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Wildlife Damage Management, Internet Center
for

September 2003

The Probe, Issue 230 – September/October 2003

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Message From Outgoing President

Within a few weeks, I will assume the mantle of Past President of the National Animal Damage Control Association. I view this milestone - the passage from President to Past President — with mixed emotions. The period of my presidency has passed so quickly, so quickly. Looking back, I am proud of the progress made under my tenure, but I also see how much was left undone. My one great comfort in giving up the Presidency is knowing that truly outstanding officers have been selected to follow my cohorts and me. I am so confident of their ability to lead NADCA to a higher plane that I feel a little like John The Baptist. My role may have been to “prepare the path” for our new President and those who follow after him. If that is what was accomplished during my administration, it is enough. For in the last few years, NADCA has been reborn. It has a new sense of identity. It serves as conduit of communication and as a voice for professional wildlife damage managers. Through NADCA, its members can express their views on important issues and know that their opinions will be heard. Through *THE PROBE*, the official newsletter of NADCA, our members stay current on new developments that affect them and their profession. Our members seem to value these things because our ranks have been swelling.

It has been an honor to serve as your President for the past three years. Likewise, it will be an honor to remain a member of NADCA, watching the achievements of this organization as its tiller is guided by the hand of another.

Continued on page 2, col. 2

Message From Incoming President

I would first like to thank everyone who has the faith in me and have chosen me as your new NADCA President. Please believe me that I am humbled by your choice. I know this is not an uncommon statement made by newly elected candidates, and I have certainly said the same thing about other positions I’ve been elected to in the past. However, I feel something different about taking over these reins. I anticipate that this will turn out to be a very exciting time to be involved with NADCA, and to be the President is a very exciting prospect.

I am grateful to Mike Conover’s leadership in

Given where we were a couple of years ago, I’m not sure if anyone, including Mike himself, understands how much work was necessary to get us to where we are now. As his tenure ends, I feel like I’m taking over a train that has really started to get up a good head of steam.

...Art Smith

helping us to redefine ourselves and pointing us in a direction that can do the most good for the wildlife damage community. Given where we were a couple of years ago, I’m not sure if anyone, including Mike himself, understands how much work was necessary to get us to where we are now. As his tenure ends, I feel like I’m taking over a train that has really started to get up a good head of steam.

I am also grateful for some recent conversations I’ve had with Mike Dwyer, the other Presidential candidate, who I am very happy to report will remain as our Great Lakes Regional Director. As the election results were first made available, without hesitation Mike volunteered to help me in any way he could. I am not shy about asking for help and have already been in contact with Mike and the rest of the new Officers and Regional Directors regarding how we can best lead NADCA.

Although it is too early to forecast exactly what we will be doing in the near future, my ini-

Continued on page 2, col. 2

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

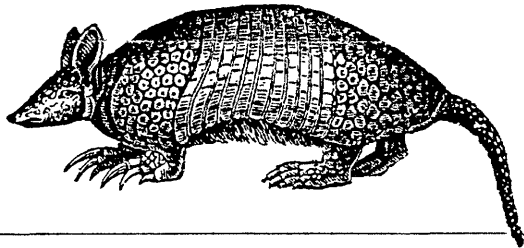
December 1-5, 2003 - 3rd International Wildlife Management Congress, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. For information see www.conference.canterbury.ac.nz/wildlife3003 or e-mail wildlife@cont.canterbury.ac.nz

December 6-10, 2003 - 64th Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference, The Westin Crown Center, Kansas City, MO. See conference website <http://www.midwest2003.com>.

February 8-13, 2004 - 15th International Conference on Bear Research and Management, Bahia Resort Hotel, San Diego. Preliminary topics include: Bear/Human Conflicts; Field/Lab/Statistical Techniques, Habitat Assessment/Relationships; Genetics/Physiology; Conservation Biology. For more information go to: <http://www.ursusjournal.com>.

