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A Message From Our New President

Unlike most American presidents, who begin their first term describing the deplorable conditions of the country due to the misdeeds on the past administration, I will do the opposite. Of course, the advantage of the president's strategy is that by the end of his term, he can report on how much better things are now — all thanks to his own effort. I will not do that. Instead, I want to make the point of how far wildlife damage management has come in the last few decades.

When I entered this field in the 1970's, my wildlife professors and colleagues shook their heads and wondered why I wanted to commit academic suicide and enter the field of wildlife damage management. They pointed out that the field contained little more than gopher-chokers who wore black hats all day long and had the blood of innocent predators on their hands.

When I entered this field in the 1970's, my wildlife professors and colleagues shook their heads and wondered why I wanted to commit academic suicide and enter the field of wildlife damage management... I saw something different. I saw a challenging field where I thought I could advance our basic knowledge of science, and at the same time, solve some wildlife problems and human-wildlife conflicts which were plaguing society...

I saw something different. I saw a challenging field where I thought I could advance our basic knowledge of science, and at the same time, solve some wildlife problems and human-wildlife conflicts which were plaguing society. I saw colleagues in wildlife damage management who I admired as people and as scientists — people such as Mike Fall, Fred Knowlton, Russ Reidinger, Richard Dolbeer, Guy Connolly, Jim Miller, Jack Berryman, and many more. They were my heroes, although none of them knew it, and they still are. I felt that if I could

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An Update on AVMA's Euthanasia Guidelines

Robert H. Schmidt, Member, AVMA Panel on Euthanasia

In 1999, the American Veterinary Medical Association's (AVMA) Executive Board authorized the formation of a Panel on Euthanasia to review the AVMA's 1993 guidelines for euthanasia (Andrews, E. J. et al. 1993. 1993 Report on the AVMA panel on euthanasia. J. Am. Vet. Med. Assoc. 202:230-247). The charge given to the Panel was to "...summarize contemporary scientific knowledge on euthanasia in order to provide the best professional guidance for relieving the pain and suffering of animals to be euthanatized."

The Panel convened in November, 1999, in Schaumburg, Illinois, for a 2-day meeting. Prior to this meeting, requests were made to interested individuals, organizations, and agencies to provide input into the new guidelines, and Panel members made initial suggestions for changes. Discussions from this meeting resulted in a first working draft.

Individual Panel members made additional comments to the Chair of the panel, and comments were edited and incorporated.

This draft was circulated for comments to interested individuals, organizations, and agencies, and these comments were distributed to Panel members. Final comments were solicited by the Panel's Chair, and a draft was prepared for the AVMA's Executive Board, which approved the report. Currently, the newest guidelines for euthanasia are being prepared for publication in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*. Although these guidelines have been approved by the Executive Board, the Panel, myself included, is not authorized to release the final guidelines because the editorial process could result in additional changes. The current "final" is still a "final draft," and should be published this year.

The new guidelines will be acceptable to some and not acceptable to others. The draft circulated for outside comments maintained the same general structure and philosophy as the 1993 guidelines.

I can report that issues and technologies involved with euthanasia are getting more complicated with time, and not less. For the future, it may

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 12-14, 2000: Sixth Mountain Lion Workshop, Holiday Inn Riverwalk, San Antonio, Texas. Call for Papers: submit oral or poster presentations on subjects such as state and provincial status, monitoring, interactions with prey, interactions with humans, populations, genetics, movements, or other aspects of ecology by Sept. 30 to Louis A. Harveson, Program Chairperson, in electronic format addressed to <harveson@sulross.edu>.

For more information, see
<http://www.sulross.edu/~lion/index.html>.

February 5-7, 2001: Wildlife Control Technology/NWCOA Seminar, Imperial Palace, Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information see the NWCOA website at www.nwcoa.com. Call 815-286-3039 to register.

