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Choosing a Career as a Wildlife Biologist

Richard B. Chipman, Wildlife Biologist, USDA/APHIS/ADC, Montpelier, Vermont; co-editor of Technical Notes, newsletter of NEA/WDB

I have been a wildlife damage biologist practicing the art and science of wildlife damage control for a grand total of 18 months. Prior to coming on board with USDA/APHIS/ADC, I enjoyed the life of a temporary state wildlife biologist and graduate student wearing the white hat often associated with a biologist working in the field of nongame and endangered species management.

The 1980s were a time of growing interest and awareness of the value of nongame species. Class discussions at the northeastern university I attended often centered around nonconsumptive wildlife management. Professors encouraged us to specialize in nongame management. I did. Wildlife management became, for me, a quest in the woods and waters of the moral high ground where ideals were uncompromised and righteous indignation awaited those who couldn't see the "inherent value" of saving endangered and threatened wildlife. My chosen field had the strong support of the general public, academia, and colleagues in the field. In short, I was riding a wave of public and professional support that made my job easier, and it felt great.

Although my views and enthusiasm for nongame management issues remain the same, a shift in my professional focus has brought to light another wave that is gaining momentum. I believe that human-wildlife conflict resolution will be the "growth area" of the 90s. Perhaps in this decade, we can look forward to a new emphasis on wildlife damage management, similar to the focus placed on nongame and endangered species management in the 1980s.

Regardless, since deciding to specialize in wildlife damage management, I have found myself less idealistic and more realistic. I no longer have the same untempered exuberance that came with being fresh out of college; however, I do still strive to take a stand in the battle for the moral and ecological high ground. Like a successful 90s style politician, I find myself talking more about compromise and consensus and less about a "scorched earth" approach to wildlife management. Topics of

management concern become, in themselves, issues of compromise. Projects ranging from managing interspecific competition to protect endangered species to reducing bird hazards at airports require finding that intricate balance between our social and biological responsibilities.

Despite periodic negative media attention and other undeserved setbacks, the future of wildlife damage management is bright. Students can attend wildlife classes at a growing number of colleges and universities and enroll in courses ranging from the management and ecology of exotic species to wildlife damage management policy. The Denver Wildlife Research Center consistently produces quality research that helps field personnel meet the growing public demand for damage control services, and professional organizations like The Wildlife Society, NADCA, NUWMA, and NEA-WDB are working on our behalf to foster an exchange of information and encourage the cooperation and support of our peers.

As a wildlife damage biologist, I want to move ahead with the same zeal and resolve that I did in the 1980s. The ability to maintain this resolve will come from the growing respect of my peers and the anticipation that in the not too distant future our efforts on behalf of wildlife will meet with greater understanding and acceptance by the general public. It will also come from our ability to meet the growing demand for wildlife management services through an open exchange of information. Participation in professional meetings like the upcoming NEA-WDB meeting in Atlantic City and a willingness to share experience and ideas in an open forum such as *Technical Notes* will better prepare us all to meet the challenges of the future and take advantage of the wave of changing opportunities in the field of wildlife damage management.

Adapted and reprinted with permission from Technical Notes, newsletter of the Northeast Association of Wildlife Damage Biologists.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

May 25-26, 1993: **The Wild Pig in California Oak Woodland: Ecology and Economics.** Embassy Suites Hotel, San Luis Obispo, CA. Contact: Dr. William Tietje, Forestry & Resource Management, 2156 Sierra Way, Suite C, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. (805) 549-5940.

June 24-27, 1993: **Fur Takers of America Annual Convention,** Washington County Fairgrounds, Bartlesville-Dewey, Oklahoma. For further information contact Bill or Dee Jackson, HC 73, Box 204, Pawhuska, OK 74056 or call (918) 336-8154.

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. Will include sessions on *Management of Problem Wildlife* and *Predation As a Regulator of Mammal Populations*. For further information, write: The Secretariat, 6th Int'l Theriological Congress, School of Biological Science, P.O. Box 1, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia 2033.

August 2-6, 1993: **Bird Strike Committee—USA, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, Seattle, Washington.** Will include two days of conference papers and a one-day field trip. Contact: James E. Forbes, USDA/APHIS/ADC, P.O. Box 97, Albany, NY 12201, (518) 472-6492.

September 12-18, 1993: **F.T.A. Professional Trappers College,** Limerlost Camp, LaGrange, IN. Contact: Charles Park, 410 S. Poplar, LaGrange, IN 46761.



The Probe is the newsletter of the National Animal Damage Control Association, published 11 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. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of NADCA.

September 19-25, 1993: **First International Wildlife Management Congress, Hotel Cariari, San Jose, Costa Rica** Includes session *Conflicts Between Man, Agriculture, and Wildlife*. Send abstracts before 31 March 1993 to: Dr. Paul R. Krausman, Sch. of Renewable Nat. Resources, Univ. of Arizona, 325 Biological Sciences East, Tucson, AZ 85721. For further information, contact IWMC Secretariat Director, The Wildlife Society, 5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814, phone (301) 897-9770.

October 3-6, 1993: **6th Eastern Wildlife Damage Control Conference, Ramada Inn, Asheville, NC.** Conference theme: "Wildlife Damage Management in the 90's: Balancing the Needs of Society." Call for papers: Authors/presenters should send a one page (or less) abstract for review by the Program Committee for consideration. Abstracts should be sent to Dr. Michael King, Extension Wildlife Specialist, Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries, P.O. Box 1071, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37901, phone (615) 974-2706. Deadline for submissions is June 1, 1993. Abstracts received after this date will not be considered. For more information, contact: Ann Coughlin, 6th Eastern WDM Conf., No. Carolina State Univ., College of Forest Resources, Box 8001, Raleigh, NC 27695-8001, (919) 515-3184.

