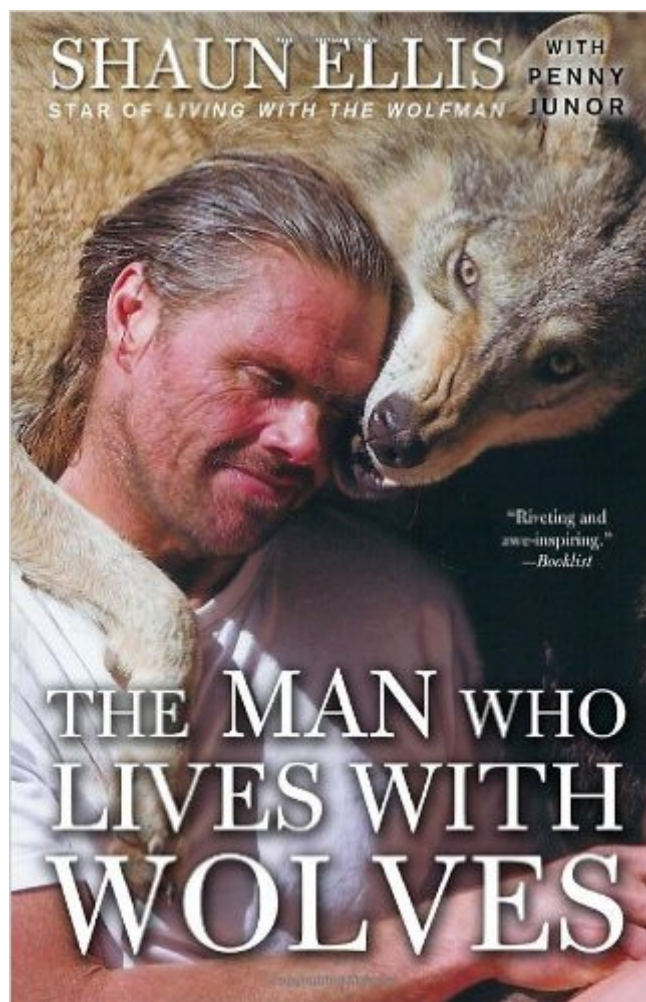


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# The Man Who Lives With Wolves



## Synopsis

What would compel a man to place himself in constant danger in order to become a member of a wolf pack? To eat with them, putting his head into a carcass alongside the wolves' gnashing teeth? To play, hunt, and spar with them, suffering bruises and bites? To learn their language so his howl is indistinguishable from theirs? To give up a normal life of relationships and family so that he can devote himself completely to the protection of these wild animals? In *The Man Who Lives with Wolves*, Shaun Ellis reveals how his life irrevocably changed the first time he set eyes on a wolf. In exhilarating prose, he takes us from his upbringing in the wilds of Norfolk, England, to his survival training with British Army Special Forces to the Nez Percé Indian lands in Idaho, where he first ran with a wolf pack for nearly two years. Offering an extraordinary look into the lives of these threatened, misunderstood creatures, Ellis shares how he ate raw kill "and little else; washed rarely, and only in plain water; learned to bury his face into the carcasses of prey "and, when necessary, to defend his share of the kill; communicated with the pack by his howls and body language, which over time became seemingly identical to theirs; and observed from this unique vantage point how wolves give birth to and raise their young, and enforce order among the pack. After years of living in the wild, Shaun Ellis was barely able to recognize the feral face that stared back at him from the mirror. And in *The Man Who Lives with Wolves*, we discover the life of a rare and fascinating man who abandoned civilization but never lost touch with his humanity. From the Hardcover edition.

