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A History of the Wildlife Services Program

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USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services, Oklahoma and Texas

Editor's Note: This information was published and distributed in conjunction with the Texas Wildlife Damage Management Program's 1998 annual state meeting, and it is reprinted with permission of Gary Nunley, State Director.

The federal Wildlife Services program was founded by one ingenious and unusual man named C. Hart Merriam. Merriam was born in 1855 in New York, and was the son of a wealthy businessman who also served as a U.S. Congressman. By the age of 5, Merriam was already fascinated with wild animals and was spending most of his time collecting all sorts of wild critters. Although his father was encouraged by his hobby, he was somewhat concerned about the ripeness of his son's specimens. Therefore, when Merriam was older, his father sent him to an Army surgeon to learn the art of preservation.

In 1871, Congressman Merriam took his son to see Spencer F. Baird, a prominent naturalist who had become head of the Smithsonian Institute. Young Merriam took along some of his specimens, and Baird pronounced him a promising naturalist. In 1872, with some encouragement from the Congressman, Baird invited young Merriam to join one of the early Geological Survey expeditions to Wyoming. This expedition made a lasting impression on C. Hart Merriam, although he subsequently entered medical school and spent several years as a practicing physician.

In 1883, Merriam gave up his practice to devote his time to natural history. A year later he was appointed chairman of the American Ornithology Union's committee on bird migration. Merriam was greatly interested in the geographic distribution of birds, and his committee took on a national bird count and collected a tremendous amount of data on their distribution and migration. Merriam needed additional funds to help analyze his data and turned to Congress for an appropriation. As part of his justification, he told Congress that the information would be of value to farmers. Congress appropriated $5,000.

After receiving the money in 1885, Merriam was invited to organize an Ornithological office as part of the Entomology Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He accepted the position and was paid an annual salary of $2,000, on the condition that he could spend the hot summers in New York rather than in Washington D.C. He immediately hired his long-time friend, A. K. Fisher, to be his assistant and the two shared a clerk. (In those days, the entire Dept. of Agriculture had only 213 employees).

This new section of Economic Ornithology proved to be so popular with farmers and politicians that Merriam persuaded the House Agriculture Committee to establish his section as a separate and independent division that would investigate both birds and mammals. Thus in 1886, the Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy was formed with Dr. Merriam as its chief. The Commissioner of Agriculture stated that their principal effort would be to educate farmers about birds and mammals affecting their interests so that destruction of useful species might be prevented. The budget was also doubled to $10,000. [*Editor's Note:* adjusted for inflation, this would equal $174,000 in today's dollars.] The new Division was empowered to make "drawings and undertake traveling and other expenses in the practical work of the Division." With this task, Merriam and his cohorts set out on numerous field trips collecting data on the geographic distribution of various birds and mammals.

Of one such trip, Vernon Bailey (Merriam's brother-in-law) wrote, "Merriam killed a big wild cat last night and we had it cooked for breakfast and dinner. He says it is delicious, but it is horribly catty. I can't eat it and Knowlton won't. The rest say it is good. Merriam had a skunk cooked down at the canyon, but I would not help him eat it. Skunks and cats are his favorite meat and he is especially fond of eagle. He is a queer chap, but a splendid fellow to camp with, always does his share, and never shirks the dirty or hard work."

Through disuse, the word "Economic" was gradually dropped from the organization's title and about 1890 the title was officially changed to the "Division of Ornithology and Mammalogy." The study of life histories, economic status, and means of control of noxious mammals became an important part of the Division's work. Vernon Bailey made special studies of the ground squirrels of the

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

February 1-3, 1999: Fifth Annual Wildlife Control Technology (WCT) Instructional Seminar, Imperial Palace, Las Vegas, NV. Room reservations, $49/night by calling (800) 800-2981. For further information on seminar, contact Lisa at (815) 286-3039.

February 14-17, 1999: 22nd Annual Meeting, Southeast Deer Study Group, Fayetteville Hilton, Fayetteville, AR. Contact: Cindy Copeland, AR Fish & Game Comm., Wildl. Management Div'n., #2 Nat. Resources Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205, phone (501) 223-6366.

