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International Bear News

Quarterly Newsletter of the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA)
and the IUCN/SSC Bear Specialist Group

February 2004 vol. 13, no. 1



In memory of Vitaly Nikolaenko: his photograph of the Kamchatka brown bear he named *Dobrynya* (see pages 5, 6-7).

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Editor: Teresa DeLorenzo, Design: Cynthia Cheney, 10907 NW Copeland St., Portland, Oregon 97229-6145, USA.

Phone (503) 643-4008, Fax (503) 643-4072, Email ibanews@bearbiology.com, Website www.bearbiology.com/www.bearbiology.org.

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Editorial Policy

International Bear News welcomes articles about biology, conservation and management of the world's eight bear species. Submissions of 750-1500 words are preferred, and photos, drawings and charts are appreciated. Submissions to ibanews@bearbiology.com are preferred, otherwise mail or fax to the address above. IBA reserves the right to accept, reject and edit submissions.

Deadline for the May 2004 issue is April 15, 2004.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue. Artwork is copyrighted—do not reproduce without permission.

Thank you to CityGraphics and Imaging, Portland, Oregon, USA for generously discounting the cost of printing.

Membership

Use the form on the page 33 to order or renew memberships, make donations, and update member information.

From the President

Harry Reynolds
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, AK 99701, USA
Phone (907) 459-7238
Fax (907) 451-9723
Email
harry_reynolds@fishgame.state.ak.us

The votes for the IBA election will have been counted by the time this newsletter arrives. Regardless of the election's outcome, there is no doubt that members and bear conservation will be well served by the new IBA Council. Please renew your efforts to be involved. Contact members of Council and ask them to address concerns or problems you have to make bear conservation or IBA more effective. Look to the future. An organization is made successful by the active involvement of its members.

Accomplishments and Challenges

At the end of my term, it seems natural to assess whether IBA has continued to evolve in achieving our mission, to evaluate what we've done right during the last three years, and to identify how we can improve.

We have made substantial progress. It has truly been rewarding to work with those on the IBA Council. This is truly a very dedicated, talented and engaged group. They are not afraid to address tough issues and to make decisions based on what is best for bear conservation. We all owe them our thanks for their commitment. Critical review and debate on matters of principle is fundamental to a healthy and effective organization. By that measure, we must be very healthy because we have had some spirited debates! We can do better, but to make improvements, your continued input is important and necessary.

Challenge Grant Success

Donations from IBA members and others interested in bears more than matched the \$10,000 challenge grant that an anonymous donor made to benefit the 2004 IBA Grants Program. Very sincere thanks go to the individuals and organizations that made this possible; especially to the anonymous donor who provided the stimulus.

Including funds from the challenge grant, and those provided by the John Sheldon Bevins Memorial Foundation and other donors, at least \$35,000 is available to benefit global bear conservation projects. This is the second year in which a matching challenge has helped fund the IBA Grants Program, resulting in an increase of almost 70% over the previous three years. It is especially important because this was at a time when financial markets were low, and disbursement of funds from the Bevins Foundation were correspondingly low.

Bear Conservation Fund

IBA members are experts and leaders in bear conservation across the globe. But knowing the critical issues is not enough. We need to stem the downward spiral faced by at-risk bear populations. We need to turn around conservation problems faced in many regions of the globe. Knowledge is crucial, but useless without the funding to achieve actions that are clearly necessary. I feel strongly that the steps taken to tackle this dilemma give the Bear Conservation Fund initiative the greatest potential to affect global bear conservation of any IBA action of the last three years.

IBA's Economic Development Committee (EDC), led by Karen Noyce and including Bruce McLellan, Bernie Peyton, Jiska van Dijk, me and others, established the Bear

Conservation Fund to provide a vehicle for individual donors, corporations, and foundations to use IBA's expertise and commitment and make a positive contribution to bear conservation. This can be done in two ways: for the short term, one-to-four years, donors can make contributions that are immediately disbursed to projects that pass scientific and conservation need criteria. For the longer term, 10-20+ years, contributions can be made to an IBA fund from which income and capital can be disbursed annually to the Grants Program for support of global programs. The Bevins Foundation has been exceptional in its use of the latter model. A group committed to making a substantial contribution by this approach has come forward and would welcome additional donations to make it a truly effective force for bear conservation.

Many entities are not aware of IBA's existence or our science-based approach. Neither are they aware that funds we raise go directly to bear conservation, education, and scientific interchange — unlike many other organizations, we are volunteers and nothing we raise goes to compensate officers or pay for their expenses. (Expenses can be allowed under exceptional circumstances, but then only for limited amounts with strict accountability.)

The EDC prepared a proposal to fund 33 priority projects contributed by the IUCN Bear Specialist Group's Expert Teams (see page 32). The amount necessary to fund these 33 cornerstone programs totals \$1.5 million for the initial three-year effort. The proposal would fund projects in Asia for sun bears, sloth bears, and Asiatic black bears where population presence and status, and critical information needed for focusing conservation efforts, are

From the President, cont'd.

often not known throughout these bears' ranges. Other projects identified include holding scientific training workshops in the five countries with Andean bears, developing programs to reduce orphaning of brown bear cubs in Europe, scientifically identifying factors that resulted in extirpation of bears in southern European Russia to enhance population recovery/reintroduction efforts, and identifying more effective measures for reducing international trade in bear parts.

The initiative to establish the Bear Conservation Fund is presented in a prospectus available from Karen Noyce (contact information on page 31) or any member of the Economic Development Committee. The IBA is currently presenting this prospectus to corporations, foundations and major donors. If you know of a donor who could be an effective partner in this effort, please contact me.

Student Forum

A Student Forum that maintains a list serve to discuss common concerns and questions of students studying bears was established under the leadership of Diana Doan-Crider (see page 23). It is supported by an international cast of very active students who are exploring ways to serve IBA and make it a stronger organization. A student gathering was initiated at the 14th conference in Norway, a practice that will continue in San Diego and into the future.

Conservation Advice to Governments

We've provided testimony to governments to provide guidance or voiced scientific concern about pending management decisions. We urged the U.S. Senate to adopt an

important polar bear treaty and provided written testimony that strenuously objected to the Bush administration's ruling to rescind a decision to reintroduce brown bears to Montana and Idaho. We provided science-based alternatives to the governments of Slovenia and Bulgaria concerning ill-advised proposed changes in estimates of sustainable yield of brown bears and in management approach. We urged the U.S. Congress to rely on state management of hunting practices regarding baiting for American black bears, and we urged the British Columbia provincial government of Canada to augment an at-risk isolated brown bear population and increase its habitat protection.

Ursus

Our professional journal has grown and has been published on an annual basis since 2001, primarily due to the efforts and constant prodding of our outstanding editor, Rich Harris. In 2003, Rich made publishing and printing arrangements with Allen Press, which serves a number of other professional journals, including *Journal of Mammalogy* and *Journal of Wildlife Diseases*. We now enjoy biannual issues containing the latest scientific papers on bear conservation.

How IBA Can Improve

This topic would best be served by each member writing his or her own list of five suggestions and providing it to me or to a Council member (contact information on page 31). I've heard from some of you, and appreciate being reminded if you don't hear back. Lacking such a list from members, I'll provide one that is short but substantial in breadth.

We need to further improve communication among members to

better serve bear conservation.

International Bear News provides an excellent means to widely distribute matters of common concern, but some members have suggested that a list serve might facilitate loans or donation of needed equipment or solutions for specific problems that cannot wait for the quarterly newsletter. For issues of interest to all members, email distribution is very useful as long as member addresses are kept current.

We need better representation from bear conservationists from all regions occupied by bears. Perhaps this requires a change in the IBA bylaws, but there are other obstacles that need to be overcome as well. For those individuals working in regions where the cost of IBA membership is far too expensive, a better system of providing complimentary memberships to individuals, groups, or conservation institutions must be devised. Let Council know where *Ursus* and *International Bear News* need to be distributed.

Despite the excellence of our conferences and our system of providing travel grants, we should be able to make helpful improvements to the conference guidelines. Both the Steinkjer and San Diego conferences have raised substantial funding to support international attendance, but we can still benefit from an improved protocol that serves both diversity at the conference and the needs of those who attend.

All in All

All in all, the last three years have been good. It's been very busy but rewarding to get to know more of you and have the opportunity to work with an outstanding group of dedicated bear conservationists. Thanks. If you come through Fairbanks, and I'm here, call me and I'll show you around.

Grants Program Status Report

In Memory: Vitaly Nikolaenko



© Vladimir Zykov

Vitaly Nikolaenko

I first met Vitaly Nikolaenko at the 10th international IBA conference in Fairbanks. He was a compact man with lots of energy and a desire to share his love of bears in photographic and video form. Vitaly was dedicated to bears and to living amongst them in one of the world's most spectacular bear sanctuaries in Kamchatka, Russia. He was killed by a bear in the Kronotsky Reserve on December 26, 2003. IBA extends our sympathy to his loved ones for their loss (see pages 6-7).

Frederick C. Dean, Chair
IBA Grants Program Committee
810 Ballaine Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709, USA
Email deansfs@alaska.net

The Grants Program Committee received 28 proposals for the 2003-2004 review cycle. The projects involve seven species of bears in at least 16 countries. The proposed work includes: basic status and distribution surveys, genetic mapping of populations, studies of the influence of human activity on bear populations and activity, habitat relationships and use, socio-cultural aspects of conservation, behavior, preparing orphaned cubs for release, and assessment of trade in bear parts.

The total requested from IBA exceeded \$149,000. The committee has not received final word about the sum available for grants.

