

The BEAVER DEFENDERS

April 2004



Anne Dinshah and a Beaver Friend



~Remember, July is Renewal Month!~

They shall never be trapped anymore.

The BEAVER DEFENDERS



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April 2004

GOOD NEWS FROM UNEXPECTED

By Sarah Summerville

Spring is in the Air

On February 4th, I was treated to a particularly welcome sight in the cove when a flash of blue caught my eye. I grabbed the binoculars and sure enough, two male blue birds were vying for the same nest box in the cove. As the days warmed, a lady eventually appeared and selected the successful possessor. Since then, these two birds have spent hours defending their home from other covetous birds. The female bluebird was so zealous in her defense that she even bumped her mate from his adjacent spot on the box lid. He took up his new post on a nearby dogwood branch.



The ice in the Main Pond began to melt around the edges during the last week of February, and the poplar branches that were held fast in the water's icy grip disappeared shortly thereafter. Now that the ice is gone, two very large beavers dine in the cove on some evenings. They are shy and beat a quick retreat at the mere thought of meeting up with humans.

We have been visited by wood ducks, ringneck ducks, mergansers and Canada geese, all dabbling and diving in the calm glassy water, pairing up and pairing off for their spring rituals. The regal kingfisher has been surveying his kingdom from atop the wood duck box next to the Dike, and a juvenile bald eagle occasionally visits the pond, circling higher and higher on the warm spring thermals. A red shoulder hawk has also made his presence known on the fringes of the wetlands, patiently perched in the pitch pine.



Making Tracks

It was a very cold winter, and South Jersey got her fair share of snow. It was interesting to follow and try to identify the tracks of the animals who live in the Refuge. The tiny white footed mouse seemed to have no agenda, with tracks looping and criss-crossing back and forth, poking into roots and hummocks for a forgotten seed or nut. The red fox was on a serious mission with her steady, measured gate, straight into the dense cedar forest. In the thickets and briars the deer bedded down, leaving soft oval cups where their bodies lay curled, protected from the cold and wind by their heavy winter coats.

While the pond was frozen over this winter, the beavers were locked under the ice, pulling poplar branches from their food raft and eating together in the warm damp darkness of the lodge.

One mild morning after an ample snowfall, the ice melted around the Dike leaving an impressive expanse of open water. About twenty feet upstream, the ice began again and extended across the pond for several hundred feet, ending with more open water at Wild Goose Blind. During the night, two stir-crazy beavers decided to break out for some fresh air and exercise, leaving two fat wobbly tail tracks side by side across the snowy pond.

If this daring duo had encountered any predators on their evening walk, they would have had no open water to enter for protection. Thankfully, right next to the departing tracks were the reciprocal tracks of two safe beavers returning home from their winter adventure.

The Gift of Giving and Thanking

We received a ½ cord of firewood from Dick and Liese from Blackwood when their sugar maple came crashing down in a fierce storm. This thoughtful donation was made in memory of their son Richard, who always had a place in his heart for Unexpected. Thanks also to Karen and Fred for the muscles to move it.

The Student Environmental Association (SEA) came in February and helped clean up a trail section from Station 11 to Station 12 that was littered with trash from the adjacent farm. We hauled out 15 trash bags of bottles and cans and other debris. This part of the trail looks so much better! If anyone else is interested in trail cleaning or trimming, there is plenty more to do!

Vernal Pool School

The Refuge is host to several vernal pools that support a fascinating array of organisms, so we attended the NJDEP Vernal Pool Project at Richard Stockton College last month. A vernal pool is defined as a wetland that is or becomes isolated while containing water, is utilized by indicator species and has wet/dry cycles that preclude fish populations. Muddy Bog is a perfect example of a vernal pool, and is the primary breeding pool for the threatened Pine Barrens tree frog (*Hyla andersonii*) at Unexpected.

Many amphibian and reptile species have become completely dependent upon the wet/dry cycles of vernal pools and face an uncertain future after years of wetland filling, drainage and changes in hydrological patterns. For a species with a narrow distribution, the loss of one vernal pool would result in extinction.

The objective of the Vernal Pool Project is to map and inventory vernal pools across the state and incorporate the information into a comprehensive map that will allow wise land use planning. The program depends upon trained volunteers who survey pools for indicator species and other criteria used to satisfy the biological

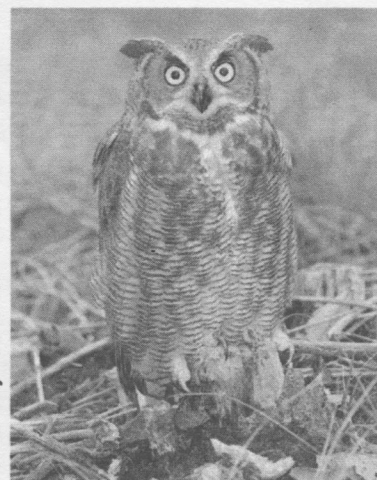


requirements for vernal pool classification. For more information on this project, contact www.njfishandwildlife.com/ensp.

Correction to January's Issue of Beaver Defenders

Some of you caught my mistake. The wrong photograph went to the printer with copy, and the owl on the cover of January's Beaver Defenders is not a great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), but a screech owl (*Otus asio*).

The great horned owl, the most formidable and widespread North American owl species, is one of the earliest nesting birds in the United States. In New Jersey, eggs are laid in January or early February, so by early April, there is plenty of food in the forest for parents to feed the hungry fledglings.



great horned owl - by Al Francesconi

The screech owl is one of our smallest birds of prey. They nest in tree cavities, man-made duck boxes and deserted woodpecker holes. They inhabit woodlots, parks, backyards and can be found in both rural and urban settings. They can be identified by their haunting and eerie wailing whistle. Sorry for the mix-up!

Beaver Defenders Dues Notice

Thanks to all of you Beaver Defenders who make printing and mailing this newsletter possible. **The annual \$20 membership fee will be due the first week of each July**, so if you have not already sent in your check, please consider renewing!

