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Bird Strike USA Meeting a Success

Eugene LeBoeuf, Bird Strike Scientist, HQ Air Force Safety Center, Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, and Past President, NADCA

The Bird Strike Committee USA did things a little different this year. Normally one would expect a committee meeting ending in "USA" to be held in the USA. However, at the conclusion of last year's meeting, Bruce MacKinnon, Airport Wildlife Specialist for Transport Canada and Chairman of Bird Strike Committee Canada, offered to host our conference in Canada with the help of Vancouver Airport Authority. The committee agreed and the rest is history.

This year's conference was truly a success beyond what was originally envisioned by the US and Canada. When the conference had concluded and the dust had settled, over 300 individuals from 15 different countries had spent four days in Vancouver comparing notes on airport wildlife hazards around the world.

Attendees were welcomed to the conference by Mr. Art LaFlamme, Director General of Civil Aviation, from Transport Canada, and Major General Francis C. Gideon, Chief of Safety, US Air Force. John Kern, Regulatory Compliance and Chief Safety Officer of Northwest Airlines delivered the keynote address. Other dignitaries including Mr. Tom McFall, Managing Director, Safety and Environment of American Airlines and Mr. Michael Dunn, Under Secretary of Agriculture, USDA spoke later on Monday evening at the opening reception.

The rest of the conference schedule was divided into individual sessions and included the following subject areas: Current Issues Regarding Bird Strikes and the Aviation Industry;

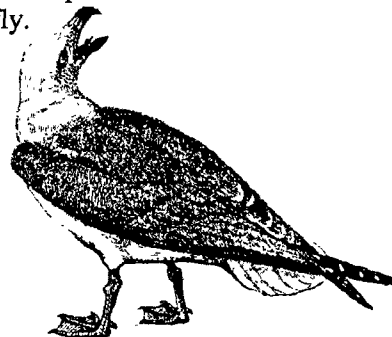
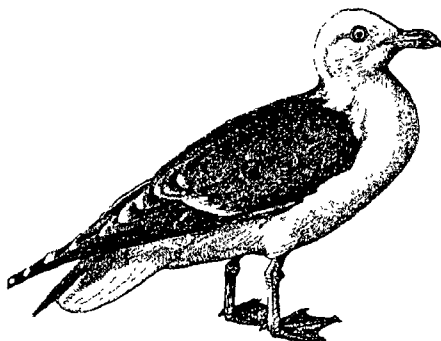
Wildlife Management in the Vicinity of Airports; Wildlife Control at Airports; Species Management Issues and Science and Technology. Panel Discussions on Habitat Management and Falconry were held and Military Training sessions were provided to stimulate audience participation. As always, a day was dedicated in the middle of the conference to tour the host airport wildlife control program and view vendor's exhibits and demonstrations in the field.

From the growing attendance and broad range of sessions, there is no doubt that interest in controlling wildlife at airports is on the rise, as it should be. Such interest is beginning to encourage a spirit of thinking outside of the box as well as a refocusing on basics. There were excellent presentations regarding novel uses of existing technologies such as NEXRAD weather radar, weather forecasting, and thermal

imagery to model and observe wildlife movement patterns affecting airfields to reviews of existing wildlife control techniques.

If you have not been to a Bird Strike Committee, you should plan to do so in the future. Plans are already in the works for next year's conference to be held in Minneapolis, MN, 8-10 August. Be there, to be better prepared to provide the professional assistance necessary to make airports a safer environment for all who fly.

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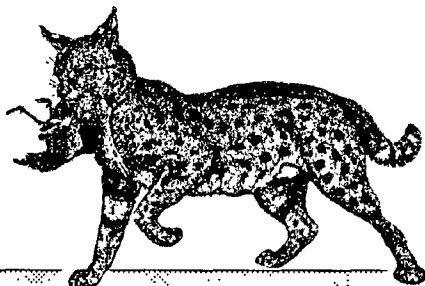


CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

August 5, 1999: Future Technology for Managing Problems with Vertebrate Pests and Over-abundant Wildlife, Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, VA. A special session to be held in conjunction with the 11th Triennial International Symposium of The Biodeterioration Society. Papers will be peer-reviewed and published as a special issue of International Biodeterioration & Biodegradation. For further information, contact: Dr. William B. Jackson, phone (419) 352-8058, fax (419) 372-2024, or Dr. Michael W. Fall, phone (970) 266-6084, fax (970) 266-6089.