October 3-8, 1993: **First International Congress of Vector Ecology, Hanalei Hotel, San Diego, California.** Topics include: *Changing Patterns of Vector-Borne Disease; Human Ecology and Sociology; Vector-Host Interactions;* and *New Approaches to Control*. For more information, contact: Secretariat, 1st International Congress of Vector Ecology, P.O. Box 87, Santa Ana, CA 92702.

October 26-28, 1993: **Symposium: Contraception in Wildlife Management, Sheraton Hotel, Denver Tech Center, Denver, Colorado.** Conference topics will include population management, theories and biology of contraception, delivery systems, potential applications, and public attitudes, policy, and regulations. Call for papers: Send an abstract of 300 words or less by May 1, 1993 to Diana L. Dwyer at the address listed below. Authors will be notified regarding acceptance of paper by May 15, 1993. Papers will be selected on the basis of relevance to symposium theme and scientific merit. For more information: Diana L. Dwyer, USDA-APHIS Denver Wildl. Res. Ctr., P.O. Box 25266, Denver, CO 80225-0266, (303) 236-7874.

December 11-15, 1993: **55th Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference, St. Louis, Missouri.** The theme is *New Agendas in Fish and Wildlife Management: Approaching the Next Millenium*. Features include an *Urban Deer Management Symposium*. For more information, contact: Wayne Porath, 1110 S. College Ave., Columbia, MO 65201, (314) 882-9880.

December, 1993: **2nd International Symposium on Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*) And On Order Suiformes, Torino, Italy.** For more information, contact: Secretariat, 2nd International Symposium on Wild Boar and on order Suiformes, c/o Prof. P. Durio, Dipartimento Produzioni Animali, Epidemiologia ed Ecologia, Via Nizza 52, 10126 Torino (Italy), Telephone 39.11 . 6503734 - FAX 39.11 . 655455.

ADC News, Tips, Ideas...

Arizona Legislators Reject Trap Ban

Arizona supporters of a ban on steel-jawed traps lost their fight in March when the amendment was voted down by Arizona lawmakers. According to the March 11 issue of the Prescott, Arizona *Courier*, the amendment was rejected by a standing vote of 24-20 which was later confirmed by a roll call vote of 28-19. The amendment was attached to a fish and game measure in an unsuccessful effort by Rep. Sue Grace. "We have a vote, and that's what we asked for—the right to have this issue brought to a vote in the House," Grace said.

If passed, the amendment would have banned the use of leghold steel-jawed traps on public lands but would have permitted continued use for research, rodent control, and such issues of public health and safety as rabies control. Under the amendment, use of snares, poisons, and several other devices and substances would have also been forbidden.

Survey Reveals Animal Activists' Attitudes Toward ADC

National leaders of thirteen animal rights and animal welfare organizations were recently interviewed as part of a study to gain insight into their ideologies with respect to wildlife issues. The study was conducted by Jon K. Hooper, Professor of Recreation and Parks Management, Chico State University, California.

In response to an open-ended question regarding changes in current wildlife management practices, 23% of respondents replied "get rid of animal damage programs." In response to the same questions, 8% replied "assure that only target animals are caught in animal damage control program traps." In comparison, the desired changes most frequently expressed were "halt hunting opportunities (on at least some sites)" and "use more nonlethal (e.g. non-hunting) methods", each mentioned by 38.5% of respondents.

The study was published in the November-December 1992 issue of *Legacy: The Journal of the National Association for Interpretation*.

Four-four percent of respondents replied "Don't know" or "Can't think of any" to the question, "What current wildlife management practices and approaches do you think should remain the same?"

The editors of The PROBE thank contributors to this issue: Mike Worthen, Jack Bohning, James E. Forbes, and Wes Jones. Send your contributions to The PROBE, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449.

Dogs Decimate Ostriches

A Potter Valley, Texas ostrich producer requested help from the ADC after suffering predation losses. The culprit turned out to be the neighbor's dog, which was dispatched in the act after killing \$20,000 worth of young birds.

River Otters Impact Crawfish Producers

Jefferson County, Texas crawfish producers are relying on ADC assistance to solve losses caused by river otters. One producer reported losing an estimated 2,000 lbs. of crawfish, valued at \$2,850. An ADC specialist removed 24 depredating otters from various producers' ponds during January and February, 1993.

Rats Damage Automotive Wiring

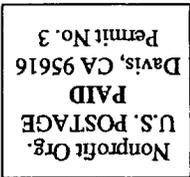
Texas ADC specialists received requests for assistance from two individuals, both reporting rats had gnawed electrical wiring in their vehicles, causing substantial damage. In the first case, the truck required two trips to the repair shop totalling \$2,100. In the second instance, rats ran up a \$2,600 bill by the time all the wiring was repaired or replaced.

The three articles above were excerpted from The Trapline (March 1993), the newsletter of the Texas ADC Program.

USU Needs Help With Wildlife Damage Management Library

The Wildlife Damage Management Program at Utah State University is building up its library. If you have any literature on wildlife damage (journals, books, historic material, etc.) that you would be willing to donate, send them to Dr. Michael Conover, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-5210.

We are especially interested in copies of the Bird Control Seminar, Great Plains Wildlife Damage Control Workshop, and Vertebrate Pest Control and Management Materials (ASTM). We can reimburse you for postage.



Terrell P. Salmon
DANR-North Region
University of California
Davis, CA 95616-8575

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) _____ | |