I hope you have enjoyed reading *The Beaver Defenders* as much as I have enjoyed sending it. Please feel free to drop me a line and let me know what is happening in your back yard. It may be of interest to fellow members. Thank you for your support!

Beavers are to befriend, beavers are to defend!

Dear Beaver Defenders

01/21/04

We have been members of the Unexpected Wildlife Refuge for a number of years and support your efforts whole heartedly. The world needs organizations such as yours!!!

In 1995 my husband and I moved from Chicago to Northern Michigan where we purchased 240 acres of abused farmland that was once total forest. Upon the purchase, we placed the entire acreage in a conservation easement with the Little Traverse Conservancy forever protecting the land from development (other than our small home and garage) and logging.

We have a stream, and currently three beaver ponds. Last Spring we were privileged to be able to watch a family of beavers enjoy the emerging life, following a long winter. Each day, around noon, we would sit near the lodge and watch one parent with what we assumed were last year's kits, swim, eat, and play. Our presence did not seem to disturb or threaten them, in fact they were quite curious. It was a huge gift for both of us.

One day, I returned alone to watch my friends. Upon reaching the lodge, which was built on the side of an old logging railroad bed, I heard frantic splashing. Running to the other side of the lodge, I saw a large beaver, on his back, obviously caught on something, his body going up and down in the water. I jumped into the water and slowly brought him to the waters edge. He was caught on a pole and his body was in a trap that cut into his mid-section.

I gently righted him and began freeing him from the pole and other debris. I then carefully brought him up to the top of the railroad bed. Sitting down beside him, I gave him some apple wedges I had brought. As he ate, I talked with him, stroked him, and tried to figure out what to do. I attempted in vain to free him from the trap. He was not only caught in the mid-section, he was caught across both legs. I needed to get my husband, but I did not want the beaver to be able to return to the water, for he would surely drown. Around the trap was a wire, so I secured this around a small beaver chewed tree trunk and ran the quarter mile back home.

Once there I told my husband to get wire cutters and the gun. If the beaver's back was broken, we could not let him suffer.

I then ran back, screaming to the world that allows such violence on such innocent and beautiful creatures. Our pond is situated in the middle of our property, our land is posted on all sides and here is an animal suffering, whom we thought was safe.

Approaching carefully, I sat down next to him and waited. I stroked him and talked to him. He was so magnificent and so calm considering the extreme pain he must be experiencing.

Once my husband arrived, we attempted to release the trap, but couldn't. We cut it in two places, freeing the beaver, but he could not move his back end. I then placed his front end on my lap and my husband began massaging his entire body. We did this for quite some time, hoping that his feeling would return. The alternative was too horrible to think about.

We continued massaging and talking to him and soon feeling began to return. We continued this until the beaver was ready to leave. He slowly returned to the water, submerged, then popped back up, looking at us one last time, before he was gone from us forever.

We searched the entire pond area around the lodge for more tapes and found three additional drown traps and two leg taps. We then called the Sheriff and reported this atrocity and gave him the license tags from two of the traps. They belonged to two neighbors, known poachers that we have had problems with before. We filed charges and cut up each trap, rendering all of them useless.

The rest of the year we continued to keep watch for our friends, but no one has ever returned. We assume that the large male may have been the sole survivor. We hope this is not the case.

To this day, the memory makes me weep. We had hoped that because our land was protected, that others would respect this, but we now know that our vigilance is now more important than ever. We believe that what occurred here is indicative of what our current Washington administration is doing to environmental laws across the county. As citizens of the United States, we all must be vigilant, we all must fight to protect the animals, land, water and air of this most precious place we call home.

Sincerely,

Joanne and Micheal C., Michigan

LETTERS



BEAVER BOOM TIERRA DEL FUEGO

Thursday, February 26, 2004 By Brian Winter, Reuters

TIERRA DEL FUEGO, Argentina — The Great Beaver Plague, as some furious locals call it, began in 1946 with the same good but misguided intentions that have presaged countless other ecological disasters.

That year, Argentina's former military government imported 25 pairs of beavers from Canada, hoping they would multiply and create a fur industry among the chilly, lush forests on this large island at the very tip of South America.

Multiply they did. But the fur trade never quite caught on, and there were no natural predators. So today there are tens of thousands of beavers wreaking havoc across Tierra del Fuego — felling trees, damming up rivers and stirring scandal among the humans as they butt heads over how to solve the problem.

"The beavers are an enormous headache, a plague, and the worst part is that nobody can agree on a solution," said Adriana Guillen, head of the local wildlife department, as she shook her head in bewildered disgust.

The debate has pitted ecologists against animal rights activists, and government officials against each other. Stuck in the middle are tourism companies, who are turning the furry critters into a side trip for a booming tide of foreigners putting in to port on luxury cruises to nearby Antarctica.

On one recent summer evening, when the sun didn't fade away until well after midnight, a guide took a small group to the edge of a small marsh littered with gnawed, fallen trees. After a good 15 minutes waiting in silence, the water rippled and an overgrown beaver churned through the pond.

"Look! I saw a beaver!" shrieked a Belgian tourist, jumping up and down in delight as her boyfriend snapped photos. At the end of the night, the tourists huddled around a fire and ate a homemade stew — made of beef. "You're not eating beaver," the guide assured them, to a round of laughter. The total cost for the four-hour trip ran at about \$40.

Nobody knows how many "beaver tourists" there have been so far, but the recent wave of interest has rekindled a debate that has raged for years: by what means, and to what extent should the beaver population be controlled.

In his famous 1977 travel book "In Patagonia", British author Bruce Chatwin nearly got stuck in a swamp created by the misplaced animals.

"This 'beaver tourism' is a scandal," Guillen said. "The beavers need to be controlled, not idealized. They're ruining the environment."

The local government offers hunters about \$1.50 for every beaver they kill, and every week somebody shows up with a truckload of bloody tails as proof of their work. But the bounty is so low that the hunting has little effect.

