

DICK ELLIS

# Seeking Wolf Photos

## OWO's informal census continues

On Wisconsin Outdoors' informal wolf census continues. Please send your trail cam photos of wolves in Wisconsin to: [wolves@onwisconsinoutdoors.com](mailto:wolves@onwisconsinoutdoors.com). List the county where the photos were taken, the date, and verify the number of wolves visible in each photo. Your name will not be published.

OWO publishers do not believe the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) population estimate that place wolf numbers in Wisconsin at 1007 animals during the winter of 2022/23. We do believe that an unmanaged wolf population in the state directly correlates with a severely declining deer hunting experience particularly in the north country. We believe that the decline in our Wisconsin tradition will magnify further as individual wolves and wolf packs continue to expand to create an increasingly out-of-balance predator/prey ratio.

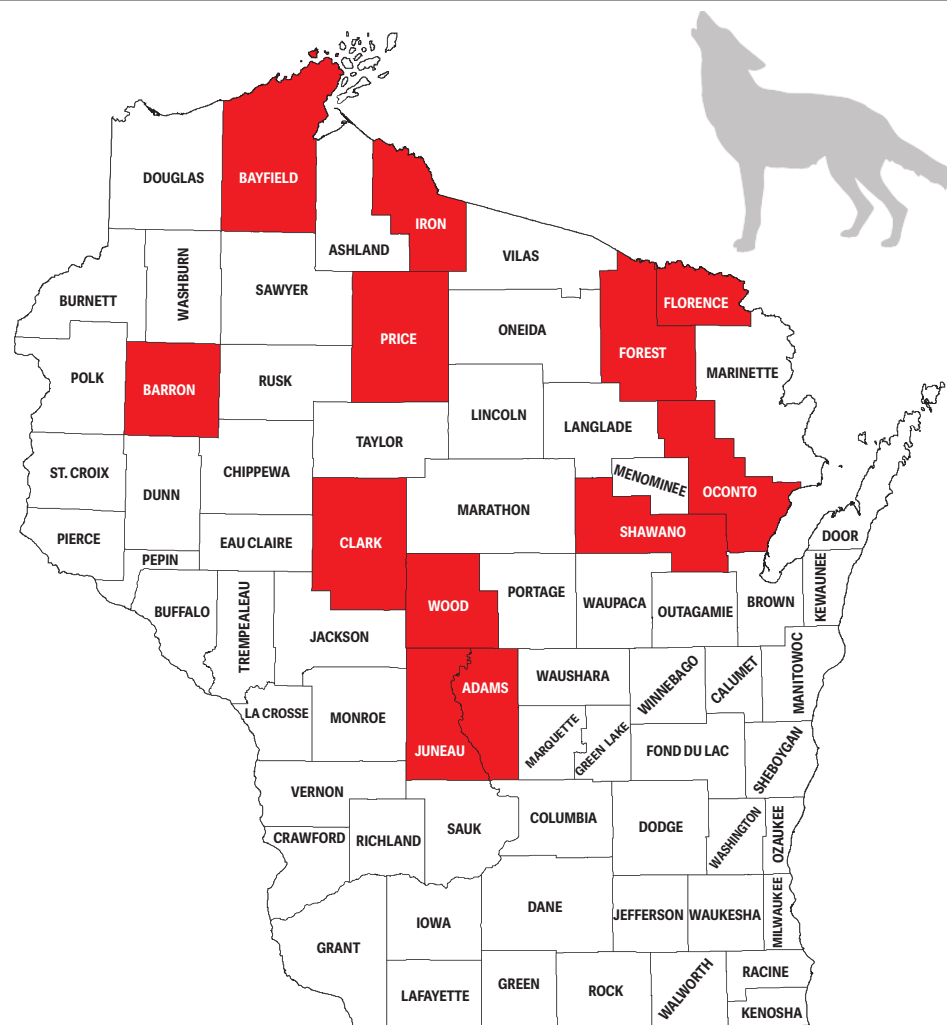
By the numbers, since OWO asked for your trail cam photos of wolves we have received 17 photos from readers and published since January, 2024. The shots include a total of 50 wolves scattered over 12 counties; Bayfield, Barron, Iron,



4-21-2023 Juneau County 1 Wolf

Price, Clark, Wood, Adams, Juneau, Florence, Forest, Oconto and Shawano. In our ongoing project, red on the adjacent Wisconsin map will represent counties from which we have received wolf photos.

To date, using the state mark of approximately 1000 wolves, with 17



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# Predator Myths

## Is wolf or man the most efficient tool for Wisconsin deer management?

This trail cam photo from Forest County submitted by an OWO reader shows a wolf taking down a fawn. Each wolf will take the equivalent of 20 adult deer annually.

