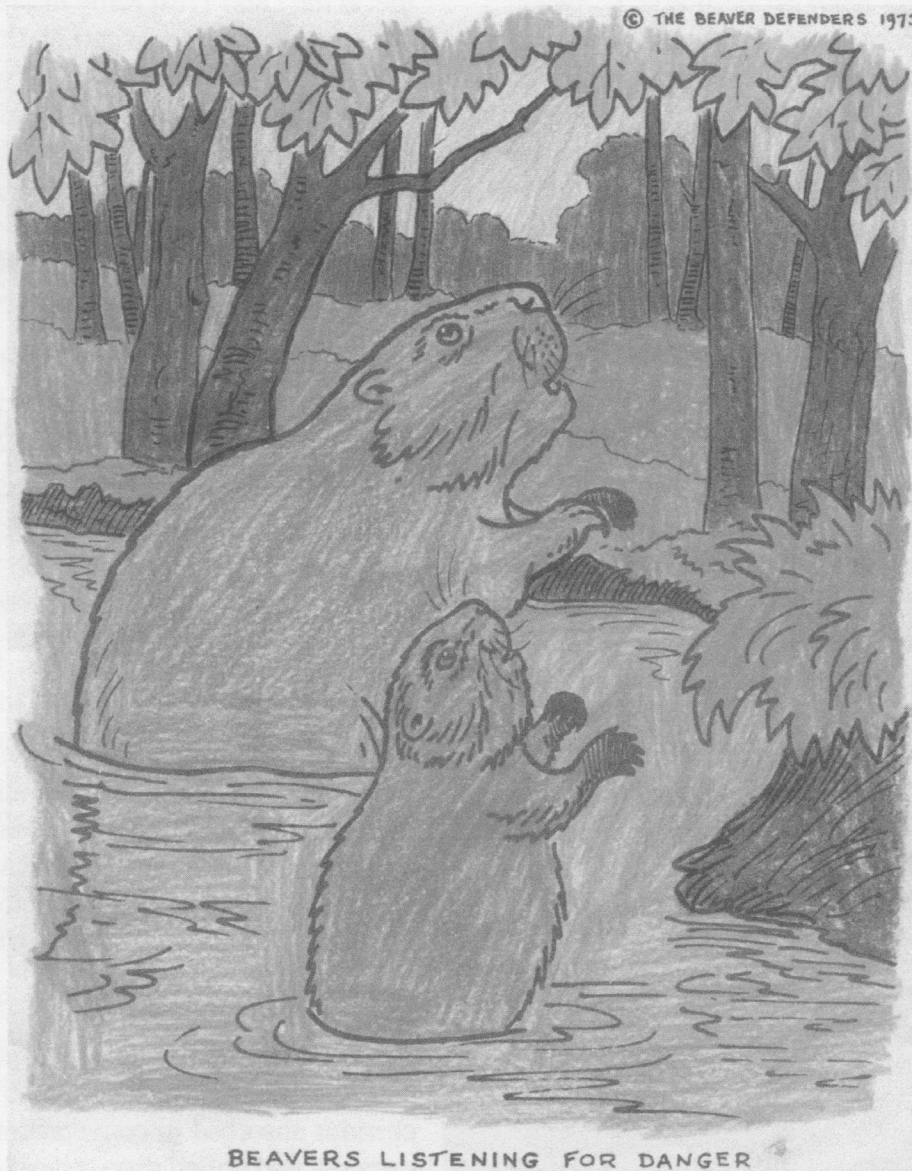


The BEAVER DEFENDERS



BEAVERS LISTENING FOR DANGER

April 2005

They shall never be trapped anymore.

The BEAVER DEFENDERS



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Editor: Sarah Summerville

April 2005

GOOD NEWS FROM UNEXPECTED

Spring has Sprung

Today is the first day of Spring, and appropriately, it has been raining lightly on and off all day. The sun is setting, wrapped in a thickening gauze of wispy fog. The day was warm enough to work outside in a light jacket but damp enough to light a small cozy fire in the wood stove to take off the chill. The common mergansers have finished dipping and diving for dinner in the damp evening, and are now lulling on the rain dimpled water, heads tucked. I thought it the perfect time to sit down and give you the Good News from Unexpected.

Exciting stuff for sure!

We are negotiating the purchase of the adjoining 127 acre farm. We share over 4,000 feet of property line, and acquisition of the farm will provide over 4,500 feet of frontage on Cedar Lake Road. The parcel has rolling farm fields, oak and pine forests as well as several acres of wetlands that drain into a lush green bog within the Refuge. Since the seller is anxious to go to settlement quickly, we contacted Conservation Resources Inc., a non-profit group whose mission is to increase the capacity, expertise and technical and financial resources available to private and public conservation organizations like Unexpected. We



By Sarah Summerville

met at the Land Trust Rally in Trenton in March, and they are now assisting us in getting title to the property with a low interest bridge loan. This will give us the time we need to apply for grants and to raise funds from dedicated supporters like YOU! We will have many costs prior to settlement, such as property survey, title search, appraisal and environmental assessment. If you would like to be part of this exciting expansion of Unexpected, please send a tax-deductible donation today!

The Big Thaw

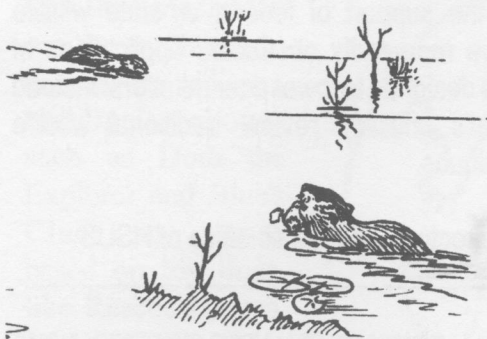
The Winter was not too harsh, although we did burn quite a few cords of firewood this year. We weathered several really cold weeks, and the pond froze solid enough to walk across. The daytime temperatures climbed into the forties as Spring approached, teasing us with warm sunshine and bright green crocus tips. The nights, however, were brutally cold, keeping the beavers locked under their ceiling of ice.

As soon as the icy edges of the pond thinned, that old familiar path to the cove materialized; the bare brown gift of poplar branches left from the last freeze were magically transformed into a flotilla of bleached peeled sticks. The apples we offered were left untouched, bobbing toward the shore by tiny wind driven ripples.

Earlier in the week two large beavers came to dine, shoulder to shoulder, bumping into each other comfortably, like two old friends walking down a narrow corridor absorbed in conversation. They touched noses, nuzzled, and pulled themselves out of the water to divvy up the branches. When the last branch was claimed, the relationship grew loud and contentious. The last beaver eating was accosted verbally and approached by his buddy. Jerking to the right and sliding into the water, the disturbed diner swam quickly to the peninsula to finish his meal. His partner left to find more generous company.

