

Oregon-born gray wolf dies after 'epic' California trek

November 25 2021



This February 2021 released by California Department of Fish and Wildlife, shows a gray wolf OR93, near Yosemite, Calif. An Oregon-born gray wolf that thrilled biologists as it journeyed far south into California was found dead after apparently being struck by a vehicle, authorities said Wednesday, Nov. 24, 2021. No foul play was suspected in the death of the male wolf known as OR93, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife said in a press release. Credit: California Department of Fish and Wildlife via AP, File

An Oregon-born gray wolf that thrilled biologists as it journeyed far south into California was found dead after apparently being struck by a vehicle, authorities said Wednesday.

No foul play was suspected in the death of the male [wolf](#) known as OR93, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife said in a news release. Gray [wolves](#) are listed as endangered in California, where they were wiped out by the 1920s.

"Before his demise, he was documented traveling the farthest south in California since wolves returned to the state, which is historically wolf habitat. The last documented wolf that far south was captured in San Bernardino County in 1922," the department said.

A truck driver reported spotting the dead wolf on Nov. 10 near the Kern County town of Lebec, about 75 miles (120 kilometers) northwest of downtown Los Angeles.

The carcass was located along a dirt trail near a frontage road running parallel to Interstate 5, and a warden who responded quickly identified the wolf as OR93 because of a radio tracking collar it wore, the department said.

A necropsy performed at Wildlife Health Laboratory in Rancho Cordova found that the wolf had significant tissue trauma to its left rear leg, a dislocated knee and soft tissue trauma to the abdomen.

OR93 was born to the White River pack in northern Oregon in 2019. He went into California's Modoc County on Jan. 30, 2021, returned to Oregon briefly, then again entered California on Feb. 4 and headed south.

His last collar transmission was from the central coast's San Luis Obispo

County on April 5. By then he had traveled at least 935 miles (1,505 kilometers) in California, the wildlife department said.

OR93 was among a small number of [gray wolves](#) that have begun coming to California from other states.

"I'm devastated to learn of the death of this remarkable wolf, whose epic travels across California inspired the world," Amaroq Weiss, senior wolf advocate at the Center for Biological Diversity, said in a statement.

"In this annual time of reflection, I thank him for the hope he gave us and for a brief glimpse into what it would be like for wolves to roam wild and free again," Weiss said.

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