Think critically when you listen to or read information from organizations like Sierra Club-Wisconsin Chapter, Wisconsin Greenfire, Humane Society of the United States, or DNR regarding the need for more wolves on our landscape. The wolf is often labeled as a necessary tool to ensure the health of Wisconsin's ecosystem by, for example, culling the deer herd of weak animals with disease like CWD, or removing excessive numbers of deer harmful to forests.

Ask yourself if a wolf, the ultimate opportunist predator, will pass on fawns or vulnerable bear cubs to take down a deer with CWD. Watch the video that On Wisconsin Outdoors will repost on our homepage of two wolves

taking down a large adult buck. You will watch the death struggle typical to a wolf kill, and listen to the agonizing wailing of the prey prior to succumbing to the inevitable.

That is how wolves are made. The wolf, a beautiful animal with the hunting instincts necessary to survive harsh environments is to be admired for many reasons and welcome in Wisconsin in proper balance. He is a reliable predator. He is not an efficient or humane predator. Man is both, with the ability to immediately drop a deer with a well-placed round, and the logic to not take a shot unless the immediate kill is probable.

The wolf needs to be managed so that scientific, numbers-based management is not smothered by a "social science" survey approach that puts as much credence with animal rights activists and people scattered throughout the world as a family in Bayfield County or a rancher in Barron



11-30-2019 Forest County Wolf Killing Deer in Progress

County. Or, hunters that traditionally hunt those areas of Wisconsin and support businesses there where deer numbers are now declining.

All of the attributes associated with the need for more wolves on Wisconsin's landscape in fact, can be better achieved by man. And it is the Wisconsin hunter too, that should be afforded the opportunity to have venison in the freezer come November. 🐾

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snapshots taken over an approximately 16 percent of Wisconsin's 72 counties, we have in theory captured approximately five percent of the DNR's estimated population. The photo contributions represent only a literal snapshot of the vast territory within each of the 12 counties, with the large majority of northern and central Wisconsin counties from verified wolf strongholds not yet contributing a single photo to our informal survey.

Did our readers to date capture five percent of the state wolf population from 17 tree mounts, or are wolf numbers grossly underestimated?

Thank you for sending your trail cam photos of wolves, and for informing friends, local sports shop owners, shooting clubs or other possible sources that OWO is asking for photos that will help verify or challenge state population estimates. Healthy, science-based wildlife management is only possible with accurate numbers of predator and prey serving as the foundation for decisions.

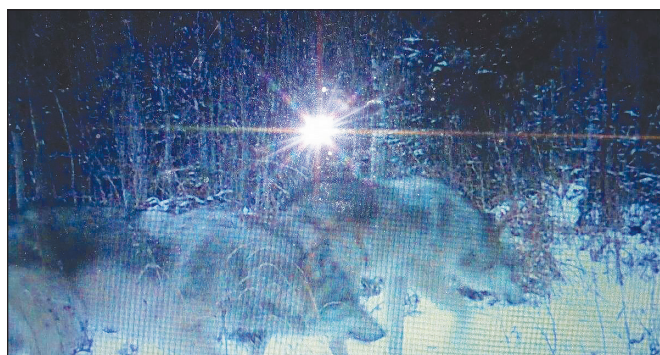
Help us verify truth in numbers. Wherever it leads us. 📷



9-18-2023 Bayfield County 11 Wolves



Wolf With Bear Cub 2017



11-28-2023 Iron County 2 Wolves



2-24-2022 Eastern Adams County 1 Wolf



1-25-2024 Clark County 1 Wolf



7-8-2019 Wood County 6 Wolves



10-18-2023 Oconto County 1 Wolf

## DEAN PAVLETICH

## Grayer Pastures

## Return to Iowa means big buck payoff for Wisconsin hunter

After a 22-year absence, I returned to deer hunt the family farm in southwest Iowa. For more than 45 years, I've been an avid Wisconsin deer hunter, but after hunting four counties in Wisconsin during 2023 bow, gun and muzzleloader seasons and only seeing four deer, it was time to give Iowa a try.

Non-resident Iowa licenses are expensive, but worth it. Opening morning, I saw 26 deer, including eight bucks. At a distance of 100 yards and fielding a shotgun with only iron sights, the deer were too far away. I adjusted my shotgun's sights that evening, but missed a big buck at 65 yards the following day. I passed on a number of

bucks over the next five days.

The fifth afternoon hunt brought another opportunity. I almost didn't shoot with the image of the buck missed still in my head, but the shot was well placed even with the iron sights. There will be a scope on my shotgun going forward, but I'm happy now that I made the decision to squeeze the trigger.

I'm not sure where or if I'll hunt in Wisconsin in 2024. But seeing deer, hunting with my brothers-in-law and visiting family members made the Iowa hunt a great experience. No more 22-year waits! I can't wait for next season. 📷



After an earlier miss and some hunter's restraint on the trigger, Dean Pavletich of Mukwonago took this beautiful 11-point Iowa buck with shotgun and iron sights.