



COLORADO WOLF & WILDLIFE CENTER

FEBRUARY 2025 · CONSERVATION · EDUCATION · PRESERVATION



THE
Lovers



The Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center

is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization certified by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA). Look for this logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things.

The contents of the material we include in our newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views of CWWC. We collect information from other organizations, the web, news feeds, and/or other sources. We choose articles that are in the related field of education and conservation.



TO SUBSCRIBE to our monthly newsletter, go to wolfeducation.org and sign up on the newsletter page.

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| SOCIAL MEDIA HAPPENINGS |

Stay up to date with the animals at CWWC, wolves and wildlife in the news, and advocacy opportunities.

- Subscribe to our YouTube Channel: ColoradoWolf&WildlifeCenter** We post videos of the training and enrichment we are providing for our animals, and educational vlogs about wolves.
- Follow us on Facebook: Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center** to get updates on new YouTube video postings, read feel good stories from other wolf/wildlife organizations, and learn about new wildlife findings in the research field.
- Follow us on Instagram: @cowolfcenter** to see pictures of our beautiful animals, stories of what we are doing around the center, and ways you can help wild wolf populations. Keep your eye on our story for fun videos of the day to day lives of our wolves and keepers.
- CWWC is now on Bluesky! Follow us: @cowolfcenter.bsky.social**
- Follow us on Twitter: @Wolves_at_CWWC** to see photos of our animals, read fun facts, and hear about events happening at CWWC.
- Follow us on TikTok: @cowolfcenter** for the videos you won't see on our other social media pages.

We hope to give you something to look forward to every day!



— THE STORY OF —

THE Lovers

This is a story about two wolves who found each other and together helped to create one of the finest wolf and wildlife sanctuaries in the world. Chinook was a beautiful wolf dog rescued from a kill shelter. Nikita was an Arctic wolf rescued from a 5' x 8' crate he had lived in for 3 years.

A beautiful enclosure was built for Nikita, but when the door was opened for him to run free he instead started to shake with uncertainty. Chinook, with her confidence, was led over to Nikita to see if she could charm him out. Immediately their tails began to wag with approval, followed by a nose-to-nose encounter. It was love.

Chinook backed out of the crate and Nikita followed. From that moment they started to play and were inseparable.

The picture on this stone was taken soon after that meeting and is appropriately titled, "THE LOVERS." They lived together for many years. Soon after Chinook's death at the age of 14, Nikita was placed with another wolf for companionship; however, he missed his true love. Nikita left this world at the age of 17. In memory of the two, you may see and hear a pair of wind chimes on the tour trail. There, Chinook and Nikita are together with a voice spirit that will never be forgotten.

Because of the amazing wolf Chinook, the sanctuary was created and thousands of people have been made aware of the power and majesty of the wolf. Because of the amazing wolf Nikita, the romance of hope and love is written in stone.



Darlene Kobobel
CWWC Founder





HOW the Center WAS BORN



It all started in 1993.

Actually, it started in 1962 when I was born and I was considered to be of the human species. However, I just wanted to live with dogs, horses and coyotes. All my life I wanted to rescue animals and help them anyway that I could. The turning point was when I was in the 4th grade and a dog strayed onto the playground. I saw some of the school boys run over to the dog, ganged up on him and they started kicking him until he was crying from fear and pain. I ran over to the dog and shielded him with my body as the boys continued to kick the dog and me. I screamed for the

teacher and the viciousness finally ceased. I whispered in the dogs' ear that someday when I grew up I would create a place to rescue animals and I would be a voice for him.

I moved to Colorado on February 25, 1993. I started doing some volunteer

work at the Divide animal shelter when it was a "kill shelter". My job as a volunteer was to take dogs down to Petsmart for adoption. The animals that I worked with were ones that had one day left to live. I gathered 4 dogs, put them in my Pathfinder and was ready to head down the mountain pass when I decided to get a water bowl. I opened the door to the isolation room where supplies were kept and to my right in one of the kennels was this beautiful silver gray female wolf dog by the name of Chinook.

According to her informational sheet that was hanging on the door she was only two years old, no prior convictions just guilty of her breed. Not being aware that wolf dogs (aka wolf hybrids) were not available for adoption, I got her leash and decided to take her with me for adoption. At that moment, the animal control officer advised me that she could not go and that she was scheduled for euthanasia.

My heart sank and I could not see this animal being put to death so I asked him if I could adopt her as a special favor to me? He told me to go to Petsmart with the dogs and when I got back to shelter if she was still there then I could have her.