Grant Request Deadline December 31, 2004

Start planning your grant requests to fund projects in 2005.

- Proposals must be received no later than December 31, 2004.
- Follow the guidelines on the IBA website www.bearbiology.com.
- If you have questions, please contact me at the address above.

Newsletter

Teresa DeLorenzo, Editor

Back Issues

A reminder that back issues of the newsletter are available on the IBA website www.bearbiology.com.

News from China

Welcome to new correspondent Matthew Durnin who will be providing news about bears in China. See his first column on page 10.

In Memory: Vitaly Nikolaenko

Life Devoted to Brown Bears

By Igor Revenko
Former Kamchatka Brown Bear Biologist

Famous Russian bear researcher and photographer Vitaly Nikolaenko was killed by a brown bear on December 26, 2003. He was 66 years old. The Kronotsky State Reserve staff bear biologist was found mauled less than a mile from one of his research cabins. Tracks in the snow indicated that he followed the bear into the bush and came within 10 feet of it when it charged. Traces of pepper spray on the snow indicated the spray did not work at such close quarters or perhaps with such a furious attack.

Vitaly's personality was written on that Kamchatka snow. His passion toward bears developed over 30 years of unprecedented work in the last hidden Eden of the Kamchatka peninsula. For the last 20 years, he spent six-to-seven-months a year in the field observing the most intimate moments of bear life. Walking up to 700 miles along bear trails each year, he kept notes about everything he saw or heard. He took thousands of photos and hundreds of hours of video footage of bears and their habitat. His annual field reports to Kronotsky Reserve were like an annual volume of a wildlife encyclopedia he had been writing for many years. His photographic close-ups of bears were the first pictures to dispel the myth that the brown bear is *Ursus horribilus* (see cover photo). Vitaly devoted his life to shorten the distance between brown bears and humans.

This time he came too close. He always tested life by either fighting with officials, spooking poachers, standing his ground to strengthen bear hunting rules, arguing with official science or by bothering bears. He knew an attack could happen any time. I remember him telling me

more than 10 years ago that his time was fast running out. He wondered if in ten more years he would be able to go out in the field and spend as much time with bears as he wanted. Did he know? He had many plans for future studies. He did not know if it would be a bear that would stop him from accomplishing his goals.

Vitaly has left his lovely family, his friends and his enemies. He has left this world. But the memory of that strange and outstanding bear man will be with us — living and loving bears and nature.

His 33rd Field Season

By Vladimir Mosolov
Kronotsky State Reserve
&
Tatiana Gordienko
Kamchatka Natural Resources and
Environmental Protection Department

Vitaly Nikolaenko died during his 33rd field season and winter wildlife survey in the remote, pristine Kronotsky State Reserve, Russia.

Vitaly arrived on the Kamchatka peninsula in 1965, and since 1969 had worked in Kronotsky Reserve as a forest ranger and tourist guide in the Valley of the Geysers. Established in 1934, Kronotsky State Reserve presently covers 1,142,000 hectares. It was designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1984 for its biological and volcanic significance.

Vitaly had no formal biological education, but he constantly pursued self-education. By persistently observing and filming, he became a world-renowned photographer and specialist on brown bear ecology. Vitaly was rewarded for his hard work in 1991 by being formally recognized as a scientist. He then initiated *The Brown Bear Behavior Study Using Photography and Video Records*. He worked 12 years on

this project, annually creating new methods for investigating bear behavior in Kronotsky Reserve. Vitaly studied bears by spending hundreds of hours with them chronicling their lives. For 10 years he studied a dominant male bear he named *Karnaykhy* ("bear with one broken ear"). Vitaly wrote, "This bear made me a photographer." Many pictures of *Karnaykhy*, standing with a background of geysers, helped Vitaly develop a worldwide reputation. During 18 field seasons Vitaly observed another huge male he named *Dobrynya* (Kind Bear). He even accompanied this male to his den. Most periods of the year Vitaly and *Dobrynya* lived in the same area and closely studied each other. *Dobrynya* probably died in 2002.

Near two small, shallow lakes on a Tikhaya River tributary, Vitaly Nikolaenko built one of his cabins, located 300 meters from the first lake, on the shore of Orlany Creek. The lakes provide late-fall spawning silver salmon and large brown bear males always fish the lakes, sometimes until the middle of January. The best hibernation sites are also nearby.

Vitaly's records report that a big male brown bear arrived at this fishing spot in mid-November. Vitaly called him *Jeltoshey* (Yellow Neck). This male was alone, fishing in the lake and resting in the nearby alder brush. Vitaly had several encounters with this bear. Beginning December 14, Vitaly began to carry a shotgun, because the male attacked him twice while Vitaly was trying to approach. Once, to save his life, Vitaly threw his backpack at the bear.

On December 22, Vitaly saw the bear resting on the snow. When he was about 25 meters from the bear, it stood up and looked directly at Vitaly. His field notes report that Vitaly slowly went around the bear, and the bear displayed aggressive behavior, seeming to indicate a high level of stress. Vitaly wrote in his field

diary: "I followed his track. Each time the male displayed strong and loud jaw popping and lunged at me. He is vicious and dangerous. I could shoot him to defend my life, using pepper spray first in the case of attack, and by shotgun if pepper spray was not effective." This statement indicates that Vitaly knew he was creating a stressful situation for the bear.

Vitaly followed this bear for several days in December. (There is much documentation that he followed other bears in previous years as well.) On December 26, Vitaly's tracks clearly showed that he was following the bear. By this time, there were only 30-40 salmon in the nearby lake.

The snow was nearly one meter deep and friable, making it quite difficult for the bear to move through it, especially in the thick alder brush. The bear was sinking almost to the ground, plowing a deep channel with his body. Vitaly was using wide hunter skis. While he followed the bear, the animal displayed aggressive behavior twice, lunging at Vitaly in three big jumps in the deep snow. In each case, Vitaly took steps backward while continuing to observe or photograph the bear from a distance of 30-40 m. Then the bear must have disappeared in the bush. Vitaly had the option to move into open terrain, but he decided to follow the bear tracks into the thick alders. Vitaly had to remove his skis and backpack to allow him free movement among the stiff alder branches to get very close to the bear, which had now bedded down in a deep depression in the snow. Vitaly seemed to take precautions in case the bear charged him — his small camera was found set on automatic and it was probably in his left hand, pepper spray in the right hand. He also took a flare gun with him.

Over a period of 30 years, thousands of photographs show that Vitaly had gone into alder bush to get this type of bear photograph. The difference in

this case was that the bear gave many warnings that he was dangerous. Vitaly had been waiting many days for a helicopter to take him home to celebrate the New Year with his wife, and perhaps he was bored and impatient. Perhaps he was looking for a substitute for his wonderful friend, *Dobrynya*, who many people worldwide knew from Vitaly's photographs. Two years before, he had celebrated the New Year with *Dobrynya* by making a video of himself toasting his friend near his winter den.

We can only guess what happened next, but what we do know is that the bear seemed to act defensively. Perhaps the pepper spray gave Vitaly a false sense of security. Vitaly trod in the bear's deep footprints and had to bend under alder branches while struggling in deep snow without skis. The bear could hear Vitaly's approach. In the thick bush maybe Vitaly's attention was briefly distracted when the bear made his rush from only four steps away, because the bear jumped at Vitaly in a very fast defensive attack. Perhaps Vitaly was able to spray him, perhaps the spray missed the bear. It would only be effective if it hit the bear in the face. Whatever happened, a swath of orange pepper spray on the snow indicated Vitaly tried to defend himself. The flare gun was lying near the body, unfired. His camera was found broken and bloody nearby. After killing Vitaly, the bear immediately ran away and did not return. He didn't eat any human remains, but he did strike Vitaly's chest and head. The bear's tracks indicated that he ran directly to the mountains without stopping, where he is probably hibernating.

There are many unanswered questions, but primarily, why did Vitaly do what he did. This male bear gave Vitaly many warnings that he was agitated and was at a dangerous stage of fear and stress — jaw popping and lunging at

him. For some reason, Vitaly was very tenacious. His records tell us that the bear was uncomfortable. Everything looks as if Vitaly lost his good sense and believed that nothing bad could happen to him, even though he said in his notes that he knew the bear was dangerous.

In his last interview with a local newspaper Vitaly said, "A Lord still protects me." And, "Nobody is able to predict his future. When you are with a bear you are in his home range area. Man is the invader. When you get close to him you are coming to him and perhaps he gets aggressive. Why? A bear fears man. This fear is another side of aggression. A bear has two alternatives — either to run away or to charge you. Most often the bear runs away. Bears prefer to avoid each other. If they choose to fight they destroy each other. All bears, including dominant ones, avoid humans." From his vast experience, Vitaly strongly suggested that if a bear charges, you should run away, because, "A bear does not see man as his victim, so there is no reason for a bear to chase a man." Vitaly believed that only the human was responsible or guilty in any human-bear accident. A generous way to look at what happened is to understand that Vitaly most likely had more experience living in the wild with bears than anyone in the world. Perhaps Vitaly simply ran out of luck. If he were able to tell us, he would probably admit he made a mistake.

During his years of studying bears, Vitaly collected unique scientific research-based data on brown bear biology and ecology, especially on dominant males. Bear managers and wildlife biologists need to analyze and study Vitaly's legacy. He had a bright long life among bears, and many of his friends will remember him as a person who devoted his life to protect the Kamchatka brown bear — the amazing predator (see cover and page 5).

