iroquois**).

heartworm disease: a disease caused by a parasitic worm that lives in the hearts of carnivores.

These worms can reach up to 30 cm in length.

hierarchy (or dominance hierarchy): the ranking system among wolf **pack** members in which some are higher ranking, or **dominant**, and others are lower ranking, or **submissive**.

home range (or range): the area an animal like a wolf or a wolf **pack** uses to find food, shelter, and water to survive; the area over which the animal travel in the scope of normal activities. Ranges can vary from 30 square miles to over 1000 square miles, depending largely on the type and number of prey.

howl: a form of communication among wolves. Scientists aren't entirely sure why wolves howl, but this form of communication seems: to help wolves locate one another when they have become separated; to warn **pack** members of intruders or other possible danger; to aid in the demarcation of **territory**; to unify the **pack** - kind of like a "sing-along"; to announce or to defend a kill; to announce the beginning of a **hunt**; to assemble **pack** members. It has been observed that **prey** species often seem to ignore wolves howling!

hunt: to stalk or to chase a **prey** animal, such as deer, for food.

hunter: a person or animal or searches for **wildlife** with the intention of killing it or catching it.

hybrid: the **offspring** produced by breeding plants or animals of different varieties or **species**. Since dogs and wolves can **breed** and produce **pups**, these **offspring** are referred to as hybrids. A hybrid can be half wolf and half dog; the percentages can, of course, be higher for wolf than dog or the reverse, depending upon the number of generations bred and who the parents are. A controversy rages on the subject of hybrids. Many people believe that if they obtain a hybrid, they will get an animal that looks like a wolf and acts like a dog. This is often not the case, however. Hybrids sometimes have a dog's aggressive nature combined with the wolf's shyness and fear of humans. That combination can be a dangerous one. **Depredation of livestock** is sometimes blamed on wolves when, in fact, the killer is a hybrid. Hybrids have attacked people as well.

hypothesis: a tentative assumption made in order to test its validity.

indicator species: a specific **species** selected for monitoring by animals scientists in order to get a general indication of the health of the **ecosystem** in which that animal lives.

interaction: the relationship of one organism to another; the action of one **population** affecting the growth or death rate of another **population**. **Populations** may compete for food with one another; one may in some way interfere with the other population. Interactions can be positive, harmful, or they can be completely neutral.

interdependencies: the interrelationships of **wildlife** with one another and with the other elements in their **environment**.

interspecific: interactions of animals not of the same **species**.

Iroquois: The Iroquois confederation was composed of six different Native American nations that lived throughout the vast portions of the northeastern United States but which are now confined to small, scattered territories. The Iroquois had an advanced form of representative government.

keystone species: An organism whose abundance or activity is central to maintaining the nature of a habitat.

kingdom: part of the **classification** system scientists use to identify plants and animals.

legend: a story, often one that cannot be verified, that is passed down from one generation to the next.

litter: a group of wolf **pups** born at the same time. Wolf litters can range in size from 1 to 9 pups.

livestock: cows, sheep, and other farm animals.

locomotion: the act of moving from place to place.

mammals: animals that are warm-blooded, have hair on their bodies, and produce milk for their young with special glands call mammary glands.

mange: a skin disease caused by a parasitic mite. Mange is characterized by intense itching and loss of hair.

mate: one of a pair of animals that associates for **breeding**.

morphology: the form and structure of organisms.

myth: a traditional story that serves to unfold a world view of a people or to explain a practice, belief, or natural phenomenon.

national forest: an area designated and managed by the Federal Government to assure an on-going supply of natural resources. These resources include grazing land for livestock, minerals, timber, and opportunities for recreational and scenic use.

national park: a tract of land declared **public property** by the national government to be used

for cultural and recreational purposes.

