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September 1992

## The Probe, Issue 125 - September 1992

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# Bird Strike Committee USA Is Born

Robert H. Schmidt, Editor, *The Probe*

“**W**hat we tried to get is a good exchange of information, and I think we did that.” With this statement, NADCA member Jim Forbes closed the first meeting of Bird Strike Committee USA (BSCUSA). Approximately 100 attendees from a wide variety of civilian and military agencies spent three days August 4-6 reviewing the history of bird strikes in the US and around the world, while also discussing the latest strategies for dealing with this serious issue.

“Bird strikes” are loosely defined as birds hitting aircraft during any phase of flight: taxiing, takeoff, climb, cruise, descent, approach, or landing. In reality, mammals are also threats in an airfield environment, as seen in recent incidents of aircraft on the ground hitting deer, coyotes, and jackrabbits.

The first meeting of BSCUSA was held, appropriately enough, at the John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) in New York.

According to J. Sillings and R. Dolbeer, during the period 1979 through 1991, bird strikes at JFK resulted in 44 aborted take-offs and 40 engines damaged or destroyed, causing millions of dollars in equipment damage annually (*The Probe*, issue 120). Currently, a controversial but effective gull shooting program, with over 15,000 gulls removed in 1991, has reduced bird strikes at JFK by 68%. According to Jack Gartner of the JFK Airport Authority during his welcoming remarks to the attendees, “We paid a price politically and socially” for the JFK bird hazard reduction program.

In the past, US representatives interested in reducing bird strikes have participated in Bird Strike Committee Canada and Bird Strike Committee Europe. Forbes, New York,

New York State Director for USDA-APHIS-Animal Damage Control, outlined six reasons for the formation of a similar group in the U.S.:

- create a forum for exchanging information
- develop new techniques and strategies
- provide training opportunities
- coordinate work with all practitioners
- liaison with the BSC Canada
- support research

Victor E.F. Solomon (Canadian Wildlife Service) discussed the history of 50 years of

bird strikes in Canada. He noted that airfield managers have learned to modify the environment to reduce the availability of food, water, and shelter, along with anything else that would attract birds. “What you can’t modify is the large open space,” concluded Solomon. For bird



harassment programs, “Motivation is the game...so don’t forget it.” He recognized that bird harassment is repetitive and boring, and warned against accidents following mistakes.

Gene LeBoeuf (Federal Aviation Administration) discussed the lack of accurate national statistics on bird strikes. According to voluntary reports from airlines, there were 1,700 bird strikes in 1991, with an average of 1,500 strikes per year. Ron Merritt (US Air Force) reported that between 1987 and 1991, the Air Force experienced an average of 3,150 strikes per year, with the annual cost exceeding \$65 million. For the Air Force, approximately half of all strikes occurred in the runway environment. Richard Parker (Pratt &

*Continued on page 5*

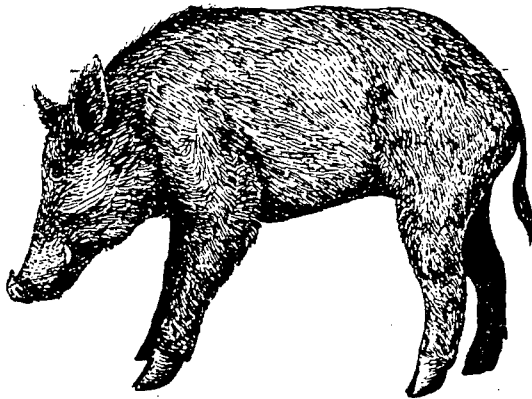
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# CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 19-24, 1993: North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, Washington, D.C.** Sponsored by The Wildlife Society. For more information, contact Dr. Lowell W. Adams, Chair, National Institute for Urban Wildlife, 10921 Trotting Ridge Way, Columbia, MD 21044, Phone: (301) 596-3311, or Dr. John M. Hadidian, Cochair, Center For Urban Ecology, National Park Service, 1100 Ohio Drive, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20242, Phone: (202) 342-1443.