Sept. 6-8, 1999: Second European Vertebrate Pest Management Conference, Technical University of Braunschweig, Germany. The conference will address fundamental aspects of biology, methodology, legislation, and the role of manipulation of habitats, behaviour and populations in vertebrate pest management. The conference will be in English and will be attended by people from Europe and North America, and it is anticipated that a Proceedings will be published. The conference program and registration info are available at the university's web site: http://www.tu-bs.de/zfw/vertebrate_pestman/page.htm. For further information, contact via email: <d.kaehler@tu-bs.de>.

September 7-11, 1999: 6th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society, Austin, TX. Conference will include the following symposia: "Educating the Public on Wildlife Damage Management Issues" (1/2 day); "Balancing Social and Ecological Factors in Management of Urban/Suburban Wildlife" (1/2 day); and "Bats and Humans: Education, Conservation, Controversy and Conflict" (1/2 day). Contact The Wildlife Society national office, phone (301) 897-9770, email <lorraine@wildlife.org>, or visit website <http://www.wildlife.org>.



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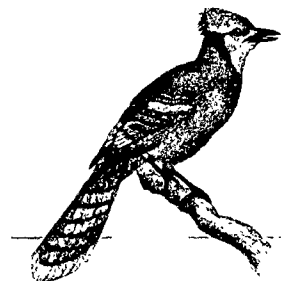
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Your contributions of articles to *The Probe* are welcome and encouraged. The deadline for submitting materials is the 15th of the month prior to publication. Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of NADCA.

Oct. 13-14 (Denver CO); Nov. 1-2 (Woodbridge, NJ); Nov. 4-5 (Orlando, FL) 1999: Bird Barrier / Van Waters & Rogers Bird Control Classes. For further information contact persons for the specific class locations are: Denver, Randy Dodrill at (313) 388-5651; Woodbridge, Greg Ten Hoeve at (732) 636-4660; and Orlando, Jim Watson at (407) 843-2611.

Dec. 5-8, 1999: 61st Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference, Chicago, IL. Conference theme "Pathways to the Future." For more information, contact Larry A. Jahn, Steering Committee Chairperson, phone (309) 298-1266 or email <la-jahn@wiu.edu>.

March 6-9, 2000: 19th Vertebrate Pest Conference, Mission Valley Hilton, San Diego, CA. One-day field trip (Mar. 6) plus three days of plenary and concurrent sessions covering diverse topics including rodent, bird, and predator research and management. To receive program and pre-registration materials, contact Dr. Terry Salmon, Wildlife Fish & Conservation Biology, UC Davis, One Shields Ave., Davis CA 95616-8571, phone (530) 754-8751, fax (530) 752-4154, or visit web site: <http://www.davis.com/~vpc/welcome.htm>



Position Available:

Wildlife Biologist, JFK Airport

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is seeking a Wildlife Biologist to supervise the Bird Control Unit at JFK Airport. Responsibilities include developing and managing the Bird Hazard Management Program, coordinating and overseeing bird control activities, supervising the collection of biological field data, developing surveys, and monitoring the effectiveness of wildlife control programs.

Applicant must have Master's degree in wildlife biology/management or a closely related field, and at least 3 years experience in applied wildlife management. Background should include research, data analysis, and formulation recommendations on a variety of wildlife management issues. Supervisory experience is desirable. Competitive salary and excellent benefits. Qualified individuals should forward a scannable resume, including salary history, to: The Port Authority of NY & NJ, HR Dept. 61E, 1 World Trade Center, New York, NY 10048, or email <ecrespo@pamail.panynj.gov>.

Wildlife Damage in the News

Hawk Starts Grass Fire

A hawk that got tangled in electrical power lines near Boise, Idaho caught fire and fell into a grassy field, according to a city fire department spokesman. The ill-fated hawk's demise resulted in a quarter-acre grass fire that was extinguished before any structures became involved.

