



### WILDSPIRITWOLFSANCTUARY.ORG/STARS-ALIGN

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eople often tell us that wolves are heir favorite animal in the canid family, and who could blame them? These strong, loyal animals are fascinating and downright cool. So, it comes as no surprise that the wolves and wolfdogs at Wild Spirit-which make up more than half of our rescue population—are the driving force behind the majority of our donations and tours. Everyone loves learning about the species and seeing them first hand; more than that, they enjoy getting to share their unique experience with friends and family. Who doesn't want to go home and say, "I saw wolves today!"? But for quests at Wild Spirit, it isn't just wolves and wolfdogs that you'll see. In addition, we are a home to red foxes, coyotes, New Guinea singing dogs, Australian dingoes, and a few domestic dogs as well! To learn more about these other wonderful canids, this is a great place to start!

Wolves and wolfdogs are by far the most sought-after animals our quests come to see, and because of this, our other species often get overlooked in lieu of their more popular cousins. Three of our most under-rated canines are the members of our NOLA pack, made up of three domestic dogs: Azteca, Katrina, and Juno. These three sisters came to Wild Spirit along with their sister Goldie and brother Saint (both of whom have

since passed away), mislabeled as wolfdogs when in fact, they are simply northern breed mixes. Currently 13 years old, the NOLA sisters have been here since 2009, when they were rescued from a small shelter in Louisiana. Unfortunately, because the NOLA siblings were mislabeled as wolfdogs and lived in the shelter for a number of years without proper human interaction and socialization, they became quite fearful of people and did not do well as pets. In fact, each time one of the dogs was adopted out into a human home, they were quickly returned to the shelter. Therefore, despite being regular dogs, once taken in by Wild Spirit, staff realized that the NOLAS would be best suited to remain together at the sanctuary instead of adopted out to human homes, and for the last 12 years we have provided them with the best possible care, a large enclosure, fun enrichment, and lots of love and socialization.

Today, these sweet old ladies win the hearts of everyone they meet. Juno, the shyest, prefers to stay back when her sisters run up to greet new people and receive pets. Occasionally, when feeling exceptionally playful, she likes to jump into a play bow, and will respond with some excited running if her Keeper returns the gesture. She also loves to carry around her favorite duck toy or other stuffed animal, and will often bury any other toys to hide them from her sisters. Katrina, who is more confident than Juno, loves when Animal Caretakers come in to clean or visit. Once a bit of trust has been developed between her and her humans, she'll even lean her full head into staff members' chests as a way to ask for attention. Azteca is similar to Katrina with her confidence and curiosity, coming up for attention and treats. She loves when it snows and gets bursts of energy, running around her enclosure, play bowing at her sisters, and jumping about like crazy! While the three NOLA sisters are usually pretty social and approachable, not all of our animals are. In fact, some of our most inherently wild animals aren't the wolves, like you'd expect, but the coyotes, of which Wild Spirit currently has four.



A close cousin of the wolf, coyotes are much smaller, being only one to two feet tall and roughly thirty-five pounds on average. Along with their smaller frames, their faces tend to be much thinner and their ears more pointed than a wolf's. They also have tiny paws and very distinctive barks, better described as "yipping". Coyotes also have the unique ability to "throw" their voices, making even a small group sound like a huge pack. Like wolves, coyotes mate for life and form bonded pairs, though they mature much more quickly than wolves and because of this, their pups leave the pack early on to find mates of their own. Unlike their wolf cousins (who can have packs made up of multiple generations), coyote packs tend to be much smaller, usually only made up of the parents and the pups for a short period of time. Coyotes are also much more environmentally adaptive than wolves, living in forests, plains, the desert, and nowadays, even the suburbs. These guys are known as urban coyotes, and odds are, people living outside of the cities have either heard or seen them at night. Their diets have a much wider range than many canids, as they are omnivores, and will eat berries, vegetables, grass, and small rodents and game.

Despite the fact that all of our coyotes have lived with humans since they were pups, they are still wild animals. As a result, they are some of our most skittish rescues, preferring to stay at the back of their enclosures when people come to visit, and skirting along the fence lines when our Animal Caretakers comes in to clean. Our most social girl is Yuni, who some of us lovingly refer to as our resident porcupine due to the unusually fluffy fur on her nape and spine. She loves to eat pinons and is very talkative, "boofing" and yipping as her Keepers walk by. Our most confident coyote, she's the only one who likes to hang out at the front of her enclosure, laying with her paws crossed and taking in the day-to-day scenery. Her companion, Maine, is much shyer and prefers to keep to himself, often seen relaxing in the back half of his enclosure and soaking up the sunlight.