“Even” and “Uneven” Families in Yar Population of Brown Bear

Stanislav Puchkovskiy
 Udmurtia State University
 Geography Faculty
 Universitetskaya, 1, Izhevsk, 426034
 Russia
 Phone 7 (3412) 52-64-00
 Fax 7 (3412) 75-58-66
 Email SVPuch@mail.ru

The brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) population in the Yar district, at the headwaters of the Viatka River, Udmurtia Republic, Russia (see map), was studied for ten years (1985-1994). The study area is 178 km², including 120 km² of woodland (south taiga with vast logged areas and young forests). Udmurtia State University students worked with me at the Yar forest station. Field methods included walking designated routes (79.15 km per round), mapping, tracking, measuring footprints and describing bear trees (Puchkovskiy, Borisov, 2001). Every year at least three censuses were conducted in May, June and July. Census work in other months from April to October was less regular. The bear family groups were counted by footprints and tracking along the designated routes. The bear families which included cubs in the first year of life were called “even,” in even numbered years. The “even” families contain the yearlings in uneven (odd) years. The other families were named “uneven.” The results of the ten year spring-summer monitoring of brown bear families are summarized in the table.

It is accepted that female bears usually breed every two years in the south taiga (Puchkovskiy, 1993). According to our data, one family averages 1.60 newborn cubs or 1.72 yearlings. Certainly the number of cubs must exceed the yearling number to account for mortality. The data may be explained by the smaller home ranges of bear families with cubs, the smaller activity radius of bear cubs, and females' with cubs avoidance of places visited by adult males. As a result, newborn cubs are counted less often (25 families and 40 cubs) than yearlings (32 families and 55 cubs).

On average 5.7 adult females from bear families and 5.5 adult males



Arrow shows Yar district study area.

is not clear to me why there is such a difference between “even” and “uneven” family sizes.

One possibility is that the field research methods employed are limited. I don't know if there are published results that could be compared with our results. Does anyone have or know of such data?

This study was originally published in:
 Puchkovskiy, S.V.
 “Even” and “uneven” families in Yar population of brown bear *Ursus arctos* (Carnivora, Ursidae). Theriofauna state in Russia and nearby foreign countries. Proc. International conf. 1-3 February 1995, Moscow. M. Theriological Society of RAS, 1996. P. 286-288.

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The number and composition of brown bear family groups on Yar station.				
Year	Families			
	"Even"		"Uneven"	
	# families/ # cubs	# families/ # yearlings	# families/ # cubs	# families/ # yearlings
1985		4/8	1/1	
1986	3/7			2/3
1987		4/6	2/2	
1988	3/8			3/5
1989		4/7	3/5	
1990	2/3			3/6
1991		4/7	2/2	
1992	3/3			1/1
1993		4/6	2/3	
1994	4/6			3/6
Total	15/27	20/34	10/13	12/21
Mean	3.0/1.80	4.0/1.70	2.0/1.30	2.4/1.75

were recorded in one snowless season at the study site. The number of “even” families and the cubs in them exceeds the “uneven” families. The mean number of “even” females was 3.5 and “uneven” was 2.2 in one year. During the ten year study, the “even” bear families generated 34 yearlings, i.e. 6.8 yearlings every two years. The “uneven” females had 21 yearlings, i.e. 4.2 every two years. It

Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*) Reproductive Success in Yakutia

I. I. Mordosov
Yakutsk State University
Yakutsk, Russia
Email mordoson@yandex.ru

Brown bear reproductive success in Siberia and Yakutia, Russia, is not well understood. There are varying opinions on the times of rut, length of pregnancy, fecundity and time of birth of this species (Voronov, 1974; Danilov, Tumanov, Rusakov, 1993; Krivokhizhin, Dunishchenko, 1987; Zavatsky, 1993; Lavov, 1993; Mordosov, 1993; Chernyavsky et al., 1993). In these works, the duration of rut is determined from climatic conditions. In the European part of Russia and in western Siberia the bear rut begins in May and lasts until July. The same rut duration was recorded in Kamchatka. In Yakutia, northeastern Siberia, the bear rut duration was recorded as June through July. Responding to a questionnaire by P. V. Mordosov, a hunter from the Lensky district of Yakutia indicated that the bear rut is from June through mid-August. A post-graduate student, Ajyy uola Ajan, recorded the rut beginning in May. In the tundra and adjacent zones of northeastern Yakutia, we recorded tracks of pairs of large bears July 20-25, 2003. We saw two adult male-female pairs.

During the rut, depending on the density of the bear population, females have been seen accompanied by up to five males. V.A. Tavrovsky et al. (1971) reported that hunters described one female pursued by eight-to-nine males, with fierce fights taking place among them. We also observed fights between males resulting in a hierarchy with one male being dominant and relatively weaker males standing aside.

Females reach sexual maturity in four years. The adult females do not breed every year. Because cubs are subject to attack by adult males, females with cubs avoid males. Rarely do females with cubs of the year take part in breeding. In only one questionnaire did a respondent, from the Olekminsky district, report on a female with two cubs and one yearling in the den.

The duration of pregnancy and the time of birth of cubs are poorly studied. According to questionnaire respondents, bear cubs appear in January-February. However, there is evidence of rather late pregnancy in females. The same respondent describes a cub of the same size appearing at the end of April. Cubs of different sizes have been seen leaving the same den.

In 2003, at the Orto-Doydu Zoo in Yakutia a female delivered a litter between February 1 and 10. Because the den was not properly built, a cub died. The dead cub's measurements: weight 296.1 gr, body length 214 mm, length of forelegs 105 mm and length of backlegs 91 mm. The fur was short, scanty, and brown-grey in color. The eyes were closed, ears were small, and barely visible. Its tongue was strongly developed.

According to our data, brown bears average 2.4 cubs (n=23): 11 females had three cubs each, 11 had two cubs and one female had one cub. These data considerably exceed those of V.A. Tavrovskiy et al. (1971) for southern and northeastern Yakutia, where according to visual observations and tracking, females average 1.8 cubs (n=84). According to Y.V. Revin et al. (1988), in Predverkhoyanye the number of cubs per female was 1.5 (n=12): one female had three cubs, four females

had two cubs each, and seven females had one cub each. Such variation in productivity in the Yakutia brown bear appears to depend on annual food availability.

Cub mortality in the first two years is estimated to reach 85% (Yurgenson, 1988). A.I. Krivokhizhin and Y.M. Dunishchenko (1987) estimate mortality at 71.4% for the brown bear in Siberia and the Far East. Cub mortality can be caused by many factors but sufficient food is necessary for successful hibernation. On average, females with cubs leave the den in mid-May. By this time the snow is gone and, on well-warmed areas, green grass appears along with animal food sources such as ants, invertebrates and carrion. In a late spring the plant growth is retarded, and after leaving their dens, the bears are forced to cover large distances in search of food, which increases the probability of cub mortality. Considerable cub mortality also occurs in years with poor crops of foods used to gain winter fat. In such years, both cubs and adults perish. A mass mortality of bears took place in autumn 1958, when a failure of the primary bear foods was observed in the southwestern spurs of the Verkhoyansky range (Tavrovsky et al., 1971). A major factor in the survival of newborn cubs is the fatness of females. Well-fed females produce more milk and they leave their dens later, thereby reducing the probability of cub mortality. Thinner females leave their dens when there is still snow on the ground and search long distances for food thus causing the majority of their cubs to die. In different regions of Yakutia the collected data show that the quality and quantity of available food is important for reproductive success of bears and the survival of cubs.

Brown Bear in Yakutia, cont'd.

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China



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News from China is provided by:
Matthew E. Durnin
PhD Candidate
University of California Berkeley
Ecosystem Science, 151 Hilgard Hall
Berkeley, CA 94010, USA
Phone (510) 643-2922
Fax (510) 643-5098
Email mdurnin@nature.berkeley.edu

Four of the world's eight bear species occur in China yet a review of all of the IBA conference proceedings since 1977 as well as newsletters since 1995 revealed only 10 newsletter contributions and eight *Ursus*/proceedings contributions. I find these low numbers discouraging and think more discussion of and support for work on bears in China needs to be encouraged. I would like to begin with regular reporting about bears in China.

Please send ANY news — legislation, research updates, human-bear interactions, traditional Asian medicine/bear parts trade issues, socio-economic-political issues related to bears in China to the address above.

Asiatic Black Bear

Don Reid
Canadian Wildlife Service
PO Box 4716
Smithers, B.C. V0J 2N0, Canada
Phone (250) 847-7286
Email Don.Reid@gems6.gov.bc.ca

This past fall in China's Tangjiahe Nature Reserve, located in Sichuan Province a team consisting of myself, Dave Garshelis (Minnesota DNR), Bill McShea (Conservation and Research Center, Smithsonian), and Wang Dajun (Beijing University) and Zhu Xiaojian (Beijing University) began a research project on Asiatic black bears. A brief synopsis of our work follows:

— China Wildlife Conservation Association approved the teaching of a course on carnivore research and monitoring techniques with an emphasis on bears, for the third year in Tangjiahe (November 6-12, 2003).

— The course was designed to accompany an effort to live-trap bears and start a GPS-based study of habitat and movements.

— Dan Guertin, an assistant of Bill McShea's at NZ, and a prospective grad student of Dave Garshelis' at the University of Minnesota, started the live trapping along with Chen Ai, a graduate student of Pan Wenshi at Beijing University. I assisted for a few weeks. We were not successful at catching any bears which was very disappointing. It was clear that the bears were very wary of people, and had an excellent mast crop which probably sated their appetites, restricted their movements, and reduced the likelihood of them exploring baited sets.

