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Wildlife Damage Management, Internet Center for

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Wildlife Damage Management in the News

Immunocontraception For Deer Control Shown to Be Ineffective

Based on five years of research, Larry Katz, Professor of Animal Science at Rutgers University's Cook College, recently concluded that, "Immunocontraception simply will not work to control deer populations."

Immunocontraception is a technique by which a deer's own immune system is used to make the animal temporarily infertile. The difficulty in contracepting deer, according to Dr. Katz, is that deer mature early, and have high survival and fertility rates. "Even in confined situations," Katz stated, "the current technology will take 10 to 12 years to reduce the population and will require annual retreatment — booster shots of at least 75% of the does."

Richard Dolbeer, a population modeler for the USDA National Wildlife Research Center, independently examined the potential effectiveness of using reproductive inhibitors to control wildlife populations. Dr. Dolbeer also indicated that the time, effort and money needed to treat such a high proportion of females makes the use of immunocontraception highly questionable.

Because of these factors, Dr. Dolbeer stated that using immunocontraception for deer control "is a waste of time and money." He also concluded that, "appropriate hunting, particularly of antlerless deer, can and does control deer, as well as feed people."

— from *Outdoor News Bulletin, Wildlife Management Institute, November 17 2000*

Rats' Rights

As a result of a lawsuit filed by an affiliate of the American Anti-Vivisection Society and a Beaver College psychology student, the USDA announced a settlement that would extend protection under the Animal Welfare Act to rats, mice, and birds used in laboratory research. It was proposed this settlement would require the USDA to write regulations insuring the humane treatment of rats, mice, and birds.

The settlement brought heated reaction from the research community, which saw it as a surrender to animal rights extremists. "In our view, this did nothing for animal welfare but added a tremendous paperwork burden," said Anthony Mazzaschi, a vice president for research at the Association of American Medical Colleges, citing one estimate that paperwork costs could run as high as \$200 million.

In response, the National Association for Biomedical Research drafted an amendment to the 2001 USDA budget appropriations bill and sent it to the University of Mississippi. The university sent the amendment on to U.S. Senator Thad Cochran, R-Miss. Sen. Cochran in turn added language to the USDA appropriations bill that blocked the settlement with the animal rights group. The bill, with Sen. Cochran's changes, passed in the House and Senate and was signed by President Clinton.

— excerpted from a *San Francisco Chronicle* article and personal communications with Sen. Cochran's Washington, D.C. office.

Continued on page 4, col. 1

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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.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

February 5-7, 2001: Wildlife Control Technology/NWCOA Seminar, Imperial Palace, Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information see the NWCOA website at www.nwcoa.com. Call 815-286-3039 to register.

August 27-30, 2001: 3rd Combined Bird Strike Committee USA/ Bird Strike Committee Canada Conference. The Westin Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Presentations at the conference have included papers, posters and demonstrations on wildlife control techniques, new technologies, land-use issues, training, engineering standards, and habitat management. Presenter proposals are due by April 2, 2001. Early Bird registration are due by June 1, 2001. For information contact Bruce MacKinnon by e-mail, mackinb@tc.qc.ca, phone (613) 990-0515, or fax (613) 990-0508.

September 9-14, 2001: 3rd European Vertebrate Pest Management Conference, Kibbutz Ma'ale Hachamisha Guest House, Israel. Abstracts and posters for the conference are invited and due by March 2001. For further information, contact Conference Secretariat: Ortra Ltd., P.O. Box 9352, Tel Aviv 61092, Israel, email <vert@ortra.co.il> or visit web site <http://www.ortra.com/vertebrate>.

The Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management: <http://wildlifedamage.unl.edu>

Dallas Virchow, Proj. Coord., Distance Ed., Wildlife Damage Management, University of Nebraska

Academics, wildlife control operators, youth, and the general public all have a new tool to use in seeking solutions or information about wildlife damage. The Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management or ICWDM, funded by the federal CSREES-IPM-North Central and Western Regions of the US Department of Agriculture, has been around for four years but has recently taken on a new look and a new role. Four universities—Utah State, Cornell, Clemson and Nebraska—were instrumental in acquiring the federal grant. Designed as a clearinghouse for wildlife damage management information, the center now has several important features:

1) The Home Page features a WHAT'S NEW with links to current and upcoming events such as conferences and workshops. OTHER RELATED LINKS includes kids' pages.