Getting Out the Word

Working toward the purchase of the farm certainly has not kept us from getting a good word out for beavers. We have sent out our informational packets to many home owners and management groups who have questions about how to deal with beavers. We discourage trapping and try to focus on educating people about the benefits of beavers. If you hear of anyone having a beaver issue, *please* tell them to contact Unexpected for support and literature.



In February, we set up for our third year at the Cumberland County Raptor Festival. This is a great show, not only for birders, but for anyone interested in the environment around us. It was

even better this year because my friend Martha came to sit in for me, so I was able to take in some presentations (she was quite a saleswoman for Unexpected, too!). Thanks also for the company of Mimi and Bret. It is always nice to see friendly faces at the booth.

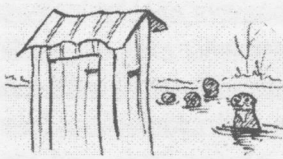
In April, we are looking forward to visits from many local nature groups. The Outdoor Club of South Jersey will join us again for our fourth annual Piney Hollow Road Clean-up and Chow-Down with Chef Maureen. The Vineland Nature Club will enjoy an evening walk followed with a picnic with (hopefully) a view of beavers, and Audubon Wildlife Society will be birding here this Spring as well.

The New Jersey Community Water Watch students from Richard Stockton College worked with us in February. We cleaned up a wetland area that drains into Miller Pond, and ultimately the Great Egg Harbor River. We also cleaned up Unexpected Road, and we amassed 19 bags of trash and recyclables, as well as tires, demolition debris and a partial living room suite.

Boy Scouts Complete Two Eagle Projects!

Five years ago, Haddonfield Troop 65 began visiting Unexpected to help clear trails, clean up and build benches. In March, two senior Boy Scouts completed their Eagle Scout Projects here. Kyle Gehring built an observation

blind on the south shore of the Main Pond, a perfect location for morning bird watching. He also redesigned two existing blinds to meet a bird watching specifications.



These blinds are available to anyone interested in watching or photographing birds and wildlife from a dry, secure and comfortable location.

Chris Keane constructed a large free-standing trail map and installed it between the parking area and the nature center. Chris used recycled cedar for the sign, and he hand-routed and painted the trails and legend. Visitor can now quickly orient themselves with this beautiful map.

Congratulations to both Kyle and Chris for doing a great job, and best of luck in College this fall!

Early Risers

Things got lively here in the first week of March. I found an abandoned rooster at the end of our driveway, Buck Road. The poor dirty orphan was left with small pile of grain and little hope for survival out in the open. He was distressed and obviously waiting for his guardian to return for him, as he would not stray from the area.

I got some help from Belinda Irizarry, Coordinator for the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, and together we chased him through the low bush blueberry bushes until we finally captured him with her coat. He is now strutting his stuff in the 20' x 20' cat enclosure with Lily, my 11 year old tabby cat. They have bonded in a rather casual way, as if old friends reunited in the most serendipitous of circumstances. He makes low throaty clucking noises at her and she responds with her sing-song refrain. I am almost embarrassed to intrude on this odd and intimate juxtaposition on my way to the barn.

As comfy as these two have become, the big fellow, whom I have named Buck, is obviously lonely for feathered company. I am looking for a permanent home for him where he will be free and surrounded by other happy fowl. And far, far, oh so far, from the bedroom window.

On the cover: Mary Grace, Kyle's little sister, provided us with the cover of this issue. This coloring cartoon is one of five beavers scenes by Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci, free with a self-addressed stamped envelope - see page 15.

Living with Wildlife, Ipswich Chronicle, 2/10/05

The letters to the editor in the Feb. 3 issue of the Chronicle address the white-tailed deer population by seeking increased hunting to control the population, and beavers, seeking increased trapping to control the population. Each letter cites the conflicts between wildlife and human populations – for deer it is the threat of Lyme disease, landscaping damage, and automobile collisions; for beavers it is flooded basements, playing fields, and septic systems. While both writers identify serious problems worthy of consideration, the letters raise more questions than they answer. If we are to increase deer hunting to control the herd, have we already reached the carrying capacity for deer?

And how should we proceed with addressing the problem with beavers? It is said that as long as there is a food supply and appropriate habitat, some beavers will always return to locations from which they have been removed. Have we adequately reviewed alternatives such as relocating septic fields and securing basements? Have beaver deceivers been installed in all locations where they are reasonable alternatives? Have zoning or land use controls been instituted that can identify potential beaver habitat and prohibit further development in those locations?

In summary, there is important information that is still required for us to understand the issues with wildlife and how to reduce the conflict so that we can share the beautiful land resources that are here in Ipswich with them. Some communities have participated in the "Keeping Track" program, to involve residents in identifying where wildlife frequent, and their behavior in using the land. Participants develop knowledge and respect for our wild neighbors.

We should attempt to develop methods of coexistence where they may be needed and effective to reduce problems for the human population, and to enhance the livability of the town for the wildlife we have become accustomed to seeing in our back yards.

Carolyn Britt, Shagbark Woods

Deer Management, Star-Ledger, 3/21/05

Letters to the Editor (one of many that they won't print)

It is disappointing to see you add your voice to that of the New Jersey Audubon Society ("Audubon recognizes reality," March 16) in demonizing deer. The killing of these animals has reached epidemic proportions across the country, while comprehensive, lasting solutions to problems with deer have languished. The reason? Deer are big business.

Most state wildlife agencies, including New Jersey's, are funded by sales of licenses and taxes on guns and ammunition used to kill deer, and all too many hunters are nearly obsessed with killing adult males with impressive racks of antlers. Population control is not a paramount concern for hunting interests, so the people claiming most loudly to be the "solution" to the deer problem are really a big part of the problem.

Research on wildlife contraception has been underway for 50 years but not with the support of federal or state wildlife agencies, which have repeatedly obstructed applications of humane technologies designed to lower deer numbers. Instead of blaming deer, let's critically review traditional wildlife "management" techniques.

- Nina Austenberg, director, Mid-Atlantic office of HSUS

SUNDAY HUNTING BILL-CONTACT SENATOR SWEENEY NOW!

