

The BEAVER DEFENDERS



**Evan Wojtkowiak, Boy Scout Troop 65, Haddonfield,
with his parents in Bluebird Field**

OCTOBER 2006

They shall never be trapped anymore.

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Editor: Sarah Summerville

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Good News from Unexpected

By Sarah Summerville

It was a busy summer for the Boy Scouts at Unexpected. We had three scouts from two different South Jersey Troops adopt the Refuge for their Eagle Scout Projects. The Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project is the highest advancement rank in scouting, whereby a Boy Scout must fulfill requirements in the areas of leadership, service and outdoor skills. Only about 5% of all Boy Scouts earn this rank, so imagine how excited we were to have three young men achieve this award level here at the Refuge this year.

Bluebird Habitat

On the cover is Evan Wojtkowiak and his parents in Bluebird Field. Evan has been visiting the Refuge every October with Troop 65, and after his fourth visit working on trails and building benches, he approached me with a request to perform his project here. He wanted to do a very physical project, so we turned Bluebird Field over to him. Multiflora rose, autumn olive and honeysuckle were encroaching into the field from all sides, and several trees had fallen in previous storms. Mowing the field for the benefit of bluebirds was becoming quite difficult.

Evan removed overgrown vegetation and created brush piles for the smaller animals around the field's perimeter. He cut up and took out the fallen trees, but made sure to leave standing dead wood for woodpeckers and other critters. He

created bench arrangements and constructed and installed a beautiful informational sign about bluebirds and their habitat.



Dining Out

Evan's friend and fellow Troop member, Andy Eklund, created a habitat for the benefit of visitors. Usually when we have a group of birders or hikers return to the parking area for lunch, they get their lunches out of their cars and eat sitting on the bumper, or on a log or just eat standing up. Andy took care of that by selectively clearing an area opposite the parking area. He mulched it and created a beautiful view of the pond that can be enjoyed from the comfort of the picnic bench. Now you won't have to miss a thing going on out there.



Andy (left) and crew members relax after finishing his project.

Know where You are Going?

You will, now that Bob has been here. Bob Burton, from Troop 54, Lindenwold, is the scout mentioned in the April 2006 issue of TBD who took over the trail sign project from Susie Highland. Bob and his volunteers cut, stenciled, hand-painted and hung wooden trail signs

throughout the entire Refuge, showing the way for the hundreds of visitors who hike, bird and photograph here every year.



Bob (2nd left) poses at our entrance sign with his work party.

It's Huntin' Time Again

Already! It is hard to believe it is patrol season again, as of the beginning of September. The leaves are turning the Refuge into a beautiful canvas of russet dogwoods, golden sassafras and bright yellow poplars. The days are getting shorter, and the sun is trying it's best to get close to this autumn beauty all around us, shunning it's blazing summer arc across the heavens. The long cool shadows it casts hint of the soft morning frost and warm comfy sweaters to come.

I detest the fact that deer hunting season begins during this special, magical time of year. However, patrolling does get you out for exercise and fresh air, and an occasional encounter with deer, turkeys or even an owl looking for breakfast during the evening rounds.

Please consider volunteering a few hours to patrol the Refuge, and let the hunters see that we are out there watching. They never know when or where they might bump into a vigilant Beaver Defender strolling the grounds.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to all of you who renewed your annual membership, and a special thanks to those who were able

to give that little extra. Your support is appreciated, and you are helping us make good things happen; from printing and mailing out beaver friendly literature to preserving land from development. Your efforts bring great rewards to both animals and the environment.

New 2007 Refuge Calendars are Available!

Susie Highland has completed the first in a line of 12 month calendars from Unexpected Wildlife Refuge. The 2007 calendar highlights the history of the Refuge and the goings-on during the early years.

The calendars are 8 1/2 x 11, black and white, spiral bound, and you can get yours for a donation of \$18. Limited quantities are being printed, so order yours today!

My Clock Wears Fur By Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci

Each evening before nightfall I tell time by my clock.

From my home in the New Jersey woods, I walk down a leafy path. Then I tiptoe along a boardwalk over the swamp. On an old log I sit next to the stream and wait for the right moment.

My clock is round and cuddly. My clock wears fur. My clock is a baby beaver kitten just two months old.

He stays in his lodge until the sun sets. He can hardly wait to dive into his indoor pool and come out to eat. He knows that sun set is breakfast time for beavers.

I know it too. That's why I'm sitting on the log with apple slices in my hand when the sun goes down each night. I know that my hungry little clock can tell time and will be out soon.

There he comes! My tame wild beaver kit with his furry teddybear face pops up like a cork in his pool. He lies on the water. His hands are bunched against his chest. His webbed hind feet dangle as he floats. His flat tail is braced in the water to hold him still.

He is looking all around for danger.

All is well. My clock says it's time to eat. With a flip of his tail he swims to me. "M-m-m-m-m," he says, and gently takes a piece of apple from my hand.

Dear Sarah,

I may have done this before, if I did just pass it off as the rantings of an old man. Anyhow, I thought you might like to know the "how comes" of one of the long-term Unexpected fans.

