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The Probe NADCA
ISSUE 183
DECEMBER 1997

Animal Rights Revisited

William G. Tapply

A recent new-member solicitation mailing from the Friends of Animals betrays the fuzzy schizophrenic contradictions of the Animal Rights movement. On the one hand, the FOA boasts of its successes in fighting poaching in Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali and Senegal. On the other hand, it brags that it backed Question One on the Massachusetts ballot in November 1996 (and similar referendum questions in other states) that resulted in the ban on leg-hold traps and bear-baiting.

Poaching is the killing of animals out of season by unapproved methods in forbidden places and in excessive numbers. Poaching is illegal. Organizations that are willing to support antipoaching law-enforcement efforts and wildlife experts with money, equipment and manpower should be praised.

But when they get into the policymaking business, they're overstepping their bounds. When you combine evangelical fervor with lots of money and deceptively simplistic philosophy, you have a dangerous formula. They think they know more than the wildlife biologists and elected legislators whose job it is to make policy. As the FOA bulletin smugly puts it, "Frustration with state legislatures and wildlife boards has led animal protectionists to utilize a valuable tool — the voter initiative process."

A recent issue of *Massachusetts Wildlife*, an estimable publication from the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, contains the remarkable essay "Observances," by Editor Peter G. Myrick. Myrick neatly distills the biological history of the earth and of mankind's interrelationships with other life forms, and he pleads passionately and rationally for an understanding of the complexities of conservation. "The Age of Restoration will not overtake and replace the Age of Destruction," he writes, "until conservation is understood and embraced by a majority of the world's citizens. It is our only path to salvation."

Myrick's quarrel with Animal Rights is that its adherents neither understand nor embrace conservation. "Animal Rights," he says, "is based on an extremist philosophy that does not recognize our natural role as a steward and predator in human-animal relationships. It should not be confused with Animal Welfare (although its has seized leadership in many Animal Welfare organizations in recent years). ...Animal welfare [which includes the fight against poaching] is based on science and seeks to ensure that human use of animals does not cause them undue pain or suffering. ...and that some animal populations require control for the benefit of themselves, people and other species.

"The primary concern of Animal Rights is not the welfare of animals; it is the imposition of a moral obligation on people. Like religion (and for many of its disciples, that is exactly what it is) it is based on personal values and the hubris of its leaders, rather than on science or logic." Myrick's point is that well-meaning people who support Friends of Animals, the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and similar Animal Rights organizations would be horrified if they understood the long-term harm these groups are causing the very animals they want to help.

Threats to wildlife populations come from loss of habitat and mismanagement. The spread of human civilization over the past centuries (what Myrick calls The Age of Destruction) has wiped out countless species of flora and fauna. Many older societies are now struggling to halt the trend (Myrick's The Age of Restoration) but the "holocaust" continues in Third World countries, where life forms are being extinguished at the rate of three species per hour, 74 a day, 27,000 a year.

Massachusetts loses 2,000 acres a year to subdivisions and highways and other forms of human use. Without habitat preservation and scientific management, both individual creatures and, in some cases, entire populations, cannot survive.

By diverting money and energy away from scientific wildlife management and habitat preservation and restoration, where it belongs, and by opposing rational solutions to real problems, Animal Rights groups are leading well-meaning people down the wrong path.

Concerned residents of Massachusetts can contribute to the preservation of habitat through the Natural Heritage Endangered Species (NHES) Fund by donations or a simple tax check-off. They can spend $5 for a Wildlands Fund stamp (a required purchase with every hunting, fishing and sporting license, which sportsmen imposed on themselves in 1991, and which in five years has enabled the Commonwealth to purchase 10,000 acres of wildlife habitat). While the treasuries of Animal Rights groups continue to bulge, contributions to NHES have been disappointing, and aside from sportsmen, few citizens choose to contribute to the Wildlands Fund.

What can concerned lovers of nature and wildlife do?

