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July 1996

## The Probe, Issue 167 – July 1996

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# Techniques and Expertise in Wildlife Damage Control: A Survey Among NADCA's Membership

*Dallas R. Virchow, University of Nebraska, and J. Russell Mason, Utah State University*

*Excerpted from a presentation at the 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference, March 1996.*

**D**uring 1994, NADCA selected a committee to develop a strategy to disseminate information and techniques to and through its membership. One of the first charges of the committee was to gain a better understanding of the expertise of the membership. A mail survey was sent to 454 NADCA members during February 1995. Members were asked about their specialty fields, preferred damage control techniques, and primary experience with depredation situations and sites. They were also asked about firsthand experience with species, geographic areas of operation and specialized training. Results of the survey were presented at the 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference in Rohnert Park, California.

Forty-four species or groups of species were mentioned among the top three specialty fields of NADCA members, although only a few species predominated. Coyote, raccoon and beaver represented 40% of all first place rankings among specialty fields. Coyotes 11.8%, raccoon 11.5%, beaver 9.6%, and tree squirrels 6.8% represented 40% of all responses to specialty fields. Animal groups most often mentioned were carnivores 43%, rodents 29%, and birds 19%.

Species listed as specialty fields were grouped as rodents, carnivores or birds and analyzed by technique. Members most often felt proficient in trapping as a technique for rodents and carnivores but selected other techniques more often for birds. These included repellents, scare tactics, exclusion and cultural methods.

Specialty fields were analyzed by techniques chosen for the ten most reported species. Live trapping was most frequently chosen for rodents, carnivores, and pigeons. Exclusion was most chosen for deer and elk and repellents or scare tactics were most chosen for blackbirds and starlings.

Members most often ranked trapping and exclusion as preferred techniques. Toxicants/fumigants, firearms, scare tactics, snares, and cultural techniques followed in rank. Certain techniques were grouped by method. Removal methods (live traps,

kill traps, snares, firearms, calling, toxicants, fumigants, denning, and chase with dogs) represented 70% of first choice responses and 63% of all responses. Exclusion was the second most commonly chosen method with only 18% of first choice responses.

Another question asked members about their primary experience in different damage control situations. Most respondents had experience with private homes, range or pastures, and commercial areas or buildings.

The survey also listed species and asked members where they may have first hand experience in control techniques. The list included and grouped ten rodents, fourteen carnivores, seventeen birds and six amphibians and reptiles. Mammals not included as rodents or carnivores were grouped under the heading "Other Mammals". These eleven species included deer and other ungulates, insectivores, bats, and rabbits. The "other" option in each group allowed members to write in species not listed.

Members showed great breadth and diversity in firsthand species experience. They reported having worked with an average of 17.6 species within 2.9 different vertebrate groups. Least firsthand experience among members occurred with amphibians and reptiles. An average of less than one species was indicated by respondents who had experience with this group.

Despite NADCA members being more involved in wildlife damage control activities in rural areas than elsewhere, the responses are noteworthy for their even distribution across U.S. metropolitan areas.

We examined differences between respondents who marked only "metro" or "rural" as to breadth of species experience. Only the category of amphibians and reptiles showed a statistically significant difference between the two groups with "metro" members having slightly more experience.

We also asked members about the geographic area where they had experience. Every state but Hawaii and South Dakota was represented by those who responded to our survey. Among respondents,

*Continued on page 2, Col. 1*

## NADCA Membership Survey

experience in Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa was also represented.

Our survey shows how members use different techniques, depending upon species, animal group, and depredation situation. Most members choose a removal method, most commonly trapping, as a technique with most animals. Birds are the exception. Most techniques chosen for birds are repellents or toxicant and fumigants.

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Many factors influence responses to questions about proficiency and preference. Included are issues in legality, agency or company policy, and public sentiment.

The main objective of our committee was to identify expertise and specialty fields of NADCA members and not to assess or directly compare effectiveness of techniques. However, we do propose that the legal constraints and public attitudes

that influenced respondents in our survey needs to be considered when comparing the usefulness of different techniques in the animal damage control industry.

Our survey among NADCA members shows a wide range of educational background and formal training. We see a potential need for specialized or formal training opportunities among animal damage control professionals.

The authors feel that a professional organization like NADCA needs to identify and express its strength and weaknesses among its members to better the profession. The NADCA organization can lead the industry and public to for-

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*Perhaps our survey reveals as much about human nature as about the nature of the animal damage control industry.*

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mulating a sound animal damage management philosophy.

