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Animal Activists Take Bear Issues to Idaho, Michigan, Massachusetts, and Washington

Reprinted, with permission, from the Fall 1995 issue of UPDATE: Newsletter of The Wildlife Legislative Fund of America, Columbus, Ohio

The campaign to stop bear hunting has become a national rallying point for animal rights activists. With recent anti-bear hunting election victories in Colorado and Oregon this mob would seem to have momentum on their side.

Now, with possible ballot campaigns to ban the use of dogs and bait to hunt bear looming in both Idaho and Michigan, and the strong likelihood of the same in Massachusetts and Washington, sportsmen must dig in against a major offensive—or face the possibility of the remainder of bear-hunting states falling like dominoes.

In Idaho, sportsmen continue to mobilize for their own defense in the wake of an announcement from the Idaho secretary of state that proposed ballot language to stop bear hunting over bait and with dogs between March 1 and September 1 has been approved. The language is modeled after Amendment 10, passed by Colorado voters in 1992. No surprise here.

Now anti-hunters—principally the Palouse (Idaho) Voice for Animals, Citizens for Prohibition of Cruelty to Wild Animals and the national Fund for Animals—have until July to collect some 43,000 valid voter signatures (10 percent of last November's aggregate vote for governor) for November 1996 ballot placement. Under the official campaign name Citizens United for Bear (CUB), the petition drive is already under way.

Don Clower, chairman of the Sportsmen's Heritage Fund said his 100-plus member coalition of sportsmen's organizations is already raising money and mapping out campaign strategies.

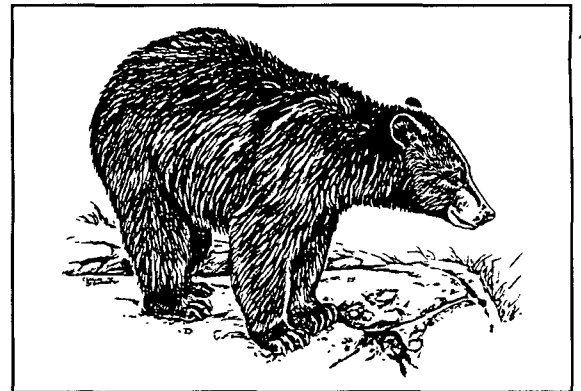
In a state where nearly one-third of the million-plus population buys hunting licenses, support is being amassed among sportsmen and others who have an interest in seeing the proposed initiative go down. Indeed, many of the state's agriculture interests, including wool growers and food producers, are backing the fund's efforts.

The Wildlife Legislative Fund of America (WLFA) held a strategy meeting with the Sportsmen's Heritage Fund in March. The dialogue between the organizations continues to be strong. In

December, WLFA staff will work with sportsmen campaign leaders in a series of media relations workshops.

Nearly 1,000 miles to the east, sportsmen in Michigan were officially notified of the anti-hunters' intent to pass a similar anti-bear hunting initiative (although rumors to that effect had been rife for months).

In July, representatives for the Fund for Animals, along with those from the Michigan Humane Society announced via press conference that they, too, would seek voter approval of an initiative petition to stop the use of bait and dogs to hunt black bear. To be placed on the ballot, these types of ini-



tiatives require the signatures of eight percent of the voters (247,127) from the last gubernatorial election and are normally submitted to the legislature prior to May 31.

Also, using the acronym CUB, this anti-bear hunting campaign is being coordinated by long-time state activist Jim Rogers. Over the past decade, Rogers and his followers have attempted several times to push anti-bear hunting measures through the Legislature and regulatory process.

Michigan Bear Hunters Association representative Bill Walker said the sportsmen of his state are mobilizing under the pro-sportsmen's campaign banner, Michigan Sportsmen's Heritage Alliance.

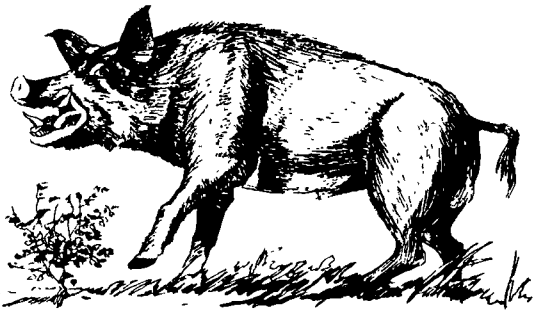
Continued on page 5, Col. 1

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

January 25-27, 1996: Four Corners Regional Bat Conference. Red Lion Inn, Durango, Colorado. A regional conference on research, education and management of bats in Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico sponsored by the Colorado Bat Society. Contact Dr. Cheri Jones, Denver Museum of Natural History, 2001 Colorado Blvd., Denver, CO 80205-5798, phone (303) 370-6354.

