

**WOLF HUNTING.**  
Chasing Wolves With Horses and Hounds in the Northwest.

A letter in the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, dated, "On the Snake River," Idaho, says:

In a fair stand-up fight the average white, gray or black wolf of these Western prairies can down the best dog that ever drew breath. He knows his own powers, and will rarely run from a single dog. But the true prairie wolf, or coyote, is too cowardly to ever engage in a face-to-face fight with a mongrel cur even, and will often whip his tail between his legs and run yelping from a month-old puppy. The dogs in camp know these characteristics of the different species as well as the hunters, and in consequence will dash out alone after a coyote, but unless urged on will never single molest a gray wolf. When the dogs are in packs of three or more, however, all this is changed, and the wolf declines an interview.

With seven hounds and four hunters we left camp yesterday morning at dawn for a day's run after wolves. They are more numerous in this region just now than any other species of game; and although hunting them is not generally included in a list of Western sports, it is a highly exciting adjunct to the pursuit of buffalo, deer and bears.

Our route led to the rocky rises at the base of the Salmon mountains, between the headwaters of the Malada and McArthur rivers, which is a famous lurking place for wolves, as the rocks and undergrowth give them ample shelter, and the proximity to water assures them of game when it comes to the stream to drink.

We were armed with breech-loaders charged with buck-shot, and were all well mounted—I am on my buffalo runner purchased in Boise City some time ago. When an hour out of camp the baying of the hounds in a copious to the right of us told that something was started, and the next minute a lank gray wolf, with six cubs streaming after her, dashed out into the open ground and ran past us so close that we might have killed her with a revolver; but something like pity stayed every man's hand, and we let her go by us without a shot. The cubs were evidently four or five months old, and kept well up with the mother, who moved over the prairie like a gray streak. When the dogs finally broke cover she had disappeared around the face of a hillock, to the top of which we spurred our horses in order to see the remainder of the chase. In the course of a few minutes it was plain to see the cubs were losing their wind; one of them falling behind so rapidly that he was almost in the jaws of the foremost hound, and the others, while keeping ahead, giving every evidence of distress. The mother wolf was not moving at her best by any means, and if she would abandon her cubs to the dogs might easily escape; but instead of doing that she suddenly wheeled around, while the cubs kept on forward, and doubling square on her tracks closed with the hound who was in the lead and not more than ten paces from the exhausted young one. Before the dog could recover from his surprise she had him by the throat, her long, white teeth cutting through skin and muscles. Then closing and tearing out the wind-pipe, jugular vein and gullet. It was only a single bite; but the spread and strength of her jaws, as well as the sharpness of her teeth, made it fatal. Then she humped up her back, and in ten bounds had regained the lost ground, and was again in full retreat in the center of her family.

In the nature of things, however, the cubs could not stand the killing pace; they fell behind in ones and twos, and result was a foregone conclusion—at least it was so until the mother adopted a new set of tactics. She started off at right angle with the line pursued by the cubs, swerving in her course so as to bring herself very near to the hounds apparently with the purpose of attracting the chase to herself. Three of the dogs accepted the invitation, and presently were out of sight in the rough country to which she led them, while the remaining two busied themselves with the cubs now left to their own devices.

At a rattling pace we set off across the country in the direction taken by the old wolf, and presently from an elevation discovered the chase not far ahead. The dogs were rapidly gaining on their prey, and we spurred on in order to be in at the death. Our sport was not marred by any sentimental pity for the victim, as the killing of wolves is a utilitarian service, appreciated as well by hunters as ranchmen. They not only kill and main enormous quantities of wild game, but do not scruple at entering rancher's barnyard and carrying away young hogs, sheep, and even young calves. The Eastern method of getting rid of troublesome domestic animals is in trouble here against wild beasts to a great extent, and thousands of wolves are killed through poisoned meat prepared for them by the farmers.

The run was but a short one, and before one drew near enough for the effective use of our shotguns the dogs had dragged the tired animal to the ground and were tearing at her throat.

Wolf skins in the frontier market bring from \$1.50 to \$3 each, and as every pelt was captured during the hunt was to fall to the share of Jim, our cook, he was probably the most eager member of the chase. He rode into the thick of the fight, and kicking the dogs to right and left had the skin strapped from the animal before the blood had done flowing from its throat. Wolf skins are the main dependency of many of the poorer ranchmen during the winter months, some of them collecting

as many as five hundred pelts from the beginning of November to the close of February. Their favorite weapon is strychnine, which often kills for one man more wolves in a single night than a party of hunters could run down and shoot in a week. When the poisoned meat is placed near a pond or stream of water the carcasses of wolves will always be found near the water's edge, as the poison breeds an intolerable thirst and the water hastens dissolution.

In the course of the morning we ran down three other gray wolves, and succeeded in shooting a coyote, as well as a cantelope for dinner. While stretched on the grass smoking our pipes after dinner was over, a black wolf stalked into the very borders of the camp, and made a leap at one of the reeking skins which Jim had hung over the lower limb of a scrub-oak. He failed to get it; but instead he got the hounds on his trail, with us after them as soon as we could gather our arms and mount. For the first few miles the run was over a smooth country; but the noon rest seemed to have stiffened the dogs' joints and slowly but surely the wolf was slipping away from them. His instinct headed him towards a piece of land broken by rivulets and coppices, where he could easily elude the hounds' sight and make his escape almost certain.

The doctor's dog—Cruso—who, since the death of the leader in the morning, was the fleetest in the pack, blocked this little game, however, by putting on a magnificent spurt and presently bringing the wolf to bay until the others came up. Then ensued a knock-down and drag-out fight between the single wolf and five dogs, which lasted for twenty minutes. Of course our shotguns might have put an immediate end to the scrimmage, but in spite of Jim's earnest entreaties, who feared for the fate of his valuable pelt, we let the fight go on, satisfied that any five hounds who could not kill an American wolf were unfit to be the companions of sportsmen.

At the beginning of the fight the dogs mainly contented themselves with circling about the beast and taking a nip out of his flanks whenever a chance presented; but as the fight continued and they got an occasional taste of blood, they began to close in and to make passes at the wolf's throat. He kept his eyes peeled, however, wheeling about like a tee-tum in his efforts at protecting flank and van, and held his own fairly well against the five assailants until Cruso managed to get a full grip on one of his hind legs, when he opened his guard in front and three of the hounds took him simultaneously in the throat and fore legs.

Bleeding from the throat wound, and with two broken limbs, he weakened rapidly, finally going down after one of the hardest struggles that I have ever seen made by a wild animal. This was the largest wolf that we have killed, or in fact seen, during our sojourn. His weight being probably above, rather than under 150 pounds, and as his color is black, instead of the usual lupine gray, his skin, when cured, will not make a bad robe.

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Lewisburg	7:25	11:00	2:15	
Fair Ground	7:30	11:05	2:20	
Biehl	7:40	11:16	2:30	
Vicksburg	7:45	11:23	2:35	
Millburg	8:50		2:50	
Millburg	8:50		3:00	
Millmont	8:55		3:05	
Laureton	8:55		3:10	
Laureton	8:55		3:15	
Millmont	8:55		3:20	
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