March 17, 23, & 25, 1999: Vertebrate Pest Control Workshops, California (Salinas, Ontario, and Sacramento, respectively). Co-sponsored by Vertebrate Pest Council and Pesticide Applicators Professional Assoc. (PAPA). Three one-day workshops providing basic information and pesticide applicator certification credits, covering bird, rodent, and predator damage control techniques. For further information, contact Dr. Desley Whisson at (530) 754-8644, or visit web site <http://www.davis.com/~vpc/welcome.html> or web site <http://www.pestweb.com/papa/>.

April 11-14, 1999: 55th Annual Northeast Fish & Wildlife Conference, Holiday Inn, Manchester, NH. Contact: Judy Stokes, Conference Coordinator, phone (603) 271-3211 or email <info@wildlife.state.nh.us>.

April 27-29, 1999: 14th Great Plains Wildlife Damage Control Conference and Feral Swine Symposium. Manhattan, Kansas. CANCELLED BECAUSE OF LACK OF SUBMITTED PAPERS. Contact: Charles D. Lee, phone (785)532-5734, fax (785) 532-5681, email <clee@oz.oznet.ksu.edu>.

May 9-13, 1999: Bird Strike Committee USA / Bird Strike Committee Canada, Delta Pacific Resort & Conference Center, Richmond, British Columbia. For information on call for papers, registration, and field trips contact: Bruce MacKinnon, Transport Canada, phone (613) 990-0515, or email <mackinb@tc.gc.ca>. Exhibitors wishing to display products should contact Jeff Marley at Margo Supplies Ltd., phone (403) 652-1932. Book hotel rooms prior to Feb. 8 by calling (800) 268-1133.

May 23-27, 1999: North American Aquatic Furbearer Symposium, Mississippi State University, Starkville, Miss. Presentations (papers and posters) will be given on ecology, economics, human dimensions, policy issues, population estimates, or techniques related to aquatic and semi-aquatic furbearers (beaver, mink, otter, nutria, muskrat, and raccoon). A variety of field trips to view local historical, ecological, and wildlife management areas are planned. Peer-edited symposium proceedings containing full papers and poster abstracts will be published. For conference information and registration forms, visit website at: http://www.cfr.msstate.edu/naafs/naafs.htm, or contact Richard B. Minnis, MS Coop. Fish & Wildlife Research Unit, phone (601)325-3158.

Hawthorne Retires

Donald Hawthorne will retire in January 1999 following many years of services in the USDA-Wildlife Services Program, most recently as State Director in Oklahoma. He also served in the unit's Washington DC office, as Director of the Western Region, and as State Director in Texas. John Steuber, currently Assistant State Director in California, has been selected to replace Don in Oklahoma.

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Your contributions of articles to *The Probe* are welcome and encouraged. The deadline for submitting materials is the 15th of the month prior to publication. Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of NADCA.

Position Available: Postdoctoral Research Associate

The position is a 2-year, GS-12 ($46,254) appointment at the U.S.D.A. Agricultural Research Service, Stuttgart National Aquaculture Research Center (SNARC) in Stuttgart, Arkansas. *Duties*: initiate a research program to develop more effective methods for reducing depredations by birds at commercial aquaculture facilities. Studies will involve investigations into the biology, impact, and control of a variety of depredating species, including cormorants, wading birds, and diving ducks. Will be expected to collaborate closely with scientists at SNARC, as well as at the USDA National Wildlife Research Center and other cooperating institutions. Will supervise one biological technician and be expected to work closely with aquaculturists and to communicate research findings both orally and in refereed scientific publications. Submit federal employment application to Dr. Mark E. Tobin, USDA/APHIS/WS National Wildlife Research Center, P.O. Drawer 6099, Mississippi State, MS 39762. Telephone: (601) 325-8215. Email: <mark.e.tobin@usda.gov>.

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History of Wildlife Services Program

Mississippi Valley and the pocket gopher of the U.S. in the early 1890s. About the same time, Dr. T. S. Palmer was engaging in a study of the jackrabbits of the U.S. Field experiments in controlling prairie dogs were conducted by H. C. Oberholser in 1901 in Texas and New Mexico. It may be surprising to note that the Division's first publication dealt with the introduction of the English sparrow into the U.S. Also, other studies were on the "rice bird" (bobolink) in the South and included the field investigation of blackbirds.

Merriam and others soon pushed the idea to change the Division's title to the "Biological Survey," saying that the name more aptly described the work they were doing. After years of lobbying, the Division was renamed in 1896. In 1905, the name was changed from the "Division of Biological Survey" to the "Bureau of Biological Survey" and remained that as long as it was in the Department of Agriculture. However, it was referred to as just "Biological Survey." In July 1905, Stanley E. Piper started field laboratory experiments with bacteria, viruses, poisons, traps, and other methods for the destruction of ground squirrels at Pullman, Washington.

