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The Probe, Issue 163 – March 1996

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"The Probe, Issue 163 – March 1996" (1996). *The Probe: Newsletter of the National Animal Damage Control Association.* Paper 18.
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The Probe NADCA
ISSUE 163
MARCH 1996

The Status of Nuisance Wildlife Damage Control in the States

Jodi A. DiCamillo, Kristen P. La Vine, and Mark J. Reeff, International Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, 444 N. Capitol St., NW, Suite 544, Washington, DC 20001
Gary S. Kania, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, 1120 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036

Over the last several years there has been an increased interest in the development of standards and/or recommendations to guide and oversee the growing nuisance wildlife damage control industry. In an attempt to assess the status of this growing industry, the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA), The Wildlife Society's Wildlife Damage Management Working Group, and the National Animal Damage Control Association (NADCA) developed a survey that addressed the level of state agencies' oversight of nuisance wildlife control operators.

Methods

In the preliminary stages of survey planning, a letter was sent out to representatives from the wildlife damage management field (including those from the private industry, USDA/APHIS/ADC, State Division of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, USDA Extension, academia, and NADCA) asking them to highlight specific issues, information, and questions that they believed should be covered in such a survey. The resulting draft of the survey was again sent out for comments and clarification.

The final survey was sent to directors of the 50 state fish and wildlife agencies, 4 territorial agencies, and 39 Animal Damage Control state offices. Questions asked covered the extent to which states allow property owners to euthanize and relocate animals responsible for property damage, nuisance, or other conflicts with humans; the authority of state wildlife and conservation departments to license nuisance wildlife control businesses; the regulations that states maintain on handling of animals or techniques used for nuisance and/or damage control; the animal species that are most commonly reported in nuisance complaints, property damage, and human health and safety issues; and the amount of support that exists for the development of national guidelines for the nuisance wildlife control industry.

Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The FREQUENCIES command allowed percentages to be calculated for each response.

Results

We received responses from 47 states and 1 territory, and 17 ADC State offices. Because of the high response rate (88.9%) of the state and territorial wildlife agencies, we chose to concentrate our analysis on these 48 respondents, hereon referred to as "the states." By doing this our results would be fairly representative of the states' perspective of wildlife damage management.

Preliminary results of the survey were presented in September at IAFWA's annual meeting in Branson, Missouri and to the TWS Wildlife Damage Management Working Group at the Annual meeting of TWS in Portland, Oregon. At these meetings, we solicited ideas and suggestions for continued direction of this project. An agreement was made with Utah State University to continue and expand on this project in a follow-up survey on Wildlife Damage Management Policies of Governmental and Non-governmental Organizations.

Currently, 37 states (77%) perform nuisance wildlife control activities as part of their regulatory duties.

General Information

Currently, 37 states (77%) perform nuisance wildlife control activities as part of their regulatory duties. The agency that was most frequently specified as performing these activities was the State Division of Fish and Wildlife (52.8%); other agencies mentioned were the State Department of Agricul-

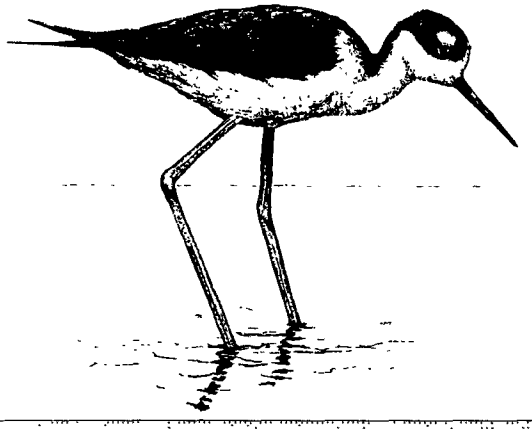
Continued on page 6, Col. 1

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

March 4-7, 1996: 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference, Sonoma County Red Lion Hotel, Rohnert Park, California. Contact: North Region-DANR, UC Davis, Davis, CA 95616, phone (916) 754-8491.

July 14-16, 1996: 6th Annual Bird Strike Committee-USA (BAC-USA) Meeting, Phoenix, Arizona: Held in conjunction with the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) at the Wigwam Hotel, Phoenix, AZ. Contact: Ms. Holly Ackerman, phone (703) 824-0504.

October 1-6, 1996: 3rd Annual Conference, The Wildlife Society, Cincinnati, Ohio. Conference will include a Symposium, "Social, Economic and Environmental Benefits of Wildlife Damage Management," to be coordinated by Dr. Kathleen Fagerstone (contact at 303-236-2098). For general information on the Conference, contact TWS at (301) 530-2471.