Long before I ever heard of Hope and Cavit or Unexpected, I had come to the conclusion that the beaver was the most important animal in the American ecology. I believed then, and still believe it is the main cause of our great wealth. In those days we used to vacation in Maine, and I would get one of our children up early each morning to paddle a canoe up nearby streams looking for beaver dams and lodges. We rarely saw beaver, but we did see and cross many dams.

One day there was an article in the Philadelphia paper about Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, and we soon got to know Cavit and Hope, and to become devotees of what they were doing. For years we would come down to try to help out: repairing fences with Ned, mowing the grass in Bluebird Field, planting poplar along the creek and sitting with Hope when she fed the beavers apples. And of course to patrol during hunting season.

Cavit absolutely amazed me in the work he could, and did do, and it was a terrible blow for him to die so young.

Time marched on, the Jersey traffic got to be more than I could handle and we stopped making the trip. Getting old didn't help, nor having some health problems ourselves. This past January, my Mary joined Cavit and Hope in the great hereafter, so now there is only the Buck of the team that Cavit had called "Buck and Doe". In closing I just want to say again that you are doing a wonderful job, and I am hoping you'll continue for a long time.

Sincerely,

Buck Carson

LETTERS



Dear Sarah,

Enclosed our annual contribution. Thank you for sending us The Beaver Defenders; we learn a great deal from it.

We would like to ask your opinion about a situation involving beavers. Our friends have 10 acres of land which is very attractively landscaped; they planted rare specimen trees throughout the property. Recently a beaver showed up in their creek and started felling some of these specimen trees along the bank. There is no beaver dam so far. They are very concerned about losing more trees but they don't want to have the beavers harmed. What do you suggest?

A. & G.M

Cylindrical cages made of 12.5 gauge welded wire (3-4' high) will protect individual trees. Low fences can protect large groups of trees and deter beavers from straying too far from the water. A mixture of mason sand and paint (8 oz. to 1 quart) can be applied periodically to the trunks of untouched trees. Be sure to have an alternate food source handy. Additional free literature on how to co-exist with beavers is available with a SASE - see page 15.)

Hi Sarah,

Thought you would enjoy reading this. It was a wonderful experience I won't soon forget. I felt there was some kind of connection with this juvenile female hawk that I cannot explain. "One's happiness depends less on what he knows than on what he feels" (quote by Liberty Hyde Bailey).

As I climb the hill now, it is quiet but the memories are there. (There will be others to come.)

Another interesting season with the golden swamp warbler. In past years nesting was finished by July 4th. Last check this year, July 21st, one box still had three young prothonotary warblers about four days old. The latest date in 10 years of record keeping.

Regards, Augie and Sally

(see the following submission from Augie: Observations of a Cooper's Hawk Nest.....)

Observations Of A Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*) Nest - Big Hill, Leisuretowne, Southampton, NJ Spring 2006

Big Hill (elevation 109 feet) is located in the center of a large retirement community off Route 70, two miles east of the Red Lion Circle (Routes 206 and 70). The hill is on the edge of the Pine Barrens, and is relatively high compared to the land surrounding it with a commanding view North toward Fort Dix. At the top of the hill there is a small wooded area with nature trails and a picnic area which is never used. I often climb the North slope (which is quite steep) from my backyard and sit on a bench enjoying the view across Budd's cranberry bogs.

My observations began on April 23, 2006, when I first sighted a female Cooper's Hawk carrying sticks to a nest about 60 feet off the ground near the top of a pine tree. On April, 26, a male was seen flying in with prey from the north. I did not see the exchange, but watched the female feeding about 10 feet off the ground while the male stayed in the vicinity.

On April 28 Don Jones came with me to confirm the sighting, and we watched the first sign of incubation as the bird sat low with her tail extending over the rim of the nest and just her head visible. The iris of her eye was yellow, an indication of a juvenile bird. This was probably her first nesting.

Between April 28 and May 28 I observed numerous times while the female was incubating. Each time I approached the nest site the male would dart off and disappear completely. The female never moved at all. During this period I did see the male chasing crows away from the area.

On May 29 I noticed the first sign of hatching. The female was sitting higher on the nest in a brooding position, and would occasionally stand looking down into the nest. On June 1 while she was standing on the nest, a flock of grackles flew low over the nest and landed in the tops of trees behind me. She immediately launched off the nest, swooping low overhead, then perching low and close to where I stood. Even after the grackles left she stayed for a while, then flew back to the nest. I was left with the feeling that she also checked me out more closely while she was there.

On June 11 I had my first glimpse of a downy head in the nest. Only one young was ever observed. Often when I visited the site the female was nowhere in my sight, but any time there was activity near the nest (such as a crow or turkey vulture flying too close) she would immediately come zipping back to the nest occasionally giving an alarm note. During the course of nesting I seldom heard any alarm notes. Apparently she was always hunting within sight of the nest.

On June 20, Chip Krilowicz and Jean Gutschmuth visited the site with me and photographed the adult and young in the nest. While we watched, the male called from a grove of pines on the North slope. The female left the nest and flew to the grove, returning to the nest with prey. During the entire nesting period I never saw the male approach the nest.

On June 27 the male again called from the North slope and the female flew back to the nest with prey on which both she and the young bird fed. By this time the youngster was almost fully feathered, and after eating began exercising its wings and branching out in the same tree.

