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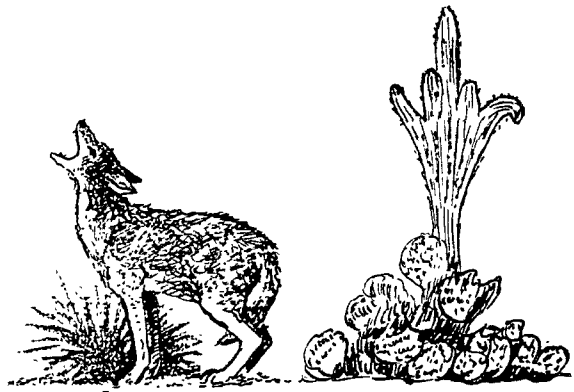


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THE PROBE



National Animal Damage Control Association

No. 7

July, 1980

ONE STEP FORWARD - - -

In a February, 1980 decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals reversed a lower court's ruling which had directed the Secretary of the Interior to close certain Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land in Alaska to aerial wolf hunts conducted by the State. The State of Alaska had approved the wolf hunts in designated areas as part of its wildlife management program to protect dwindling numbers of moose and caribou.

Environmental groups then went to court (where else ?) suing Andrus for not preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Appeals' decision declared the Secretary did not need to comply with NEPA and affirmed state authority under the BLM organic act, stating Congress assigned the States the primary responsibility for management of wildlife programs within their boundaries. Andrus in recinding his court-directed order to close federal lands to the state wolf control program noted management of resident non-endangered wildlife on public lands was a State prerogative and the principle of State responsibility is an essential ingredient in managing resident wildlife [Andrus apparently has several sets of speech writers]. - - The Wildlifer (The Wildlife Society) No. 179, March-April, 1980.

- - - TWO STEPS BACK

In 1971 the "Wild and Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act" was passed, the opposition being drowned in the tears of those stalwart defenders of "wildlife". Before that time the burro population was kept in check informally by local ranchers, professional hunters and state fish & game officers. Now it is illegal to kill a burro on BLM lands except under very special circumstances. While the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service are not covered by this law, every time officials announce plans to shoot the burros, the very vocal defenders of the faith call down the Gods of Media.

Recently the Park Service announced plans for burro removal from Bandelier National Monument (New Mexico) and Grand Canyon National Park (Arizona) where burro herds are destroying the natural resources. Under the plan, the Park Service gave several private groups two months to remove that burros they could. These groups plan to round up the animals and then have people "adopt" them.

Meanwhile the Fund for Animals, American Horse Protection Association and Humane Society of the U.S. have sued the Park Service to prevent any shooting of the burros.

It is estimated it will cost \$360,000 just to round up and remove some 350 or so burros from the almost inaccessible Grand Canyon area which is a helluva price to pay for 105 tons of not very good dogfood on the hoof. In the meantime, the burros keep eatin', drinkin' and breedin' at the expense of our truly native "wildlife". There is something sick about urbanized society's priorities.

THE BLACKBIRD PICTURE IS GETTING BLACKER

Here are extracts of a letter from the Director of the Fish & Wildlife Service to Congressman Carl Perkins relative to research on toxicants to alleviate blackbird problems in Kentucky:

"Research has been conducted on an aerially applied toxicant, CAT (DRC 1347), which was sprayed on birds while they are roosting and is subsequently ingested. This product takes up to seven days to kill birds. It has been field tested under an EPA Experimental Use Permit, both in 1979 and 1980. Test results have been less than satisfactory. In both instances, the helicopter used to spray the birds, flushed them from the roost resulting in only a limited kill. While effective delivery systems could probably be developed, it is unlikely that this toxicant could be registered for general use. Not only would the substance be prohibited near any aquatic systems, but the many environmental hazards associated with this toxicant would probably preclude general use elsewhere."

The chemical was "tested" twice in Arkansas, but the conditions under which the tests were made do not constitute "adequate testing" so the chemical can be written off so casually. The statement of "many environmental hazards" is questionable. USFWS data shows it has an extremely short life after field exposure and that field tests with it as a roost toxicant were very promising.

"It is Service policy that reduction of the continental blackbird population or even segments of that population is not an appropriate goal, nor do we have any evidence that such a reduction would have any significant impact on the problems caused by blackbirds."