Another dark episode in Tierra del Fuego's past has ruled out more creative solutions. In 1900, immigrants brought in European rabbits — which then did what they are known for. That prompted settlers to introduce the fox, which then hunted sheep on nearby farms and ravaged the local economy.

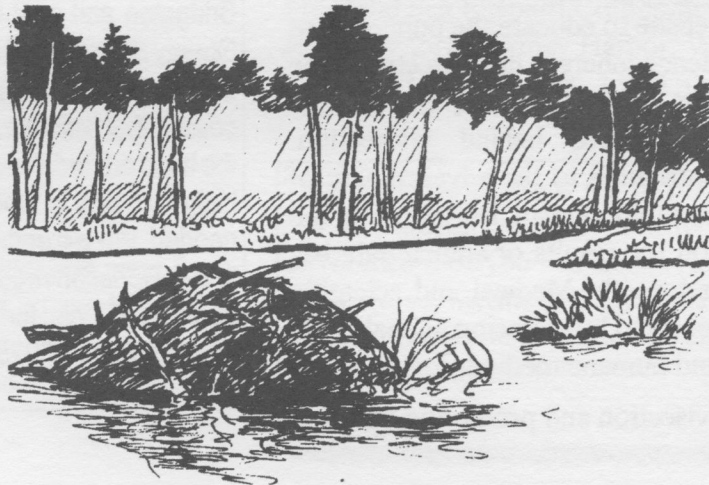
"It's a more-difficult problem to solve than you might think," laughed Julio Lovece, tourism secretary in the nearby town of Ushuaia. "Some people say the beaver is a plague. But I say humans do much more damage!"

Paintings of beavers hang in Lovece's office, and can be found in restaurants and hotels all over Ushuaia. Meanwhile, a new ski resort nearby is named "Beaver Mountain," and some local entrepreneurs have just this month begun producing hats and gloves made from beavers.

The consumption of beaver is technically prohibited, but if a tourist meets the right people he or she can get a small Tupperware container filled with marinated meat and onions. Beaver meat is grainy and tough, and tastes a lot like deer.

Tito Baserga, a local guide, has started a business with his wife aimed at exporting beaver meat, keychains and wallets, since Argentine products are dirt-cheap in dollars following a recent economic crisis.

"I want people to love the beavers, but not so much that they can't be exploited. My wife and I want to live off the beavers," said Baserga. "Besides — the fact they're here in Tierra del Fuego really isn't their fault, is it?"



**ANNUAL NJ BALD EAGLE COUNT TALLIES
169 OF THE ICONIC BIRDS AP, 3/20/04 Trenton**

The state's midwinter count of bald eagles recorded 169 of the birds, the highest count in the program's 26-year history. The Department of Environmental Protection said New Jersey's bald eagle population has seen steady growth since 1982. That year the state brought 60 eagles from Canada to revive the iconic birds' breeding population. Before then, the birds' numbers dwindled to about 10 thanks to years of pesticide use. Despite the eagles' gains, they remain on New Jersey's endangered species list.

The midwinter survey is part of a national effort to pinpoint and tally the bald eagle population in the 48 contiguous states. The Garden State's survey, coordinated by the state Division of Fish and Wildlife, was conducted in January and released this week. Volunteer surveyors focus on known eagle wintering grounds. In northern New Jersey this includes the upper Delaware River from the Water Gap to Port Jervis, and most of the major reservoirs such as Round Valley, Merrill Creek, Boonton and Wanaque. In southern New Jersey, surveyors center on the major river systems flowing into the Atlantic Ocean and Delaware Bay. Nine golden eagles were also observed during the count.

From New Jersey Animal Rights Alliance

NJARA's Anti-Vivisection project is moving ahead nicely. Our first billboard went up on Friday, March 19 in Woodbridge (immediately south of the intersection of Convery and Amboy Avenue) to garner public interest and invite people to learn more about animal experimentation through our new website, AskUsWhy.com.

As part of this ongoing, educational campaign we have established this website to educate the public about the cruelty and fraudulence inherent in vivisection. The site explains the horrors animals endure, the lack of success rates and motivations behind vivisection. Vivisection has not contributed to the advancement of science nor has it benefitted human health. On the contrary, our reliance on the results of animal data has caused human harm and death. Medical and scientific advances can only be achieved by replacing animals with accurate, progressive and humane methodologies.

By opposing vivisection and promoting humane

and valid research, we advocate for the health and well-being of humans and animals alike. It is not a question of "them or us." The advancement of medical and scientific research is not dependent upon the animal model, but hindered by it.

This project is made possible through the generosity of NJARA member Olive Walker and a grant from Society Against Vivisection. It is dedicated to the memory of Matt Fancera. (Attached is a virus-free image of our billboard.)

**MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND PICNIC &
LECTURES - Sunday, May 30 - 12 Noon**

American Vegan Society -72 Dinshah Lane, Malaga, NJ

Join the American Vegan Society for a picnic lunch followed by The Greatest Diet on Earth, a lecture by Dr. Joel Fuhrman. Our second speaker will be Sarah Summerville, director of Unexpected Wildlife Refuge and editor of The Beaver Defenders. She will speak about Unexpected Wildlife Refuge with a historical slide show explaining how, why and when the refuge came to be with a brief introduction to our friends, the beavers. Contact AVS at 856-694-2887 for further details.



PICNIC WITH THE COWS Sunday, April 18, 5:30pm

Helga Tacreiter has invited us again to have a hayride and picnic with the cows at her cow sanctuary. This is a good event for children, teens & adults. Shiloh is on NJ Rt. 49, west of Bridgeton and east of Salem. From the center of Shiloh take County Rt. 620 south approx. 1.4 miles. Mailbox #465 is across the road from the sanctuary. Arrive at 4pm to visit with the cows, other animals and with each other. You can learn about the hand crafted, life-sized floor sculptures called "cowches" that Helga creates to fund her farm. Helga will provide hayrides as needed. We will gather about 5:30 PM to tell about our food and to eat. Donation requested. Helga's phone number is 856-455-6637. Call Lois for more info at 856-694-3025.



