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August 1990

## The Probe, Issue 103 - August 1990

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# THE PROBE

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## National Animal Damage Control Association

AUGUST 1990

NUMBER 103

### APHIS ACTIVITY REPORT

(The following are abstracted from APHIS-ADC activity reports and newsletters like *Idaho Trappin and Gabbin*, *Texas Trapline*, *The Trappers' Jaw*, etc. for the benefit of non-APHIS readers. This is not a publication source. Only names of NADCA members are used in situations in which they are involved. If you want to see your name in print, better join up.)

### DWRC IN TROUBLE!

The U. S. Agency for International Development has informed the Denver Wildlife Research Center that it will not continue support to maintain DWRC's International Programs Research Section after 12/31/90. If this occurs, DWRC will not be able to (1) conduct lab studies on developing countries vertebrate pest problems; (2) provide information to vertebrate pest control workers with any regularity; (3) respond efficiently to requests for toxicological, pharmacological, environmental, biological, chemical, library and statistical services; (4) provide timely, short-term technical assistance and training to foreign workers; and (5) participate in training, extension, and field studies in foreign countries.

I'm selfish. I generally believe "charity begins at home" but in this instance the AID money supports a good deal of DWRC's activities that are of direct benefit to the ADC field in this country. This action has been threatened before. Comments from the field reversed the directive, so please write to AID (Dr. D. Bathrick, Chief, Office of Agric., Bureau Science & Technology, U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington, D.C. 20523) and/or your Congressman to support DWRC. You might send a copy to Dr. Dick Bruggers, DWRC, so they know who their friends are.

### BEAR

(WI) The Rhinelander district received 214 complaints about bear during May. Forty-five were taken in culvert traps and relocated.

### BIRDS

(DWRC) "BLOCK-OUT", a capsaicin bird repellent proved of no value in bird repellency tests.

### BLACKBIRDS

(ND) Breeding bird surveys showed:

YEAR	1967	1981-2	1990
Redwing*	2,100+		1,100+
Yellow*	200+	960+	400+
Grackle*	330+	570+	780+

\*Red-winged blackbird, Yellow-headed blackbird, and common grackle.

+Figures in thousands.

Drought and wetland drainage is suggested as reason for blackbird fluctuations; maturaton of shelter belt plantings for the increase of grackles.

(LA) The British Broadcasting Corp. has requested live blackbirds from APHIS. BBC wants to train them to fly alongside camera equipment mounted in radio-controlled aircraft for a proposed film at the Miller's Lake roost next year. The ARs will probably demand a commission as the birds' agent. If so, pay 'em in birdseed.

### CATS

The Bahama parrot has been listed as endangered since 1970. While habitat loss is principal cause, feral cats caused the failure of 45% of nests under study. This is the only New World parrot that nests underground in limestone cavities.

### CORMORANTS

(ND) A fishing bait vendor had at least 1,000 cormorants eating minnows from his pond. Ropes with plastic flagging strung across the pond alleviated the problem.

(MS) Feeding studies indicate these birds can take 12.7 fish (4-inch fingerling catfish) per hour amounting to \$0.57 loss/cormorant hour which translates to a \$500 loss in catfish fingerlings by 100 cormorants in an 8-hour day.

## DRC-1339

(CO) Tests with rabbits and DRC-1339 were discontinued when it was found the chemical was extremely irritating and corrosive to the cornea. Beware!

## MOUNTAIN BEAVER

(WA) Pen tests with these rodents showed poor mortality and acceptance of ORCO pelleted strychnine bait, one animal requiring 13 days. Animals prebaited with untreated bait in the field had a higher mortality (83%) and quicker bait acceptance (1-4 days).

## PIGEONS

(KY) One application of DRC-1339/corn after four weeks gave 100% removal of a downtown pigeon population in Mt. Sterling originally estimated at 600 birds.

## YELLOW-BELLIED MARMOTS

(ID) Tests with the two active ingredient gas cartridge (sodium nitrate/charcoal) proved 80% successful against these rodents.