When I returned, the animal control officer looked down at his watch and told me that if I wanted this animal I would need to take her at that moment which I did. I felt lucky for him to surrender her to me so I was sure not to offer any information as to where I lived such as a 1-room studio cabin that I was renting, had two dogs already and if the landlord were to catch me with this wolf, he would give me less than two weeks to find a home for her or to face eviction.

To make a very long story shorter, I found a place in Lake George, Colorado with 8.5 acres. My husband at the time helped me to fence in 5 acres and I decided that I was going to be a "rescue center". I placed a large sign in my front yard that said; "WOLF HYBRID RESCUE CENTER". I tell people to NEVER say the word "rescue" unless you are prepared to do just that. My first week, I rescued 17 animals and was overwhelmed. I lived at that location for 10 years until 2002 when we endured the Hayman fire which burned over 137,000 acres and forced us to evacuate in 3 hours. We moved to a ranch in Florissant and lived in a horse barn with wolves for several weeks until the new Center was constructed. The lease was suppose to be indefinite however,

conditions with the landlord made it impossible to live there and after only 3.5 years of rebuilding, we had to move. All of the money and hard work was gone and I was uncertain of where to go and how to survive. I was on my own, but when I would look in the eyes of those babies I knew I had to find a way no matter what. Chinook was my inspiration before and now she was again. I, by a miracle found a bank president through a sister friend of mine who believed in me and gave me a loan just on my track record for this property. Now the fun started sort of speak. I guess three times is a charm. I signed the papers on the deed in January 2006.

This is our final and permanent home. This Center, all of the animal residents you meet, and the education would not be possible without the love of so many volunteers and a beautiful and special wolf by the name of Chinook.

Darlene M. Kobobel
Founder



Areas where coyote-hunting is legal have more coyotes, research shows

Caroline Long | Utah Public Radio | January 21, 2025



Coyote hunting is incentivized in Utah, but it may not be the best strategy to manage this species. Photo: Pickpic

Coyotes are native to the southwestern U.S. and have expanded their range rapidly in the last 100 years. A recent study examines patterns of coyote abundance.

"Now they're found basically throughout all of North America. ... And so, our main goal was to figure out – what are the environmental and human-led factors driving this expansion?"

Austin Green, one of the study's authors, is an ecologist for Sageland Collaborative and an associate instructor at the University of Utah. He said the data for this study came from Snapshot USA, a network of camera traps across the contiguous United States.

"From that data, we can look at long-term nationwide trends in wildlife populations," Green said.

What they found was that, in states and counties where coyote hunting is allowed, coyotes are actually more abundant.

"There's a number of potential reasons for why we are seeing this kind of weird, what we call "coyote math," where two minus one equals three," Green said.

It does seem to be a pretty consistent trend. However, Green said, that where hunting pressures exist, coyote populations are high.

In Utah, hunting coyotes is encouraged to protect the mule deer population. The Division of Wildlife Resources offers a \$50 bounty for each coyote killed. This month, that bounty was increased to \$100 in areas classified as crucial mule deer habitat.

Research suggests, however, that killing coyotes is not the answer.

"There was no evidence across our model or across other investigations that unregulated coyote hunting is a legitimate population control measure," Green said.

Photo: Pexels cottonbro studio



DAIRY WORKERS MAY HAVE PASSED BIRD FLU TO PET CATS – CDC

Two dairy workers in Michigan may have transmitted bird flu to their pet cats last May, suggests a new study published Thursday by the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention.

In one household, infected cats may have passed the virus to other people in the home, but limited evidence makes it difficult to ascertain the possibility.

The results are from a study that was scheduled to be published in January but was delayed by the Trump administration's pause on communications from the CDC.

A single data table from the new report briefly appeared online 2 weeks ago in a paper on the wildfires in California, then quickly disappeared. That odd incident prompted calls from public health experts for the study's release.

The new paper still leaves major questions unanswered, including how the cats first became infected and whether farm-workers spread the virus to the cats and to other people in the household, experts said.

Officials in Michigan began investigating two households in May, when exclusively indoor cats showed respiratory and neurological symptoms and, after death, tested positive for the virus, called H5N1.



