



Photo by Julie Lawrence.

Kiani

By Daniel Curry

Kiani, her sister Aurora, and their brother, Akela, were born at the Minnesota Zoological Garden on April 11, 1989. Kiani, Aurora, Akela and their mother lived there until the fall of 1994 when they moved to Northwest Trek, a wildlife park located in western Washington. After five years Northwest Trek decided that the pack needed a quiet place to retire and live out the rest of their lives in peace away from the busy zoo life. The most suitable place that they found for the pack was Wolf Haven International. The pack was moved on November 16th 1999 to their final home.

From the beginning to the end of Kiani's journey fighting played an integral part in her life. In the beginning of their lives she and her sister Aurora would constantly fight. Both sisters were trying to vie for Beta position within their pack. Kiani held that position for some time until she pushed Aurora too hard. Aurora then pushed Kiani to the omega position of the pack. Kiani and Aurora's confrontations were usually very violent, leaving both girls badly injured on more than one occasion. The two sisters continued to frequently fight until they were moved to Wolf Haven. The

sisters seemed to do well initially at Wolf Haven. Unfortunately the sister's animosity toward one another was stronger than their urge for peace amongst each other. On December 17, 2001, the sisters had to be separated for their own safety.

Kiani was moved in with Ramses, a male wolf that also needed a mate. Kiani and Ramses viewed each other indifferently, at least initially. Either one not taking much interest in what the other was doing. They definitely cared for each other; they just went about their own business. Even though they weren't exceedingly affectionate with each other they could usually be found lying together while the morning sun slowly slid onto their sleep laden bodies, warming them up to greet the day. Kiani loved to spend her time during the day lounging in the protection of her large Douglas-Fir. She had an enormous den at the base of her tree that she would retreat to when she wanted to get away from it all. Kiani's life was fairly easy-going once she moved in with Ramses. She didn't have to fight for a position nor for food usually. All and all the two complemented each other very nicely.

For quite some time Kiani's life didn't really change that much. However

in late December of 2006 Kiani's health started to wane. She started to exhibit signs that our veterinarian thought to be sinus cancer. We opted to not catch her up and run a gauntlet of tests on her due to the stress that she would incur during the process, and the fact that she would have to be anesthetized in order to correctly perform the required tests to accurately diagnosis her ailment. Given her age and personality we thought it to not be in her best interest. Besides even if we did find out that it was sinus cancer there wasn't anything that we could do for her. We did everything that we could to cater to her needs in order to make her more comfortable during the last chapter of her life.

With Kiani's dwindling health Ramses started to become pushy with her, especially when it came to food. He would try to take advantage of her weakened state and hoard as much food for himself as possible. This forced us to devise new methods of feeding them. Kiani helped us out by becoming much more trustful of her caretakers than she had previously been.

continued on page 21

time you read this article, that there will be a resident pack in the North Cascades, the Blue Mountains or the Okanagan.

Issues yet to discuss are: how the state will manage wolves when they do arrive; how many packs and how many animals will the habitat support; how will depredations on livestock be handled; will there be a compensation plan for depredations on livestock, and will wolves be translocated in the state to move wolves to suitable habitat.

These and other questions are sure to be cussed and discussed as we work through the process. Public meetings are being scheduled around the state prior to the first draft of the plan. The group does not always agree but we are working hard to consider everyone's opinion as much as possible.



KIANI continued from page 17

She started to venture up to the fence during our walkthroughs, which made it much easier to keep a close eye on her and more accurately assess her condition. It also helped us to insure that she and Ramses were getting their fair share of food.

Toward the end of her life Kiani started to show signs that the fight with the disease that was laying siege to her body was starting to become too much for her to compete with. Kiani was found in her enclosure on May 9, 2007. Fortunately Kiani

passed away peacefully on her own before we needed to aid her in the transition from this life to the next.

Kiani I hope you know that you are deeply loved and missed by many. I hope that you and your sister have made peace with each other since there is no reason to fight with one another any longer. There is one thing that you never did have to fight for, nor ever will, and that is a place in the hearts of anyone that had the honor of meeting you. Sleep well Friend. I look forward to seeing you again.



SEA WOLF continued from page 18

Students will be wowed by the teeth, size, and asymmetry of the orca skull.

We chose to highlight the orca during this program because of its recent listing as an Endangered species in November 2005 and because the resident pods are found in the Puget Sound area. Orcas are known as the "wolves of the sea" because when they are hunting large prey, they hunt in groups or pods mimicking the hunting strategy of the wolf. They herd their large prey animals into a smaller area, attacking them from several angles. If you are interested in bringing a class or group to Wolf Haven to receive an educational presentation featuring the orca skull please contact Megan Moskwa, Director of Education, at (360) 264-4695 x 220.

