



Urban Wildlife News

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

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A Word from the Chair

Seth Riley

Hello again,

I hope everyone is having a good spring and early summer. I know this can be a busy time for many folks working with urban wildlife issues and beginning fieldwork. Out here in southern California everything is more year round, although we have some interesting extra tasks in the spring, such as marking bobcat kittens and doing stream surveys for amphibians.

We are continuing to work on two of the initiatives that I mentioned in the last newsletter -- urban wildlife-focused meetings, and urban wildlife-friendly development. The new committee on urban wildlife-friendly development met, by conference call, this spring. We had a good discussion about how to move forward and talked about a number of options, the first of which is a white paper on the history and status of urban wildlife research and management and on ways to move towards urban development that provides habitat for wildlife and reduces conflicts. This white paper, which we have begun work on this spring, would be presented to the working group and to The Wildlife Society, and eventually be submitted for publication. Potential future plans include educational and training materials for those working with developers, and some kind of certification program for developments. The chair of the committee, Mark Hostetler, with others in Florida, has

put together training and educational materials for their area, and has extensive experience working with developers down there, so he has a lot of insight about opportunities, as well as pitfalls. I am looking forward to the progress we can make in this, I believe, critically important area. As we all know, it is so much more effective and efficient to plan for and avoid conservation and management concerns than to react to them. To learn more about this work, or to voice questions or thoughts about our efforts on this issue, please contact Mark (phone and e-mail address at the end of this newsletter). The committee is planning to get together in Anchorage in September.

The other issue that we are pursuing is the future of urban wildlife meetings and the working group's role in them. I believe that urban wildlife is a vital and growing field and that there is more interest in it than ever. Consequently, I think there is also considerable interest in, and need for, meetings devoted to urban wildlife. As I mentioned in the last newsletter, past meetings such as those in Seattle in 1994 and in Tucson in 1999 were well attended and very valuable. Since then, meetings in Nebraska City in 2003, 2004, and 2005 sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation also provided an important forum but were smaller than the previous, less frequent meetings. It is my belief that we, meaning the community of people interested in urban wildlife ecology, conservation, and management, should have a regular forum for presenting, learning about, and focusing

--Seth

on the work we are doing in urban areas. The annual TWS meeting is obviously a good forum as well, and we should continue to present symposia, workshops, talks, posters, etc. there, of course, but specific urban wildlife meetings are also important. The question, then, is how will these meetings occur, and how will the working group be involved in them. How often will they happen? Who will organize them and run them? What will be the focus of the meetings? There are other organizations interested in urban wildlife related meetings as well, including the Arbor Day Foundation's continuing interest, and the publisher of the recent urban wildlife textbook. How will we partner with these groups? The Wildlife Damage Working Group sponsors its own meetings every two years, and we may be able to learn from their experiences. I have formed a small committee to discuss these issues, including board member Steven DiStefano, former chair Lowell Adams, who has been involved in many of the previous urban wildlife meetings going back at least to 1987, chair-elect David Drake, and myself. I hope that we can be involved in putting together another meeting that happens in the next year or two, but more importantly that we can start to think about the long-term status of these meetings and how the working group will be involved in them. We are also hoping to get together in Anchorage.

Speaking of Anchorage, I am really looking forward to the meeting. I have never been to Alaska and always wanted to go. It will also be an exciting few days. We have the workshop on urban wildlife issues in Anchorage, a symposium on urban carnivores, and the annual meeting of the working group, along with all the regular meeting sessions. I hope to see many of you there!

Have a good summer,

Urban Wildlife Activities in Anchorage

The working group is sponsoring or co-sponsoring three events for members at The Wildlife Society's 2006 Annual Conference in Anchorage. On Saturday, September 23, an all-day workshop "**Urban Wildlife Management Issues in Anchorage, Alaska**" will be conducted. An indoor morning session will focus on wetland conservation in Anchorage, human-moose interactions in the city, brown bear conservation in the urban-back country interface of the Kenai Peninsula, wildlife-airport hazards, minimizing human-wildlife conflicts, and a facilitated panel discussion. Afternoon field trips are designed to reinforce material covered in the morning session. Advance registration (\$45 student/non-student) is required by August 25 in addition to the conference registration fee.

