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THE PROBE



National Animal Damage Control Association

NUMBER 77

NOVEMBER, 1987

YOUR MONEY'S NICE - BUT TIME & THOUGHTS ARE NEEDED TOO !!

THE PROBE is OUR newsletter. It is a forum for exchanging information about things that have happened, up-coming events, new products, tools, and techniques, as well as ideas related to the work we do. It also helps us keep in contact with friends and associates. Without THE PROBE, NADCA would soon wither.

Fitz has to be commended for keeping us together and NADCA going, but if NADCA aspires to become more involved and influential, he needs help...Help in the form of providing publishable material about the things we do, events that influence ADC, and mostly ideas about the work we do.

I am tossing out a challenge to each NADCA member to contribute items for THE PROBE and to bring in at least one new member for 1988 ! FRED KNOWLTON, NADCA RD-II APHIS, Logan, UT.

Never cry over spilt milk. It is over 95% water anyway.

JUST WHAT WE'VE BEEN TELLING THEM

A five-year study of duck hunting regulations by the USFWS and Canadian Wildlife Sv. has come up with these startling conclusions, "Destruction of nests and losses of hens to predators have an important and perhaps a dominant influence on the ability of some duck populations to sustain themselves. Overall nesting success was low for

mallards in the mid-continent areas studied, contributing to poor production during most of the stabilized regulations period. Increased losses from predators are associated with loss of nesting habitat, because remaining habitat tends to be preserved in broken-up sections or 'islands' that concentrate predators... "death rates for males (mallards) are higher during hunting season and much lower during breeding season than for females. Females are subjected to substantial mortality in both the breeding and hunting seasons. Female mortality is due primarily to predation during spring and summer, whereas hunting was the major cause of deaths for hen mallards wintering in the Mississippi Delta." OUTDOOR NEWS BULLETIN, Wildl. Mgt. Inst., 12 Jun 87.

My doctor suggested I give up the pursuit of happiness and concentrate on survival.

CROCKED CRANES

Fifteen cranes, including three whoopers, have died at Patuxent Wildl. Res. Ctr. during the past two months. This is the biggest blow to the crane breeding program since seven whoopers were killed with eastern equine encephalitis back in 1984. In this instance the disease agent has not been isolated. This incident, along with the recent loss of a colony of black-foot ferrets at the same installation, emphasizes the fragile links on which the saving of an endangered species at times relies. Thanx to JOHN C. JONES, NADCA RD-VIII, Bethesda, MD & WASHINGTON POST.

Some stretch pants have no other

APHIS ACTIVITY REPT.

The following are abstracted from the activity reports of APHIS, TRAPLINE (TX), TRAPPER'S JAW (NM), etc. for the benefit of non-APHIS readers. This is not to be considered a publication source. Only names of NADCA members are used in situations in which they are involved.

COYOTES: (NM) The "success" of a project by New Mexican USDA researchers to bond cattle to sheep as a means of protecting the sheep from coyote predation is off to a slow start. Three out of the 21 lambs in the study have been killed so far as the coyotes haven't learned the rules of the game and are killing so fast, the lambs can't learn to bond. The study area was "cleaned" of coyotes before the start of the experiment by chopper and calling. Parts of the range also have electric fences and guard dogs. The flock was also kept in pens at night and under the close supervision of the researchers. Sounds like they are really stacking the deck to get a good report.

(NM) "Monkeys are the kuaziest people." Coyotes outside Holoman AFB have discovered monkeys caged outside the facility will throw food at them if harassed. Researchers have seen as many as nine coyotes working the monkey cages. One technician attempted to shoo the coyotes away and reports they followed her back to her car and reared up looking in her windows which made her nervous.

(NM) LARRY KILLGO reported a case where a coyote came into a field full of goats of all sexes and sizes. Ignoring the young and weak it killed a 3-year old Angora goat, the largest, strongest animal in the field. So much for predators taking only "the weak, the sick, and the old."