*The gas station on the corner is up for sale. They're asking \$60,000.009.*

## READIN'

**DODSON, MONTE** - "Applying for an ADC Position - My Thoughts", *American Trapper* Jul/Aug '90 p. 51-54.

This is an excellent article on the pros and cons in becoming an APHIS hunter. Monte left the Service (it was PARC then) when he got tangled up in a hassle with an Oklahoma dogman who had political clout. The Service lost a dedicated employee, but Monte gives an unbiased account without any rancor of just what is involved in being an employee in the Federal ADC.

**HOWARD, DR. WALTER E.** - *Animal Rights vs. Nature*, W.E. Howard Press, 24 College Park, Davis, CA 95616, paperback, 226p, \$12 postpaid.

This is pure "Howdy" at his best on the pulpit. It sums up all his vast experience and ability to tell it as it is in the field of vertebrate ecology. I particularly liked his appendix with short statements debunking the ANIMAL RIGHTS movement statements.

**POTTER, M.J.**, "Treeshelers Improve Survival and Increase Early Growth Rates" *J. Forestry*, Aug. 1988, p. 39-41.

Report on the use of a tree shelter in the UK that is available in the USA from TUBEX, 75 Bidwell Street, Suite 105, St. Paul, MN 55107. Not cheap, but these portable 2 to 6-foot high devices

not only increased growth rate of oak by a factor of 7 to 8 but enhanced survival chances from weather, weed competition, and rabbit/deer/mouse damage. They look interesting. For more information, write or call (612) 228-0535.

*I don't care if Zsa Zsa wins her next round in court. She's already lost her appeal.*

## I GET LETTERS

**NORTON MINER**, rtd. USFWS, NADCA Reg. Dir. MT:  
Just returned from GEORGE GOOD's funeral. He needs to be remembered by the friends of NADCA. He came to Montana after doing fox research trapping for Iowa F&G as he wanted the challenge of coyote trapping. He and Faye applied to me for Joe Morin's job in Circle (MT). While I had reservations about a flatlands fox trapper getting along with Montana ranchers, I reluctantly gave him a chance. They rented a place in Circle two months before Joe's retirement, went back to Iowa, leased their farm, packed up the kids and moved to Montana! George more than paid his entire salary and expenses from the fox and coyote furs salvaged from his district in the eight years he had it. He was a solid NADCA member. Faye will continue to manage the Tri-County Private Predator Control Program with the help of one trapper and two pilots.

*I'm opposed to using chemical weapons. Don't we need these for food?*

## HUMANS GOT RIGHTS???

(This is confined to Fitzwater's personal vendetta against the Animal Rights (AR) movement so any purists should skip it. Unless otherwise noted, THANKX to SHERM BLOM for the myriad of clippings with which he snows me.)

AR attacks are on the increase in England as per the following report:

YEAR	A*	I+	B#
1986	3.1 M	947	16
1987	3.6 M	708	33
1988	3.4 M	338	16
1989	NA	422	44

\* No. animals used in experiments.

+ Animal liberation incidents.

# Bomb attacks.

Two recent bomb attacks involved two veterinary surgeons. One at the Ministry of Defense's Chemical & Microbiological Research who saved herself by jumping out the window of her jeep when the bomb exploded and the other at the Univ. of Bristol who drove his car for five days before the bomb dropped off and injured a 13-month-old boy. The infamous Animal Liberation Front (ALF) claimed responsibility for both attacks. Scotland Yard is so worried by these terrorists it has set up an Animal Rights National Index to keep track of the creeps. Statistics show a decline in overall activity, but a rise in the use of incendiaries. THANKS to

MIKE FALL.

*It was so cold this morning a flasher walked up to me this morning and started describing himself.*

## ALL THE DEAD CRITTERS

That's what *Outside* mag (8/90) calls ADC. The flap is over mountain lions in Arizona. A stack of 17 grinning lion heads in a pile brought down the wrath of the environmentalists. The unpublished facts were: all had calves in their stomachs and the heads were routinely cut off so they could be weighed, aged, and sexed by biologists.

*I wish I was rich enough to be what I really want to be - rich.*

## FUR FLIES IN THE ARTIC

The Athabascans and Inuits have formed an Indigenous Survival International Cooperative in which they intend to sell native-trapped furs through small stores under the label of "Authentic Native Design".

