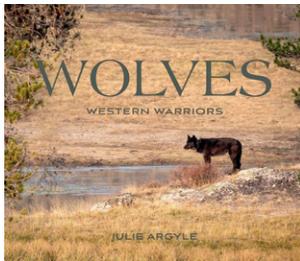


## Wolves: Western Warriors

By Julie Argyle. 2022. Gibbs Smith. 224 pages, 50.00 USD, Cloth.

*Wolves*, similar to Argyle's book *Bears* (2021, Gibbs Smith; Way 2021a), is an impressive, coffee-table-style book. It contains about 200 glossy, colour pictures of Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) and



scenery from Yellowstone National Park. It is a large (26.0 × 2.4 × 30.6 cm), heavy book (~2 kg) meant to be gazed at in admiration as we are given the pleasure of looking into the lives of these controversial and politically divisive animals. Fans of Yellowstone, nature, wolves and canids, predators, the western United States, and national parks will enjoy this book.

I recently read very personal accounts of Gray Wolves (e.g., Way 2020, 2021b) and Grizzly Bears (*Ursus arctos horribilis*; Way 2021a) inhabiting Yellowstone. This tome follows suit. Argyle shows her appreciation for the species by dedicating the book to her subjects, noting that wolves are sentient beings which have suffered at the hands of humankind (p. 5). She describes wolves as one of the most unique animals on the planet (p. 13), full of love, compassion, empathy, and devotion (p. 14). Particularly heart-warming to Argyle is the love wolves show for each other, along with their zest for life (p. 117). Wolves

are highly social animals that live in packs (p. 21). They are often compared to humans because we share similarities in social behaviour (p. 10) and, like humans, each wolf has a distinct personality.

In the chapter *The War on Wolves*, Argyle succinctly describes the awful things that humans have done to wolves over the course of recent history, as well as the efforts made to recover them in places like Yellowstone (p. 65). Wolves live a natural life in the national park, which provides protection from their biggest threat outside the park—humans (p. 71).

The earlier chapters in *Wolves* set the stage for the rest of the book, with the latter sections focussing on individuals, and showing awe-inspiring images of them. I especially liked the stunning photo of a shed out, lanky, uncollared black wolf staring at the camera as it travelled along a water body during the summertime (p. 81). Through Argyle's words and pictures, we get to know 755M, 926F, 1091F (a.k.a. *Daddy's Girl*), and *White Lady* and her mate 712M, as well as additional members from the *Wapiti Lake* and *Lamar Canyon Packs*—the two packs most frequently observed by Argyle (and most park visitors). The white alpha female of the *Wapiti Lake Pack* held a special place in her heart that no other wolf will ever be able to fill (pp. 117–119). Learning that this alpha female's daughter, 1091F, was killed while hunting was a difficult blow to Argyle (p. 117). The author was brought to tears both when 926F was shot by a

hunter in suspicious circumstances a mile (1.61 km) outside Yellowstone (p. 157), as well as when White Lady died from a hunter's bullet at the age of 12 at the northern park boundary (p. 193). I enjoyed reading Argyle's personal stories of these wolves which she has watched over the years, and viewing photographs emanating from those accounts was especially special.

*Wolves: Western Warriors* was an easy read and is well written. I read it over the period of a few hours on back-to-back days. One minor complaint I have is that there are no maps in the book. Showing the current range of the wolves in the United States, with Yellowstone National Park highlighted, would have been helpful to frame where the author took the pictures compared to the species' overall range. In addition, the pictures did not have descriptions. In some cases it was obvious which wolf we were looking at based on the chapter, but in many others it was not clear. Having short, one to two sentence, captions describing them would have been beneficial. Also, the book was relatively pricey, at \$50 USD. Yet, this might be expected given the book's large dimensions and the 100% glossy paper used for all 224 pages.

Overall, I really enjoyed reading *Wolves*, although it is difficult for me to not like anything that is Yellowstone-based, especially when it involves wolves. At the end of the book, Argyle noted that wolves have the same emotions as you and me, so we need to be a voice for them (p. 205). I hope we all heed the author's suggestion, and speak up and demand better protections for this sentient, social, and emotional animal.

### Literature Cited

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