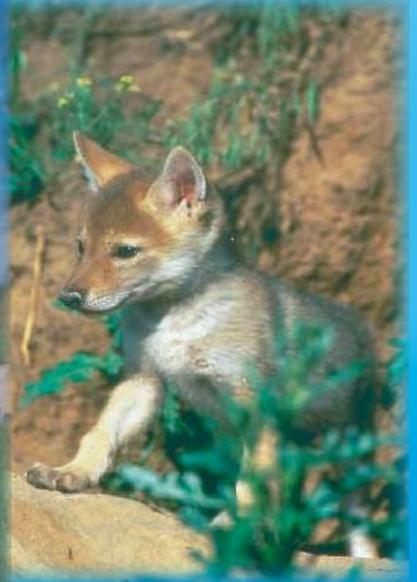


GO! wild

Photos: © Shattil/Rozinski - burrowing owl, Tom Tietz - Refuge visitors, Shattil/Rozinski - coyote pup



Visit - Rocky Mountain Arsenal
National Wildlife Refuge
For information and hours call:
303 289-0930
Visit the web at:
<http://rockymountainarsenal.fws.gov>

ISSUE 4:

- 2 - Spring at the Refuge
- 3 - Animal Babies
- 4 - Song Dogs
- 6 - Owls Underground
- 8 - Archie Carr NWR



This blue goose designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, a cartoonist who stressed wildlife conservation, has become the symbol for the National Wildlife Refuge System.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

part of the

National Wildlife Refuge System

It's springtime at Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and that means warmer days, blooming flowers, singing birds, and animal babies roaming the Refuge for the first time. Because the Refuge is just that, a safe place, it is the perfect spot for wildlife to have and raise their young. Some of those animals like the coyote are year-round residents while other like the burrowing owl travel hundreds and thousands of miles to spend a few short months with us.

So, what are you waiting for?

Visit us today to **GO!** wild and you too can experience "spring fling" Refuge style!



Did you know?

National Wildlife Refuges are far more than safe places for wild plants and animals. Eighty-eight percent of the land in the Refuge System is opened to the public! Visitors are encouraged to take part in outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, interpretation and/or environmental education.



Tony Wright USFWS

Every year thousands of wildlife babies are mistakenly kidnapped from their mothers. The best way to make sure an animal is truly orphaned is to wait and check it periodically. Animals often appear to be abandoned but are not. If the babies are plump, warm and squirmy, they are often being taken care of. If you find orphaned wildlife, DO NOT try to raise it on your own. Not only is this illegal, but it could harm both you and the baby animal you are trying to help.

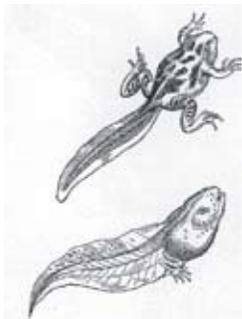
So remember, resist the temptation to "save" baby animals - mom is usually watching from a safe distance. And even though wildlife babies appear cute and cuddly they are "wild" and can turn on you without warning.



EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED

Research opportunity:

The young of many species are given different names than their parents. See if you can discover what animal baby goes with the adult.



Tadpoles transform into adult frogs.



YOUNG

- A. CUB
- B. GOSLING
- C. FLEDGLING, HATCHLING
- D. FAWN
- E. DUCKLING
- F. EAGLET
- G. PUP
- H. FRY
- I. OWLET
- J. TADPOLE
- K. CALF
- L. KID
- M. LARVAE

ADULT

- ___ INSECT
- ___ COYOTE, DOG, FOX
- ___ GOAT
- ___ FROG
- ___ BEAR, LION, TIGER
- ___ OWL
- ___ BUFFALO, ANTELOPE, COW
- ___ BIRD
- ___ EAGLE
- ___ DEER
- ___ GOOSE
- ___ FISH
- ___ DUCK



Coyotes

have only 1 litter per year. Females give birth to 1 to 12 pups each spring in an underground den.

Both parents help care for the pups. When born, they are blind and covered with a woolly, brownish-gray fur. The pup's eyes don't open until they're about 10 days old. So to make eating easier, the parents will actually chew food, swallow it and then throw it up again to feed the pups! At about 3 weeks of age, the young pups are ready to venture out from the den and by fall are out on their own.

When we get older, we will be able to run at speeds of up to 40 mph and jump fences 8 feet high!

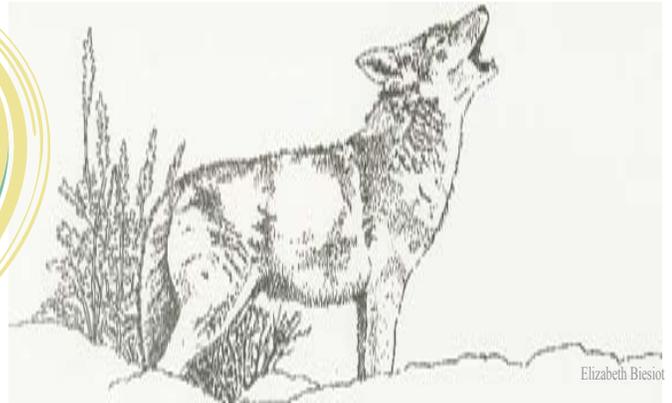


© Shattil/Rozinski

★ Males & Females

- about 4 feet long
- weigh 20 to 40 pounds
- bushy tail with black tip
- rusty brownish grey fur
- slender, pointed snout
- mate for life

Coyotes are well adapted to live in almost any environment. In fact they used to be found only in prairie habitats, but today coyotes live in all parts of the United States - except for Hawaii.



