

RESURRECTION UNIVERSITY CATHOLIC PARISH



Land Stewardship Committee

RETURN OF THE WOLF

25th Year Anniversary of the Return of the Wolf to Yellowstone National Park

The Rose Creek Acclimation pen still stands, one of the first pens built for the controversial release of wolves back into Yellowstone. Three wolves were carted from Canada and housed in the pen so that they could get used to Yellowstone. The pen was opened on March 22, 1995. The trio began their passage into Lamar Valley and beyond. Thus commenced the reintroduction of wolves into Montana.

Prior to the release of the wolves, armed guards were posted to discourage vandals from killing them in their "get acquainted" pens near the beautiful Lamar Valley

This verdant valley has long drawn humans. The Native Americans were first to arrive about 12,000 years ago. The Shoshonis and Bannocks who lived on the Snake River were forced to migrate due to their primary source of food, the bison, being hunted to extinction. A small group of Sheep eaters took up residence in the area of the tourist attraction site now known as sheep eater cliff. Eventually, after decades of hunting, poaching, mistakes and total elimination of wolves, researchers came to Yellowstone Park. Adolf Murie and the Craighead brothers being the most renowned. And they were augmented by many MSU students and graduates.

In 1879, Lamar Valley became part of the world's first national park. Now, humans have moved from killing to saving. A journey not yet over but well underway in this twenty-fifth year.



● Without wolves Yellowstone ecosystem fell out of balance:

- ◆ coyotes ran rampant
- ◆ elk population exploded resulting in overgrazing of aspen and willows
- ◆ beaver could no longer build dams causing riverbanks to erode.
- ◆ without trees songbirds declined
- ◆ without beaver dams and shade from trees, river temperatures became too high for cold water fish.

● With reintroduction of wolves the Yellowstone ecosystem began to recover:

- ◆ elk and deer populations responded quickly
- ◆ in 10 years willows rebounded, in 20 years aspen began to flourish
- ◆ riverbanks stabilized
- ◆ songbirds returned along with beavers, eagles, foxes and badgers
- ◆ wolf ecotourism brings in \$35M annually, the program cost about \$30M.

And, **LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD RETURNS TO CHILDRENS' FICTION**

LILY OF THE VALLEY

Lily of the Valley, sometimes written lily-of-the-valley, is a sweetly scented, highly poisonous woodland flowering plant that is native throughout the cool temperate Northern Hemisphere in Asia, Europe and America.

Like many perennial flowering plants, *C. majalis* exhibits dual reproductive modes by producing offspring asexually by vegetative means and by seed, produced via the fusion of gametes.

Convallaria majalis is a plant of partial shade, and mesophile type that prefers warm summers. It likes soils that are silty or sandy and acid to moderately alkaline, with preferably a plentiful amount of humus.

Convallaria majalis is used as a food plant by the larvae of some Lepidoptera species including the grey chi. Adults and larvae of the leaf beetle *Lilioceris merdigera* are also able to tolerate the cardenolides and thus feed on the leaves.

Convallaria majalis is sometimes grown in gardens for its scented flowers and ground covering abilities in shady locations. It has a strong attraction to Christian gardeners because of its supposed relationship to Mary, Mother of God. The flower is also known as **Our Lady's tears** or **Mary's tears** from Christian legend that it sprang from the weeping of the Virgin Mary during the crucifixion of Jesus. Other etiologies have it coming into being from Eve's tears after she was driven with Adam from the Garden of Eden, or from the blood shed by Saint Leonard of Noblac during his battles with a dragon.

How odd than that it has that relationship when all parts of this plant are highly

poisonous, including the red berries, which may be attractive to children. If ingested—even in small amounts—the plant can cause abdominal pain, vomiting, reduced heart rate, blurred vision, drowsiness and red skin rashes.

The name "lily of the valley" is used in some English translations of the Bible in Song of Songs 2:1, but the Hebrew phrase "*shoshannat-ha-amaqim*" in the original text (literally "lily of the valleys") does not refer to this plant.

It is a symbol of humility in religious painting. Lily of the valley is considered the sign of Christ's second coming. The power of men to envision a better world was also attributed to the lily of the valley.

Other names and Legends: Its scientific name, *majalis* or *maialis* means "means of or belonging to May". In the language of flowers, the lily of the valley signifies the return of happiness. Legend tells of the affection of a lily of the valley for a nightingale that did not come back to the woods until the flower bloomed in May.