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Next door, Lyla Rose is one of our most antisocial coyote rescues, and while she used to have relationships with people in the past, in recent years she has decided to keep to herself. Lyla Rose is our only coyote who has a unique "blonde phase" coat, making her stand out from the others. Her companion, Jasa, is much darker and shyer than Lyla. Though they've been together since they were pups, Lyla likes to push Jasa around a bit to remind him who's boss. Occasionally, Jasa will play bow at Keepers he trusts, and one of his favorite pastimes in peeing in his freshly cleaned water bucket, much to the staff's dismay.

Unfortunately, coyotes are very misunderstood animals, often regarded as pests or vermin and hunted indiscriminately. Each year, thousands of coyote pups are den-robbed to be used as bait for hunting dogs, or to be skinned for their pelts. This is true for many of our coyotes, and for our next featured species as well. Thankfully, at Wild Spirit these incredible animals have been given a new start and forever home that will always provide them with exceptional care and safety.

Like coyotes, red foxes are a species native to much of the United States, where they are hunted, trapped, or even purposefully bred for their fur, or to be sold into the exotic pet trade. Many of our Wild Spirit supporters are familiar with our late red fox, Romeo, who was born in the wild and taken in as a pet after being found on the side of the road as a

baby. Romeo was a very special animal who lived a long and happy life at Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary, and he held a place in many people's hearts. While he likely only would have lived between two to five years old in the wild, Romeo lived much longer than the average red fox, passing away at the ripe old age of 14 years old, making him almost ancient by fox standards.

A little less well-known are our two young foxes, River and Rumi. These silly siblings are red foxes just like Romeo, and are approximately two years old. Foxes are categorized as canids, but they actually have more in common with felines. They have long whiskers, semi-retractable claws, and slit pupils. They rely on stealth hunting and are most active at night. Foxes also have vocalizations much closer to a feline's. They yip, make cute "eee" sounds when they are excited, and their little growls sound similar to purring. Less cute is when they alarm bark or "vixen scream", something many people can confuse for a woman's or child's scream at night. It's alarming, until you realize it's just River or Rumi, begging for snacks or being startled by a new person walking around the compound (especially in the evenings).

As we do with all of our rescues, staff love to make creative enrichment items for our foxes to interact with and explore! River is a bit braver and more sociable than her brother Rumi, and loves running around the enclosure and checking out new smells or searching for hidden goodies! They're both quite fond of blueberries and other small fruits, and will chirp at Keepers who bring them treats. Because caching is one of the fox's natural behaviors, the siblings can often be seen digging shallow holes in the dirt and hiding things, including toys, bones, and even pieces of meat that they intend to save for later. Best of all, we recently set the foxes up with a large cat-climbing tree, which Rumi loves to curl up on the top of, and even added a suspended trampoline to their outdoor space! They're a bit too nervous to climb on it yet, but they're definitely curious, as they are with most things.

While both foxes are a bit more social with our Animal Caretaking team, they are still quite shy around members of the public. As such, it's not common



for people to see them on tours so instead, I'd love to tell you about some of their cutest behaviors! River, for example, upon seeing a Keeper that she likes, will often crouch down on her belly and "slither" across her enclosure while chirping to get their attention. She'll also run her fence line while carrying a favorite toy or enrichment item, and likes to "tag" her brother, enticing him to play along. Rumi is a little quieter and more reserved, preferring to stay inside and away from people, but when he is comfortable, he's often found curled up in the sunlight on top of the cat tree, or playing with his sister. Foxes are a huge favorite in the animal kingdom, and they're definitely a favorite here as well.

Another unique canid we care for comes all the way from Australia! Dingo brothers Glacier, Uluru, and Aussie, are pure dingoes that, prior to their rescue, were part of a breeding program through the Dingo Discovery and Research Centre, an organization that works with zoos and private owners in an effort to increase the dingo population through selective breeding in Australia and even here in the United States. Our dingoes story began when the siblings' parents were placed in a private home where they soon gave birth to a litter of five pups. Unfortunately, as the male pups got older, they got into a fight with their father that resulted in severe injuries and the need for immediate re-homing of the family. Wild Spirit assisted by taking in our three boys, along with their mother, who has since passed away.