This seems contrary to the original directive by Congress that the Service is to relieve wildlife damage losses in the production of food and fiber in this country. It is the current philosophy of the administration that the reduction of pest animal populations has no effect on damage done to food supplies and health of this country. The basis for this belief has no documentation to support it, whereas statistical evidence can support that significant reduction of a species population will definitely have an effect on the degree of damage caused by that species.

"...control of blackbirds would have little or no impact on the spread of histoplasmosis."

This is false as decontamination of roosts can be accomplished but only if subsequent reinfestation of the site is prevented. Mr. Greenwalt has spent so much time counting ducks that he thinks that is all that can be done with anything with feathers.

When you've got half a mind to get married, you don't realize that's all it takes.

PYTHONS TO GET GRIP ON ADC PROBLEM

A recent UP newsrelease says that the South African army is in the middle of a huge recruiting campaign, but not for human draftees. Defense headquarters has issued a recent call to all citizens to donate pet pythons to the army in its battle against rock rabbits on the Botswana-Zimbabwe border. The rock rabbits have taken over the area, invading mess halls and camp sites. They do not want to use "insecticides" because of the great number of wildlife, to say nothing of a wild army. As the rock rabbits are the favorite food of pythons and they can go where humans can't (where have I heard that refrain before?), the army feels it needs at least 100 snakes to do the job.

To show that bureaucracy can rear its ugly head even in deepest Africa, the army appeal for the snakes includes a warning that it is "...illegal to keep pythons without a permit and those wishing to catch pythons in order to donate them to the defense force shall first obtain the necessary permit and papers."

Money can't buy love, but it puts ya in a good bargainin' position.

A LETHAL GAME OF TAG

DMCT, a presumably nontoxic fluorescent tooth and bone marking agent, used to tag pine voles (*Pitymys pinetorum*) in a New York study of the optimal spacing of bait stations proved lethal to the surprise of the investigators. Subsequent field and laboratory trials indicated original studies done with tetracycline marking chemicals showed an LD₅₀ of 2,372 mg/kg of DMCT on laboratory rats. However, most wild voles fed a single dose of 10 mg (400 mg/kg) of DMCT and sustained on a vegetation diet died within 4-6 days. Necropsy showed the cecum enlarged, watery, distended with gas and sometimes discolored with small hemorrhaged areas. Contents of the lower intestines were also watery and usually contained no formed feces.

The bacteriocidal or bacteriostatic actions of these chemicals may cause radical alteration of the intestinal flora of some mammals. The investigators hypothesized a superinfection of gram-negative bacteria occurred following DMCT ingestion leading to severe enteritis and the associated ion imbalance and dehydration resulting in death of the voles. The voles under study all showed renal impairment caused by the toxic intake of lead that had accumulated in that particular orchard which might explain some of the mortality obtained with DMCT.

While there are still many unanswered questions on environmental risks and physiological limitations, this opens up another possible toxic chemical

approach that might be a little harder for the environmentalists to shoot down. - - R.A. Stehn; E.A. Johnson & M.E. Richmond [Journ. Wildlife Mgt., 44(1):275-280 (1980)]

By the time a man's got money to burn, his fire's gone out.

HOW DO YOU LIKE THESE HORS-D'OEUVRES ?

A lion killed 16 registered angora billies worth \$250 apiece over a two-week period on a ranch in Edwards County, Texas. In most cases, the only portion of the animals eaten was the reproductive organs. (I like Rocky Mountain "oysters", but not at these prices !). I'm sure the DEFENDERS feel this is more propaganda as everybody knows predators kill only the sick and diseased members of a prey population. - - THE TRAP LINE (San Antonio, TX USFWS) 23 June 1980.

Psychiatrists and the IRS agree - - it ain't good to keep too much for yourself.

MINORS MAKE MAJOR DECISION

Joe Miner (Nevada) quit the USFWS in March followed by Norton Miner (Montana) in July. Both had many more years of federal service ahead of them, but the reasons for their leaving are summed up very well in Norton Miner's requiem:

"A lot of people have asked me in recent times, knowing I was approaching retirement, if I was serious considering it. My answer has always been no, because why should a person give up a life that he has always found so enjoyable, to go away and do something that perhaps he doesn't like at all ?