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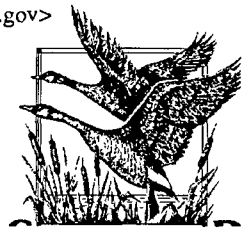
CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2-5, 1998: 18th Vertebrate Pest Conference, Doubletree Hotel, Costa Mesa, California. All-day field trip March 2. Plenary and concurrent sessions dealing with rodent, bird, predator, and other vertebrate pests issues from both a research and management perspective on March 3, 4, & 5. Pre-registration $110 before Feb. 6, students $25. Field trip, $30. Hotel reservations due by Feb. 7, with rooms for 1-4 persons, $90. Contact: Sydni Gillette, DANR-North Region, UC Davis, Davis, CA 95616, (530) 754-8491 or visit website http://www.davis.com/~vpc/welcome.html

April 19-24, 1998: 11th International Conference on Bear Research and Management, Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Contact: Michael R. Pelton, Univ. of TN, Dept. of Forestry, Wildlife & Fisheries, P.O. Box 1071, Knoxville, TN 37901, (423) 974-7126, FAX (423) 974-4714, e-mail: <pelton@utkux.utcc.utk.edu>

May 3-8, 1998: 11th Australian Vertebrate Pest Conference, Lord Forrest Hotel, Bunbury, Western Australia. Particularly relevant to those involved in research, extension, management, and administration of vertebrate pests in Australia and New Zealand. Bunbury is located 2 hours south of Perth. Contact: Promaco Conventions Pty Ltd., PO Box 890, Canning Bridge, Western Australia 6153, telephone 08 9364 8311, or e-mail: <promaco@promaco.com.au>, or visit http:// www.promaco.com.au.

May 17-20, 1998: 1st National Extension Natural Resources Conference, Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge, Deerwood, Minnesota. Aimed at natural resource educators focused on environmental education, fisheries, forest products, forestry, range, recreation, water, and wildlife. Contact: Larry Biles, National Program Leader - Forestry Management, USDA-CREES, Washington DC, at (202) 401-4926, or e-mail <lbiles@reeusda.gov>



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Editor: Robert M. Timm
UC Hopland Res. & Extens. Ctr., 4070 University Road, Hopland CA 95449, (707) 744-1424, FAX (707) 744-1040, E-mail: rmtimm@ucdavis.edu

Editorial Assistant: Pamela J. Tinnin
P.O. Box 38, Partridge, KS 67566.
E-mail: PamT481@aol.com

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.

June 16-18, 1998: 8th Annual Meeting, Bird Strike Committee USA, Holiday Inn Lakeside / Burke Lakefront Airport, Cleveland, Ohio. Of particular interest to military and civilian personnel responsible for airfield operations, land-use planners, researchers, FAA inspectors, engineers, pilots, and aviation industry representatives. The meeting will emphasize hands-on demonstrations and activities, and will include papers and posters on topics such as wildlife control techniques, new technologies, land-use issues, engineering standards, and habitat management. Pre-registration $60 before May 1, $75 afterward. For hotel reservations at room rate of $89, call (216) 241-5100 and mention BSC-USA. For conference registration, contact Betsy Marshall, USDA-APHIS-WS, Sandusky, OH at (419) 625-0242, fax (419) 625-8465, or email: <nwrcsandusky@lrbcg.com>

Oct. 5-9, 1998: International Conference on Rodent Biology and Management, Bejing, China. Organized by Instit. of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Science, and CSIRO Div'n. of Wildlife and Ecology, Australia. For additional information and mailings, contact: Zhibin Zhang, Secretary General, Int'l. Conference, 19 Zhongguancun Road, Haidian District, Beijing 100080, P.R. China, or e-mail: <zhangzb@panda.ioz.ac.cn.>

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Animal Rights Revisited

* Educate yourself. Learn about biodiversity. Read Aldo Leopold and Henry David Thoreau. Subscribe to Massachusetts Wildlife ($6/year. Massachusetts Wildlife, Division of Fisheries & Wildlife, 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westboro, MA 01581-3337).