**April 26-29, 1993: 11th Great Plains Wildlife Damage Control Workshop, Hyatt Regency, Kansas City, MO.** For further information, contact: F. Robert Henderson, Ext. Wildlife Specialist, Kansas State University, (913) 532-5654, or Robert A. Pierce II, Ext. Wildlife Specialist, University of Missouri, (314) 882-7242. *The Annual Meeting of the NADCA membership will be held in conjunction with this meeting. Watch the Probe for future details of agenda items to be discussed, as well as specific date and time of this meeting. Plan to be there!*

**May 25-26, 1993: The Wild Pig in California Oak Woodland: Ecology and Economics. Embassy Suites Hotel, San Luis Obispo, CA.** Contact: Dr. William Tietje, Forestry & Resource Management, 2156 Sierra Way, Suite C, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. (805) 549-5940.



*The Probe* is the newsletter of the National Animal Damage Control Association, published 10 times per year.

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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 Field Station, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449. If you prefer to FAX material, our FAX number is (707) 744-1040. The deadline for submitting material is the 15th of each month.

**July 4-10, 1993: Sixth International Theriological Congress, Sydney, Australia.** This is an international meeting of scientists interested in mammalogy, and will include symposia and workshops including such topics as population biology of mammals, the role of disease in population regulation, and wildlife management. Will include sessions on *Management of Problem Wildlife and Predation As a Regulator of Mammal Populations*. For further information, write: The Secretariat, 6th Int'l Theriological Congress, School of Biological Science, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia 2033.

**September 19-25, 1993: First International Wildlife Management Congress, Costa Rica** Proposed sessions include: *Strategies to Sustain Human and Wildlife Communities; Management for Sustainable Utilization of Wildlife Resources in Developing Countries; Human Population Considerations in Wildlife Management; Integrating Biodiversity Goals With the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources; Local, National and International Policies Used to Achieve Sustainable Use; Incorporating Wildlife into Development; Cultural and Social Value Differences; Conflicts Between Man, Agriculture and Wildlife* (which will include Animal Damage Control Techniques); *Legal Structures for Managing Wildlife; Trade Economics, and Identification of Wildlife Products; Landscape Linkages and Restoration Ecology; Advanced Technology Applied to Wildlife Management; Techniques for Monitoring Terrestrial Wildlife and Their Habitats; and Wildlife Management - The Role of Education in Undergraduate and Graduate Wildlife Programs in Developing Countries*. For more information, contact Tom Baudolin, The Wildlife Society, (301) 897-9770.

**October 1993: 6th Eastern Wildlife Damage Control Conference, Asheville, NC.** For further information, contact: Peter R. Bromley, Ext. Wildlife Specialist, NC State University, (919) 515-7587.

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## Positions Available

**T**he North Carolina Animal Damage Control program is in the process of recruiting three biological technicians for work on a recently funded beaver control program in southeastern North Carolina in Brunswick, Bladen, Columbus, and Sampson Counties. These positions are full-time temporary for Ad-404 one-year appointments at an annual salary of \$15,808 and will begin in October 1992. Although they are currently one-year positions, there is a possibility they may be extended subject to future funding. Responsibilities include trapping and removal of problem and nuisance beaver, and the testing and development of new beaver damage control strategies.

For more information, contact Jon F. Heisterberg, State Director, USDA/APHIS, ADC, 6301-E Angus Drive, Raleigh, NC 27613, telephone (919) 856-4124.

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# “Wire” Grid Excludes Cormorants from Commercial Catfish Ponds

