



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 everyone,

Happy 2007! I look forward to another great year in urban wildlife. I want to let you know about our meeting in Alaska, and where we are with some of our recent activities. The conference in Alaska was a big success, I thought, both in general and for urban wildlife specifically. For those of us that had never been there before, it was amazing to see the country and to experience some of the wildlife firsthand.

The first urban wildlife-related event was the workshop on Saturday about wildlife issues in Anchorage. The workshop also turned out to be a great success. Thank you again to Chris Moorman for organizing it, and for all the folks in Alaska who gave talks and participated. We were concerned beforehand about a limited number of initial signups for the workshop, but when we arrived on Saturday morning we had a full room and a great group. In the morning we had a range of talks about urban wildlife issues in Anchorage and surrounding areas, including urban moose management, human-bear conflicts, keeping geese off Elmendorf Air Force Base after a fatal accident, community wetland restoration, and the process for producing an integrated urban wildlife plan for the city (see write-up below for more information). In the afternoon, we headed out on a field trip and got to tour the air force base and learn about

the varied efforts that have reduced the aviation-wildlife conflicts, went to see some of the impressive wetland restoration efforts occurring in the city, went to open space areas above the city where we saw moose, both from afar and up close (see below for photos), and learned about some of the fascinating brown bear work in and around Anchorage. Along the way we got a great look at a cross-fox on the air force base, an animal I had long read about but never seen, and saw salmon swimming against the current right next to one of our parking spots.

The other Urban Wildlife Working Group-sponsored event was a symposium on urban carnivores on Wednesday morning, organized by Stan Gehrt, Brian Cypher, and myself. We were really glad to see quite a few folks attending the session throughout the morning. The talks covered a wide range of species, from endangered San Joaquin kit foxes to raccoons to coyotes to mountain lions, and we were really lucky to have two talks by researchers from England, where they have been studying urban carnivores for many decades. Carl Soulsbury talked about some of the long-term urban red fox work in Bristol, and Phil Baker talked about domestic cats in urban areas, an issue for urban wildlife all over the world. This symposium was also part of the early organization for an edited book that we (Stan, Brian, and myself) are planning on urban carnivores. We just recently got the final go ahead for the book from Johns

Hopkins University Press, so look for that sometime in 2008.

At midday on Monday we had the annual meeting of the working group (see also report below). Anchorage is certainly a hard place for many folks to get to, but we were happy to have a good group of 22 people at the meeting. This included past chairs Kate Stenberg, John Hadidian, and Lowell Adams, board members Lesley Kordella, Mark Hostetler, and Allan O'Connell, secretary-treasurer Harry Zinn, and chair-elect David Drake. We also had a number of new and prospective members, including Art Smith, member of the Urban Wildlife Working Group and also current chair of the Wildlife Damage Management Working Group. Art provided a lot of valuable input from another, very successful, working group. We were able to accomplish much general business at the meeting, in particular discussing the funds for the group and how to effectively manage them, especially across transitions from one treasurer to the next. Thank you to Harry for his persistent efforts to straighten things out in this area.

Also at the working group annual meeting, we heard from two special committees that had been formed earlier in 2007: Mark Hostetler talked about our "urban wildlife-friendly development" group, which he is chairing, and David Drake highlighted some of the first discussions of our "urban wildlife conferences" group, chaired by board member Stephen DeStefano, who was not able to attend. (See below for details about these committees from the meeting in Anchorage.) In addition, I want to let you know about further developments in the last couple of months. With the Urban Wildlife-friendly Development Committee, the first proposed activity is a paper about planning wildlife friendly communities; in particular on how an important paradigm in develop-

ment, "the new urbanism," does or does not effectively incorporate urban wildlife management and conservation concerns. This manuscript will be submitted to an appropriate journal, and a draft of the paper will be put together this spring by Mark and David. In terms of urban wildlife conferences, we are planning to attend a number of related conferences that are occurring this spring and summer, including the Auburn University/ USDA Forest Service Urban/Rural Interface meeting in Atlanta in April and the Arbor Day Urban Wildlife Management meeting in Portland, Oregon in June. This summer we will discuss our impressions of these meetings and how we want to move forward, something we can also discuss again as a group at the annual TWS meeting in Tucson. If we were to organize a separate meeting, it would be in 2008, potentially in the northeast. There is a lot going on in that region (and certainly plenty of urban area), there haven't been as many urban wildlife-oriented meetings there recently, and there is also some potential interest from the state of Massachusetts in helping to sponsor a meeting.

