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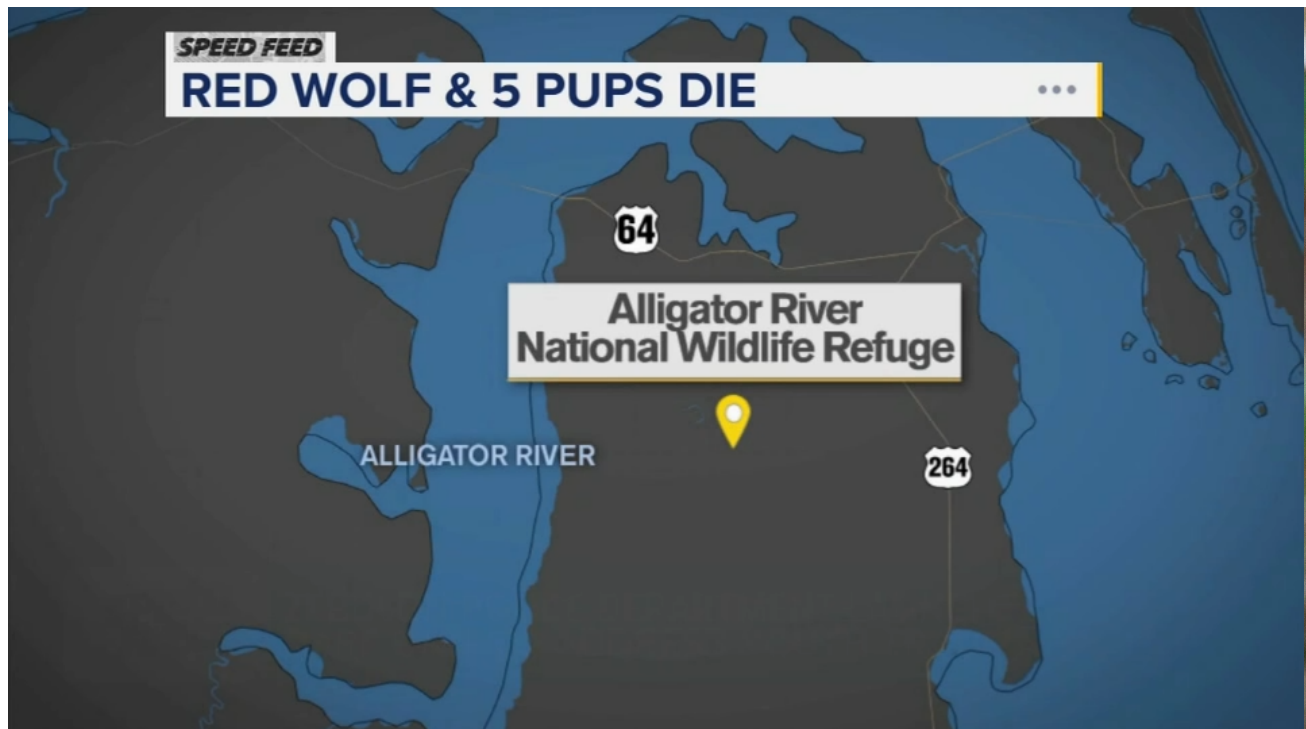
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PETS & ANIMALS

5 red wolf pups die in eastern North Carolina after father hit, killed by vehicle



Tuesday, September 17, 2024



Five red wolf pups died after a vehicle hit and killed their father this spring.