Some of our survey respondents commented upon issues in the animal damage control field like the prospect of too much regulation or certification requirements. One respondent expressed a trend that he saw when he stated "Almost everything I grew up with is either illegal, immoral, or no longer made!" Another responded, "Retired over 20 years. Now age 83. Don't know 'nuttin.'"

Perhaps our survey reveals as much about human nature as about the nature of the animal damage control industry.

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

**October 1-5, 1996: 3rd Annual Conference, The Wildlife Society, Cincinnati, Ohio.** Conference will include a Symposium, "Social, Economic and Environmental Benefits of Wildlife Damage Management," to be coordinated by Dr. Kathleen Fagerstone (contact at 303-236-2098). For general information on the Conference, contact TWS at (301) 530-2471.

**October 5-9, 1996: 50th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, Arlington Resort and Spa, Hot Springs, Arkansas.** Hosted by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission. For further information, contact AR Game & Fish, #2 Natural Resources Dr., Little Rock, AR 72205.

**December 8-11, 1996: 58th Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference, Red Lion Hotel, Omaha, Nebraska.** For information, contact 58th Midwest F&W Conference, P.O. Box 4558, Lincoln, NE 68504-0641, phone 402-471-0641, FAX 402-471-5528, or visit <http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/iafwa/midwest.html>.

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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 Research & Extension Center, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449. Articles and notes can also be sent by e-mail to [mtimm@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mtimm@ucdavis.edu). 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.

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# **ADC News, Tips, Ideas , Publications . . .**

## **Rats' Rights Repealed in New Jersey**

The New Jersey State Senate has unanimously voted to repeal the rights of rats, following a well-publicized 1994 incident. At that time, animal rights groups had filed charges against a Hillside, NJ man who bashed a rat to death in his tomato patch using a garden implement. Charges against the man were subsequently dropped.

The legislation, SB 465, is currently in Assembly Committee. It would exclude rats and mice from protection under the state's animal cruelty laws. The bill would allow for the killing and disposal of rats, mice, or other animals considered "significant threats to public health."

## **Texas Predators Dine on Exotics**

ADC Specialist Gary Kraatz responded to damage on a Willacy County, Texas ranch where five leechwe antelope valued at \$15,000 were lost to predators. Although this occurred in a county which does not cooperate in the state's ADC program, the ranch was more than willing to pay for the ADC services. Kraatz has removed 22 coyotes, and no more damage has been reported.

A Kinney County, Texas rancher lost one rhea worth \$1,200 to bobcat predation. ADC Specialist Pete Bland set leghold traps and caught a male bobcat the first night, which was apparently coming back to the kill. No further loss of rhea has been reported.

## **Recipes for Nutria**

A nutria cook-off, sponsored by the Louisiana Nature and Science Center, honored a computer scientist's recipe for apple-smoked nutria and wild-mushroom crepe in bourbon-pecan nutria sauce. Nutria are rodents which are native to Argentina, and are considered a table delicacy in Eastern Europe. But in Texas and Louisiana, nutria are best-known for being voracious pests which live in aquatic habitats, causing serious damage to rice and sugar cane crops.

## **Wildlife Damage to Aircraft Tallied**

ADC, in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration, recently completed the first analysis of all wildlife strikes to civilian aircraft reported for an entire year. In 1994, there were 2,220 such incidents reported, involving gulls (30%), waterfowl (13%), and other wildlife. Mammal strikes included 57 deer and 9 coyotes. Damage was reported for 517 aircraft, including 118 incidents of engine damage.

Denver Wildlife Research Center biologists estimated that less than 20% of known wildlife strikes were reported to the FAA, indicating that the nationwide economic losses from strikes to civil aircraft exceeds \$100 million annually.

## **Airplane Hits Deer**

A twin engine turboprop airplane struck and killed two deer at the Falcon Field Airport in Peachtree City, Georgia. The plane was extensively damaged, but the passengers and crew were uninjured. After receiving a request for assistance from the airport officials, ADC personnel safely removed the six remaining deer from the airfield to prevent future threats to human safety.

## **Golfers Get Teed Off at Coots**

About 1,000 coots caused considerable damage to a golf course in Santa Barbara, California early this year, by feeding on greens and tee areas and by defecating and digging on the greens. ADC personnel had previously provided technical assistance to golf course personnel regarding use of various harassment techniques to scare the coots away, but the birds had become accustomed to these efforts. ADC specialists used the chemical immobilizing agent alpha-chloralose to remove a number of the birds in order to reduce further damage. The golf course is continuing harassment efforts and other nonlethal control methods.