Interestingly, many zoos and sanctuaries that house dingoes don't actually have "pure breds", but rather dog/dingo mixes as a result of cross-breeding that has occurred, even in Australia, for a number of generations. We're lucky to have three pure bred dingoes, and they're wonderful examples of the wild breed. Uluru and Aussie have the well-known tannish red color that is most commonly found in dingoes, but Glacier is a creamy white color—a more unique coloration. Dingoes can also be black, brown, or mixes of these. They may also heavily resemble some domestic dog breeds, like shiba inus, cattle dog breeds, or Korean jindos. Dingoes are generally medium sized animals, ranging from twenty-five to forty-five pounds, with long muzzles and long teeth.

Our three dingoes absolutely love scent rolling on new smells and people they are comfortable with. Glacier and Aussie especially like the smell of coffee, and will try to smell inside their Keeper's mouths if they catch a whiff of it. All three brothers wait at the front of their fence line for breakfast, and if they have to wait too long, Glacier starts to whine and vip, demanding his food. His brothers usually are much more patient. Glacier is the bravest of his brothers and enjoys being pet around his neck and his back. Once he's comfortable with a new person, he'll even stretch out his back legs to receive leg rubs—it's his favorite thing in the world! While Glacier loves receiving socialization from his Keepers, Aussie and Uluru are a little more shy, only coming up occasionally. When they are not interested, they like to stick together toward the back of their enclosure. When they are in the mood to play, the three brothers love to run around and play tag, punching each other with their noses and running around their enclosure. They also have a big rock that they love to sunbathe on, and Glacier and Aussie will jump on each other to try and claim it, or just completely push the other off. Uluru is a little more hesitant, and we like to say he's the middle child, always getting a little left out by his brothers, but one of the sweetest in

Dingoes are a very beloved and interesting species, but we also are home to four of their distant cousins, New Guinea singing dogs (affectionately known as "singers"). New Guinea singing dogs are a very interesting species. Native to the highlands of New Guinea and thought to be extinct until the early 2010's, there are very few of them left in the world. In fact, it was recently determined that there may be just a single pack left in the wild. In captivity, their numbers are still slim, with an estimated 200-500 living as private pets, or residing in zoos and sanctuaries. Wild Spirit is currently home to four singers: Bono, Reba, Bowie, and Foxy.

These little canines resemble dingoes in many ways, but are much smaller and have vastly different personalities. They don't grow much taller than a foot, and usually won't weigh more than thirty pounds. Their coats are very similar to dingoes or Canaan dogs, ranging from tan to brown to red with darker or

lighter muzzles. Singers have a full repertoire of vocalizations along with their unique 'singing'. They whine, yip, bark, chortle, groan, howl, and much more! The difference between a singer's howl and other canids' is their ability to hold a howl for longer than thirty seconds, and engage in group howls that start and finish abruptly. Often, singers will even start howling together for nonspecific reasons. But one of the biggest things that make them stand out from other canines are their personalities.

In 2010, Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary rescued five New Guinea singing dogs from a private owner and hoarding situation. Of the original five, four still remain. We also rescued two additional New Guinea singing dogs from Mexico some time later. Sadly, both of those rescues recently passed away due to health complications or age. Of the remaining singers, Bono and Reba share one enclosure, and Bowie and Foxy share the other, so they have plenty of space to run around, play, and climb on their structures, which is a favorite activity of theirs, even in their older age.

Bowie is definitely a favorite of the staff, a very social and sweet boy who loves to be pet and receive treats. He tilts his head back and forth when he is looking for attention, and will mimic the Keepers if they do so too. One of his oddest quirks is when he's excited for his medication ball in the morning, he'll lick the gate and dance back and forth. He's often found lying in a bed he's dragged out of his house and enjoying the sun. His companion, Foxy, is the oldest and most reserved of the four singers, and doesn't enjoy human interaction. She prefers to stay farther away from the Keepers, but on occasion will come up to catch some sniffs at a distance.