February 9-11, 2004 - 10th Annual Wildlife Control Technology & National Wildlife Control Operators Assoc. Seminar, The Imperial Palace and Casino, Biloxi, MS. For more information go to <http://nwcoa.com>

March 1-4, 2004 - 21st Vertebrate Pest Conference, Visalia Convention Center, Visalia, CA. See conference website at: <http://www.vpconference.org>



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Your contributions 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.

EVER WONDER?

Were the mythical vampires of Europe named after vampire bats?

No, European folklore about vampires was developed well before the discovery of vampire bats in the New World. When European explorers discovered blood-feeding bats in South America they named them after the mythical vampires of Europe.

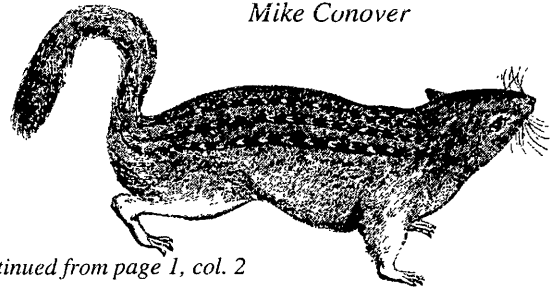


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Outgoing President's Message

God's speed, as we journey to that distant shore where articles about human-wildlife conflicts are found in history books and not on the front pages of newspapers.

Mike Conover



Continued from page 1, col. 2

Incoming President's Message

tial conversations with the new Officers and Directors have indicated some very interesting, and hopefully fruitful, ideas to pursue. The enthusiasm displayed by everyone coupled with the anticipation of what we could be working on has given me the excitement I mentioned at the start of this column. I will close with a repeat of my thanks to everyone for showing the faith you have in me by electing me President. I feel very fortunate to be in this position, to take over after Mike's organizational groundwork of the past few years, and to be surrounded with the fine supporting cast of Officers and Directors that I am blessed to inherit. If anyone has any comments, suggestions, or questions, please don't hesitate to get a hold of me.

*Sincerely,
Art Smith*

NADCA 2004 Election Results

The following officers and directors will serve 2 year terms commencing December 1, 2003.

President

Art Smith, Wildlife Damage Management Program Administrator, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, Pierre, SD

Vice President - East

James Parkhurst, Associate Professor, Wildlife Science and Extension Wildlife Specialist, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA

Vice President - West

Scott Hygnstrom, Extension Specialist, Wildlife Damage Management, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE

Secretary

Larry Sullivan, Extension Specialist Emeritus, Wildlife Damage Management, The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

Treasurer

Nicki Frey, Graduate Student, Jack Berryman Institute, Utah State University, Logan, UT

Directors

Western Region

Eric Covington, Wildlife Biologist, USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services, San Luis, CA

Southwestern Region

Dave Bergman, State Director Arizona, USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services, Phoenix, AZ

Northern Rockies Region

Olin Albertson, Owner/Operator, Wildlife Solutions, Vanderhoff, BC, Canada

Southern Region

Kevin Grant, Assistant State Director Oklahoma, USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services, Oklahoma City, OK

Northern Plains Region

Chad Richardson, Wildlife Biologist, USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services, Fort Riley, KS

Great Lakes Region

Mike Dwyer, President, Critter Control Inc., Traverse City, MI

Northeastern Region

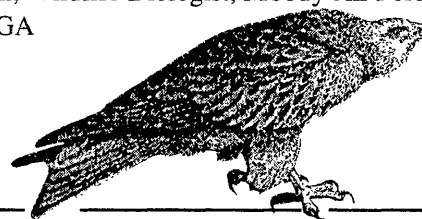
Lynn Braband, Extension Associate, New York State IPM Program, Cornell University, Geneva, NY

Central-Eastern Region

Open

Southeastern Region

Todd Sullivan, Wildlife Biologist, Moody Air Force Base, Athens, GA



Editor's Request for Submissions

The editor of *THE PROBE* has a continuing need for the submission of short articles of interest to our members. These articles may be short, 200-300 words, or longer. They should address any topic related to WDM such as techniques, new products, research projects/results, or any topic of general interest to our readers.