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## Customer Reviews

Everybody has heard the same stories about wolves - how there's an alpha pair, the biggest and boldest of the wolf pack, that sort of thing. Shaun Ellis' new book "The Man Who Lives With Wolves" disproves that and many other such notions. The book is well written and accessible. Mr Ellis' passion for the life he has chosen - living with captive wolf packs - comes shining through on every page. And it's his passion and intelligence that makes this such a good book to read. Mr Ellis grew up in Norfolk, England, which to me seems to be an unlikely spot to begin a lifelong commitment to wolves. (I don't think of England having a lot of wolves.) He grew up with his grandparents on their farm, with no other children around him - or anything most of us take for granted such as television and video games. This autobiography is not a "poor me" writing, just an explanation of how Mr Ellis came to bond with dogs and wolves. He was so focused on working with wolves he was willing to eat jelly beans for every meal just so he could study the wolves more closely. I recommend this book highly to anyone, no reservations. Mr Ellis life story, as well as his work with wolves, is interesting and impressive. He manages to make the connections between dog and wolf behavior quite clear. So even if you are not particularly interested in wolves, I suggest this book to you. If you're a fan of dogs (I like dogs - other peoples' dogs), you will gain some insight as to the whys and wherefores of dogs' behavior. Do yourself a favor and read this book.

I chose this book because my daughter is big into wolves and I thought it would be interesting. Lo and behold, I decided to casually browse it the day it arrived and I literally found myself turning page after page for three or four hours. I know there are loads of people who claim they "couldn't put the book down" or that they "read it in one sitting" or whatever, but I am not that type of person. Even if I love a book, I need to massage my adhd and walk away for a while. This book is the first in recent memory that held my attention for such a long time. No, I didn't finish this book in one sitting, but I damn sure came close. The closest I can describe the sensation is like being in a conversation with the author that carries on into the night and never gets dull. This is a book that is devoid of literary wonder, rich, impressive turns of phrase, heavy metaphors, or deep reflective philosophical ramblings. What it is chock-full of, however, is the stark, engaging, and matter-of-fact recounting of one man's incredibly fascinating life among the notoriously misunderstand cousins to man's best friend. I'm a wolf guy like my daughter and I found so much of value in these tales for dog lovers of all kinds. What this man understands and learns about wolves has immediate use for dog owners, and in an era where we have tv shows about dog trainers helping hapless, spineless clods teach Fido not to pee on the couch, this couldn't come at a better time. I will not say this is the best book I've ever read. Far from it. But it is a book I would happily recommend to anyone because it is

enormously enjoyable and stunningly incredible.

I've never seen the author's tv shows, but I looked forward to reading this book because I've read several other wolf books, follow the wolf-moose study on Isle Royale, and have visited a couple of wolf education centers and been caged and had physical contact with two wolves. Although the author and I have similar views about people and nature, I never enjoyed the book as much as I expected to. The section about living for two years in Idaho with no human contact and with wild wolves bringing him food had too few details to seem believable to me; instead, I felt that I was reading a nature tall tale or another of the tribal legends which are included in the book. I'm certainly in no position to call the man a liar, but given some of his past behavior and irresponsibility mentioned in the book, I also don't feel inspired to automatically believe every word he writes. On several other subjects, I just disagree with his opinions such as seeing dogs and wolves as the same, or that a wolf-dog hybrid would make a good teaching animal for children, or that wolves are not opportunistic killers but instead select a particular animal based on specific nutritional needs of the moment. Although he states there is no evidence that inbreeding causes bloodline problems, that evidence has been found over a long period of time in wolf skeletons from Isle Royale. Some of his claims of understanding wolves seem a bit Timothy Treadwellish to me, and his dream of proving that the presence of wolves improves local ecology has already been demonstrated since the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone. Anyone interested in wolves will want to read this book, but they should add a grain of salt to this raw meat diet.

This book was interesting and easy to read. I appreciated Ellis' relentless determination to learn about wolves and his desire to save them from man's encroachment. His methods are unorthodox, to say the least. He is more attuned to wolves than humans and that is one of the reasons I didn't give the book a higher rating. He marries and has children, but is away from his family so much that he can't be a good husband and father. He puts his third wife in a dangerous situation where she could have been killed. I did enjoy reading about his childhood and his time with the wolves in Idaho, but thought the latter part of the book was less interesting. This was a good book group selection as it generated a lot of discussion.

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