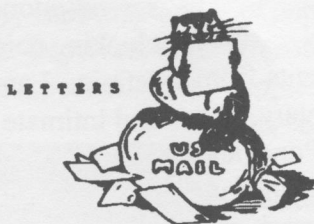
S2475, which authorizes deer hunting with bow and arrow on Sundays, has been proposed for introduction by Senator Stephen M. Sweeney. Although not introduced, proposal is the first step in the process. Unless stopped at this stage, the bill is likely to be introduced when the Senate reconvenes on May 5. Since this is a companion bill to A3736, which has been released by the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, the introduction of a Senate bill means that the measure has a greater likelihood of passage.

If introduced, this bill is likely to be assigned to the Senate Environment Committee, of which Senator Sweeney is vice-chair! So, now is the time to contact Senator Sweeney. Tell him you oppose the bill and ask that it not be introduced. Mention all the reasons why hunting should not be allowed on Sundays, including:

- Day of peace for animals and people
- Safety
- Opening the door for additional weapons and other species

Please call Senator Sweeney as soon as you get this alert and follow up with a short letter or fax. He needs to hear from all of us, loudly and clearly, that Sunday hunting is vehemently opposed.

Senator Stephen M. Sweeney
935 Kings Highway, Kingsway Commons, #400
Thorofare, NJ 08086
Phone: 856-251-9801; Fax: 856-251-9752
Email: SenSweeney@njleg.org



Apple Features Edutainment Software

Apple has posted a feature on **edutainment** titles available for the Macintosh. The edutainment genre covers games that mix learning with the fun of playing games. Number Munchers and Oregon Trail are some of the earliest examples of edutainment on Apple computers.

Today's edutainment titles are much more advanced, and some are hard to tell apart from pure entertainment titles.

The titles available for the Macintosh run the gambit from games based on children's shows, such as Dora the Explorer and Blue's Clues to games based on toy lines, like Rescue Heroes, to original games such as Didi and Ditto.

Didi & Ditto are a pair of beavers, one a boy and one a girl. During a stroll through the woods, one of them is kidnaped by Zolt, a vegetarian wolf. The player must guide the other beaver through a series of kindergarten-level math, reading, thinking and problem solving exercises, the rewards for which are the vegetables needed to exchange with Zolt for the trapped sibling. Three difficulty levels allow you to make the problems more challenging as your child gets older.

Durham Residents Try To Avoid Beaver Killing

January 27, 2005

DURHAM, N.C. -- Residents in the Duke Park neighborhood are tired of chronic flooding in their yards, but they prefer high water to the solution being proposed by state officials.

The neighborhood is located next to the Interstate 85 widening project, and North Carolina Department of Transportation engineers say a beaver or a family of rodents have dammed up a drainage pipe that runs beneath the highway project.

The DOT has notified affected homeowners that the beavers would have to be eradicated, either with explosives

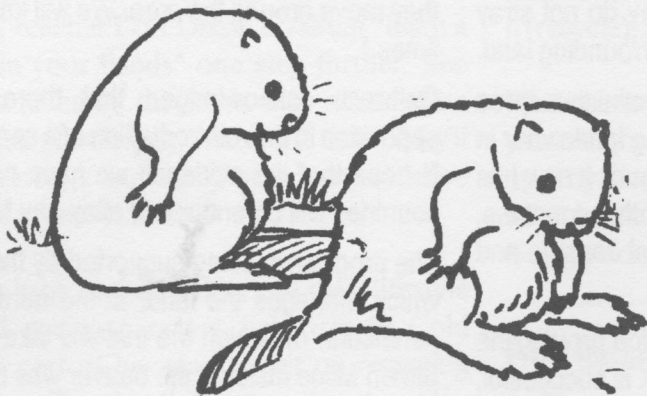
or a shotgun. Residents say they would prefer another solution. "I guess it has to be killed. I don't know. I would rather it be captured and relocated, but it's hard to believe a beaver could cause all this," resident Larry Crabtree said.

The DOT has a contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's wildlife services to get rid of problematic beavers, and agriculture officials said they are required to kill the rodents since relocating them would just create similar problems elsewhere.

"Apparently, there are more beavers than most people think, almost to the point of being a pest or nuisance," said Aaron Earwood, of the DOT.

Crabtree and other neighbors are talking with state officials to develop a plan that would allow them to reclaim their yards without any bloodshed.

"Seems like it could be done a better way," he said.



Greystone Village Adopts Beaver Management Guidelines

(from Beavers: Wetlands & Wildlife, Winter 2004)

With the help of B:W&W, a neighborhood north of Raleigh, North Carolina, now has concise guidelines for nonlethal beaver management in their neighborhood. It took years of hard work, but in November 2004, the Guidelines were completed. This plan, which stresses beaver benefits and methods of coexistence, may well become a model for other communities nationwide.

For more information on the Beaver Guidelines, contact Ellen Kinsinger, Lakes and Grounds Committee, Greystone Homeowners Association, 7221 Bluffside Court, Raleigh, NJ 27615 or visit www.greystonevillage.org.

Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are people who want crops without ploughing the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning; they want the ocean without the roar of its many waters.

Frederick Douglass

Beaver will soon give a dam about the Highlands

Electronically-tagged beavers are to be set free into the wild under a new £500,000 plan designed by government scientists.

Scottish Natural Heritage wants to release up to 20 of the dam-building, aquatic animals on a wildlife reserve in Argyll as part of an ambitious program to reintroduce extinct species back into the country. If approved by the Scottish Executive, the beavers will be imported from Norway and held in quarantine pens before release next spring.

They will be tracked electronically to ensure they do not stray outside the trial area in Knapdale Forest on to surrounding land.

A similar reintroduction program was sidelined by ministers three years ago following opposition from a neighboring landowner in the trial area and farmers' leaders. But SNH believes it now has overwhelming evidence, based on experience in other countries, that the beavers will cause minimal environmental damage and will increase tourism in the area.

If the trial, being carried out jointly with conservation groups, the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the Mammals Trust UK is successful, other beaver colonies could be set up across Scotland.

Beavers were hunted to extinction in Scotland in the 17th century for their pelts, their meat and their musk glands, which had medicinal properties. But the European Union is insisting that member states set up program to reintroduce species that have died out. SNH believes beaver dams would improve water quality, produce new habitats for fish and help reduce flooding downstream. It stresses that the European beaver causes much less damage than its American counterpart.

The agency has now submitted new evidence from other European countries which have successfully set up beaver colonies. Until recently, they were confined to remote, densely-wooded regions of eastern Europe, Sweden and Norway, where the animals have the closest genetic resemblance to the former Scottish population.

SNH said the cost of the project, including catching the animals, importation, quarantine, field officers, equipment and monitoring would be spread over a seven-year period.