The Mad Cowboy's Prediction Comes True

By Captain Paul Watson

Back in 1998, a few Texas cattlemen, led by billionaire Paul Engler, owner of Cactus Feeders, Inc., filed suit against Howard Lyman, Oprah Winfrey, and Harpo Productions. The lawsuit alleged Howard Lyman and Oprah Winfrey had violated a Texas law that forbids someone from "knowingly making false statements" about agricultural business. The cattlemen alleged that Oprah and Lyman were responsible for the decline in beef futures.

Howard and Oprah had discussed the threat of e-Coli and Mad Cow Disease and Howard suggested that it was only a matter of time until Mad Cow Disease appeared in the United States. The cattlemen lost their suit but scoffed at, and publicly dismissed any suggestion that Mad Cow disease could occur in the United States.

On December 23, 2003, Howard's prediction was revealed to have come true. The first case of a cow, a Holstein suffering from bovine spongiform encephalopathy was discovered from an animal originating from a farm near Yakima, Washington.

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman said the slaughtered cow was screened earlier this month and any diseased parts were removed before they could enter the food supply and infect humans.

"There is no risk to consumers based upon the product that came from this animal," said Terry Stokes, chief executive of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

Reading between the lines, it appears that meat from the cow did get released to the public. Veneman said that "diseased parts" were removed. Stoke's statement admits to the fact that meat from the cow in question entered the marketplace.

There is no explanation as to why any meat from an infected cow was apparently sent to market. The Agriculture Secretary also said that there was no possibility of any human being infected.

This statement has no credibility.

In 2003, only 20,526 cows were tested for Mad Cow disease. Millions of cattle were slaughtered and sent to market in 2003. Alisa Harrison, an Agricultural department spokeswoman, said downer cattle that show signs of mad cow disease when they reach the slaughterhouse are tested for the illness.

Congressman Gary Ackerman, D-N.Y., said such cows shouldn't be in the food supply in the first place. The Senate passed such a ban earlier this year, but it failed to make it through the House. "I blame it on greed, greed, greed," Ackerman said. "The greed of the industry, the greed of the lobbyists and the greed of the members of Congress."

An estimated 130,000-downed cattle are slaughtered each year, yet only 20,526 cows in total were tested nationwide. This means that there is a real possibility that meat infected with the lethal prion may be circulating in the American market place.

Secretary Veneman reacted to the revelation with the politically predictable statement that "We see no reason for people to alter their eating habits, I plan to serve beef for my Christmas dinner." This is a rather ominous statement considering her counterpart in the British government over a decade ago said the exact same thing. In the years that followed over 153 people died from Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease.

Howard Lyman predicted this outbreak years ago. Perhaps now the public might pay more attention to this Montana rancher turned vegan. He knows that of which he speaks.

From the Sea Shepard Conservation Society 12/24/03
P.O. Box 2616, Friday Harbor, WA 98250 (USA)
Tel: 360-370-5650 Fax: 360-370-5651



"The purpose of life is not to be happy. The purpose of life is to matter, to be productive, to have it make some difference that you live at all. Happiness, in the ancient, noble verse, means self-fulfillment and is given to those who use to the fullest whatever talents God or luck or fate bestowed upon them."

Leo Rosten

How Did Your Legislators Vote? Midterm Report on the 108th Congress

The Humane Scorecard -- A Project of The Humane Society of the United States and The Fund for Animals

As the animal protection movement grows and its core ethic of compassion for animals takes hold in mainstream America, animal issues are becoming more of a presence in the U.S. Congress. Legislators need to hear from you today and throughout the coming year.

Please study the scorecard and do all you can to help. We hope you will use it as a tool to ensure that your legislators represent your interests in Washington. Let them know you are watching and you appreciate their support for pro-animal legislation; or, if they haven't done enough, let them know you'd like to see them do more.

Hard copies of *The Humane Scorecard* can be obtained free of charge by calling 301-585-2591 or by sending an email to fundinfo@fund.org. Please be sure to provide your complete mailing address and indicate that you are requesting a copy of *The Humane Scorecard*.

compassion (kom-pash-on) n. a sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it.

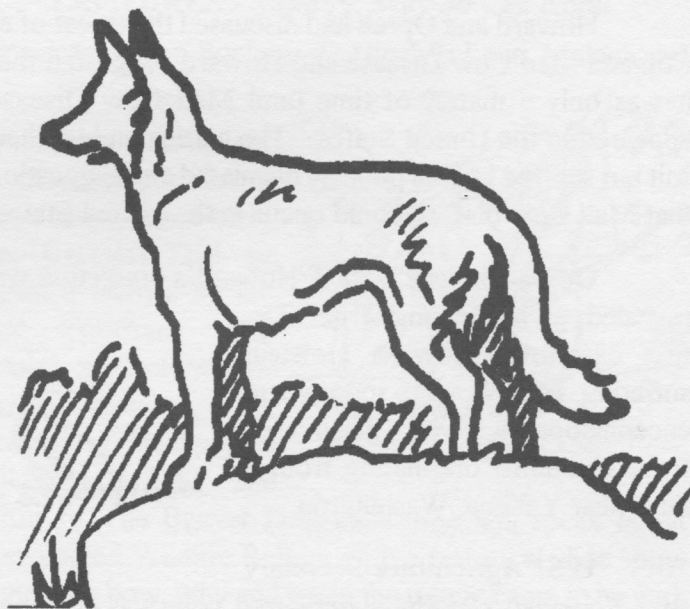
Board of Game Expands Aerial Wolf Kills, Includes Bears in Predator Control

At their spring meeting, the Alaska Board of Game expanded the state's predator control programs for wolves and bears and removed hunting prohibitions for moose in Alaska. The board tripled the area where aerial, or land-and-shoot, wolf control could occur in Alaska. The control program allows the killing of up to 100 wolves in a 10,000-square-mile area, just west of Anchorage (Game Management Unit 16B).