— excerpted from the *Idaho Statesman*, June 7, 1999

Juicy Fruit Gum Remedy Story Persists

The notion that Juicy Fruit gum is an effective control for moles continues to be repeated in gardening magazines and various media. Apparently first reported in the 1980s, the "theory" apparently goes like this: if you roll up a stick of gum and drop it into a mole's run, the animal will ingest the gum, which then blocks its digestive system, killing it. In a recent article circulated by the Associated Press, a Pemberton Township, N.J. town councilman promoted this method of mole control for city property after claiming to have successfully used it on his own acreage. Councilman John W. "Bud" Clark now claims the municipal complex's 9 acres are now mole-free, as is the town's 20-acre recreation area across the street. A Rutgers University Cooperative Extension agent led credibility to the story by explaining the purported mode of action to the news media. However, a spokesperson for the William Wrigley Jr. Company of Chicago, which makes Juicy Fruit, says they have no plans to advertise their product for mole control. "It's not something we feature on our product or in commercials," said Wrigley's Christopher Perille.

— excerpted from the *Denver Post*, Feb. 8, 1999

Cambodian Artifacts Threatened by Bats

Some of Cambodia's greatest masterworks have survived wars, thieves, and social upheaval. But now they're facing another peril: bats. As many as 2 million tiny bats have found residence in the capital's National Museum, and their acidic guano is threatening statuary and other centuries-old masterpieces. Every dawn for more than 20 years, the bats have poured into the museum through gaping holes in its roof, jamming the eaves, ceilings, and grounds of the 80-year-old repository. All day long, the 95,000-square-foot building and an inner courtyard resonate with the sound of peeping bats. And every dusk, they fly off into the night sky to forage, like a plume of thick black smoke. Visitors often leave scratching their heads or shoulders—the result of bat fleas that have dropped from the ceiling. Curators and art-loving Cambodians are concerned about some of the museum's finest treasures, which have recently returned to the capital after a tour of the world's greatest museums.

The question of what to do about the bats has sparked a small battle between art curators, who want to protect the sculptures, and wildlife conservationists, who want to protect

the bats. Museum workers have started placing netting over large holes in the museum's roof hoping that frustrated bats will look elsewhere for a roost site. However, if they do choose a new home, the cash-strapped museum will also lose about \$200 per month generated by selling bat guano as fertilizer. Notes museum director Khun Samen, that's not "even enough to buy brooms to sweep up the dung."

— excerpted from an *Associated Press* article

Predator Killings Planned: State Game Managers Target Cougars, Coyotes

New Mexico game managers plan to kill dozens of cougars to help bighorn sheep recover and to kill hundreds of coyotes to help deer populations. But they admit they're not sure the coyote plan will benefit deer.

Department biologist Bill Dunn said this week that cutting the number of lions will give the state's bighorn sheep population a chance to recover. The state Game Commission is expected to approve a policy next month that would permit the Game and Fish Department to kill as many cougars as it sees fit on 140 square miles in the Manzano, Ladrones, Hatchet and Peloncillo mountain ranges.

The policy, which could go into effect by August, could mean the deaths of about two dozen cougars a year. But Darrel L. Weybright, leader of the department's big game projects, said he's not confident killing coyotes will have the same benefit for deer. Still, he said, it's worth a try. "There's not a study that I'm aware of that shows coyote control shows long-term positive effect on fawn recruitment," Weybright said. Some studies have found that getting rid of up to 70 percent of coyotes in a given area has some short-term effect on increasing the number of fawns, but other studies haven't agreed. "I'm willing to proceed with this because we may learn something," Weybright said. "I'm not real hopeful, because the evidence is not real shining that we're going to get a bang for our buck."

Animal-rights activists and environmental groups denounced both plans. John Horning of the Santa Fe-based Forest Guardians group said New Mexico's desert bighorns are limited to a fraction of their historic range because of bad management and diseases contracted from domestic livestock. "I don't think that a bullet in a mountain lion is a healthy response to the situation," Horning said.

"It's just a crisis-management response." Lisa Jennings, director of Animal Protection of New Mexico, said the decision to kill coyotes is politically motivated. "I've never seen a study

Continued on page 5, col. 1



The Editor thanks the following contributors to this issue: Mike Fall, Guy Connolly, Eugene LeBoeuf, Don Stokes, and Stephen Vantassel. Send your contributions to THE PROBE, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449.

