



Urban Wildlife News

The Newsletter of the Urban Wildlife Working Group
of The Wildlife Society

Volume 8, Number 1, Summer 2009

Editors: Lowell Adams and Jennifer Cotting

A Word from the Chair

David Drake

As I write my last chair's message, I am returning home from the International Urban Wildlife and the Environment conference at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. The Urban Wildlife Working Group was a major sponsor of this conference and it was one of the best I've ever attended. For those of you who were unable to get to Amherst, I am going to attempt to capture the mood of the conference and summarize the events. The conference program and abstracts will be posted soon to the Urban Wildlife Working Group's website (www.rw.ttu.edu/urbwlf/), so please visit the website for more details. The field trips and breadth and quality of papers presented during the concurrent sessions (more on all of that in a minute) certainly aided in making this a great conference. However, in my opinion—and in speaking with other conference attendees—what made it an especially significant event was the social interaction, energy, and enthusiasm that occurred. About 200 people attended the conference, including urban ecologists from Australia, England, and Switzerland. Most, if not all, seemed to attend all of the concurrent sessions; even the very last talk on the very last day was relatively well attended! The combination of a casual and relaxed mood among attendees, an intimate venue, and the fact that like-minded individuals had a stage in which to showcase their research, teaching, and management efforts relative to urban ecology, seemed to gen-

erate countless and endless discussions throughout the 4 days of the conference. There was definitely a buzz and energy level that radiated throughout the duration of the meeting.

The conference began on Sunday, June 21, with 3, all-day field trips. From all accounts, the field trips were a success despite the rainy weather. That evening the opening social was held, where we got our first taste of the excellent food we were to experience for the next few days. Monday morning was consumed with 3 excellent talks during the plenary session. Jim Miller (University of Illinois) began the plenary with a discussion on integrating humans and wildlife in the same space, and how to re-think ways to do that. Mike Feller (New York City Parks and Recreation) discussed the excellent efforts on-going in New York City to keep places wild and native. Richard Forman (Harvard University) concluded the plenary giving us his perspective on how change constantly occurs within defined urban areas and how humans and wildlife adapt.

Monday afternoon (June 22) through Wednesday afternoon (June 24) included 16 concurrent sessions with topics ranging from assorted taxa to roads and wildlife management to urban wildlife education to planning and design, human dimensions, and even invertebrate inventories, research, and management. Approximately 115 papers were presented during the concurrent sessions, in addition to 15 posters being displayed during the session breaks.

Steve DeStefano (University of Massachusetts) was the planning chair and Seth Riley (National Park Service) was the program chair. Without Steve's and Seth's tenacity, perseverance, and focus, the urban wildlife conference would not likely have occurred nor would it have been nearly as successful. Thank you very much Steve and Seth!

As I mentioned, there was an electricity, excitement, and enthusiasm among the attendees that I seldom see or experience at other conferences I've attended. I believe we are at a tipping point in terms of momentum to really move the urban ecology and planning movement forward in North America and catch up with our European and Australian colleagues. One of the ways to do that is to continue hosting an urban wildlife conference. A commitment was made to host another urban ecology conference in Austin, Texas sometime between January and June 2011. So, please block those dates off on your calendar and plan on participating in, or volunteering to help with, the conference in 2011.

Another way to continue the momentum is to define a strategy to propel urban wildlife management forward in North America. We had robust discussions in Amherst on how to do that, including, but not limited to, building greater networks between the wildlife community and urban planners, landscape architects, and others working in the human dominated landscape, defining a model curriculum that could be adopted by colleges and universities wanting to offer an urban wildlife program, generating dedicated sources of funding for urban wildlife research, teaching, and management, and co-opting the urban forestry model to the benefit of urban wildlife management. Our working group should be, and needs to be, a leader regarding strategy definition and implementation. Chris Moorman, the incom-

ing chair of the Urban Wildlife Working Group, is well-suited to lead and continue the momentum. Our membership is growing, and we have some very dynamic individuals among our ranks. If we all bond together and contribute, we can ride the crest of energy and enthusiasm that was generated during this past conference and make urban wildlife management and ecology a mainstream concept.

