



Popularity: ★★★★★☆



## A wolf called Wander (May 2019)

Review: EBSCONovelist

**Author:** [Parry, Rosanne](#)

**Illustrator:** Armino, Monica - ill.



**Description:** "A young **wolf** cub, separated from his pack, journeys 1000 miles across the Pacific Northwest, dealing with forest fires, hunters, highways, and hunger before finding a new home. Based on the true story of a **wolf** called OR-7"--Provided by publisher.

**Genre:** First person narratives; Illustrated books

**Themes:** Stories told by animals

**Character:** Sympathetic; Anthropomorphic

**Storyline:** Action-packed

**Tone:**Moving

**Writing Style:**Attention-grabbing

**Illustration:**Realistic

**Min/Max Grade level:**4 - 6

**Lexile:** 670 **Accelerated Reader:** IL: MG, BL: 4.3, AR Pts: 4

**Persistent link to this record (Permalink):**

## Reviews

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## Booklist:

Grades 3-6 *Wander the wolf* is a survivor whose peaceful life is destroyed when invading wolves kill his pack. He escapes his family's mountain home, leaving everything familiar behind. As he travels, a raven becomes his only companion but later abandons him to join a flock of ravens. Continuing his lonely journey, Wander is often hungry and thirsty; once he's severely injured trying to kill an elk and must spend many days recovering. He encounters unfamiliar animals, people, and dangerous highways during his long months of wandering, until, at last, he meets a female wolf with whom he can start a family and pack of his own. Wander's first-person narration may not be to every reader's taste, but it lends a unique perspective and immediacy to the story for those undeterred. Others will be drawn to the fact that Wander's story is based on an actual wolf who survived a journey of more than 1,000 miles across the Pacific Northwest. Armiño's realistic black-and-white illustrations fill in gaps, making this memorable adventure a beautiful one as well. -- J. B. Petty (Reviewed 4/1/2019) (Booklist, vol 115, number 15, p73)

## School Library Journal:

*/\* Starred Review \*/* Gr 4–6—Swift, a yearling wolf, is separated from his family after a rival wolf pack attacks and claims his family's territory as their own. His thousand-mile journey across the Pacific Northwest to find a new home brings danger, hunger, and desperate loneliness. Inspired by the story of OR-7, a real wolf naturalists tracked in the wild, Parry perfectly conveys her character's curious, alert, and social nature. Swift's successes and failures throughout his travels shape a relatable bildungsroman theme. His symbiotic relationship with a raven will delight and intrigue readers, just one example of the abundant information about wolves Parry seamlessly incorporates into this page-turning narrative. Generously illustrated, Armiño's spot and full-page black-and-white drawings capture the landscape's stark beauty from the fragility of a bumblebee in flight to the ferocity of an animal attack. The novel's grim yet blunted depiction of life and death in nature,

along with an upbeat ending in which Swift gives himself a new name, make it an ideal middle grade read. The novel would also function well as the fictional component in a classroom lesson about wolves, as the gripping story—and extensive back matter—will inspire students to learn more about the real OR-7. VERDICT A first purchase for all libraries; deserving of a place alongside Sheila Burnford's *The Incredible Journey*, Jack London's *White Fang*, and other classic animal adventure novels.—Marybeth Kozikowski, Sachem Public Library, Holbrook, NY --Marybeth Kozikowski (Reviewed 04/01/2019) (*School Library Journal*, vol 65, issue 3, p72)

### **Publishers Weekly:**

Parry (*The Turn of the Tide*) offers a wolf 's-eye view of the Pacific Northwest's forests, mountains, and prairies in this harrowing survival tale based on the story of OR-7, a wolf electronically tracked by scientists. As a pup, quick learner Swift was taught that there are perils in the world ("you are tender and tasty, my wolfling"), but he doesn't encounter danger firsthand until he and his siblings are old enough to learn how to hunt. When a rival wolf pack attacks, many of Swift's clan, including his father, are killed and their territory usurped. Eager to flee the enemy, Swift begins an arduous solo journey, renaming himself "Wander." Along the way, he encounters such threats as a human with a "lightning stick," a busy highway, a cougar, and a forest fire, all the while yearning for the companionship of another wolf. A straightforward, relatable narrative mixes facts about wolves' habits with sensory explorations of nature (flowers nod, hunger awakens, scents reveal), and Armiño's realistic art illustrates key moments throughout. An action-packed novel perfect for reluctant readers as well as animal lovers. Ages 8–12. (May) --Staff (Reviewed 04/08/2019) (*Publishers Weekly*, vol 266, issue 14, p)

### **Kirkus:**

Separated from his pack, Swift, a young wolf, embarks on a perilous search for a new home. Swift's mother impresses on him early that his "pack belongs to the mountains and the mountains belong to the pack." His father teaches him to hunt elk, avoid skunks and porcupines, revere the life that gives them life, and "carry on" when their pack is devastated in an attack by enemy wolves. Alone and grieving, Swift reluctantly leaves his mountain home. Crossing into unfamiliar territory, he's injured and nearly dies, but the need to run, hunt, and live drives him on. Following a routine of "walk-trot-eat-rest," Swift traverses prairies, canyons, and deserts, encountering men with rifles, hunger, thirst, highways, wild horses, a cougar, and a forest fire. Never imagining the "world could be so big or that I could be so alone in it," Swift renames himself Wander as he reaches new mountains and finds a new home. Rife with details of the myriad scents, sounds, tastes, touches, and sights in Swift/Wander's primal existence, the immediacy of his intimate, first-person, present-tense narration proves deeply moving, especially his longing for companionship. Realistic black-and-white illustrations trace key events in this unique survival story, and extensive backmatter fills in further factual information about wolves and their habitat. A sympathetic, compelling introduction to wolves from the perspective of one wolf and his memorable journey. (additional resources, map) (Fiction . 8-12) (Kirkus Reviews, March 1, 2019)

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Wilderness survival

Wolves

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