Speaking of next year's meeting in Tucson, we have another urban wildlife workshop coming up, which I am very excited about: "Tucson, Arizona: Laboratory for Urban Wildlife Research." Thank you to Lisa Harris and Bill Shaw in Arizona and chair-elect David Drake and Chris Moorman for organizing the workshop. There has been much important urban wildlife research in the Tucson area over the years, and there are many interesting management and conservation issues in the area, along with it being a beautiful and ecologically fascinating place.

Finally, as mentioned below in the report from the annual meeting, keep in mind that we have elections coming up this year. We

have a new chair-elect, secretary-treasurer, and six board members to elect. Board member John Triana will have completed two terms on the board so cannot run for another term. The other five members (see last page of the newsletter) and Harry Zinn (secretary-treasurer) can run for a second term if they so desire. If you are interested in running yourself, or have thoughts about someone who might be interested, please let board member Allan O'Connell, chair of the Nominating and Elections Committee, or myself, know. Urban wildlife is a growing and important field in wildlife ecology, and we want to keep the working group active and vibrant for many years to come. That's it for now. Let me know if you have thoughts or suggestions regarding the working group, and make your plans to come out to Tucson!

--Seth

Annual Meeting in Anchorage

The working group held its annual meeting on 25 September 2006, in Anchorage, Alaska, in conjunction with the annual conference of The Wildlife Society (TWS). Twenty-two individuals attended, 12 of whom were members, constituting a quorum. Secretary-Treasurer Zinn reported that membership stands at 134. Allan O'Connell volunteered to chair the Nominating and Elections Committee. If you are interested in volunteering for this committee, please contact either Allan or Seth right away (contact information is included on the last page of the newsletter). Two additional members are needed.

Early in his tenure, working group chair Riley established two special committees and reports from both were presented. The Special Committee on Urban Wildlife-Friendly Development is chaired by Mark Hostetler,

with David Drake, John Hadidian, Lesley Kordella, and Seth Riley also serving. The committee has been discussing ways to interact with development interests. A TWS conference symposium also has been discussed. Mark suggested submitting this symposium proposal for Miami in 2008 rather than Tucson in 2007.

The Special Committee on Urban Wildlife Conferences is chaired by Steve DeStefano, with Lowell Adams, David Drake, and Seth Riley also serving. On behalf of the committee, David reported that the committee was created to explore the advisability of the working group taking a leadership role in organizing a national urban wildlife conference and/or partnering with an existing conference. The committee suggested that the first task for the working group will be to identify its audience. Then we can make an informed decision about initiating our own conference versus partnering with one of the existing conferences that already has some content related to urban wildlife. David suggested a lot more needs to be learned about existing conferences before a decision is made and that 2008 would be the earliest year an urban wildlife conference might be held. Lowell pointed out that the working group and its predecessors, the Urban Affairs and Regional Planning Committee, and the Urban Wildlife Committee of TWS, have a long history of bringing together planners, landscape architects, and wildlife biologists to discuss urban wildlife conservation. He also pointed out that these professions were the target of the symposium series initiated by the National Institute for Urban Wildlife in 1986. Attendance at those national symposia continued to rise through the fourth symposium held in Tucson, Arizona in 1999, and participant response was positive. In addition to a national focus, the last two symposia (Seattle and Tucson) held one-day local sessions,

along with a variety of field trips, both of which were popular. Art Smith pointed out that the biennial Wildlife Damage Conference has been a lot of work but a good money-maker for the working group.

Unfinished business included further discussion from last year about the working group listserv. It was pointed out that, as the working group grows and becomes more active, re-establishing the listserv might make sense. It was reported that TWS is talking about adding listserv capability in-house so chapters and working groups can utilize it via the TWS web site. It was agreed that the next step should be to find out about this, especially since need is not yet pressing.

One item of new business focused on discussion of an urban wildlife workshop for Tucson in 2007. It was suggested that we should make a conscious decision about whether or not to target local participants, rather than let the nature of the session drift. If we wish to attract local people to this session, it will need to be promoted very differently and TWS cannot require these people to register for the conference. The officers will discuss this issue with Michael Hutchins, TWS Executive Director, and John Organ, President (more on the workshop below).

A second item of new business was the education symposium proposal developed by Charlie Nilon that was turned down for the 2006 TWS annual conference. Art Smith pointed out that the number of proposals has been increasing and this year there were many more symposium proposals than available slots. Seth will ask Charlie to consider updating and resubmitting his proposal for the 2007 meeting in Tucson as soon as possible.

