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European Fur Ban: A Canadian Perspective

After years of discussion the European Community has approved an import regulation on wild furs. Initially the proposed regulation would have closed the borders of the European Economic Community (12 countries) to fur and fur products taken from 13 species originating in countries which still allowed the use of the steel jawed leg-hold trap, effective in 1992. This meant that if the leg-hold was allowed for the capture of any of the species appearing on the list, anywhere in the country, that country would not be allowed to ship fur products of that species to any of the EEC countries.

The Fur Institute of Canada, the Canadian government, the International Fur Trade Federation and several other organizations intervened and lobbied the EEC to scrap the proposal, or if they would not, to modify it substantially. The Canadian agencies suggested that the wild fur trade must be protected and that it can be proven that furbearers can be and are taken humanely...and that leg holding devices are required for certain species. Thanks to intense lobbying efforts, and the fact that Canada, the FIC and IFTF were committed to trap research well before the proposed legislation, the implementation was pushed back from 1992 to 1995.

Ultimately the legislation would read that by 1995, countries wishing to import the furs of 13 species to the EEC could either ban the use of the leg hold trap or use methods that were sanctioned by ISO, the International Organization for Standardization. In this latter case, if leg-holding devices meet the international standard they will be deemed acceptable. Additionally, the implementation date of 1995 can be extended by one year if progress is being made in trap development.

The fur industry must continue to try to educate Europeans as to the realities of trapping and effective wildlife management practices. Many European politicians now realize that the seal ban was a monumental error and is having disastrous effects on fish stocks and people. To this day, however, the politicians have not changed their position nor is there any attempt to do so.

There are those who suggest the Canadian fur industry should tell the Europeans to get lost and forget about the market. What one must realize is that more than 70 percent of our wild fur sales are destined for Europe. We cannot afford to lose any part of our market share...much less the biggest portion. If we are to continue to sell our fur to Europe we have two clear choices:

1) Ban the use of the leghold trap for all the species named in the regulation beginning in the fall of 1994. If this was accomplished, the EEC would not stipulate how furbearers are taken, providing it was not with a leghold trap.

2) Comply with the international trapping standard established by ISO and use devices approved under the standard. It is felt that many of the sets commonly used today will be acceptable, others may require some modification, and some may be rejected.

Did the Fur Institute of Canada sell out the trapper? The short answer is NO! The FIC is against foreign regulations implemented by people who know nothing about trapping, or wildlife management and who are responding to political pressures and disinformation from animal rights groups. We are also opposed to the regulation because of its limited time frame.

A wild fur ban in Europe would effectively destroy the wild fur industry, the livelihoods of thousands of Canadian trappers, and would seriously compromise habitat protection and conservation programs. Our strategy was to ensure our future market by proving we were open to and capable of discussion and negotiation. The Institute did not develop this regulation, rather we were instrumental in ensuring that it would be something that Canadian trappers can live with...and continue to earn their livelihood.

Would all wild fur producing countries have to comply with the regulation? Absolutely, even in the member countries of the EEC. In fact Canada is well ahead of other fur producing countries because current trapping legislation has prepared us to be flexible and effect changes when necessary. Other major fur producing countries like Russia and the United States may have more difficulty in getting used to the new rules.

It is very easy to be negative and complain about and second guess the efforts of others...it is far more difficult to be involved in building for a positive future. Trappers and other members of the fur trade owe a good deal of thanks to our federal government for its support through the Departments of the Environment and External Affairs.

The above article was adapted from a Fur Institute of Canada (Institut de la fourrure du Canada) April 1992 COMMUNIQUE article by Bruce Williams.

The Fur Trade

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

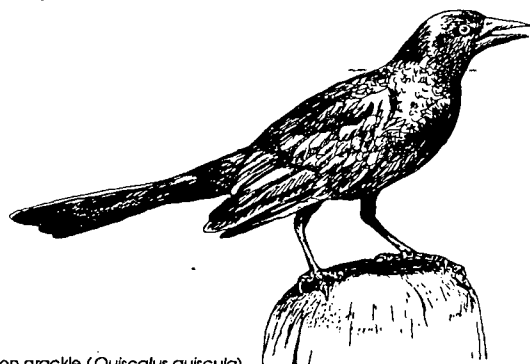
June 25-28, 1992: North America Fur Taker's Rendezvous, Cobleskill Fairgrounds, Cobleskill, New York. Contact: Earl Van Wormer, RD No. 1, Box 9, Sloansville, NY 12160, (518) 866-9344.

