

Wolf or Dog?

The wolf is the progenitor of all dog breeds, some of which resemble the wolf. Dogs have inherited their intelligence and social behaviour from wolves. In Saxony wolf evidences should be reported to the Kontaktbüro Wolfsregion Lausitz and in Brandenburg please report to the Environment Agency (Landesumweltamt). (For addresses please see the back)

WOLF (*Canis lupus*)

Characteristics

- ✓ grey-yellow to grey-brown fur, a dark area on shoulders and back
- ✓ long legs with large paws
- ✓ straight and bushy tail with a black tip
- ✓ broad head with light coloured area around the muzzle

Wolf Scat

- ✓ Wolves often leave their scat on paths. It often contains hair and pieces of bones and is approximately 2.5 - 4 cm thick.

Paws/Tracks

- ✓ regular shaped, longish paws with blunt claws
- ✓ front paws large
8 - 10 cm long, 7 - 9 cm wide
- ✓ hind paws smaller
7 - 9 cm long, 6 - 8 cm wide
- ✓ typical way of walking is an even trot
- ✓ the track is very straight with few swerves



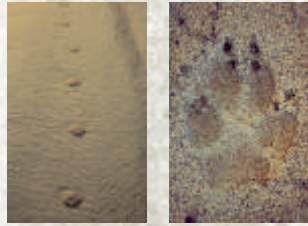
Summer coat



Winter coat



Scat



Perfect-step trot: The wolf puts its hind paw in the imprint of the front paw.



Diagonal trot: The wolf puts its hind paw in front of the front paw

Wolves on Both Sides of The Border

The survival of the Central European Lowlands wolf population is anything but certain. They need our protection!

The IFAW has therefore established a transboundary project. They closely collaborate with LUPUS German Institute for Wolf Monitoring & Research and Federal State Authorities on the German side, in Poland with "WOLF" Nature Conversation Association. On both sides of the border information on the wolves is being collected. Please support the monitoring by reporting evidence of wolves to the institutions below. The results help to develop and implement measures to ensure a long-term survival of the wolves and a peaceful coexistence with human beings.

For all questions and requests concerning the wolf, feel free to contact the Kontaktbüro Wolfsregion Lausitz. (For address see right)

Please report wolf sightings or signs to:
for Saxony and Brandenburg:
Kontaktbüro Wolfsregion Lausitz
Address please see right

LUPUS Institut für Wolfsmonitoring und -forschung in Deutschland
LUPUS German Institute for Wolf Monitoring & Research
Dorfstraße 20, 02979 Spreewitz, Germany
Phone (+49) 357 27 / 577 62
Fax (+49) 357 27 / 57 90 94

for Brandenburg:
Landesamt für Umwelt, Gesundheit und Verbraucherschutz, Naturschutzstation Zippelsförde
Rägelsdorf 9, 16827 Zippelsförde, Germany
Phone (+49) 339 33 / 708 16 oder 901 73
Fax (+49) 339 33 / 901 72

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MASTHEAD

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U. Anders

Wolves on our doorstep

In the border region of Germany and Poland



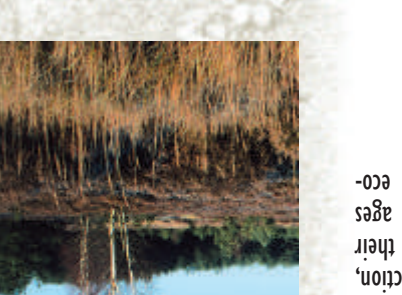
WOLFSREGION LAUSITZ

Why Are Wolves Important?

In our woods and forests, the principal food of the wolf – wild ungulates – is so common so that damages to agriculture and forestry can be considerable.

Wolves usually prey on those animals which are most easily captured e.g. young, inexperienced, old and weak game, so that animals quick in reaction and with good health are captured less frequently. Through natural selection, wolves have a positive effect on their prey species and have through ages played an important role in the ecosystem.