Reba is another fan favorite. As the most social (and dramatic) of all the singers, she loves to climb, and receive pets, and especially enjoys trying to sniff inside her Keeper's mouth if they kneel down on the ground for her. Bono, her companion, is our only resident tripod. He lost his front right leg to Valley Fever a few years ago, but has adjusted like a trooper! He loves to go on walks around the sanctuary and to receive attention from Keepers, just like Reba. Sometimes

they'll even become a little jealous of each other and jaw spar for attention. They both enjoy sunbathing on warm days.

None of the singers like the winter months, but we always make sure their enclosure houses are warm and full of soft beds. In the warmer months, they are much more energetic and enjoy playing with enrichment treats, climbing, howling and running about their enclosures. These animals are super unique and so much fun, despite the research on them being slim and their wild counterparts being relatively unknown.

As you can see, wolves and wolfdogs are not the only interesting canids in the wild world, or here at the sanctuary. In fact, each of the unique species mentioned in this article have an incredible role to play in the wild, and we hope that through learning more about them, our supporters will find themselves falling in love with them just as much as we have here at the sanctuary. As an original wolf-lover myself, I can see why they remain a fan favorite, but after working with so many other canids, I have found my passion broadening and hope yours will too!



**6** WILD SPIRIT WOLF SANCTUARY

# DAKOTA KOTA

It's never easy when one of our rescues passes away, but the passing of both Dakota and Kota hit especially hard. Dakota was a sweet, curious, and photogenic high-content wolfdog, always willing to meet new people. When we used to do encounter and photo tours, guests were often treated to a visit with Dakota, because of his easy going personality and natural curiosity. It's no surprise that most who have had the opportunity to meet him will not forget the experience.



One of the most wonderful pairings we've had at the sanctuary was that of Kota and his female companion. Agana. The two were inseparable, and could often be seen relaxing together in the sun or shade of their shared habitat. Kota was one of our largest wolfdogs, weighing over a hundred pounds. Like Dakota, he was also very handsome and photogenic, even having been featured in a National Geographic documentary.





What comes to mind when you hear the job title "Animal Caretaker"? For most people, providing match-making services probably isn't even on the list, but here at Wild Spirit, promoting healthy relationships between suitable animals is actually a large and incredibly important part of what we do! In fact, the majority of our rescues reside in pairs rather than packs, as that is generally the safest and healthiest dynamic in captivity. As such, we are constantly playing match-maker, especially when an animal finds itself in need of a companion, which could occur for a number of reasons. Most of the time, match-making occurs when an animal has passed away and left their companion behind, but sometimes a once healthy relationship reaches a point at which one or both animals are no longer thriving (can relate).

No matter the situation, the staff at Wild Spirit understands the importance of companionship, especially to highly social animals like wolves and wolfdogs, and do what we can to facilitate happy, healthy relationships. Over the last several months our team has paired up six new couples and would love to update you on all their progress!

### **KENAI & STIGMA**

These two young rescues are beautiful black-phases so they make a gorgeous couple! During his first few months at Wild Spirit, Kenai had been living with one of our older females, a 14-year old high-content wolfdog named Savannah, and while they coexisted peacefully, they didn't seem to have any particular attachment to one another. But when the lovely Stigma arrived, we placed her in the enclosure next door to Kenai so we could observe their interactions through the fence. Their first few introductions were uneventful and the team actually wondered if maybe these two weren't going to be all that we were hoping for in a match. We soon realized, however, that with Savannah next door during introductions, Kenai was extremely apprehensive about socializing with another female knowing his current companion was watching just a few yards away. With this in mind, we moved Savannah to a temporary enclosure (closer to her new potential partner), and Kenai became much more excited about

visiting Stigma. It wasn't long before he began prancing around her enclosure, spending the majority of his time kicking up dirt and urinating on each and every tree to mark (what would one day be) "his" territory.

After a few more play-dates, Kenai and Stigma finally began living together fulltime. Almost instantaneously, Stigma began approaching the fence line when people walked by, started eating meals from Caretaker's hands, and had an overall calmer disposition about her with the more confident Kenai by her side. These days, the two are often seen laying together right up against the fence line of their neighbors, Lobo and Flicker, who like to interact with the new pair. Kenai now has a younger companion who can keep up with him, and Stigma is becoming more confident everyday.