Anchorage Workshop

The working group held a successful workshop at the annual meeting of TWS in Anchorage, 23 September 2006. Five speakers presented perspectives from different agency and organization standpoints that focused on urban wildlife management issues in Anchorage. Corey Rossi of USDA Wildlife Services reviewed methodology for reducing Canada goose numbers on Elmendorf Air Force Base following the bird strike and crash of an AWACS plane in 1995 with 24 human fatalities. Efforts focused on managing habitats to discourage the birds. The Anchorage Waterfowl Working Group was formed to provide guidance. The first method employed was to reduce the goose population. Once that was done, deterrent techniques were used, including egg-eating pigs, falcons, and traditional egg gathering whereby eggs were collected and donated to charity groups for distribution. Fencing the base perimeter reduced number of moose problems.



Workshop attendees participated in an indoor morning session led by five speakers with local experience.

Dave Mitchell of the Great Land Trust discussed wetland conservation in Anchorage. The Trust is funded by in lieu fees gener-

ated from drainage/fill permits issued by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Since inception of the program in 1998, \$2.6 million have resulted in seven acquisition projects, four restoration projects, and three wetland conservation studies. Following acquisition or restoration, lands are donated to the city. The Great Land Trust retains a conservation easement to ensure that properties are maintained as intended.



Dave Mitchell of the Great Land Trust discussed wetland restoration in Anchorage during the afternoon field trip.

Rick Sinnott of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game discussed human-moose interactions in Anchorage. Two to three hundred animals are resident in the city and some 700-1,000 winter there. Animals prefer parks and wetlands but wander into neighborhoods and use the roads for travel during winter because of little snow cover. More than 100 are killed on roads annually. Aside from roads, cows with calves are the most dangerous to humans. Cows may perceive humans as threats to their young. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game provides guidelines about moose behavior so that residents can better understand the animals and minimize conflict with them. A restricted hunting program was initiated recently in an effort to reduce conflicts. Peo-

ple like to have the moose in the city even though the animals cause some problems. John Schoen of Audubon Alaska discussed the conservation of brown bears along the expanding urban edge of the Kenai Peninsula. He reported there may be some 300 bears and, although the bear is not endangered, the animals on the Kenai Peninsula represent a Population of Special Concern. Human population is projected to continue to increase and data show that with increasing human numbers come increased mortality of bears under DLP (defense of life and property). A conservation strategy prepared in 2000 identified education as a most important factor in bear conservation as the human population increases. Bear access to human garbage is a problem. Studies show that bear-resistant garbage containers are helpful in reducing human-bear interactions but such containers are expensive and not widely used. Both Kenai (city) and Homer have garbage ordinances but there is no garbage ordinance peninsula wide. Some changes in human behavior will probably be required if bears are to remain on the Peninsula 50 years from now.



A highlight for attendees of the afternoon field trip was sighting of several moose. Two hundred to 300 animals live year round in Anchorage and some 700 – 1,000 winter in the city.

Colleen Matt of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation discussed planning efforts to minimize conflict with wildlife in Anchorage. She reported good participation by entities involved with this effort in the city. All accepted the goal of working to minimize wildlife conflicts and to maintain or enhance wildlife benefits. An Anchorage bear committee was formed that developed and prioritized issues (garbage, summer bird feeding, and critical bear habitat). The group identified causes of conflict interactions, and created educational messages to reach the target audience. Success of the approach was indicated by fewer bear complaint calls, a greater number of bear-resistant garbage containers in use, and more bumper stickers on garbage cans, dumpsters, and vehicles with educational messages.

Workshop Planned for Tucson


Again, as in recent years, the working group is co-sponsoring an all-day workshop at The Wildlife Society's 2007 Annual Conference in Tucson, Arizona. Titled "**Tucson, Arizona: Laboratory for Urban Wildlife Research,**" the workshop is being organized by Lisa Harris, Bill Shaw, David Drake, and Chris Moorman. It will be held on Saturday, 22 September and will provide an opportunity for wildlife professionals attending the Annual Conference, local citizens, and persons from local agencies and conservation organizations to exchange information about managing wildlife populations, protecting critical habitat, and responding to human-wildlife interactions in urban-suburban environments. Presentations in the morning session will be limited to 15 minutes and each speaker will be encouraged to deliberately involve the audience. Presentations will be followed by a facilitated panel discussion. The afternoon session will consist of a field trip to the sites

discussed during the morning session. The field trip will help participants better understand the management issues and opportunities discussed during the morning session, and it will provide additional opportunities for visitors and local participants to "compare notes" about urban wildlife management issues in different locales. The field trip will end with a wrap-up discussion of the relevant points and concepts identified during the workshop. More detail on the workshop will be included in the summer 2007 issue of *Urban Wildlife News*. For more information now, contact Lisa Harris (Larris@heg-inc.com) or David Drake (ddrake2@wisc.edu).