* Vote for conservation. Study the voting records and platforms of your state and federal officials. Hold them accountable.

* Trust biological science; professional wildlife biologists know what they're doing. Mistrust animal religions; most Animal Rights organizations are antiscience.

* Put you money in responsible hands. Support Animal Welfare, but beware of Animal Rights. Buy a Massachusetts Wildlands Conservation stamp. Check off the NHES on your tax form. Contribute to science-based conservation organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund, Conservation International or The Nature Conservancy.

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in ***Worcester Magazine****, and was subsequently reprinted in the May 1997 issue of* ***WLFA Update****, newsletter of the Wildlife Legislative Fund of America. It is reprinted with the permission of the author, who is a regular contributor to* ***Field and Stream*** *magazine.*

Reports From the 4th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society

The following are published abstracts of papers presented at the 4th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society, Snowmass Village, Colorado, September 21-27, 1997.

Techniques for Managing Predation on Domestic Livestock and Big Game Animals

William F. Andelt and Jeffrey S. Green, *Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University*

Predators kill significant numbers of sheep, goats, and calves in the United States even though various types and intensities of predator control are used. Coyotes are responsible for the majority of livestock losses to predators. Predators also can limit big game populations under some conditions. Livestock husbandry techniques such as night confinement, disposing of carcasses, placing larger livestock on the same range, use of herders, regular surveillance of herds, and fencing can reduce livestock losses to predators. Frightening devices such as the Electronic Guard and propane exploders have temporarily frightened predators from livestock. Livestock guarding dogs have been successful for reducing predation on livestock by coyotes, bears and mountain lions. Llamas, donkeys, and bonding sheep to cattle have also been used to deter predators. Aversive conditioning with lithium chloride and use of repellents generally have been unsuccessful for reducing predation on livestock. Trapping, snaring, M44's, denning (the practice of removing coyote pups from dens of depredating animals), aerial and ground and livestock protection collars have successfully reduced predation on livestock. New developments such as padded traps, pan tension devices on traps, and break-away snares have significantly reduced injuries and increased selectivity of capture devices. Choice of techniques for reducing predation on livestock varies with the type of livestock operation and predators involved. Most non-lethal methods are not applicable for reducing predation on big game animals, however, removing coyotes from localized areas such as fawning or calving grounds, can have a positive effect on big game recruitment. It appears that a growing segment of the public is questioning the rationale and processes managing predators to reduce their impacts on other animals.

Grizzly Bear-Cattle Interactions on Two Cattle Allotments in Northwest Wyoming

Chuck R. Anderson, Dave S. Moody, Mark T. Bruscino, Mark A. Ternent, and Damien F. Miller, *Wyoming Game and Fish Dept., Lander, WY*

From mid-May through mid-October 1994-96, grizzly bears were monitored daily using Blackrock/Spread Creek cattle allotment (BSA), Bridger Teton National Forest, and the Elk Ranch East cattle allotment, Grand Teton National Park. Eighteen grizzly bears, 12 males (3 subadults, 9 adults) and 6 females (3 subadults, 3 adults), were captured and fitted with radio-transmitters during the three seasons. Cattle losses (all causes) on BSA totaled 57 calves, 8 cows, and 3 bulls during 1994; 50 calves, 12 cows, and 2 bulls during 1995; and 30 calves, 5 cows, and 1 bull during 1996. Seventy-five, 72, and 67% of cattle during 1994, 1995, and 1996, while the remainder were missing at the end of each grazing season. During 1995, we attached mortality transmitters to 32% (n=233) of the calf population on BSA to estimate the proportion of missing calves that may have been killed by bears. The proportion of radio-tagged calves killed by bears (0.30) did not differ (P=0.92) from the proportion of all bear caused calf mortalities identified during the grazing season (0.32). We detected 56 bear-caused cattle depredations from both allotments during the three year study and identified individuals responsible in 41 cases. While all grizzly bears monitored interacted with cattle and scavenged carcasses, 3 adult males accounted for 90% of cattle depredations where responsible individuals were identified. During 1996, we removed 1 of 2 depredating bears from the population and but we were unable to identify what impact this had on depredation rates. Our findings suggest that selective management of predatory bears could be a viable means to significantly reduce cattle losses and may enhance human tolerance of grizzly bear expansion in the future.