### NAIA & IRWIN

Naia and Irwin are one of the couples our team was most excited about introducing to each other. Naia is a 2-year-old high-content wolfdog who needed a young companion, and Irwin is a 6-year-old wolfdog who needed rescue in October. Naia had previously lived with one of our Arctic wolves, a 14-year-old senior named Flurry, but unfortunately, Naia and Flurry were not a perfect match. Naia really needed a younger partner who would engage in play with her, but Flurry had officially hit his retirement years and couldn't keep up.

Once Irwin arrived, he shared a fence line with Naia for a period of time until he was settled in, and then the introductions began. In the beginning, Irwin was a little apprehensive around Naia despite her submissive body language and curiosity, but it didn't take long for them to start playing together and chasing each other around the enclosure. A few successful play-dates later, they officially moved in with each other!

The two settled in together almost immediately and thoroughly enjoy being on the tour path where they can see who comes and goes and steal attention from anyone who walks by. Some of their favorite past-times include wrestling matches, painting, and partaking in duels through the fence with their neighbors. Irwin's favorite game is stealing all the attention from his Keepers, and Naia loves to sneak up behind him and nip at his heels. Recently, they've started napping next to each other and running the fence lines with their neighbors. Occasionally Irwin will have to remind Naia that he's in charge, and she likes to be very dramatic and yell at him in return. Their only hindrance currently is that Irwin is very possessive of his food, so while Naia eats in the full enclosure, Irwin is temporarily let into the shift-pen (a smaller sub-encloure within their habitat) to eat his (Continued on page 12) meals in privacy.



### **CINDER & TEHYA**

One of our newest pairings this year was between two high-content wolfdogs, Cinder and Teyha. Cinder came to the sanctuary a few years ago after running loose in the wild for an unknown length of time. As a result, he was extremely timid and leery to approach people. Soon after his rescue, however, Cinder was placed with Riot, a lovable and rambunctious "pocket wolf" as the Keepers liked to call her, due to her unusually small size. Riot was a highly socialized animal that absolutely adored human interaction, and it was because of her that Cinder soon became more comfortable around humans. Unfortunately, Riot joined the Big Pack in the Sky in December, 2020, and Cinder quickly began to regress, showing little desire for most human interaction without his beloved companion by his side... Seeing the impact that Riot's loss had on Cinder,

staff knew that finding him another companion was essential for his well-being, so when we received news of a young high-content female named Teyha who needed placement, we leapt at the opportunity.

At the time of her rescue, Teyha was less than 2-years-old and living as a privately owned pet in California. Though she was well-loved and shared a unique bond with her owner, circumstances arose that required her to find a new home. After speaking with her owner, we learned that Teyha was social and seemed to enjoy interacting with humans. She immediately reminded us of Riot in that way, and we hoped that she might be able to help Cinder come out of his shell once again. So, we set off to California to bring Teyha home, where she was placed into an enclosure across from Cinder's and given a few weeks to decompress. Unfortunately, we soon realized that despite being social with her previous owner, she was not very comfortable around her new human Caretakers, and our hopes of seeing Cinder revert back to his more social self were cut in half.

When the day finally came to introduce the new pair, Teyha was allowed into Cinder's enclosure where the two quickly greeted one another, but showed



little interest. In fact, Teyha seemed more interested in Obi, one of her nextdoor neighbors, who was equally interested in her. Still, because we saw no signs of conflict between the two, and because both animals seemed much more calm and comfortable with one another by their sides, we decided to keep them together and see how their relationship might develop in time.

Cinder and Teyha have been residing together for months now, and while we haven't seen much play or obvious connection between them as of yet, both of their anxieties have lessened significantly since being introduced. While Tehya used to be too afraid to come up and take her food, she now runs right up to the fence line, patiently waiting to be fed. She is also much more confident any time people are around and can often be seen taking strolls around the enclosure, napping next to Cinder or playing with her neighbors. Thankfully, despite the fact that Teyha remains uninterested in socializing, Cinder has gone back to loving intensely on some of his Keepers just as he did when Riot was with him! We are still waiting to see if a stronger relationship forms between this pair, but for now they are making slow but steady progress.