How Many?

A healthy coyote must eat 25 pounds of food in a 10 day period. If its diet consists of 45% rabbits, 25% mice, 15% prairie dogs, 10% birds, and 5% plants - **how many** pounds of each type of food does it consume in 10 days, a month, a year?

Did you know?

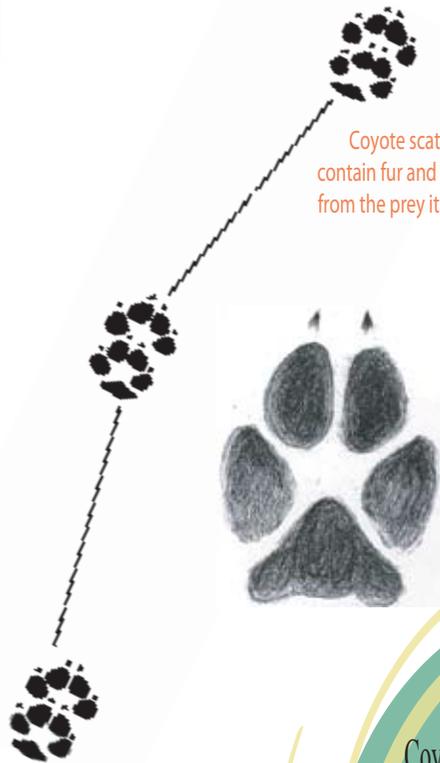
Canis latrans, the scientific name for coyotes, means barking dog. This wild canine is the true "song dog" of the West. They communicate by barks, yips, growls and howls making a few coyotes sound like a large pack.

In Native American stories the coyote is always portrayed as a trickster - cunning and mischievous. And that's for a good reason! Using their good eyesight, keen hearing and fantastic sense of smell, they are crepuscular and nocturnal hunters that take advantage of other animals. Coyotes will gaze to the sky to look for scavenger birds flying in circles around dead animals or hunt in groups to outsmart their prey because even a coyote isn't opposed to a free meal!

Research opportunity:

Like most humans, coyotes are opportunistic omnivores - that means they eat both plants and other animals. In fact coyotes eat almost everything: mice, voles, rabbits, insects, fish, frogs, snakes, lizards, grasses, fruits, nuts, and all sorts of dead animals. They even eat watermelon! Biologists will study animal scat to determine what the animal eats. Become a "scat detective". Come out to Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR in search of scat and see if you can tell if the animal it belongs to is a:

- omnivore
- herbivore
- carnivore



Coyote scat can contain fur and bones from the prey it ate!



Coyote tracks are about 2 inches wide and 2 1/2 inches long. Their hind paws are slightly smaller than their front paws.



© Shattil/Rozinski

Discover prairie food webs. Coyotes are just one part of a complex interaction of plants (producers) and animals (consumers) that make up a prairie ecosystem. Brainstorm and list the plant and animal species that you will find around a prairie habitat. Then using your list construct a prairie food web where the coyote is the top predator.



crepuscular - nocturnal - herbivore - carnivore

Burrowing owls

We are very helpful to farmers because we eat so many insects and rodents.

fly all the way from Mexico every spring to nest on the Refuge. Instead of nesting in trees like other owls, they will scout out abandoned prairie dog burrows. The female will usually lay 6 to 11 eggs and will incubate the clutch

for about 28 days while the male provides her with food. After hatching, the little owlets will sit near the burrow entrance hopping back in the hole when frightened. The young owl will make a noise similar to that of a rattlesnake's rattle to scare away the intruder. The owlets will leave the nest to hunt for insects and small rodents on their own after about 45 days.



★ Males & Females

- 7 to 9 inches tall
- weigh only five to six ounces
- 22 inch wingspan
- yellow eyes and beak
- long, spindly legs
- earthy brown with white spots

Unlike a human, an owl's eyes are fixed in their skulls and cannot move. To focus on another object, an owl can turn its head around an amazing 270 degrees!



Did you know?

Owls are members of the raptor family. They are birds of prey that hunt for their food. Raptor beaks are curved, and their feet have sharp talons that they use to catch their food.

How Many?