February 26-28, 1996: Livestock/Big Game: Sharing Common Ground on Western Rangelands, John Ascuaga's Nugget, Sparks, Nevada. To include poster session, and published proceedings. Sponsored by a coalition of 20 agricultural, conservation, and sportsmen's organizations. Preregistration received by 12/31/95 is \$85.00. Contact Nevada Cattlemen's Association, P.O. Box 310, Elko, NV 89803-0310, phone (702) 738-9214, FAX (702) 738-5208.

February 9 - 11, 1996: Second Annual WCT Wildlife Control Instructional Seminary, Nordic Hills Resort and Conference Center, Itasca, Illinois. Emphasis on practical, how-to trapping methods, techniques, and equipment for many nuisance species. Brochure, topic schedule available. Registration fees are \$225 which includes meals and course materials. Vendor exhibitor table fees are \$225. Additional reps are \$100 each. For more information, contact Lisa at WCT, phone: (708) 858-4928; e-mail address: wctech@ix.netcom.com



February 18-21, 1996: Second Eastern Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators Shortcourse. Holiday Inn North, Lexington, Kentucky. Includes such topics as: Relationships of NWCOS to State Wildlife Agencies; TWS Position Statement on Wildlife Translocation; Does USDA-APHIS-ADC Compete with Private Enterprise?; Establishing Industry Standards and Certification; Selling Exclusion—What Works; Marketing—The Key to Success; Capturing Trap-Shy Squirrels and Raccoons; and Developing Lures that Work. Includes a full-day session devoted to "Euthanasia of Native Wildlife," sponsored by the Humane Society of the U.S., including hands-on training. Contact: Tom Barnes, Dept. of Forestry, Univ. of Kentucky, phone (606) 257-8633; FAX (606) 323-1031; internet tbarnes@ca.uky.edu.

February 28 - March 1, 1996: Fifth Mountain Lion Workshop. Bahia Hotel, San Diego, California. Sponsored by the So. California chapter of The Wildlife Society, and the Calif. Dept. of Fish & Game. Topics will include ongoing and recently completed research, status and management, pathology, and lion-human interactions. Call for Papers: Abstracts, typed on a single 8.5 x 11-inch page, may be submitted to the Program Committee on any topic dealing with mountain lions, and will be received until January 10. Mail to: Fifth Mountain Lion Workshop, c/o W. Douglas Padley, P.O. Box 41306, San Jose, CA 95160. A Proceedings will be published. Workshop pre-registration fee (received by Jan. 21) is \$65. Contact: W. Douglas Padley (address above), phone (408) 265-2607 ext. 2725, or e-mail 72164.142@compuserve.com.

March 4-7, 1996; 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference, Sonoma County Red Lion Hotel, Rohnert Park, California. Optional field trip on March 4; Plenary Session and Technical Sessions presenting research and management information on rodents, birds, predators, and other wildlife on March 5, 6 & 7. Contact: North Region-DANR, UC Davis, (916) 754-8491.

Is this your renewal time?

The membership of many of our members will expire at the same time as the 1995 calendar. This reminder is for those with any 1995 expiration date; check the date on your mailing label. Save us the time and expense of mailing renewal cards, and help us keep the forthcoming directory current. Thanks for minimizing our office work.

As promised at the 7th Eastern in Jackson, here is the E-mail address (if you have that capability) to use for membership inquiries, address changes, and the like :

wrjones@mail.wiscnet.net
Wes Jones
Route 1 Box 37
Shell Lake WI 54871
Telephone: 715/468-2038

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Your contributions to *The Probe* are welcome. Please send news clippings, new techniques, publications, and meeting notices to *The Probe*, c/o Hopland Research & Extension Center, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449. Articles and notes can also be sent by e-mail to mtimm@ucdavis.edu. If you prefer to FAX material, our FAX number is (707) 744-1046. The deadline for submitting material is the 15th of each month. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of NADCA.

ADC News, Tips, Ideas, Publications . . .