On June 29 I found the young about 50 feet from the nest tree. With a series of short flights, it returned to the nest where it apparently searched for remaining food. It picked up the tarsus of a small bird (with toes still attached) and seemed to play with it before swallowing it whole. (Note: during the whole process most observations of the nest were done with a 30 power spotting scope from a safe distance.)

From June 29 to July 6 the young bird was seen branching out further and further from the nest tree, but staying in the area and often returning to the nest. On two occasions during this time the female would fly in and perch low and close to where I sat in plain view. It was a great experience as we studied each other. She seemed relaxed, standing on one foot. Her purpose, I believe, was to see if there was any real danger to her young. My purpose was to learn more about her life.

On July 6 at 1pm the youngster was still hanging out in the nest. That was my last sighting of the bird.

Observed and reported by Augie Sexauer



From Animal Rights Activists of NJ (ARANJ)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has issued a new rule making it easier for farmers, airports, landowners and public health officials to kill geese without permits. The new rule went into effect the week of August 10. The new rule includes several provisions, which now allow:

Airports, public health officials and landowners to destroy nests and eggs without federal permits.

Private and public airports to round up the birds for destruction without federal permits.

Local governments to round up the birds if they threaten public health by congregating at reservoirs, athletic fields, parks and public beaches.

The new rule also allows states to establish August hunting seasons for the birds. The existing hunting season is Sept. 1 to March 10.

Local government, businesses and communities only have to contact geese control companies to obtain permits to eliminate geese under the new rules.

ARANJ is asking that you notify us if you become aware of local governments, businesses or communities that are making attempts to eliminate geese so that we can arrange protests and urge the humane management of goose population by contacting Geesepeace at www.geesepeace.org or the Coalition to Prevent the Destruction of Canada Geese at www.canadageese.org and www.ddal.org/legislation/state for further information on how to control goose populations utilizing only humane methods.

(ARANJ is a non-profit organization whose mission is to advocate for the establishment of rights for all animals and to no longer have animals treated as property under the law. Contact ARANJ at PO Box 363, Blackwood, NJ 08012)

GOOD NEIGHBORS

I live at the edge of a state park that shall remain nameless. I had friends visiting who'd never been here before. They were hoping for a bear encounter (which they got).

When I returned from work, I asked our female guest who was in her 60's how she'd like to spend her afternoon, and she expressed a keen interest in swimming. We hiked down to the deserted end of the lake where the beavers have a

Help prevent another bear hunt in NJ

NJARA had been working hard behind the scenes to give Corzine all the information he needs to see why we should not have a bear hunt. We have just learned that a decision will be made by his administration by the end of this month as to whether there will be a hunt in December.

Corzine told us during his campaign that he couldn't do anything about the hunt because he wasn't in office. We cannot let him use the excuse that the 5-year plan was put into effect before he got into office. The governor has the executive power to stop the hunt.

Please contact Governor Corzine and tell him the following:

1. We want the hunt stopped NOW.
2. This hunt is NOT about safety.
3. Garbage is the #1 issue. Preventing bears from eating unnatural food is the number one solution to any issue involving bears. Get a handle on business waste, residential garbage, baiting by hunters, bird feeders, etc. and complaints would go down immediately.

Governor Jon Corzine, State House
PO Box 001

Trenton, NJ 08625

Phone: 609-292-6000, 609-777-2500, 609-777-2459

Fax: 609-292-3454, 609-777-0357

W e b m a i l :
www.state.nj.us/governor/govmail.html

For more information, contact:

New Jersey Animal Rights Alliance (NJARA)
PO Box 174

Englishtown NJ 07726

732/446-6808, Fax: 732/446-0227,
www.nj-ara.org



fabulous lodge the size of a small cabin, and we went for a wonderful swim. The beavers swam out to see who was swimming in their garden. They whacked the water with their tails to let us know they preferred privacy, but let us swim in peace. My friend was as thrilled to be swimming with the beavers as she was to sit beneath a tree with a mama bear and her two cubs.

- Arlene

Odd Thoughts: Trapped in the Wilderness,

by Bob Groeneveld, Langley Advance

Have I got a job for you! You get to work outdoors. You get to explore wild and unruly wilderness. And best of all, you get to kill things.

You wouldn't have to deal with anything like those big, bad wolves or bears or other ferocious beasts that could get mad at you and fight back while you're trying to kill them. Besides, it gets better: you get to kill them from a distance. Better still, it's not too much of a distance. The job is available right here in Langley, so you can do all your killing practically in your own backyard.

Yes, you could fill out a simple job application right here in your own hometown, and before you know it, you could be killing beavers. You know - the furry, cuddly guys with the big front teeth that they use to gnaw down trees. Right here in Langley, who'd a thunk it! And legally.

You'd have a 007-style licence to kill. You'd be like a regular James Bond of the beavers. Wait! I haven't listed all of the perks yet. There's not really all that much effort involved in carrying out the the job (you'd be working as a civil servant for Langley Township, 'nuff said.)

It's not like you'd have to carry around a big, heavy club or pack a rifle and all of those heavy lead bullets or anything that you see in the movies about those big, rugged trappers who the Mounties invariably end up chasing all over the Northwest Territories for murdering some prospector or dance-hall girl who stole their best sled dog or something.

