



GRAY WOLF (EUROPE)
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PHOTO ENTRY

Wolf (G), Loup (F).

Also called wolf or common wolf. The name "gray wolf" is used to differentiate it from the red wolf of North America, which is a different species, and the maned wolf of South America and extinct Falkland Island wolf, which are not really wolves.

DESCRIPTION (male) Head and body length 3-5 feet (0.9-1.5 m). Tail length 13-20 inches (33-51 cm). Shoulder height 26-32 inches (66-81 cm). Weight 80-120 pounds (36-54 kg), sometimes considerably more. Females are about 20 percent smaller than males. The gray wolf is the largest wild member of the dog family and is the ancestor of the domestic dog. It resembles a large German shepherd dog, with its heavy frame, long legs, large feet and thick, bushy tail. The skull is especially large, with powerful jaws and large, well-developed, meat-eating teeth. Like most canids, it has 42 teeth (i3/3, c1/1, pm4/4, m2/3). The fur is moderately long and thick. The overall color varies from grayish-brown to yellowish-brown, and there may be a reddish tinge on the head, ears, shoulders and legs. Northern specimens tend to be large, gray and long-haired; southern ones are smaller, brown and short-haired.



HABITAT Dense forests, open woodland and tundra.

DISTRIBUTION At one time throughout the greater part of Europe including the British Isles. Now mainly in Russia, Romania and the former Yugoslavia, with lesser numbers in Finland, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal. A few survive in northern parts of Sweden and Norway. Outside Europe, the gray wolf is also found in Asia and North

America.

REMARKS Hunting the intelligent, wary wolf is difficult, and most are taken by chance encounter. Occasionally taken over bear bait or during drives for other species. European wolves have a reputation for being more aggressive toward humans than North American wolves.

TAXONOMIC NOTES Dozens of subspecies have been described at different times, based mainly on color and size. The following are listed in Europe: *deitanus* (southeastern Spain), *italicus* (Italy), *kurjak* (former Yugoslavia), *lupus* (most of Europe) and *signatus* (central Spain). We do not separate them.