On Monday, September 25, the working group will hold its annual meeting from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. Your active participation is needed to continue the work of the group. Please attend if at all possible.

On Wednesday morning, September 27, a symposium entitled "**Urban Carnivores: Ecology, Behavior, Conflict, and Conservation**" will be held. Eleven presentations will focus on urban foxes, raccoons, bobcats, coyotes, mountain lions, and domestic cats. Two of the presentations will be contributions from the UK (Stephen Harris will discuss urban red foxes, and Philip Baker will discuss predation by domestic cats in Bristol).

For more details, including registration, go to The Wildlife Society's web site (www.wildlife.org).

Urban Bird Symposium

A symposium "**Conserving Birds in Human-Dominated Landscapes**" was held on April 27 and 28, 2006 at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. The meeting focused on new approaches for managing bird diversity in urban, suburban, agricultural, and industrial areas; and explored possibilities for conservation in the face of an increasingly developed and industrialized world. Abstracts of speaker presentations and posters are available online (<http://cbc.amnh.org/birds>).

Upcoming Urban Wildlife Symposium

Informa Learning will host a new, innovative conference—**New Strategies for Urban Natural Resources: Integrating Wildlife, Fisheries, Forestry and Planning**. This event, scheduled for May 14-16, 2007 in Chicago, will bring together individuals from across a broad cross-section of disciplines, departments, agencies and professional associations. The primary objective of this conference is to provide a forum for attendees to discuss research findings, present case studies, share methodologies, and form cross-disciplinary networks. For more information or to submit a paper, point your browser to:

<http://www.informalearning.com/wildlife>

-- Kieran Lindsey

National Agenda for Urban Parks and Recreation in America

A 2-day urban summit, attended by some 400 participants, was held May 17-18, 2006

in Chicago, Illinois. The meeting was called to discuss and adopt a National Agenda to revitalize urban parks and recreation in America to reverse the neglect of the nation's urban parks. The effort was endorsed by city mayors and others.

The National Agenda is calling for a \$1 billion federal commitment over the next 3 years for urban parks and recreation to be matched dollar for dollar by cities and states. "Protecting the Urban Environment" is one of four guiding principles of the initiative. This involves protecting open space and providing quality outdoor recreation opportunities. The federal government should restore sufficient and sustainable funding to the state assistance program of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. States should create sustainable, reliable funding sources. At the local level the initiative suggests: "That cities commit their urban park systems to protect the environmental quality of the urban environment by acquiring and protecting flood-prone areas, protecting wetlands and watersheds, maintaining and increasing healthy urban forests, and protecting wildlife and natural resources." (A Call to Action: A National Agenda for Urban Parks and Recreation in America. A 12-page booklet published by the National Recreation and Park Association, 22377 Belmont Ridge Rd., Ashburn, VA 20148). More information is available on the web (www.nrpa.org).

Maryland Wildlife Commission Establishes Urban Wildlife Committee

The Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission, a non-regulatory body comprised of citizens appointed by the Governor of Maryland, is charged with advising the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and the agency's Director of the Wildlife and Heritage Division on matters dealing

with wildlife. As a means of improving public input regarding deliberations and recommendations to the Department, the Commission recently created an urban wildlife committee. Charges of the committee are to: a) provide an educational forum whereby residential leaders of local communities can come together, share common urban wildlife problems and possible solutions, hear guest speakers, and obtain information from experts to take back and disseminate to their respective constituencies; and b) make timely recommendations to the Wildlife Advisory Commission in the area of urban wildlife management for its review, consideration, and possible recommendation for action by the Department of Natural Resources. Specific emphasis shall be placed on new and innovative methods of wildlife management in metropolitan areas and the research base on which these

methods are grounded. For further information, contact committee chair Lowell Adams (Ladams4@umd.edu).



In Print

The issue of sprawl has become one of the most critical land use issues in the country. *Sprawl and Suburbia*, edited by W.S. Saunders, provides an analysis of both the physical

and social realities of sprawl through a series of essays from some of the most respected thinkers in the field. The book is available for \$22.95 from the University of Minnesota Press. For more information, visit

http://www.upress.umn.edu/Books/S/saunders_sprawl.html.

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