You won't have any of those complications here in Langley Township. You just set a trap in the bottom of a ditch or a stream here or there and drown your quarry, so you don't have to so much as look them in the eye while they're dying. Even if your assignment were to pit you against a particularly nasty beaver with the

unmitigated gumption to fight for its life - you can be safe and sound, miles away.

Which wouldn't have any impact on your safety anyway - a beaver's idea of fighting for its life is to chew its leg out of a trap while it slowly runs out of oxygen under water. A beaver can hold its breath for an incredibly long time, so you can only begin to imagine how long it could have to chew away at itself in an effort to reach a little more of that life-giving air at the water's surface - maybe only a few tantalizing inches away - while the reserves slowly run out. I would expect that they get pretty frantic at some point - just before it's all over.

Every once in awhile, a beaver will prove to be a fast enough chewer that it can sever its leg during that long, drawn-out, last breath, and escape to the safety of its lodge. There, I suppose, its family will be glad to see it, although perhaps somewhat dismayed at their mom or dad's injuries. Beavers don't have universal health care or extended medical.

Apparently, about 50 beavers were killed in Langley Township in the past year. But the person who had the job is retiring, and the Township is

looking for a new trapper. Maybe it could be you. Can you think of anything more satisfying than a job of killing Canada's most internationally recognized animal symbol?

Back in 1965, we almost put one on the new Canadian flag - but that one would have had all of its legs intact, of course.

Maybe we could add a three-legged beaver to the Township's coat-of-arms - to make sure everybody knows who we are.

published Langley Advance, British Columbia, Canada, 08/29/2006



You do not have to sit outside in the dark. If, however, you want to look at the stars, you will find that darkness is necessary. But the stars neither require nor demand it.

~ The Annie Dillard Reader

Nature's Greatest Engineer

By M.J. Smith, The Mohave Daily News, Bullhead City, AZ, September 17, 2006

Developers across the world could take a few lessons from nature's greatest engineer when it comes to creating an environment where life flourishes. The rotund, buck-toothed designers of wetland utopias are credited with governing runoff, limiting erosion, controlling floods and filtering toxins from natural water sources and the air, according to Arizona Game and Fish Department spokesman Zen Mocarski.

All in all, the 45-60 pound, 3-4 foot long beavers could be the most environmentally friendly builders in the world, former U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologist Paul Morris said. "Some people might disagree because of the animal's so-called destructive habits, but they are an important part of a healthy wildlife cycle," he said. "Farming along river banks often results in nitrates, phosphates and other nutrients leaching into the soil which can cause problems downriver. Along with the silt that collects at beaver dam sites, which serves as a filter, the other materials used in building the dam produce a bacteria that feeds on the nitrogen and phosphorus."

Dams and lodges are constructed using mud, stones, brush and branches, with soggy vegetation used to fill cracks and act as plaster, Mocarski said. Handy critters to have on hand for keeping the environment clean, the conscientious dam builders can become a nuisance in their quest to find supplies and feed their voracious appetites, Mocarski said. "Dock owners can protect their docks and landowners can protect their trees along the river's edge with wire," he said. "Tree trunks can be protected the same way, running the material 4-feet high, but the wire needs to be staked down because beavers are very strong."

Using their compact bodies and sharp, bright orange incisors, which continue to grow throughout their lives, beavers are extremely efficient at felling trees, Mocarski said. "They eat the bark and use the stripped branches to build their dams," he said. "They also feed on cambium, twigs, leaves, roots, shrubs and aquatic plants. They anchor the twigs and plants under water to feed on during the winter."

The deep, still water created by the dams is the perfect

location for building a lodge, and beavers take advantage of the benefits, Morris said. "The floor of the lodge is above the water level but the entrance is normally below the water to keep predators at bay," he said. "Beaver lodges normally have at least two chambers, one for drying off when the beaver first gets out of the water and a second chamber that is drier."

Designed to flourish in a watery landscape, with webbed hind feet, a flattened tail, ears and nostrils that can be closed off when under water and a skin flap that prevents water from getting in, beavers often appear clumsy when on land, Mocarski said. "They can appear somewhat awkward when walking on land but beavers are good swimmers and divers," he said. "They can stay submerged for four to five minutes on average and have been known to stay under considerably longer."

With small eyes, set near the top of their head, beavers are able to monitor the goings on above them and spot potential danger on the shoreline, Mocarski said. "Think about a human swimming, their eyes are generally focused down," he said. "Beavers are the opposite and they have a membrane that protects the eyes when under water."

Another feature making them ideally suited to their watery wonderland is their two layers of fur that can be waterproofed using excretions from their anal gland, Mocarski said. "Contrary to popular belief, beavers do not use their tails to apply the secretion," Morris said. "They use their hind feet." When slapped on the water, the rudder-like black tail, covered in large scales, is used as a warning device to alert other beavers to possible danger, Mocarski said.

Beavers live in colonies of 4-8 individuals, usually a mating male and female and their offspring, he said. "Beavers are monogamous in nature," Mocarski said. "They mate in January and early February and have a litter of 1-9 kits, usually 2-4, in April to June." Both the male and the female care for the offspring, who are born with fur and their eyes open, Morris said.