— Efforts to catch bears will continue in 2004, led by Dave Garshelis and Bill McShea.

— Interviews with local villagers indicated that poaching is still a major issue, with poisoning being used in recent years. My sense, based on the density of sign, was that the bear population in Tangjiahe was similar to that in the late 1980s.

Sloth Bear Project in Sri Lanka

Shyamala Ratnayake
Dept. Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37901, USA
Email sratnayake@yahoo.com

I first visited Wasgomuwa, a national park in the central lowlands of Sri Lanka (see map), in 1999 and later in 2000 in search of the sloth bear. Wasgomuwa, according to local wisdom, is a derivation of the old name Walasgomuwa, which means "Bear Country." Most people fail to realize that, and there is no one more at fault than the sloth bears themselves who are more secretive and elusive than any of the 14 species of carnivore in the park. To most visitors, Wasgomuwa was best known for its magnificent, temperamental and sometimes dangerous elephants. The park's abundant animal life, particularly the rich diversity of mammalian carnivores, is much less obvious owing to the dense jungle which reduces visibility, and the secretive nocturnal tendencies of much of the carnivore life.

There is plenty of carnivore sign, especially bear sign, at Wasgomuwa, a deciding factor in bringing me back here. Two years after that first visit, I pitched a tent at the Mahaweli beat working with any wildlife officer willing to accompany me and my remote cameras, while I documented the carnivora of Wasgomuwa and sorted out logistics for an impending capture and telemetry study on the sloth bear. Four months later, a small field crew — field assistant Rohan, field mechanic Bandara, wildlife officer Karunaratne and I — were on the trail of the first radiocollared sloth bears in Sri Lanka.

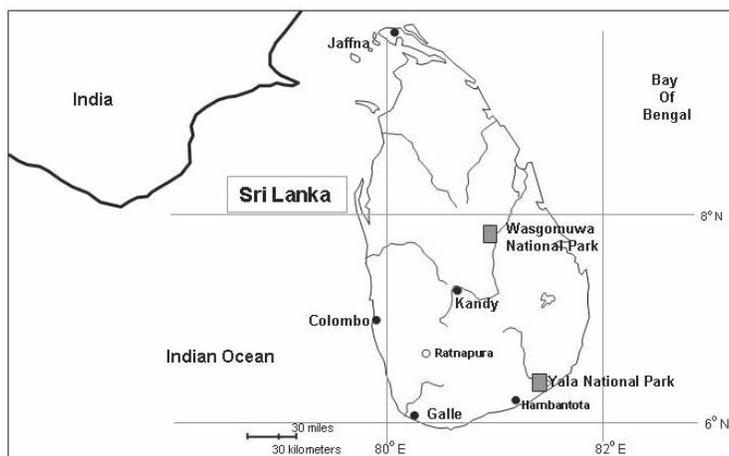
The sloth bear study is a joint effort among the University of Tennessee, the Open University of Sri Lanka, and the Sri Lanka Department

of Wildlife Conservation. Apart from me, the three investigators include Kalinga Padmalal, a cervid biologist and senior lecturer at the Open University of Sri Lanka, and Frank van Manen, research biologist at the University of Tennessee. Mike Pelton is senior advisor to the project.

The sloth bear, Sri Lanka's only ursid, is also found in the lowlands of India, Nepal and Bhutan. Sloth bear populations throughout their range are vulnerable to decline because of rapid habitat loss, conflicts with humans, and poaching. The subspecies of the sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus inornatus*) is endemic to Sri Lanka and very little is known about its distribution, status and ecology. The sloth bear project will provide some of the first information on the bear's biology and behavior in Sri Lanka and update information on its current status and distribution.

Location of the Sloth Bear Study

Wasgomuwa National Park (33,765 ha) is situated on the edge of the dry and intermediate zones in the lowlands of Sri Lanka. The north, east, and west boundaries of the park are flanked by rivers easily crossed on foot during the dry months. The park was initially designated a strict nature reserve which barred any human activity, including patrolling, before the mid-1980s. As a result, the southern boundary of Wasgomuwa was heavily encroached for cultivation and settlement until the reserve was declared a national park and a wildlife law enforcement unit was established on the premises. Because



village settlements occurred directly outside all boundaries, poaching, logging, and illicit cultivation have been common at Wasgomuwa for decades. Despite the establishment of the national park in the mid-1980s and ensuing law-enforcement, villagers still continue to enter the park to set trap-guns and snares, shoot game and log timber.

Villagers consider the sloth bear a dangerous adversary, the nature of the bear's horrifying mutilation of its victims' heads or faces making it the most feared animal in Sri Lanka's jungles. This contrasts with the shy, retiring nature of the bear and its apparent preference for wild habitat, relatively free of human activity. In fact, the sloth bear has disappeared from most unprotected areas and some protected areas of its former range in Sri Lanka, reputedly being the first species to retreat before the advancing tide of forest clearance and human settlement. One of the goals of the study is to use telemetry data in conjunction with a geographic information system to study habitat selection and assess how natural and anthropogenic factors influence the distribution of sloth bears on a landscape scale. The capture and telemetry study is located in the southern region of Wasgomuwa, close to the park's south and southeast boundaries, partly because we thought better

Sloth Bear Project in Sri Lanka, cont'd

road access would facilitate monitoring and partly because this would allow a better evaluation of human activity on habitat use by sloth bears. As a result, some of the radiocollared animals in our study occupy areas on or closely abutting park boundaries.

Capture and Radiotracking Study

We captured and radiocollared our first six sloth bears in late June 2002.

We started with nine barrel traps built on a design similar to one used by Anup Joshi and David Garshelis in Nepal, initially putting them where we saw fresh bear sign. The park permit required the presence of a wildlife veterinarian during capture. The only wildlife veterinarian lived nearly an hour away and was usually in another district attending to wounded elephants, so we had to schedule the trapping as efficiently as possible to stay within the permit's requirements. We did this by prebaiting the traps and called the veterinarian to attend only when we were fairly sure of getting a bear. We prebaited the traps with honey, but had little response for the first few days although the bears were walking by our traps. We eventually hung little pots of honey closer to the road where the honey would practically hit the bear in the face. This seemed to work. Within a week, we had a few bears going in to take the honey hung at the back of the trap. We were able to capture and radiocollar six adult bears in four days of trapping using four active traps each night. The following year, we obtained permission to capture and radiocollar four more adult sloth bears. Frank volunteered to come down to help us in the field and



Sloth bear photo take by a remote camera set by Shyamala Ratnayeke

once more we were able to capture and radiocollar the four new bears in a fairly short time.

Wasgomuwa's poor road access and dense habitat pose some challenges to radio tracking involving frequent treks through thick thorny jungle to obtain coordinates or to approach the bears — with caution — to determine the types of dens or daybeds they use. We have been fairly successful at locating the bears regularly, mostly because we initially trapped them in areas that were readily accessible, and the bears themselves have very small home ranges. We also examine fresh scats on a regular basis to gather data on food habits throughout the year. Additionally, we conduct sampling using remote cameras across a much larger area of Wasgomuwa National Park and a second study area (Yala) located in the south of Sri Lanka to detect the presence or absence of bears in different habitat types and relative abundance among areas.

Sloth bear home ranges at Wasgomuwa average a few square kilometers and are much smaller than those reported for sloth bears in Nepal or India. The Sri Lankan sloth bears are smaller than bears on the

mainland — males and females average 75 kg and 58 kg respectively and are on the smaller end of the weight range for sloth bears on the Indian subcontinent. The bears at Wasgomuwa also have considerably shorter hair than the Indian and Nepalese sloth bears. Termites are the mainstay of the sloth bear diet at Wasgomuwa, but the pods of a small tree *Cassia fistula*, are a close second. The tree produces pods during February and March. By late March, the pods ripen and turn black and remain edible until October or even November if the monsoon rains are late. During the peak of the drought, the bears may subsist solely on *Cassia fistula*.

In 2003, we lost a radiocollared adult male to poachers, raising an important question about the future of the sloth bear in Sri Lanka. In the early 1900s, the sloth bear was apparently so numerous and feared by settlers in the dry zone that rewards were paid for its destruction. Despite legal protection, this negative perception still persists among rural populations and poachers routinely kill sloth bears mostly because they fear them. Poachers tend to sit over waterholes during the dry season, so bears seeking water are an

Sri Lanka Sloth Bear Expert Team Report

easy target. Since 2000, I have found four sloth bear skulls, and wildlife staff have shown or reported at least four more skulls or carcasses of bears close to waterholes, usually at rock outcrops. The skulls were recovered within national parks, and one skull contained a half-inch lead shot. Bears routinely fall victim to trapguns throughout the island and, in the north and eastern areas, landmines are an additional source of injury and mortality.

During the first years of the sloth bear project, support came from the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, the U.S. National Science Foundation, and the University of Tennessee. Since then, more support has come from the IBA, the Swedish Large Carnivore Center-Orsa Grönklitt and the Chicago Zoological Society for 2004.

Several individuals helped launch the project or keep it going in an unofficial capacity. David Garshelis provided much of the initial motivation to begin the study, assisted with identifying funding sources, supplied critical field-related information consistently as we needed it, and wrote the most incredibly insightful letter to Sri Lanka authorities in support of the study when it faced a political impasse in 2002. In Sri Lanka, Rohan Pethiyagoda, Malik Fernando, Ajitha de Costa and Sarath Kotagama among others have provided crucial support for the project from the political side. In the U.S., my friends and collaborators, especially Frank van Manen and Mike Pelton have kept me sane, been voices of moderation, and maintained communication through the sometimes difficult and often lonely experience of being a field biologist.