The agency's director of science, Colin Galbraith, said: "More than 20 other countries, including France, Germany and Denmark have reintroduced beavers and the experience has been very positive. Beavers fit into the landscape very well and in places like Brittany they have become part of the environment, with minimal damage to agriculture and other interests. "The habitats in Knapdale are very similar, so we believe it is the right place."

from Scotland on Sunday, 2/27/05, by Jeremy Watson

The trial area within the forest is around 10sq km, with numerous small lochs, burns and regenerating woodland. "There is enough food for them in terms of vegetation and we anticipate they will separate into family groups and settle down," Galbraith said.

"They tend to stay in the area where they have been put as long as they have an adequate food supply. "We will track them by using small radio transmitters glued to their backs to see how they move around the area. We will know where they are at all times."

Galbraith acknowledged that there would still be some opposition to the reintroduction of a species after four centuries. "I hope that the evidence we have now gathered from other countries will be enough to allay any fears," he said.

The program is being supported by the Scottish Wildlife Trust, which manages the land, at the northern end of the Kintyre peninsula, on which the trial will take place. Chief executive Simon Milne insisted the beaver was once part of the Scottish landscape. "This is a keystone species that should be reintroduced to Scotland - not just because it is an attractive furry mammal but because it has an important role in recreating the wetlands of which Scotland has a shortage," he said. "They build dams which create pools that attract all sorts of wildlife. This is a hugely exciting project in which the benefits far outweigh any risk."

But opposition is still expected from the National Farmers' Union Scotland, which said reintroduced beavers had caused problems for Bavarian farmers where land had been flooded because of the animals' activities.

NFU Scotland communications director James Withers said: "We will look at any new evidence from SNH, but the fundamental problem remains that we haven't had beavers in Scotland for 400 years and they are not part of our ecology. The farming industry needs serious assurances that you can control wild, roving animals."

The decision on whether to grant SNH a licence to conduct the trial now lies with Scottish Executive environment and rural development minister Ross Finnie. A spokeswoman said: "The Executive has received additional information from SNH on its proposed trial to reintroduce beavers to Scotland.

"Detailed consideration will be given to the new information and the original proposal, taking account of the range of legal, ecological and economic issues. A decision will be announced in due course."

STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT TRASH THE HARD WAY

Santa Maria, CA, Times, 3/12/05, By Kirsten Flagg

Many recent high school graduates have memories of carrying around a 10-pound bag of flour -- a surrogate baby -- as a lesson about the responsibilities of parenthood. But whoever heard of having to carry around 10 pounds of garbage through the halls of a high school?

In her advanced-placement environmental science class at Nipomo High School, teacher Lori Dixon is taking "learn a lesson by holding it in your hands" one step further. She required her students to carry the trash they accumulate over 10 days in a black plastic bag. After 10 days, they'll sort and weigh their garbage and calculate what they leave behind on the earth in a year of living.

"It really gets them to look at their habits and their lifestyle choices," Dixon said during a recent field trip to Cold Canyon Landfill, also part of her class's unit on recycling and waste. "And it quantifies things in a way that throwing something in the trash could never quantify it."

In 2004 -- the first time Dixon experimented with the project -- the students averaged about 20 pounds for the whole week, a number slightly lower than what the average American throws away. Recently, the students had a chance to learn how these averages add up.

Last week, Dixon's students toured Cold Canyon's recycling, green waste and hazardous waste centers as well as its completed landfills already disguised as grassy hills and its next mound, which is layered with new garbage and dirt every day. One of three dumps in San Luis Obispo County, the Cold Canyon Landfill takes in about 1.2 million pounds of solid waste every day, said Mike di Milo, the school education program coordinator for the county's Integrated Waste Management Authority.

By 2013, this last landfill will have hit capacity -- and purchasing, preparing and getting permits for another site will be a costly procedure, di Milo told the class. "This is the generation that's going to be running the county in the future," di Milo said of the roughly 4,000 children who tour the facility each year. "It's good to give them this level of consciousness now."

Santa Maria offers similar tours to local schools at the city's regional landfill, recycling center and water treatment

facility. Halfway through her unit on recycling, Dixon said, she could already see the portable trash bags starting to change her students' thinking and habits.

Though reluctant to make her meal at home before school, senior Shawna Stackhouse said she's started bringing her own snacks to school to avoid having to carry around leftover food wrappers. "I think individually you may not make much of difference, but if every individual didn't do it (recycle), that would make a difference," said Stackhouse.

Near the end of a morning spent breathing in the odors of yesterday's garbage, junior Katie Grieg said she'd grown up recycling, but never given much thought as to why. "I don't know if it's been enjoyable, but it's been insightful," Grieg said of her week lugging garbage.

From Raccoons are the Brightest People, by Sterling North

As Thoreau suggested, all living things are better off alive than dead, be they man, moose or pine tree. And as John Muir believed, man cannot even survive without the wilderness to freshen his mind and revive his perception. We are but the ephemera of the moment, the brief custodians of redwoods, which were ancient when Christ was born, and of the birds of the air and animals of the forest which have been evolving for countless millennia. We do not own the land we abuse, or the lakes and streams we pollute or the raccoons and the otters which we persecute. Those who play God in destroying any form of life are tampering with a master plan too intricate for any of us to understand. All that we can do is to aid that great plan and to keep part of our planet habitable. The greatest predator on earth is man himself, and we must look inward to destroy the killer instinct which may yet atomize the human race. Our mortality must be extended to every living thing upon our globe, and we must amend the Golden Rule to read: "Do unto all other creatures as you would have them do unto you!"



EP Dutton & Co. Inc., 196

On the 150th anniversary of Walden, several new editions of the classic were published. Some are elegantly footnoted or designed. Others explore the recurring significance of Thoreau as a mirror reflecting America's nature, and Barksdale Maynard's detailed history of Walden Pond itself contains invaluable new material for students of Thoreau.

Rachel Carson kept Walden by her bedside. Annie Dillard wrote her master's thesis about Walden Pond. Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac were affected by it in their early years, as was Pete Seeger. Arlo Guthrie named his cat after Henry; my wife named a dog. Besides these individuals, millions of anonymous backpackers carry their own paperback editions of Walden wherever they seek respite.

These days Thoreau is mainly remembered for the self-conscious life he lived, and for his vital role in the creation of environmentalism. In his own time he embodied ideas that others merely discussed in their parlors. The liquid clarity of Thoreau's sentences arose from the natural simplicity in which he was grounded.