In the last few years I've tried to answer my own questions, and think I've finally found the answer. Gone are the days of throwing a diamond around a bedroll, cook kit, sack of getters, and three No. 15 bear traps and riding humped up in a cold rain to timberline on a bear call.

Only memories are left of dropping by an isolated ranch after stringing bait, suppering with the folks, and bedding down in the bunkhouse or frequently a spare bedroom in the attic. These folks are, after all, the most hospitable people in the world.

The esprit de corps of the old PARC, Wildlife Services, and ADC is not nearly alive today as it once was. We used to be fiercely protective of that, but attrition has done its job.

To the field supervisors and trappers - - what a fine bunch of individuals. Wise in the ways of wildlife, livestock and ranchers. Long working from spring to fall, and suffering mud, snow, and bitter cold in winter. They endured poverty level salaries, low mileage payments, no chance for promotion, and a disgraceful retirement annuity. And, I'm not speaking exclusively of the men in Montana. I have worked one way or another in twelve states and while they are distinctively different, they are too much alike in this respect.

The only thing that really is alike is the men themselves. They are deeply dedicated in their profession and would work at it with no pay - - if they had an outside income.

Recruitment of supervisors is almost a thing of the past. I may be wrong, but I doubt if there is a single trainee in the Western States...It's not the hard work that needs to be done that bothers me, it's the way to get there...I'll miss you all very much."

Norton started out as a DFA in Fort Collins, CO in July 1953. He and Joe were young enough to have given the ADC program many more years of dedicated Service but the present administration in Interior regards such an attitude as hopelessly naïve.

An old timer's a guy who remembers when the Board of Education was only a paddle.

CUTE LITTLE PETS, THOSE BUDGIES !

Pets, yes, but we didn't expect these Australian visitors to make themselves so much at home. It seems those exotic parakeets escaping from loving owners have joined in gangs of up to 8,000 birds to fast become one of the most abundant resident wild birds in coastal Florida today. In the wild, they are prolific breeders; aggressive towards native birds particularly hole-nesting types like woodpeckers; and have a serious potential as a seed crop pest when they move into interior Florida.

Control is not going to be that easy either when these start to become a problem. An example of what we can expect is the complaint of one resident who asked wildlife officials to shoot a red-shouldered hawk that was killing "her budgies". Uncle Sam has become a "patsy" for the world in his foreign relations, but this is too much !

Considering what it costs - - experience should be the best teacher.

VERTEBRATE PEST CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

The proceedings of the NINTH VERTEBRATE PEST CONFERENCE (1980) are finally in print. This contains all the papers presented at the conference held last March in Fresno, CA. The proceedings may be ordered from: *Vertebrate Pest Conference, California Department of Food & Agriculture, 1220 N Street, Room A-357, Sacramento, CA 95814.* They cost \$10.00 per copy postpaid (\$11.00 U.S. to foreign subscribers). Incidentally, they have a special offer of \$15.00 (\$16.00 for foreign subscribers) for all three: FIFTH (1972), SIXTH (1974) and SEVENTH (1976) as they are trying to get rid of their stock of back issues. All previous proceedings, FIRST through FOURTH, are out of print. The EIGHTH (1978) is still available at \$15.00 per copy (\$16.00 for foreign orders). We reviewed this conference in THE PROBE No. 5, and feel it is a publication ADC professionals should have in their libraries.

The contents of the NINTH VERTEBRATE PEST CONFERENCE are:

