

Wolves & Pets

Wolves consider dogs a territorial threat and may attack and kill them. Wolf attacks on dogs have been documented in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Washington, Oregon, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Alaska.

“Wolves kill dogs. It’s a simple fact that was overlooked in the wolf reintroduction scheme, but it’s become heartbreakingly too familiar to many ranchers, pet owners, and hound hunters in the region.” (Cat Urbigit - Wolf Watch - Wyoming)



“Wolves look at all domestic dogs as competitors. Competition for territory, food or a mate drives wolves to be aggressive toward dogs.”

(Carolyn Sime - Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, wolf coordinator)



“Although wolf attacks on pet dogs in residential areas are rare, they do occur and have increased in recent years. These types of attacks represent a special kind of wolf depredation to domestic animals.

In the case of dogs attacked near homes, these may occur throughout the year and outside the summer rendezvous period. In these specific cases, wolves are probably attacking dogs in defense of the edges of their territory, or they may be preying on dogs as food sources. These types of depredations have been relatively uncommon, but have been on the increase in recent years. Even in a territorial dispute that was not intended as predation, once a dog is dead, if wolves have not fed recently, they may consume the dog as a food source.”

(Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources)

“As wolves expand their range in Oregon, dog owners will need to be aware of the potential risks to their animals. Areas or situations where wolves and domestic dogs encounter each other can result in dog mortality. In some instances, wolves may alter their regular movements or activities to seek out and confront domestic dogs.”

“Working dogs used to protect livestock are not immune from wolf depredation. The killing of guard dogs by wolves has been documented in the Rocky Mountain Recovery Area.”

“In Oregon, some wolves are likely to occupy areas near human habitation or areas used for recreation which could put pets or working dogs at risk. Dogs running at large or dogs working cattle or sheep could be vulnerable in these situations. Bird hunting dogs or hounds used in forested areas occupied by wolves also could be at risk. Public education will be important in preventing wolf/domestic dog interactions.”

(Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan /Chapter III – Wolf-Livestock/Domestic Animal Conflicts)



“If your dog is killed or injured by wolves, report the incident as soon as possible to your local fish and game officer or regional office, or to USDA Wildlife Services.” *(Reducing Conflicts Between Dogs and Wolves in Idaho)*



Keeping Pets Safe from Wolves

- Avoid releasing dogs outside for bathroom breaks after dark except in areas with good lighting or that are fenced.
- Do not leave pets outside overnight unless they have a sturdy kennel.
- Avoid feeding deer near your home.
- Don't leave cat or dog food outside at night.
- Don't deposit table scraps or animal products near home sites.
- Keep pets on a leash or in visual/ auditory range on walks and vocalize regularly including use of whistles.
- Don't allow dogs to roam at large.

(Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources)

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