The danger in such memories is that he becomes a harmless icon whose example is salutary but obsolete. The problem is that Thoreau cannot be understood through Walden alone. One wonders if the prestigious publishers of these volumes will issue new editions of the whole Thoreau, the Thoreau who drafted Civil Disobedience (1849), who penned Slavery in Massachusetts (1854), A Plea for Captain John Brown (1860), and Life Without Principle (1863), who kept thirteen notebooks on Native Americans, and whose last mysterious words were "moose" and "Indians" -- or whether he will be reduced to an ascetic hermit.

In 1960, I was spellbound as a student editor listening to a representative fresh from the Southern sit-ins cite Thoreau's refusal to pay taxes for the Mexican war. His conversation with Emerson from jail -- "Why Henry, what are you doing in there?" "Ralph Waldo, what are you doing out there?" -- was the most powerful expression of the credo that carried thousands of young people, mostly African Americans but some whites as well, to fill the southern jails in protest against racial segregation: "A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority... but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight."



The same Thoreau inspired the resistance to the Vietnam War and to domestic police brutality: "Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison... It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race, should find them." It was also this Thoreau who framed the issue of voting in a larger moral context: "Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, by your whole influence."

Since Thoreau drafted both Walden and Civil Disobedience in the two years spent at Walden Pond, we must conclude that there was only one Thoreau, not an earlier nature writer and a later champion of Indians, Mexicans, tax-refusing war resisters, and violent abolitionists. The message linking all the issues Thoreau addressed was to live naturally wild and free, like the rest of Creation, not in conformity to institutions or dogma. "Action from principle," he wrote in Civil Disobedience, "the perception and the performance of right, -- changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with any thing which was." In essence, action -- the fully lived life -- creates an evidence of its own that the social order can change, just as the natural order changes through the drama of evolution.

The lesson of Thoreau is not that environmentalists and nonviolent spiritual seekers should retreat from the worlds of poverty, racism, and war, or focus on voluntary simplicity alone as the antidote to consumption. Their natural dignity, he seems to argue, requires that they understand themselves as carriers of a "wildness" that resists all bondage. To be faithful, if we would follow Thoreau into the woods, should we not follow him to the prison cell? If we respect the reasons he retired to his cabin -- a radical act at the time -- why not admire his defense of Captain John Brown?

Thoreau's call is to live heroically as nature does, to feel both the inner and outer as one, to link personal self-reliance with direct action in the world, and to resist the nature of any state that does not conform to the state of nature.

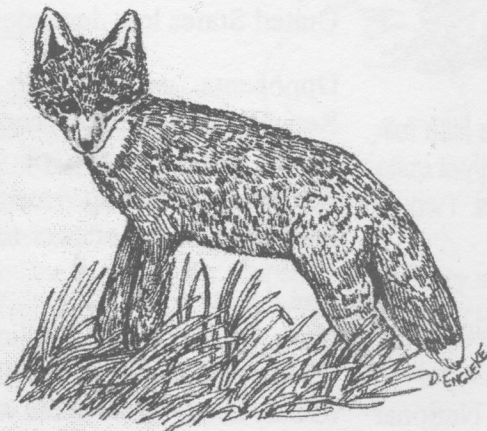
TOM HAYDEN, a social activist since the 60s, has been a California State Assemblyman and state senator. He is a professor at Occidental College and author of 9 books.

Notes From a South Jersey Naturalist

My Wildlife experiences started in my early life when I began to wonder about the plants and birds in my area. I learned that my house was in a migration route for hawks. While playing street hockey, the local children accepted that when I came out of the goalie box to get my binoculars it was time out. Although the children seem unimpressed, my influence on them remained with them. My friend Dave was walking up the street one day while I was watching my first eagle, and we shared this moment.

In Delaware County where I lived there was not a lot of open land near me. What was nearby had very good wild flowers and plants. Later in life I learned about soil types and my area had quite a few different kinds. This attributed to my growing knowledge of plants.

My father and mother both were very supportive about my wildlife studies and they took me on many trips. The trips with my parents usually took us into South Jersey. We would usually end up going where the eagles nest, like Stow Creek. In that area we saw our best wildlife, like mink, fox, muskrats, owls and, of course, eagles. One day we saw a blue heron successfully catch a fish from a very small hole in the ice.



At dusk we would drive around looking for deer. I won't forget the day there were about twenty deer in the field, and in the center of the herd were three massive bucks. To this day I've never seen bigger, and I wonder why man must kill them. It doesn't seem right.

The experiences of my youth shaped my life. I would always ask my father, curious about what *he* enjoyed, what was *his* favorite thing of the day. His answer was, "Being with you." I now live in South Jersey. I'll love it until it is gone.

-Brett Roberts, Naturalist and Beaver Defender

Dances with Beavers (from www.paddling.net)

Perhaps I would not have mentioned this occurrence, (which will forever after be referred to as the "Beaver Incident" within my circle of friends,) but for the fact that I paddle a wooden kayak.

Recently I took an evening paddle on the Sammamish River in Western Washington State. The route would be a total of around 10 miles. Referring to the Sammamish River as a "river" is akin to referring to 7-11 as a restaurant. You can buy stuff to eat in 7-11 and the Sammamish River has water in it. The river is more of a

trough about 30 feet wide and generally has a barely perceptible current for most of it.

This particular evening was a scorcher and by the time I was a mile or two into the return trip I was in need of a breather. So I took my feet off of the foot braces and slid down into the boat and just drifted a bit. Not long after this I noticed a small beaver swimming opposite me, giving me a wide berth. I ignored him and continued my float. Little did I know that the little delinquent had snuck up behind me until he gave the water a tremendous whap with this tail about 10 feet from my boat. Being the skilled paddler that I am I handled this like an Inuit of old. (read: I nearly fell out of the boat)

Lest I fall pray to any more marine rodent shenanigans I sat up properly in the boat and continued paddling. Even I, a dumb city boy, know that beavers slap their tails on the water as a warning to invaders of their territory but a mile or two down the route I was thinking about that beaver laughing himself sick back in the reeds someplace. "If that ever happens again", I thought to myself, "I think I will answer him with a whap of my own by slapping my paddle blade on the water". After all, if we allow such creatures to run roughshod over a kindly kayaker what is next? If I remember correctly the Spanish/American War was started over a similar incident. (I could be a little off here-history is not my strong suit)

Well, being taught that a good kayaker should always practice his or her skill set in calm conditions I thought that I should give a good slap or two. I raised my paddle and brought the blade down quick emitting a satisfying crack on the water. That was so nice that I thought I would give it another one for good measure. As soon as the blade hit the water the second time the world's largest beaver, about the size of a manatee, came charging out of the bushes that line the river toward my beloved wooden boat. Like a scene from Jaws I tell you!