J. Alan May, District Supervisor, USDA/APHIS/ADC, Stoneville, Mississippi

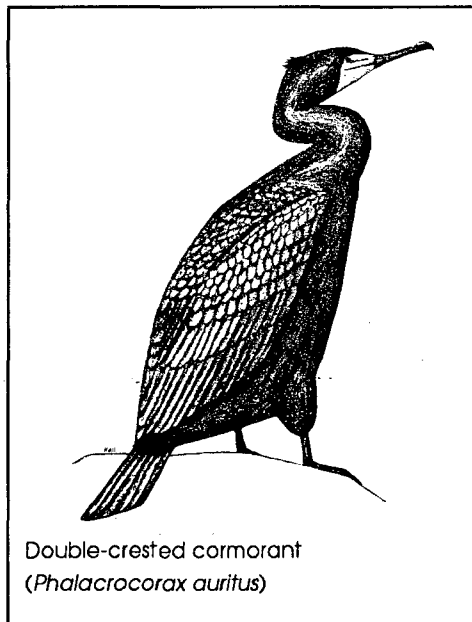
Michael J. Bodenchuk, District Supervisor, USDA/APHIS/ADC, Pierre, South Dakota

**D**ouble-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) populations have risen dramatically in the past two decades, and significant conflicts have developed in the Mississippi Delta where commercial catfish operations coincide with wintering areas. Annual depredation losses are estimated to be approximately \$3 million. A field trial using a “wire” grid to exclude cormorants from ponds was conducted by USDA/Animal Damage Control (ADC) to determine the compatibility of such a system with current pond management practices, adaptability of materials to the design, construction costs, and longevity. The grid was designed to exclude cormorants by making landing on the pond difficult.

Materials and basic construction design were provided by National Netting Inc. of Norcross, Georgia. Design modifications were developed by ADC in conjunction with Thompson Fisheries, Inc., Thornton, Mississippi. A 12-gauge polypropylene wire grid was constructed over a 9.1 acre (approximately 500'x1,050') fingerling pond. To facilitate lifting of the grid to allow for harvest of the fish, the 2-inch steel pipe support posts were placed in 2.5-inch PVC sleeves set in concrete along the pond levee at 100' intervals. A perimeter wire was connected to these posts with quick-coupling links at a height of 6.5 feet. This was designed to allow the entire grid to be lifted and the support poles removed to allow the passage of harvest equipment, chemical treatment boats, and levee maintenance equipment. Electric fence tighteners were used to tighten the perimeter wire as well as four other support wires which spanned the width of the pond (a double wire in the center of the pond and one wire midway between the center and each end). Grid wires were connected to the perimeter wire on 30-foot spacing by passing the grid wire through a 0.125-inch double ferrule which had been crimped to the perimeter wire. The grid wires were tightened by pulling them through the ferrule by hand and tying them off.

While it appears that this grid may deter cormorants from catfish ponds, there are several problems associated with this design. The polypropylene wire may stretch up to 12%, causing the grid to droop into the water. In this trial, 50% of the grid was in the water after three months. This problem may be offset somewhat by eliminating the

perimeter wire and placing support posts every 30 feet, then building the grid from post to post. Electric wire tighteners could then be used on every line. High construction costs may be offset by longevity. However, we have experienced some wire breakage during the first three months. The adaptability of this system to the management needs of catfish producers still needs refinement. While fingerling producers may be able to operate under the wires for most of the year, the harvest of food fish under this design is impractical. Other exclusion methods including floating polypropylene rope are currently being investigated by USDA/ADC researchers. This system may be easier to design and build, and may be more adaptable to current pond management practices.



Double-crested cormorant  
(*Phalacrocorax auritus*)

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## “Pesticides to 1995” Available

**M**arketFax, an Atlanta-based information broker, is currently distributing a marketing research study called Pesticides To 1995. This study projects market opportunities to 1995 and 2000 for the U.S. pesticide industry. It analyzes the demand for herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, soil fumigants, rodenticides, nematocides, and others.

Pesticides are also examined in terms of crop use, sector (e.g., agriculture, home and garden, etc.) and formulation type. The report reviews industry trends and profiles key companies. Cost is \$2,400. For more information, contact MarketFax, P.O. Box 52977, Atlanta, Georgia, 30355-0977, telephone (404) 888-0978.