– LOCAL GUIDE

What an awesome place to visit! I showed up not sure what to expect and was blown away by the quality of the tour. Educational and eye opening. They take pride in taking care of these animals and making sure the visitors understand that they need our help. I especially loved seeing the wolf dogs - reminded me of my Mia back home (Siberian Husky/German Shepherd/Malamute/Wolf mix). Beware of the gift shop - it is very destructive to your wallet! So many awesome things to buy. I highly recommend taking a tour and if I find myself back in the area I will visit again and bring the family :)



Pawprints in the Snow

Learning to Love the Fox by Ariel Austill

Throughout history, foxes have held varying roles in folklore and mythology as people look for symbols to tell their stories. In ancient -and even modern – cultures, they were associated with gods and tricksters, symbolizing cunning, mischief, and adaptability. These associations influence society's perception and behaviors towards foxes, impacting wildlife conservation efforts, media output, and news coverage.

I thought why not ask some people what they think about foxes? I asked five people of different ages and occupations to tell me the first three words that popped in their head when I said "fox". My results: Trickster (5), Clever (4), Mischievous/Deceitful (4), Fluffy/Cuddly (2). I found it interesting that only four words – out of a possible 15 - were mentioned.

This had me wondering why we still think these things about foxes. Surely, they've been in the public eye long enough that their negative stereotypes have gotten better, right?

The answer there is yes and no. Yes, the public image of foxes is miles better than it was fifty years ago, but it still isn't up to par with reality. And the only way to move forward is to understand our past.

All of our stories and symbolism have to come from somewhere. Whether it be true or a misunderstanding, the behaviors and associations our ancestors made when observing wildlife became the building blocks for the characterization we still see today.

In Japanese folklore, the Kitsune (meaning spiritual fox) is believed to have spiritual abilities and is seen as a protector and a deceiver, containing both sides of the fox we see in cultural narratives. However, foxes have developed a more "trickster" position in the majority of our stories and fables.

They see them as a "clever troublemaker" that will make themselves comfortable anywhere. This stands true to a fox's adaptability. They can be found anywhere from their natural habitats to urban settings, to our own backyards. They will even change their eating habits, finding it much easier to get their meal from your trash can than hunt down their food. Unfortunately, this only made the "thieving" association stronger.

Nowadays we see foxes represented in the media as con artists, doing whatever they have to to get what they want. These representations of foxes trigger associations that reflect the fears, virtues, and complexities in our own human nature.

In art and folklore, foxes are often depicted as vibrant characters. European medieval art frequently portrays foxes as symbols of nobility and cunning, forming a critical element in fables and tales that reflect societal morals.

Examples of these types of morals might come from Disney's 1973 Robin Hood. Robin is portrayed as a fox because of all the tricks he has to pull to benefit others. While still viewed as the hero of the story, Robin Hood main characteristics are thief and trickery, exactly what we would think a fox to be.

We can see the way foxes are viewed changing with modern fox characters. For example: Disney's Zootopia. Nick Wilde (our fox character) starts off the movie as a con-artist looking to only be what everyone says he already is and nothing more. The difference between Robin Hood and Nick Wilde is that Nick goes on to be a better person and to help fight the stereotypes society put upon him.

We might not be where we were fifty years ago, and we still might not be exactly fair yet, but society is already starting to change. Sometimes we need to take a step back and appreciate what we have accomplished for these animals. However, our work is not done. During my small questionnaire from the beginning of this project, the negative characteristics were still there, but so were the positives. As a society, we are learning to love the fox.

FIRST RESPONDER APPRECIATION MONTH

February 15 - March 15

Tuesday-Friday ONLY!

TOURS:

Standard.... \$10

Feeding \$15

20% OFF in
our Gift Shop

Beat the
Winter Blues
and do
Something
FUN!



RESERVATIONS & VALID ID REQUIRED

MUST Mention "We Salute You" special at time of booking

719.687.9742 • WolfEducation.org

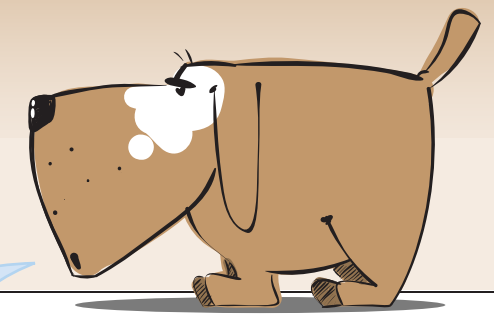
Adoption corner

TCRAS

Teller County Regional Animal Shelter
tcrascolorado.org · 719.686.7707

SLVAWS

San Luis Valley Animal Welfare Society
slvaws.org · 719.587.woof (9663)



[NOTE - Our shelter is still open for adoptions, but we are asking that you call ahead and make an appointment before coming in to the shelter - 719-686-7707.]