August 3-7, 1992: Bird Strike Committee—USA; FAA Regional Office, JFK International Airport, Jamaica, NY, will include two days of conference papers and a one-day field trip. Contact: James Forbes, USDA/APHIS/ADC, P.O. Box 97, Albany, NY 12201, (518) 472-6492.

August 25-27, 1992: 2nd North American Wolf Symposium. Contact: L.N. Carbyn, University of Alberta, Canadian Circumpolar Institute, 215 Central Academic Bldg., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2G1.

September 13-16, 1992: International Conference on Avian Interactions with Utility Structures, Hotel International, Miami, Florida. Will focus on avian interactions with powerlines, towers, buildings, and aircraft. Contact: Ed Colson, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, 3400 Crow Canyon Road, San Ramon, CA 94853, (510) 866-5461; FAX (510) 866-5318.

April 26-29, 1993: 11th Great Plains Wildlife Damage Control Workshop, Hyatt Regency, Kansas City, MO. For further information, contact: F. Robert Henderson, Ext. Wildlife Specialist, Kansas State University, (913) 532-5654, or Robert A. Pierce II, Ext. Wildlife Specialist, University of Missouri, (314) 882-7242.



The common grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*)

The Probe is the newsletter of the National Animal Damage Control Association, published 10 times per year.

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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 Field Station, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449. If you prefer to FAX material, our FAX number is (707) 744-1040. The deadline for submitting material is the 15th of each month.

July 4-10, 1993: Sixth International Theriological Congress, Sydney, Australia. This is an international meeting of scientists interested in mammalogy, and will include symposia and workshops including such topics as population biology of mammals, the role of disease in population regulation, and wildlife management. For further information, write: The Secretariat, 6th Int'l Theriological Congress, School of Biological Science, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia 2033.

October 1993: 6th Eastern Wildlife Damage Control Conference, Asheville, NC. For further information, contact: Peter R. Bromley, Ext. Wildlife Specialist, NC State University, (919) 515-7587.

BIRD STRIKE COMMITTEE ORGANIZED

From James E. Forbes

Representatives of USDA's Animal Damage Control Program, the U.S. Air Force, and the Federal Aviation Administration recently met to form a new organization called Bird Strike Committee—USA (BSCUSA).

BSCUSA will serve to improve communications among various agencies and the air transport industry regarding bird hazards to aircraft, and to encourage research and management programs to reduce bird/mammal hazards at airports. The group will strive to develop new technology, provide training, coordinate bird strike reporting, support research, and be a liaison to Canadian counterparts.

James E. Forbes was elected chairman. Other NADCA members who are also serving on the first organizational meeting and six person steering committee are: Vincent Cimino, FAA; Tom Hupf, FAA; and Eugene LeBoeuf, also of FAA.

BSCUSA will meet once a year at major airports or air force bases. In the event that a host location cannot be found, the FAA Technical Center, Atlantic City, NJ, will serve as home base for the organization.

The group plans to issue a quarterly newsletter called *Flyers* (refers to both aircraft and birds). A set of proceedings (working papers) and abstracts will be published annually.

BSCUSA plans to hold its first annual meeting in August at JFK International Airport, New York City. For more information, contact: James E. Forbes, USDA/APHIS/ADC, P.O. Box 97, Albany, NY 12201.

— *Animal Damage Control in the News* —

ANIMAL ACTIVISTS DAMAGE TOXICOLOGY LAB AT MSU

Animal activists ransacked and burned the offices of a toxicology researcher at Michigan State University in late February, causing between \$50,000 and \$100,000 in physical damage and destroying years of research data. According to an article in the March 12 issue of *Nature*, the People for Ethical Treatment of Animals released a statement on behalf to the underground group Animal Liberation Front (ALF) that credited the raid to ALF members.

STEEL COYOTE TRAPS BANNED IN L.A.

The Los Angeles City Council has banned the use of padded, steel-jaw traps for catching coyotes in Los Angeles for a six-month trial period. An article in the April 16 issue of the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* indicated that the 10-4 decision came after pressure from animal-rights activists who claim the traps are inhumane and a danger to pets. Authorities fear that the ban may hinder the city's efforts to protect people from coyote attacks. "There is no question that coyotes are dangerous animals and kill 500 cats and dogs — beloved pets — every year," said Marvin Braude, who cast one of the dissenting votes. Cage traps are much less effective at catching coyotes, stated Gary Olsen, supervisor of the Animal Regulations Department's West San Fernando Valley District. Olsen said that the padded leg-hold traps do not injure coyotes and very rarely snap on pets.