It has been my privilege to chair the Urban Wildlife Working Group. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

Sincerely,
David

Fall Elections

Election of officers and board of the working group will take place soon, and winners will be installed at the annual meeting of the working group in September 2009. The working group charter calls for a slate of candidates proposed by the Nominating and Elections Committee to be circulated to working group members before the election (which will be by mail ballot in accordance with the charter). The charter calls for two candidates to run for each of the elective positions. At this point, we have two candidates for Chair-Elect, one for Secretary-Treasurer, and six agreeing to run for the six board positions. If you know of someone willing to serve as an officer or board member (and who has agreed to be a candidate), please consider nominating the individual. To submit the name of an additional candidate you need the signed support of six or more members of the working group. Please review (and save) this slate of candidates and look for an official ballot from the Nominating and Elections Committee soon.

The Nominating and Elections Committee offers this proposed slate of candidates:

Chair-Elect (will vote for one)

Stan Gehrt
Kieran J. Lindsey

Secretary – Treasurer (will vote for one)

Robert McCleery

Board Members (will vote for six)

Erin Boydston
Paul Curtis
John Davis
Robert Denkhaus
Tommy Parker
Ray Sauvajot

Brief resumes of candidates, listed in alphabetical order, are found below.

Erin Boydston

Erin Boydston received her B.S. in Zoology from Duke University and Ph.D. in Zoology/Ecology, Evolutionary Biology, and Behavior from Michigan State University. She started pursuing interests in animal behavior and conservation in high school, volunteering and later working at the Dallas Zoo. After college Erin assisted studies of howler monkeys in Costa Rica and elephants at the National Zoo, where she also worked as a large mammal keeper. She began studying social carnivores during graduate school and spent 2 years observing spotted hyenas in Kenya and documenting the impacts of increased human activity on their behavior. Since joining the U. S. Geological Survey in 2001 as a Research Ecologist with the Western Ecological Research Center, Erin has continued studying carnivores, focusing on the movement ecology of bobcats, coyotes, and other carnivores across nature reserves, habitat fragments, and urban areas of coastal California.

Paul D. Curtis

Paul Curtis is an Associate Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist in the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University. He received a Ph.D. in Zoology from North Carolina State University in 1990, and a M.S. in Wildlife Biology from Colorado State University in 1981. His research interests include managing human-wildlife conflicts in urban landscapes, wildlife fertility control, and resolving community-based wildlife issues. His extension programming has included a variety of wildlife-related booklets, videos, and fact sheets. He has been a member of The Wildlife Society since 1978, and is a Certified Wildlife Biologist.

John Davis

John Davis is in charge of conservation outreach programs for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Wildlife Division. He coordinates the following programs: Texas Master Naturalist, Texas Nature Trackers, Urban Wildlife Program, Texas Wildscapes, and Regional Interpretive Specialists. Before assuming his current position, John was one of eight urban biologists working for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. In 1991 John received his B.S. degree in Biology from Sam Houston State University. He received his M.S. degree in Biology from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1993. He later received a Master of City and Regional Planning from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2006. John has worked with municipal governments, parks departments, corporations, developers, schools, homeowner's associations, etc. to improve wildlife habitats and maintain biodiversity within our urban areas. He has enjoyed serving on the board of the working group the past 2 years and welcomes the opportunity to serve another term.