Attitudes of Private and Public Land Managers in Wyoming Toward Beaver

Stanley H. Anderson and M.C. McKinstry, *Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Laramie, WY*

A mail survey concerning beaver management in Wyoming was sent to 5,265 private-land managers and 124 public-land managers during 1993. The survey was developed in response to increasing interest in beaver management and beaver reintroduction possibilities. Fifty-five percent of the private-land managers responded to the survey and supplied information on 62,859 km2 of land area (25% of Wyoming) and 20,037 km of streams. Primary concerns about beaver damage centered on (in decreasing order of importance) blocked irrigation ditches, girdled timber, blocked culverts, and flooded pastures, roads, crops, and timber. Primary benefits that landowners perceive that beaver give them were, in order of importance, elevated water tables, increased riparian vegetation, and increased stock-watering opportunities. Public-land managers also listed these benefits and detriments among their top concerns for beaver. Over 45% of landowners with streams on their property and all of the public-land managers displayed an interest in a beaver reintroduction program and in more proactive beaver management.

The Effects of Wolf Colonization on Coyote Behaviors

Wendy M. Arjo, Robert R. Ream, and Daniel H. Pletscher, *School of Forestry, University of Montana*

The Flathead area in western Montana is one of the last ecosystems in the United States still containing a full complement of mammalian predators and their prey. Recolonizing wolves may affect congeneric coyotes by altering food habits, social behavior, movements and habitat use. We examined the effects of colonizing wolves in northwestern Montana on the resident coyote population. Radio-collared wolves and coyotes were monitored from June 1994 through December 1996 to determine home ranges and movements. Home ranges for eleven coyotes were distributed between the two wolf pack territories or on the edge of the territories, and did not overlap with core wolf areas. Simultaneous locations of wolves and coyotes were used to determine nearest neighbor distributions. Locations for a 24-hour period were used to determine if temporal partitioning occurred between the canids. Coyote movement was the greatest betwee 1100-1400 and wolf movement between 0200-0400 hours. Some food partitioning does occur in that coyote diets consist of small mammals (i.e.. snowshoe hare and microtines), however, white tailed deer are also consumed. Elk

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Video Review by Stephen Vantassel, NWCO Correspondent

"Rob Erickson's Live Trapping Urban Beaver, Vols. 1-2"
Rob Erickson's On Target A.D.C., P.O. Box 469, Cortland, IL 60112 (815) 286-3039.
Length: approx. 2:20 Price: $75 (postpaid)

Rob Erickson has certainly outdone himself in making this two-part video. If comparisons can be made, he would have to be called the "Charlie Dobbins" of the animal damage control industry. If you want to learn about getting into the business of trapping beavers with snares or conibears, then this is the video for you. I want to emphasize this point again: this video is on how to trap beavers with a business mindset, not a fur trapping mindset. If you don't know the difference between these two perspectives, then you are not in the animal damage control business.

Rob begins the video with some opening words about suburban beaver control. The amazing thing is how you think he is trapping in the woods, until the camera pans and shows you an apartment complex just 200 yards away. Rob's concerns and suggestions are repeated like a mantra. This isn't a criticism of his repetition, it's a praise. I couldn't agree more with his warning about being professional, ethical and safe when trapping beavers in an urban/suburban environment. Like most adc videos, Rob has contributed another no-nonsense tape on getting the job done.