Video Review: Stephen Vantassel, NWCO Correspondent

*"Cleaning Skulls for Pleasure or Profit" by Ken Carver, Maplewood, MN.
VHS. Approx. 120 minutes. \$19.95 postpaid.*

You may remember Mr. Carver, as I reviewed another of his videos ("Pocket Gopher Trapping") in Issue #175 April 1997. The subject of this video is more novelty information than about animal damage control. Animal skulls are an excellent way to educate the public about wildlife. With skulls, you can teach people about the natural history of animals, how their teeth are adapted to utilize certain foods, and so on.

Mr. Carver's video, like his previous one, is a no-frills and no-nonsense educational tape. As demonstrated by the number of skulls presented at the video's opening scene, Mr. Carver certainly has a great deal of experience. He shows off skulls such as beaver, coyote, and even pocket gopher. Mr. Carver explains that there are essentially three ways to clean skulls: The first way is to bury the skulls and let the microbes clean them. The second way is to place the skulls in a cage and let the bugs clean them. The last way is to boil them. It is this last method that Mr. Carver prefers. His rationale is speed. Boiling allows the skull to be cleaned in a relatively short period of time—in hours/days, rather than days/weeks.

His video takes you through the various steps to make beautiful skulls. His approach breaks down into four steps:

The tools that Mr. Carver uses are dental pick, brush, scalpel, and a boiling plate. I appreciated the way Mr. Carver takes the viewer through the process in real time. Only the time spent boiling was excerpted. You are left with the distinct impression that "hey, I can do this".

Boiling, Secondary Boiling, Bleaching, and Gluing/Shellacking. In between the boiling sequences one must scrape the flesh from the skulls. The tools that Mr. Carver uses are dental pick, brush, scalpel, and a boiling plate. I appreciated the way Mr. Carver takes the viewer through the process in real time. Only the time spent boiling was excerpted. You are left with the distinct impression that "hey, I can do this". Mr. Carver presents the information in a clear and frank manner. To add to your excitement, he even gives some prices of what finished skulls sell for. To my mind, you could add to your income with this skill.

I did have a few concerns about the video. First and foremost, I would have appreciated it if Mr. Carver wore gloves when handling the heads. Some parts of the country are affected by rabies outbreaks. At the very least, Mr. Carver should have discussed the potential for disease transmission. Although

the picture quality is quite good, Mr. Carver should have spent a little more time working on some of the technical aspects of the taping. The tape is marred by some off-screen noises and distractions. On a few occasions, Mr. Carver's actions occur outside of camera view. Another oversight was the lack of a source for one of the chemicals used in the skull cleaning pro-

This video isn't about animal damage control, so I won't give it a grade. Yet, if you want a video to teach you how to clean skulls, I would recommend this tape.

cess. While he graciously offers to give an address to those who write, it would have been more professional to give a few addresses on the video itself. If a revision is ever done, it would be great to see these changes made.

This video isn't about animal damage control, so I won't give it a grade. Yet, if you want a video to teach you how to clean skulls, I would recommend this tape. If you have read my columns in the past, you know that I believe government officials should be making better economic use of the natural resources in their states. Too often wildlife laws like those in Massachusetts actually encourage the waste of harvested wildlife by not allowing animal parts to be used and/or sold. I believe this video will help more people not only waste less of our wildlife resources, but it will also allow more people to learn about them, too.

You can obtain a postpaid copy of this video by sending \$19.95 payable to Ken Carver, 3034 Furness Ct., Maplewood, MN 55109. If you are looking to pick up some extra money through an unusual hobby, this video is for you.

Stephen Vantassel Special NWCO Correspondent
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<http://www.wildlifedamagecontrol.com>
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Reviewer's Note: If you would like a book or video reviewed in **THE PROBE**, please send it to Stephen Vantassel at the above address.

Continued from page 3, col. 2

Wildlife Damage in the News

that would suggest that killing coyotes would have an increased effect on deer populations," she said. "What the department is not facing is that they literally slaughtered way too many deer for many years, and what they're doing is blaming a predator for their lack of proper management practices in the past."

Dunn said the plan to kill cougars in bighorn sheep ranges is anchored in science. The department has put radio collars on up to as many as 100 bighorn sheep in recent years. Since 1995, 53 collared animals have died, three-quarters of them killed by cougars, Dunn said. New Mexico has about 540 Rocky Mountain bighorns and about 220 desert bighorns, Dunn said. It has an estimated 2,000 mountain lions. Lions have increasingly turned to preying on bighorns as the deer herds have declined in certain areas, Dunn said.