Another control program for a 10,000-square-mile area in the Central Kuskokwim region of interior Alaska (Game Management Unit 19A) was approved for the killing of up to 200 wolves. Karen Deatherage, Defenders' Alaska representative, served on the Moose Management Planning Team

for Unit 19A and strongly opposed any predator control program.

"The biologist for the area stated that the moose population in that area is 'not low,'" states Deatherage. "In fact, it is higher in some areas than in Denali National Park where moose are not hunted." The control programs currently encompass more than 30,000 square miles, with the objective of killing up to 500 wolves.



The board also approved a bear management and conservation policy, authorizing bears to be trapped, shot using aircraft, or baited with human or dog food. Brown bear sows, as well as their one-year-old cubs, can also be killed. Bear skulls, hides and handicrafts made from bear hides can be sold.

Finally, the board lifted the prohibition on moose calf hunting in some areas, despite claims that moose populations are declining statewide.

Please help end these scientifically unsound programs immediately by signing Defenders' online petition to Governor Frank Murkowski at <http://www.savealaskawolves.org/> or visit For details about the wolf control programs, or please visit <http://www.defenders.org/wildlife>

How Healthy Wetlands Devour Mosquitoes (reprinted from *Beaversprite*, Winter 2003)

Although West Nile Virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne disease, not all mosquitoes carry it. It is species of *Culex*, the so called "filth mosquito" or "container mosquito", that generally carry this virus. *Culex* females deposit eggs in almost any container holding water, such as old tires, birdbaths, buckets or wading pools. In its larval stage the "filth mosquito" live in watery areas that are especially rich in organic matter, such as septic outflows, leaf-clogged gutters, and neglected birdbaths or swimming pools.

A 2002 Fort Wayne, Indiana, Allen County Department of Health survey found that 66 percent of the West Nile Virus carriers were born from larva found in waste tires.

Healthy wetlands are not stagnant, and therefore, do not support the winged carriers of WNV. For example, once a beaver dam is complete, a current continues to carry water over and through the leaky dam. A lack of understanding is making the beaver a scapegoat once again.

When a wetland is drained, however, the small puddles that remain make especially good habitat for *Culex* eggs and larva, because the various fish, frogs and insects that prey upon the mosquitoes and their larva cannot survive in a puddle. Therefore, besides having a Deet-containing insect repellent, our first line of defense against WNV should include a local healthy wetland.

Culex pipiens, the northern house mosquito, is a common household mosquito and the primary vector of WNV. Horses and birds are more susceptible to the virus, which first appeared in the northeast US in 1999, than humans. Very few mosquitoes are infected with the virus even in areas where the disease is prevalent, according to the Centers for Disease Control. When bitten by an infected mosquito, less than 1% of people will become infected and severely ill.

From 1999 through early 2003, the Centers for Disease Control reported only about 250 deaths nationwide from WNV. When compared to other causes

of mortality, the risk of death from WNV infection is relatively low. For example, during those same four years there were about 10,400 deaths due to talking on a cell phone while driving, and 80,000 deaths due to influenza. Most people who are infected with WNV have either no symptoms or mild flu-like symptoms.

Despite the relatively low infectivity and incidence of WNV, some communities have panicked at this new threat, and overreacted by trying to drain every spot of wetland, including beneficial beaver ponds. They should be doing just the opposite, according to a brochure from Purdue University, which explains that an effective way to reduce all varieties of mosquito is to restore a wetland.

By doing so we provide habitat for dragonflies, damselflies, water strays, backswimmers and predacious diving beetles, all critters that love a mosquito snack.

After the Essex County Mosquito Control Project restored a 1,500 acres of wetland in Massachusetts, the mosquito population dropped by 90 percent.

Community leaders should be informed of these facts as they prepare to fight the WNV. Restoring healthy freshwater wetlands is a good way to win that battle and the beaver can be our ally. More wetlands provide more flood control downstream, and fewer areas where standing water will become mosquito breeding grounds.

(*Beaversprite* is published by Beavers: Wetlands & Wildlife, 146 Van Dyke Road, Dolgeville, NY 13329 (518) 568-2077)

Our National Wildlife Refuges

National Wildlife Refuges are administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for animals, rather than recreation or, in theory, exploitation. In 1903, Theodore Roosevelt established the first NWR at Pelican Island, FL, as a "preserve and breeding ground for native birds." This is our Executive record since that date (in acres):

Johnson - 9,900,000; Nixon - 1,600,000; Ford - 3,100,000; Carter - 66,300,000;
Reagan - 10,600,000; George Bush (#41) - 4,000,000; Clinton - 9,500,000;
George W. - 500,000*

*that's 1/8th of what Dad preserved, but he has until November to come around.

Don't forget to VOTE. It is your right, obligation and duty.



A Dragonfly at Unexpected

THE BERGEN RECORD

03/11/04

PREDICTABLY, the trigger-happy state Fish and Game Council voted this week to hold another bear hunt this fall - despite the well-founded objections of the state Department of Environmental Protection.

Although the vote could ultimately lead to an ugly showdown between the council and the DEP over the legality of such a hunt unless a compromise is reached, a wiser long-term course of action would be for the Legislature to intervene and to put the self-serving council out of its misery.

The problem with the inflexible 11-member council is that it is dominated by representatives of sportsmen's groups who have a vested interest in approving the hunt. The situation is akin to letting vegetarians decide whether to ban beef or allowing beer drinkers to write the laws on drunken driving. Because the group cannot be objective, the public is ill-served by its decisions.

The time has come for lawmakers to scrap this pro-hunting group and replace it with a council that reflects a wide range of views. The new council should include several wildlife biologists and environmental professionals, as well as hunters, animal-rights advocates, and other members of the public. And it should be accountable to the head of the DEP.