Canada Geese Almost "Get" Gingrich

Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and his wife escaped injury after four Canada geese struck their small jet on takeoff from the Mackinac Island, Michigan airport.

According to a report in the September 27 issue of the *Chicago Tribune*, the Cessna Citation hit the birds just as it started its climb. "We were very lucky," Gingrich commented at a Republican gathering in Cincinnati after the incident. "The pilots were very shaken. Another three or four minutes and we would have had a real problem."

As the plane approached, a flock of geese on the runway scattered, said Mackinac Island Police Chief Lawrence Jones. Two geese were sucked into the right engine on takeoff, while two more crashed into the leading edge of the left wing. A 14-inch portion of the wing caved in at the impact.

The plane skidded to a halt 30 feet off the end of the runway, but no one aboard was injured. The Cessna then taxied to a nearby terminal under its own power.

Gingrich and his party left the airport on another aircraft. Gingrich, Republican representative from Georgia, was leaving the island resort in Lake Huron after attending the Michigan Republican Leadership Conference.

Egrets Causing Health Hazards in Oklahoma

An entire city block was recently bulldozed flat in Ardmore, Oklahoma because of some troublesome egrets. The area is the roosting site for thousands of egrets and their offspring and had been declared a health hazard by Oklahoma Department of Health Inspector Andy Munson.

In a letter to city officials, Munson declared, "The dead birds, manure and general filth is creating a potential threat that could affect the nursing home, restaurant and school in that area as well as the residences. Please take whatever action possible to abate this nuisance."

Munson and the officials and residents of Ardmore have been struggling with the egret problem for 20 years or more. "When you run them off of one place," Munson said, "they go to another." He agreed, however, that the problem is now the worst ever.

Thousands of egrets had built nests at the site. Until egret chicks are able to fly, federal law prevents anyone, including local and state governments, from killing or harassing them. Because of a very wet spring and summer, the unhealthy conditions had been greatly magnified. Dead birds floated on stagnant water and numerous rats had invaded the area.



The editors of **The PROBE** thank contributors to this issue: Franklin Anderson, Pink Madsen, Stephen Vantassel, James E. Forbes, and Wes Jones. Send your contributions to **The PROBE**, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449.

Pigeons Hitch a Ride In London

According to a report in the October 16 issue of *Newsweek*, there are some pigeons in London, England that are getting a free ride. Witnesses say they have seen pigeons hopping a ride on the local subway—apparently the birds have been seen hopping into subway cars, riding to another stop, and then disembarking.

Apparently the birds were undisturbed by the nearby presence of the subway's human passengers. The savvy birds were mentioned in a letter in September to the *New Scientist*. The reports were investigated and confirmed, but not to everyone's amusement. One editorial complained that the feathered commuters should have to buy tickets like everyone else.

Letter to Editor

Dear Editor:

Thanks to Stephen Vantassel for raising an interesting topic ("A Christian Minister Explains Why He Can Morally Trap God's Little Creatures", November 1995 issue of **The PROBE**). As an individual also very interested in these issues, I would like to expound upon, and in certain areas disagree with, Stephen's thoughts.

The emphasis that, Biblically, humans are stewards of what belongs to God is accurate. However, while we have been given use of nature, the primary purpose of the rest of Creation is not to meet our needs but to give Glory to God. One powerful illustration of this concept is in chapters 38 through 41 of the book of Job. Some theologians are arguing that much of human activity is limiting the activity of parts of nature to express this Glory.

The phrase "image of God" is best expressed not in the abilities humans have, but in the relationships which we develop (including the relationships with Creation). A major theme, starting in the Old Testament and coming to fruition in Jesus Christ, is the model of a "servant king". Christ, although our Lord, came as the ultimate servant. Christians, with Christ as our model, should seek to exercise our lordship (dominion) over nature in this form of servanthood. How we are to exercise this servanthood is a novel (even strange) way of thinking for most Western Christians. However, I believe one important aspect is the maintenance of biodiversity, and wildlife damage management definitely plays a role.

Respectfully,
Lynn Braband
Critter Control

Book Review

Stephen Vantassel, Special Correspondent, The PROBE

Variations of the Flat Set, by Charles Dobbins. 1995. Sullivan Productions, Blue Creek, OH. 78 pages.