"Older siblings often watch over the youngsters when mom and dad are out taking care of dam business," he said. "Even when the young leave the lodge, they usually remain relatively close as long as the resources are available to support them."

Beavers are constantly maintaining their dams, fixing any problems and making modifications as needed, Mocarski said. "The sound of running water and the feel of movement prompt the beavers to act," Morris said. "Beavers have been observed damming based strictly on recordings. They have been known to barricade speakers playing running water sounds. They can also detect water flow from quite a distance and will often plug pipes that undermine their dams." The primarily nocturnal animals, who remain active year round, will even create spillways in the event of a flood, Mocarski said.

The large rodents have been observed using human-like logic to overcome obstacles and single-minded determination in keeping their dams in top working form, Morris said. "When you watch a beaver work you can actually see conscious thought and logic applied," he said. "There will be those who disagree with me but I've seen them worry through a problem and find a solution. I do not believe we are the only species that uses logic in our everyday lives, heck we may be the only species that doesn't."

Saving your Land While Protecting the Beavers, Shawn Cetrone

SHERRILLS FORD - Judy Krueger woke to a "loud whoosh" in the middle of the night last month. She thought nothing of it until the next morning when she stepped outside to see her favorite tree, a 40-foot dogwood, fallen, lying across the lower deck of her lakefront home.

"I was just absolutely upset," Krueger said. "I called the police." The officer who came out assured her he was certain the culprit was a beaver. "I didn't realize we had beavers in the lake," said Krueger, who moved to Sherrills Ford from Michigan over a year ago.

Beavers are pretty well established in this state, said wildlife biologist Jack Mason, who oversees 11 counties for the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. They're not as common to the Lake Norman area, however, as to other lakes on the Catawba River chain, he said. But that is beginning to change as beaver populations move west, he said.

Historically, beavers played a valuable role in the N.C. economy. Their fur was a coveted commodity, and by the

late 1890s, they were hunted to near-extinction, according to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission's Web site. They were successfully reintroduced in 1939, and since demand for beaver products has dropped, populations in the state have dramatically increased, according to the commission's Web site.

The presence of beavers is often beneficial to the environment, Mason said. Their dams act as filters, improving water quality and helping reduce downstream sedimentation. They can be nuisances, however, when they damage commercial and residential property. There are several options to legally manage beaver damage, including wiring or fencing property and trapping. It is also legal to kill beavers, but only if they are damaging property, Mason said. Mason encourages people to use nonlethal measures.

He suggested calling the N.C. Wildlife Management Office to report any beaver problems. The agency can send someone out and advise landowners on how to deal with the problem, he said. Then people can decide if they prefer to hire a wildlife damage control agent or deal with it themselves.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Service also offers advice on managing beavers. The office in Raleigh receives about 2,000 calls per year regarding beavers, said assistant state director Todd Menke. Most of them come from the eastern part of the state, he said. Menke, who oversees the state's Beaver Management Assistance program, said there are probably some 500,000

beavers in North Carolina.

After speaking with a wildlife damage control agent, Krueger started wrapping the bases of her lakefront trees in metal fencing to protect them. She said she now takes daily "beaver walks" to make sure none of her other trees has suffered damage. "I can't afford to lose these trees," she said. They provide shade, privacy and a buffer between the shoreline and her home, she said.

"Anyone along the lake who doesn't wire their trees is taking a chance," she said. "I just want to warn my neighbors to spare them from losing trees like I did."



Spring into Action-Conservationists Work to Protect a Slice of Natural Habitat in the Middle of the City,
By Ellen Spitaleri, The Clackamas Review Aug 29, 2006

Minthorn Springs, just behind Milwaukie Market Place, is a lovely spot to get away from it all – but the wetlands area is really set up as a natural habitat for plants and animals. One chunk of Minthorn (pronounced Mint-Horn) Springs is owned by The Wetlands Conservancy, and the one-acre Minthorn North Wetland Area, adjacent to the conservancy property, is owned by the City of Milwaukie.

Mart Hughes, a natural resource ecologist for Portland Parks and Recreation, lives near Minthorn Springs, and has worked as a volunteer on all of the seven-and-a-half acres managed by the Wetlands Conservancy. In fact, Joann Herrigel, the program services administrator for the City of Milwaukie, described Hughes, and fellow volunteer Donald Hammang, as “the stewards of Minthorn.” She added, “They are both advocates for the environment. They are what got it to where it is today, they are what keep it where it is today and they maintain it in its natural habitat.”

There are pathways in both Minthorn areas, for humans to walk on, but both Hughes and Herrigel counsel caution when entering the area. A wetland area “should function on its own – it can’t do that with people interfering,” Herrigel explained. “This little spot provides habitat for Canada Geese, green herons, a lot of ducks, hawks, swifts and swallows,” Hughes added.

He also noted that there is a beaver colony at work at Minthorn Springs, as evidenced by some abandoned beaver dens and chewed up trees. Herrigel explained that the beavers have created a “huge controversy with water rights. People east of Minthorn use the water that comes through there, and the beavers created havoc by blocking the water.”