PRAIRIE DOGS: (TX) They had a Texan ask how to live trap prairie dogs. It seems there is a big market back East where they are sold as pets. A woman in Florida recently paid \$40.00 for one. Before you hook your hose up to a water tank, consider the health implications and the possibility of introducing a serious agricultural pest into new areas.

VULTURES: (TX) Vultures seem to be losing their fear of shell crackers.

Trappers have taken several black vultures and caracaras standing around cattle waiting for them to calf. The latter species is more aggressive and are the first to land near a calving cow.

The best way to learn speed reading is to get a letter from the IRS.

DAM BEAVER

There's a report of an Alabama farmer who bought a Bombardier Muskeg tractor. It's not cheap (\$60,000) but the farmer claims it is the only thing to rip out beaver dams. It has a hydraulic system that can be hitched to a 3-point chisel, weighs in at 7,000 pounds, and can float through swampland on 20-inch tracks. It is also a handy device in which to wade around swamplands filled with cottonmouths and not have to be looking at your feet all the time. PROGRESSIVE FARMER (2/84).

A politician is one who puts his best foot forward - - into his mouth.

LOSS OF OUR SUPPORT BASE

For the fourth straight year hunting license sales declined from 15,879,572 in 1985 to 15,773,190 in 1986 even though license receipts to the States rose nearly \$22 million. ADC has much in common with hunters in combatting a common enemy in the. Animal Rightists. OUTDOOR NEWS BULLETIN, Wildl. Mgt. Inst., 7 Aug 87.

Zsa Zsa Gabor would never go to a nudist camp because she wouldn't go where every woman wears the same thing.

AHHH ! TO BE IN ENGLAND

We certainly don't have a corner on the kooks in this country. Big headlines when a sparrow got caught in a country church's rafters and broke into song during a taping of a classical guitarist recital. The rector had it shot with an air gun - - and naturally made the headlines. You could see it coming as the rector's name was Robin Clark - "Who shot Cock Robin? I, said the sparrow, with my little bow and arrow." Other comments included, "...the next one might be carrying a harp."

If you're over the hill, why not enjoy the view?

MEETIN'S

53RD NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE & NATURAL RESOURCES CONF., Mar. 1-3 in Louisville (KY). Contact: Wildl. Mgt. Inst., 1101 4th St. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

THIRTEENTH CALIFORNIA VERTEBRATE PEST CONFERENCE, Mar. 1-3, 1988. Papers on the largest and oldest conference on vertebrate pest control. Contact: Rex Marsh, Dept. Wildlife, Fisheries, & Biology, Univ. of California, Davis, CA 95616.

SIXTH ASTM SYMPOSIUM, Mar. 4, 1988 in Monterey (CA). Methods, tests, techniques, etc. in vertebrate pest control measures. Contact: DR. WILLIAM B. JACKSON, Dept. of Biological Sciences, BGSU, Bowling Green, OH 43403.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE RANCHING SYMPOSIUM, May 16-21, 1988 in Las Cruces (NM). This is on operations and marketing strategies for wildlife ranching. Contact: Raul Valdez, POB 4901, NMSU, Las Cruces, NM 88003.

INTERNATIONAL UNGULATE BEHAVIOR & MANAGEMENT CONF., May 1-22, 1988 at Texas A & M University. Any aspect of ungulate behavior and management. Contact: Dr. Elizabeth Mungall, 342 Double Tree Dr., Lewisville, TX 75067.

Probaby the most difficult of all instruments to play is second fiddle.

WE DIDN'T DO IT !!