More information on the Sri Lanka carnivore/sloth bear project is on Mark McAllister's website www.fieldtripearth.org.

In 2002, the IBA invited Charles Santiapillai to co-chair the Sloth Bear Expert Team of the Bear Specialist Group that would identify conservation issues pertaining to the sloth bear, in this case the subspecies of sloth bear peculiar to Sri Lanka. Charles put together a small team of seven individuals to serve as a Sri Lankan branch of the sloth bear expert team. In mid-2003, on Charles' request, I was asked to replace him as co-chair. The team, now consisting of 11 individuals, met for the first time in December 2003 to brainstorm conservation issues for the sloth bear and chart a plan for addressing those issues. We also discussed the Sri Lanka sloth bear survey now in its early stages.

The team identified the contraction of sloth bear habitat as a consequence of deforestation, increasing human disturbance in both protected and unprotected areas, and a negative public perception of the bear, as the principal threats facing the Sri Lankan sloth bear. Human disturbance was identified as honey-gathering, logging for timber or fuel, and poaching. Although poaching of bears for the sale of bear fat or bear parts was not considered a significant issue at the time, since the meeting, one member of the team reported farmers in the eastern region killing bears for fat. The fat is used in native medicine, namely for stimulating hair growth.

Sri Lanka's largest extents of contiguous forest are found in the north and northeastern regions of the island. These forests have historically supported healthy populations of sloth bear and reports of bear encounters are increasing with the onset of the peace process and the current flood of refugees back to the north and east. In the

near future, large extents of forested habitat will be divided among refugee families for homes and agriculture. The team considered the sloth bear survey, particularly in the north and eastern areas that were previously closed to the public, a priority. Secondly, it was necessary to identify and recommend absolute protection of key areas in the north and east that would serve as sloth bear refuges. The team further identified a need to document human-sloth bear conflict as part of the sloth bear survey.

Finally, the team felt that grassroots-level educational outreach and community-based programs were needed to address negative perceptions of the bear among rural populations living in or adjacent to bear habitat. The team has already made progress in this direction by conducting workshops at rural campuses and at the Colombo zoo. We have also produced an information brochure on the sloth bear for distribution in schools across the island.

The idea of a locally-based team for dealing with bear issues has been an excellent recommendation from the Bear Specialist Group. I was pleasantly surprised and grateful for the attitude and sense of ownership displayed by team members who were clearly proud to be part of a Sloth Bear Expert Team and eager to contribute. Hopefully, this will spread awareness of conservation issues facing the sloth bear and ensure a continued interest and investment in its future survival and welfare.

(See article on page 32.)

Alaska

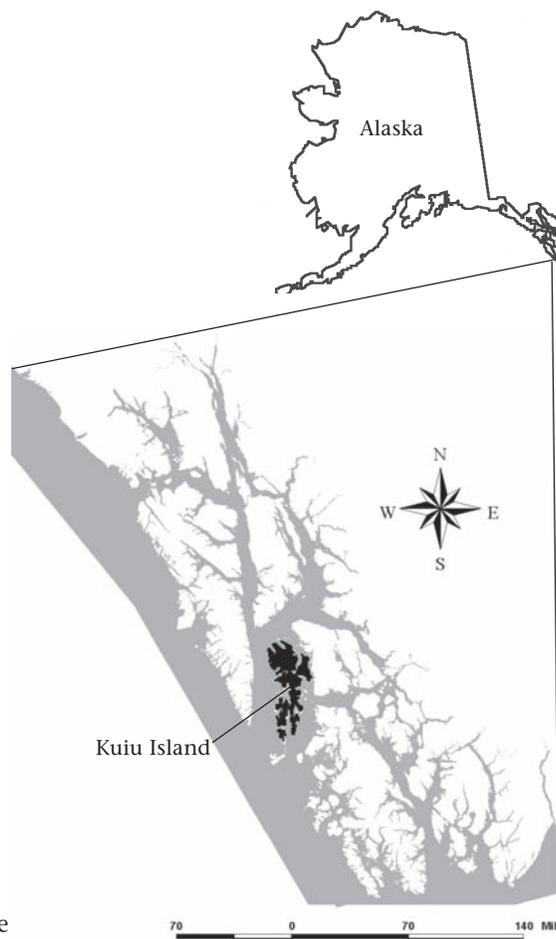
News from Alaska provided by:
Steven Kovach
Innoko National Wildlife Refuge
PO Box 69
McGrath, AK 99627, USA
Phone (907) 524-3251
Fax (907) 524-3141
Email steve_kovach@fws.gov

Alaskans, please send your bear news to the address above.

Tetracycline Biomarking Project on Kuiu Island, Southeast Alaska

Elizabeth Peacock
Program in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology
University of Nevada, Reno, USA
&
Kim Titus
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Wildlife Conservation
Juneau, Alaska, USA

Kuiu Island (see map) has long been known by big game guides and a few other bear enthusiasts as a location where American black bear densities are very high and on any given evening in the spring 10, 20 or more black bears might be seen feeding on a single estuarine grass flat. Kuiu Island has only black bears, even though Admiralty Island (and all the ABC islands) and its very dense brown bear populations are just 10-20 km away over salt water. Hunting pressure, largely from nonresident guided and transported hunters has been intense on Kuiu Island over the last 10 years, mostly the result of the well-publicized reports in hunting magazines. Biologists and hunting guides that have worked on the island for many years all say that they feel the population size is decreasing.



big game guiding and transporter operations on their lands. As a result, both agencies have a keen interest in the long-term conservation of this high density black bear population to provide a variety of public uses.

In the early summer of 2000 we marked 131 bears, after distributing 188 baits (see photo on page 15) over a 263 mi² area — a baiting success of 70%. Our recapture sample consisted of toe bones from harvested bears submitted by hunters over the subsequent year. We used a microscope with a UV light to examine the bones for tetracycline marks. We estimated the proportion of the population marked to be 12%. Using a Lincoln-Petersen estimator we calculated the population density to nearly 4 bears/mi², with a coefficient of variation of

Kuiu Island is within the Tongass National Forest and the habitat is temperate rainforest composed largely of old growth Sitka spruce and western hemlock. Valleys in the northern part of the island have been roaded as a result of logging in the 1980s and 1990s. There are no towns or villages on the island.

We worked with Dave Garshelis in the design of a tetracycline biomarking project on Kuiu Island to estimate the number of black bears on the northern part of the island. Primary funding for the project came from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). In addition, the USDA Forest Service and Tongass National Forest Service staff provided significant logistic support and staff in aiding the project. Although ADF&G is the primary bear harvest manager, the Forest Service permits

31%. We used a different sampling strategy along with more intensive baiting efforts in 2002, and distributed 263 baits over the same area. With approximately the same baiting success, we marked 191 bears. The samples from the subsequent year's harvest show we marked 17% of the population. From this baiting effort, we calculated the density of black bears on North Kuiu to again be nearly the same as two years earlier. Again, the coefficient of variation was 31%.

We chose to use tetracycline biomarking in this population estimation effort, as the black bears on Kuiu Island are quite elusive. The thick rainforest cover and the black bear's behavior precludes using capture-mark-resight. Genetic tagging would also be quite difficult

Bear Habituation Conference



Kuiu Island Bait Box

on this island, as accessibility and costs would prohibit accessing the stations multiple times. With tetracycline biomarking, these stations must only be visited twice, and the hunters do the rest of the work!

Our estimates of the population density are quite high — though not surprisingly — given the quality of habitat we have seen on the island. These results and others from the PhD program undertaken by Lily Peacock will provide important information for the long-term management of Kuiu black bears. Her results will also provide biologists with basic information about the genetic structure, relatedness, and movement of black bears across the Alexander Archipelago. We would like to talk with other biologists to compare notes on regions with similar high density black bear populations.

Reprinted from *Missoulian*, Missoula, Montana, USA, October 24, 2003, by Sherry Devlin.

A two-day workshop in October 2003 on the management of habituated grizzly bears was sponsored by Yellowstone National Park and the Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit in Missoula.

Its mission: for researchers and park, forest and wildlife managers to compare the strategies they use to manage habituated populations of grizzly and brown bears, especially those frequenting areas of high public use.

People can, need to and are successfully coexisting with habituated populations of brown and grizzly bears, according to one of the world's leading authorities on bear-human interactions. But successful coexistence isn't possible everywhere and always requires the active management of both people and bears, Stephen Herrero told a meeting of bear biologists from the United States and Canada.

By allowing visitors to be close — but not too close — to bears, park and refuge managers can expand the public's understanding, enjoyment and love of the species, said Herrero, a professor at the University of Calgary in Alberta. And some bear populations may actually have to become habituated to survive as humans increasingly move into their territory, he said.

The 1970s and 1980s were "terrible eras," Herrero told the group. "Bears were ripping into tents and pulling people out." Almost always, the bears were food-conditioned; they were accustomed to human foods and would do anything to get them, he said. The fix was obvious: close the dumps in places like Yellowstone National Park and

educate people not to feed or make food available to bears. Of course, Herrero said, every grizzly bear that fed at a dump did not attack humans. "But a huge percentage of those that ripped into tents were food-conditioned," he said. Food-conditioned bears are much rarer nowadays, and so are the attacks on people. However, there is a new type of bear behavior that causes concern for both grizzlies and humans.

Some brown and grizzly bears are habituated to — or tolerant of — human visitors to their world. Those bears may continue feeding on a roadside berry patch, even though dozens of people stop their cars to watch and snap photographs. Habituated bears go about their daily lives sometimes in the presence of human beings.

