

How Can You Tell?

One of the major challenges facing the red wolf as it reclaims its role in the wild is its similarity to the coyote. The same is true for some gray wolf species, especially when they are young and closer in size to a coyote! Coyotes and red wolves often share the same habitats. It is legal to kill coyotes under certain conditions prescribed by state agencies; they are not protected by the Endangered Species Act. Intentionally or willfully killing or harming a red wolf is, however, a federal crime. Heavy fines and prison sentences can be imposed.

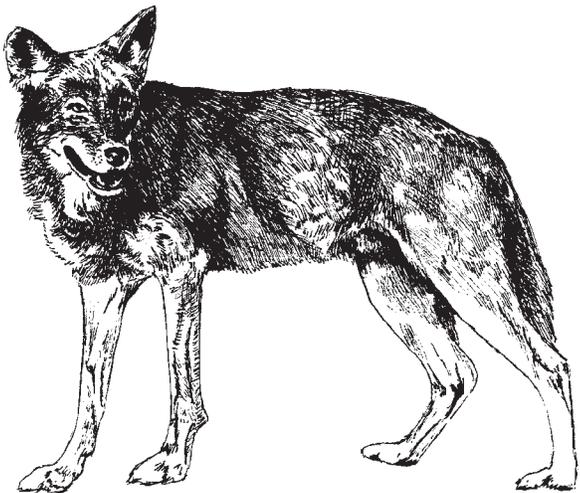
Red wolves are generally larger than coyotes and much more robust. Their bodies are muscular and solid. The coyote, on the other hand, is smaller and more delicate. Check out the heads. A red wolf's head is broad even though the muzzle is longer and thinner than that of the gray wolf. The give-away is often the ears. The ears of the red wolf are long - often more than 4 1/2 inches! Some people say they look like the ears of a German shepherd dog.

Is the Red Wolf Really Red?

"Despite the disclaimers in the technical literature, the wolves are red, some more than others - laced through the back of the ears and neck and splashed through their shoulders and haunches and legs. Not bloodred...but the brown-red color of certain animals like the copperhead and the grouse, a forest red that easily darkens to brown or black in a wolf's shoulders and across its back and flanks, or bleeds into the ruddy yellow that fades to the pale fur of its underbelly....Red in the signature way that a red-tailed hawk is red. Red as a point of departure. A red quickly hidden in the flowing motion of a running wolf, when the animal turns darker, almost black, not red at all."

Christopher Camuto: [Another Country](#)

Red Wolf



Jane Rohling '90

Coyote



Elise McCauley Hammond