## **Japanese Technologist Tackles Rodents**

According to a recent issue of *National Geographic*, the Ikari Corporation of Japan has developed a pneumatic system for controlling rats and mice in warehouses and other buildings. Installed inside a building's baseboards, the system of plastic tubes has several entrance holes. When a rodent enters a tube, its body heat activates a sensor that slams steel shutters over the holes, and turns on a powerful fan that blows a plastic ball down the tube toward the rodent. The forced air and the ball push the rodent into a vat of 0-degree antifreeze, where it is quietly and almost instantaneously frozen for disposal. The system is estimated to cost \$40,000 per installation, but is expected to be cost-effective because of the large amount of damage to buildings' electrical wires and cables caused by commensal rodents in Japan.

## **ADC To Tackle Gophers**

US Forest Service officials with the Malheur National Forest in Oregon have requested a formal cooperative agreement with ADC's John Day district to conduct a control program for pocket gophers. The Forest Service had not been successful in soliciting private contractors to do the work for protection of plantation seedlings. The agreement with ADC will provide full funding for treatment of about 2,000 acres on ponderosa pine seedlings.

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*The editor of The PROBE thanks contributors to this issue: Robert Schmidt, Ki Faulkner, Pink Madsen, Dallas R. Virchow, J. Russell Mason, and Stephen Vantassel. Send your contributions to The PROBE, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449.*

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# Book Review

*Stephen Vantassel, Special Coorrespondent, The PROBE*

*Booklet Review: Missouri's Beaver: A Guide to Management, Nuisance Prevention, and Damage Control by Ron McNeely. Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri, 1995. Pp. 1-29 with illustrations.*

Sometimes government documents lack sufficient information to be worth the time to even read them. This booklet is not one of them. Author Ron McNeely's credentials should make every reader take the content here very seriously. He has been a fur trapper for 40 years and a damage management biologist for the Missouri Department of Conservation for 21 years.

Knowing what it takes to control beaver has made me even more impressed with the quality of the information contained in this booklet. McNeely has covered all the bases. Pages 1-9 are an overview of the history of the beaver. McNeely briefly relates the role beaver have had in Missouri's history, both past and present. He then proceeds to detail the life cycle of the beaver. Care is taken to provide basic biological and behavioral information without getting the reader bogged down in doctoral thesis issues or evidence; just the facts needed to better understand and appreciate the beaver are provided.

I was pleasantly surprised by the inclusion of a section highlighting the species' economic value. This section explained that beavers provide low fat, high protein meat, glands for perfume, and fur. This section was important because too often the financial value of wildlife is overlooked in ADC pamphlets. I appreciated the way it reminded people that beaver are a valuable resource that should be respected and treated as such. Perhaps more importantly, informing people that beaver have value will hopefully help them respond more rationally when beaver move from being pretty to being a pest. If a property owner realizes the economic value of the beaver, he will hopefully try to wait for fur season before having them removed.

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The next section, which constitutes the majority of this 8-1/2"x11" size booklet, explains how to prevent and handle beaver damage. The information throughout this section is concise yet extremely practical. Appropriately enough, McNeely be-

gins with non-lethal forms of control. Property owners learn how to protect trees and boat docks from gnawing damage. Property owners also learn how to respond to pond flooding. I found the information on overflow tubes to stop pond flooding to be most interesting. The reader should find the line drawings to be very helpful in explaining how they themselves can install these devices. I would like to caution the reader that the suggestions may not be legal in your own state. This booklet, while containing very valuable information, is keyed to Missouri law. Before enacting water drains or damaging dams, be sure to consult the wetland and wildlife laws in your state.

Lethal control constitutes the second portion of responding to beaver damage. I appreciated the author's frankness that lethal control is often the most economical and effective method to stop damage. Given what happened in the town of Chelmsford, Massachusetts, I think that message should be shouted loud and clearly by all biologists before news cameras. As in other areas, McNeely is thorough. He discusses shooting and trapping. The trapping instruction is superb and should give any fairly inexperienced beaver trapper the information he or she needs to be a very competent one.

The final section of the booklet addresses trapping as a business. The author explains proper pelt handling techniques as well as recent prices paid for castor and beaver meat.

As you may already tell by this review, I was completely impressed by the quality of this booklet both in content and form. The Missouri taxpayers got their money's worth. What is even better is that we non-residents can benefit from their investment. I give this booklet the animal damage control grade of A+.