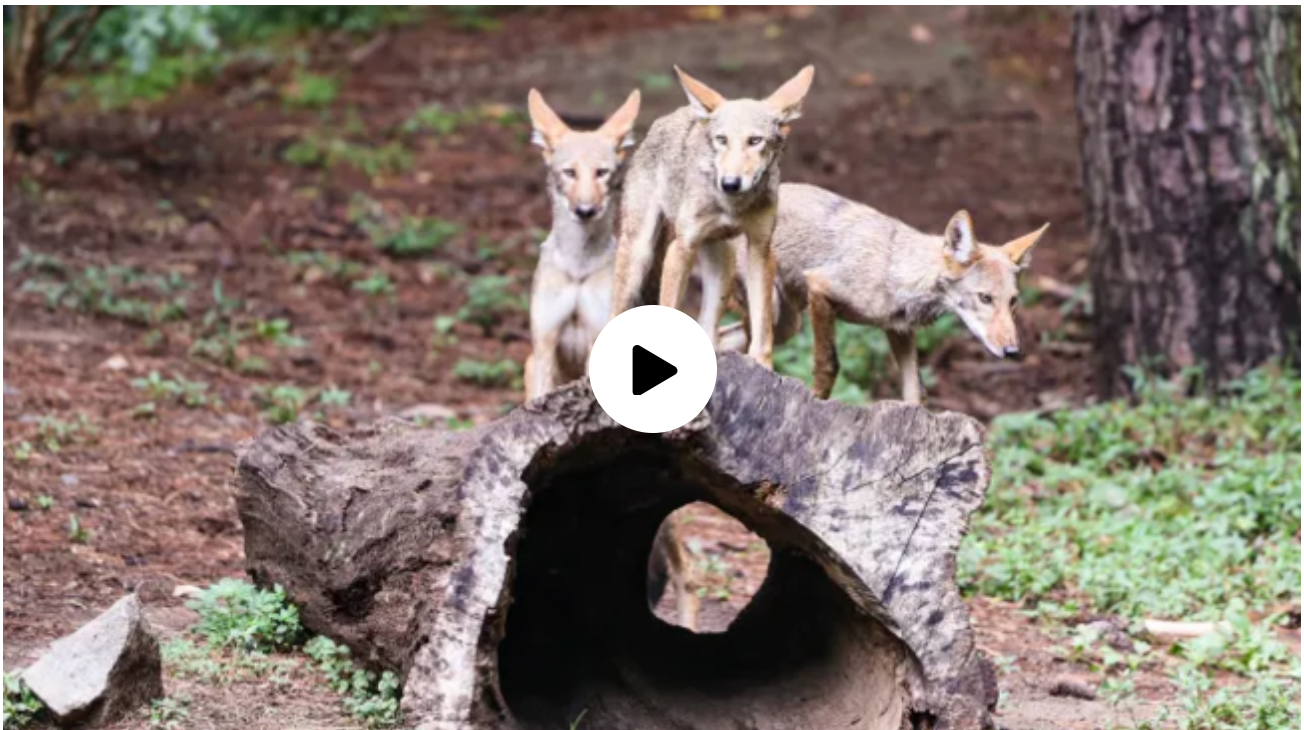
RALEIGH, N.C. (WTVD) -- Five red wolf pups died after a vehicle hit and killed their father this spring.

The deadly collision happened near Highway 64, which runs through the heart of the last remaining territory for wild red wolves: Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge.

Red wolves are monogamous and both parents participate in caring for their young. With this being this couple's first litter, wildlife experts believe the mother was ultimately unable to care for the five pups once the father died.

"The tragic deaths of these five pups might have been prevented if we had wildlife crossings in red wolf country," said Will Harlan, a senior scientist at the Center for Biological Diversity. "It's shocking to see how a single vehicle collision has ripple effects across the critically endangered wild red wolf population. Wildlife crossings can protect people and save red wolves from extinction, but we need to build them before it's too late."

SEE ALSO | [Endangered red wolves at Durham's Museum of Life and Science headed to NY: 'bittersweet'](#)



"This will allow the family to continue to grow next year," Senior Director of Animal Care Sherry Samuels said.

[According to the Center for Biological Diversity](#), a nonprofit conservation organization, wildlife collisions along Highway 64 have killed two dozen other species, such as black bears, bobcats, spotted turtles and river otters. Across the United States, annual wildlife collisions kill more than 200 people and cause \$10 billion in damages.

The conservation group advocates for [wildlife crossings](#), which the group says have been shown to reduce collisions by 97 percent.

Because of that, the group is working on a campaign to raise money for wildlife crossings along Highway 64. That campaign has already raised more than \$1 million and an anonymous donor has pledged a \$2 million match. You can learn more about contributing to the fundraiser at [SaveRedWolves.org](#).

Fewer than 20 red wolves remain in the wild, this after a recovery program grew the population to more than 120 before it was halted in 2015. [The program has since resumed](#) and is working to [reintroduce more red wolves](#) into the wild in eastern North Carolina.

SEE ALSO | ['America's wolf' among those rescued by Endangered Species Act: 'Absolutely worth protecting'](#)

