



From the Director's Chair

An Update from Executive Director Kim Wheeler

Travel back with me to a day unlike any other. The date is September 14, 1987 and you are one of people anxiously awaiting the release of the first red wolves into the wild. As each of the eight animals took its first steps toward reclaiming its wild heritage, I imagine the humans were wondering if these captive red wolves could survive in the wild.

Back to the Wild - Celebrating 25 Years of Red Wolf Recovery in North Carolina!

Well, survive they have—for 25 years. The last 25 years have been filled with many triumphs, challenges and new discoveries. The team of individuals that made this moment in history possible will never be forgotten for their unwavering dedication to red wolf conservation. Every red wolf, whether wild or captive, carries with it the desire for survival and the promise of the future. I can only wonder what the wolves have in store for us in the next 25 years!

The Coalition is grateful to everyone that has taken part in red wolf conservation and allowed us to be a strong voice for red wolves. We have plans for this 25th anniversary celebration, so keep checking our website for further details.

Announcing the Red Wolf Print Winner...

The winner of the red wolf limited-edition print—signed by artist Ann Raspberry—is red wolf enthusiast Leah Dey!



Red Wolf in Snow

Kim Wheeler



**Red Wolf
Supporters Ring in
the New Year for
Wolves**

The 2011 fall appeal rallied scores of red wolf lovers! We set an ambitious goal of \$30,000...and we made it! In fact, we ran the red line on the website tracking thermometer right out the other end and broke the glass! There is no possible way for us to adequately thank everyone for their gifts of support to the Red Wolf Coalition. But we will highlight what that support means in 2012 by rolling out several new programs. Stay tuned!

Also, we want to send out a huge thank-you howl to the scores of Facebook-using packmates who helped the Red Wolf Coalition win a cash award from the Chase Community Giving Challenge!



*RWC Executive Director with the check from
the Chase Community Giving Challenge*



**Coyote Night
Hunting a Threat to
Red Wolves**

We have learned that the state of North Carolina is pondering the wisdom (or lack of same) of allowing people to hunt coyotes at night. According to the State Division of Wildlife Management's "Rulemaking Revision Proposals to Take to Public Hearing," staff recommendations under consideration for public hearings include allowing the hunting of feral swine and coyotes at night with a light. The Red Wolf Coalition strongly opposes this due to the obvious threats to red wolves, and we will work to keep this from happening—especially in the five-county red wolf restoration region.



**What in the Woods
Is That?**

The Red Wolf Coalition receives frequent reports of people catching glimpses of big wolf-like canids in fields and pastures, along woodland edges and even on golf courses! Some who contact us include photos and ask “Is this a wolf?!” It’s exciting to know that people are observing wildlife in their own backyards and on their hikes, and that they take the time to send us queries. We are always glad to respond, even though it’s impossible for us to give a definitive answer based only on a photo.

These sightings are often intriguing, though. Many of us who have been out West have seen the small coyotes of the Great Plains and the Northern Rockies. Those coyotes are small—maybe 20 pounds. They are beautiful animals, but they do not resemble their big, burly cousin, the gray wolf. Eastern coyotes are, on the other hand, relatively large and robust. Many of them are long-legged and dark, and folks who spot them aren’t exactly sure what they are seeing. Eastern coyotes are sometimes called brush wolves or coywolves. They may have eastern wolf and even red wolf in their genetic makeup, which explains their large size.

Many of these animals may indeed be hybrids or, as one biologist puts it, *Canis soupus*. Some could possibly be dispersing wolves from southern Ontario or possibly even a red wolf that has left and headed out on its own. Considering the huge distances that dispersing wolves travel, that is not out of the question.

If you get lucky and spot a large wild canid, take a photo if you can. Note whether the animal is alone or with one or more other animals. If there is time, study the head. Is it broad? Is the nose tapered or more squared off and massive? What about height, leg length, size of the feet? All that is very hard to notice if from just a glimpse, of course. But it’s fun to look with an educated eye.

Remember that wild canids almost always appear to weigh more than they actually do because of their dense fur. Let us know if you spot one...we will be glad to talk to you about it!



**The Red Wolf
Coalition is
Looking...**

...for cooperative relationships with businesses and corporations. We are the beneficiary of a General Mills *Good Works* program grant! Marketing experts from General Mills will work with us on strategies to develop relationships that increase the impact of the Coalition in the coming year and beyond.

An example of such a relationship is ours with Unifi Corporation, which is encouraging employees to engage with proven nonprofits through a variety of projects including *Lunch and Learn*, a monthly program where a nonprofit is featured and a speaker scheduled to showcase that nonprofit. The Red Wolf Coalition has been chosen to present during the month of January.



The Education Connection

The Red Wolf Coalition conducted an exciting all-day workshop in October 2011 for classroom teachers and informal educators. In addition to the activities and the introduction to the red wolf curriculum *Far Traveler*, participants got to play “field biologist” by attempting to find a hidden radio tracking collar. It’s not as easy as you might think! But Executive Director Kim Wheeler taught the participants how to use an antenna and receiver to locate the collar.

Also, the RWC now has available three Red Wolf Discovery Boxes filled with exciting artifacts and hands-on activities for teachers. The boxes can be reserved through the Red Wolf Coalition office at 252-796-5600. A description of the contents and information about reserving a Discovery Box is listed on the website under the Resources menu.



The Winds of August – Hurricane Irene

Many northeastern North Carolina residents packed up and left the region in August 2011 as Hurricane Irene churned through the Atlantic on its way to landfall on the Outer Banks. But what about the wildlife? Animals don’t have windows to board up and keepsakes to pack into a car headed for safety inland. So what do red wolves and other critters do?

The truth is, they just hunker down and wait it out. So far, none of the big storms that have raked the North Carolina coast in past years have caused an ecocatastrophe. The red wolves have weathered the storms just fine. But that is not to say that a monster storm, like a Category 5 hurricane, could not cause severe and lasting damage to red wolf habitat. The North Carolina coastal lands are low and flat. The land has little slope, and incremental sea-level rise has wildlife managers planning for a perhaps not-too-distant future when much of the land will be under water. Red wolves are particularly vulnerable because there are no other populations of wild red wolves anywhere in the world. An article about this subject will appear in the Spring issue of the International Wolf Center’s quarterly magazine, *International Wolf*. We will post the article on this website, so be on the lookout.



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