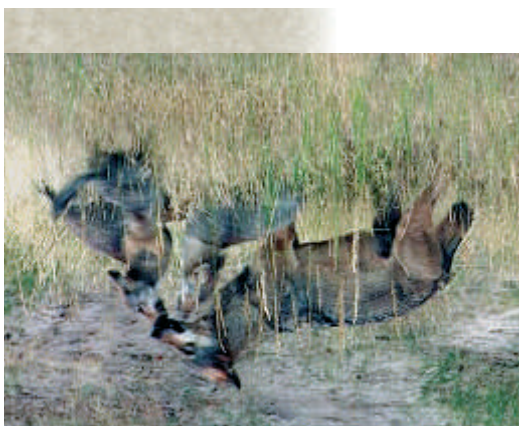
Wolves and wild ungulates share the same habitat. Here they use the same drinking place – even though at different times and for different purposes.



How Do Wolves Live?

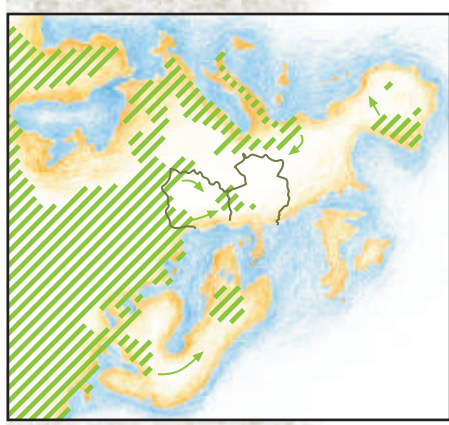
A wolf pack usually consists of the parents and pups from the previous and the current year. The wolves hunt, eat, rest and play together. But they also often travel on their own. At an age of approximately two years, a young wolf reaches sexual maturity and leaves his/her pack. In search of a non-related mating partner and their own territory wolves have been known to travel long distances.

Due to their territoriality and their food requirements only a few wolves can live in the same area. Every pack defends its territory against other wolves. Dependent on the food supply, the size of a territory usually ranges between 200 to 300 km² in Middle Europe. The size of a pack is commonly between five and ten animals. Wolves primarily feed on wild ungulates. In eastern Germany these are red deer, roe deer, boars, mouflon and fallow deer. They also prey on European hare, rabbits, birds, mice and other small mammals. In autumn they sometimes feed on fruits.



B. Stöcker

Current distribution and spreading tendencies of wolves in Europe



Forty years later single wolves started emigrating from Poland and were sighted in Germany again. However all were shot. Since 1990 wolves have been strictly protected by law in United Germany and since 1998 across the whole of Poland. They are no longer subject to legal hunting. Since 1992 wolves have enjoyed the highest protection in the European Union – apart from some regional exceptions. In many countries the populations are now recovering and the animals are gradually returning to their former territory. In the middle of the 1980s some wolves were able to settle and raise pups in western Poland – far away from their traditional territory in the east of the country. Some years later, in spring 2000, wolf pups were born in the northeast of Saxony, Germany, close to the Polish border.

The drive to exterminate wolves, that started at the end of the Middle Ages, almost led to the complete extinction of the wolf population in Germany by 1850. In 1904, Germany's "last wolf" was shot near the town of Hoyerswerda.

Are Wolves Dangerous?

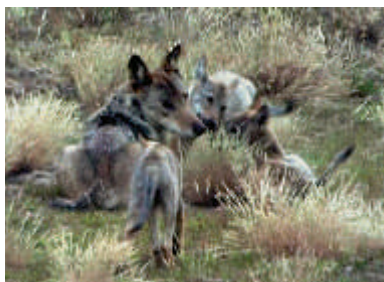
Walkers, cyclists, joggers and horse riders will only rarely see the animals. Wolves notice human beings early and usually flee. Young wolves sometimes react less shy than more mature animals.