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Pamela J. Tinnin, *163 Mulford Hall, UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720*

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 rmtimm@ucdavis.edu. If you prefer to FAX material, our FAX number is (707) 744-1040. The deadline for submitting material is the 15th of each month. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of NADCA.

Reed-Joseph International: Thanks for Your Support

Note from Editor: At the NADCA meeting held in conjunction with the 7th Eastern Wildlife Damage Management Conference, Mr. Barthell Joseph Jr. presented a check for $1,000 to the NADCA.

November 1995

Barthell Joseph Jr.
Reed-Joseph International
Box 894
Greenville, Mississippi 30701-2115

Dear Barthell:

On behalf of the membership of the National Animal Damage Control Association I want to thank you for the extremely generous check you presented to the organization at our annual meeting on November 7th in Jackson, Mississippi. Your continuing support of our organization and efforts is greatly appreciated.

Personally, it was very enjoyable for me to again be able to visit with you, Clark Reed, and Barthell III all at one time. I'm sure many of our other members feel the same.

Again, best regards and thanks for your support.

Sincerely yours,
James E. Forbes, President
NADCA

Have you renewed your NADCA membership?

If you haven't renewed your NADCA membership yet, please do so now. NADCA membership will help you connect with other professionals like yourself. Encourage your friends to apply—you don't want them to miss out. Each membership includes a subscription to **The PROBE**, a publication that can keep you in touch with developments in wildlife management and animal damage control, ADC news, ideas, and tips, and upcoming events and conferences.

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

ADC News, Tips, Ideas , Publications . . .

European Fur Import Regulation Delayed One Year

Following months of discussion and debate, the European Commission has proposed a one-year delay, until January 1, 1997, in the implementation of a ban on the import of wild furs into the European Union.

"This is welcome news for trappers and all Canadians who support the sustainable use of renewable resources," said Bruce Williams, Chairman of the Fur Institute of Canada. "The delay is a clear statement that the Europeans have understood that a realistic timetable for change will ensure that fur producing countries are not penalized while making every effort to develop and implement an international trap standard."

The development of international humane trapping standards was initiated by Canada in 1985 and a Technical Committee of ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) began its work in this area in March 1987. At the same time, the Fur Institute of Canada, supported by the federal government and the international fur trade, initiated the world's most extensive humane trap research and development program. To date, this rigorous testing program has approved nine humane trapping devices.

There are at least 75,000 trappers, including 35,000 Aboriginal fur harvesters, in Canada. Another 25,000 people work on Canadian fur ranches, in auction houses, as dressers and dyers, manufacturers and retailers.

Trapping is undertaken for many different reasons worldwide—for wildlife management, habitat protection, for pest control, food and fur. If animal welfare is to be improved, it is important that international standards be agreed upon and then applied to the international community evenly and fairly. Without an agreed means of measuring the performance of different traps, it is impossible to assess the claims made about various trapping systems in an objective manner.

There are at least 75,000 trappers, including 35,000 Aboriginal fur harvesters, in Canada. Another 25,000 people work on Canadian fur ranches, in auction houses, as dressers and dyers, manufacturers and retailers. At least 100,000 Canadians earn all or part of their living from an environmentally sound and sustainable trade.

The editors of **The PROBE** *thank contributors to this issue: Robert H. Schmidt, Jim Burns, Robert E. Rolley, Donald W. Kruse, Stephen Vantassel, James E. Forbes, and Wes Jones. Send your contributions to* **The PROBE**, *4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449.*

Red Fox Book Out of Print

The Red Fox: The Catlike Canine by J. David Henry, Smithsonian Inst. Press, 1986. 177 pages & index.

The above entitled book is currently out of print, but will be reprinted this June. Orders can be placed by writing to: The Smithsonian Press, P.O. Box 960, Herndon, VA 22070-0960.

The cost is $15.95 plus $3.25 for shipping or you can call 1-800-782-4612 and order with a credit card.

Urban Deer Syposium Proceedings Available

The North Central Section of The Wildlife Society has just published the proceedings from the Urban Deer Symposium held at the 1993 Midwest Wildlife Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. The proceedings are titled "Urban Deer: a Manageable Resource?" It includes discussions of the human dimensions of urban deer conflicts, evaluations of specific techniques for control of urban deer problems, and a review of several case histories. It is an excellent reference for anyone dealing with an urban deer problem.

Copies can be ordered from the North Central Section Publication Sales Coordinator: John Hart, Forestry Department, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA 48824-1222, Phone (517) 355-7547.