Merriam's dedication to field surveys never wavered even though it brought him into constant conflict with various Congressmen who did not see the practical value of investigating animals in Canada and Mexico. However, Merriam insisted that the information was needed to help the farmers. Nevertheless, his agency was known in some areas as the "Bureau of Extravagant Mammalogy," and in 1907 the matter came to a head and Congress made an effort to abolish the Survey's appropriation. In the end, the funds were restored, thanks in part to the efforts of President Theodore Roosevelt, who was a friend of Merriam. Roosevelt expressed his pleasure at the outcome with a characteristic note to Merriam that read "Bully for the Biological Survey."

(To be continued in next issue.)

Anyone Seen the NADCA Caps???

Missing in action: a small supply of unsold "NADCA" caps, last seen at 13th Gt. Plains Wildlife Damage Control Workshop in Nebraska City, NE, in April 1997. Have you seen them, or do you know where they are? Reward offered—you get the keep a cap of your choice! Please contact Treasurer Grant Huggins at (580) 221-7277, or email <jghuggins@noble.org>. Thanks!

Maintain the Connection!

Greetings to all new and old members of NADCA! It will be my privilege to work with the NADCA Officers and Board of Directors, and all of you, over the next year as NADCA's President. First, I must convey a word of thanks to Robert Giles for his assistance as outgoing President. Bob, on behalf of NADCA, I thank you for your willingness to step forward and provide leadership, and we look forward to future opportunities when you can provide NADCA with your energy and insights. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the NADCA Executive Board for their vote of confidence.

The NADCA leadership slots are filled by volunteers, and the dedication of these volunteers is essential to the growth and maintenance of this organization. For example, Bob Timm, Editor of THE PROBE, has worked on every issue since number 101 (check out the number on this issue). Prior to that, NADCA Charter Member Bill Fitzwater edited issues 1-100. Both Bill and Bob have volunteered literally hundreds of hours for NADCA. Their commitment, in addition to the commitments of other past and present NADCA members, make NADCA what it is today.

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The connection between NADCA's past and its present is important. Our future is dependent on the framework established by this connection. What is NADCA? Who are its members? What do the members want from their professional organization? What can NADCA provide to the profession of wildlife damage management? NADCA is not a large organization, and it needs to get larger. It needs to reach out to the thousands of wildlife damage managers, practitioners, biologists, technicians, specialists, administrators, educators, and extension specialists and agents. It needs to touch the lives and activities of students, regulators, politicians, media specialists, and community leaders. NADCA must establish a dialogue with people affected by wildlife damage, agencies involved with wildlife damage, and those concerned about the ways wildlife damage is managed. The first step in this process is knowing who we are. I want to start a series of articles in THE PROBE featuring our tireless volunteers. I want to establish a recognized symbol, perhaps a pin, that provides a constant professional link between members. I believe NADCA should have a professional presence at all state, regional, and national wildlife meetings, especially those meetings that relate to wildlife damage management, and I look for your ideas on establishing incentives to do this. Finally, I am interested in developing an identification system within NADCA that provides formal recognition of professional competence and stature, perhaps with a NADCA Fellows program.

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Book Review: by Stephen Vantassel, NWCO Correspondent

"Being Kind to Animal Pests: A No-Nonsense Guide to Humane Animal Control with Cage Traps" by Steve Meyer (self-published), Garrison, IA 1991. 132 pages.

Being Kind to Animal Pests is one book that I should have reviewed a long time ago. I am pleased to have finally corrected my failure and present my views of this book for the PROBE readers. If you have never heard of Mr. Meyer, perhaps you heard of his trap manufacturing company, called Safe-N-Sound, which he founded in 1983. He sold the company in 1989 and developed this book two years later.

Mr. Meyer begins the book with an introduction, "Cage Trapping in Perspective," putting the role cage trapping plays in societal context. Here Mr. Meyer lays out the driving forces behind the development of the cage traps. He correctly points out that people need methods to control wildlife damage. Box trapping is just one tool, although a needed one as other methods such as shooting become less practical. I was happy to read Mr. Meyer contend that the term "live trapping" is just too vague a term when referring to box or cage trapping. As a frequent critic of those who persist in using the inaccurate term "live traps," I am glad to have Mr. Meyer on my side (pp.6-7).