MAIN MENU SELECTIONS (upper left) include:

a) PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS, and KEY menu items: A quick guide for the general public to find common wildlife characteristics, their sign and typical damage and solutions.

Continued from page 1, Col. 2

Human-Wildlife Conflicts

vehicle collisions which result in over a \$1 billion in damage to cars, 29,000 human injuries, 200 human fatalities, and 1.4 million dead deer.

One approach to human-wildlife conflicts is to create preserves, wildlife refuges, or parks where human impact on wildlife are minimized. Although this approach is well intended, it does little to resolve human-wildlife conflicts because society demands for natural resources is so great that only a small fraction of the environment can ever be set aside in parks. There is also the problem that wildlife do not respect our boundary lines and stay inside parks. In fact, the vast majority of wildlife live outside of parks — the same place people live. Wildlife populations thrive in our most densely-settled cities.

Clearly if human-wildlife conflicts are going to be resolved, ways must be found for humans and wildlife to co-exist harmoniously. This is the goal of the science of wildlife damage management.

b) PRODUCTS, SERVICES menu items: A voluntary list of wildlife control operators, their services and products.

c) PROFESSIONAL'S CORNER with links to job listings, specific equipment needs, professional associations and training, as well as professional journals.

d) UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS links to most land-grant institutions and their on-line wildlife damage publications.

e) PROCEEDINGS: full text articles (in PDF or Word) of most of the Eastern and Great Plains Wildlife Damage Control Workshops can be found here.

f) ORDER THE HANDBOOK (Prevention and Control of Wildlife Damage) LOWER LEFT MENU: This menu features full text sections of the handbook, usually in PDF

A structured SEARCH engine now lets you find words by author, proceedings article title, or animal.

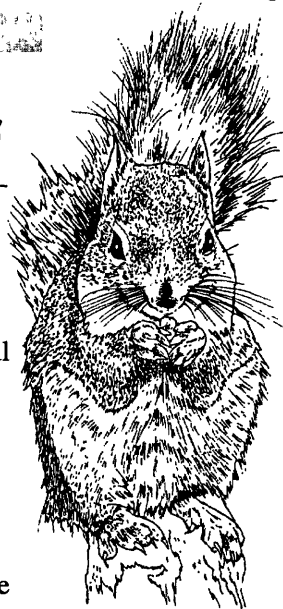
The internet is an ever-changing medium for information. Look for the following features in the near future:

MARCH 2001: Are you a vendor of wildlife damage control services and/or products?

A free place where vendors can list and edit their wares will be arriving soon! Developed by InfoSoft Corp., Burlington, Ontario, this is a secure site for vendors but a fully searchable, online database for those who want to find experts close to them or with specific products.

AUGUST 2001: Want the latest news about wildlife damage around the world? We are examining ways to help you keep abreast of the ever-changing wildlife damage field and its issues.

2001 will also see the ICWDM continue its effort to scan and show full text articles from hard-to-find conference and workshop proceedings; to provide a library of related wildlife damage images, and to assist in opening avenues of communication within and among professionals and interested publics.



The Editor thanks contributors to this issue: Susan Greene, Dallas Virchow, and Mike Conover.

Wildlife Damage Management in the News

EPA Issues Stop Sale Order Against New Tech for Pesticide "KRITTER KILLER"

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 5 has recently ordered New Tech International (Warren, MI) to stop selling the unregistered pesticide Kritter Killer. The order prohibits New Tech from selling, using, or removing for disposal any pesticide product known as Kritter Killer, including any sales via the internet (e-commerce).

Under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), any chemical intended to be used as a pesticide must be registered by EPA before it can be sold or distributed in the United States. This process ensures that the pesticide does not pose an unreasonable risk to human health or the environment.