Also needed are longer articles, 500+ words for front-page stories. These articles should be substantive and address such general interests as pending legislation, emerging policies, research needs, controversies, or any topic of wide interest to members.

THE PROBE is the primary means of communication between NADCA's diverse membership and a source of communication between the various organizations, agencies and interests represented by our membership. As such, *THE PROBE* can serve as a forum for fostering a better understanding of diverse opinions as well as to strengthen those interests and concerns we all share.

Let's all participate in this effort and submit articles to the editor at the address noted in the masthead on page 2.

Thank you.
Larry Sullivan

Human-Wildlife Conflicts in Mexico

Andrea Thurlow, Berryman Institute, Utah State University

Editor's note: This article is the third in a series of articles dealing with human-wildlife conflicts in various countries around the world. These papers were written by students at the Berryman Institute and sent to THE PROBE by Berryman Institute Director, Dr. Mike Conover

In Mexico, factors such as low financial budgets and a lack of trained personnel all add into making the management of human-wildlife conflicts difficult. There are many species that cause damage to Mexican agriculture. These include rodents (mice, rats, ground and tree squirrels, and gophers), hares, rabbits, raccoons, coyotes, woodpeckers, starlings, crows and quail. Livestock (cows, goats, sheep) predation by coyotes, feral dogs, and less so by fox and bobcats are problems. The species which directly affect man are skunks that transmit rabies, rodents and doves that

The pocket gopher is a major problem animal in Mexico. Crops damaged by this animal include fruit trees, wheat, cocoa, potatoes, bananas, corn, alfalfa, avocado trees, and sugarcane, as well as damaging forest regeneration areas. Besides agricultural damage, pocket gophers also cause structural damage with their digging and tunneling, affecting irrigation canals, roads, building foundations, and underground cables.

contaminate grains with their excrement or urine, and rattlesnakes and nauyacac that cause approximately 100 human deaths annually in Mexico.

The pocket gopher is a major problem animal in Mexico. Crops damaged by this animal include fruit trees, wheat, cocoa, potatoes, bananas, corn, alfalfa, avocado trees, and sugarcane, as well as damaging forest regenera-

tion areas. Besides agricultural damage, pocket gophers also cause structural damage with their digging and tunneling, affecting irrigation canals, roads, building foundations, and underground cables. According to the literature, 4% of Mexico's corn crop is lost to pocket gophers annually. To deal with pocket gophers, the Mexican farmers have em-

According to the literature, 4% of Mexico's corn crop is lost to pocket gophers annually. To deal with pocket gophers, the Mexican farmers have employed a number of methods.

ployed a number of methods. However, control methods are not usually applied until the damage has been noticed and is already significant. Some of the methods used include fumigating gopher tunnels with car exhaust, butane gas, and aluminum phosphide, while other methods utilize poison baits, anticoagulants, and traps. Control methods are usually only used on small areas, therefore, the re-infestation potential is high.

Other vertebrate pests include field rats, which is a general term for any rodents which farmers believe harm their field crops. Species that farmers consider pests include cotton rats, rice rats, and the small rice rats. Field rats damage crops such as maize, sugarcane, cacao, rice, coffee, oil palm, sorghum, and bananas. The greatest damage by field rats to the corn and sugarcane. Reports of corn losses of 20-30% and sugarcane losses of 35-40%, are common. However, it should be noted that such losses are "subjective assessments only," and few comprehensive evaluations have been made. In 1991, the Mexican Government started a campaign against field rats, providing \$500m Mexican pesos (US\$170,000) to four problem areas. Secretariat of Rural Development (SDR) personnel worked with Secretaria de Agricultura Recursos Hidraulicos groups in the campaign. Fields with high damage were treated with zinc phosphide, fields with medium damage were treated with diphacinone, while those fields with reportedly low or no damage were left untreated.

Unfortunately, funding for this program did not last. Another pest known to Mexico is the vampire bat. This animal is a pest that can spread rabies, as well as attack cattle, horses, pigs and goats. Losses of cattle to rabies attributed to

Continued on page 5, column 2

The editor of THE PROBE thanks contributors to this issue: Andrea Thurlow, Michael Conover, Art Smith, and Pamela J. Tinnin.