Cost is $10.00 (U.S.) per copy, including tax and shipping if prepaid. Payment by check or money order; no credit cards. Agency purchase orders accepted. Books that are charged and require billing will result in a shipping fee of $2.00 for the first book, plus $1.00 for each additional book. Make checks payable to: North Central Section/The Wildlife Society.

Histoplasmosis: Threat to Wildlife Professionals

With the recent outbreak of histoplasmosis in Kentucky, wildlife professionals are reminded once again of the risks involved with working closely to bird and bat guano (feces). The disease is caused by inhalation of the microspoic spores of the *Histoplasma capsulatum* fungus, commonly found in aged bird and bat droppings. Histoplasmosis occurs when contaminated areas are disturbed and people breathe in large numbers of spores. According to a report in the October issue of the *SCWDS Briefs* (newsletter of the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, University of Georgia), the Kentucky outbreaks were associated with old buildings where bird or bat droppings had accrued over a long period of time.

Researchers who study bats or birds, or those who work with urban wildlife problems, should take appropriate safety precautions. For additional information, contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Bacterial and Mycotic Diseases, Ntl. Ctr. for Infectious Diseases, 1600 Clifton Road, NE., Atlanta, GA 30333, phone (404) 639-3158.

Video Review

Stephen Vantassel, Special Coorrespondent, The PROBE

Review of "Professional Beaver Trapping Video" Produced by Tom Miranda Outdoor Films exclusively for Fur-Fish-Game, 2878, E. Main St., Columbus, OH 43209. 82 minutes.

This video is just one of eight videos in the Professional Trapping video series offered by Fur-Fish and Game. A friend of mine was gracious enough to lend me the tape so that I could not only learn from it, but review it as well.

At the start, the viewer will realize the professionalism that produced this video. The camera shots were taken at good angles and the audio has excellent clarity. The photographer and director have done a fine job in setting up the takes so that the viewer can feel like he is just standing there with the trappers. If you overlook the occasional canned talk, you will learn a great deal about beaver trapping.

This video features three trappers who can properly be considered trapping experts. Tom Miranda, Bob Gilsvik, and to a lesser extent (at least to me), Jerry Herbst are well known for their work in the trapping industry. Each of them adds his unique contribution to the video's educational value. Broadly speaking, Tom Miranda explains foot hold sets, Bob Gilsvik, conibears, and Jerry Herbst, snares.

For the purposes of this review the video can be divided into four parts: History/Biology/Ethics, Under Ice Trapping, Open Water Trapping, and Skinning/Handling. The video starts with Tom Miranda's brief narration of the history and biology of beaver trapping. It is to his credit that these topics are covered in a simple straightforward manner that doesn't get bogged down in endless details. Ethical issues are covered later but are also raised throughout the video. In fact, this video could be understood as applied trapping ethics, because these men apply biological and ethical information in the way they set up their traps and their trap line. For example, it is stated at one point in the video that they could safely take one more beaver from that colony. But they don't just leave the viewer with guessing how many beaver exist in a particular colony. Rather, they educate the viewer on how to estimate colony size by noting the different heights in the tree cuttings. This kind of instruction really emphasizes the importance of ethical trapping.

Under ice beaver trapping begins the trapping instruction. Here, as in the open water section, fundamental beaver sets using footholds, conibears, and snares are demonstrated. The viewer is taken from set to set as each instructor explains his set while preparing it. Occasionally, the instructor explains the set after removing a beaver which was caught in that very set. It is imperative that the viewer listen carefully to the instructions. The instructors will often pass along time-saving informational tidbits that could be easily missed if you're not paying close attention.

The open water portion of this video was simply excellent. Having lifted a few sprung (but empty) beaver foothold traps of my own, I watched intently as they explained two different ways to prevent misfires. The beaver slide snare set was also well taught, with particular attention to the little details that make the difference between a good and a great trapper. Channel sets and the castor mound sets were also explained.

"The open water portion of this video was simply excellent. Having lifted a few sprung (but empty) beaver foothold traps of my own, I watched intently as they explained two different ways to prevent misfires. The beaver slide snare set was also well taught, with particular attention to the little details that make the difference between a good and a great trapper."

Pelt handling was the last area to be covered. Tom Miranda cautions that of those regularly trapped for fur, beaver are probably the hardest animal to skin. He provided important and detailed information about preparing the carcass before skinning, skinning equipment, and cutting technique. Novice trappers will appreciate his demonstrating the difference between rough and clean skinning. I enjoyed his explanation on removing and handling the beaver's castors and oil sacks. After a brief example of fleshing, Mr. Herbst and Mr. Gilsvik demonstrate pelt stretching with the hoop and board, respectively. Unfortunately, this aspect of the tape won't make you an expert pelt handler. More time should have been given to close up shots (to provide more detail) and illustrations of fur handling mistakes.