New Tech has been selling and distributing the industrial product cleaner containing tetrachloroethylene, a known human carcinogen. New Tech failed to obtain a registration for its Kritter Killer and has been illegally selling the product as an insecticide and rodenticide. An August 2000 inspection by the Michigan Department of Agriculture revealed product samples, label graphics, and customer order records for Kritter Killer with illegal claims that the product could be used safely as a rodenticide.

New Tech did not register or provide evidence to EPA that use of Kritter Killer does not pose unreasonable adverse effects to human health and the environment when used as a pesticide. FIFRA, requires companies to prove, during the registration process, that their products are effective.

— EPA news release

D.C. Declares War on Rats

Washington D.C. is cracking down on rats and the city residents who feed them, according to the Associated Press.

The war is being spearheaded by D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams. Williams called together city officials, various citizens groups, industry experts and pest control operators for the city's first Rat Summit.

The summit included presentations on rat management, rat biology, and human behavior. One of the program presenters, Dale Kaukeinen from Zeneca Professional Products, noted that the city's rat problem worsened largely because of community apathy. "People have become used to seeing rats and they haven't been doing anything about them, despite the health and property hazards they represent," he said. "City agencies won't do anything if the public is not concerned."

As a result of the summit, a short-term initiative draft for rat control has been launched. The initiative's goal is to better manage waste, remove rat harborage and correct unsanitary conditions in food establishments. The plan includes a cross-agency inspection approach to ensure compliance with all District codes in public spaces, private homes, apartments and food establishments. Two other key elements of the plan are the distribution of 50,000 heavy-duty plastic garbage containers with attached lids to residences in the "Inner Core" neighborhoods and the implementation of a massive education program targeted at children.

Kaukeinen added that before pest control operators and city workers can begin making major impacts using glueboards, traps, rodenticides and other control measures, sanitation must be achieved throughout the city.

— excerpted from PCTonline.com

Ever Wonder?

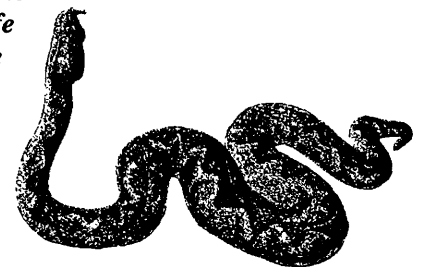
Since all snakes lack external ears, are snakes deaf?

It is true that snakes do not have external ears nor do they have external ear openings or ear drums. However, there seems to be a difference of opinion among herpetologists as to whether or not snakes are deaf. This difference of opinion may be more a matter of the definition of deaf. It does appear that snakes do not seem to directly perceive the types of air vibrations we know as sound waves. Herpetologists do agree that snakes are aware of sound waves if the air-borne vibrations caused by the sound waves are transmitted to the substratum on which the snake rests. This substratum may be the ground, a floor, a box or any material that is in contact with the snake's body and is capable of transmitting the vibration to the snake.

So snakes do not "hear" sounds the way we do, but they can "feel" sounds if the sounds are transmitted in the form of vibrations through the substratum. In fact snakes are extraordinarily sensitive to the sound transmitted through vibrations — and in that regard, they can "hear" very well.

An old custom of Mexican sheepherders was to shuffle their feet as they walked through rattlesnake country. The shuffling served to alert the rattlesnakes through ground vibrations thereby causing it to rattle and announce its location.

— adapted from *Rattlesnakes, Their Habits Life Histories, and Influence on Mankind*. By Laurence M. Klauber; Univ. Of Calif. Press, 1982.



Trap-Shy Feral Cats continued

Unconventional lures were offered. By attaching a crate containing kittens to a trap, the nursing mother can be lured. Open traps alongside a trap containing the mother lures kittens. Other listmembers mentioned additional lures including a live mouse secured in a clear ventilated deli box and fresh and dried catnip on a cardboard floor leading to the bait. Take weather conditions and fast removal into consideration with live lures. Other cues include feathers dangling from the top of the trap, toy fur mice, and taped bird chirps. Fish oil applied to cloth (placed high) will draw cats in. D. Purwin, Desert Wildlife Services, AZ noted that live lures or real feathers may be illegal in some states.