At McNeil River State Game Sanctuary in Alaska, bears feed on salmon while visitors watch from a distance — and from locations known to the bears. At a number of backcountry lodges in Canada, visitors watch bears from towers and raised platforms.

But are habituated grizzlies less dangerous to humans? Herrero asked. And does the habituation put the bears themselves at greater risk? "Even if a bear doesn't react to a human's presence, it may still be expending more energy," he said. "We don't know. We haven't explored what habituation means for bears."

Barrie Gilbert, a bear researcher from Utah State University, wondered if non-habituated bears don't spend more energy running away from people, especially on public lands where access is easy and use is increasing. "A micro-evolution is going on in bears," Gilbert said. "A new, learned behavior is being passed on from parents to offspring." And it's likely to become more wide

Bear Habituation Conference, cont'd.

spread, as bear watching grows into an ever-larger, ever-more-lucrative industry, he said. On Knight Inlet on the coast of British Columbia, a lodge known for its bear-watching potential grossed \$1.8 million in one season, Gilbert said, "Just from bringing people in to watch bears."

Already, bear-viewing has eclipsed bear-hunting in its economic impact, said Colleen Matt of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, "It's huge, and growing every year."

Not all bear biologists are enthused by the trend, though, including Chuck Jonkel of Missoula's Great Bear Foundation. "It bothers me to hear talk of the benefits of habituation," Jonkel told the workshop-goers. "It's like touting the benefits of serial killing. You get to meet new people and travel."

Gilbert said, "We need to let bears be wild. We don't have to get up next to them. The more bear-viewing that can be done at a distance, the better."

In fact, Herrero said he and a pair of co-authors are working to define the "overt reaction distance" of grizzly and brown bears. There is such a thing as "too close." An individual bear's response to humans is influenced by many factors. Are they adults or young bears? What is the season? What are the humans doing? How much natural food is available to the bear? Has the bear

had other experiences with humans? Are they genetically predisposed to tolerate human activity? And there are places, including Canada's Banff National Park and Montana's Glacier National Park, where habituation would most assuredly lead to more dead bears, Herrero said.



© Larry Aumiller, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Habituated bears in the presence of highways are at great risk of being hit and killed by a car, he said. They're also more likely to be fed by people — and food-conditioning remains a death sentence for bears.

Also a no-no, Gilbert added, is habituating bears to photo-taking tourists, then giving hunters access to the same population. "I would close all the big salmon streams to hunting," he said. "It's just not ethical."

Whistler Bear Group Bans Rubber Slugs

Sylvia Dolson, Executive Director
J.J. Whistler Bear Society
Canadian Bear Alliance
204-3300 Ptarmigan Place
Whistler, B.C. V0N 1B3, Canada
Phone (604) 905-4209
Fax (604) 935-4009
Email Sylvia_dolson@telus.net
Website www.bearsmart.com

The Whistler Bear Working Group (Jennifer Jones Whistler Bear Society; British Columbia Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection; Resort Municipality of Whistler; Royal Canadian Mounted Police; Whistler/Blackcomb Mountain; Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (AWARE); Whistler Black Bear Project; Squamish Nation; Lil'wat and Nation) has decided to remove rubber slugs from officers'

Rubber Slug Use in Prudhoe Oilfield

non-lethal bear management kits. The decision was made to minimize physical injury to the animals. When rubber slugs are used on a young animal, or at a distance closer than 25 m, there is a strong possibility of penetration. This has happened on more than one occasion that we are aware of. As a result, bean bag rounds will be used when a pain deterrent is warranted. Bean bags are much safer, not only for the bear, but for bystanders as well.

If the officer effectively communicates his dominance to the bear, then no tools would be necessary. We have decided to place more emphasis on understanding bear postures and vocalizations and using human dominance to disarm threatening bear behavior. This will ensure public safety and officer safety and provide a more effective and more humane method of managing bears. Anecdotally, the longest lasting primary deterrents have been using human dominance (or the use of a dog) in mitigating a conflict situation. Bears that have been persistently pursued by a person and walked out of town have not returned. Using a well-trained dog to track and follow the bear, slightly beyond the edge of human territory, has also been extremely useful.

The J.J. Whistler Bear Society fully supports this move and asks that all bear managers consider removing rubber bullets from their kits.

Dick Shideler
Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, AK 99701, USA
Phone (907) 459-7283
Fax (907) 456-3091
Email
Dick_shideler@fishgame.state.ak.us

The Whistler Bear Working Group recently discontinued use of rubber slugs as a bear repellent in their ongoing non-lethal problem American black bear management program. Other venues that are or will be involved in bear deterrence programs may benefit from our experience in the Prudhoe Oilfield Grizzly Project, Alaska. Since 1991, we have used projectiles such as rubber bullets, beanbags, and paintballs (the latter on cubs and yearlings only) as tools to reinforce the message that bears should avoid approaching oilfield workers at active work sites and around the camps. We've fired several hundred rounds at grizzly and polar bears over the years with no bears injured. We have also trained over 100 oilfield security officers, local police, and environmental staff in bear deterrence, and their record is similar with the exception that two young grizzly bears were injured when a security officer mistakenly fired obsolete model rubber slugs at too close range and the slugs penetrated the bears' rumps. This type of slug, the BD-100 or Bear Deterrent Round — a white, torpedo-shaped plastic round — was supposed to have been removed from the officer's active deterrent kit and was to have been used only for training.

Early in the project we recognized that there was the potential for injury, and developed guidelines for projectile use. These include selection of the specific round, target area, appropriate range, and when to use them. Our guidelines are in line with the Whistler Non-lethal Guidebook and recommendations by the Wind River Bear

Institute. I've summarized some of our recommendations below:

Round Selection: Although the State of Alaska does not allow us to endorse specific products, the ONLY rubber slug we use is the "Strike Two" sold by Margo Supplies. We have found this round to be relatively accurate, to remain soft when cold, and safe at much shorter ranges than other rubber or plastic slugs.

Target Area: We aim primarily for the rump although occasionally the only target is the shoulder. There is still some potential for injury with rubber slugs if they hit the bear in the eye, but that would also apply to beanbags or any other projectile. If the bear is moving laterally, we aim for the rear portion of the rump so there is no chance of hitting the soft tissue of the flank, where bruising internal organs is unlikely but possible. The simple rule is that if there's a question, don't shoot.

Range: We use the Strike Two at distances as close as 20 m — e.g. overlapping with the range of the beanbags we use — and out to 40 m. Beyond 40 m, accuracy, especially in a cross-wind, drops dramatically.

Most aversive conditioning programs pair a stimulus with an aversive event so that eventually the animal will recognize the stimulus and exhibit avoidance behavior. With that in mind, we recommend yelling at the bear before firing a projectile. Yelling is a common response of people when a bear approaches, so by yelling we are not only focusing the bear's attention on us, but also "teaching" the bear that when it hears someone yelling it's time to leave.

Like the Whistler program, we also use vehicles, Karelian bear dogs, and numerous types of noisemakers. However, we believe that properly used rubber slugs are an effective tool in the non-lethal tool kit.

Anyone wanting a copy of our two page guidelines is welcome to contact me.

Nature Conservancy of Canada and Tembec Agree to Conserve Elk Valley



© Larry Aumiller, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Nature Conservancy of Canada press release, December 12, 2003.

A landmark agreement was announced between the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC (www.natureconservancy.ca)) and Tembec (www.tembec.com), one of Canada's largest softwood lumber producers, to permanently conserve significant wildlife corridors in the Elk Valley near Fernie, British Columbia, Canada, while at the same time facilitating continued forest utilization and accommodating the needs of local communities. The agreement is the largest of its kind negotiated by NCC. It will result in NCC's acquisition of 1,565 hectares (3,867 acres) of land, the permanent conservation of an additional 3,000 hectares (7,413 acres) of land through conservation covenants, and the restriction of another 35,034 hectares (86,570 acres) against subdivision and residential development for a period of 10 years.

The 4,565 hectares (11,280 acres) of conservation lands are concentrated around three scientifically

identified wildlife corridors that cross Highway 3. Conservation of these corridors is helping to protect key movement opportunities for wide-ranging carnivores such as grizzly bear, gray wolf and Canada lynx that rely on them for maintaining healthy and viable population levels. The Elk River also provides critical habitat for many other species, including populations of bull trout and east-slope cutthroat trout, both species at risk. In September 2003, a large grove of giant black cottonwood trees, the oldest known cottonwood trees in the world, were discovered in the area to be conserved.

NCC and Tembec have a history of cooperating on conservation efforts in the Elk Valley through their co-management of NCC's 8,947-hectare (22,100-acre) Mount Broadwood Heritage Conservation Area, located immediately south of Tembec's private property. Tembec holds timber rights on that land from a grandfathered agreement with Shell Canada, which donated Mount Broadwood to NCC in 1992. In 1997, after several scientific studies identified the significance of the major wildlife movement corridors across Highway 3, NCC and Tembec began working on a plan to ensure the conservation of the entire area.

The agreement also restricts another 35,034 hectares (86,570 acres) against subdivision and residential development for a period of 10 years, giving both parties the opportunity to investigate possibilities for more permanent conservation. The agreement fits in well with objectives of the British Columbia Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management's Southern Rocky Mountain Management Plan, which aims to provide increased certainty for both resource development and conservation.

North Cascades Grizzly Sighting Confirmed

From Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, USA, press releases.