CALIFORNIA ADC PERSONNEL FACE FURLOUGHS

Budget cuts imposed on the USDA-APHIS ADC program in California by the state's Department of Food and Agriculture may result in a statewide furlough during May and June 1992, according to State Director Ron Thompson.

A serious deficit in the state's general fund has caused state authorities to propose reduction of the state's contribution to the cooperative program by \$400,000, as compared to the original contract agreement. This shortfall, unless remedied, is likely to necessitate a two-month layoff for 45 ADC specialists, plus the furlough of an additional 16 ADC specialists during all or part of the same time period.

All 38 contract counties in California will be impacted by the furloughs. At the time of this writing, negotiations between USDA-APHIS-ADC and California Food & Agriculture remained at an impasse.

CORNELL PUBLISHES QUARTERLY NEWS

Wildlife Damage News is a quarterly publication of the Cooperative Extension Wildlife Damage Management Program at Cornell University. Edited by Paul Curtis and Michael Fargione, it contains a number of informative articles written in a non-technical style. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, write: *Wildlife Damage News*, Cornell Cooperative Extension, 109 Fernow Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.

AUDUBON MAGAZINE RAPS ADC

In an article entitled "Killer Fish Farms," writer Ted Williams criticizes aquaculturists and ADC personnel in the March/April issue of *Audubon*. The article's subtitle states "Fish farmers are blasting away at America's birds, killing thousands a year."

Williams further writes, concerning the ADC program, "The main business of animal-damage controllers...has always been killing wildlife... The mission of the Department of Agriculture...is promoting agribusiness, and the agency has scant understanding of population dynamics or ecology."

Audubon cites a number of instances in which fish farmers have been cited by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service special agents for illegally killing birds in and around their facilities. The article depicts fish farmers throughout the U.S. as uneducated, routinely inflating loss estimates, and unable to identify depredating bird species.

PHOSTOXIN KILLS AUSTRALIAN, CAUSES HOSPITAL EVACUATION

Lethal gas leaking from a man's body forced evacuation of wards at two Perth, Australia, hospitals and closure of nearby roads. According to a report in the February issue of *PCN - Pest Control News* (New Zealand) the man was found slumped on a suburban footpath. After being transported to the Royal Perth Hospital, he died after being treated by doctors and nurses in protective clothing.

The deadly gas had formed in the man's body after he ingested four pills containing the pesticide Phostoxin. The pesticide reacted with the man's body fluids to create deadly phosphine gas. Hospital staff were evacuated after some were affected by the gas. Two ambulance attendants and a doctor were treated after being overcome by fumes from the man. Other hospital staff were treated for headaches and nausea. Firemen in full gas suits were brought in to control the spread of fumes.

BOY RECOVERS FROM LION MAULING

A 9-year old California boy luckily survived a mountain lion attack in the Los Cruces-Gaviota area in March. An article in the March 13 *Santa Maria Times* said that the boy was saved when his father hit the animal with a large rock and drove him away. Darrin Arroyo suffered facial fractures and tooth and claw wounds. He was also treated for rabies. Darrin and his two brothers were hiking in front of their parents when the lion appeared, jumped over one boy, and attacked Darrin. Two weeks later, federal ADC specialists killed a young male lion they believe was the same animal that attacked the boy. The specialists had been trailing the animal's prints since the attack.

The editors of The Probe thank contributors to this issue: Ron Thompson, Mike Fall, James E. Forbes, and Wes Jones. Send your contributions to The Probe, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449.

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Membership Application

NATIONAL ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Mail to: Wes Jones, Treasurer, Route 1 Box 37, Shell Lake, WI 54871

Name: _____ Phone: (____) _____ - _____ Home

Address: _____ Phone: (____) _____ - _____ Office

Additional Address Info: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP _____

Dues: \$ _____ Donation: \$ _____ Total: \$ _____ Date: _____

Membership Class: Student \$7.50 Active \$15.00 Sponsor \$30.00 Patron \$100
(underline one) Check or Money Order payable to NADCA

Select one type of occupation or principal interest:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Pest Control Operator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> USDA - APHIS - ADC or SAT | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> USDA - Extension Service | <input type="checkbox"/> ADC Equipment/Supplies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal - not APHIS or Extension | <input type="checkbox"/> State Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign | <input type="checkbox"/> Trapper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator | <input type="checkbox"/> University |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) _____ | |