The next segment of the tape covers equipment. Mr. Erickson has recorded some important information here. His explanations are thorough without getting pedantic or arrogant. He covers everything. I couldn't think of anything that he missed. He talked about snares, traps, prices, stakes, setting techniques, and baits. He even discussed the pros and cons of waders versus hip boots. Other than a few interruptions with the phone ringing in the background, you may forget that this portion of the video is about 60 minutes long. One of the aspects that I appreciated was his specificity. Too often mature trappers forget that new trappers need specific instruction rather than generalities. For example, a mature trapper may say use thick gauge wire to anchor your traps. But this means little to the novice trapper. A better instruction would be to say "use 12-gauge wire." This is what Rob Erickson does. He leaves little to chance and tells you in detail what you need to get the job done.

The remaining hour and twenty minutes of the two-part video centers around field work. One of the locations Rob is trapping lies outside a major Chicago airport. It was a quite a contrast to see a man remove a snared beaver with the sound of traffic almost drowning out his voice. Rob is careful to emphasize safety in removing a snared beaver. He even shows a piece of video where a beaver is trying to bite his boot. Proper set location and construction are carefully discussed and demonstrated. It was a great touch to show him making the set and then in the next segment showing him a beaver caught in the same set. He carefully discusses how to set snares when a freeze is coming. He shows how to set a snares in a variety of places, which should cover most situations. For more examples of places to set snares, consult Mr. Reichart's snaring video reviewed in the October 1997 issue of **The Probe** (#181).

I would like to emphasize that the majority of the tape is on snaring. If you are looking for a lot of information on conibear trapping of beavers, this tape will disappoint you. Mr. Erickson says he uses snares 80% of the time and conibears only 20%. Only a couple of conibear sets are discussed. However, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the quality instruction on using 330 conibears. Rob uses conibears in underwater sets, usually in front of the den entrance. He has some great tape on setting a den entrance which includes what the set looks like after the water level dropped. You could actually see the den entrance and where he set the trap. It is this kind of time-consuming work that makes the video worthwhile.

In all, I give this video an animal damage control grade of "A." I am not giving it an "A plus" because the video needed a little editing. The phone ringing and the occasional fuzzy picture should have been edited out. There is nothing unusual about this problem, because most ADC videos have trouble with picture, but it does get annoying at times. Regarding the distracting phone rings, adc people don't have access to production studios. In all, I am very confident that anyone who buys this tape and lives in a state where these traps are legal will make money. I also think he will save a lot of money in not buying unnecessary equipment.

Stephen Vantassel (c) 1997
Wildlife Removal Service Inc.
340 Cooley St.
Springfield, MA 01128
Http://www.wildliferemovalservice.com
Stephen@wildliferemovalservice.com

Reed-Joseph Donates to NADCA

REED-JOSEPH INTERNATIONAL, a supplier of bird damage control products, cage traps, and other materials based Greenville, Mississippi has presented NADCA with another $1,000 contribution. The presentation was made at the recent 8th Eastern Wildlife Damage Control Conference held in Roanoke, Virginia.

Thank you, Reed-Joseph, for your continued support of our professional organization!

Wildlife Damage in the News...

Riot Police Quell Big Mac Attack

It took about 60 police officers in riot gear to subdue about 200 animal rights protestors at a Washington DC-area McDonald's restaurant on June 29. Animal rights activists had left a grassroots meeting in nearby Arlington, Virginia and decided to hold a protest at the McDonald's nearest to their hotel. The protest began with demonstrators burning a straw Ronald McDonald effigy. Police were called in when some activists entered the restaurant and began harassing patrons, throwing chairs, and dumping trays with condiments on the floor. Protestors carried signs that read "Meat is murder" and "Did your food have a face?" Police reported the disruption resulted in a two-hour closure of a section of Jefferson Davis Highway, a major artery in Arlington County. As many as 18, including several juveniles, were arrested on charges including destruction of property, unlawful assembly, assault on a police officer, and trespassing