Hughes said that the beavers have raised the water level, and in places drowned the willows, but he thinks that is a “good thing.” He added, “This creates change. In dynamic places, things are destroyed and then regenerate quickly. Having disturbance is a good thing – it makes it function like a wetland.”

In order to alleviate some of the problems caused by the

beaver dam, what Hughes calls a “beaver reliever” was constructed. “The beavers built a dam, so we put a pipe underneath and built an elaborate fence in here to keep him out,” Hughes explained.

As for the water itself, Hughes said, “Half the water goes to Crystal Springs, by the Ledding Library and the Waldorf School. It comes out half a block from my house, crosses Monroe to Harris and to the library; it is piped out to Johnson Creek. Then, Minthorn Creek flows on down to Blount Industries and comes out at Lake Road and Railroad Avenue, connects with Kellogg Creek and ultimately to the Willamette.” He cautioned, “It looks shallow, but there is algae on top – it is about six-feet deep.”



In addition to water and animals, Minthorn is principally a green place, chock-a-block with vegetation. “This was all grassland, originally. Here we’ve got a multi-layer tree canopy – the tall shrubs are elderberry and dogwood, the ground layer is composed of sedges, native impatiens and snowberry. The soil is black, like an organic peat bog with clay mixed in,” he said.

Volunteers have planted red ozier dogwood, native woodland sedge, and red elderberry, among others. The elderberry is “a good restoration plant – it provides shade and keeps weeds from moving in,” Hughes said.

Not all the greenery is good, however, as invasive plants have infested the area. Hughes noted that one spot was a 12-foot “wall of blackberry” before it was cut down. He also spotted one purple loosestrife plant that needed to be removed. “A lot of work needs to be done here – there are still invasive plants,” he added.

Hughes would like to see more volunteers take an interest in the Minthorn area. “It protects the water in our community, and provides a place for wildlife to reproduce. It brings birds into our community. We also need a place to support the butterfly population – everyone delights in seeing butterflies in their garden. They need a place to exist,” Hughes said.

He added, “For people it is a place of quiet and solitude – even to just sit for half an hour. It is a place for education. All the work here was done by volunteer labor. It is a chance for people to learn about local plants – to learn about the interaction between plants and animals. A functioning native wetland connects us to our past.”

Rare Woodpecker Sends Town Running for Chain Saws - Associated Press

BOILING SPRING LAKES, N.C., (Sept. 24) -- Over the past six months, landowners here have been clear-cutting thousands of trees to keep them from becoming homes for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker.

The chain saws started in February, when the federal Fish and Wildlife Service put Boiling Spring Lakes on notice that rapid development threatened to squeeze out the woodpecker.

The agency issued a map marking 15 active woodpecker "clusters," and announced it was working on a new one that could potentially designate whole neighborhoods of this town in southeastern North Carolina as protected habitat, subject to more-stringent building restrictions.

Hoping to beat the mapmakers, landowners swarmed City Hall to apply for lot-clearing permits. Treeless land, after all, would not need to be set aside for woodpeckers. Since February, the city has issued 368 logging permits, a vast majority without accompanying building permits.

The results can be seen all over town. Along the roadsides, scattered brown bark is all that is left of pine stands. Mayor Joan Kinney has watched with dismay as waterfront lots across from her home on Big Lake have been stripped down to sandy wasteland.

"It's ruined the beauty of our city," Ms. Kinney said. To stop the rash of cutting, city commissioners have proposed a one-year moratorium on lot-clearing permits.

The red-cockaded woodpecker was once abundant in the vast longleaf pine forests that stretched from New Jersey to Florida, but now numbers as few as 15,000. The bird is unusual among North American woodpeckers because it nests exclusively in living trees.

In a quirk of history, human activity has made this town of about 4,100 almost irresistible to the bird.

Long before there was a town, locals carved V-shaped

notches in the pines, collecting the sap in buckets to make turpentine. These wounds allowed fungus to infiltrate the tree's core, making it easier for the woodpecker to excavate its nest hole and probe for the beetles, spiders and wood-boring insects it prefers.

"And, voilà! You have a perfect woodpecker habitat," said Dan Bell, project director for the Nature Conservancy in nearby Wilmington.

The woodpecker gouges a series of holes around the tree, creating "sap runs" to discourage the egg-gobbling black snake, the bird's chief enemy. Because it can take up to six years to excavate a single nest hole, the birds fiercely defend their territory, said Susan Miller, a biologist for the Fish and Wildlife Service. "They're passed from generation to generation, because it's such a major investment in time to create one cavity," Ms. Miller said.

Like the woodpeckers, humans are also looking to defend their nest eggs.

Bonner Stiller has been holding on to two wooded half-acre lakefront lots for 23 years. He stripped both lots of longleaf pines before the government could issue its new map.

"They have finally developed a value," said Mr. Stiller, a Republican member of the state General Assembly. "And then to have that taken away from you?"

Landowners have overreacted, says Pete Benjamin, supervisor of the federal agency's Raleigh office.

Having a woodpecker tree on a piece of property does not necessarily mean a house cannot be built there, Mr. Benjamin said. A landowner can even get permission to cut down a cavity tree, as long as an alternative habitat can be found.