In the next section, Meyer writes about box trapping in broad terms by providing a primer on animal behavior. Here he endeavors to inform the reader about the need to know one's quarry. This section covers general principles of reading signs, looking for dietary clues and how these facts will help you catch animals. Of special note is his admonition that animals are only nuisances because they have found areas to live in that conflict with people.

The next four sections introduce the reader to the fundamentals of box trapping. Mr. Meyer describes various trap types, their features, how to maintain them, etc. He goes into great detail about the mechanics of box trapping. Mr. Meyer also takes great effort to teach the reader the importance of location, camouflage, baiting, and trap security. His exhortations to be patient and creative should be read by every client who complained about the lack of trapping success. When I first read his book, I didn't think much about the paragraphs on camouflage. However, as time as gone on, I am beginning to think that there is more to his argument than I originally allowed. The information contained in these sections will be old news to most PROBE readers. However, if you ever have to instruct novices about box traps, you will want to read these sections first.

The bulk of the book is spent covering the biology and trapping techniques of no less than 17 animal species groups. I say "groups" because he discusses the techniques for catching gray and fox squirrels in the same section. The information is not very detailed but would be helpful to those just starting out.

The book ends with brief mentions on trapping ethics, alternative methods of animal damage control, and even diagrams for building your own cage traps. Each of these topics round out the book's discussion of box trapping. He includes an appendix on other trapping books that he recommends and another on various suppliers of box traps.

Overall, I enjoyed the book. I found it quite informative and especially so for people new to box trapping. If there was one book you wanted to give someone to help them become a box trapper, I think this is the one. Mr. Meyer writes in a clear and understandable manner, with an easy writing style which makes for quick reading. I found his photographs and diagrams clear enough to aid in understanding the text, and generally useful. He also went to great lengths in showing trap designs other than his own. Overall, I give the book an animal damage control grade of "B+". It is a solid work.

There are a few areas where the book exhibits some weaknesses. First, it neglected to warn readers that traps should be set away from objects trapped animals might damage. Raccoons in particular can do an incredible amount of damage to objects within reach of their wire prison. Second, he suggest that trappers relocate captured animals at least ten miles away. While relocation is not necessarily humane, ten miles is not far enough to prevent many animals from returning raccoons in particular. Third, he takes a too optimistic view of ultrasonic devices (p.117). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Mr. Meyer didn't discuss the importance of covering traps to help protect animals from exposure. While he may have assumed this fact, given that he so strongly recommends camouflage, covering traps to give the animal a place of shelter wasn't mentioned.

The book is presently out of print. However, Critter Control® still has copies for sale by calling (616) 947-2400. The cost I saw advertised was $12 plus shipping. I asked the author, Steve Meyer, if a reprint was in the works and he said "No." The book rights are available; if you are interested in purchasing the publishing rights, you can reach him at (319) 477-5040, by e-mail at <gfdchief@netins.net>, or by mail at 304 E. Maple St., Garrison, IA 52229.

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Needed . . .

Books, pamphlets, videos, etc. for review in THE PROBE. Send suggestions or materials to Stephen Vantassel, address above.

Abstracts from the 5th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society, September 1998, Buffalo, New York

Coyote Predation on Domestic Sheep Deterred with Electronic Dog Training Collar

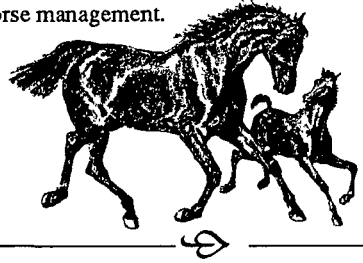
W.F. Andelt, R.L. Phillips, K.S Gruver, and J.W Guthrie.*
**Dept. of Fisheries & Wildlife, Colorado State University*

Additional methods are needed to deter predators from killing livestock. We therefore tested the effectiveness of an electronic dog-training collar for deterring captive coyotes from killing domestic lambs. The collar averted all 13 attempted attacks on lambs by 5 coyotes, greatly reduced the frequency of attempted attacks, and caused coyotes to avoid and retreat from lambs for over 17 weeks. We believe this approach to aversive conditioning has potential for reducing coyote predation on domestic sheep in limited areas and may have application to a variety of other problems involving carnivore predation on domestic or endangered species.