To Dust They Shall Return

A newly patented process could soon solve the problem of disposing of animal carcasses by turning them into a dust like material. Alberta's Biosphere Technologies received international patents for its BioRefinex process that breaks down organic material using water, high temperature and pressure. The process took 12 years to develop.

Not only can the BioRefinex process break down risk materials such as skulls, parts of the intestine, ganglia, eyes and spinal cords, and condemned carcasses, but the thermal hydrolysis process can also process sewage, restaurant and industrial waste, and urban organic waste.

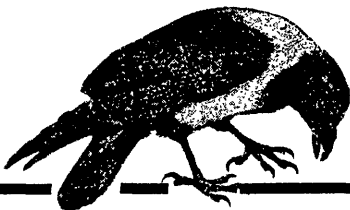
The process heats material under high pressure at 180° C for 40 minutes, which destroys pathogens and reduces transmissible spongiform encephalopathy agents. But con-

A newly patented process could soon solve the problem of disposing of animal carcasses by turning them into a dust like material. Alberta's Biosphere Technologies received international patents for its BioRefinex process that breaks down organic material using water, high temperature and pressure. The process took 12 years to develop.

firmed or suspected cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy would not be processed. The finished product is a thick, dark brown sludge that smells like molasses. When dehydrated it resembles coffee grounds. The concentrated material can be used as an organic fertilizer or be further processed to produce methane gas.

How to pay for the technology is a major concern. Estimated start-up and first year costs are about \$35 million. But disposal of dead stock is a growing problem and rendering companies are charging at least \$75 per carcass pickup. This is forcing many producers to bury their dead animals, which could cause environmental problems later decaying carcasses leach into ground water.

Source: *Western Producer*/ Barbara Duckworth, Oct. 30, 2003



Publication Released by Hopland Research and Extension Center

Pamela J. Tinnin

Since 1951, the University of California's Hopland Research and Extension Center has been the site of a wide diversity of research programs, many of them focused on wildlife damage management. Located in the Mendocino County hills of California's North Coast rangeland, the Center provides a 5,358 acre site for University researchers and visiting scholars who have produced 1,220 publications ranging from sheep and range management to the predation problems caused by coyotes, bears, and mountain lions.

Research at Hopland: 1951-2001—An Annotated Bibliography lists and describes those publications. Reading the bibliography is like taking a tour of some of the more interesting wildlife management research done in the last five decades.

Robert M. Timm, former editor of *THE PROBE*, and Charles E. Vaughn edited the bibliography, which includes excellent photographs. Cost is \$10.00 per copy to defray shipping and handling expenses. Make your check payable to *Regents, University of California* and mail to:

Publications
Hopland Research and Extension Center
4070 University Road
Hopland, California 95449-9717

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Human-Wildlife Conflicts

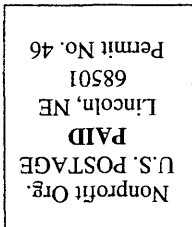
vampire bites were estimated to be one million head a year. Mass vaccination against rabies was the major means of control. In 1972, Mexico tested one method to control vampire bats by injecting anti-coagulants into cattle with the results favorable.

More information on this subject may be found with the following sources:

Key, Gillian and Romeo de la Piedra Constantino. 1992. *The field rat control campaign, Chiapas, Mexico*. Proceedings of the 15th Vertebrate Pest Conference. 268-271.

Whisson, Desley, and Beatriz Villa-C. 1996. *The pocket gopher as a pest in Mexico*. Proceedings of the 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference. 151-153.

TIME VALUED MATERIAL — DO NOT DELAY



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Forestry, Fisheries & Wildlife
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Membership Renewal and Application Form

NATIONAL ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Mail to: Art E. Smith, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks, 523 E. Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501

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

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

Additional Address Info: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP _____

Please use 9-digit Zip Code

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

Membership Class. Student \$10.00 Active \$20.00 Sponsor \$40.00 Patron \$100 (Circle 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) _____ | |

The Probe