

Wolf Attacks Mother Walking with Child in Sweden



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Sweden recently overturned a **45 year ban on wolf hunting** as wolf populations have grown to more than 200 animals, and wolves impinge more frequently on areas occupied by humans. The **clash between man and nature** has claimed another victim, as two wolves converged on the path of a mother out walking with her child in Norrtälje, north of Stockholm. The wolves appeared suddenly on the path in front of the young mother, who was pushing a baby carriage and accompanied by the family dog. One wolf attacked the pet, seizing it by the neck and turning to carry its prey off to the woods.

Initial reports indicated that the second wolf turned its attention to the baby carriage, but later **reports confirming the wolf attack** indicate that the wolves did not threaten the baby. The later reports say the woman began screaming and flailing her arms, which wolf experts praise as the right course of action. Turning to run back towards town, as earlier reported, could draw predators to the chase, and is not the recommended response to encountering

wolves in the wild.

Foresters assembled a team that searched the woods and found the remains of the family pet. Olof Liberg, predator researcher and Coordinator of the Scandinavian wolf project, elaborated on wolf behavior to the **Swedish news agency TT**, as reported in **The Local news**:

This isn't unusual. We have had a few of these cases. Wolves honor their territory very strongly. Wolves hate other wolves who pass into their territory. If they can, they'll try to kill them or chase them away. They don't attack people, they barely even saw her. We haven't had one incident in Scandinavia where wolves acted aggressively against humans.

Liberg said that the wolves perceive the dog as kin and when one comes into their territory they become so focused that they barely notice humans. According to the same report, last year, 38 dogs were attacked by large predators, wolves accounting for 21 of the attacks.

The Swedish government is currently defending the population-culling wolf hunt, which has proceeded for two years now, against **legal action by the EU**. Sweden recently filed a **response to the EU notice regarding wolf hunting**, claiming that the wolf hunt is essential to recovery of wolf populations, claiming "Genetically strengthening the wolf population requires an acceptance that cannot be achieved without licensed hunting."