Master canine trapper Charles Dobbins has produced a fine sequel to his earlier book, *The Dirt Hole and Its Variations*, which was reviewed in the June 1995 issue of **The PROBE**. Format wise, this text closely mimics his previous work. Numbers at the beginning of each chapter correspond to the companion video, which is also available.

Anyone familiar with Mr Dobbins' written work knows that he writes in a no-nonsense, "just the facts" style. This book is no exception. The beauty of this book lies in the education it provides its reader. I said it before and it bears repeating, "Biologists who are studying canines would surely profit from reading this book."

Dobbins' descriptions of the sets are as clear as his black and white photographs. It seems to me that he has learned what it takes to make photographs that not only illustrate the text, but are visually understandable as well.

After a brief foreword, where Dobbins asserts that there are more variations of the flat set than the dirt hole, he describes his equipment. Two pages later, Dobbins turns to the "post set." He contends that the post set would be better designated as a "marker set," because these sets exploit the natural tendency of canines to mark their territory. In all, Dobbins describes a total of 7 different kinds of post sets.

Dobbins continues describing 11 more flat sets. Each one exploits a particular habit of canines that he has discovered over his 50 years of experience. These sets include the hidden bait set, campfire set, the rubbing set, and the mink set. Of particular interest to me, living in Massachusetts, was his description of "the water set." I look forward to making this set in the coming trapping season. As a side note, I am also hoping to try a few of the others, now that padded jaw footholds are legal for use in land trapping in Massachusetts. Sorry, I can't go into more detail about the sets. You will have to read the book.

For animal damage controllers, I give this text an "A" rating. The sets as they are described will help you catch canines. If you are trying to catch canines made wary by heavy trapping pressure, then you need this book. By cataloging various sets, Charlie Dobbins will give you enough ideas to make a variety of sets which will take canines spooked by the more commonly-used ones. Thus you will find this book, as others written by Dobbins, a great asset to your trapper's library.

I haven't given the book an "A+" rating because Charlie doesn't talk about dealing with customers, pricing, and avoiding domestic pets. I would like to see Charlie write a text entitled "Trapping Canines in Suburbia" where he discusses how to reduce dog and cat catches. Like the situation in many other towns and cities in the East, coyotes are moving into the towns surrounding my city of Springfield. I would like to trap them, but am worried about the potential problems with pets. Customers don't like hearing about how the neighbor's dog got trapped. I hope the reader doesn't take my words here as a reason not to purchase the book. Rather, I hope it will stimulate more thoughts on controlling coyotes in urban settings.

You can purchase your post-paid copy by sending \$12.00 by check to Charles Dobbins, P.O. Box 7082, Canton, OH 44705 (Ohio residents must add 5% sales tax). If you are contemplating canine control, then I would strongly suggest getting a copy of this book.

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New Trapping Laws in Colorado

The Division of Wildlife (DOW) Commission recently enacted resolutions that severely restrict trapping in the state. Steel jaw traps and killing snares are out and coyotes are no longer a predator but a game animal—hunting season will be from November through February only.

Experts estimate that these regulations will cut the harvest of beaver, muskrat, coyote, red fox, badger, striped skunks, raccoons and bobcats by 50 to 60 percent. Depredation on livestock and agricultural producers will significantly increase. The cost to control wildlife damage will more than double. With the exception of box traps, there is no trapping equipment now in common use that can be used without expensive modification.

In the same vein, Colorado Game Damage claims nearly tripled in recent years; from \$170,923 in 1984-85 to \$475,000 in 1993-94.

It is being discussed that coyote kills will be paid for which is the only positive aspect of all the above actions. Basically, our DOW Commission caved in to the environment pressure without using sound biological knowledge.

(The above article was written by NADCA member Franklin Anderson of Ignacio, Colorado and reprinted from the Nov. '95 newsletter of the La Plata/Archuleta County Farm Bureau.

Animal Activists and Bear Issues

With the participation of Michigan United Conservation Clubs, a statewide network of more than 300 organizations, Walker said a fund-raising campaign strategy was in the works.

The WLFA continues to work with Michigan sportsmen's organizations to monitor the situation.