National Park Service: the branch of the United States government which controls **public lands** in the **national park** system, including Yellowstone National Park where wolves were **reintroduced** in 1995.

niche: (ecological niche) an **ecological** term used to describe a place or a position occupied by a plant or animal with reference to other organisms. The things that determine the niche, or place in society of an organism, are: where it lives, where it finds shelter, who its friends are, who its enemies are, where it gathers food, what it takes from the community where it lives, what it gives to the community, and how the community is affected by the organism.

non-consumptive use: any use of **wildlife** that does not directly kill **wildlife**.

nongame: **wildlife species** that are not generally **hunted** or consumed by humans. An example would be songbirds.

offspring: the babies, the **pups**, the “children” that an animal has. The primary focus of adult wolves is the raising and the nurturing of the **pups**. Responsibility for feeding the pups is shared by the adults in the **pack**. Since the social ties between **pack** members are very strong, wolf **pups** raised without the bonding system of the **pack** do not **adapt** successfully to life in the **wild**.

olfactory communication: Many **species** of animals communicate with one another by “reading” **scents**. For example, an animal scent marks to designate a **territory**. Wolves and other dog **species** sniff certain parts of another individual’s body when they are reunited or meet for the first time. A good deal of information is exchanged between two animals in this manner.

omega: the lowest-ranking animal in a wolf **pack**. These subordinate wolves may become **dispersers**, especially if food is limited.

oral tradition: the tradition of telling stories and passing along information to new generations. This system of verbally reciting history has been practiced for many centuries by many indigenous cultures around the world. Native American cultures in the United States used this method of recording and reciting history.

order: part of the **classification** system scientists use to identify plants and animals. Wolves are in the order Carnivora, meaning meat-eating. An order is a subgroup of a **class**.

pack: a group of wolves. Packs usually consist of the **breeding** or **alpha** pair and their recent **offspring - pups** and juveniles. Pack sizes can be as small as two or three and as large as twenty or more. The size of the pack may depend on **prey** density and size. For example, wolves that prey on moose may form larger packs because moose are so large that they are easier to kill if the pack is composed of several wolves. However, the more wolves, the more quickly a kill is

consumed and the sooner it is necessary to **hunt** again! In general, wolf packs number between five and eight animals. Order within the pack is maintained by a functional **dominance hierarchy**. Roles are expressed and reinforced through body language, vocalizations, and facial expressions.

parasite: an often harmful organism that lives in or on another organism. For example, fleas are parasites. So are ticks.

passive submission: expressed when a low-ranking wolf is threatened by a **dominant** wolf who is expressing its authority by baring its teeth and growling. In this behavior, the low-ranking wolf tucks its tail between its legs, lies on the ground, and exposes its belly to the **dominant** wolf. The lower-ranking wolf may also demonstrate subordinate affection such as face licks and mouth nuzzling.

pelage: the hairy coat of an animal. Wolf coats can vary in color from black to white and many shades of gray and brown.

pelt: the skin and fur of an animal. Note that **pelage** is the hairy coat of an animal. The pelt is the skin and the hair or fur.

perspective: a point of view. People have varying perspectives about wolves.

phylum: part of the **classification** system scientists use to identify plants and animals. Wolves are in the phylum Chordata, which means they have an internal skeleton like humans, not an external skeleton like the lobster, or no skeleton like a jellyfish. Phylum is a subgroup of **kingdom**.

plantigrade: walking so that the back part of the foot (the heel) touches the ground. Examples of animals that use this form of **locomotion** include humans, raccoons, and bears. Wolves and dogs, on the other hand, walk on their toes.

play bow: the wolf extends its front legs, raises its hindquarters, cocks its ears forward, and puts on a big play grin. Often it will pant and wag its tail.

play face: an expression is used to elicit play. Basically, it is a big open-mouthed smile! The mouth is open and the teeth are bared, but the lips are not retracted in an **agonistic pucker**. This is a friendly face and can be paired with other actions such as rolling on the ground to show others that play is intended. And, of course, the play bow often accompanies the grin.

pinch period: the period in the annual cycle when the conditions for living are least favorable.

poaching: taking game illegally

population: all of the individuals from the same **species** (or closely-related **species**) that are closely associated and that occupy a certain area.

precaudal gland: a gland located on the top side of a wolf's tail. The exact purpose of this gland is unknown, but it may play a role in **olfactory communication** between wolves.

predation: the act of **preying** upon.

predator: an animal that kills and eats other animals for survival.

preservation: protection of **wildlife** and **habitat** which emphasizes **non-consumptive values and uses**, such as **no direct use** by humans. **Conservation**, on the other hand, emphasizes both **consumptive** and **non-consumptive use** of resources.

