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The Probe NADCA
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Why NADCA? *One Region Director's Opinion*

Peter H. Butchko, NADCA Region 9 Director,
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Not too long ago, I heard a report of some NADCA members who were not renewing their membership because there was "nothing in **The PROBE**". This was further explained to mean that there was very little in the way of techniques and methods for the wildlife damage professional, e.g. how to trap moles or baits for squirrels. The clear inference was that these members evaluated their participation in NADCA based on what they get out of it.

I must say that this bothered me. Of course, the easy response might be that if a member was disappointed with the content of **The PROBE**, that person ought to submit an article that would address those topics. (**The PROBE** editors are very cooperative!) And certainly everyone ought to assess their commitments periodically. But when they do, I hope they consider not just what they get but what they accomplish.

I foresee that the conflicts between wildlife and humans will increase and that society will expect an increasingly skillful response.

I hope they will consider what wildlife damage professionals can do by organizing together. I hope they consider what can be accomplished collectively that we could not do individually. If they do this, I am confident that membership in NADCA will be seen as a beneficial investment. That's why I remain an NADCA member.

For example, NADCA recently was able to make a significant financial contribution to the 7th Eastern Wildlife Damage Control Conference, which I attended. I think the conference was without question very successful on many levels in exchanging scientific knowledge, in promoting professional excellence and in providing opportunities for networking. This conference brought together a large number of people from many state and federal agencies, academia, private interest groups and private enterprise who have an interest in the future of wildlife damage management.

Now one might argue that the conference could have managed without our contribution—but certainly it was better with our assistance and NADCA members should take some satisfaction in that. NADCA gave a cash award to the best student presentation at the conference. I doubt that such an award will make someone's career, but giving encouragement to aspiring professionals is certainly a wise and reasonable endeavor in which NADCA members should take considerable pride.

Our participation in the Eastern Wildlife Damage Control Conference is by no means unique. NADCA has made contributions like this to several other conferences and workshops around the country - on behalf of all of us.

Because of our collective efforts, NADCA has earned a position of influence which certainly will be of value as the wildlife damage management profession changes. This is evident in NADCA's participation in examining the idea of national guidelines for the nuisance wildlife control operators.

I think NADCA also deserves some credit for being a unifying organization. I can think of no other forum on a national scale were wildlife damage professionals from the government and private sector get together like this. Even though these two groups have somewhat different perspectives, they really have a great deal in common. This alliance is a recent development and altogether positive.

Likewise, NADCA provides a unique forum for our retired wildlife damage management professionals to be involved with the current practitioners. These "veterans" like Ki Faulkner and Wes Jones and Alan Foster, by the wealth of their experience, have much to offer. Without people like them, we risk professional amnesia.

I am very optimistic about the future of the wildlife damage management field. I foresee that the conflicts between wildlife and humans will increase and that society will expect an increasingly skillful response. If these expectations can be met, wildlife damage management will have a healthy future. But somebody will have to shape it. Somebody will have to promote excellence.

I'm not content to concede this to somebody else. That's *why* NADCA.

The Turtle and the Hare (Wildlife Damage Version)

Robert H. Schmidt, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-5210

Once upon a time there was a turtle and a hare, both involved in the wildlife damage management profession.

The turtle was about 100 years old, with a full 95 years of field experience working with every type of wildlife damage management problem conceivable, from dispersing obnoxious blackbird roosts near homes, to trapping coyotes on western ranges, to using poison baits for house mice. Ever since he was a hatchling, the turtle knew he wanted to work with the other wild animals. School was a chore, while the trees were his friends. He met other, more experienced turtles, and learned from them. In time he became their teacher. His wisdom and skill were well-known throughout the land. All agreed that there was no better field turtle.

The hare was different from the turtle in more ways than shape. She was much younger, and mostly school-trained, with limited field experience. She grew up in the crowded fields with the other hares, and knew little of the wilderness. She became fascinated with the natural history, ecology, and management of the other animals through her classes and reading. Four years-of-college weren't enough for her, and she continued her studies in graduate school, becoming an expert in the population dynamics of meadow mice. After graduation, she committed herself to a career resolving wildlife damage problems, and she worked diligently toward that goal. All agreed that there was no better academic hare.

It came about one day that the mayor of the city of Animalopolis noticed that a great-horned owl was sneaking into his poultry yard at night and escaping with a broiler hen on a regular basis. Asking around, he learned of the availability of the turtle and the hare to help him resolve this wildlife damage issue. However, the mayor's advisors (an assortment of turtles and hares themselves) disagreed in their choice of which of the two would be best for the job.

