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THE RED WOLF



GETTING TO KNOW...

THE RED WOLF

Region & Habitat	Native to the southeastern US
Classification	Mammal
Size	About 26" at their shoulder and about 4 feet long
Nocturnal or Diurnal	Mostly nocturnal
Conservation Status	Critically Endangered; less than 25 in the wild, less than 250 in captivity
Average Lifespan	6-7 years
Gestational Period	60-63 days, average of 3-12 per litter
Diet	Carnivore
Scientific name	Canis Rufus
Fun Fact	Red wolves hunt in the same area for about 10 days, then switch to a different hunting range.

The red wolf is slightly smaller and redder in color than their cousins, the gray wolf. They mate for life, forming a pack of five to eight. Both males and females help rear their young with older offspring helping raise their younger siblings. Once old enough, they leave the pack to search for their own mate and territory. There are no recorded attacks by red wolves on humans and they choose to stay as far away from people as possible. They play a vital role in keeping the deer population in check and it is believed that their preference for nuisance species, like nutria and raccoons, can help reduce crop damage.

Over a century ago, the once common red wolf roamed across the southeastern United States. They were often mistaken for coyotes, earning them a bad reputation as a threat to livestock. By the 1980's, hunting and habitat loss had pushed the red wolf to the brink of extinction. They are now the world's most endangered wolf with fewer than 25 known in the wild (2023 estimate). Less than 250 red wolves are maintained and cared for in several Red Wolf SAFE (Saving Animals From Extinction) facilities throughout the United States, including the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina. Other conservation efforts for the red wolf include captive breeding programs and reintroduction into the wild.

WORD SEARCH

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Mate
Wolf
Red

Hunt
Canis
Mammal

Rufus
Endangered
Southeast

Carnivore
Howl
Nocturnal

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