All in all, the video is an excellent instructional tool. Obviously, the less one knows about beaver trapping, the more this video will help. After going through a trappers' educational course in order to be able to trap on land, I wish that we had been shown videos of this caliber in that class. I appreciated the subtle way they demonstrated different ways to get the job done. One trapper uses a chainsaw to cut through ice while another

Continued on page 5, col. 1

Continued from page 6

Nuisance Wildlife Damage Control

National Guidelines

Finally, we asked states if they would support the development of national guidelines for the NWCO industry and, if such guidelines were developed, who should take the lead in their preparation. Thirty-six states (75.0%) favored the development of national guidelines if they were general in nature and allowed for local conditions. Many of these states feel guidelines could improve customer satisfaction and the state of the NWCO industry's professionalism. Those states that were opposed (20.8%) believed national guidelines would be unable to address local conditions and some interpreted guidelines as regulations. Some states (4.2%) were undecided. Of the states that favored national guidelines, sixteen states (38.1%) believed that the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies should take the lead in such an endeavor, followed by The Wildlife Society's Wildlife Damage Management Working Group (19.0%), APHIS/ADC (14.3%), and the National Animal Damage Control Association (11.9%). A number of states (16.7%) believed the responsibility should be shared by all of the above organizations.

Discussion

It is our hope that the results of this survey will help define the needs of state and federal agencies and private nuisance wildlife control operators, so that they may be better met in the future. The resulting discussions may provide a stimulus for the development and adoption of national guidelines for the nuisance wildlife control industry; the survey results may also act as a benchmark by which to measure future accomplishments of the agencies and industry.

Berryman Institute Fellowship Available

The Berryman Institute at Utah State University announces the availability of a Berryman Fellowship to start Fall 1996. This fellowship will be awarded to a USU graduate student with an interest in the broadly-defined area of wildlife damage management (i.e., management of problems caused by animals, exotic species management, wildlife-agriculture interactions, improving of human-wildlife relationships, etc.). The fellowship includes a $12,000 stipend, $1,200 for tuition, and $1,800 for research support. The fellowship is for two years ($30,000 total), with the second year contingent upon satisfactory progress during the first.

For more information, contact Dr. Michael Conover, Berryman Institute, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-5210.

Letter to Editor

Christians and Trapping...

Dear Editor:

I want to take the time to congratulate Stephen Vantassel on a fine paper ("A Christian Ministers Explains...") written for the November issue of **The PROBE**. Stephen did an excellent job of explaining the position Christians should take in dealing with creation and deserves to be commended for tackling deeper ethical issues that are too often ignored by wildlife damage managers. The study of environmental ethics and theology has long been an interest of mine (as I hold a degree in Environmental Education/Interpretation and write a monthly stewardship column), thus I felt compelled to communicate when I noticed a letter by fellow Critter Controller Lynn Braband refuting Vantassel statements.

I agree with Lynn that the primary purpose of creation (including humankind) is to give glory to God. This is evident in the declaration of the Psalmist as "the heavens are telling the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1), but it is wrong to ignore the fact that the Creator has allowed mankind to wisely use what was given. In Genesis 9:3 the Lord commanded Noah: "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant." Many Christians make the mistake of believing that non-human creation is still operating under a garden of Eden-like existence, when in fact *all* of creation is under the affects of a fallen world. (Genesis 3:14-19 and 9:2 support this assertion). God accounted for this fallenness and thus re-directed the duties of mankind accordingly.

To properly interpret the phrase "image of God" one can best seek counsel from the greatest biblical scholar since the era of the Apostles: Martin Luther. In his *Small Catechism*, Luther writes: "The image of God consisted in this — that man knew God and was perfectly happy in such knowledge (Colossians 3:10), and that man was perfectly holy and blessed (Ephesians 4:24)." Man *lost* the image of God when he fell into sin. In believers, a beginning of its renewal is made. Only in heaven, however, will this image be fully restored (as validated by Genesis 5:3 and Psalm 17:15). Therefore, humankind will never fully achieve the servanthood level of Jesus the Christ and must constantly heed the stewardship directives from God's Word.

Yes, the maintenance of biodiversity is an important aspect in our exercise of lordship, but discussions of biodiversity must include the needs of humans and the life-sustaining management practices humans are capable of.

Jim Burns, Critter Control of Kalamazoo

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