"For the most part, we've found ways to work with most folks," he said.

In my opinion, the only way to avoid stepping on toes is to stand still.

~William J. Clinton, *The Mighty and the Almighty*



'That sort of self-delusion is what it takes to be a real Aussie larrikin', The Guardian, Germaine Greer, 9/5/06

The world mourns. World-famous wildlife warrior Steve Irwin has died a hero, doing the thing he loved, filming a sequence for a new TV series. He was supposed to have been making a new documentary to have been called *Ocean's Deadliest*, but, when filming was held up by bad weather, he decided to "go off and shoot a few segments" for his eight-year-old daughter's upcoming TV series, "just stuff on the reef and little animals". His manager John Stainton "just said fine, anything that would keep him moving and keep his adrenaline going". Evidently it's Stainton's job to keep Irwin pumped larger than life, shouting "Crikey!" and punching the air.

Irwin was the real *Crocodile Dundee*, a great Australian, an ambassador for wildlife, a global phenomenon, a superhuman generator of merchandise, books, interactive video-games and action figures. The only creatures he couldn't dominate were parrots. A parrot once did its best to rip his nose off his face. Parrots are a lot smarter than crocodiles.

What seems to have happened on Batt Reef is that Irwin and a cameraman went off in a little dinghy to see what they could find. What they found were stingrays. You can just imagine Irwin yelling: "Just look at these beauties! Crikey! With those barbs a stingray can kill a horse!" (Yes, Steve, but a stingray doesn't want to kill a horse. It eats crustaceans, for God's sake.) All Australian children know about stingrays. We are now being told that only three people have ever been killed by Australian stingrays. One of them must have been the chap who bought it 60 years ago in Brighton Baths where my school used to go on swimming days. Port Philip Bay was famous for stingrays, which are fine as long as you can see them, but they do what most *Dasyatidae* do, which is bury themselves in the sand or mud with only their eyes sticking out. What you don't want to do with a stingray is stand on it. The lashing response of the tail is automatic; the barb is coated with a bacterial slime as deadly as rotten oyster toxin.



As a Melbourne boy, Irwin should have had a healthy respect for stingrays, which are actually commoner, and bigger, in southern waters than they are near Port Douglas, where he was killed. The film-makers maintain that the ray that took Irwin out was a "bull ray", or *Dasyatis brevicaudata*, but this is not usually found as far north as Port Douglas. Marine biologist Dr Meredith Peach has been quoted as saying, "It's really quite unusual for divers to be stung unless they are grappling with the animal and, knowing Steve Irwin, perhaps that may have been the case." Not much sympathy there then.

The only time Irwin ever seemed less than entirely lovable to his fans (as distinct from zoologists) was when he went into the Australia Zoo crocodile enclosure with his month-old baby son in one hand and a dead chicken in the other. For a second you didn't know which one he meant to feed to the crocodile. If the crocodile had been less depressed it might have made the decision for him. As the catatonic beast obediently downed its tiny snack, Irwin walked his baby on the grass, not something that pediatricians recommend for rubbery baby legs even when there isn't a stir-crazy carnivore a few feet away. The adoring world was momentarily appalled. They called it child abuse. The whole spectacle was revolting. The crocodile would rather have been anywhere else and the chicken had had a grim life too, but that's entertainment at Australia Zoo.

Irwin's response to the sudden outburst of criticism was bizarre. He believed that he had the crocodile under control. But he could have fallen over, suggested an interviewer. He admitted that was possible, but only if a meteor had hit the earth and caused an earthquake of 6.6 on the Richter scale. That sort of self-delusion is what it takes to be a "real Aussie larrikin".

What Irwin never seemed to understand was that animals need space. The one lesson any conservationist must labour to drive home is that habitat loss is the principal cause of species loss. There was no habitat, no matter how fragile or finely balanced, that Irwin hesitated to barge into, trumpeting his wonder and amazement to the skies. There was not an animal he was not prepared to manhandle. Every creature he brandished at the camera was in distress. Every snake badgered by Irwin was at a huge disadvantage, with only a single possible reaction to its terrifying situation, which was to strike. Easy enough to avoid, if you know what's coming. Even my cat knew that much. Those of us who live with snakes, as I do with no fewer

than 12 front-fanged venomous snake species in my bit of Queensland rainforest, know that they will get out of our way if we leave them a choice. Some snakes are described as aggressive, but, if you're a snake, unprovoked aggression doesn't make sense. Snakes on a plane only want to get off. But Irwin was an entertainer, a 21st-century version of a lion-tamer, with crocodiles instead of lions.

In 2004, Irwin was accused of illegally encroaching on the space of penguins, seals and humpback whales in Antarctica, where he was filming a documentary called Ice Breaker. An investigation by the Australian Environmental Department resulted in no action being taken, which is not surprising seeing that John Howard, the prime minister, made sure that Irwin was one of the guests invited to a "gala barbecue" for George Bush a few months before. Howard is now Irwin's chief mourner, which is only fair, seeing that Irwin announced that Howard is the greatest leader the world has ever seen.

The animal world has finally taken its revenge on Irwin, but probably not before a whole generation of kids in shorts seven sizes too small has learned to shout in the ears of animals with hearing 10 times more acute than theirs, determined to become millionaire animal-loving zoo-owners in their turn.