The turtle, the turtle-advisors argued, was the creature for the job. "He has the experience to get rid of that pesky owl once and for all," they said. "The hare will study the situation to death, and besides, don't you want an animal that has done this kind of thing before?"

The hare-advisors disagreed. "The day is past when you can just yank an owl out of its territory at will," they stressed. "The turtle will focus on the owl and disregard all potential environmental impacts, social concerns, and non-target hazards. You need the hare, a university-trained animal that can bring the latest technology to bear on your problem."

The mayor listened carefully to these arguments, and decided that he needed to get both specialists together for an interview, to fully evaluate their qualifications and potential. So both the turtle and the hare were contacted, and they presented themselves to the mayor and his advisors the very next day.

Continued on page 5, Col. 1

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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 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.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

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.

ADC News, Tips, Ideas , Publications . . .

From the Editor: The following was broadcast on Canadian radio station CBC-NW. The author is Rex Murphy, a well known CBC radio/TV personality

Point of View: Mad Cow Disease

As with so many other of life's more interesting experiences, I cannot claim a firsthand acquaintance with mad cow disease. I've known a frisky poodle or two, and the odd demented cat, but widespread insanity of the barnyard variety has, alas, largely passed me by.

Trust the British to underline the gravity of a toxic outbreak by giving it a name — mad cow — that could have been lifted straight from the menu of Fawlty Towers. But then, the British have always shown a commendable indifference to the line dividing sketch comedy from real life. Consider the royals and the career of John Major—but I digress.

Now, I may be a layman in dairy science, but am I alone in thinking that the proposed solution to the mad cow phenomenon is a tad extreme? Wiping out millions and millions of cows because a couple of their number are a few fibers short of a cud, the British are the most ecologically pious citizens on the planet. But could this be a sensitivity that only operates on remote? They bleed for seals that are not their own, but if there's a threat to the domestic hamburger supply, it's opening night for "Dead Cows Walking."

This is Britain, let us all remember: the native land of the animal-lover. This is Britain, where they have road crossings for toads, practically mate with hedgehogs—Britain, where the domestic cats and dogs enjoy the status that is only slightly less than idolatry. The spectacle of some members of the horseback aristocracy chasing a single fox can put the entire countryside in an uproar, yet who's putting in a good word for the cow? Aren't cows people—I'm sorry. Aren't cows animals too?

If this were a couple of pandas that had gone slightly loopy, they'd be flying psychiatrists in from all over the world. Or if a few owls—and I mean this in the kindest possible way— few owls—had gone slightly bats; or if a few bats—and I mean this in the kindest possible way too—had gone slightly barmy, I don't think it'd be open season on all the night flyers. I think we must acknowledge the hypocrisy here and confront the question: Is the movement for animal rights only for the ecological superstars?

Now let us consider the cow. It is one of the most innocuous creatures on the face of God's green acreage. It munches a little grass, chews its cud, has a small problem with flatulence and, basically, spends most of its time staring innocently at nothing in particular. Kind of like the ideal guest on Regis and Kathie Lee. Next to the chicken, the cow is the least demanding of our co-confederates on the planet.

So, in the kingdom that was built on roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, is this how they reward innocence and loyalty? A few cows are stricken, and possibly the whole herd—millions—are on the long path to Cold Comfort Farm. What would the great eulogist and poet, Thomas Gray, think? "The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea and leaves the world to darkness, and to me." This is Rex Murphy.

Dolomitic Hydrated Lime Feeding Deterrent to Birds

Scientists at the Denver Wildlife Research Center field station in Sandusky Ohio have discovered that dolomitic hydrated lime is a feeding deterrent to birds. In cage and pen tests, lime mixed with millet at 25%, 12.5%, and 6.25% (g/g) significantly reduced intake by both brown-headed cowbirds and Canada geese. Application of powdered or slurried lime to enclosed grass plots at a rate of 544 kg/ha also reduced goose grazing. No phytotoxicity was observed. Dolomitic lime has considerable potential as an effective, readily available and inexpensive method of bird control. Additional testing is planned. For further information, contact Mr. Jerry Belant at 419-625-0242.

Letter to NADCA Treasurer

From the Editor: During the May 6 NADCA Directors' Conference Call, it was agreed that NADCA would contribute $500 to WLFA. Treasurer Wes Jones receivd the following response from WLFA.

Mr. Jones:

Thank you very much for NADCA's contribution to Wildlife Legislative Fund of America (WLFA). I assure you that each day we work diligently to protect scientific wildlife management. We are painfully aware, especially in light of the eight ball of issues sportsmen are dealing with this year, that to protect hunting, fishing and trapping, wildlife management must be protected.