Three out of five bird species endemic to Guam have become extinct during the 1980s. It hasn't been pesticides, pollution, or even habitat destruction but appears to be a predator -the brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*) which was introduced from New Guinea or Australia in the late 1940s. This is a venomous little rascal that can grow up to ten feet in length. Its population has reached seven snakes per acre or 936,320 snakes on the island. Controls suggested are introduction of a parasitic mite, chemical repellents, physical barriers, and trapping as well as developing a market for the skin. Thanx to GUY CONNOLLY, NADCA, RD-IV, APHIS, Twin Falls (ID)

This is an Aussie contribution from JIM BACKHOLER:

*If you can't shear it, shoot it
If you can't shoot it, spray it
If you can't spray it, work out a way to shear it.*

LETTERS TO YE ED

FRANKLIN ANDERSON, rancher, Ignacio, CO:

Enjoy THE PROBE and get much useful info from it. We are having lots of problems with lion in the 4-corners area and also in the Grand Junction-Norwood area. What we are hoping to do is to convince the USFWS to revise their ideas and policy on lion. The sheep producers have lost over 100 ewes and lambs in the last year plus colts, calves, and many yearlings unaccounted for. Some families have killed lions in their corrals. One sitting on a root cellar stared down a child and tried to do the same with the parents when the child went and got them, but they had a gun. The problem is we can't convince USFWS to do anything. All they want to do is quibble and pay token damages or talk transplant.

CHUCK CADIEUX, rtd. USFWS, Albuquerque, NM:

William, you 'chornicled' (He corrected my spelling a time back ! Editors never forget something like that !) the fact that Defenders of Wildlife have talked a VISA card 'issuer' (ditto) into a cooperative deal, whereby DOW gets a half percent cut. Why not tell me which VISA issuer that is ? With that knowledge, I then tear up that VISA card and mail the pieces back to the issuer, along with a note telling them that any friend of DOW is no friend of mine ? Just a few letters like that and they would withdraw from their cooperative venture with DOW. We gotta fight, Willy, or go under. Thanks, Charley, I threw out the application in disgust but they have a free telephone number - 1-800-424-2743 (a bankcard company) so you can save one stamp. I told them to send me an application for the "Defenders of Wildlife Classic VISA card" and will follow through as you suggest.

WELLS M. STEPHENSEN, APHIS State Dir. Palmer, AK:

I appreciate receiving THE PROBE each month and enjoy reading about our

controversial ADC program. In #75 reference was made to gull problems with spawning herring near the Sitka and Fairbanks airports. Sitka was a real problem but Fairbanks is located 400 miles inland from the nearest spawning grounds. At Fairbanks it was shorebirds using the grass strips between the runways. A new revolving multi-shot propane exploder along with falcon silhouettes was successful. Sorry, Wells, I took that directly from the APHIS narrative, but remember wondering at the time what gulls were doing so far inland in that country.

DR. RODGER MACQUIGG, Albuquerque, NM 87110:

Begorra, if your club had a longer title we couldn't get it all on a check. When they finally get around to musical checks and bills get a folder for NADCAETC that plays "Onward Christian soldiers". Mac, the bank recognizes "NADCA" so save your ink.

REX SHADDOX, 708 Manitou Ave., Manitou Springs, CO 80829:

I sent a letter about 8 months ago with my dues and received it back, "lost in the mail the other day". Here is my new address and my dues. I hope to get back in ADC in Wyoming. Here is a picture of a sow bear I trailed for two hours before getting a shot at 15 yards. She weighed 250 lbs. I killed her out of Papago Springs (CO) with a 270 Win. And they say us ex-native Texans don't have any bear experience!

Lots of things are more important than money. The trouble is you need money to buy them.

ARIZONA BEAR SOCIETY

Got a flyer from this organization that sounded like it might be reasonable until I started to read over their objectives.

Minimizing bear/human conflicts by installing bearproof refuse containers in campgrounds.

Transplanting sow bears into areas where they have been eliminated by "past hunting and trapping excesses".

Promoting a feasibility study to transplant a population of grizzly bears

into a "remote, safe habitat" (for whom?) in Arizona.



"...and what was your reaction when you saw the grizzly in the barn?"

Then some of their "facts" - "Contrary to what some believe, black bear are seldom inclined to killing livestock. They eat mostly acorns, berries, mushrooms, grass, insects, and grubs...The fears that lead to the eradication of these noble animals (grizzly bear) were ill-founded...In other states and countries, game management practices have enabled grizzlies to co-exist peacefully in areas where humans live or visit."

A girdle is used to keep figures from telling the truth.