—from WLFA Update, July 1997 issue

Oregon Cougars on the Rise

In 1994, Oregon voters eliminated the use of dogs by lion hunters in the state. Hunting success fell, and lion complaints jumped up significantly. Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission data shows the average annual sport hunting take of cougars was 137 during the years 1987 through 1994. In 1995, only 31 were taken, and 47 were taken in 1996. Total annual lion complaints ranged from about 50 to 250 per year in 1987 - 1993, but increased to about 600 - 800 per year in the years 1994, 1995, and 1996, climbing each year. It's too early to declare the loss of hunting to be responsible for the huge increase in complaints, according to Oregon Fish & Wildlife officials. But population models showed the state's number of cougars, prior to the ban on dogs, to be stable or slowly climbing at about 2,800 animals. By 1996, the estimate had increased about 25%, to an estimated 3,700 cougars. Fish and wildlife commissioners are changing management strategies, in an effort to compensate. They've opened hunting year-round near populated zones of Southwest Oregon, and the Legislature is trying to reduce the cost of lion tags. The cheaper tags would be aimed at deer and elk hunters, who could then legally take any cougars they encounter.

*—adapted from **The Oregonian**, July 1997*

Confronting Anti-Trap Initiatives

As the proponents of anti-trapping initiatives hit the streets with their petitions, seeking sufficient signatures to qualify for the ballot, persons who oppose such initiatives need not feel helpless. If you see someone gathering signatures for such measures, you might want to waste a little of their time and keep others within earshot from signing by asking the solicitors a few questions:

1) Do you work for a signature-gathering organization? If they answer "yes", ask them how much they are being paid per signature (10 cents to $2 per signature is common). Others within earshot will find this interesting and be less likely to sign. This also makes a great point with the media articles and in editorials. Paid gatherers will become more numerous as the signature-gathering deadline draws near.

2) Ask them if they are aware that traps and snares are used extensively to protect endangered species such as the Least Tern and the San Joaquin kit fox.

3) Tell them that this trap ban will simply put you out of the sheep business, and that you will be forced to sell your farmland and rangeland to local developers.

4) Ask them if they have any alternative to the use of traps. They don't, so tell them about the time, money, and non-lethal tools that you are using to keep predator damage down. Unless they are real zealots, or paid, this may discourage them from pursuing their signature gathering with as much vigor.

5) If you feel ambitious, make these points known through editorials or letters to the editor of local newspapers. It is not too early to build relationships and credibility with the media and the public.

Editor's Note: The above information has been developed by the California Wool Growers Association and was published in their October 7, 1997 newsletter. It is specifically aimed at an initiative that bans traps, Compound 1080, and sodium cyanide, that is seeking to qualify for the November 1998 California ballot. You can adapt these suggestions to similar anti-trap or anti-wildlife damage control measures in your own state.

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Reports From the 4th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society continued

and white tailed deer comprise the main diet of the wolf packs. Complex interrelationships between the predators in the North Fork occurs as well as interrelationships between the predators and the prey. Predators, in fact, account for 80% of the coyote mortality in the North Fork. Wolf presence may be beneficial to coyotes as a source of additional food through scavenging, but it also appears that the wolves are affecting coyote distribution and survival.

Current Status and Future Prospects for Mesurol as a Bird Repellent

Michael L. Avery, Edward W. Schafer, Jr., and D. Mark Arnold,*
**USDA/APHIS, National Wildlife Research Center, Gainesville, FL*

Birds feeding on agricultural seeds often cause substantial economic impact. Reducing bird damage to seeded crops is best accomplished through an integrated approach that can include bird deterrent seed treatments. Formulated pesticides applied to seed prior to planting must also include a distinctive dye. Thus, a potential factor in reducing depredations to chemically treated seed is a dye color that is unattractive to birds. In a series of cage and flight pen trials, we offered red-winged blackbirds and boat-tailed grackles rice seed colored red, white, blue, green, yellow, black and tan. Although there was considerable variation among individuals, blue was avoided most consistently by both species. We contend that incorporating blue dye or pigment in seed treatment formulations will not only satisfy regulatory requirements, but will also reduce the attractiveness of seed to foraging birds. This will lessen the likelihood of accidental ingestion of potentially harmful chemicals and also enhance the effectiveness of bird deterrent seed treatments.

