



2023 U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services **Killing** Report

Wildlife Services claims that its goal is to allow people and wildlife to coexist, but nothing could be further from the truth. Instead, **they use public taxpayer dollars to kill millions of wild animals** held in the public trust, damaging ecosystems and putting public safety and health at risk. Wildlife Services wasn't created to serve wildlife—it was created to kill wildlife largely at the behest of commercial agriculture.

Each year Wildlife Services publishes program data detailing the number of animals killed and the methods used. In 2023, the numbers are as staggering as always with **1.4 million animals killed nationwide**.

Wild carnivores were among the most heavily targeted, as usual.

In 2023, the program intentionally killed:

2,246

Red, Gray, & Kit Foxes



482

Bobcats



68,649

Coyotes



2

Mexican Gray Wolves



305

Gray Wolves



237

Mountain Lions



437

Black Bears



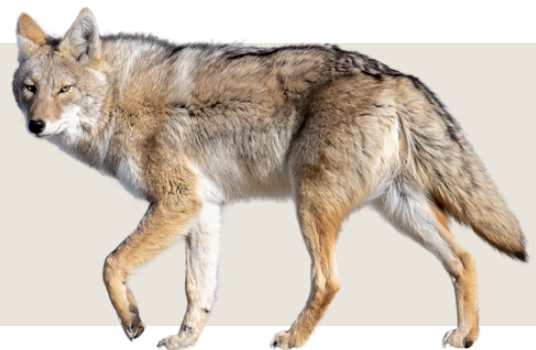
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Grizzly Bears



Tragically, these numbers are likely underestimated as program insiders have long claimed that Wildlife Services consistently underreports animals killed. Wildlife Services also gassed over **400** coyote and fox dens, killing an **unknown** number of pups in dens.

Wildlife Services' lethal arsenal includes M-44 cyanide bombs, neck snares, foothold traps, and aerial gunning. Coyotes are subjected to all of these inhumane methods, and in 2023 Wildlife Services killed 34,080 coyotes by **aerial gunning**, 6,148 by **M-44 cyanide bombs**, 10,529 by **firearms**, 11,301 by **neck snares**, and 4,778 by **traps**.



Every year, Wildlife Services “accidentally” kills thousands of unintended targets.

In 2023, the top species unintentionally killed included 658 river otters, 443 raccoons, 379 snapping turtles, 91 gray foxes, and 87 coyotes. WS also unintentionally killed federally protected species, including the golden eagle & Mexican gray wolf, and domesticated animals, including 6 cats & 3 dogs.



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Dangerous and Unethical **Killing Methods**

Cyanide Bombs

M-44's also known as cyanide bombs are one of the most inhumane and dangerous killing methods deployed by Wildlife Services. These devices, filled with deadly sodium cyanide spray, are spring-loaded and, once triggered, blast clouds of poisonous gas five feet into the air. The poisonous gas attacks the cardiovascular, pulmonary, and central nervous systems and results in death in a matter of minutes. These devices are indiscriminate, attracting countless non-target species, including endangered species and family pets. M-44s have also injured several people, including children. In 2023, M-44s killed 6,148 coyotes, 325 gray foxes, 48 red foxes, 11 raccoons, 4 striped skunks, 2 dogs, 2 kit foxes, 2 opossums, and 1 pig.

Aerial Gunning

Wildlife Services uses “aerial gunning” as a method to kill coyotes, wolves, bobcats, foxes and numerous other species. This method of shooting wildlife from aircraft is inherently inhumane for numerous reasons. First, it causes extreme stress to all wildlife in an area due to noise from the aircraft and from gunfire, which can cause harm to multiple species. This method also forces animals to expend critical energy reserves to escape, which may affect survival and reproduction. Third, target animals are often not killed by the first shot, which prolongs suffering and can allow maimed or “crippled” animals to escape. Lastly, there is a significant likelihood that dependent young will be orphaned because these operations often coincide with the peak birthing period for many species.

Trapping/Snaring

Neck snares and various types of traps (i.e., body-gripping, foothold) are routinely used by Wildlife Services to capture and kill coyotes and other wild carnivores, despite these methods being brutally inhumane. Snares inflict extreme cruelty on animals caught, regardless of the intention of the snare set (i.e., killing or restraining) or the type of snare in use. Body gripping/crushing traps are intended to quickly crush animals caught inside, but in reality, these traps result in slow and painful deaths. Leg-hold traps are another common, inhumane method used by Wildlife Services—causing pain, distress, and physical injuries as a result of being caught in these devices. In 2023, Wildlife Services used traps and snares to kill 16,079 coyotes, 1,142 foxes (including red and gray species), 256 wolves (including 1 federally protected Mexican gray wolf), 388 bobcats, 92 mountain lions, 52 black bears, and even 443 cats and 71 dogs.