# Animal Damage Control in the News

## Arizona Update From WLFA

According to the July issue of the *WLFA-gram* (published by the Wildlife Legislative Fund of America), the crucial vote that will determine the future of hunting, fishing, and trapping in Arizona is a mere 90 days away. Fundraising is the key to victory, so the WLFA and the Arizonans for Wildlife Conservation are concentrating their efforts in that area. In July, Pete Cimellaro, treasurer and spokesperson for AWC, addressed the annual conference of the Outdoor Writers Association of America in Bismarck, North Dakota. He told the 500 outdoor communicators that a great deal of the money will come from Arizona, but the rest must come from national sources. Contributions may be sent to Arizonans for Wildlife Conservation, P.O. Box 82773, Phoenix, AZ 85071.

During the NADCA Board's August conference call, the Board voted to contribute \$50 from NADCA funds to Arizonans for Wildlife Conservation.

## California Activists Convicted For Tule Elk Hunt Disruption

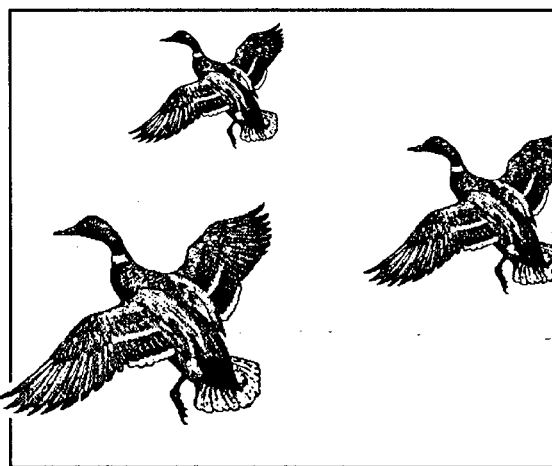
Twenty-three animal rights activists were given jail terms, fines, and community service sentences in Solano County, California. The August 1992 issue of *WLFA-gram* reports that Municipal Court Appeals Judge Luis Villarreal handed down the sentences to the activists who were convicted of disrupting the 1990 Tule elk hunt at Grizzly Island Wildlife Area. The charges included interfering with the hunt, trespass, and blocking a public road. The defendants were appealing an earlier conviction by a lower court.

## Ace Hardware Stops Support For "Kind News" Publication

After extensive pressure from the nation's sportsmen and women, Ace Hardware Corporation has rescinded its financial support for the Humane Society of the United States publication, *Kind News*. The publication is distributed to grade school children. Ace dealers had previously been encouraged to financially support the publication. The August issue of *WLFA-gram* stated that WLFA had earlier issued a call for letters, phone calls, and fax messages to Ace, objecting to the corporation's support of "the nation's largest anti-hunting organization." The corporation cites the reason for its decision as "the negative publicity...which detracts from Ace's comprehensive efforts in the environmental area."

## Ducks Scared for Own Good

Bill Stack of Whitehall, Montana, has a rather odd job. An article in the June 8 issue of the *Denver Post* reported that Stack is a "duck guard" with the Golden Sunlight Mine. He floats about in a 26-foot houseboat, using everything from propane cannons to recorded raptor calls to keep birds out of a pond laden with cyanide-laced mine tailings. Mining companies came up with the idea as a way to prevent the deaths of waterfowl, deer, and other wildlife. According to mill superintendent Paul Dale, "We don't want to get any fines either." In Nevada, mining companies have had to fork over as much as \$500,000 in fines after migratory birds died in cyanide tailing ponds.



## Attack on California Girl, 5, Results in Coyote Hunt

After a recent coyote attack on a 5-year-old San Clemente, California, girl, officials authorized a late night coyote hunt in the remote canyons on the outskirts of town. As reported in an article in the *San Diego Times Advocate*, authorities decided to mount the hunt in hopes of "scaring the coyotes off, not wiping them out." They planned to kill eight to ten coyotes and scatter the carcasses throughout the canyon areas as a warning to other wild canines. The child was attacked as she was playing in her sandbox. The coyote bit her on the torso, but she scrambled up to the top of her swing set where her mother found her after hearing the child's screams. The attack was the third to occur in the neighborhood within ten days, but the first on a human. Neighborhood residents have lost household pets to the coyote attacks.