COMPENSATION

I have a mimeograph of an article by J.E.Kautz of Cornell (don't know whereabouts it was published) that is a most interesting commentary on the effect of a pest population compensating for mortality due to pest control measures. He quotes R.K.Murton's work in the UK on pigeons and incomplete results of his own on rural pigeon flocks. He studied four separate populations using one as a control and reducing the fall populations on the others 20%, 40%, and 60%. The incomplete results showed the populations recovered in one year from harvests of 20% and 40%, but not the 60%. This is reinforcement of the belief of most pest controllers that in order to achieve a noticeable reduction in pest numbers over longer than a year period you have to remove better than half the original population. This goes back to our basic

premise in commensal rodent control that reduction of numbers without habitat alteration is ineffective in controlling the problem in a given area.

The world hasn't been inherited by the meek, but it is being largely supported by them.

ALL THE NEWS THAT'S PRINT TO FIT

Continuing on with my fight to reduce my load of newspaper clippings :

CRAZY OVER HORSES

The BLM's plan to kill unadopted wild horses met with the usual barrage of emotional mail. Though it costs over \$7 million a year to feed these animals standing around in corrals, the mail is sentimentally in favor of the wild horse. As a BLM spokesman points out these people "...have the luxury of not worrying about mining, recreation, and livestock interests on these lands..." as BLM planners have to do. By last year, they had 66,000 adoptions, including 15,000 burros, but estimate some 44,000 wild equines still roam the West which they would like to reduce to 25-30,000 by 1991. However, an insight to this problem is illustrated by a horse/auto problem south of Phoenix. About five years ago they had a round up reducing the herd to about 50 animals. Two years ago the herd was estimated at 500. Thank to ANN FITZWATER, 'PINK' MADSEN, & NORTON MINER.

CLEVER COYOTES

are...getting fat on Arizona house cats...moving into urban Virginia...kept from sheep by better than "guard dog" donkeys...increasing steadily in South Dakota...seeking out the weakened young or old animals in Indiana...collared in Montana and Wyoming, while having difficulty in Texas where the collar was first developed...filling an ecological niche left by the removal of the wolf and bobcat in the East. All this according to news articles found by GUY CONNOLLY, PHIL EGGBORN, HOWARD MERRILL, STEVE MORO, and FRANCES POLSTON.

WATCH THE BIRDIES !

By land, sea, and air is the proposal by one entrepreneur to rid Mountlake Terrace/Lake Ballinger (WA) of a growing problem with waterfowl over the last ten years. He is offering, for a fee of

course, to provide radio-controlled little cars to chase the offending birds off the land. When in the water he will harass them with similarly controlled boats. And as a last resort keep them moving in the air with toy planes (toys ? engines cost \$300). For this interesting concept he is charging \$8,000. For the authorities who are considering a waterfowl biologist with her trained border collie at \$5,000 per and have tried traps, exploding firecrackers, rubber owls, and chemical pellets (make the birds sick ?), this might be next. Thank to GUY CONNOLLY, NADCA RD-IV, APHIS, Twin Falls (ID) & SEATTLE TIMES (WA).

In another old, but rarely successful attempt, Marion (IN) has contracted to take down the grand old trees on its stately courthouse square due to the health hazards of flocks of pigeons, starlings, and sparrows. Thank to FRANCES POLSTON & LAFAYETTE (IN) JOURNAL/COURIER.

When Lititz (PA) got a mayor who was a sound engineer, they also got someone to work on the crows plaguing the town. The mayor started with 20,000 "db", but got no reaction until he dropped to 8,000 "db" and then got the crows to move -- to nearby trees (as usual the newspapers have db confused with cps so you are not sure just what he was working with, but a quote by the mayor, "I don't think anyone's ever done a study on it before.", shows he hasn't read very much either.) Thank to ANN'S RELATIVES in Lititz (PA).