prey: animals that are killed and eaten by other animals. For example, deer, elk, moose, and many small **mammals** are prey animals. The favorite prey of wolves are **ungulates**, the large hooved animals such as moose and elk. Depending on the location of our **home range**, our chief prey might be bison, deer, caribou, or musk oxen.

private land: land owned by private individuals.

producer: In an **ecosystem**, this is an organism that can manufacture organic compounds. For example, a green plant is a producer because it manufactures simple sugars from organic substances (carbon dioxide and water).

public lands: land owned by the general public and managed by state or federal **agencies** such as the **National Park Service** or the **Forest Service**.

pup: a wolf baby.

rally: to gather in a group. Wolves rally for various reasons - before a **hunt** and to greet other **pack** members, for example.

range: the land upon which animals live. See "**home range**."

rank: the relative social positions of animals in a **pack**. The more **dominant** animals are higher in rank.

rare: **wildlife species** not presently **endangered** but with numbers so low that there is concern.

recovery plan: a guide that identifies actions necessary for restoring an **endangered** or **threatened species** to being a self-sustaining member of its **ecosystem**. It is a structure or

framework to guide **biologists** toward the objective of **species** recovery. A good recovery plan is critical to the success of **species** restoration.

regurgitate: to throw up food shortly after consuming it. Wolves will eat at a kill site and then return to their **pups** and regurgitate food which the **pups** eat.

reintroduction of species: a **wildlife management** strategy whereby an **species** is returned to its historic **range**.

rendezvous site: the area to which wolves move their **pups** when they are 8-10 weeks old. It is a gathering place for the **pack**, and the **pups** are left at the site while the adults hunt for food.

resident wildlife: animals that are residents of a specific area on a year-round basis as opposed to migratory animals.

scat: animal poop - to put it plainly and simply. Scientists often identify the animals that have been in an area by looking at their scat. Wolf scat often looks like a hairy cocoon. Since wolves consume every part of the carcass except stomach contents, skulls, and antlers, scat is encased in hair so that bone fragments do not puncture the intestines.

scavenger: an animal that eats animals it did not kill directly but that die from other causes such as disease, starvation, or another **predator**.

scent marking: leaving a mark, such as urine, to establish **territory** and to communicate with other animals. When you see a **domestic** dog urinating on a fire hydrant, it is scent marking.

scent post: an object or area an animal uses through scent **marking** to establish **territory**. Examples include trees, fence posts, and rocks.

small game: term designating smaller **hunted species**. Examples are rabbits, squirrels, pheasant, quail, and groundhog. Look up **big game** and **nongame**.

social animal: an animal that lives in a group with its own kind. Wolves are highly social animals because they live in a **pack** or family according to strict cooperative rules. The **pack** members are dependent upon one another for survival, and they all participate in the care and nurturing of the young.

soft release: a **reintroduction** strategy whereby the animal is brought to the release area and kept in a "holding area" in order to become acclimated to its surroundings. Soft release was used with the Yellowstone wolves in 1995. The Central Idaho wolves, on the other hand, were **reintroduced** by **hard release**.

species: subgroup of **genus**. Part of the **classification** system scientists use to identify plants and

animals. There are two species of wolves in the United States, *Canis lupus* (gray wolf), and *Canis rufus* (red wolf). The proper name of a species is made up of two words: the **genus** name (*Canis*) and the specific name (*lupus* or *rufus*).

Species Survival Plan: an organized method of breeding **endangered species** in captivity to help increase their **populations**. Managed by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), there is an SSP for Mexican wolves and one for red wolves.

stalk: to follow, track and eventually sneak up on an animal.

state wildlife agency: the state agency that has legal responsibility for the **management** of all or some of the **wildlife** in that state. It is usually responsible for regulations and for law enforcement.

stereotype: a conventional, oversimplified opinion, belief, or conception. A group or person or animal that is thought to be typical or to conform to a formula or a fixed pattern; lacking any individuality.

stewardship: refers to responsible caretaking of the **environment**. Stewardship is based on the premise that we are managers of natural resources and that we are responsible to future generation for **conserving** and **preserving** these resources.

stress: a harmful pressure to an organism or a **population**. A drought or a flood or a severe winter would cause stress to a plant **population** and, therefore, to animals.