Barry Hale, assistant chief of the Division of Wildlife, said the deer plan will focus on increased law enforcement, improving habitats, surveying hunters and controlling predators in the north side of the Jemez Mountains, and near Gallup, Lordsburg, Capitan, and east of Cimarron. The department hasn't decided how many coyotes would be killed, he said.

— excerpted from an Associated Press article in the *Albuquerque Journal*, June 12, 1999

House Backs Funding of Program That Targets Predators

The House voted in early June to fully fund the USDA Wildlife Services program at the level requested, defeating an attempt by Oregon's Rep. Peter DeFazio (D) to cut \$7 million from the program. As he did a year ago, the congressman argued that the federal program is wasteful and ineffective, and that ranchers should have to take care of their own pest problems.

"The question is: Should federal taxpayers pay for predator-control services on private ranches — for profit — in the western United States?" DeFazio said on the House floor.

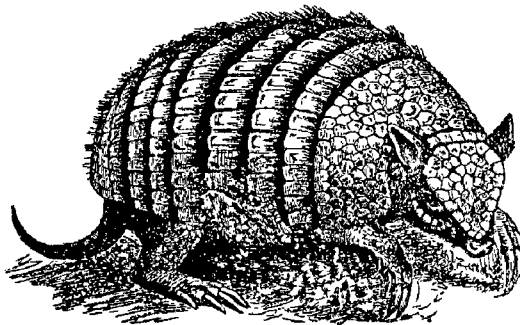
But the House defeated the amendment, 230-193, with supporters arguing that the program does far more than aid ranchers. Cutting funds from the \$30 million program would increase the threat of rats spreading the bubonic plague, of mountain lions killing hikers and even of planes crashing, since program funds eradicate troublesome birds at airports, supporters said.

"Ask yourself if you could live with an accident occurring at an airport — or live with a child dying, who was afflicted with rabies — because there was not enough money in the budget to support this program," said Rep. Henry Bonilla, R-Texas.

Agriculture Department officials in 1997 killed 146,000 animals, and about 82,000 of the animals were coyotes, ac-

ording to Wildlife Services program figures. Other animals killed included 31,000 beavers, 7,300 raccoons and 6,800 skunks. DeFazio and Rep. Charles Bass, R-N.H., offered their amendment to a \$61 billion agriculture appropriations bill.

— excerpted from an Associated Press article in the *Salt Lake City Tribune*, June 9, 1999



Armadillos Considered Delicacies By Some; Leprosy Threat by Others

Armadillos are a common sight in Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma and are often considered garden nuisances. In San Francisco, it's a different story. Armadillos are served as delicacies in some Chinatown restaurants.

It wasn't a problem until city health officials discovered that armadillos can contract Hansen's Disease, or what is more commonly known as leprosy. Health officials are currently discussing whether "dining on 'dillos" poses a health hazard for San Francisco residents and visitors.

Sold at \$5.99 a pound, the armadillos are usually used in soups. Visitors to Asian countries say they have eaten the meat abroad, but several Chinatown butchers have discontinued sales because they understood the sale of armadillo meat had been banned, which is not the case.

Is there a connection between armadillos and leprosy? According to authorities, armadillos are susceptible to the disease. They are also used in laboratory studies of leprosy. Whether an armadillo suffering from Hansen's Disease is a threat to humans is still being considered.

Jane Mahlow, a doctor with the Texas Department of Health, said that there have been studies that suggest people who have greater contact with armadillos—wildlife biologists and trappers—may have a slightly higher rate of leprosy than people who have had no exposure. Another study indicated that a higher percentage of Los Angeles leprosy patients had been exposed to armadillos than the control group.

San Francisco health officials will be presenting information to the Animal Control and Welfare Commission. The Commission stated that they do not wish to ban the meat—just ensure that all meat sold to the public has been tested for leprosy.

—excerpted from the *San Francisco Examiner*

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Membership Renewal and Application Form

NATIONAL ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Mail to: Grant Huggins, Treasurer, Noble Foundation, P.O. Box 2180, Ardmore, OK 73402

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Additional Address Info: _____

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Dues: \$ _____ Donation: \$ _____ Total: \$ _____ Date: _____
Membership Class: Student \$10.00 Active \$20.00 Sponsor \$40.00 Patron \$100 (Circle one)
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Select one type of occupation or principal interest:

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