My one criticism is the unfortunate use of the inaccurate term "live trapping". As I have written elsewhere, the term live trap should be removed from all technical trap discussions because it is simply too vague. Footholds, snares and box-traps are all live traps. Our continued use of the term live-trap to describe the box trap just perpetuates the myth that footholds and other restraining devices kill. As any trapper knows, footholds don't kill—it's the set that kills.

Missouri residents can obtain these copies free of charge. Non-residents can order a copy by sending \$2 payable to the Missouri Department of Conservation, mailed to Missouri Beaver, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102. There are discounts available for multiple copy purchases.

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# Elk Reintroduction and Meningeal Worms

This article is reprinted from the April 1996 quarterly newsletter of the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Georgia.

There has been renewed interest in reintroduction of elk into their historical range in the Southeast. Although some previous reintroductions into our region have failed, elk released between 1981 and 1985 along the Buffalo River in Arkansas have survived and increased gradually. More recently, 29 elk were imported from Canada and released in a large enclosure on The-Land-Between-The-Lakes in western Kentucky. The new enthusiasm for elk restoration is being catalyzed by the private sector, and financial assistance has been offered by an advocate group, The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

Proposed elk reintroductions are being discussed in several states, and a variety of issues, including both the benefits and potential negative impacts, are being weighed.

The Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS) has been asked to provide advice to member states on the health issues associated with elk importation and release. Several diseases must be considered that theoretically could be introduced if precautions are not taken, including bovine brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis, the tissue worm (*Elaphostrongylus cervi*), and chronic wasting disease (spongiform encephalopathy). But even if disease-free elk are imported, the health problems are not fully resolved. One aspect that should be considered carefully is the virtual certainty that neurologic disease due to the meningeal worm, *Parelaphostrongylus tenuis*, will kill some elk that are relocated into the eastern half of the country.

White-tailed deer are the normal hosts for *P. tenuis*. These thread-like nematodes commonly reside within the meninges surrounding the brain of whitetails throughout the Southeast, except for the Lower Coastal Plain. Although the prevalence of infection in most infected white-tailed deer populations is 50% or higher, infection is rarely associated with disease in whitetails. In contrast, meningeal worm infection can cause severe neurologic disease in other species of North American cervids including elk, moose, caribou, black-tailed deer, and mule deer. It also is pathogenic in domestic sheep and a variety of exotic ungulates. There are many accounts of neurologic disease among elk populations that shared range with infected white-tailed deer in Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Clinical signs of infection in aberrant hosts such as elk are related to damage to the central nervous system and can include depression, weakness of limbs, progressive hindlimb paralysis, twisting of the neck, disorientation, and circling. Clinical signs usually begin around 2 months after infection and can be transient or eventually fatal depending on the number of parasites and the damage they cause.

Some elk populations have persisted or, in the case of Arkansas and Michigan, have grown substantially despite losses to meningeal worms. Thus, the assumption that all infections with the meningeal worm are fatal in hosts other than white-tailed deer is incorrect. Research conducted by Canadian scientists has shown that the outcome of infection in elk is at least partially dependent on the infecting dose; animals exposed to low numbers of larvae often survive. Furthermore, the meningeal worm can successfully complete its life cycle in elk infected with small doses of larvae; however, elk are a much poorer host than white-tailed deer. Field case information corroborates experimental studies. Clinically affected elk typically are younger animals, and *P. tenuis*-induced neurologic disease is uncommon in older age classes. This suggests that if an elk survives an initial, small infective dose, it may develop an immunity. Therefore, we believe that losses of elk to meningeal worms can be predicted in endemic areas, but the impact of these losses on the population is less certain.

Prevention of exposure at endemic release sites is not possible. Studies investigating anthelmintic treatment of meningeal worms have shown little promise, and the frequency with which anthelmintics would have to be delivered to free-ranging animals makes this approach impossible. Similarly, white-tailed deer population reduction, short of near eradication, will not prevent exposure because high prevalence rates of *P. tenuis* can be found even in low density deer populations. Wildlife agencies that decide to participate in elk reintroductions should prepare the public to expect losses that cannot be avoided. A predetermined protocol should be developed for handling affected elk, i.e., criteria for euthanasia, and this action plan should be explained in advance to the media and public.