In the meantime, the Legislature should ban bear hunts for 18 months, as Assemblyman Reed Gusciora, D-Mercer, advocates in a bill introduced last week. The bill would also give Rutgers University \$95,000 to analyze the bear population growth in the state, to compile information on its population and distribution, and to determine the availability and effectiveness of other bear population-control methods.

Mr. Gusciora says he also plans to introduce a bill that would expand the council to include three members who have expertise in environmental concerns, but would favor overhauling the council totally if the public supported such a move.

DEP Commissioner Bradley Campbell favors postponing the hunt as well, to give the state more time to check population surveys and to test a bear contraceptive program, in cooperation with the Humane Society.

Mr. Campbell also wants to see better enforcement of the state's garbage laws, which require people who live in bear country to secure their trash so it won't attract bears. This is a common-sense move that should be done regardless of the bear hunt's fate.

THE PRESS OF ATLANTIC CITY

03/14/04

ANOTHER HUNT? Give bears a break

The state Fish and Game Council bucked the McGreevey administration last week when it voted to hold another bear hunt next December.

Bad move. First, because the bears - and the sizable portion of the public that was so turned off by the hunt last year - deserve a break this year.

And secondly, the council should reconsider if only for its own self-protection: This issue has reopened public debate about the wisdom of granting autonomous power over hunting to a panel that is so dominated by hunters and farmers.

NJDEP Commissioner Bradley Campbell, who supported the hunt last year, made it clear that he opposes another this year. The bear-population figures are less than previously believed, he contends, and the hunt drained resources from other bear-management programs.

Still, both sides of the debate acknowledge that the election season is driving the administration's opposition. Even Campbell concedes that the administration is reacting in part to public opposition last year.

Call it the teddy-bear factor. Call it the fact that these lumbering creatures were once almost extinct in New Jersey, and that last year's hunt was the first in 30 years. Whatever it is, people are more repulsed by hunters bagging a bear than shooting a

grouse.

But what's wrong with considering public sensibilities when setting public policy on a bear hunt? New Jersey held a bear hunt last year. And a limited hunt may again be needed in the future if the population balloons. But what's wrong with a timeout to see how the numbers measure up and whether less-drastic measures are effective? Putting bleach on garbage, for example, is real turnoff to



bears. Keeping garbage lids on cans goes a long way to keeping bears out of back yards.

Meanwhile, the confrontation between the Fish and Game Council and the administration has reignited debate about the makeup of the council. Certainly, the council shouldn't be dominated by animal-rights activists. But better balance would be healthy, and it would give the council more credibility when it does rule a hunt is needed.

Moreover, the administration should certainly have *some* say over the council's decisions. Campbell has the power to overrule the council, in effect, by not issuing bear-hunting permits. But the DEP commissioner should have some kind of established oversight over this now-autonomous agency.

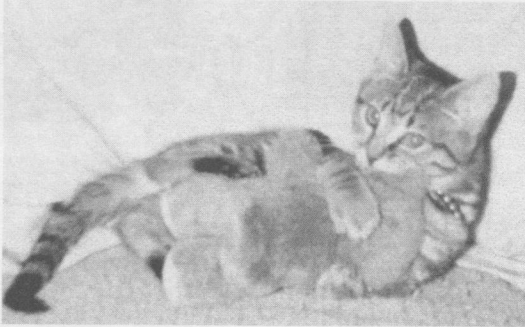
In Memory of Abigail

September 1987 - January 2004

Dear sweet little Abigail, my companion for 17 years, passed away peacefully on January 6th.

As we grew older together, we grew to know each others' habits, likes and dislikes as we knew our own. She raised three dogs, five cats and two teddy bears (the first dog got the first teddy bear). The expression on her face was always a tolerant: "not another one!"

My little friend is here in the butterfly garden, anchored to our realm with her "scratchy log", the hunk of oak that I picked up on our way home from the shelter so many years ago.



Good News Updates:

The US Postal Service is not issuing any pro-trapping stamps this year, according to a USPS representative;

The Captive Wildlife Safety act (banning the interstate commerce of exotic animals) has been passed and signed into law.

FOREST SERVICE TO END OUTSIDE REVIEWS

Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, 03/18/04
Washington, DC

The U.S. Forest Service is moving to eliminate any reviews of its actions by outside agencies for compliance with endangered species, clean water, and historical preservation laws, according to a planning memo released today by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER).

Citing what Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth has identified as "the Four Threats" (fire risk, invasive species, un-managed recreation and loss of open space), the agency plans to jettison any consultation or other "process" it deems unrelated to "the Four Threats." Consequently, the Forest Service will end endangered species consultation on "inland aquatic species with both Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA-Fisheries.

"In addition, building on a recently finalized rule waiving Endangered Species Act consultations on fire-related activities, the Forest Service would expand this no consultation stance "to all land management activities;" Environmental analyses of any herbicide applications done in the name of controlling invasive plants; and Compliance with Historic Preservation Act rules requiring review by state agencies of protection of historical and cultural artifacts.

"The Forest Service fails to grasp the difference between streamlining and steam rolling," stated PEER Executive Director Jeff Ruch, arguing that ending inter-agency consultation eliminates checks on Forest Service abuses and leads to more litigation because lawsuits would become the only avenue for securing agency compliance with resource protection laws.

"The Forest Service's track record makes a powerful case for more outside review not less." Taken together, this new policy takes the Forest Service in a radically different direction from that articulated by the previous Chief, Michael Dombeck, a fisheries biologist.

Dombeck placed "the health of our rivers, streams and lakes" as the guiding principle for Forest Service management - an ecosystem approach completely absent from the mechanistic formulation of "the Four Threats."

"The Four Threats sounds more like a Maoist slogan than a coherent management philosophy," commented Ruch. "Healthy fish populations, water quality and preserving our cultural heritage are important values springing from our National Forests, not impediments to be overcome."

PEER is a national alliance of local, state and federal resource professionals, working to protect the environment.

TRAPS 101 - WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Rarely are trapped animals killed remotely quickly. The majority of trapped animals die desperate, agonizing deaths.