Ecological Effects of Feral Horse Grazing on Great Basin Mountain Ranges

E.A. Beever and P.F. Brussard
Dept. of Biology, University of Nevada, Reno

While a substantial literature exists regarding the effects of cattle grazing in a variety of ecosystems, no comparable research has been performed on the effects of feral horse grazing. Feral horses may exert a unique impact on the environment because they are more mobile and use sloped more broadly than cattle, and they have a larger mass and broader hooves than native ungulates. This study tests the null hypothesis that feral horse grazing exerts no significant effect on arid landscapes, using vegetation, ants, the guild of granivorous small mammals, and soil compaction as ecosystem indices. Because exclosures could not be used, six criteria were employed to achieve equivalence between control (horse-excluded, N=8 and experimental (high horse use, N=9) sites from western and central Nevada, all of which were relatively free of cattle. In addition, sites were stratified by elevation to examine effects at both high and low elevations. For all four indices, effects of horses were strongest at lower-elevation sites. At sites with horses during 1997, deer mice (*P. maniculatus*) abundance and soil surface compaction were higher, while plant species richness, number of ant mounds, and small mammal species richness were lower. These results suggest a need for an expanded research program investigating interactions of horses with native ecosystem components, as well as an expanded monitoring program in future feral horse management.



The Editor thanks the following contributors to this issue: Donald W. Hawthorne, Gary L. Nunley, Vivian Prothro, Stephen Vantassel, and Robert H. Schmidt. Send your contributions to **The PROBE**, *4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449.*

Implications of Hunting Participation on Control of Deer Populations in the East

T.L. Brown, W.F. Siemer, J.W. Enck, and D.J. Decker
Human Dimensions Research Unit, Dept. of Nat. Resources, Cornell University

Deer hunting participation has been sufficiently stable over the past two decades that the wildlife profession has no clear consensus as to future trends in hunting. However, the deer population appears to be growing throughout much of the east, to the extend that in some areas harvest goals are not met and management too often appears to be reduced to "getting enough dead deer." This presentation examined trends in variables related to hunting demand, including several demographic factors. It then developed directional projections of hunting participation and implications for deer harvest, based on the most likely projected demographic scenarios. Finally, we examined attitudes of hunters related to alternative harvest policies of agencies and point out, with data where such exist, and with hypothesis beyond current data, possible inconsistencies of hunter interests with agency alternatives for increasing the deer harvest. Plausible ways of reducing these inconsistencies or turning toward other deer control strategies are also explored.

Management of Gulls at Landfills to Reduce Public Health and Safety Conflicts

R.H. Bruleigh, D. Slate, R.B. Chipman, M. Barden, C. Allen, J. Janicke, and R. Noviello.*
**USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services, Montpelier, VT*

Modern waste management practices rely increasingly on transfer stations and incineration; nevertheless, open landfills remain as a common feature on the suburban landscape. In the northeastern U.S., landfills often serve as foraging and loafing areas for gulls throughout the year, while attracting larger concentrations of gulls during migration periods. As a consequence, landfills frequently act as catalysts for a variety of gull-public health and safety conflicts. Excessive noise and accumulation of debris and droppings in communities adjacent to landfills as a result of increased gull activity; air traffic safety concerns; and health and safety risks to landfill personnel and clients represent examples of conflicts. We discuss gull management programs conducted by USDA-Wildlife Services at several landfills that rely on innovative, integrated strategies to meet site-specific objectives and environmental conditions. We also discuss the potential off-site impacts of successful gull damage management programs at landfills and the need to consider regional strategies to reduce the frequency and intensity of site-specific conflicts.

The Efficacy of Border Collies for Nuisance Goose Control

P.M. Castelli and S.E. Sleggs
NJ Div'n. of Fish, Game and Wildlife, Port Republic, NJ

We performed a retrospective analysis of the efficacy of a border collie program implemented in 1990 to control nuisance Canada geese at the Dow Jones & Co. corporate complex in New Jersey. Personnel at

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Wildlife Society Abstracts continued

DJC were interviewed to obtain the origin, details, costs, and perceived effects of the program. Aerial waterfowl survey and ground count data (1982 to 1997) were examined to document yearly changes in Canada goose numbers at DJC and for the surrounding area. At DJC, the border collie program successfully eliminated Canada geese and the problems associated with their presence, despite the fact that the number of geese in the surrounding area increased during the same time period. The estimated cost of implementing this program in 1990 was $9,400, with an approximately annual maintenance cost of $2,000. Logistic, social, and legal aspects of the program are discussed and recommendations for implementing a border collie goose control program are provided. The border collie program was effective in addressing overabundance of Canada geese at DJC; however, it did not contribute to a solution for the larger problem of overabundance of both resident and wintering goose populations in the entire northeast region.