- L. McCann - New concepts in wildlife management.
 R. L. Bruggers - The situation of grain-eating birds in Somalia.
 L. R. Martin & W. T. Jarvis - Avitrol-treated bait for protection of grapes from house finch damage.
 M. M. Jaeger & W. A. Erickson - Levels of bird damage to sorghum in Ethiopia.
 W. Amling - Exclusion of gulls from reservoirs in Orange County, California.
 C. E. Knittle, et al - Baiting blackbird and starling congregating areas in Kentucky and Tennessee.
 D. F. Mott - Dispersing blackbirds and starlings from objectionable roost sites.
 S. Moran, et al - Protecting polyethylene irrigation pipes from woodpeckers.
 A. C. Rand - Factors responsible for successful establishment of exotic avian species in southeastern Florida.
 P. P. Woronecki & R. A. Dolbeer - The influence of insects in bird damage control.
 J. J. Jackson - Needs of county agents for vertebrate pest control in Georgia.
 R. W. Matheny - Federally registered pesticides for vertebrate pest control.
 G. Zdunowski - Environmental manipulation in roof rat control programs.
 S. C. Frantz & G. M. Padula - Recent developments in anticoagulant resistance studies.
 B. C. Nelson - Plague studies in California - The role of sylvatic rodents.
 O. Funmilayo - Mammals and birds affecting food production and storage in Nigeria.
 G. L. Simpson & T. K. Lamonyon - Multiple litters in California ground squirrel.
 K. A. Fagerstone, et al - Hazards to small mammals associated with underground strychnine baiting for pocket gophers.
 D. Valencia - Rat control in coconut palms in Colombia.
 R. J. Robbins - Taste-aversion learning and its implications for rodent control.
 Y. Saxena, et al - Studies on toxicity of VACOR on reproductive biology of the roof rat.
 D. Bajomi - Deratization of Budapest and 5 years of follow-up control measures.
 A. A. Khan & W. R. Smythe - Pika control in Baluchistan, Pakistan.
 J. E. Borrecco & R. J. Anderson - Mountain beaver problems in forests of California, Oregon and Washington.
 K. Tongtavee - Efficacy tests of different rodenticides on rats in Thailand.
 H. Kurylas - Socioeconomic & ecological aspects of field rat control in tropical and subtropical countries.
 L. Santini - The habits and influence of environment of the old world porcupine.
 K. Wassif & S. Soliman - Population studies of gerbils of Egypt.
 J. W. Caslick - Deer-proof fences for orchards: A new look at economic feasibility.
 P. A. Chamberlain - Armadillos: Problems and control.
 R. D. Lord - Ecological strategy for controlling bovine rabies through elimination of vampire bats.
 J. Hone & H. Pedersen - Changes in a feral pig population after poisoning.
 C. D. Gooding - Red Kangaroo management in western Australia.
 D. A. Wade - Predator damage control, 1980: Recent history and current status.
 R. J. Burns & G. E. Connolly - Lithium chloride bait aversion did not influence prey killing by coyotes.
 R. D. Nass - Efficacy of predator damage control programs.
 M. J. Dorrance - Use of toxicants for coyote control in Alberta.
 P. J. Savarie, et al - Development of a simple two-ingredient pyrotechnic fumigant.
 P. C. Nelson - The need for good public relations and staff training in the use of toxins in pest destruction.

MEETINGS OF INTEREST

Nov. 9-12 - 34th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Assoc. Fish & Wildlife Agencies, Opryland Hotel, Nashville, TN

Dec. 7-10 - 42nd Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference, St. Paul, MN

And what is a conference but a meeting of the bored ?

NEW ADC PATCH NEEDED ?

Bob Fisher, USFWS Biologist from Jackson, TN feels that the Service patch on the left arm is confusing to the public. Wearers are constantly subjected to such questions beyond the expertise of mere ADC personnel as: "Why don't you open the Refuge to hunting ?", "So you're the SOB who wouldn't let me drain my fields !", "When are you jelly-fish gonna put ducks on the endangered list ?", and questions of similar ilk. So that people will know just what you are and what is expected, Bob has suggested that ADC be issued patches like the one on the right.



Politicians are people who stand for what you'll fall for.

YE ED - William D. Fitzwater

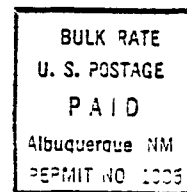
Thanks to Ki Faulkner's gracious contribution we are in good financial shape for this issue, but if any of you feel real charitable, we sure would like to start collecting dues for 1981 anytime now. Anybody who joins up now is going to be a paid-up card-carrying member for 1980-1.

We are most unhappy with even the temporary appointment of a non-ADC person in the top ADC position in Washington. We are doing all we can to keep the kettle boiling in hopes of getting some people's feet in it.

We apologize for bringing out the "July" issue of THE PROBE after the middle of August. Ye Ed and the missus spent most of July in travel status which

included Poland, Sweden and Denmark as well as some time in the USFWS library in Denver getting background material for an article that has a deadline for the end of this month. So please forgive and we'll try to do better for the next issue. - damn that's a week away! We'll also go back to the other ribbon for this word-pecker.

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