As for your newsletter, we welcome having it sent here... Al Wolter has retired as WLFA communications director. Although Al is missed, we are very happy to have J.R. Absher on board heading our communication efforts. You may be familar with him as he has written several articles over his career emphasizing the positive and much needed work of the NADCA.

Again I thank you and want to say that our entire staff is always as close as a phone call away.

Doug Jeanneret
WLFA
Field Services Director

The editor of **The PROBE** *thanks contributors to this issue: Robert H. Schmidt, Jeff Margo, Peter H. Butchko, and Stephen Vantassel. Send your contributions to* **The PROBE**, *4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449.*

Book Review

Stephen Vantassel, Special Coorrespondent, The PROBE

Booklet Review: A Homeowners Guide to North Eastern Bats and Bat Problems. By Lisa M. Williams-Whitmer and Margaret C. Brittingham. August, 1995 Penn State University. Pp. 1-22.

This review should have accompanied my review on the bat video also created by Penn State which was published in the September, 1995 **PROBE** p. 4. Unfortunately, this booklet wasn't ready at the time I received the video. In a sentence, this booklet is excellent. The authors have succinctly and clearly written about bats, their life history, and how to evict them from buildings

The booklet begins with bat ecology. In three 8-1/2x11 pages the authors inform the reader about the benefits of bats, the various species which live in the Northeast, and their life history. As with the following sections, I found the writing bridges that difficult space between brevity and clarity. The booklet is adorned with excellently crafted pencil line drawings. The artists listed on the back inside cover should be proud of their fine contribution to this work.

Like the video, the next section tells how property owners can respond to the two primary incidents of bat and human conflict. The first problem, single bat in house, is discussed using step-by-step instructions. Unfortunately, like in the video, the person pictured capturing the hanging bat has neglected to wear protective gloves. Strategies for responding to maternity colonies residing in a building addresses the second conflict humans have with bats. Tips on finding signs of bat occupation and locating entrances are clearly covered. The authors have shown due concern over the viability of excluding the maternity colony. They clearly inform the reader which months exclusion should take place and how to install an alternative roost.

The next section of the booklet is entitled "Bats and Public Health." The typical concerns of rabies and histoplasmosis are duly covered. I especially appreciated the advice to wear a respirator capable of filtering particles as small as two microns to minimize the risk of exposure to histoplasmosis. It's a pet peeve of mine to read government pamphlets that lamely say "wear a mask to protect against exposure." These authors have correctly provided some information that will provide some real protection for their readers. The authors also talk about bat parasites, particularly a bedbug, that could infest one's house when the bats have left. Not to leave the reader with fright, the authors suggest an environmentally sound way to destroy these potential pests. My one concern centers on an apparent contradiction between the warning about histoplasmosis on p. 14 and the commendation to homeowners who allow bats to reside in their homes p. 7. I understand that it takes years to develop enough feces to become a real histoplasmosis threat. However, given the rise of people with immune disorders and the fact that the bats were probably there for a few before discovered, I would think the homeowner should be encouraged to exclude bats.

For those of you seeking more information, the authors have included a literature cited and time appendices. Appendix 1 is "Bat-Proofing Materials and Suppliers." Appendix 2 is "Bat Box Construction Plans" and Appendix 3 is "Further Information."

Even if you don't handle bats, I would still suggest that you get this booklet. Chances are the information will be greatly appreciated by you and your customer when a bat crisis arises. As with the video, I would have liked to have seen more information on exclusion and bat entrance identification. So its animal damage control grade will be the same as the video, B. However, I think both items together raise the grade to a B+. In any event, the free price makes this booklet a fantastic bargain.

Ms. Williams-Whitmer has informed me that this booklet will accompany the video and is also available separately at no charge. To obtain the video and booklet, send $35 to Ag. Information Services, Pennsylvania State Univ., 119 Ag. Administration Bldg., University Park, PA 16802. You can call them at 1-814-865-6309. If you just want the booklet, send your request to Ag. Publication Distribution center, The Pennsylvania State Univ., 112 Agricultural Admin. Bldg., University Park, PA 16802. Their telephone number is 1-814-865-6713.