Wildlife Attacks on People: Trends and Solutions

M.R. Conover
Jack Berryman Institute, Dept. of Fisheries & Wildlife, Utah State University

Each year in the U.S., approximately 6,000 people are bitten by venomous snakes, 4,000 by rodents, 100 by skunks, 75 by foxes, 20 by alligators, and 1-2 by bears, coyotes, or cougars. Attacks by alligators and large mammalian predators more often are fatal than with other species, and therefore attract most of the media attention. Wildlife attacks on humans are becoming more common due to a higher frequency of human-wildlife interactions and, in some cases, to animals losing their fear of humans. Human-wildlife interactions are becoming more frequent due to increasing human and wildlife populations, dispersal of wildlife into metropolitan areas, and a movement of humans into more remote areas. Some attacks are inevitable and that risk is a price we pay for having abundant wildlife resources. Others, however, could be avoided by better public education. Human tolerance for fatal wildlife attacks is low and when they become too common, they will start to influence policy.

Citizen Task Forces: Involving Stakeholders in Deer Management Decisions

P.D. Curtis, Cooperative Extension, Cornell University

High deer densities have been associated with increased numbers of deer-vehicle collisions and substantial damage to agricultural crops and ornamental plants. Deer management issues have generated heated debate in several eastern U.S. metropolitan areas and parks. To identify support for and concerns about potential deer management options, the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation and Cornell Cooperative Extension initiated a Citizen Task Force (CTF) to obtain public input in a manner that would balance the viewpoints of various groups affected by deer. The 11-member CTF had 2 charges: determine an appropriate deer density, and recommend methods of achieving this desired population level. CTF members agreed that 8-10 deer/km^2 of quality habitat was an appropriate density for this suburban herd. After considerable discussion and debate, CTF members recommended the continued use of archery hunting, in areas where hunting was permitted, to achieve the desired population goal. In the town of Irondequoit, where bow and firearms discharge are prohibited by a local ordinance, a combination of selective culling by qualified professionals and reproductive inhibition were recommended as the most socially-acceptable, cost-effective, and humane management options. However, complete consensus for the deer culling was not reached by CTF members. This case study emphasizes the need for integrating both biological and human dimensions to resolve suburban deer management issues.

Changing Attitudes Toward Deer in Urban Ecosystems: Implications for Future Management

D.J. Decker and L.C. Chase, Human Dimensions Research Unit, Dept. of Nat. Resources, Cornell University

White-tailed deer have proven they can adapt to living with humans in urban ecosystems, but it is not clear whether people have similar capability. People with different stakes in the deer resource have different acceptance capacities for the presence and behavior of deer. The causes people to disagree about how to manage urban deer. Furthermore, people's attitudes about deer can change over time as their cumulative experience and knowledge about deer change. Many urban residents are realizing that: (a) deer have impacts that need to be mitigated, (b) deer affect different people in different ways (some severe) depending on circumstances, (c) deer can be managed to assured continued positive benefits while reducing negative impacts, (d) assistance of professional wildlife managers is needed, and (e) communities must be involved in the development of solutions. Although this complicates management, it also presents opportunities for wildlife managers willing to intervene proactively. Managers can intervene in two complimentary ways: managing citizen involvement in management, and influencing citizens' attitudes about deer and deer management through educational communication. We discuss how managers can develop strategies to achieve successful urban deer management. Options range from influencing urban planning to gaining citizen participation in deer population reduction. The future of urban deer management promises to be even more challenging than the presentand perhaps more rewarding.

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Maintain the Connection!

These are some of my ideas for projects over the next year. The idea is to maintain the vital connection between NADCA members, strengthening our core membership, and then expanding from that core. I need your ideas — a connection with you — to make this work. Please send me your thoughts, and let me know how to make NADCA fit your needs.