### FLURRY & ALICE

Ever since removing Naia from Flurry's enclosure in order to pair her up with Irwin, we've been looking for a suitable companion for our handsome senior, but have had some trouble finding the perfect match. Knowing Flurry, who is a pretty relaxed animal, we realized he would need a low-key female companion, and we hoped we could find one who would also benefit from his calm temperament. As such, Flurry was tried with mid-content wolfdog, Mika, who was rescued from Indiana at the end of 2020. While Mika was extremely interested in Flurry, he showed little interest in her and as such, the two were considered unsuccessful after just two introductions. A short while later, Flurry was introduced to young high-content wolfdog, Sox, an extremely unsocial animal who we thought might benefit from Flurry's confidence around humans. Unfortunately, their introductions were also uneventful, with neither animal really seeking the other out for engagement.

Meanwhile, Arctic wolf Alice, following the loss of her lifelong companion and brother, was paired up with high-content wolfdog, Dakota. The pair was a match made in heaven, as Dakota brought out a social and confident side of Alice rarely seen before. Sadly, Alice soon lost Dakota as well, regressing almost immediately. As such, we knew that finding her a new companion was critical, and Flurry became an obvious choice.

Interestingly, Alice and Flurry are actually siblings from separate litters, but they hadn't met each other before, so staff was beyond surprised when, during their first introduction, the two greeted each other like old friends! Upon coming face to face, both animals began wagging their tails immediately, and Flurry straightened up his posture, standing taller while Alice gave him some sniffs. After their initial greeting, Flurry spent much of his time peeing on the trees and marking his territory, before finally settling in for a nap with Alice right by his side. Following their first introduction, Flurry and Alice only had one more before being considered a success and moving in together permanently.

Today, Alice and Flurry have only been together for a couple of weeks, but they both seem happy with their new arrangement and get along so well! The two can often be found napping together, or strolling the fence line to interact with their neighbors. It's still early for the new couple and things can always change, but it looks like theirs will be another successful long-term pairing.

### SAVANNAH & TETON

Most of our long-term readers and supporters know about two of our older animals, Arctic wolf Teton and high-content wolfdog Savannah. Teton was born at the sanctuary 14 years ago, and has been one of our highest sponsored animals for years. Savannah is also a 14 year resident of Wild Spirit and a longtime favorite of guests and Animal Caretakers!

Sadly, in 2019 Teton lost his sister, Shasta, who he had lived with all his life. Following her passing, Teton became a lot more reserved and staff wondered whether he'd ever be able to connect with another animal like he had with his sister. The idea to pair him with Savannah came from seeing how Teton reacted when Savannah would go on walks, where she would begin whimpering and practically dragging her Caretaker over to see him. In response, Teton would come right up to the fence to say hello, making himself appear as large and strong as possible while wagging his tail and whimpering in return. After seeing their intense interest, staff decided to introduce the two. Before an official introduction took place, Savannah moved into an enclosure next door. Shortly after, we built a door between their enclosures and finally let them meet. The two took to each other so quickly that Savannah's instincts had her digging a new den in Teton's enclosure immediately! Despite the fact that they are spayed/neutered and will never have puppies, it was a sign that Savannah felt at home in her new relationship.

Since moving in together, the pair is often seen laying next to each other at the top of their enclosure, basking in the sun. Even with Savannah's old joints, she still climbs all over the enclosure and sits atop her castle looking out over the entire sanctuary. It's fairly safe to say that Teton and Savannah have taken on the role of King and Queen of the sanctuary. With Savannah, Teton has become braver and more curious with his Caretakers. He comes directly up to the fence line now and has even begun to allow multiple people to pet him! Savannah herself is much happier with someone her own age, with whom she can rest or patrol the edges of her "territory". They are truly a sight to be seen and we are ecstatic to observe this new couple ruling the roost together.

We are so grateful to be a part of creating strong and healthy relationships for our rescues, and hope you've enjoyed hearing about how all of our new couples are doing! Make sure to check out or website, Peek into the Pack online blog, and various social media platforms to stay up to date on future animal and sanctuary





## meet the O





In January of 2021, Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary received an intake request for three wolfdogs that were living as private pets in Ohio. Unlike many of the rescues at Wild Spirit, the Ohio Pack were well loved and cared for by their owners, who had actually rescued the animals themselves approximately 4 years prior. Unfortunately, after years of marriage the couple decided to separate, leaving the future of the pack uncertain.