I don't, or at least I didn't up until that time, have any irrational fear of beavers but anything charging at you suddenly from a blind 20 feet away can cause you to pause. (read: need to change your wetsuit)

Well I believe that the behemoth of beavers must have thought initially that I was a rival come to give him the business. Once he was within 10 feet of my boat he realized that I was not worth the trouble, did a U-turn and let me go on my way. And I, with a bit of an adrenaline rush, did just that.

Submitted Scott Thompson

Grey Owl and Beavers

"I had watched fat little beavers sitting up like queer diminutive Buddhas on a river bank, solemnly wagging their heads at the rising sun, while the mother lay by and crooned to them, plucking them towards her at intervals, and rolling on her back from time to time, murmuring with contentment, happy with her young and the sheer joy of living...."

"And now had come these small and willing captives, with their almost child-like intimacies and murmurings of affection, their rollicking good fellowship with not only each other, but ourselves, their keen awareness, their air of knowing what it was all about. They seemed to be almost like little folk from some other planet, whose language we could not yet quite understand. Tho kill such creatures seemed monstrous. I would do no more of it."

- G.O.



Senate Votes to Allow Arctic Drilling, by David Stout
The New York Times (Published: March 16, 2005)

The Senate endorsed oil-drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge today, giving President Bush and others who favor exploration of the Alaska wilderness a major victory.

The 51-to-49 vote was in favor of a budget resolution that assumes revenues of some \$5 billion from drilling fees over the next decade, with the federal government and the state of Alaska to split the money.

While this afternoon's vote is not the final word on the issue, it nevertheless made drilling in the wilds of Alaska - an idea favored by the oil industry and fiercely opposed by environmental groups - far more likely than before.

For drilling to take place, the Senate will later have to pass a measure explicitly authorizing the opening of the wildlife refuge to drilling, something that until now has been prohibited. Then the House of Representatives would have to explicitly authorize drilling as well.

But the Senate has long been the biggest obstacle, since opponents have used the chamber's parliamentary devices - notably, the threat of a filibuster, a stalling tactic that requires 60 of the Senate's 100 votes to overcome - to frustrate proponents of drilling.

This afternoon's vote came on an amendment sponsored by Senator Maria Cantwell, Democrat of Washington. It would have removed language in the budget resolution for 2006 that assumes that drilling will take place.

Senator Lisa Murkowski, an Alaska Republican who supports drilling, noted just before the vote that "the price of oil just jumped up to 56 bucks a barrel this morning."

The closeness of this afternoon's vote could be a prelude to bitter debate ahead. President Bush and many Republicans say drilling in the refuge would help make the United States less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

Opponents, who include most Democrats and some Republican moderates, contend that drilling in the refuge would endanger one of the last unspoiled regions of wilderness in North America, and that in the long run it would not be the answer to America's energy problems.

The debate focuses on about 1.5 million acres of coastal plain within the 19-million acre refuge. Oil industry representatives have said that drilling would be confined to only about 2,000 acres within the 1.5 million acres, and that it can be done with a minimum of environmental damage.

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Against Drilling - Baucus (D-MT) Bayh (D-IN) Biden (D-DE) Bingaman (D-NM) Boxer (D-CA) Byrd (D-WV) Cantwell (D-WA) Carper (D-DE) Chafee (R-RI) Clinton (D-NY) Coleman (R-MN) Collins (R-ME) Conrad (D-ND) Corzine (D-NJ) Dayton (D-MN) DeWine (R-OH) Dodd (D-CT) Dorgan (D-ND) Durbin (D-IL) Feingold (D-WI) Feinstein (D-CA) Harkin (D-IA) Jeffords (I-VT) Johnson (D-SD) Kennedy (D-MA) Kerry (D-MA) Kohl (D-WI) Lautenberg (D-NJ) Leahy (D-VT) Levin (D-MI) Lieberman (D-CT) Lincoln (D-AR) McCain (R-AZ) Mikulski (D-MD) Murray (D-WA) Nelson (D-FL) Nelson (D-NE) Obama (D-IL) Pryor (D-AR) Reed (D-RI) Reid (D-NV) Rockefeller (D-WV) Salazar (D-CO) Sarbanes (D-MD) Schumer (D-NY) Smith (R-OR) Snowe (R-ME) Stabenow (D-MI) Wyden (D-OR)

For Drilling - Akaka (D-HI) Alexander (R-TN) Allard (R-CO) Allen (R-VA) Bennett (R-UT) Bond (R-MO) Brownback (R-KS) Bunning (R-KY) Burns (R-MT) Burr (R-NC) Chambliss (R-GA) Coburn (R-OK) Cochran (R-MS) Comyn (R-TX) Craig (R-ID) Crapo (R-ID) DeMint (R-SC) Dole (R-NC) Domenici (R-NM) Ensign (R-NV) Enzi (R-WY) Frist (R-TN) Graham (R-SC) Grassley (R-IA) Gregg (R-NH) Hagel (R-NE) Hatch (R-UT) Hutchison (R-TX) Inhofe (R-OK) Inouye (D-HI) Isakson (R-GA) Kyl (R-AZ) Landrieu (D-LA) Lott (R-MS) Lugar (R-IN) Martinez (R-FL) McConnell (R-KY) Murkowski (R-AK) Roberts (R-KS) Santorum (R-PA) Sessions (R-AL) Shelby (R-AL) Specter (R-PA) Stevens (R-AK) Sununu (R-NH) Talent (R-MO) Thomas (R-WY) Thune (R-SD) Vitter (R-LA) Voinovich (R-OH) Warner (R-VA)

Lethal Predator Control Courtesy of Wildlife Services

Wildlife Services, a program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), uses millions of taxpayer dollars to kill nearly 100,000 wild carnivores annually. This publicly funded campaign continues to destroy wild predators, in vast numbers and inhumane ways, despite the development of non-lethal methods and evidence that lethal control is ineffective.

Formerly known as Animal Damage Control, Wildlife Services spent \$31.9 million (\$13 million of which was federal funding) in fiscal year 2000 to protect agriculture (crops and livestock) and natural resources from damage by wildlife.

In the Name of Livestock Protection

The program's "protection" of livestock consisted largely of killing native predators (e.g., coyotes and foxes). In 1999, Wildlife Services killed 96,592 coyotes, foxes, badgers, and other predators—about 85,000 of whom were coyotes. That's a 10% increase over the number of coyotes that Wildlife Services killed the previous year. Generally, the number of coyotes killed annually has remained the same over the past ten years.