*The editors of The Probe thank contributors to this issue: J. Alan May, Michael J. Bodenchuk, Mike Fall, James E. Forbes, and Wes Jones. Send your contributions to The Probe, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449.*

## ...Bird Strike Committee USA



Whitney) summarized a long-term study of 3,500 bird strikes in Pratt & Whitney engines. He reported that the biggest threat to commercial, multiple-engine jet aircraft was multiple engine strikes upon take-off. This condition occurs when flocking birds are present (for example, gulls in the US). Large, non-flocking birds generally don't get into multiple engines.

Technologies discussed for reducing bird strikes included application of methyl anthranilate to pools of water on runways, ultrasonics, falconry, sanitary landfill management, and airfield habitat management. Studies underway by Rutgers University, Cornell University, and USDA-APHIS-ADC are investigating the relationships between bird use of airfields and various habitat components. Among other topics, Donald Caccamise (Rutgers University) and his students are studying the ecology of Japanese beetles on Atlantic City International Airport habitats and the relationship between beetle numbers and laughing gull activity.

Thomas Hupf (Federal Aviation Administration) described an ideal airport wildlife management program, in place at the Atlantic City International Airport. This program includes:

- wildlife harassment training
- an airport bird study
- detailed biological studies
- bird strike data compilation
- bird harassment program
- minimize water attractions
- long grass management
- insect control
- opposing solid waste facilities near airport
- long-term research on habitat management

## Proceedings Available

**F**ifth Eastern Wildlife Damage Control Conference Proceedings. Proceedings from conference held October 6-9, 1991, at Ithaca, New York. Co-editors Paul D. Curtis, Michael J. Fargione, and James W. Caslick. Copies of the Proceedings are available for \$20 each including shipping from Carol Rundell, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Room 108 Fernow Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853-3001.

Forbes announced that the next meeting of the BSCUSA will be August, 1993, at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport in Washington. Meeting details will be available in a future issue of *The Probe*

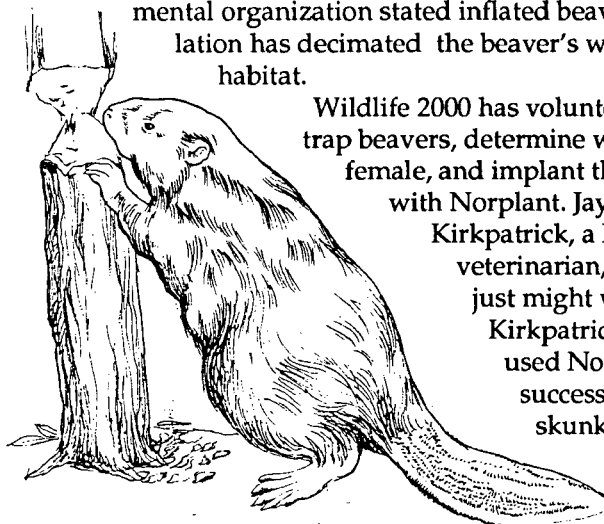
*The Probe* encourages submission of articles or tips on effective bird and mammal management at airports. Share this information with your colleagues. Send your articles to the Editors.

## Norplant for Beavers?

**A**ccording to the August 24 issue of *Time Magazine*, the beaver population explosion is about to run into an enforced slow-down. A Colorado environmental group, Wildlife 2000, is attempting to find a humane solution to the burgeoning beavers. The group has proposed the use of Norplant, the contraceptive agent devised for humans.

Wildlife 2000 believes the beaver population is somewhere between 6 and 12 million as a consequence of the "...crippled fur trade" and because "killing helpless animals for sport is no longer fashionable." With the likelihood that fur coats will never return to great popularity, the beaver population will more than likely continue to increase dramatically. The environmental organization stated inflated beaver population has decimated the beaver's woodland habitat.

Wildlife 2000 has volunteered to trap beavers, determine which are female, and implant the animals with Norplant. Jay Kirkpatrick, a Montana veterinarian, says it just might work. Kirkpatrick has used Norplant successfully on skunks.



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

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

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

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

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

Membership Class: Student \$7.50    Active \$15.00    Sponsor \$30.00    Patron \$100  
(underline 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) _____             |   |