

Catch the SPIRIT

AT THE SHY WOLF SANCTUARY,
VISITORS CAN ENTER THE WORLD
OF THESE MYSTICAL CREATURES.

Photography by Brian Tietz





OUR ANGLO FAIRY TALES TURN THEM INTO VILLAINS, BUT IF you explore Native American lore, you'll know wolves are mystical creatures—spiritual guides and guardians who embody wisdom, courage and strength. They are cousins to man, the legends say, and bonded to us as we are to them. Step through the gates of the Shy Wolf Sanctuary in Golden Gate Estates and you'll sense that connection. Nancy and Kent Smith bought the 2.5-acre property in 1989 and in 1993 took in their first rescue, a three-legged leopard. Today, they have a menagerie of critters—some 35 coyotes, panthers, foxes, gopher tortoises, bobcats, lemurs, dingoes, kinkajou and others—but they are best known for the wolves. They have about 35 of them—a combination of pure wolves and wolf dogs for whom the sanctuary is named. Yes, they are shy by instinct, but under the gentle care of human companions, they allow us to enter their world.

—Jennifer Reed

A normally sleepy arctic fox named Dickens shows his mischievous side, at one point tugging on photographer Brian Tietz's camera strap as if he were trying to snatch the equipment. He earned his name as a cub, when he was a rambunctious little "dickens."



Caroline Riggall (above), 13, kneels silently to reassure Jasper, the wolf dog seen in the background. Caroline and her mother, Maggie, volunteer every Sunday. Treasure (far right) was found in a junkyard and ended up at a high-kill shelter before Shy Wolf rescued him. With a gentle personality, he visits nursing homes to bring comfort to residents. Sanctuary founder Nancy Smith (right) enjoys a moment with Chatima, “Chatty” for short, who was rescued as a pup.

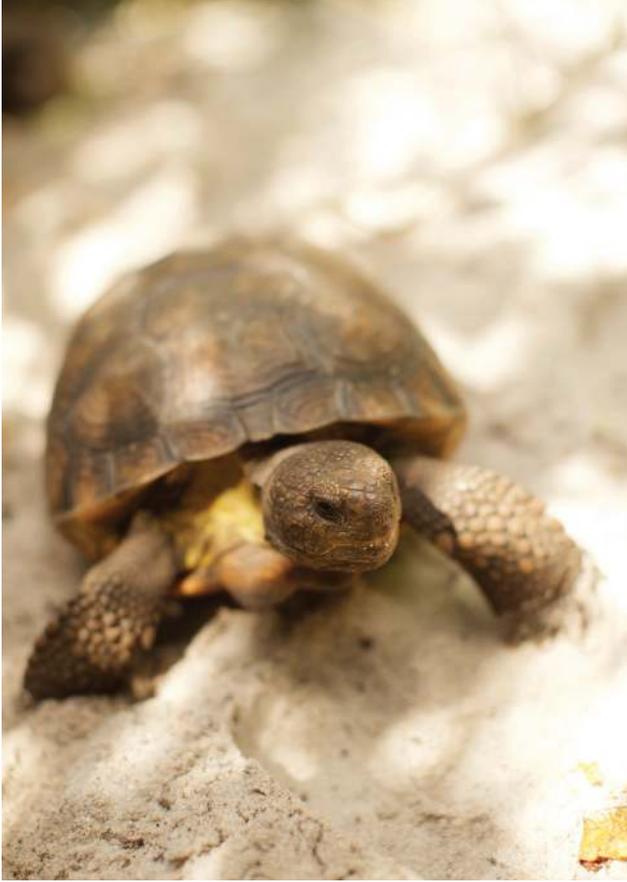






Six-year-old Grayson Tietz gets eye-to-eye with Cimmaron, a Florida panther rescued in late 2010. Several times a day, the wolves let loose a mass howl, filling the neighborhood with their ethereal sounds. Chatty, standing outside her shelter, is the most vocal of the pack, her voice ringing out long after the others have stopped.





This tiny tortoise is among the many species to find refuge at Shy Wolf. Right, Ava Tietz, 10, gets some love from Dreamer, a wolf dog, who loves to dote on his human companions. Below, the aptly named bobcat Professor Bob Leo offers a surly stare and air of superiority to passers-by. The Professor lives with a domestic house cat named Boomer. †