August 27-30, 2001: 3rd Combined Bird Strike Committee USA/ Bird Strike Committee Canada Conference. The Westin Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Presentations at the conference have included papers, posters and demonstrations on wildlife control techniques, new technologies, land-use issues, training, engineering standards, and habitat management. Presenter proposals are due by April 2, 2001. Early Bird registration are due by June 1, 2001. For information contact Bruce MacKinnon by e-mail, mackinb@tc.qc.ca, phone (613) 990-0515, or fax (613) 990-0508.

September 9-14, 2001: 3rd European Vertebrate Pest Management Conference, Kibbutz Ma'ale Hachamisha Guest House, Israel. Abstracts and posters for the conference are invited and due by March 2001. For further information, contact Conference Secretariat: Ortra Ltd., P.O. Box 9352, Tel Aviv 61092, Israel, email <vert@ortra.co.il> or visit web site <http://www.ortra.com/vertebrate>.

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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.

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A Message From Our New President

measure up to them, I would have met a high standard and could have a sense of accomplishment.

I may not have yet met that high standard, but the profession and science of wildlife damage management certainly has reached some lofty heights. It has now become an integral and respected part of wildlife science and the wildlife profession. I can remember a time not so long ago when a paper I wrote on wildlife damage management was returned to me by the editor of the *Journal of Wildlife Management* who did not even send it out for review because in his opinion "articles on wildlife damage were not science, not wildlife management, and not appropriate for the journal." How things have changed. Today, every issue of the *Journal of Wildlife Management* and the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* contain many articles on wildlife damage management.

I can remember the first symposium on wildlife damage management at a conference of The Wildlife Society. There were maybe 20 people in a large auditorium which had seating for 300. I have just returned from this year's conference of The Wildlife Society in Nashville, Tennessee where there were three separate symposia on wildlife damage management. There were 200-300 people in each, and they were all among the best attended symposia at the conference. Another example of how things have changed is the fact that the Wildlife Damage Management Working Group is the largest and most active in The Wildlife Society.

There are many reasons for the growing stature of the science and the profession of wildlife damage management. One reason is the high-quality work of National Animal Damage Control Association under the leadership of former presidents. I will not lie and say they blew it. I will not say that we are going downhill. I will not say that I will do a better job than them. Rather, I will try to live up to the standards set by my predecessors. I also will say thank you for your confidence in me and for having elected me as your president. It is a great honor to serve.

Dr. Michael Conover

Newsletter Material Needed

Incoming **PROBE** editor Larry Sullivan solicits your input for upcoming issues of this newsletter. Please send any and all materials to Larry Sullivan, Extension Wildlife Specialist, University of Arizona, 325 BioSciences East, Tucson, AZ 97521-0043, or e-mail them to <sullivan@Ag.Arizona.Edu>.

Wildlife Damage Management in the News

Fuzzy Thinking?

As a result of several years of above-average moisture in many areas of Colorado, the growth of berries, acorns, and other bear forage has been boosted and these conditions have led to a rise in the population of black bears. However, recent hot, dry weather conditions have been wiping out much of the natural food sources and bears are dying throughout the state. Some surviving bears are invading residential areas in a frantic search for food needed to store energy to survive the pending hibernation period.

Residents around Aspen, Colorado have been experiencing bear encounters around garbage containers and bears actually invading home kitchens. As a result, some of the local residents want to start an emergency bear feeding program. Their theory is that fed bears will be happier, more respectful, and in better shape to survive winter. In addition, if the bears were fed at remote feeding sites, they would be drawn away from residential areas. Local wildlife officials say this idea is ridiculous and would only serve to make the bears more dependent on humans. Wildlife officials also point out that since bears spend about 19 hours a day feeding this time of year, these programs would be hugely expensive. Officials go on to say that since the local bear population is probably too high, natural winter mortality would likely take care of the situation.