Urban Wildlife Refuge Expands


On Friday, 13 October 2006, U. S. Department of the Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne marked National Wildlife Refuge Week by celebrating the expansion of Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, a premier urban refuge in the heart of the rapidly-growing Metro Denver area. The ceremony formally transferred about 7,200 acres of land from the U.S. Army to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, more than doubling the refuge to nearly 12,500 acres. The transfer is a milestone at Rocky Mountain Arsenal, which is undergoing an extensive environmental cleanup. The work is about 2/3 complete and expected to be finished in 2011, when 15,000 of the Arsenal's 17,000 acres would become part of the refuge. The site now hosts 330 species of wildlife, including deer, coyotes, bald eagles and burrowing owls.

Upcoming and Of Interest

 Auburn University's Center for Forest Sustainability and the USDA Forest Service's Southern Center for Wildland/Urban Interface Research and Information are

pleased to announce the upcoming conference "**Emerging Issues Along Urban/Rural Interfaces: Linking Land-Use Science and Society**" to be held 9-12 April 2007 at the Sheraton Atlanta. The conference will focus on linking ecological aspects and human dimensions of land-use science and practice along urban/rural interfaces, with interfaces defined broadly. More information can be found at <http://www.sfws.auburn.edu/urbanruralinterfaces/>.

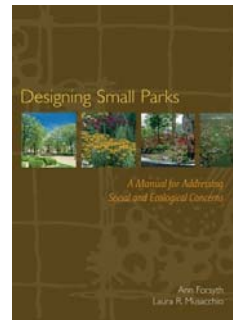
 **A symposium on urban coyotes** will be held in conjunction with the 12th Wildlife Damage Management Conference, 9-12 April 2007, in Corpus Christi, Texas. For more information, see the Web site of the Wildlife Damage Management Working Group of The Wildlife Society (<http://wildlifedamagegroup.unl.edu>) or contact Art Smith, working group chair (phone: 605-773-7595, e-mail: art.smith@state.sd.us).

 The 2007 **Urban Wildlife Management National Conference** will be held 18-20 June 2007, in Portland, Oregon. Co-sponsored by the Urban Wildlife Working Group and organized by The National Arbor Day Foundation, the meeting will cover a broad range of topics. For more information see the conference Web site (www.arborday.org/urbanwildlifecall).

 A symposium and workshop focused on urban ecology are scheduled in conjunction with the 2007 World Congress of the International Association for Landscape Ecology, Wageningen, The Netherlands, on Tuesday and Wednesday, 10-11 July 2007. The sessions are organized by Robbert Snep (Wageningen University and Research Centre, The Netherlands), Jari Niemelä (University of Helsinki, Finland), and

Jürgen Breuste (University of Salzburg, Austria). The Tuesday half-day symposium "**Applying Landscape Ecological Principles in Urban Environments**" includes nine presentations with speakers from Australia, Europe, South Africa, and the USA. The full-day Wednesday workshop "**Current and Future Research in Urban Ecology**" includes 19 presentations and discussions with broad international participation. For further information on the Congress and the urban ecology sessions, go to the IALE Web site (<http://www.landscapeecology.org>).

New in Print



Designing Small Parks: A Manual for Addressing Social and Ecological Concerns, authored by Ann Forsyth and Laura Musacchio, ISBN: 978-0-471-73680-6, Hardcover, 224 pp., 2005, \$50.00.

The book provides guidelines for building better parks by integrating design criteria with current social and natural science research. Small parks typically have low priority in municipal and metropolitan open space systems because of assumptions that their small size and isolation limits their recreational capacity and makes them ecologically less valuable than large city and county parks. Topics covered in the manual include fundamental issues for urban parks, natural systems, and human aspects. Also included are useful case studies with alternative design solutions using three different approaches for integrating research findings into small urban park design. For more information, visit Wiley's Web site (<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471736805.html>).

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