

# Born to Be Wild , NOT A PET !



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service / John & Karen Hollingsworth

**No one sets out to kill what he loves.**

**But, for those who love wolves, that's what happens when they try to make a wolf into a pet.**

The growing trade in captive wolves and hybrids (wolf-dogs) stems in part from unscrupulous breeders who play upon people's love and admiration of the wild spirits of wolves and assure potential owners they can keep a wolf or wolf-dog as a pet. Wolves, however, are undomesticated, *wild* animals and *do not* make good pets. Their adult behavior is unpredictable and dangerous, and hybrids are even more aggressive than wolves.

By the end of their second year, the natural adult behaviors that have enabled them to survive as wild animals for millions of years become unmanageable. Their desire to claim their territory leads them to scent mark wherever they wish and they cannot be housebroken. Their curiosity causes havoc in human domestic space. Their need for exercise—they can run 20 miles a day and need territories of 18 to 1,000 square miles—is frustrated in captivity. In confinement, they become destructive, stressed, and mentally diseased, indifferent to human commands and attempts at control. They also challenge their owner's dominance and become a threat, especially to children, pets (including other dogs), and other domesticated and farm animals. Consequently, wolves and wolf-dogs kept as pets end up living out miserable lives, chained or penned up. A very few might find a limited life in a sanctuary. Most are destroyed.

If you love wolves, fight for their survival in the wild and fight to restore and preserve their habitat. But don't try to keep one as a pet.

**Keep the wild in your heart, not in your home.**

**Make no wild or exotic creature a pet.**



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