## South African Puppy, "Licky," Barely Survives Eagle Attack

From 'Earthweek' - Vancouver Sun - Saturday, June 15, 1996

A South African puppy was in intensive care but lucky to be alive after a hungry crowned eagle swooped into her owner's backyard and plucked the baby Jack Russell away. "I heard this incredible whimpering and saw this huge bird grappling with Licky," said the owner. The *Johannesburg Star* reported that the eagle sank its talons into Licky and flew off toward a tree. The airborne puppy managed to wriggle free from certain death, and fell three metres into a suburban Pietermaritzburg swimming pool. After diving in to save her, the owner rushed Licky to a clinic where she was being treated for concussion, water inhalation and talon punctures on her neck.

# Publications Available

The **Proceedings of the 12th Great Plains Wildlife Damage Control Workshop** (1995) is available from: Ron Masters, Wildlife Specialist, Dept. of Forestry, 008 Ag Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078-6013, phone (405) 744-8065. The price for this publication is \$15; make check payable to Gt. Plains Wildlife Damage Proceedings.

The proceedings for a conference, "**Private Property Rights and Responsibilities of Rangeland Owners and Managers**" is now available for purchase. This compilation of papers presented Oct. 23-25, 1994 in Austin, Texas, totals 225 pages and includes articles by 29 authors representing landowners, legal counsel, commodity groups, environmental groups, agencies, legislators, and academicians. Cost is \$15 per copy, which includes shipping and handling. Make check payable to Texas Section, Society for Range Management, and send to Larry D. White, Editor, 1814 Shadowwood Dr., College Station, TX 77840.

**Proceedings, 6th Eastern Wildlife Damage Management Conference** (1993) is available from: Ed Jones, Ext. Wildlife Specialist, No. Carolina State Univ., Extension Forestry Resources, Box 8003, Raleigh, NC 27695-8003, phone (919) 515-5578. Cost is \$20, which includes shipping. Check should be payable to "North Carolina State University."

**Rangeland Wildlife** (1996), edited by Paul R. Krausman, and published by the Society for Range Management, is available for purchase at \$24.50 per copy plus \$6.50 shipping & handling. This volume contains 26 chapters, including the following:

- The Birds of Rangelands - Eric G. Bolen and John A. Crawford
- The Mammals - Clyde Jones and Richard W. Manning
- Threatened and Endangered Wildlife and Livestock Interactions - W. Dean Carrier and Brian Czech
- Perspectives on Grazing Nongame Bird Habitats - Fritz L. Knopf
- Upland Gamebirds - Fred S. Guthery
- Rodents and Lagomorphs - Kathleen A. Fagerstone and Craig A. Ramey
- Carnivores - William F. Andelt
- Elk - Michael J. Wisdom and Jack Ward Thomas
- Mule Deer - James M. Peek and Paul R. Krausman
- The White-tailed Deer - James G. Teer
- Feral Animals on Rangelands - Charles L. Douglas and David M. Leslie Jr.

*Continued in next col. 2*

# New "Animal Talk" Radio Program

Los Angeles, CA — **Animal Issues Today**, a radio talk-back show concerning animals and the broad issues dealing with them has begun broadcasting over Cable Radio Network (CRN) Sundays, 8 pm to 9 pm Pacific time. **Animal Issues Today** is concerned with issues about animals. It covers animals great and small, domestic and wild.

"This show is not only a labor of love to reach the public, but is needed as more and more animal issues become concerns of our citizens," states Lois Newman, host of the radio show. "**Animal Issues Today** is a way to get more of the general public interested, knowledgeable, and thinking about animal issues."

Typical topics to be discussed include: Animal Ownership—A right or a Privilege; Feral Cats and How to Deal With Them; The War on Wildlife; Pets in Rental Housing; Animal Control Agencies—Why They Exist and What They Do; Animal Cruelty and Its Effects; Biomedical Research; and What Are Animal Rights Anyhow?.

"These are just a few of the many topics we'll be discussing," says Newman. "The topics we'll be dealing with will not only educate, but entertain listeners as well. They'll be able to call in and add their ideas and opinion," Newman further states.

At the present time CRN is available in 3,000,000 homes over cable TV channels in California and 7,000,000 additional homes in 25 other states. More areas and homes are being added weekly.

"Cable radio is the wave of the future," says Michael Horn, owner of Cable Radio Network. "Cable radio can reach more areas better and cheaper than current radio stations."

Cable subscribers can tune into CRN over their cable channel 24 hours a day to listen to CRN at no extra charge to the subscriber.

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*Continued from col. 1*

Damage to Rangeland Resources - Walter E. Howard  
Diseases of Wild Ungulates and Livestock -  
David A. Jessup and Walter M. Boyce

Orders should be sent with a check payable to "Society for Range Management" to: 1839 York St., Denver, CO 80206. Include your shipping address.