Prescribed Predation Management: Predator Control to Enhance Recruitment in Big Game Populations

Warren B. Ballard, Arizona Game and Fish Dept., Phoenix, AZ

Declines in ungulate recruitment have frequently been identified as a significant management problem in North America. Recently, predation has been recognized as an important limiting factor of ungulate populations. Traditional wildlife management attempts to reduce the magnitude of limiting factors to allow increased sustained us of ungulate resources. Reductions of predator populations in certain situations appears to be a potentially viable direct management strategy. I review several case histories where reductions in predator numbers resulted in significant improvements in ungulate recruitment and increased human use, and also cases where attempted reductions in predator numbers failed to increase recruitment. I provide several population management strategies where predator control appears justified, which should result in significant increases in ungulate recruitment.

Restoration of Gray Wolves in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming

Edward E. Bangs, Steven H. Fritts, Joseph A. Fontaine, Wayne G. Brester, Carter C. Niemeyer, and Timm Kaminski,*
**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Helena, MT*

Sixty years after their extermination and after nearly 25 years of acrimonious public debate, the gray wolf was restored to three areas in the northern Rocky Mountains of the United States. Recovery efforts in northwestern Montana encouraged natural reestablishment of wolves dispersing from nearby Canadian populations and control of any wolf that attacked livestock. These efforts were successful and 8-10 packs now live in that area. Restrictions on human uses of public lands were not required to promote recovery and only 3 cattle and 2 sheep were killed annually. Reintroduction of wolves from Canada in January of 1995 and 1996 led to the establishment of about 8 breeding pairs in each of the recovery areas around Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho. After 2 years, the reintroduced wolves adapted to their new surroundings more successfully than expected. These 66 wolves raised about 30 pups. Sixteen wolves died, about half as many as predicted. Wolves settled primarily on remote public lands where wildlife managers hoped they would live, nearly 10,000 visitors to public lands saw or heard wolves, and only 4 cattle and 38 sheep were killed. All livestock producers who lost livestock were compensated from a private fund. The federal, tribal, and state wolf working group concentrates its efforts on interacting with people who live near wolves, implementing an aggressive field program to resolve conflicts, and preparing to delist the wolf population which, if current trends continue, should be recovered (10 breeding pairs in each of the 3 recovery areas for 3 successive years) by 2002.

Secondary Hazard Study Using Chlorophacinone-Contaminated Laboratory Rats Fed to Black-Billed Magpies (*Pica pica*)

John A. Baroch, Genesis Laboratories, Fort Collins, CO

With the loss of EPA registrations of many field rodenticides and the high cost of developing new compounds, it has become increasingly important to evaluate the uses and attendant hazards of existing products. Chlorophacinone is a first generation anticoagulant which has been used for many years to control commensal and field rodents. One EPA data requirement to maintain field registrations is a hazard evaluation of risks to non-target organisms. In order to evaluate the hazard to avian predators and scavengers feeding on chlorophacinone-contaminated rodents, a simulated field test was conducted in the laboratory. Laboratory Norway rats were maintained for 5 days on a diet of commercially formulated 0.005% chlorophacinone bait. The contaminated rats were fed ad lib, to black-billed magpies for 5 days in a no choice situation. The magpies were observed for an additional 21 days for clinical signs of toxicosis and mortality. There was no mortality and no symptoms of anticoagulant poisoning were observed. These results indicate that chlorophacinone rodent baits used in the field should pose little secondary hazard to avian predators and scavengers.

