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Michigan's only known wolverine is dead

By [Jeff Kart](#) | [The Bay City Times](#)
 March 15, 2010, 8:01AM



Courtesy Steve Noble

Jeff Ford holds Michigan's only known wolverine after she was found dead on Saturday.

Michigan's only known wolverine has been found dead along a trail in Sanilac County.

The animal, a female, was found by hikers on Saturday, said Arnie Karr, a wildlife biologist for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

"There's no visible indications of the cause of death," Karr said this morning.

The wolverine, first spotted by coyote hunters in February 2004, had been in the news several times in recent weeks, including a [Sunday story in The Bay City Times](#) and [The Saginaw News](#).

Two hikers were walking in the Minden Bog at the [Minden City State Game Area](#) when they saw the wolverine in a ditch. Due to publicity about the animal, they knew right away what they'd found, Karr said.

"According to the conservation officers, it did not appear that she had been dead very long," he said.

Jeff Ford, a science teacher at Deckerville High School, has been keeping track of the wolverine since 2005, using trail cameras, and sharing photos and video with school children and others.

"I feel like I lost a member of my family," Ford said this morning.

He found out about the death from Steve Noble, principal of the Deckerville school, who has been helping Ford with wolverine research. The two met with the conservation officers before the wolverine was taken away. Ford was able to collect some hair samples for DNA analysis.

Ford said he doesn't have any theories about what might have happened to the animal. He said he always told a white lie about the animal's exact location so as to protect her from people "seeking a trophy." She had been living in the Minden game area since at least March of 2004; he previously said she was in the Verona State Game Area east of Bad Axe.

Karr estimates the wolverine was about seven years old. She weighed 28 pounds. Wolverines have been known to live for up to 17 years in captivity.

"It was quite interesting to have her here, but we really don't know how she got here and probably never will," said Karr, who speculates the animal might have been an exotic pet that was let loose years ago.

Karr hopes to have the animal mounted and put on display at [Visitor Center at the Bay City State Recreation Area](#), since it was such a rare creature. The wolverine was the first of its kind spotted in the state in about 200 years.

The animal has been sent to a lab for examination to see if a cause of death can be determined.

Karr said he doesn't believe anyone intentionally harmed the animal.

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Posted by **jetboy**
March 15, 2010, 9:13AM

Wow! What a strange coincidence. The wolverine had a nice article about it in Sunday's paper but must have been dead already.

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Posted by **koreanwarvet**
March 15, 2010, 10:52AM

Bstark you are truly a great writer....

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Posted by **bstarke**
March 15, 2010, 9:17AM

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear.
And Grace, my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far
and Grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me.
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

When we've been here ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun.



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Posted by **jhdjd**
March 15, 2010, 9:44AM

Very appropriate.

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Posted by **landingteam2**
March 15, 2010, 9:31AM

sad

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Posted by **natron3030**
March 15, 2010, 9:36AM

Nothing is going right for UofM.

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Posted by **B'wana**
March 15, 2010, 9:58AM

The poor animal probably just read about U of M's dismal Football and basketball teams and her heart couldn't take the strain.

Very sad though. It would be great to have more of these animals in Michigan.

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Posted by **trexx0072002**
March 15, 2010, 10:28AM

What an amazing creature the animal was. Too bad Michigan does not start a re introduction program for these animals.

The DNR needs to help re establish these fine creatures.

It was just over 5 years ago when I spotted a Martin or a Fisher by Tobico Marsh Area. I could not believe my eyes. I reported it to the DNR and never got a call back. Because of it's size I would say a Fisher.

Ocasionaly you get the privlidge to see one of Michigan's Rare creature in person. Cherish those moments because they are decreasing more and more.

As for the Wolverine; RIP; and thank you for your brief presence to our state.

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Posted by **koreanwarvet**
March 15, 2010, 10:48AM

I think the Buckeyes already knew that the Wolverines were all dead. Now who do we root for? Oh yeah the Spartans.

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Posted by **B'wana**
March 15, 2010, 11:21AM

Well, I don't think some of us can go that far :)

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Posted by **phrint**
March 15, 2010, 11:21AM

Like the Spartans are anything to write home about. U of M is still the better school even with the past two years they have been down in football. Didn't the Wolverines just sweep your precious Spartans in the CCHA tournament? That's what I thought.

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Posted by **licketysplit**
March 15, 2010, 10:56AM

I blame Global Warming Uh Uhhmm I Mean Ahhhhh..... Uhhmmmm. Climate Change. Poor Wolverine died from Heat exhaustion over the winter.

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Posted by **hankscorpio**
March 15, 2010, 11:18AM

If it was a released exotic pet that was released it would have lived a life of extreme loneliness in the wild. If there was no outward signs as to cause of death, and it was young I'd guess it was poisoned or diseased.

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Posted by **jmarti41**
March 15, 2010, 11:29AM

I bet you RichRod did it.

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Posted by **B'wana**
March 15, 2010, 11:43AM

RichRod only kills Wolverines that live in Ann Arbor.

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Posted by **enuff**
March 15, 2010, 11:34AM

A metaphorical nail in the coffin..

[Inappropriate comment? Alert us.](#)[Reply to this comment](#) | [Post a new comment](#)Posted by **brinkswagon**
March 15, 2010, 11:42AM

I thought the title was referring to Lloyd Carr.

[Inappropriate comment? Alert us.](#)[Reply to this comment](#) | [Post a new comment](#)Posted by **fhsoldie**
March 15, 2010, 12:07PM

Skipping over all the trivial sports comments, I'd like to extend my gratitude to Jeff Ford for his dedication and affection for this Wolverine. You've had a once in a life time experience to get up (sort of) close and personal with this incredible animal. You're to be commended for your interaction and all the time you put into keeping an eye on her.

I did enjoy reading the article Sunday but at the same time, I felt saddened by the thought that she has been alone for years.

Jeff, many who love animals are mourning with you now.

Don't let the thoughtless of some taint your memories of your efforts.

[Inappropriate comment? Alert us.](#)[Reply to this comment](#) | [Post a new comment](#)Posted by **lairdda1**
March 15, 2010, 12:22PM

Yea! And what about the womens water polo team! uofm is great in all the non-revenue sports.

Try to keep it relevant dude.

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