## NWRC Announces Bird Research Leader

The USDA National Wildlife Research Center (formerly Denver Wildlife Research Center) announces the selection of Dr. Robert G. McLean as Wildlife Research Program Manager for the Center's bird damage research and related projects. Bob most recently held a research leadership position with the Division of Vector-Borne Infectious Diseases, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in Fort Collins, CO.

McLean began his career in the field of bird pest control during graduate school at both Bowling Green State University and at Pennsylvania State University, where he received his Ph.D. He has published more than 90 papers, and has received numerous awards and honors for his accomplishments. He reported to his position at the new NWRC Fort Collins facility on May 27, according to Director Richard D. Curnow.

## Sick Boy Who Wishes for Dream Hunt Incites Wrath of Animal Rightists

In March 1996, Make-A-Wish Minnesota, a chapter of the international Make-A-Wish Foundation, granted a 17-year-old high school senior, Erik, his wish, an Alaskan brown bear hunt with his father. The Foundation exists to provide special "wishes" and services to young persons with terminal or life-threatening illnesses. Erik is suffering from a brain tumor.

Soon after the "wish" announcement first became public, the Make-A-Wish office was deluged with threatening and hateful calls from animal rights fanatics. Callers threatened to pressure the national organization by encouraging supporters to withhold donations, and said they were prepared to use the names of Hollywood celebrities to hurt the foundation financially. Minnesota board members were outraged by their cruel comments and contacted the Wildlife Legislative Fund of America for assistance.

Following a WLFA press release to sportsmen's organizations and the outdoor media, both the Minnesota office and Make-A-Wish headquarters in Phoenix have received calls from supportive sportsmen everywhere—along with thousands of dollars in donations made in Erik's name. Sportsmen's organizations and individual sportsmen are encouraged to make further donations on behalf of Erik by contacting Make-A-Wish Minnesota, 5201 E. River Rd., Suite 309, Minneapolis, MN 55421, phone (612) 571-9474.

## A Picture Speaks A Thousand Words

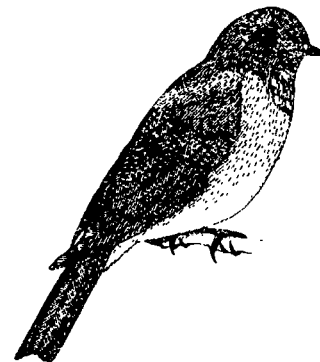
*Editor's Note: From the WDAMAGE listserv:  
Fred Lyass (pseudonym used by request)*

A picture speaks a thousand words. . . One of the most important aspects of this business is integrity. Your business must be known to be reliable and honest. Nuisance Wildlife is often caught and removed while the homeowners are away at work. Many NWCOs will openly state that they have never been questioned by a customer about whether or not they actually caught the animals that the bill says were caught. You can bet your bottom dollar that the question was asked, except that it was discussed between spouses or neighbors. Few people will have the courage to come right out and ask you about the accuracy of your count.

I have a method that lets the customer know the number of animals trapped and has also resulted in more business for me. The secret? After arriving at the home and finding a trapped animal, I get out my Polaroid instant camera and take its picture! I leave this in the doorway of the home with the time and date written on the back of the portrait. When the homeowners get home from work, they are greeted with pleasant news and have something to talk about during supper.

People love to talk! They also like to show pictures! You better believe that the neighbors, the relatives, the coworkers - somebody, will also be shown the pictures. As an added advertising bonus for you, make certain that your business name and number is in the picture. Be creative! I have a metal sign that used to say "house for sale". It now proudly displays my business name and number. All pictures left in the door now show the animal, my sign, and the customer's house in the background. The cost is cheap enough that this year I intend to give all my customers pictures whether they are home or not!

Chances are that the picture is going to bring business to you. One extra call can pay for the camera and a year's supply of film. Even non target catches give the customer something to talk about to their friends. If they're talking about your catch, they're advertising your business! Customers will now be positive that your bill is accurate and that you are an honest trapper. A picture speaks a thousand words - let them all be about you and your fantastic service!





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Forestry, Fisheries & Wildlife  
202 Nat. Resources Hall  
University of Nebraska  
Lincoln, NE 68583-0819

**Membership Application**

**NATIONAL ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ASSOCIATION**

Mail to: Wes Jones, Treasurer, W8773 Pond View Drive, Shell Lake, WI 54871, Phone: (715) 468-2038

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Home

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Office

Additional Address Info: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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*