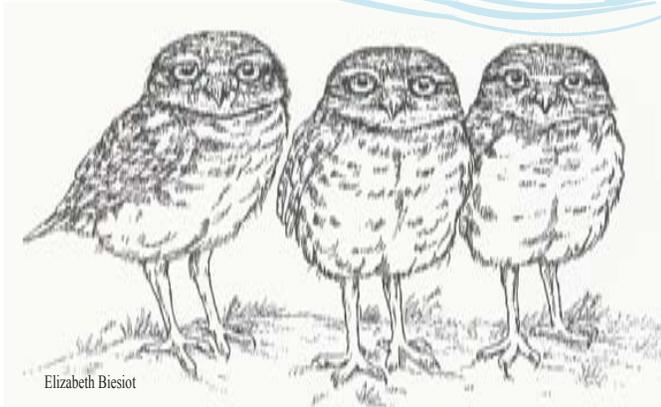
A burrowing owl travels 1,446 miles from Mexico to nest on the Refuge. **How many** miles will the owl travel in a round trip journey? **How many** kilometers?
HINT: 1 mile = 1.6 KM

Burrowing owls have disappeared from much of their historical habitat. Until about 100 years ago, burrowing owls were common across the plains and prairies of North America. But today their numbers are dwindling because of habitat destruction, the use of pesticides, and efforts to get rid of prairie dogs, which co-exist with burrowing owls. These underground owls have been impacted so greatly they are now listed as a threatened species in Colorado!

Research opportunity:

In Colorado there are currently 32 animal species listed as threatened or endangered. Discover what they are and see what you can do to make a difference:

- in your community;
- at home;
- in your yard; and
- in your classroom.



Elizabeth Biesiot

OWLS UNDERGROUND

Find the words listed on the right, then see if you can discover the hidden message.

O	T	H	E	S	E	D	R	E	U	N	D	E	R	G	BURROW CARNIVORE DIURNAL FEATHERS FLY MEXICO MIGRATE OWL OWLET PRAIRIE RAPTOR THREATENED
C	R	O	U	N	I	O	T	D	W	O	O	W	L	S	
I	F	L	Y	U	T	A	A	L	T	O	W	L	T	H	
X	E	W	R	P	R	A	Y	H	F	R	R	L	O	M	
E	M	N	A	G	T	E	R	O	V	I	N	R	A	C	
M	A	R	I	S	R	E	H	T	A	E	F	E	U	X	
L	I	M	C	P	A	O	L	T	O	S	P	E	N	B	
D	T	H	E	T	R	I	R	W	S	U	M	M	E	R	
O	N	T	E	H	E	A	R	E	O	F	U	G	E	F	
M	Z	N	K	N	K	T	I	V	M	B	M	Q	E	X	
M	E	L	X	X	J	N	Q	R	U	K	K	A	R	F	
D	Z	K	G	R	E	L	N	B	I	V	H	O	J	L	
U	Y	M	D	D	G	W	L	D	T	E	B	A	C	Y	
X	T	P	N	L	X	G	R	Z	Q	H	D	Y	R	H	
X	T	B	E	O	C	Q	A	O	Q	L	O	G	Y	X	

Burrowing owls are the only owl that is active both day and night. During the day, the owl will stand guard by its burrow; at dusk and into the night the owl will hunt for its prey.

Hidden Message:

threatened - endangered - diurnal



GO! wild

LIVE *at the* REFUGE

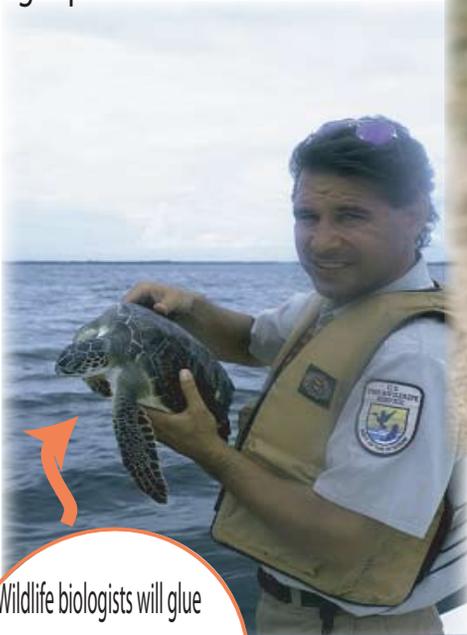
Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge isn't the only safe place for wildlife to have their young. Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1991 and was named after the late Dr. Archie Carr, Jr., in honor of his extraordinary contribution to sea turtle conservation. The Refuge stretches across 20.5 miles of beach along Florida's eastern coast. Each year, the secluded beach is essential habitat for 15,000 to 20,000 sea turtle nests. In fact, it is the most important nest area for the threatened loggerhead sea turtle in the western hemisphere! The sea turtle is one of the largest living reptiles



What do you think made these tracks?
Which way are they going?
How do you know?



Photos: USFWS



Wildlife biologists will glue a radio transmitter onto the back of our shells so they can track our movements!

How Do I Get to the Ocean?
When loggerhead sea turtles hatch, they immediately head to the ocean. Male sea turtles spend the rest of their lives in the ocean; the females only come out to nest on the beach where they were born. Can you help the baby sea turtle find its way to the ocean?