People searching for mushrooms or berries are more likely to encounter a resting wolf. They should try to keep calm and give the wolf a chance to retreat. Dog owners should keep their dogs on a leash in wolf territories because wolves may react aggressively towards dogs. People living close to wolf packs may occasionally hear the howling of wolves. Wolves howl in order to attune themselves for a joint hunt, to declare their territory towards other wolves and use it for communication within the pack.

If you see an injured wolf in the wild, leave it alone and report sightings to the institutions mentioned on the back of this leaflet or to the nature conservation authority in charge. Wolves are strictly protected. An injured wolf can only be shot by authorized persons with an official legitimation issued by the Nature Conservation Authority.

Wolves in Lusatia

In 2000, the first pack in Germany was founded on the military training ground Oberlausitz by wolves emigrating from Poland. In the following years the wolves born in Lusatia and those emigrating from Poland occupied new territories and founded families. Since then, every year young wolves get born and migrate from their parents' territories. Therefore, the establishment of new packs is expected in Saxony, Brandenburg and other states. Information on the current situation can be found on the website www.wolfsregion-lausitz.de.



The game-rich Lusatian landscapes offer good conditions for the future of the packs and their descendants. Military training grounds and other forested areas may offer areas to retreat during the day and provide safe areas to raise their pups.

How Do We Live With The Wolf?

The return of the wolf enriches our natural heritage. This is one of the most sensational events in the field of European nature conservation in recent years. Experiences in Poland and other European countries have shown that cultivated landscapes can also offer a suitable habitat for wolves and conflicts rarely arise. Wolves thrive in many environments and don't need wilderness.

The coexistence with these carnivores in Germany requires a clear strategy in dealing with wolves which show problematic behaviour, such as individuals that continue to predate on livestock despite defensive measures or individuals that show unusual behaviour towards humans. On behalf of a peaceful coexistence between humans and wolves the removal of such individuals is possible, despite their strict protection, but only as a last resort. There is no reason to fear that the coexistence of wolf and man is more difficult in Germany than in other European countries with a similar structure.

A Competitor to Hunters?

Hunters and foresters in wolf areas should include the proportion of game eaten by wolves into their hunting plans.

The nutritional needs of a wolf are estimated at about 1 400 kg per year, whilst a pup eats about 700 kg. The dietary composition of the Lusatian wolves can roughly be derived from the analysis of faeces. Assuming that half of his prey consists of young animals, an adult wolf eats about 62 roe deer, 9 red deer and 14 wild boars each year. With a territory size of about 200 km², a pack of eight wolves (half of which are pups) will need about 1.8 roe deer, 0.4 wild boar and 0.3 red deer per 100 hectare annually.

Are Farm Animals Threatened?