— excerpted from an Associated Press article

BATF Halts Sales of Pyrotechnics

The Reed-Joseph International Company of Greenville Mississippi imports and distributes wildlife control equipment. Since the company deals in pyrotechnic devices, they are inspected by the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) every two years. During a recent inspection, BATF agents verbally ordered Reed-Joseph to cease and desist the sale of pyrotechnic cartridges. This order was apparently based on the BATF's authority to regulate explosive devices.

The specific items affected are:

- 1) 15mm Bird Banger cartridges
- 2) 15mm Screamer Siren cartridges
- 3) 19.2mm CAPA long range cartridges
- 4) 12 gauge Shot Tell (cracker shells) cartridges

If enforced, this order stops the sale of the items listed to all private parties who need these tools to protect crops and other resources from bird damage. Reed-Joseph is appealing this order and requesting the BATF to exclude these items from regulation as explosive devices. Reed-Joseph's contention is that, when used for their intended purpose, these devices do not constitute a public safety hazard, and are essential to control birds and other pests in croplands, orchards, vineyards, airports, and other venues.

Supporting the BATF review of this matter are US Senators Trent Lott and Thad Cochran, along with William Clay, Director, USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services. Barthell Joseph, of Reed-Joseph, indicated that the resolution of this matter may require legislation as the BATF's hands are tied by existing regulations which they must enforce.

— from Jim Miller via Bob Timm (edited)

ALF Raids Gensis Labs

The North American Animal Liberation Front (ALF) took responsibility for an early morning break-in and subsequent release of lab animals at a Genesis Laboratories facility in Wellington, Colorado on August 28. According to an ALF statement, they first cut the wires of a coop containing bobwhite quail and "freed" about 100 "wild birds". The group then moved to an adjacent coop and "freed" about 11 mallard ducks. Upon entering the main laboratory to free other animals including rats, the group tripped a silent alarm and fled.

The raid initially sparked police warnings that poison resistant rats had been let loose into the community. Richard Poche, the lab's president, later said that only birds were released, no rodents were missing. He stated that the research building was surrounded by a 3-foot high wall and apparently no rats had escaped. Officials reported that the rats, shipped in from New York City and Chicago, had developed immunity to commercial rodenticides and Genesis was working on control methods.

Deputy Cindy Gordon, spokesperson for the Larimer County Sheriff's Office, said the lab confirmed that 150 birds escaped. However, the birds were not wild and were obtained from a game-bird breeder. Investigators reported one quail suffered a broken leg and "was left to die" outside the lab. Lab personnel estimated that at least 75% of the others were killed by predators. Some of the remaining birds were recovered after they returned to the coop for food and water. According to a Sheriff's Office statement, "none of these birds had ever lived in the wild and their chances for survival were almost none."

ALF, according to a released statement, claims Genesis Laboratories was engaging in "wasteful, redundant and cruel toxicology testing". A spokesman for the ALF refuted claims of dead birds saying law enforcement officials typically release misleading information.

Since the attack, Poche, a wildlife biologist, has hired armed security guards to protect his property. "It doesn't pay to be logical to try to defend oneself against a group like that," he said. "They don't care how many people die from rodent diseases. They have no real compassion for mankind."

— excerpted from articles in the *Rocky Mountain Collegian* and the *Denver Rocky Mountain News*



The Editor thanks the following contributors to this issue: Mike Conover, Robert H. Schmidt, and Bob Timm.

From the Editor

I am honored to have been named the new editor of *THE PROBE* and I look forward to getting future issues out (in a more timely manner than this one) that will be of interest and, hopefully, value to the members of NADCA. I have a copy of the portion of the NADCA member survey that deals with *THE PROBE* and will keep that handy as I put future issues together. Unless directed otherwise by our officers or board, I plan to produce an issue of *THE PROBE* every two months.