Robert Denkhaus

Rob Denkhaus is the Natural Resource Manager at the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge (FWNC&R), a 3,600-acre property owned and operated by the City of Fort Worth, Texas. Raised in urban northeast Ohio, Rob spent his formative years exploring the urban wilds along the Cuyahoga River before obtaining a B.S. degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 1984. The combination of life experience and education led Rob to pursue a career that would help bridge the gap between the natural world and urban residents. Working in urban nature centers and zoological facilities in Ohio, Indiana, and Tennessee helped Rob to better understand urbanites' relationships with nature in general and wildlife in particular. His 12-year tenure at the FWNC&R has provided Rob with the opportunity to introduce Fort Worth residents to traditional resource management activities, including prescribed burning, wildlife surveys, and prairie restoration, to further their understanding and appreciation of the world around them. He also works closely with a number of local universities by providing volunteer and intern opportunities for students to gain valuable experience. Rob believes that the Urban Wildlife Working Group is a vital link between traditional wildlife management disciplines and the average citizen and that the group should strive to encourage wildlife professionals to work with all stakeholders to develop integrated, mutually acceptable plans for improving the plight of all urban wildlife. He welcomes the opportunity to serve on the working group's board of directors as a means of supporting the group as well as the needs of urban wildlife.

Stan Gehrt

Stan Gehrt is an Assistant Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist at The Ohio State University, and Senior Scientist at the

Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation. Prior to his current position, he was Director of Research at the foundation where he focused on urban wildlife research in the Chicago area. Most of his research is still based in Chicago, including long-term research on the urban ecology of mesocarnivore and bat communities. Stan is the senior editor for the soon-to-be published *Urban Carnivores*, based on an urban symposium he co-organized for the 2007 Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society. Stan was raised in Kansas (definitely not an urban area), and holds a B.A. degree from Bethany College (KS), M.S. degree from Emporia State University (KS), and a Ph.D. in Fisheries and Wildlife from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He has been an active member of The Wildlife Society since 1989, having served on committees at every level, and is a Certified Wildlife Biologist. Stan believes the Urban Wildlife Working Group has been effective in increasing the visibility of urban wildlife issues among wildlife biologists, and that this progress needs to extend to the larger professional arena.

Kieran J. Lindsey

Kieran Lindsey is a faculty member with the Virginia Tech Natural Resources Program (National Capital Region), where she teaches courses on urban wildlife management and human dimensions. Additionally, Kieran is the director of the Natural Resources Distance Learning Consortium (NRDLC), an organization of university members and federal partners; Virginia Tech serves as the lead institution. She received her M.S. (2003) and Ph.D. (2007) in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M University. Her dissertation research examined privatization and regulatory oversight of urban nuisance wildlife control in the United States. Kieran began her involvement with urban wildlife management in 1997 as the executive director of a non-

profit wildlife center in Houston, Texas, followed by a decade or so as an urban wildlife management consultant. Kieran is a co-author, along with Clark Adams and Sara Ash, of *Urban Wildlife Management*, a textbook chosen as the 2006 Outstanding Book by the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society. She believes it is important for the working group to assist in moving urban wildlife management toward greater acceptance by the broader wildlife management discipline by promoting greater awareness of the work being done in this field, by encouraging updates to university curriculum, and by educating our colleagues.

Robert McCleery

Robert (Bob) McCleery is an Assistant Professor of Wildlife Ecology at Western Illinois University. Bob's research has focused on understanding how urban and other intensively modified landscapes alter wildlife populations. He also has an interest in relating attitudes to behaviors in human-wildlife conflicts. Bob grew up outside of New York City. He received his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Texas A&M University, his B.S. from Cornell University, and served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Swaziland, Africa. Bob is active in The Wildlife Society where he has served as Associate Editor for the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* (2005-2007) and the *Journal of Wildlife Management* (2006-2009). He welcomes the opportunity to increase his involvement in the Urban Wildlife Working Group by serving as Treasurer.