What is "normal" on the trapline is this: Traps are placed where animals travel frequently, along creek beds, for instance or in trees. Sometimes the trap locations are baited with urine or sex gland scents that lure the animal to a certain trap.

The animal is surprised, painfully gripped and restrained alive. Not infrequently, the animal is clamped on a part of the body that is excruciatingly painful; on an eye, the muzzle, or the abdomen.

In an agony of pain and confusion, the animal struggles in frenzy, often mutilating itself, dislocating joints, breaking its teeth, chewing its leg or paw – in an attempt to break free. If it succeeds, the traumatized animal has scant hope for survival in the wild; death will come surely by infection, by starvation or by the animal's being an easy prey to its predators.

For the animal unable to break free, death is no kinder. Exhaustion and unconsciousness are the kindest possibilities, but there are other, grimmer modes of death in the trap. In Canada trap checking times vary from once every 24 hours to once every five days – and such laws are really unenforceable. An animal who does not die quickly is faced with excruciating pain and a desperately panic-filled wait.

The three main traps in use today are the Leg-Hold Trap; the Conibear Trap; and the Snare Trap. Each trap, and the particular way it is used, presents its own unique cruelty. Although it is encouraging that the number of animals trapped in North America per year has dropped from about 31-33 million down to about 6 million, there still is much work to be done. We can no longer look the other way. Millions of fur-bearing animals a year are depending on us!

The Leg-Hold Trap (currently banned in New Jersey) doesn't kill, but holds the animal alive in cold steel jaws. Pain is long... death is slow. Finally, hunger, cold, exhaustion, or the returning trapper ends it all.

In addition to the millions of target animals trapped and sold for their pelts, there are also many more "accidental" catches of animals whose pelts are not valuable. And there are also animals whose pelts are damaged so badly by the time the trapper returns, that they are not valuable enough to use.

Dogs and cats are frequent victims of these cruel traps. Owls, ducks, jays, porcupines, flying squirrels and rabbits are also caught. They are "unwanted" and are thrown away, or let free, often

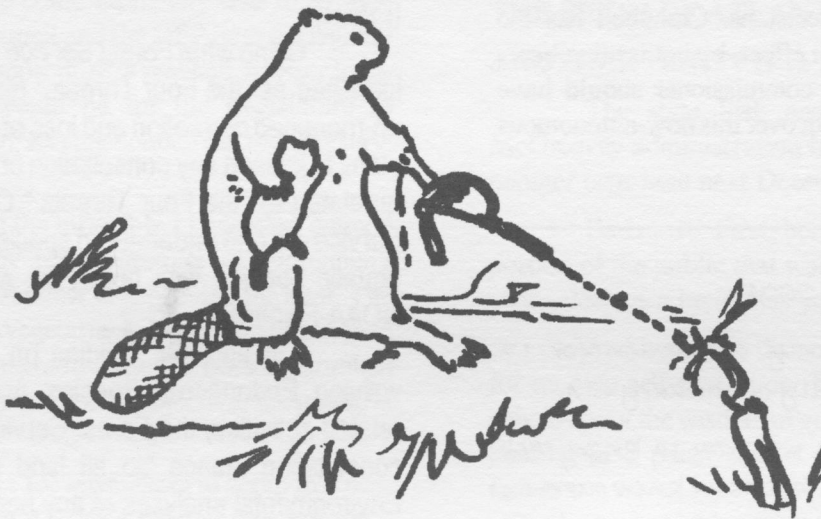
painfully and sometimes fatally injured. Some non-target catches are even endangered species, such as eagles or badgers.

The Leg-Hold Trap is over 200 years old! It's a terrible instrument of torture and has no place in the 21st Century.

Padded Traps "Leg-Hold", or "Propaganda Traps", are referred to by the fur industry and North American Governments as the "Padded" Trap, or the "Soft-Catch" Trap. "Padded" or "Soft", it is not. It's a cruel steel-jawed Leg-Hold trap, and it clamps onto an animal's leg with enough excruciating power to hold a desperate, panicking wolf.

The only difference between a "padded" trap and a regular steel jawed leg-hold trap is a thin piece of synthetic material, stuck onto the powerful steel jaws.

You'll hear that today's Leg-Hold traps have been "modified" for better animal welfare. These "modified" traps, used and promoted by the fur industry and governments are the "padded" trap, the "offset" trap and the "laminated" trap.



The "offset" trap is a regular steel jawed leg-hold trap with a 3/16" gap between the closed steel jaws. The "laminated" trap is a regular steel jawed leg-hold trap with extra steel added to the jaws to make them slightly wider (thicker).

The Conibear Trap, seen in its development stage as a potential instant-kill trap, is now recognized as inhumane. The problem is that the Conibear does not work as intended unless the animal happens to be the "right size" for the size of the trap, come into the trap at the "right speed" and from the "right angle".

Rather than being an instant-kill trap, it generally works as a body-holding trap that clamps onto various parts of the animal's body, for example, the shoulder, neck, abdomen where it restrains him alive until the trapper returns.

Even trappers refer to the Conibear as the "Body-Gripper". It can cause horrendous pain and suffering – a slow and agonizing death. And in Canada, there is no time limit on when the trapper is required to return to check his Conibear trap. This is because the Wildlife Departments classify Conibears as "quick-killing" (though they are generally not). The animals can be left suffering in these traps for as long as, or longer than, in other traps.

Newer Conibear type traps such as the Magnum and the Sauvageau have the same basic design, and suffer the same basic problems.

Snares are brutal, yet simple traps. A wire loop encircles the animal's body. As the animal struggles, the loop tightens... and tightens. Sometimes the animal will slowly strangle himself, choking to death. Sometimes he will suffer alive until the trapper returns to kill him.

Pole Snares are often used to catch squirrels. In many jurisdictions, several snares are attached to one suspended pole. The sound of one trapped squirrel attracts the others. There they hang, alive, dangling off the pole by their trapped body part until the trapper returns.