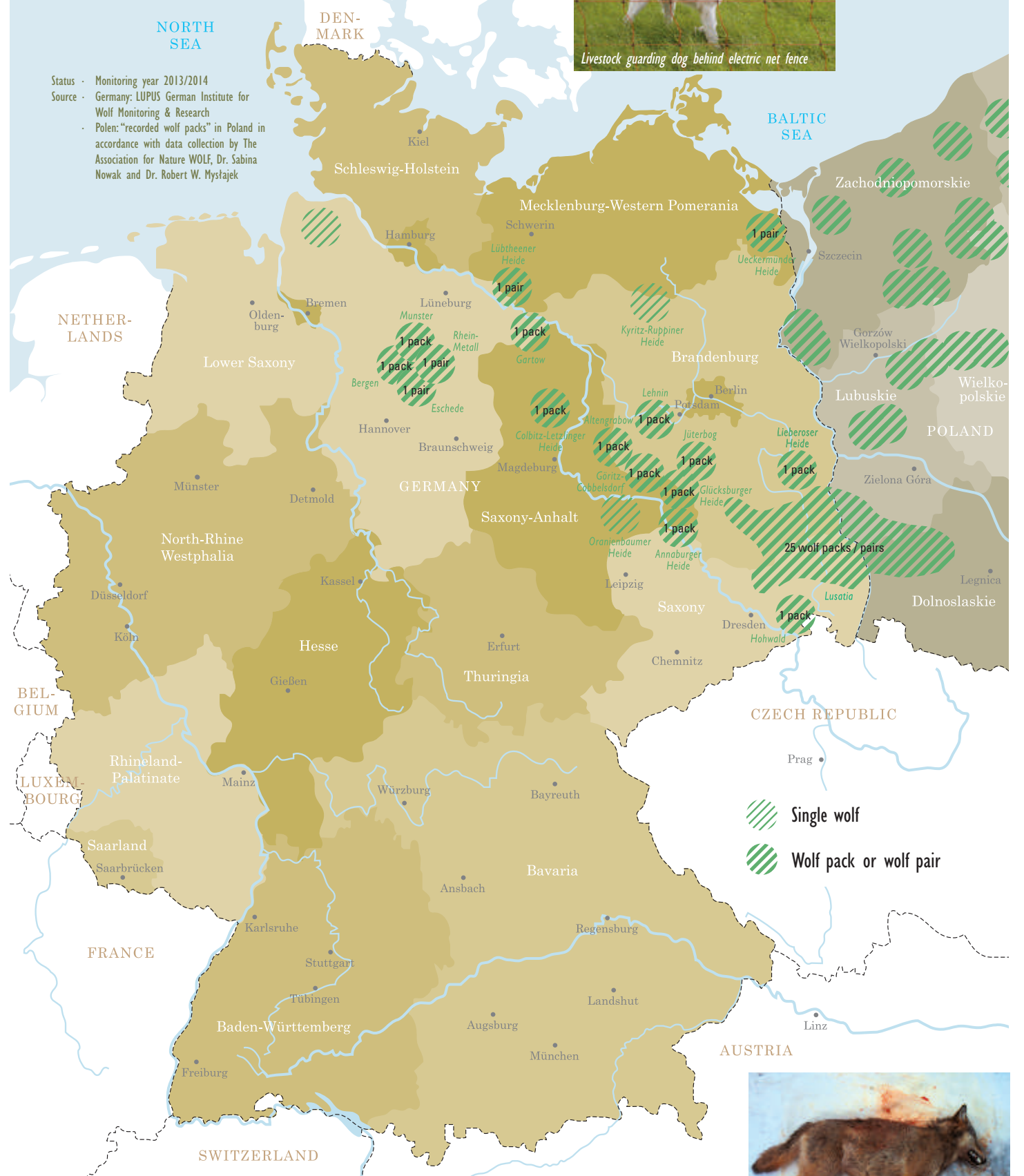
Wolves are specialised on feeding on hoofed animals, but they cannot distinguish between "permitted" wild animals and "not permitted" farm animals such as sheep and goats. Therefore measures are needed to protect the latter from wolf attacks.

A well maintained electric fence offers an extensive amount of security if it is closed to all sides and leaves no gap under the fence. The attachment of a barrier tape about 20-30 cm above the fence offers additional protection. To prevent wolves from digging under wire mesh fences farmers can install an additional electrical wire or embed the wire mesh fence into the ground. In Saxony and Brandenburg a supporting structure for livestock prevention measures exists. In case of an attack on livestock, specially trained persons examine the cause and extent of the damages. After examining the situation the livestock owner is compensated for his loss as long as the animals were protected. Suckler cow herds and horses are less threatened because of their size and defensiveness.



Area of distribution of wolves

in Germany and Western Poland



Is There a Future for Wolves in Germany?

The number of wolf packs and pairs that currently live in Germany and western Poland are still a relatively small and threatened population. Outside the Lusatia area the distribution range is still very fragmented. However, the trend is quite positive.

Several factors may threaten their future:

- ✓ Road kills
- ✓ Illegal killings
- ✓ Diseases such as mange and parvovirus
- ✓ Dissection of habitat due to motorway and railway lines
- ✓ Hybridisation with dogs — when wolf numbers are low there is a lack of mating partners