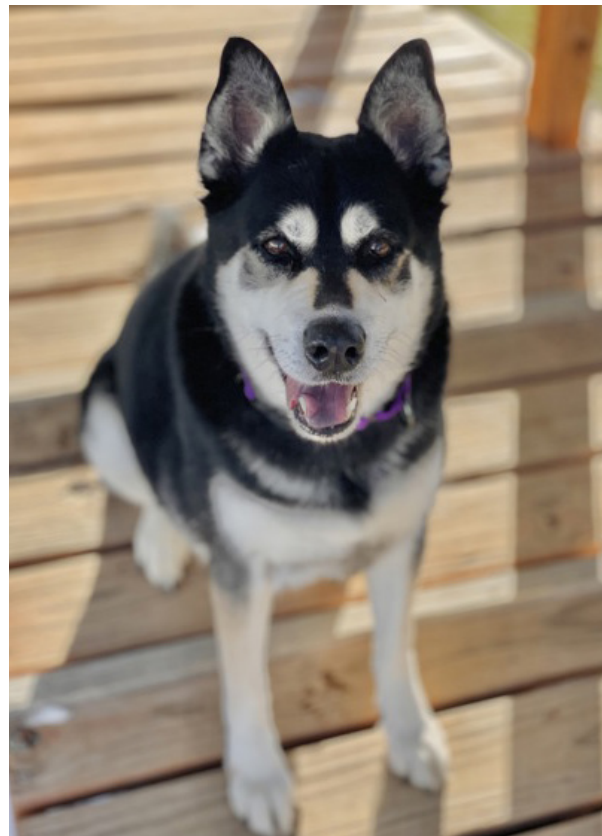
KORRA »

Hi! My name is Korra. I'm a very shy, quiet girl. If you gently pet me, I'll lean into your hand and purr. I would love a quiet home where I can keep coming out of my shell. Will you be my new family?



« LIZZIE

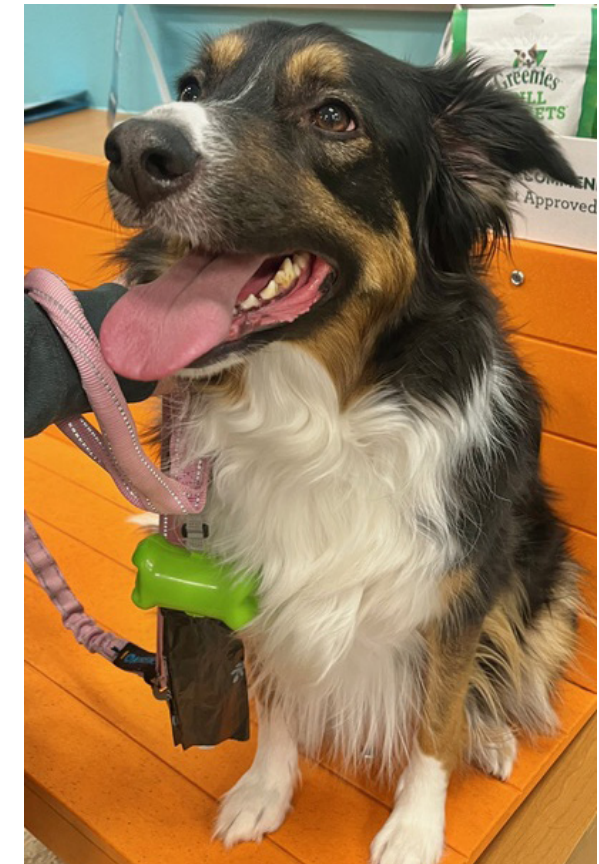
Hello new friend! My name is Lizzie. I'm a big, fluffy, and friendly girl. I just want to be with my people and get loved! I do love food and treats a little too much, as I am a hefty gal. I would love a family who can provide me with regular exercise so I can work my way back to a healthy weight!



SLVAWS
Please check our website, www.slvaws.org for our next adoption fair in Colorado Springs, every Saturday 10am-3pm.

NOODLE »

Noodle is a very loving border collie/aussie ~ 3 1/2 years old. Very smart, learns quickly, runs very fast, loves to play ball. Her breed needs lots of exercise and mental stimulation. Okay around children but sometimes anxious around them. Knows commands. Spayed, all vacc's. Surrendered by a single mom with a baby.



« FANNY

Fanny is a 3-year-old Anatolian/hound mix. Prefers to play with larger dogs. Good with other dogs. Affectionate. Loves the outdoors. Spayed, all vacc's, chipped.