

New wolf enters Northeastern California from Oregon

HIGHLIGHTS

Wolf dubbed 'OR25' by wildlife officials is in Modoc County

He's exhibiting 'dispersal' behavior, perhaps in search of mate

Dark-furred wolf is wearing collar that allows movement tracking



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State wildlife officials say a new gray wolf has entered far Northern California.

In mid-December, a 3-year-old male wolf from Oregon wearing a collar that allows biologists to keep tabs on his movements walked into California in the rural northeastern corner of the state. Last week, biologists said his collar showed he was in northern Modoc County.

California wildlife officials announced his arrival to the state Thursday in an online post.

Dubbed "OR25" by Oregon wildlife officials, the dark-furred wolf is a former member of the Imnaha Pack of northeastern Oregon. Wildlife officials say he left the pack in March.

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OR25 "appears to be exhibiting dispersal behavior" in California, Department of Fish and Wildlife spokeswoman Jordan Traverso said in the post.

If so, his behavior is similar to that of OR7, the radio-collared, wandering wolf that arrived in California in December 2011. That wolf spent much of 2012 wandering northeastern California in a meandering path that eventually covered thousands of miles. He returned to Oregon in March 2013 but remained near the California border.

Wolves can walk incredibly long distances in search of new packs and mates.

In June 2014, Oregon wildlife officials confirmed OR7 was raising a litter of pups just over the state line in Oregon. At the time, biologists said the finding significantly increased the odds that wolves eventually would repopulate California for the first time since being exterminated nearly 90 years ago.

This summer, state wildlife officials announced that that had indeed happened when a pair of gray wolves had moved into the woods of Siskiyou County, likely from Oregon, and had five black-furred pups. The wolves' arrival and classification as a state endangered species hasn't been without controversy.

Wildlife officials announced last month they had classified a November sighting by ranchers of wolves eating a calf as a "probable" wolf kill. They said the calf may have died through other means, and the wolves may have merely scavenged the carcass. But the incident put local cattle ranchers on edge. They fear wolves may develop a taste for their valuable livestock. Wolf advocates say predation on livestock is rare, especially if ranchers take proactive steps to keep the animals away.

State wildlife officials, meanwhile, recently released a draft wolf conservation plan. They're seeking public comment to shape a final version.

The public has until mid-February to comment on the draft. Three meetings are scheduled around the state later this month and in early February to solicit input.

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5 days ago

Nice looking. Lets hope he doesn't attract humans... His natural response will not be friendly...