While they plan to return to a sealing-based culture from store bought food and clothing, they need cash to buy gas and ammo. However, the ARs are not having that. That paragon of virtue, HSUS, admits they need to trap and shoot animals for their own needs, "but to kill animals just to market their skins is another thing altogether...the only hope for these people is to get away from marketing furs. We acknowledge there are problems...(but) we don't have an official position on that...our job is protecting animals."

*My boss doesn't know his shortcomings. He's too busy paying attention to mine.*

## SAVE OUR PRAIRIE DOGS. GO TO NUCLA

Sherm really snowed me with all the clippings on the Nucla (CO) big prairie dog shootout. Anyway, it looks like 2,956 prairie dogs were killed; T-shirts, critter coffins, and booze were the big sale items that boosted the economy of the town; and 22 protestors made noise and threatened to get more drastic next year. One of the better "Letters to the Editor" was by a Louis Phillippe (Ft. Collins): "You've got to love the Rocky Mountain Humane Society. What entertainment they provide. Demanding National Guard babysitting while they attempt an illegal hunt sabotage is like asking for police protection for a rabid pit bull at a dog show. The "thousands" of protestors planning to attend this rodent control contest will kill more innocent wild creatures with their cars enroute than the contestants. If any, Robin Duxbury included, are seen slapping a mosquito, they should be arrested. The RMHS does not operate animal shelters, nor does it care for unwanted pets. It exists only to protest all human contact with animals."

*I'm starting a business selling chunks of the Berlin Wall. I got my*

*first shipment from Taiwan.*

**ALL THE NEWS THAT'S PRINT TO FIT**  
(Again THANX to SHERM BLOM who keeps sending me more than I want to read)

## WHO TO BELIEVE?

Under a headline "PUBLIC LANDS IMPROVED, NOT HARMED BY RANCHING" (*Livestock Weekly* 7/5/90), BLM found big game numbers (Barbary and big-horn sheep, bear, bison, caribou, elk, antelope, deer, javelina, moose, and Mountain goat) went up 31% on BLM land and 4% on Forest Service land between 1977 and 1988. Livestock grazing occurs on 93% of BLM acreage in the 11 Western states, but only 32% is classified as grazable on FS lands. Without livestock grazing, the federal government would have to absorb the rancher's costs of maintaining water tanks necessary for wildlife production, too, which is estimated at \$5.7 million in 1983. Nearly 80% of BLM and 88% of FS lands are either improving or stable in their ecological condition today.

*I turn half my money over to people who understand investing—my creditors.*

## I'M AN OLD COWHAND FROM THE RIO RHINE

Ever since a tiny item appeared in a German newspaper about a shortage of cowboys in Wyoming, the Travel Comm. has been flooded with requests from both sides of the Berlin Wall. One, Steffen-Petry read cowboys could get \$1,000 a month and a room with cable TV, so a wee later he arrived in Cheyenne with one pair of street shoes, little experience, and a big dream. Casper's Mountain Plains Agricultural Services, whose name and number appeared in the article, has its phone ringing off the hook. The receptionist has a note posted to remind her how to say she doesn't speak German so she gets calls like "Moo, cowboy." Meanwhile, Petry is living at a nearby ranch (no work visa) and enjoying the notoriety. The rancher took him to a bar to meet some cowboys. A girl waved at him, put a beer on the table, said "Welcome to America", and bent over and kissed him. Now Petry doesn't want to go back. Who would? I never got that treatment when I was in Wyoming!

*I think my bank is in danger of going under. They only issued 6-month calendars.*

## A BILL OF RATS

Jack Kisling (*Denver Post* 7/12/90) in an article entitled, "TELLING RAT FROM WRONG TAKES TIME" deplores our specism that refers to mice as "itty-bitty" and rats as "dirty". The rat is a victim of pure hatred. We kill a cow for beef, a mink for fur, the rhino for its horn, but we kill rats just to see them dead. Education for a bill of rats is the answer. Rats should be drawn more sympathetically—teeth de-emphasized, eyes a little larger,

tails a little bushier, and should be shown preparing their nests and taking care of the little ones. If we try, we can become more rat sensitive, as we have in the case of the grizzly, mountain lion, wolf, and chicken hawk. These were varmints and despised by everyone. Now we have decided they were more sinned against than sinning. We have gone from killing the grizzly, to leaving them alone, to protecting, and finally reinstating them in the wild. Years later we might want to consider reintroducing rats to cities that have treated them so viciously.