Foothold traps may succeed if cage traps fail. Purwin also stated that if a foothold trap is used it should be a No. 1 size and have offset and/or padded jaws.

Purwin uses a snare pole and kevlar-lined gloves to remove

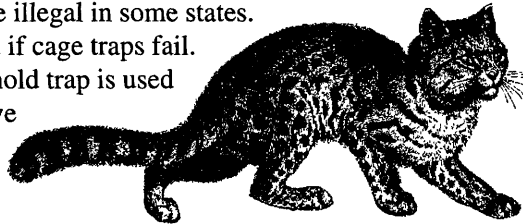
cats. Padded footholds can be used in tight spaces (walls; storm drains) and checked frequently. Cats can also be removed with a short-handled netbag applied from behind. Panic is reduced if the trap site provides a hiding place rather than leaving the cat exposed.

Possible foot injury and public opinion toward footholds was debated at length. Monterroso said, "The general public accepts box traps as a humane trapping method. Foothold traps, however, are seen as painful or cruel. Because we use gentle trapping methods, the public does not disturb our traps. We continue to receive donations to continue our work. People continue to adopt our cats because they approve of the way we treat them."

Programs that depend heavily upon public approval often decide against using the foothold for trap-shy or injured cats that balk at cage traps. Wildlife damage managers, however, may welcome situations where they can discuss the trap openly, since many wish to retain the foothold as a wildlife tool.

Three list participants were unconvinced that footholds should be used in any situation, even if cats were immediately removed. This confirms that sentiment against footholds can be unyielding, even after continued discussion. Cage traps offer the benefits of high success rate with domestic cats and immediate restraint. Therefore, in public settings, footholds and footsnare were viewed as a final choice when cages could not be utilized.

Purwin said, "All traps are only as safe, or 'humane,' as their weakest link. This weak link is generally the operator of the trap, pertaining to his/her knowledge of the trap being used and the animal species to be trapped. Get some 'face-to-face' professional advice on how to handle the cat



and how to set and remove the foothold trap without hurting the cat or yourself." Changing weather or poor trap placement can make even a cage trap deadly. Any trap user should have proper training.

Chemical immobilization was briefly discussed. "A class in chemical immobilization should be your first step," Dave advises. Contacts included Safe-Capture International (608-767-3071), American Humane Association (800-227-4645) and Animal Care and Equipment Services, (1-800-338-ACES). Immobilization drugs require a DEA Controlled Substances permit. Certain tranquilizers are available through prescription and training from a veterinarian.

Tranquilizers aid in handling cats post-capture, or may ease euthanasia. "To tranquilize cats, up-end the carrier and the cat's flank will rest against a ventilation hole (and inject)" advises J. Harkin, A.S.A.P., DC. Cage-trapped cats can be restrained for injection by quietly pushing a large towel into an upended trap, pressing the cat down against the wire. Cats become frantic in snarepole loops, so apply around both head and leg when necessary. Transfer cages and net bags are easier on the cat, the handler, and bystanders.

The federal Animal Welfare Act, state anti-cruelty laws, health codes, and local animal control ordinances all effect domestic cat handling. References to cats sometimes appear in state/local dog control laws. Examine laws closely before trapping, euthanizing, selling, keeping, or alter-and-releasing domestic cats.

To subscribe to FERACAT, e-mail wildrun2@yahoo.com. Given the varied background of list members, the utmost professional conduct is required. Due to space limitations, many participants could not be quoted.

Susan Greene, c/o Wildrun, POB 415, Spencer NY 14883
Technician, Ithaca College Biology Dept., and Wildrun
(wildlife control/rescue and feral cat rescue)

Opinions expressed are my own unless otherwise attributed.

Articles Wanted

THE PROBE is always looking for well-written, informative articles. Send yours to Editor: Lawrence M. Sullivan, Extension Natural Resources Specialist, Wildlife Damage Management, School of Renewable Natural Resources, 325 Biosciences East, The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721 or e-mail: sullivan@ag.arizona.edu

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NATIONAL ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Mail to: Arthur E. Smith, Certified Wildlife Biologist, Game Harvest Surveys Coordinator, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks, 523 E. Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501

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