The quality of this newsletter will depend largely on the contributions of information from NADCA members and other sources. If the content of this newsletter relies solely on me, then variety and diversity of ideas will be limited and the usefulness to our members will be diminished. I need contributions from the membership. Please send me articles, ideas to research, questions, comments, jokes (I have noticed a that there seems to be a deficit of wildlife related jokes), calendar items, news clippings, or anything else you would like to see in *THE PROBE*.

Snail-mail or e-mail your contributions to me at the addresses listed on page 2 of each issue. I would like to have your input by the 15th of the month prior to publication. I do plan to get back on a more timely schedule for the next issue—so the deadline for the Nov/Dec issue would be October 15. However, you probably won't get this issue by then, so this time just get information to me as soon as possible. If it doesn't make the next issue, it will make the following.

I am looking forward to serving as your editor.

Larry Sullivan

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An Update on AVMA's Euthanasia Guidelines

be useful for the AVMA to consider developing "guidelines for guidelines for euthanasia," then allowing the various professional associations working with laboratory mice, pigs, wild mammals, fish, birds, and other creatures to develop specific guidelines for euthanasia. As you might expect, working with a laboratory rabbit is different than working with a free-ranging, wild rabbit.

When the 2000 guidelines come out, look in *THE PROBE* for a summary and review.



Avitrol Banned in New York Cities Exceeding One Million

Amanda Paskiet

NEW YORK CITY— Governor George Pataki signed a bill last Thursday that bans the use of Avitrol in New York cities with populations over one million.

This news will primarily affect Manhattan. Unfortunately, the city has the highest population density in the country with approximately 65,500 people per square mile, as well as highest pigeon population in the state.

Avitrol, a widely-used avicide, prevents pigeons from congregating in undesirable areas by causing pigeons affected by the product to display erratic behavior and emit distress calls that frighten other birds of the flock. This behavior is seen as controversial to some animal rights and environmental groups who believe that the product is harmful to birds and other animals.

Kelly Swindle, president of Avitrol said the ban will hurt the city's efforts to control diseases since pigeons are often carriers of diseases such as encephalitis, the West Nile virus, and cryptococcosis.

"We've lost one of our vital tools in protecting people from these illness in this area since now we have one bird we cannot control by using Avitrol," Swindle said.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cryptococcosis can be fatal to people with low immune systems such as children, the elderly and people with AIDS or HIV. This adds further problems to pigeon control since New York has the highest number of AIDS cases in the United States, with over 115,059 cases in the Metropolitan area. In fact, the CDC warns those with AIDS or HIV to stay as far away from pigeons and pigeon droppings as possible.

"We have argued, fought, and spent more money on [pigeon control] in the past year than our total sales in New York because we felt very strongly that the product was needed," Swindle said.

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), on the other hand, vigorously supported the bill claiming Avitrol kills pigeons inhumanely as well as other birds and animals that come in contact with the product.

Swindle said the claim is simply untrue. In fact, a study conducted by animal rights advocate Dr. Harry C. Rowsell at University of Ottawa's (Canada) Department of Pathology proved that the chemical does not cause pathological changes in a pigeon's organs that would cause it pain or distress, nor is it intended to kill the birds.

"We are not responsible for human death nor have we ever had a human poisoning with an Avitrol product," said Swindle.

Unfortunately, the New York ban on Avitrol leaves few alternative avicides to control the pigeon population in the state.

—Copied with permission from www.pctonline.com

Wildlife Damage Management in the News

NWCOA National Certification Program

Tim Julien, President, NWCOA

The National Wildlife Control Operators Association (NWCOA) has finished the certification program and will formally present it at the Eastern Wildlife Damage Control Conference at Penn State on the 8th of October 2000. This is a Trade Certification. Our peers will decide if we meet the challenge and if it sets the standard for the industry. The program has a three part evaluation of Training, Experience

The program has been built to encourage the new operator to achieve the standard and has an apprenticeship program that anybody, regardless of experience, can take part in.

and Ethics. It is not meant to be easy and will be an accomplishment that you can be proud of. The program has been built to encourage the new operator to achieve the standard and has an apprenticeship program that anybody, regardless of experience, can take part in. Check it out at the temporary NWCOA Web site:

<http://www.wildlifedamagecontrol.com/nwcoa.htm>

Located there is the Certification Program Outline, the Certification Application and the Continuing Education Course Development application.