Massachusetts Fisheries & Wildlife Director, Wayne F. McCallum, said the situation there is very serious. He informed us that a consortium of animal rights groups called Protect Pets and Wildlife (ProPaw) have stated in a letter to Massachusetts activists "...I would like to officially introduce you to ... our campaign to place a wildlife protection question before Massachusetts voters on the 1996 statewide ballot. Ten citizens, coordinated by ProPaw, have filed an initiative petition with the Massachusetts Attorney General to prohibit cruel traps, to end the chasing and hunting of bears and bobcats with dogs, and to eliminate the statutory requirement that hunters and trappers control the Fisheries and Wildlife Board. If this initiative petition is signed by 65,000 registered voters in the next few months, it will be well on its way to the 1996 ballot. This could be the most significant victory for wildlife this century!

"We are off to an excellent start. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has generously provided start-up funding for our campaign, and we have been endorsed by the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Audubon president Jerry Bertrand is one of the ten original signers of the initiative petition, as is former U.S. Senator Paul Tsongas!..."

The WLFA has been participating in strategy sessions with officials and sportsmen from Massachusetts. President Richard Pierce journeyed there in mid-September and had this to say, "The problem is Massachusetts. It's nearly all urban, so the sledding gets tough for sportsmen."

In Washington state, sportsmen defeated S.B.5492, a bill that would have banned bear hunting over bait plus banning the use of hounds for hunting bobcat, lynx, cougar and bear. Upon defeat, Wayne Pacelle, vice-president of HSUS, said at a press conference that the hunters' lobby had defeated the bill just as they had a year ago in Oregon. He intimated that it's now time to let the voters have their say as they did in Oregon where baiting and bear hunting with dogs was voted out via the ballot.

Earlier this year, WLFA's State Services Director, Rob Sexton, journeyed to Washington state to meet with members of the sportsmen's coalition that defeated S.B.5492; now it looks like the will have to do it again—under much tougher circumstances. Ballot issues are winnable, but it takes lots of moxie and money.

Letter to the Editor

Editor, **The PROBE**:

Enclosed are a couple of news clips from *USA Today* that indicate that news people (and hopefully the public) are beginning to recognize that people—in large numbers—nearly demand that wildlife be managed. Too many of the "romantics" think that if left alone, wildlife will survive and be happy with MORE and MORE human neighbors.

There is strong talk of introducing Mexican wolves back into Arizona... And in all the arguments, there is a shocking lack of consideration as to the effects of MORE and MORE people—even here in Arizona... And the history of wolves suggests that even when wildlife (deer, antelope, elk, etc.) are plentiful, the wolves seem to gravitate to populations of domestic livestock, which is easier to handle.

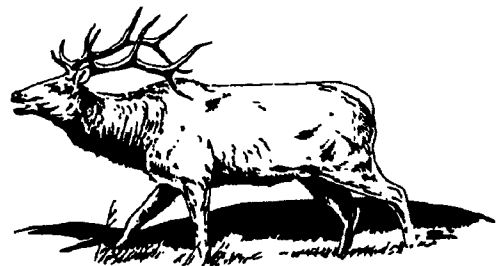
What prompted me to write is a growing conflict between wildlife and humans: the Wasatch Front in Utah (Logan, specifically) has developed a complicated condition of a few deer staying in the farm edges and along washes, etc. for several years, where they have been raising a fawn each year. Now they have a population of deer that don't know where the mountains are. At first it was fun to have a pet deer in your yard during the winter. But deer are not stupid. They soon learned that fruit trees were available in winter. And now they hang around all summer and go from yard to yard and clean up all the gardens of peas, pumpkins, corn, beans, etc. The winter deer population has a fair ratio of antlered males, but hunting is prohibited in residential areas. If you know of someone who has an answer for such a problem, then I'm sure the Utah Game and Fish would like to hear from them. The coyote problem in L.A. started out this same way.

Now it's my turn! I feed a few quail and other birds at my home here in rural Arizona. Coyotes have become so tame this past summer that they come into my bird water in mid-day. When fur gets better, I'll call them to my 12-gauge—for an education. But now during the past couple of weeks, a pair of javelina have also come in at night to clean up the grain spills from the birds.

I personally think all these examples may just be a forewarning of future conflicts between city people who don't know any better and rural (at least edge) people and wildlife...

Thanks for a good job with **The PROBE**. It's a thankless job, but you'll hear from lots of folks if you step on their toes.

Sincerely,
Pink Madsen (Florence, AZ)



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NATIONAL ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Mail to: Wes Jones, Treasurer, Route 1 Box 37, Shell Lake, WI 54871, Phone: (715) 468-2038

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Additional Address Info: _____

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