When a big brown bird landed in Carol Paladini's backyard (Glendale, CA) she thought it came early for Thanksgiving. "We thought it was a wild turkey, but all we know now is that it's brown and ugly, it's eaten up all of our flowers and leaves its droppings all over our yard...it was cute at first, but the novelty wore off very quickly...we made the mistake of feeding it on the second day of its stay..." Apparently it is a female silver pheasant that escaped from the LA Zoo, but they don't want it back. Another innocent brought face to face with the realities of urban wildlife. Thank to "PINK' MADSEN, rtd. FWS, Florence (WI).

The AT&T building in Manhattan (NY) has solved its pigeon problem with an inflatable plastic owl from K-Mart to keep

pigeons from roosting on the impressive 100-foot-arch over its entrance. It worked so good they are ordering hand-painted Italian models. (WALL STREET JOURNAL)

SHEEP BINGO

Amidst cries of barbarism by animal rights activists, a nervous Forest Service postponed a proposal to put marked sheep in a forest to be hunted. A New Mexico rancher wanted to release some red-dyed sheep on his government lease, charge licensed deer hunters \$50, and pay \$200 for each sheep collected. I think he was taking a big chance on losing a lot of mutton to trigger-happy hunters. ALBUQUERQUE (NM) TRIBUNE.

PUTTY CATS

A 50-lb. mountain lion who tried to join a boy scout troop near San Diego (CA) was finally killed in an empty tent in the camp by a game warden. The animal was acting very bold and unafraid of people. When it was killed it was found to be plague-positive. Pete asked if a lion had ever been reported with plague before. I can't find any reference as such but it would be possible as many other carnivores, including wildcats, have been found with positive plague titers. I don't feel it would be important epidemiologically due to the habits of these big cats and the resistance of cats, in general, to the plague bacilli. PETE BUTCHKO, APHIS, Visalia (CA) & SAN DIEGO (CA) UNION.

There have been a number of lion incidents recently on the west slope in Colorado. A Montrose hunter reported 40 deer carcasses apparently killed by lion in the past two weeks. In Norwood a rancher was awakened by his dog and found a lion on his porch. When he got his gun, the lion and dog, which had been on a leash, were both gone. He followed a blood trail into the woods but never found the dog. In Paradox another man shot out of his backdoor at a lion who was stalking children playing at a wedding ceremony. Thanx to FRANKLIN ANDERSON, Ignacio (CO).

Many a train of thought never reaches the station.

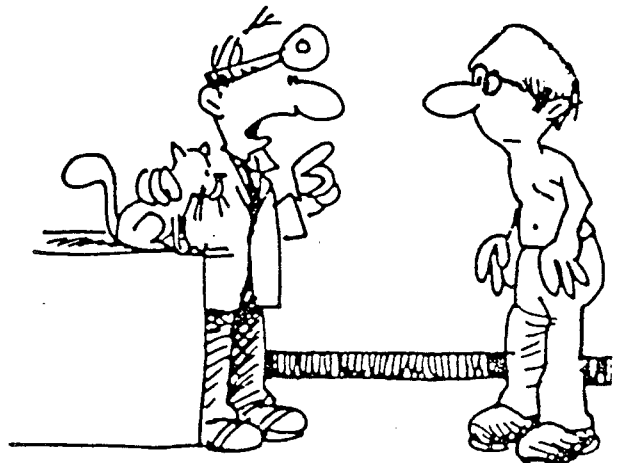
SPEAKING OF CATS -

I recently encountered a prospectus (thanx to PAUL LEFEBVRE, APHIS, Gainesville (FL) & Vic Dunaway in FLORIDA SPORTSMAN) that offers a greater return on my money than smuggling dope, robbing banks, or selling health foods. The entrepreneur, Bob Daily of Valdosta (GA) requires a \$50,000 investment but it seems like a sure thing and in a field I am well qualified. He plans to start small by setting up a cat farm in south Georgia with a mere million female cats and one tomcat. His prospectus reads as follows:

"A female cat averages about 12 kittens a year and the skins will be sold for an average of 30 cents each giving a gross revenue on 12 million skins of about \$3.6 million a year or \$12,000 a day, excluding Sundays and Holidays. A good Georgia cat skinner can skin about 200 cats a day at the wage of \$26. We would need 200 cat skimmers, so the net profit will be \$6,800 per day. Thus your \$50,000 investment would be recovered in 7.35 days which beats the hell out of playing the stock market.