Tommy Parker

Tommy Parker is an Assistant Professor at the University of Louisville and Principal Investigator in the Urban Wildlife Research Lab. He received his B.S. in Zoology and M.S. in Organismal Biology from The University of Memphis. After working as an urban ecologist for the city of Kansas City

Missouri, Tommy obtained his Ph.D. in Fisheries and Wildlife from the University of Missouri. Prior to his current position, he served as the Endangered Species Biologist for the Eastern Region of the U. S. Forest Service. Tommy's research interests broadly revolve around themes essential for understanding population dynamics and behavioral adaptations exhibited by urbanized vertebrate species. In his research, Tommy quantifies and models resources in urban systems at the microhabitat and landscape scales. At each scale, he focuses on the relationships among population-level dynamics, behavior, and resource availability. His work has focused primarily on mammals; however, he does work with other taxa to address questions related to his research interest. Tommy also works with a broad range of collaborators, including state, federal, and private industry biologists, and scientists from varying disciplines.

Ray Sauvajot

Ray Sauvajot is Chief of Planning, Science and Resource Management at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and is a Senior Science Advisor for the U.S. National Park Service. Ray also holds adjunct faculty positions in the biology departments at the University of California, Los Angeles and California State University, Northridge. Ray designs and supervises ecological studies, manages science and research, and oversees cultural resource programs and planning in the Santa Monica Mountains. As a National Park Service Science Advisor, Ray also assists other units of the National Park System. Ray's research focuses on the effects of urban encroachment and habitat fragmentation on wildlife, including the effects of roads. For over 10 years, Ray has helped direct research on carnivores along the urban interface of southern California, includ-

ing internationally recognized studies of bobcats, coyotes, and mountain lions. Ray obtained a B.A. degree in biology from UC San Diego and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in ecology from UC Davis.

-- Submitted by the
Nominating and Elections Committee:

Chris Moorman
(chris_moorman@ncsu.edu)

Charlie Nilon
(nilonc@missouri.edu)

New Research Institute

Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago, has been awarded a \$1.5 million grant by The Davee Foundation to establish a new research division, the Urban Wildlife Institute, which will focus studies on the interactions between urban dwellers and wildlife, and utilize sound science to create best practice conflict resolution. The institute aims to integrate landscape and animal ecology with epidemiology research to create a holistic approach to ecosystem health as it applies

to urban settings. The goal of the institute is to use Chicago as a model for other urban areas struggling to deal with wildlife relocation, rehabilitation, disease, and conflicts.

The Urban Wildlife Institute is composed of scientific experts in landscape ecology, population biology, epidemiology, endocrinology, veterinary medicine, and more. While still in the early developmental stages, the institute has wasted no time in launching a couple of pilot projects, including a study investigating the prevalence of raccoon roundworm with the goal of creating management strategies to mitigate risk to humans, as well as a study on avian nest predation with the goal of improving urban habitat for birds.

Lincoln Park Zoo's Urban Wildlife Institute will be enlisting local partners for conservation projects and plans to create community-involved citizen scientist programs in the year ahead. For more information, phone 312-742-2000 or visit www.lpzoo.org.

Urban Wildlife Working Group of The Wildlife Society Officers, Board Members, and Newsletter Editors

Chair:	David Drake	608-890-0445	ddrake2@wisc.edu
Chair-elect:	Chris Moorman	919-515-5578	chris_moorman@ncsu.edu
Past Chair:	Seth Riley	805-370-2358	seth_riley@nps.gov
Secretary-Treasurer:	Harry Zinn	814-863-7849	hzinn@psu.edu
Board Members:	John Davis	972-293-3841	Jmdavis01@aol.com
	Stephen DeStefano	413-545-4889	sdestef@nrc.umass.edu
	Stan Gehrt	614-292-1930	gehr.1@osu.edu
	Lesley Kordella	202-502-6406	Lesley.kordella@ferc.gov
	Allan O'Connell, Jr	301-497-5525	oconnell@usgs.gov
	Mark Wallace	806-742-1983	mark.wallace@ttu.edu
Newsletter Editors:	Lowell Adams	301-405-1178	Ladams4@umd.edu
	Jennifer Cotting	301-754-0058	jcotting@umd.edu