The methods used to kill these animals include shooting from helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, trapping, poisoning, and denning (killing pups in their dens with a fumigant). Used extensively at the behest of ranchers in some western states, aerial gunning accounts for the greatest percentage of predator "take" by Wildlife Services (33% of deaths in 1999). This method is often used as a "preventative" to reduce local coyote populations before any livestock losses occur; as a result, however, coyotes who would never attack sheep are killed along with those who might actually cause problems.

Trapping is used almost as much (28%), generally in the form of leghold traps and neck snares—both of which can cause significant suffering to trapped animals. In addition, both types of traps routinely injure or kill "non-target" animals such as deer, birds, and pets.

Whatever method used, lethal control is not effective over the long term in reducing predator-caused livestock losses. After intensive lethal control, surviving coyotes experience reduced competition for food. This means the coyote population will reproduce and rebound quickly. What's more, not all coyotes attack livestock, even when no other prey is available. Killing a coyote who has no interest in attacking livestock creates a vacant territory that will quickly be filled by a nearby coyote or dispersing younger animals. This new coyote may cause problems that would have been averted by allowing the original resident to remain and defend its territory.

A careful assessment of livestock husbandry practices, as well as the use of a variety of non-lethal methods, can go a long way toward

reducing or eliminating predator-caused livestock losses over the long term. Husbandry practices include bringing sheep into a barn during lambing (when they are especially vulnerable); corralling livestock at night; and removing livestock carcasses before they attract coyotes, bears, or other predators. Non-lethal means of reducing livestock depredations include the use of livestock-guarding animals, electric fencing, and aversive conditioning of attacking predators.



Overall, predators account for a small percentage of livestock losses: a combined total of 9.1%. (Sheep and lambs are far more vulnerable than cattle to predation, but the number lost to predators is far smaller than the number lost to other causes.) The vast majority of livestock loss is due to disease, severe weather, and difficulty during calving or lambing. However, coyotes and other predators provide

easy scapegoats for the many difficulties faced by ranchers, and an easy target for Wildlife Services.

In the Name of Wild Birds

Many of the same predator species are killed, using the same methods, in the name of protecting natural resources. Coyotes and foxes are once again Wildlife Services' primary targets when populations of ground-nesting birds (such as plovers, grouse, and waterfowl) begin to decline. The birds species of concern are those valued either because they are endangered or threatened or because they are considered a "game" species and therefore important to hunters.

In most cases, bird population declines are caused by loss and/or fragmentation of habitat. Once imperiled as a result of habitat loss, these populations may be impacted more directly by predation. Predators provide an easy scapegoat—and lethal predator control appears to provide a simple solution—when ground-nesting birds or other prey species are in trouble. However, reductions in predator populations only occasionally result in bird population increases; when increases do occur under these circumstances, they are short-lived and require continued and widespread lethal predator control.

On the other hand, habitat improvements, coupled with fencing that excludes predators, provide an alternative solution that is more likely to produce positive results in the long term—not to mention a more peaceful coexistence with wildlife.

Sources: National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, U.S. Department of Agriculture; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services, Annual Tables

Fashion Industry Trumpets Resurgence of Fur

The past year has seen a resurgence of fur on fashion models around the world. Global fur sales have increased steadily in recent years, from \$8.2 billion in 1998-99 to \$11.3 billion in 2002-03, with the year-end totals for 2004 expected to rise for the sixth consecutive year. A substantial part of the trend involves cheap clothes marketed to young people through the outlet stores.

How did it happen? To counter the negative image of furs of the late 1980's, the world's largest producer of fashion furs set up an educational hub outside Copenhagen. The producer is SAGA, the marketing division for Scandinavian fur traders; its courses on using fur as a "fashion fabric" have drawn thousands of designers. SAGA press releases are now the indicators of which designers will be showing fur. Meanwhile, fur trade associations have issued chains of releases heralding the donning of fur by celebrities such as Naomi Campbell and Kate Moss.

"Fur has become fashionable again and women will wear anything that's fashionable," said Richard D. North, a fellow of Britain's Institute of Economic Affairs. Much real fur now looks like fake fur — a factor cited in a recent Sydney Morning Herald report as helping real fur to return.

Minks and foxes line the SAGA institute's halls, in rows of cages. The minks are gassed and the foxes are anally electrocuted. Richard North is unmoved. "They are treated better than farm animals," North has stated. "They are not moved to their slaughter. They are killed quickly in situ."



Although "better than farm animals" is hardly a glowing endorsement for the quality of these animals' lives, North's words contain a kernel of truth. People are unlikely to stop wearing the skins of other animals as long as it is acceptable to eat other animals. Given that reality, Friends of Animals campaigns are addressing both issues in creative advertising, editorial, and letter-writing initiatives, complementing peaceful yet high-profile protests. Friends of Animals representatives also meet with fashion house managers (most recently Prada in New York) to let them know that activism for ethical standards in clothing is alive and well.

(Reprinted from ActionLine, the Friends of Animals' magazine, 777 Post Road, Darien, CT 06820, Winter 2004)

Wildlife Scientists Feeling Heat, by Zachary Coile

Chronicle Washington Bureau, 2/10/05

Scientists in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service say they've been forced to alter or withhold findings that would have led to greater protections for endangered species, according to a survey released Wednesday by two environmental groups.

The scientists charge that top regional and national officials in the agency suppressed scientific information to avoid confrontations with industry groups or to follow the Bush administration's political policies.

The mail-in survey by the Union of Concerned Scientists and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility -- which drew responses from 414 of 1,400 biologists, ecologists, botanists and other scientists -- was not a scientific poll. But the two groups said the large number of responses reflect concern by of many Fish and Wildlife Service employees that political appointees are inappropriately influencing the science that drives decisions to list species and protect their habitat.

A spokesman for the agency said he could not comment on the report until agency officials have had time to review it. But an Interior Department official said the survey results reflect the natural tension between agency scientists and managers in making tough decisions about protecting species.

"There's nothing inappropriate about people higher up the chain of command supervising the work of people below them and reaching different scientific conclusions," said Hugh Vickery, an Interior Department spokesman. "These (decisions) should get scrutiny. That's what they pay these folks for," he said. "The question at hand is, are they doing their job properly and in accordance with the law? The answer is yes. Does everyone like it? No. But they are doing it properly."

The results were released a day before Republican leaders in Congress, led by House Resources Chairman Rep. Richard Pombo, R- CA, were scheduled to announce their strategy to pass a major overhaul of the Endangered Species Act, which critics say is failing to save species from extinction.

Two senior House Democrats who oppose the proposed changes to the act sent a letter to Interior Secretary Gale Norton on Wednesday urging her to respond to the charges of political interference by agency officials. "The Fish and Wildlife Service's credibility rests on its scientific integrity," wrote Rep. Henry Waxman, D-CA, and Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W. Va. "If political agendas

are allowed to overrule science, that credibility will be compromised."