A DNA analysis by Wildlife Genetics International, Nelson, British Columbia, Canada, has confirmed two hair samples collected in May 2003 from a barbed-wire fence east of Chesaw, Washington, USA, (northeast Okanogan County) were left by a grizzly.

It may be the first verified grizzly sighting in the Okanogan Highlands since one was shot in the 1950s. "It is unusual for grizzlies to be sighted almost anywhere within their historic range in the upper half of Washington, particularly from the North Cascades to the Selkirk Mountains," said Scott Fitkin, a biologist with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

A landowner told Fitkin that he watched the bear wander across his property at a distance of 200 to 500 feet, passing near an enclosure with two domestic sheep without incident. The bear removed a screen from a water collection barrel but no further nuisance activity was reported. The landowner took several photos of the bear before it wandered off. The bear has not been seen since this sighting. "Chances are the bear was just passing through in its normal course of foraging," said Fitkin.

Fitkin and another biologist documented by photo, measurement, and plaster cast several bear tracks found in mud near a spring on the property. They collected hair samples from a barbed wire fence through which the landowner reported the bear had passed, and bear droppings found near the tracks and hair. The biologists also found and photographed a small dig site where a large animal had excavated a ground squirrel burrow, a common foraging behavior for grizzlies.

North Cascades Ecosystem Residents Respond to Grizzly Bear Survey

Jim Davis
 Conservation Partnership Center/
 Grizzly Bear Outreach Project
 Email jimdavispc@comcast.net
 Phone (360) 705-1549
 &
 Chris Morgan
 Insight Wildlife Management/
 Grizzly Bear Outreach Project
 Email
 chrismorgan@insightwildlife.com
 Phone (360) 734-6060
 Website www.bearinfo.org.

A survey of rural residents from Skagit and Whatcom Counties in Washington State, USA, has revealed widespread support for grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades. A majority of respondents (52%) reported strong support for recovery and 24% reported moderate support for recovery. Very few (11%) said that they strongly oppose grizzly bear recovery and only 5% said that they moderately oppose recovery. Support for grizzly bear recovery was about the same in Skagit and Whatcom Counties.

The telephone survey was sponsored by the Grizzly Bear Outreach Project (GBOP) and funded by the Skagit Wildlife Research Grant Program managed by Seattle City Light. The survey was conducted by Responsive Management, a nationally recognized survey firm based in Virginia.

All participants in the survey lived in or adjacent to the recovery ecosystem (east of Highway 9) in Skagit and Whatcom Counties. Adults were selected at random from the area to participate in the survey. Survey telephone calls were conducted during September and October 2003.

A total of 508 adults age eighteen and older completed the survey. The results are accurate to within plus or minus 4%. The large number of people completing the survey provide confidence that the results accurately represent the opinions of rural residents in Skagit and Whatcom Counties.

Wildlife agencies have not determined whether grizzly bears will need to be added to the North Cascades to recover the population. Adding bears can be controversial. However, 33% of the respondents in the survey reported that they would be more supportive of grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades if 5-10 bears had to be added, while only 15% said they would be less supportive.

The survey showed that Skagit and Whatcom County residents need more information on grizzly bears. Few people knew that meat and fish comprise only 10% of the grizzly bear's diet in the North Cascades. Very few realize that full recovery of the grizzly bear population in the North Cascades will take around 100 years. Fortunately, nearly everyone knew that it is legal to kill a grizzly bear in self-defense or defense of other people. However, almost a third did not know that it is illegal to kill a grizzly bear if it were to attack livestock.

The survey looked at local attitudes toward grizzly bear interactions with people. Almost everyone (91%) agreed that residents and visitors to the North Cascades could prevent almost all problems with grizzly bears by taking a few simple precautions and avoiding areas where grizzly bears are known to be present.

Most rural residents of Skagit and Whatcom Counties think grizzly bears should be preserved in the North Cascades for future generations. More than two-thirds of the people participating in the survey believed that local citizens in and near the North Cascades would be willing to work with wildlife agencies to determine the best way to recover grizzly bears.

The GBOP is a community-based education project providing accurate information on grizzly bears, the grizzly bear recovery process, and ways to make homes and communities bear safe.

Ontario Takes Action on Nuisance Bears

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, press release, December 17, 2003.

Toronto — The McGuinty government will move to manage nuisance bears and protect Ontario, Canada, communities and the natural environment, Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay announced.

For years, governments have not acted on this complex issue, which has frustrated communities, especially in the north. The McGuinty government is ending years of buck-passing by taking the lead in the management of nuisance bears, said Ramsay. Our nuisance bear strategy will be a real, positive change for people who are looking for a clear solution to this long-standing problem.

The government is taking action on key recommendations from the Nuisance Bear Review Committee report, released last month. The government will not reinstate the spring bear hunt. The committee's report found no scientific connection between the cancellation of the spring bear hunt and increases in nuisance bear activity. Instead, the report concluded that nuisance bear activity is linked to the availability of food and climate conditions.

Ramsay said he shares northerners concerns about the economic impact

of canceling the spring bear hunt and will work as a team with the Ministries of Tourism and Recreation and Northern Development and Mines to help develop real and lasting jobs for the northern economy.

The Natural Resources Ministry will have a nuisance bear management strategy in place by spring 2004, after discussions with municipalities, police and other stakeholders. The strategy will include such actions as:

- a nuisance bear response system operating round the clock — with a toll-free number for reporting nuisance bear incidents and personnel dispatched to the scene if necessary;
- assistance to municipalities to help prevent bear problems;
- increased public education on bear management;
- and, an improved bear population management system to better track the bear population and manage the harvest.

Together with municipalities, police and citizens, the government is moving in a new direction to help protect the people of Ontario, their communities and the natural environment, said Ramsay.

Contacts:
Kevin McGuire
Ontario Ministers Office
Phone (416) 314-2210
&
Jolanta Kowalski
Ontario Ministry of
Natural Resources
Phone (416) 314-2198

Wyoming 2004 Memorial Bear Fund Grants

The Wyoming Chapter of the Wildlife Society will be accepting applications for grants for the 2004 field season. This is the seventh year we have awarded grants and we hope to award up to \$4,000. To qualify, projects must relate to bear management, research, law enforcement or habitat. To obtain application materials contact:

Bill Rudd
320 Evans
Green River, WY 82935, USA
Email Bill.Rudd@wgf.state.wy.us

Applications are due by March 1, 2004 and awards will be made by April 15.

The above address can be used to obtain more information about the fund or to make a contribution. The Memorial Bear Fund is a lasting memorial to Ray Austin, Kirk Inberg, Kevin Roy and Fred Reed who were killed in two separate airplane crashes in Wyoming, USA.

New Jersey Bear Hunt

Kelcey Burguess
Black Bear Project Leader
New Jersey Division of
Fish and Wildlife
New Jersey, USA
Phone (908) 735-8793
Email kburguess@nac.net

Here is an update on the first New Jersey hunt since 1970:

We made it through the full six day season, December 13-18, 2003, without incident

We harvested 328 bears.

Sussex county was the top county for harvest.

We are compiling data.

(See article on page 25.)

Southwest USA

Southwest USA/Mexico news provided by:
Diana Doan-Crider
Caesar Kleberg
Wildlife Research Institute
MSC 218
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Kingsville, TX 78363-8202, USA
Email d-crider@tamuk.edu

New Mexico

Rick Winslow
Large Carnivore Biologist
New Mexico Department of
Game and Fish
PO Box 25112, #1 Wildlife Way
Santa Fe, NM 87505, USA
Phone (505) 268-6347 or
(505) 476-8046
Email rwinslow@state.nm.us

Changes to Hunt Structure

In October 2003 the New Mexico State Game Commission approved a proposal by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish to dramatically change the structure of American black bear hunting in New Mexico. Prior to this rule change, season length had been the main control of harvest. The new hunt structure divides the state into six management zones based upon biogeographic boundaries of bear populations. Each zone has two harvest limits, one for the total number of bears that may be harvested, and one for the total number of female bears that may be harvested. Whichever limit is reached first will close that zone for the remainder of the bear hunt. Harvest limits to maintain stable populations were determined with a computer model developed during the department's eight-year bear study. Parameters include natality, recruitment, mast quality, natural and

human-caused mortality, season lengths and start dates, historic harvest from pelt tag records, and migration rates.

Research

There is ongoing research of nuisance American black bears in the Albuquerque, New Mexico area. Each summer Albuquerque and its bedroom communities are subject to nuisance excursions by black bears from the nearby Sandia and Manzano mountain complex. These bears are popular with many area residents and long-term conservation of this population is a priority for our department. We are capturing, radiocollaring and tracking these nuisance bears in order to determine effective methods of limiting damage by the bears and alternative methods of nuisance bear management besides relocation. A control population of bears from the much less urbanized Manzano Mountains will also be radiocollared and tracked for comparison. We will test if there are differences in the physical condition and habitat use of nuisance and non-nuisance bears.

9th Western Black Bear Workshop

Instead of holding the Ninth Western Black Bear Workshop in the spring of 2005 as previously announced, we have decided to hold it during the spring of 2006 in order to avoid conflicts with other scheduled events. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and the Philmont Scout Ranch will still be the hosts, as will other local organizations.

Southeast USA

News from the Southeast USA is provided by:
Thomas Eason, Chief
Bureau of Wildlife
Diversity and Conservation
Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
Bryant Building
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600, USA
Phone (850) 413-7379
Fax (850) 921-1847
Email thomas.eason@fwc.state.fl.us

Florida

The Bear Management Section continues to operate with the Section Leader's position vacant. The application period is closed, and applicants will be interviewed soon.