—copied with permission from NWCOA News Aug/Sep 2000

West Nile Virus Range Expanding

The deadly, West Nile Virus (WNV), a mosquito borne virus which primarily circulates between mosquitoes and birds, and has infected humans and other animals in the northeastern US, appears to be expanding its geographic range. First encountered in the New York City metropolitan area in the summer of 1999, WNV has been confirmed in all but two counties in New York State as well as areas of Connecticut, New Jersey and Maryland. Until now, WNV has not been found south of Baltimore, Maryland. However, recent discoveries of the virus have been made in heavily populated suburbs south of Baltimore. In addition to the southerly movement of this virus, a recent, although not yet confirmed, "possible positive" has been detected in Windsor, Canada, indicating that the virus may be headed there.

The onset of cooler fall temperatures may restrict mosquito activity, but the threat of mosquitoes infected with WNV will not end for the year 2000 until temperatures drop below freezing for a period of days. This may not occur until late October in northeastern states and even later further south.

—excerpted from a variety of sources as reported by ProMed-mail <promed@promedmail.org>

WNV Found in Raccoons

The New York State Health Department reported that as of September 15 the total number of WNV positive specimens is 644 birds, 269 mosquito pools, 1 sentinel chicken, 6 live wild birds, 9 bats, 1 horse, 1 raccoon and 11 human cases.



This is the first report of WNV in a raccoon. Since the WNV primarily circulates between mosquitoes and birds, there is no evidence that handling raccoons, birds or other wildlife poses any additional threat to humans. However, the standard recommendation is to never

handle any wild animal, dead or alive, with bare hands.

— excerpted from a New York City Dept. Of Health press release reported in ProMed-mail <promed@promedmail.org>

Ever Wonder?

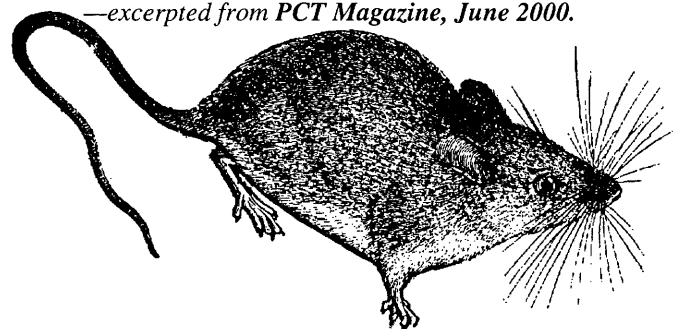
What do you think is the principle cause of death of mice caught in a multiple catch trap? Starvation? Stress? Thirst? All of these?

All of these may play a role in some cases, but according to Dr. Bobby Corrigan, in a recent issue of *PCT* magazine, many mice die of hypothermia—a loss of body heat. Because the mouse has a high body surface-volume to body mass ratio, mice lose body heat rapidly. Unless the mouse is able to conserve body heat by constructing a nest of insulating material, it may die of hyperthermia.

The length of time a mouse can survive in a trap, without the protection of insulating material, will vary with the age of the mouse and its physiological health. In areas where the trap is exposed to outside winter temperatures, death may occur after only a few hours. If the trap is in a warmer environment such as during summer or in a heated room, the mouse may live for several days.

Corrigan also points out that when two mice are trapped at the same time, the stronger mouse usually kills the weaker mouse and consumes the carcass to obtain food and maintain body heat.

—excerpted from *PCT Magazine*, June 2000.



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NATIONAL ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ASSOCIATION

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