Wildlife Safety Precautions Fatality File



CASWELL COUNTY, N.C. – A wolf attacked a worker on Saturday at the Conservators Center – the same exotic animal center where an intern was mauled to death by a lion in December 2018.

Caswell County Sheriff's Office said the worker was in the wolf enclosure around 2 p.m. when wolves bit her on the elbows and thigh. Authorities said she was able to get out of the enclosure and was taken to UNC Hillsborough hospital. Her injuries are non-life-threatening.

Authorities said two wolves were involved in the attack.

Hayley Quay, an Animal Keeper at the Conservators Center, was attacked by the wolves. Through an attorney for the center, she issued the following statement:

"I have been receiving numerous inquiries about my condition after the incident on Saturday, so I wanted to let everyone know that I am doing just fine. I have been working closely with wolves for my entire professional career and know that sometimes things like this happen even when everything is done perfectly. I am looking forward to a full and speedy recovery so that I can get back to doing what I have spent years studying and training to do—caring for Rayne and Sitka and all of the other animals at the Animal Park."

The incident report reveals what led up to the biting. Here is the summary from Caswell County Animal Control documents:

"I spoke with the general manager about the incident. She advised me that the victim goes in the cage with the wolves on a day-to-day basis to socialize with the animals. She states the victim approached the female wolf as it was acting skittish tail tucked and the male wolf came behind the female and scared the female wolf and in fear bit the victim. The male wolf followed behind and bit her also in the right thigh and both arms. The victim was awake and aware when transported to the hospital. I then inspected the enclosure to where the animals were kept shown. No public safety risk dies to the high rise of the enclosure followed by another enclosed area. Both animals did not seem aggressive. They had these animals since they were puppies and now, they're two years old. The animals are under a ten-day quarantine and being kept at the center. Animal control will monitor and follow up upon the ten-day quarantine."

The Conservators Center's Executive Director, Mindy Stinner, released the following statement following the wolf attack:

“On Saturday, March 20, one of the Center’s professionally trained full time animal keepers was performing routine activities with two of the Center’s juvenile wolves, within the wolves’ secure enclosure and separated from the public tour path by multiple fencing barriers. During these activities, the juvenile wolves bit the keeper. Pursuant to the Center’s protocols and Emergency Response Plan, 911 was called and the keeper was transported for medical care. Due to employee privacy laws, the Center cannot release any information about the employee at this time. Caswell County Animal Control was also called, and the juvenile wolves have been quarantined for 10 days, just as would be the case for any dog that bit a human. At no time during this incident was any member of the public in any danger. The Center continues to have as its top priority the safety of its public guests, volunteers, and employees, and the Center is confident that it provides a safe environment for all who visit and work at the Center.”