The key to success lies in operating a rat farm next to the cat farm so we could feed the rats to the cats. Since rats multiply four times faster than cats, our stock of one million rats would be sufficient to feed each cat four rats a day. Conversely, one cat, after being skinned, will feed four rats. The cats eat the rats, the rats eat the cats, and we get the skins.

Eventually, the rat farm (as we will be getting threats from cat lovers) will be



"Ready for your CAT scan, Fitz?"

eliminated, as we plan to cross the cats with snakes. These will then skin themselves twice a year, saving labor costs and increasing profits many times over. Until then, however, our wives will have to help out by working in the rat house while you and I attend to business in the cat house." That is an offer I find difficult to resist.

Money isn't everything - but it sure comes in handy when you lose your credit cards.

ENDANGERED ? PUT THEM IN SOMEBODY ELSE'S BACKYARD

A River Falls (WI) city council plan to start a trumpeter swan colony received a setback. They put a pair of the rare birds on a pond in the Kinnickinnic River. The female died last February and this May, the male attacked a 4-year old girl, jumping on her stomach and pecking at her face. The sister of the girl's mother got scratched on the cheek when she grabbed it by the neck and held it down until the mother beat the animal to death with her shoe. Gee! Urban people can't even live with wild swans and they want to turn wolves loose !? Of course, they want to turn them out in the country where they are somebody else's problem. Thanx to DICK WETZEL, APHIS State Dir. (WI)

A scandal is a breeze stirred up by a couple of windbags.

ANIMAL RIGHTS

As promised, I wrote for several of the items mentioned in FREEBIES FOR CAT LOVERS in the last issue. Boy am I getting snowed with propoganda ! From the AMERICAN ANTI-VIVISECTION SOCIETY (AA-VS) an editorial on this being the 200nd anniversary of the U.S. Constitution which "was a flawed document from the start" as it addresses only human rights. "Animals must have some basic freedoms guaranteed to them, such as the right to a natural life and the right to live free from cruel acts or conditions. It is likely that over a period of time such general concepts could come to have a place in the body of law which governs our nation...It is impossible to ignore the many unresolved human rights struggles taking place in

our troubled world (*that is a concession !*). But a truly just society is respectful of all life, including animals. Humans must be made mindful of the fact that there are other species who await their fair share of peace and justice."

Among the notes in there is the story of "heros" - a 15-year old vegetarian who is flunking biology because she refuses to dissect earthworms and frogs and a couple of veterinarians at the University of Pennsylvania who will do their surgical studies only on animals that are terminally ill; cases of faked experiments using animal data with the suggestion that this is common procedure; shame on the National Wildlife Federation for supporting trapping as an "important wildlife management tool and a legitimate recreational activity that makes use of a renewable natural resource" by focusing only on the phrase, "legitimate recreational activity"; dismay over the new policy of the U.S. Patent Office permitting patents to be taken out on animals but not on humans (cross-species gene splicing to make leaner more productive livestock could create a "potential holocaust of the animal kingdom"); lists government agencies where "your tax dollars" support vivisection; and numerous letters from "life members" (it only costs \$50 to sound so good) in memory of their departed pets. It is depressing to read about apparently well-intentioned, but thoroughly humorless, individuals being taken in so thoroughly by these snake-oil salesmen. Most interesting is how a few names pop up in all these organizations piously spouting out the drivel bringing the suckers into the fold. *REMINDS ME - GET YOUR DUES IN NOW*

THIS PUBLICATION IS INTENDED AS AN INFORMAL NEWSLETTER TO MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS OF NADCA. IT IS NOT AN OFFICIAL DECLARATION OF NADCA POLICY OR A CONSENSUS OF OPINION IN ALL INSTANCES.

YE ED -
William D. Fitzwater

adios,



**National
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