Robert H. Schmidt
NADCA President
Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
Utah State University
Logan, Utah, 84322-5210
e-mail <rschmidt@cc.usu.edu>

Position Announcement

Post Graduate Researcher
Dept. of Wildlife, Fish and Conservation Biology
University of California, Davis

Salary: $2,647- per month + benefits

Duration: 11 months (1 February - 30 December 1999) with possible extension depending on progress and funding.

Position Description:
Person required to assist with wildlife damage management research programs in the Department of Wildlife, Fish, and Conservation Biology at UC Davis. Projects include investigation of cultural methods for management of Belding's ground squirrels in alfalfa, baiting strategies for control of California ground squirrels, and evaluation of an aquatic bird hazing device for use in oil spill situations. The appointee will be based at UC Davis and primarily be responsible for coordinating the field components of these projects.

Selection criteria:

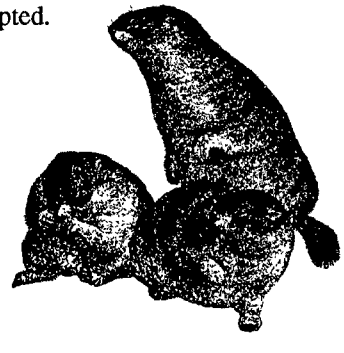
- Bachelor's Degree in Wildlife Biology or related field.
- Prior field research experience
- Demonstrated ability to work with limited supervision
- Willingness to spend extended periods in the field
- Good computer skills
- Current driver's license.
- Ability to commence work in early 1999.

Preference will be given to someone who is interested in pursuing a career in wildlife damage management. The successful applicant will be provided the opportunity to enroll in the graduate program at UC Davis (with full fee remission).

To apply, send a resume, and a letter of application addressing each of the selection criteria to:

Dr. Desley Whisson, Dept. of Wildlife,
Fish and Conservation Biology,
University of California, One Shields Ave.
Davis, CA 95616-8751.
Inquiries to: Desley Whisson Ph: (530) 754-8644
<dawhisson@ucdavis.edu>
or Terry Salmon Ph: (530) 754-8491
<tpsalmon@ucdavis.edu>.

Applications close January 22, 1999. E-mailed applications will not be accepted.



Scmidt Appointed to AVMA Panel on Euthanasia

NADCA President Robert Schmidt has been appointed to the American Veterinary Medical Association's (AVMA) new Panel on Euthanasia. The AVMA regularly updates and revises its guidelines for animal euthanasia. This new Panel will revise the 1993 edition of the AVMA guidelines. Schmidt will represent the nuisance wildlife management community.

The AVMA guidelines are produced as professional recommendations for applying principles of euthanasia (the process of delivering a rapid, pain- and stress-free death) to animals, particularly for research and companion animals. Although these guidelines are recommendations, there is no doubt that they have become the standard by which all killing methods are judged. In some cases, particularly with research projects subject to the provisions of the federal Animal Welfare Act, variations from these guidelines require detailed explanations and justifications, as well as specific approval from an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. The 1993 AVMA guidelines were the first to focus specifically on wildlife euthanasia, with a condemnation of drowning and a qualified endorsement of gunshot and kill traps as euthanasia.

Although the 1993 report mentioned multiple times that traditional wildlife management activities evolved outside a euthanasia framework, there are an increasing number of regulatory agencies requiring the application of these guidelines to wild animals. In addition to laboratory practices involving wild animals, field studies involving invasive procedures with wild animals also fall under the Animal Welfare Act. Many states regulate wildlife rehabilitators and animal shelters, and many of these specifically reference the AVMA euthanasia guidelines. Connecticut now has legislation requiring that nuisance wildlife managers utilize AVMA guidelines when wild animals are killed. In short, agencies increasingly are utilizing the AVMA guidelines as an industry standard, and these guidelines increasingly are affecting the ways wild animals are captured and killed.

NADCA members are encouraged to provide the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia with comments on the utilization of euthanasia principles to the wildlife damage management profession. Specific comments can be sent to: Dr. David E. Granstrom, DVM, Education and Research Division, American Veterinary Medical Association, 1931 N. Meacham Road, Suite 100, Schaumburg, Illinois, 60173-4360.

In addition, NADCA members are encouraged to write or call Robert Schmidt with their suggestions and concerns (Dr. Robert H. Schmidt, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, 84322-5210, or by e-mail to rschmidt@cc.usu.edu). Watch future issues of THE PROBE for updates on the progress of the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia.

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