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Reports From the 4th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society continued

Reducing Coyote Predation on Livestock Through Selective Control

Karen M. Blejwas, Michael M. Jaeger, and Dale McCullough, Dept. of Environmental Science, Policy and Management, University of California-Berkeley*

Population reduction over small ranch-size areas is one of the most common responses to coyote depredations on livestock, a strategy based on the assumption that reducing coyote numbers will also reduce livestock losses. Research has shown, however, that territorial, breeding adults are responsible for the majority of depredations, suggesting that selective control may be a more effective approach to the predation problem. Furthermore, despite the widespread reliance on broadcast control, there is little information available about how local coyote populations respond to such exploitation. We are in the final year of a 3-year study investigating the territorial dynamics of a local coyote population under three different control regimes; no control, intensive broadcast control, and the selective removal of problem individuals. Our objectives were to determine how quickly breeding adults removed by control are replaced and breeding territories reestablished and to evaluate the effectiveness of selective control at stopping predation. Territorial, breeding adults were replaced quickly and the reestablishment of breeding territories was essentially complete by the onset of the next breeding season. Territories remained stable as long as the breeding pair remained intact, while territorial shifts following the loss or acquisition of a mate were common. Selective control was effective at stopping predation with that coyote's territory during the non-lambing season, and preliminary data from the current lambing season indicate that the selective removal of problem coyotes at the beginning of lambing may stop predation during the lambing period as well.

Dispersal Characteristics and Landscape Use by Colonizing Wolves in the Rockies

Diane K. Boyd and Daniel H. Pletscher, Wildlife Biology Program, University of Montana

Gray wolves recolonized western Montana, southeastern British Columbia, and southwestern Alberta 50 years after their systematic extirpation from the region. Twenty-nine of 57 tagged wolves dispersed from the Glacier National Park, Montana, study area. Dispersal distances ranged from 25-840 km. Recovery of recolonizing wolf populations depends on dispersal from source populations and successful reproduction in their new home range. Of the 18 dispensers, with known mortality causes, 89% (n=16) were killed by humans. Thirteen dispersers (45%) produced offspring, 13 (45%) did not reproduce, and the reproductive success of 3 (10%) was unknown. Philopatric wolves had lower reproductive success: 12% (n=3) produced pups, 32% (n=8) did not breed, 4% (n=1) were breeders when tagged, and breeding status of 52% (n=13) was unknown. We will report on characteristics of dispersal, including direction and distance traveled, age and season of dispersal, and days separated from pack conforming to the linear nature of the mountainous landscape. The rugged heterogeneous nature of the Rockies fragments habitat and separates demes spatially. Anthropogenic effects may further fragment potential wolf habitat. We determined differences between wolf use and available habitat for 6 dispersers, comparing wolf locations to random points inside and outside the actual home range. We will report on landscape attributes, including distance to roads, distance to water, road density, slope, aspect, elevation, and canopy cover, to determine which attributes had the most influence on habitat selection by colonizing wolves. These low elevation habitats are also selected by humans for ranching, recreation, and habitation, creating potential conflicts and management dilemmas.

Northern Bobwhite Population Response to Experimental Nest Predator Reduction: A Four-Year Pilot Study

Leonard A. Brennan, Jeffrey M. Lee, Eric Staller, and Shane Wellendorf, Tall Timbers Research Station, Tallahassee, FL

During the past 3 decades, northern bobwhite populations have experienced widespread population declines through most of its geographic range. Although the primary cause of the decline has been attributed to extensive losses of habitat from changing land use, the role of increased populations of mid-sized mammalian nest predators in limiting the bobwhite population productivity has not been evaluated with an experimental approach. After collecting a year of pre-treatment bobwhit abundance on a private shooting plantation in 1993 we initiated a systematic removal of raccoon and opossum on a 500-acre shooting course. During the 1994, 1995 and 1996 bobwhite nesting seasons, (May-October) we removed approximately 20 raccoons and 30 opossums during each nesting season using live-catch box traps at a density of a trap per 5 acres. During the 3 years of nest predator removal, bobwhite density on the trapped area increased by almost 200% (from 0.2 to approx. 1 bird per acre) whereas bobwhite density on a comparable, untrapped control area did not change. Our results indicate that a limited, but strategic removal of key nest predators during a non-traditional trapping period can have a positive impact on bobwhite population productivity. Further study using radio-marked bobwhite will be required to evaluate the role of nesting success, brood survival and other factors such as habitat in the dramatic bobwhite increase that we observed.

More abstracts will be presented in following issues of ***The PROBE.***

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