Taken from the Fur Bearer Defenders a non-profit society working to stop the use of cruel traps. You can contact them at 3727 Renfrew Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada V5M3L7 (604) 435-1850 or visit them on the internet at www.banlegholdtraps.com)

Please take a moment to contact your State and local representatives and tell them what you think about trapping and why. These people need to know that this cruel recreation must stop.

Please urge them to support pro-animal, anti-cruelty legislation and promote non-lethal means of controlling out-of-control animal populations.



first they ignore you, then they ridicule you, then they fight you, then you win.

- Mahatma Gandhi

How Did Your Legislators Vote? Midterm Report on the 108th Congress

The Humane Scorecard -- A Project of The Humane Society of the United States and The Fund for Animals

As the animal protection movement grows and its core ethic of compassion for animals takes hold in mainstream America, animal issues are becoming more of a presence in the U.S. Congress. Legislators need to hear from you today and throughout the coming year.

Please study this scorecard and do all you can to help. We hope you will use it as a tool to ensure that your legislators represent your interests in Washington. Let them know you are watching and you appreciate their support for pro-animal legislation; or, if they haven't done enough, let them know you'd like to see them do more. Hard copies of *The Humane Scorecard* can be obtained free of charge by calling 301-585-2591 or by sending an email to fundinfo@fund.org. Please be sure to provide your complete mailing address and indicate that you are requesting a copy of *The Humane Scorecard*.

The Menace of Farmed Fish

Just when the mad cow scare has wary diners swearing off burgers, scientists have more bad news. A study of more than 700 salmon found that farmed fish have nearly 10 times the amount of PCBs and other contaminants as wild fish. Contamination levels were highest in fish from Northern Europe, followed by fish from the US and Chile. The culprit is salmon feed: the pellets of ground fatty fish that helped farmed salmon fatten fast also concentrate pesticide residues and industrial byproducts. The study, one of the most extensive to date, concludes that salmon raised in feedlots are so contaminated with suspected carcinogens that people should not eat them more than once a month. The PCB levels in the fish are acceptable under Food and Drug Administration standards, but study co-author David Carpenter of the University of New York at Albany is nevertheless alarmed. "Just because the contaminants we found do not exceed FDA levels," he says, "doesn't mean they are safe for consumers." More than 90 percent of the fresh salmon eaten in the US is farmed.

(Taken from *The Week* - the best of the US and international media; January 23, 2004; www.theweekmagazine.com)

The Beaver Defenders is published quarterly by the Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, Inc., a non-profit organization created in 1961 to provide an inviolate sanctuary for wild animals, to study wild animals in relation to humans and to promote humane treatment of animals through education and example.

Unexpected Wildlife Refuge Needs Assistance

We are looking for someone to volunteer their expertise with a hand-held GPS unit in order to locate a property line. Anyone interested in donating time to this project can call me for mor information. (856) 697-3541.

'Tis hope supports each noble flame,
'Tis hope inspires poetic lays;
Our heroes fight in hopes of fame,
And poets write in hopes of praise.
She sings sweet songs of future years,
And dries the tears of present sorrow;
Bids doubting mortals cease their fears,
And tells them of a bright tomorrow.

-Thomas Jefferson

Earth Faces Sixth Mass Extinction, But This One Is Man-Made

by Roddy Scheer

A steep decline in birds, butterflies and native plants in Britain supports the theory that humans are pushing the natural world into the Earth's sixth big extinction event and the future may see more and more animal species disappearing

In an effort that sent more than 20,000 volunteers into every corner of England, Scotland and Wales to survey wildlife and plants, researchers found that many native populations are endangered and others are gone altogether. One of the major new findings is that butterflies are going extinct at an even greater rate than birds.

"If we can extrapolate that pattern of the British butterflies to other British insects, and indeed to invertebrates across the planet, we are obviously looking at a very serious biodiversity crisis," said researcher Mark Telfer of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in Bedfordshire, England.

The data support the idea that the rise of humans over tens of thousands of years is partly if not wholly to blame for this sixth great species extinction. The causes of the other extinctions are not well understood. The largest ended the Permian Period some 250 million years ago, when all but about four percent of Earth's species disappeared.



The Beaver Defenders Membership Application

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Comments: _____

Phone/fax: _____

Membership/subscription is \$20 annually, due each July. Please make checks payable to Unexpected Wildlife Refuge. All contributions are tax deductible. The amount of your donation in excess of actual membership dues will be considered a donation unless otherwise specified.

**Mail to: Beaver Defenders
PO BOX 765, Newfield, NJ 08344**

In the Store! (Please include an additional \$3 for shipping and handling of merchandise orders)

Books: <i>Hoofmarks</i>	\$18.00
<i>The Best of Beaver Defenders</i>	\$ 8.00
T-shirts: Hunter green, on the front - our logo; on the back - <i>I support the Unexpected</i> (with charming beaver).	\$20.00
Mugs: Light brown mug with green logo, very tasteful	\$ 5.00
Posters: Trapped beaver and baby	\$ 1.00
Beavers turn wilderness into happiness	\$ 1.00 (colorable!)
Cards: 12 custom beaver block prints created by fifth graders with poems written by Beaver Defenders, 24 pack, fit legal envelopes	\$ 4.00
Sheet Music: Away with Traps, Song of the Beaver Defenders	\$ 1.00
We Love You, Little Beaver	\$ 1.00

Educational Materials free with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

2. Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, Home of the Beaver Defenders
4. What Beavers do for Waterways
6. Beaver Problems and Solutions
8. Species found at the Refuge
10. Coloring sheets (seven different beaver scenes, drawn by Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci)
12. They All Call it Home
14. Slandered Do-gooders (snake information)
16. The Square of Flesh
18. Chopper, in Memoriam
20. Intruder in a Cageless Zoo (by Ferris Weddle)
22. Is it Safe to Come Near You? You Won't Hurt Me, Will You?

Furs should be worn on only the ones they were born on.



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July is Membership Renewal Month