Friends of Animals' Statement on the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, which Passed in the Senate on September 29, 2006

At Friends of Animals, we oppose the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (H.R. 4239), a bill that amends the Animal Enterprise Protection Act (AEPA), now 18 U.S.C. § 43. The AETA will force people into defending their traditional First Amendment rights over activities such as demonstrations, leafleting, and boycotts. The bill is overbroad, vague, and unnecessary. Federal criminal laws already provide a wide range of penalties for all unlawful activities targeted by this bill.

The bill passed the Senate (as S. 3880) and will be before the House in November. We



urge our members and guests to oppose this bill.

We continue to urge activists not to support violence or intimidation as a method. It does nothing to change the lawmakers' mistaken thinking, and indeed gives both lawmakers and industry excuses to support and promote unnecessary, oppressive, and unconstitutional laws. Animal-rights activists should always stand for peace, respect, and clear thinking.

Beaver Viewing in Scotland

Aigas Field Centre is delighted to announce that on Friday 14th April, 2006 a pair of Eurasian beavers were safely delivered into their new home on the loch at Aigas. The habitat within the enclosure is perfect for beavers with a large freshwater loch fringed by wet deciduous woodland. As a member of the Scottish Beaver Network, Aigas Field Centre has commenced this demonstration project to allow visitors to the centre to view beavers in their wild

surroundings in the Scottish Highlands.

To maximise viewing opportunities we have constructed a comfortable loch-side hide.



Over the past month over 100 visitors to the field centre have successfully visited the hide and watched with fascination as the beavers toiled away. They have already felled a few small diameter birch and willow trees.

These are the first beavers in their natural habitat in the Highlands for 450 years. We hope that as summer approaches and the days lengthen, dusk visits to our hide will provide guests with the unique opportunity of watching beavers in Scotland. There will be excellent viewing and photographic opportunities of these

fascinating aquatic mammals in their "wild" surroundings. Join one of our 2006 programmes to be amongst the first to see them beavering away at Aigas! (info@aigas.co.uk)

YOU GIVE.....AND YOU GET.....

For a donation of \$15 you can get this lovely hunter green T-shirt with a tan Unexpected Wildlife Refuge emblem on the front, and "I support the UNEXPECTED" with peeking beaver on the back. Sizes: small, medium, large, XL, 2XL and 3 XL

(Model: Mansur Saad, Refuge Volunteer: moved brush and stacked firewood - got a cool T-shirt.)



For only \$5 you can get a great mug to go with that T-shirt

Place your order now for the NEW 2007 Unexpected Wildlife CALENDAR! Each month has photographs of Hope and her family during the early years of the Refuge. \$18. (8 1/2 x 11, B&W)



YOU CAN GET GREAT BOOKS FOR COZY WINTER READING

Hoofmarks, by Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci - the fascinating story of her childhood in her own words. . \$ 10

The Best of the Beaver Defenders - a compilation of pieces from past issues hand picked and edited by Hope. . \$ 10

Beaversprite, My Years Building an Animal Sanctuary, by Dorothy Richards & Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci - the story of Dorothy's adventures with beavers and other critters at her sanctuary in New York State - \$15



Beaver Block-print Cards

Years ago, Hope taught 5th grade students how to carve blocks and make black ink block prints of beavers. The endearing result evolved into 12 different cards with the students' beaver prints and poems composed by Beaver Defenders. Each pack of 24 cards contains 2 of each print (blank inside). These cards fit into #10 envelopes, or you can just address the back, stamp it and send it. Some of you may have gotten one of these cards as a thank you for your generosity. You can get a pack of 24 cards for only \$4!

The Beaver Defenders Membership Application

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

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 membership dues will be considered a donation unless otherwise specified. **THANK YOU!**

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

UNEXPECTED STUFF!

(Please include an additional \$3.95 for shipping and handling of merchandise orders)

Books: Hoofmarks (by Hope Buyukmihci)	\$10.00
Beaversprite, My Years Building an Animal Sanctuary (by Dorothy Richards and Hope Buyukmihci)	\$15.00
The Best of Beaver Defenders	\$ 5.00
T-shirts: Hunter green, on the front - our logo; on the back - I support the Unexpected (with charming beaver)	\$15.00
Mug: Light brown mug with green logo, very tasteful	\$ 5.00
Posters: Trapped beaver and baby	\$ 1.00
Beavers turn wilderness into happiness	\$ 1.00
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 self-addressed stamped envelope.

- ▶ Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, Home of the Beaver Defenders
- ▶ What Beavers do for Waterways
- ▶ Beaver Problems and Solutions
- ▶ Species found at the Refuge
- ▶ Coloring sheets (beaver scenes Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci)
- ▶ They All Call it Home
- ▶ Slandered Do-gooders (snake information)
- ▶ The Square of Flesh
- ▶ Chopper, in Memoriam
- ▶ Intruder in a Cageless Zoo (by Ferris Weddle)

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.



Unexpected Wildlife Refuge
PO Box 765
Newfield, NJ 08344

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My definition of a free society is a society
where it is safe to be unpopular.

-Adali E. Stevenson, Jr.