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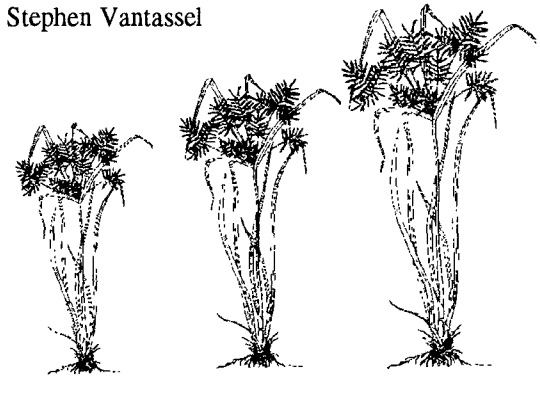

Treasurer Changes Address

NADCA Treasurer Wes Jones has a new address. You may now contact him at: Wes Jones, W8773 Pond View Drive, Shell Lake, WI 54871. His e-mail address is: wrjones@mail.wiscnet.net

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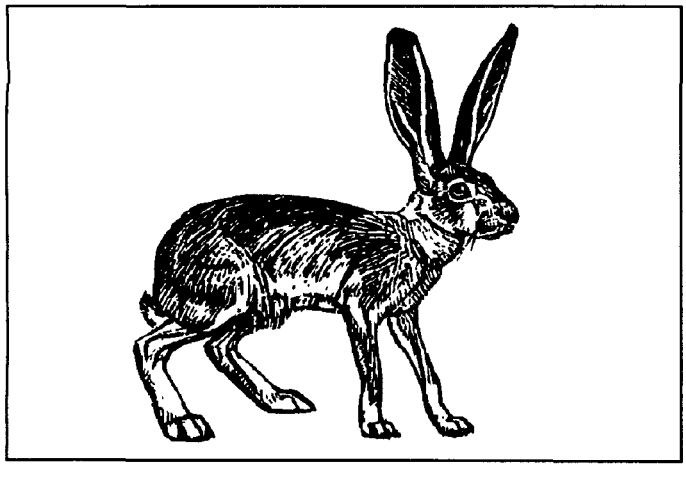
The Turtle and the Hare – Wildlife Version

The mayor explained his problem with the owl, and the controversy among his staff in making a selection. He said, "We give you this opportunity to convince us who is the best wildlife damage management specialist."

The turtle and the hare listened carefully, and when the mayor was finished, they paused and looked at each other. The hare gave the turtle a nod, and the turtle stood and addressed the crowd.

"We appreciate your concern to choose the best animal for this job, " the turtle began. "But you are wrong to believe that either of us would accept this assignment if we did not feel we were capable of doing it. I have a great deal of experience, but you must remember that every wildlife damage situation is unique. Thus, there will be something new about this job that, hopefully, my experience will enable me to overcome and solve. But I freely admit that I do lack the academic training that enables me to adequately predict the results of owl removal on surrounding rodent populations, the social ramifications of an owl management program, and the latest behavioral manipulation techniques that could resolve this problem."



The hare stood next to him. "And I," she admitted, "can tell you what predator-prey theory predicts will happen if the owl is removed, and give you a case history analysis of how local communities respond to owl management. I can describe how recent work has demonstrated the potential effectiveness of strobe lights of a particular pattern, color, and intensity in repelling the owl. But I do not have the experience to guarantee that all losses will stop immediately while I am testing the lights."

The turtle agreed. "You were wrong in believing that we do not appreciate the skills of the other. We continuously consult with each other. As professionals, we are both committed to resolving wildlife damage problems to the best of our abilities, to continuing educational growth, and to representing our profession at all times. We both understand our respective limitations, and we learn from each other."

The turtle continued. "Aldo Leopold, the founder of modern wildlife management in North America and one of the earliest proponents of the conservation biology philosophy, wrote *A Sand County Almanac* after a lifetime of training and maturity. Sixteen years earlier, however, he had written *Game Management,* the first real book dedicated to wildlife management. Leopold anticipated the evolution of professional natural resource managers lacking academic training. He argued that by contact with academically trained managers, by personal study, and by attendance at workshops and conferences, field technicians pick up a point of view, a technical understanding, and a degree of skill as good as and sometimes greater than their school-trained colleagues. Those unwilling or unable to accomplish this self-education have tended to drop out of the profession."

The university-trained biologist needs to learn from the experiences of the self-taught field specialist, and the field specialist needs to learn from the trained biologist.

"I agree," acknowledged the hare. "Leopold believed that the teaming of university-trained wildlife experts with unschooled but experienced and open-minded field workers was good for both. That is why you will not hear either the turtle or myself argue that experience is better than formal training, or that formal training leads to better decisions than experience. The university-trained biologist needs to learn from the experiences of the self-taught field specialist, and the field specialist needs to learn from the trained biologist. The turtle and I will not consent to a competitive race against each other. We utilize each other's strengths and we each recognize our own weaknesses."

And with that pronouncement, the turtle and the hare left together to solve the mayor's problem with the hungry great-horned owl. The turtle got the necessary permits, trapped the owl, and relocated it to a site selected by the hare. The hare remodeled the fence posts so they could not be used as perching posts by future owls. The solution was praised by all, especially the chickens. The turtle and the hare were the best team of wildlife specialists in the land. And all agreed.

TIME VALUED MATERIAL –
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