Things become further complicated when the animals' primary owner relocated to Colorado, leaving them in the care of his ex-wife. While the animals still had a safe and secure home, as well as the company of one another, the person left to care for them wasn't nearly as comfortable with wolfdogs as her exhusband had been. As such, she requested that he find them a new home as soon as possible so they could continue to receive the specialized care that they needed.

Luckily, a Colorado wolfdog rescue agreed to place all three animals, which would have allowed their owner the chance to continue seeing them regularly. Unfortunately, an unexpected issue with local zoning ordinances forced the rescue to back out, leaving the Ohio Pack's future, once again, in a state of uncertainty. It was then that Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary was contacted and asked for assistance.

During our initial communications with the owners we learned that each of the animals responded quite differently to strangers, much like the bears in the story of Goldie Locks. High-content mother, Aleu, was described as practically feral while mid-content father, Denahi, was said to be incredibly social. Lastly, their daughter, mid-content Yue, landed somewhere right in the middle. As such, we knew that their rescue would involve a lot more hands-on efforts than some, as Aleu (and possibly Yue as well) wouldn't be able to simply be

loaded into our rescue van on a leash. In addition, all three animals would require vet care prior to traveling, adding yet another layer of complexity to the situation.

After days and weeks of planning and preparation, a vet appointment was scheduled and Wild Spirit staff loaded up our rescue van and hit the road for Ohio! Upon arrival, we were greeted by the animals' owners who were incredible in assisting us in the safe and successful capture of Yue and Aleu. Denahi, being the sweet and gentle giant that he is, was leashed up and loaded into the rescue van without complaint, where he was able to provide the girls with calm and comfort during the two hour drive to the vet clinic.

At the vet office, all three animals were sedated and provided with a thorough physical examination, comprehensive bloodwork, routine vaccinations, and even nail trims! A huge howl of thanks to the staff at Lebanon Small Animal Clinic in Ohio for their amazing work on our three new rescues!

Following the long drive home, all three members of the Ohio Pack quickly began to settle into their new enclosure, which is one of the largest and most naturalistic that we have, and they have been greatly enjoying getting to know all of their new neighbors!

Sadly, a few days after their arrival, we received word that the Ohio Pack's vet results came back with some less than ideal news... Specifically, we learned that all three animals were positive for Hypothyroidism, a condition that slows the metabolism and can be treated, but not cured, and as such will require twice daily medications for the rest of their lives. Thankfully, giving the pack their meds has been a breeze since all three animals are extremely food motivated and greatly enjoy getting their twice daily "treats".

In addition, we learned that Aleu was also positive for heartworms, a parasitic infection that is potentially fatal to not only the infected animal, but also highly transmissible to other animals in the area. As such, Aleu was immediately scheduled for treatment in order to protect her and all the other animals in our care. Unfortunately, proper heartworm treatment is tricky, especially for a hands-off and unsocialized animal. The treatment itself involves an initial injection to kill the worms, but that part is fairly easy. The real challenge comes with the animal's after-care, as it requires them to spend at least 30 days on "cage rest", meaning absolutely no physical activity outside of the basic functions involved in eating, drinking, and bathroom breaks. This is because as the adult worms die a few days after the injection, their bodies start to decompose. As they break up, they are carried to the lungs, where they lodge in the small blood vessels and are eventually reabsorbed by the body. This re-absorption can take several weeks to months, but if an animal becomes too active during this process, the heartworm fragments can cause lethal complications.

Thankfully, Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary is equipped with a fully functional Geriatric Building which has made Alue's treatment and cage rest possible by providing her with a small, safe, and extremely private space where she can rest for the full duration of her treatment. The building has both an indoor and outdoor feature as well, so she has the ability to spend her time in either section without over-exerting herself.

Unfortunately, not only does heartworm treatment usually takes several months to complete, it can also be quite costly. But when the team at Wild Spirit says "the animals come first", we mean it, and in order to ensure that Aleu has a long and happy life here, there's no question that she will receive all the specialized care that she needs!

If you're interested in learning more about the Ohio Pack, stay tuned on our website and social media accounts for future updates about the whole family, keeping in mind that as our newest rescues, all three wolfdogs are looking for new Animal Sponsors to show them some love and adoration! And remember, the donations from annual Sponsorships assist in covering the costs of our animals' care. For example, Sponsorships toward the Ohio Pack might go toward Hypothyroid medications, bloodwork, or even heartworm treatment for Aleu!





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