

Wolves

All wolves in Canada are grey wolves but there are twenty-three varieties of grey wolf, so that the Canadian family is not as uniform as one might suppose. The largest are found near the Mackenzie River and the fastest run at 28 mph. They are predators who will go after anything, including in a pinch untasty

"Wolves are scarce in Canada, but they afford the finest furs in all the country. Their flesh is white, and good to eat; they pursue their prey to the tops of the tallest trees."

—William Guthrie, "Guthrie's geographical grammar," 1807

"Any man that says he's been et by a wolf is a liar."

—"Sam Martin" of Algoma, about 1910, attributed by J. W. Curran in "Wolves don't bite," 1940

humans, and will sometimes kill some animals for pleasure. The pelts are worth little, but provincial authorities have sometimes encouraged the killing of wolves in order to increase the stock of their natural prey such as caribou, moose and elk. When it comes to food in the northern lands which are the wolf's natural habitat, aboriginal man and wolf are in direct competition.



Wilderness in Canadian mythology

The concept of "wilderness" occupies an important place in Canadian mythology. The facts of modern Canada are largely urban facts, industrial facts, with 76.1 per cent of the population living in towns and cities. But Canadians remain aware that, historically and geographically, vast areas of wilderness form a backdrop to their way of life.

Indeed the very fact of urbanization appears to be generating a reaction—both in terms of growing numbers going out of the cities to renew contact with nature in the wild acres of the national and provincial parks, and in the increasing vigilance of conservationists over areas which may be threatened by development.

Great steps have been taken in recent years towards the development of workable machinery for balancing out the various interests at stake in the environment.

Aside from the people immediately concerned, there is growing public interest in environmental issues: when Judge Berger held a meeting in Toronto to discuss the Mackenzie Valley pipeline, nearly 700 people attended on the first day alone.

"It is no coincidence that our national emblem is not a rising sun, a star, a hammer, a sickle, or a dragon, but a beaver and a maple leaf. Nor is it coincidence that there are more paintings of wilderness lakes, spruce bogs, and pine trees on more Canadian living room walls than in any other nation on earth. We may scoff, we may deny, but the wilderness mystique is still a strong element of the Canadian ethos."

—Fred Bodsworth, "Quoted by Richard C. Bocking in Canada's Water: For Sale?" (1972)