*When I asked the bank manager for an instant, low-interest loan, he wanted to see my gun.*

## **PORKER PATROL**

A passel of pigs are being tried out in Roberts City (MI) to eat eggs and chase seagulls away from a break-water on Lake Huron. The gulls have become a nuisance and health hazard. *Rocky Mtn News*, 7/5/90

*I lost my job at the orange juice factory. My boss said I couldn't concentrate.*

## **HITCHCOCK'S "BIRDS"**

The "Hashibuto" are giant crows that have been terrorizing Tokyo (so this is where they got the idea for the movie, "The Frog That Ate Tokyo"?) They attack strollers in the park, pillage garbage cans, and vandalize everything from bicycle tires to TV-antennas. These have come in from the country and driven out smaller, gentler crows in the urban areas. And they're a protected species! *Denver Post* 7/8/90

*If medical science is so advanced, how come X-rays are still in black and white?*

## **BY-PRODUCTS**

Lori Gillick says when they moved to the suburbs of Bloomington (MN) six years ago, the family enjoyed the occasional sight of two or three deer in their backyard. Now she is complaining because every two or three weeks she shovels up a 30-gallon can full of deer droppings to put out on the curb. *Star Tribune* (MN) 6/29/90

*East Germans will know they've embraced capitalism when they receive an envelope from Ed McMahon.*

## **ENDANGERED SPECIES**

Livestock-killing lions have increased dramatically in Wyoming over the past few years. Damage claims rose from \$2,015 in 1982 to \$106,836 in 1987. *CASPER* (WY) 4/7/89

The Wyoming G&F wants some 5,000 elk harvested from the Jackson Hole area as the Department is 30% over their budget for feeding the critters. They are trying to liberalize the hunting season starting from the middle of September to possibly November, but they feel there won't be many hunters to take advantage of the situation as they've got 9,000 fewer local hunters than they had in the early eighties. Hunters—these are the real endangered!

*Medicine is so high tech now when I'm not feeling well, I don't know whether to go to the drugstore or Radio Shack.*

## **BILL FITZWATER**

Future issues of *The Probe* will be edited by Robert Schmidt and Robert Timm. Please send your contributions to the editors at the Hopland Field Station, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449. Bob and Bob appreciate Bill's submission of the timely information contained in this issue.

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## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**October 16-18, 1990:** *"Managing Wildlife in the Southwest"*, Symposium, Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, Tucson, Arizona. Contact: Dr. Paul R. Krausman, 325 Biological Sciences E. Bldg., School of Renewable Natural Resources, Univ. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85745.

**March 22-27, 1991:** *56th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference*, Edmonton, Alberta. Includes a session on "Managing Predator/Prey Populations". For further information, contact: Wildlife Management Institute, 1101 14th Street NW, Suite 725, Washington DC 20005.

**April 15-18, 1991:** *10th Great Plains Wildlife Damage Control Workshop*, Lincoln, Nebraska. Abstracts for papers to be presented are due Dec. 31, 1990. Contact: Scott Hygnstrom, Dept. of Forestry, Fisheries & Wildlife, 202 Natural Resources Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68583-0819. Phone (402) 472-6822.

**July 29-31, 1991:** *"Wildlife 2002: Populations"*, Berkeley, California. For researchers and agency personnel interested in the science, conservation, and management of vertebrate animal populations. For further information or to submit an abstract to give a paper, contact: Dale McCullough or Reg Barrett, Dept. of Forestry and Resource Mgmt., 145 Mulford Hall, UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720



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### Membership Application

#### NATIONAL ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Mail to: Wes Jones, Treasurer, Route 1 Box 37, Shell Lake, WI 54871

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Dues \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \$: \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Underline: Student \$7.50, Active \$15, Sponsor \$30, Patron \$100)

Check or Money Order payable to NADCA

Select one type of occupation or principal interest:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> USDA - APHIS - ADC         | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal - other than APHIS | <input type="checkbox"/> State Agency          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Trapper               |
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