submission: the act of acknowledging another animal's **dominance** or higher rank. Wolves do this in several ways including lying on their backs and exposing their bellies, tucking their tails between their legs, flattening their ears against their heads, and assuming a lower body position. Another behavior exhibited by submissive wolves is **food begging**. Subordinates learn that they can sometimes get higher ranking members of the **pack** to relinquish food.

subspecies: part of the **classification** system scientists use to identify plants and animals. It is the lowest, or most specific, group of animals. Scientists disagree on how many subspecies of wolves there are. **Domestic** dogs are the same species as wolves (*Canis*). They have always been classified as a different subspecies, however. Wolves are *Canis lupus*. Dogs are *Canis lupus familiaris*. Some scientists think that both dogs and wolves should be **classified** as *Canis lupus* because they are **genetically** identical. Others disagree, saying that dogs have evolved so far from wolves that to give them the same **classification** is misleading.

tame: brought from **wildness** into a manageable or easily controlled state. Tame animals may be handled by humans and used in some cases to perform work. **Domesticated** animals, on the other hand, are animals that have, over a series of generations, become accustomed to living with humans and which have, to varying degrees, become dependent upon humans to provide for their

needs. Domestic animals that live in a **wild** state are called **feral** animals.

taxonomy: the **classification** of organisms in categories based on common characteristics.

territory: the portion of an animal's home range which is defended against other animals of the same species.

theory: a working hypothesis given probability by experimental evidence or factual analysis but not conclusively proven or accepted as a law.

threatened: a **species** present in its **home range** but in declining numbers and in danger of becoming **endangered**. On the other hand, a species that has been listed as **endangered** but whose numbers are increasing may be moved from **endangered** status to threatened.

top predator: a predator, usually large in size, that is rarely killed by other predators and may kill smaller predators. Wolves are top predators and have few natural enemies. They often kill smaller predators such as coyotes. Sometime wolves and bears will tangle, but this is infrequent.

track: a print left by an animal. Wolf tracks are large in comparison to most **domestic** dogs and other *canids* such as coyotes. Wolf tracks can be up to five inches long with four toes on the front feet and five on the back. The front feet are larger than the back feet. Claws are usually visible. This is one way you can distinguish a wolf track from a mountain lion track. Mountain lions walk with their claws retracted just like your **domestic** cat does.

translocate: a term referring to the process of moving animals from one location to another. For example, **wildlife managers** translocated wolves from Canada to Yellowstone National Park and to Central Idaho as part of the **reintroduction** effort in the Northern Rockies.

underfur: the soft downy fur beneath the guard hairs that keeps the animal warm. It is more dense than the guard hairs and has "loft" which traps body heat much the same way your down jacket does.

ungulate: animals with hooves such as deer, moose, caribou, and elk.

U.S Fish and Wildlife Service: the branch of the federal government that is responsible for **wildlife**, including saving **endangered species**.

U.S. Forest Service: an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Forest Service manages national grasslands and national forests, and it participates in forestry research. Forest rangers are officials in charge of managing specific districts and national forests. Other employees are specialists in timber, grazing, mining, wilderness, water, and recreation

management.

wampum: small beads made from polished shells, formerly used by Native Americans as currency and jewelry.

“web of life”: the term used to describe the interrelatedness of all forms of life.

“weight load on track”: the term used to describe the pressure placed on an animal’s feet when standing on all four feet. Weight load on track is calculated by dividing the body weight by the total surface area of all four feet.

wild: not **tamed** or **domestic**. Wild animals provide their own food, shelter and other needs in an area that serves as a suitable **habitat**.

wilderness area: an uninhabited area left in its natural condition. Wilderness areas are for **non-consumptive** use of resources, although **hunting** is permitted during designated seasons. Forest fires are not fought in Wilderness Areas, and no machinery is permitted, not even chain saws. Visitors are encouraged to **“leave only footprints, take only memories.”**

wildlife: animals that are not **tamed** or **domesticated**. Wildlife can range in size from tiny microscopic organisms to animals as large as whales.

wildlife manager: a person who is responsible for maintaining and managing **wildlife habitat** and the human activities within that **habitat**.

wildlife management: a term referring to the technical and scientific skills applied to protect, **conserve, preserve**, extend, and limit the value of **wildlife** and **wildlife habitat**.

yard up: to congregate in a sheltered place in winter. Herds of deer and elk, for example, may yard up during periods of heavy snowfall.