



### Calls of the Wolf

I got to see my first wild wolf on the first day of the Marine Mammal Survey with Raincoast and could not believe my luck. It was a beautiful animal and was dragging a deer carcass up a rocky bank from the shore. Throughout my time with Raincoast, I got to see several wolves and this bonded my love for this animal that will stay with me forever. Why they are so indiscriminately hounded, beleaguered and shot for no reason, ceases to amaze me. They are amazing animals to observe and study, they have a family bonded structure and communicate with each other just as we do.

In the fall of 2008 I was helping as a volunteer with Pacific Wild on a video project. We had set up a remotely monitored camera in the bush next to a river in the hope of filming some wolf feeding activity as the salmon made their way up river. We had scouted the area the previous day and at the next high tide we took our equipment in to set it up in the desired position. As I was positioning the camera I heard a 'woof' from in the bushes. I carried on with my work and a little while later, I heard it again, 'woof'. I stopped what I was doing and peered around the bush, as I did so, I came face to face with a large wolf, also peering around the bush at me. We startled each other and I was back in the boat with what would probably be a world record long jump and the wolf shot back in to the bush at some speed too.

Shortly thereafter, the wolf began to howl, it was a sorrowful long howl ...and we felt really bad for having disturbed him. He must have been sleeping in the bushes when we went in, obviously not knowing he was there. After a couple of howls, several more broke out and it really did sound so deep and meaningful as if the wolf was separated from his pack and was calling for the way home or maybe giving a warning. During the time of our observations of this pack, we were later able to identify that the wolf I had seen, was probably the alpha male as he was quite distinct.

Early morning a few days later...