Forty-four percent of the scientists who responded to the survey said they have been asked by their superiors to avoid making findings that would require greater protection of endangered species. One in five agency scientists reported being directed to alter or withhold technical information from scientific documents. And more than half of the respondents -- 56 percent -- said agency officials have reversed or withdrawn scientific conclusions under pressure from industry groups.

The sponsors of the survey, who often have criticized President Bush's environmental policies, said the results are part of a broader effort by administration officials to mold scientific findings to support their policies.

Last week, the inspector general of the Environmental Protection Agency reported that the agency has failed to fully assess the health impacts of mercury pollution because political appointees have intervened and compromised scientific practices. EPA officials denied the charge.

"The political manipulation of science is an ongoing problem with this administration," said Lexi Shultz of the Union of Concerned Scientists. Nearly 30 percent of the Fish and Wildlife Service scientists queried responded to the survey -- a high rate, especially since several regional offices had urged employees not to reply. An official in the Great Lakes regional office asked the staff, in a memo, not to fill out the survey "in the office or from home."

Fish and Wildlife Service spokesman Mitch Snow said officials in Washington had directed employees only to not answer any unauthorized surveys during working hours. The written comments reflect a view shared by many agency scientists that politics have clouded decisions on whether to list species as endangered and designate areas of critical habitat. One scientist from the Pacific region, which includes California and five other western states, reported being involved in two decisions to list species as endangered that were reversed, allegedly due to political pressure.



"Science was ignored -- and, worse, manipulated to build a bogus set of rationale for reversal of these listing decisions," the scientist wrote. Another scientist from the Pacific region concluded: "I have never seen so many findings and recommendations by the field be turned around at the regional and Washington level. All we can do at the field level is ensure that our administrative record is complete and hope we get sued by an environmental or conservation organization." The survey gave no specifics about which agency decisions were changed because of politics. The survey's sponsors said many scientists did not cite specific cases for fear they would be identified and would face retaliation for speaking out.

Sally Stefferud, a scientist who worked for 20 years at the agency before retiring three years ago, said that in the past political pressure affected only a few high-profile decisions but that now it is affecting almost all agency actions on endangered species.

Stefferud, who helped prepare the study, noted that field scientists in the Southwest region who study the impact of grazing on federal lands are now accompanied by the grazing permit holders, who she said are unlikely to show researchers any potential harm to endangered species.

"The data can become very easily distorted," Stefferud said.

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Chopping Firewood Brings Him Warmth Inside and Out

By Art Carney, Philadelphia Inquirer, November 27, 2004

Teddy Roosevelt extolled "the strenuous life." Charles "Buck" Carson embodies it. He's no outdoorsman, he insists, because he doesn't hunt and fish. But he loves being outdoors. "A house," he says, "is just a place to eat and sleep."

In younger days, the Carson family would pack up the Airstream and head for Florida, Maine, Alaska, eager for wilderness adventure. (They visited all but six states.)

Today, Carson plays tennis once a week, golf three times a week (18 holes, pulling his bag on a handcart). He and his wife Mary, a saucy Aussie he met at a dance during WWII, bike regularly on their tandem, often along the Schuylkill and Perkiomen trails.

In the summer, they paddle their cedar-strip canoe on a lake in the foothills of the Adirondacks. Come winter, they snowshoe. Until a couple of years ago, Carson skied in Colorado. On December 8, he will turn 85. Ruddy of face, agile of step, he brims with vigor. At 5 foot 9, 161 pounds, he's admirably trim. When he joined the Army, he weighed 165. His secret: "Three square meals a day," Carson says, "and staying busy."

"Staying busy" includes the way Carson heats his house. He uses wood, which he splits himself. In summer, the gas and electric bills for the Carsons' three bedroom rancher in Oreland, Montgomery County, is about \$75 per month. Ditto in winter. That's because Carson rarely touches the thermostat. No need when you have a large wood-burning stove.

Carson prepares the fuel for that stove in his backyard. He invites tree surgeons to dump amputated limbs in his driveway. Then he cuts them up with a chain saw and sets to work with maul and wedge.

"It's wonderful," says Carson, a retired appliance serviceman who grew up in Olney. "Taking a log and, with four or five whacks, making several pieces of firewood is very rewarding. You have something to show for your labor - and it helps my golf swing."

He has been at it now for 20 years, ever since a son living in Maine convinced him that an open fireplace is a heat thief. Carson's goal is to fill his woodshed, which holds about two cords of wood, steadily for two weeks, up to six hours a day. A while back, his son-in-law offered Carson use of his log splitter. Carson refused. "I don't look at it as work, he says. "I enjoy it."

There is a beauty of the wood, the rhythm of the task, the sounds and smells of the enterprise, the enthralling exertion, the exquisite solitude in the season's chill air and waning light. Plus, the primal thrill of reenacting a ritual lodged in blood memory, and the bracing sense of self-reliance in an age of corporate

dependency.

Thoreau once said that wood warms you twice - once when you split it, again when you burn it. Not so, Carson contends. Wood warms you four times: When you get it, split it, move and then burn it. "Load a truck with wood, and I guarantee you'll get warm," Carson says. "No matter what the temperature."

(Charles "Buck" and Mary "Doe" Carson were patrollers at the Refuge years ago. They were given their nicknames by Cavit Buyukmihci, co-founder of Unexpected Wildlife Refuge.)

Numbers

The nation's colleges throw out approximately 4.5 million pounds of food waste per meal. - *Inform Inc.*

The \$152.6 billion that Congress has thus far authorized for the war in Iraq is enough to fund the Department of Homeland Security for more than three years, provide a year's worth of health care for 34 million people, or build 17,957 new elementary schools. - *Newsday*

Thirty-two percent of the population in Copenhagen, Denmark commute on bicycles. Thirty percent drive, five percent walk, thirteen percent take the train and twenty percent take the bus. - *E Magazine*

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 and environmental protection.

Unless otherwise credited, all artwork displayed in *The Beaver Defenders* was created by Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci.



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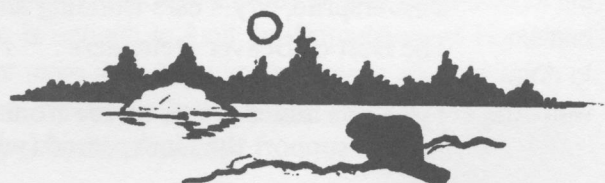
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- ▶ Slandered Do-gooders (snake information)
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