

'Famous' Wolf Is Killed Outside Yellowstone

By NATE SCHWEBER
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Yellowstone National Park's best-known wolf, beloved by many tourists and valued by scientists who tracked its movements, was shot and killed on Thursday outside the park's boundaries, Wyoming wildlife officials reported.



Enlarge This Image
Doug McLaughlin
The wolf that researchers called 832F, left, was shot on Thursday. The alpha female of the Lamar Canyon pack, she wore a tracking collar. The wolf with her, known as 754, was killed last month.

The wolf, known as 832F to researchers, was the alpha female of the park's highly visible Lamar Canyon pack and had become so well known that some wildlife watchers referred to her as a "rock star." The animal had been a tourist favorite for most of the past six years.

The wolf was fitted with a \$4,000 collar with GPS tracking technology, which is being returned, said Daniel Stahler, a project director for Yellowstone's wolf program. Based on data from the wolf's collar, researchers knew that her pack rarely ventured outside the park, and then only for brief periods, Dr. Stahler said.

This year's hunting season in the northern Rockies has been especially controversial because of the high numbers of popular wolves and wolves fitted with research collars that have been killed just outside Yellowstone in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

Wolf hunts, sanctioned by recent federal and state rules applying to the northern Rockies, have been fiercely debated in the region. The wolf population has rebounded since they were reintroduced in the mid-1990s to counter their extirpation a few years earlier.

Many ranchers and hunters say the wolf hunts are a reasonable way to reduce attacks on livestock and protect big game populations.

This fall, the first wolf hunts in decades were authorized in Wyoming. The wolf killed last week was the eighth collared by researchers that was shot this year after leaving the park's boundary.

The deaths have dismayed scientists who track wolves to study their habits, population spread and threats to their survival. Still, some found 832F's death to be particularly disheartening.

"She is the most famous wolf in the world," said Jimmy Jones, a wildlife photographer who lives in Los Angeles and whose portrait of 832F appears in the current issue of the magazine [American Scientist](#).



Wildlife advocates say that the wolf populations are not large enough to withstand state-sanctioned harvests and that the animals attract tourist

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money. Yellowstone's scenic Lamar Valley has been one of the most reliable places to view wolves in the northern Rockies, and it attracts scores of visitors every year.

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