Fieldwork has ended for the Ocala Bear Study and Statewide Bear Study. Data analysis has begun for both projects, and final reports will be completed in March (Ocala) and September (Statewide) 2004. Two masters students whose projects grew from the Ocala Bear Study will graduate at the end of this semester, a third will graduate next year.

Staff members continue monitoring bear hair snares along U.S. Highway 98 in the Aucilla Wildlife Management Area, the last stages of fieldwork for this project, through the end of February. Hair samples will be genetically analyzed to examine bear population numbers and road crossings. The first semi-annual report is due this month, with the final analysis and report due in July.

Southeast USA, cont'd.: Joint Undercover Operation Links International Black Market to Virginia Mountains

Submitted by Denny Martin.

Virginia Department of Game and
Inland Fisheries news release.

Contact: Claire Comer
Shenandoah National Park,
Phone (540) 999-3183,
Email claire_comer@nps.gov
&

Julia Dixon
Virginia Department of Game and
Inland Fisheries
Phone (804) 367-0991
Email dixonj@dgif.state.va.us.

Richmond, Virginia — At a joint press conference, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) and the National Park Service announced the results of a multi-year, joint, undercover, investigation that has produced numerous wildlife violation charges and directly linked the communities surrounding Shenandoah National Park with the multi-million dollar international black market trade in American black bears and American ginseng plants.

State and federal officials have become increasingly concerned about the commercialization and exploitation of natural resources and the results of this investigation confirm the existence of an active black market demand for products from the Virginia mountains. The extent of this international demand threatens the viability of the species involved. Additional investigative support was provided by the FBI, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the National Fish and Wildlife Forensic Laboratory, the United States Attorney's Office, and the Rockingham County/Harrisonburg, Virginia Commonwealth Attorney's Office. A total of 487 state violations (193 felonies and 294 misdemeanors) and 204 federal

violations (99 felonies and 105 misdemeanors) have been documented against over 100 individuals in seven states, the District of Columbia and one foreign country.

Operation VIPER (Virginia Inter-agency Effort to Protect Environmental Resources) is the latest in a series of cooperative interagency investigations. The operation built upon previous state/federal undercover investigations, including Operation SOUP (Special Operation to Uncover Poaching), which was concluded in January 1999. Evidence obtained from Operation SOUP revealed the existence of extensive illegal taking and trade in black bear parts that originated in Virginia, including Shenandoah National Park, which were being trafficked primarily to Asian markets in the Mid-Atlantic states as well as overseas. Operation SOUP also revealed that many of the entities involved in the illegal bear trade were also involved in the illegal commercial trade of wild American ginseng roots, some of which originated from within Shenandoah National Park where the digging of ginseng roots is prohibited. Based on this knowledge, the recently completed Operation VIPER specifically targeted the illegal commercialization and black market sales of both black bear and American ginseng.

During the past three years, the investigation has analyzed the illegal market flow of ginseng and black bear parts and their interrelationship with each other, as well as other commodities within the black market, including other federally protected species. Utilizing a storefront operation, an undercover agent operated a sporting goods business near Elkton, Virginia, that bought and sold black bears and ginseng roots. The storefront operation allowed investigators to infiltrate the

commercial black market commonly associated with wildlife and endangered plants. Operation VIPER has uncovered evidence that whole bears, gall bladders, bear paws, and other bear parts originating in Virginia are being trafficked to Washington, D.C., Maryland, West Virginia, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, and California, as well as overseas. Operation VIPER has established a direct connection between Virginia and South Korea, and has obtained evidence of links to other foreign countries. Shenandoah National Park Superintendent Douglas K. Morris commented, "Commercialization of protected natural resources is a nationwide, worldwide problem, and some of it starts right here in Shenandoah National Park as well as other National Park sites." To be successful long-term investigations like SOUP and VIPER require extensive cooperation and combined efforts of state and federal law enforcement. Bill Woodfin, director of VDGIF added, "These ongoing investigations indicate an extensive black market trade that can only be addressed by working closely with all our federal, state, and local partners as well as with wildlife conservation groups committed to protecting our natural resources."

Exploitation of natural resources like ginseng and bear parts has driven these species to near extinction in Asia. The international void, coupled with increased demand for these products by mainstream American markets, raises concern for the protection and conservation of our treasured natural resources. Resource protection agencies like the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the National Park Service will continue to monitor and investigate this threat.



Why Am I Doing This?

Diana Doan-Crider
 IBA Student Coordinator
 Caesar Kleberg
 Wildlife Research Institute
 MSC 218
 Texas A&M University-Kingsville
 Kingsville, TX 78363-8202, USA
 Email d-crider@tamuk.edu

Are you an IBA student? Then you need to belong to the Student Forum!

SIGN UP NOW!

STUDENT LIST SERVE (TRUMAN)

- For students only.
- Discussions pertaining to bear biology, management, or study design challenges.
- Assistance with proposals and study design through IBA professionals.
- Job searches, announcements, information regarding the IBA and student membership.
- Planning for IBA student activities and meetings.
- IBA membership is *encouraged*, but not required for initial sign-up.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Contact Diana Doan-Crider at d-crider@tamuk.edu to enroll.
- After enrollment, go to: <http://aristotle.tamuk.edu>.
- Click on Agricultural Lists.
- Click on Truman.
- Enter your email address and the password "Bears01."
- Go to Create Message.

Do NOT reply to list serve messages using your "reply" button. You must return to Truman and respond within the list serve or else other members will not receive your response.

I remember one particular day, as I was counting the 325th acorn on oak tree No. 546 on Transect No. 36, I asked myself, "Why am I doing this?" Day after day, week after week, acorn after acorn, the same question bounced around my mind. I finally finished my bear movements/acorn data collection after three years, and stumbled back to my home base to begin the analysis. Bear location data point after bear location data point, Excel file after Excel file, *t*-test after *t*-test, the question *still* lingered. GIS map after GIS map, layer after layer...the dissertation...paragraph after paragraph. Then one fateful day, the advisors on my PhD Committee asked me, "Why *did* you do this?" Good question. Thank God I had produced some sort of answer in the way of a dissertation, and actually felt somewhat redeemed by the fact that the results were kind of interesting. If they had not been, I would have resented acorns for the rest of my life.

One of the most important questions you can ask yourself is "Why am I doing this?" While this phrase is more frequently known to graduate students as a reminder that we are confused or simply searching for the meaning of life, it can also be your best friend when it comes to making good decisions in bear research. I know I've covered this before, but I'd like to make sure you really get it.

The other day, my good friend John Hechtel and I were philosophizing about the direction, or lack thereof, of some recent research proposals we were asked to review. Some of the proposals had great goals, but the objectives to achieve these goals were unrealistic and somewhat irrelevant. We weren't being critical, but were simply reflecting on some of our own haste

and oversight in developing the goals and objectives for our past research projects. In my case, especially early in my research, I simply didn't take enough time to ask the right questions.

What distracts us from asking the right questions? Sometimes funding deadlines force us into hastily designed studies, because if we don't come up with a study before next week, someone else may get the money. Like those cartoon lemmings, some of us simply pile off into the world of high-tech studies to do what everyone else is doing because that's what's in the literature and on the Discovery Channel. Worse yet, some of us (namely me) try to write the book on "how to save bears on \$5/day" and end up unable to answer the huge questions we posed at the beginning of our studies. You can't get to the moon on a pogo-stick, and low sample sizes and a two-year study period simply won't answer huge questions about population trends. You can hop across the *road* on a pogo-stick, however, and you might be able to answer some *small* questions under those conditions. It's not necessarily the scale of the question; it's whether or not you can answer it.

What makes a good scientist? I think it is someone who can really ask a good question, and find a practical and realistic way to answer that question. What makes a good conservationist? I think that it is someone who is able to ask a *pertinent* question, and then incorporate that answer into a functional conservation strategy. Did you ever hear the joke about why the chicken crossed the road (Answer: to get to the other side)? How many of us have done a bear study just to do a bear study? Whether you want to go

Student Forum

Why Am I Doing This? cont'd.

to the moon or simply cross the road, take some time to ask yourself "Why?"

As bear biologists, most of us strive to be both scientist *and* conservationist. Whatever your resources — a billion dollars and 20 years or \$500 and two years to study bears — there is just as much chance to blow the opportunity or come up with some useful answers. Either case deserves the same effort in planning, so invest your time and money well. Maybe you don't need to actually handle bears or use expensive tools such as telemetry to answer the question you are asking. It's important to understand that tools like telemetry and DNA-hair sampling are not magic, and come with their own set of problems. Maybe the more relevant and simple questions need to be asked first, and then the bigger questions can come later. Admit-

tedly, it's more glamorous and exciting to count cubs in dens or appear in magazines with radio-collared bears, but some pretty important answers have come from collecting bear scat, counting acorns and conducting public attitude surveys. On the other hand, perhaps your time and efforts might be better spent raising money for the next two years to buy 50 radiocollars instead of 5 and *do* a good telemetry study if it will address the question you are asking. The most important issue, however, is to determine what question you are trying to answer, and which study design and tools are sufficient to help you do the job.

After 10 years of field work and some frustration with the holes in my database, I took time to re-evaluate my goals and organize my thoughts. I actually sat down and

drew a schematic plan on a piece of paper that would help me address the basic questions upon which other, more specific questions could be built. Now I have a prioritized "to do" list for my research projects, and am ready to develop the third phase of my work. Eventually, this plan should lead to a Mexican black bear conservation strategy that will be based on some solid scientific information, and yet still be practical and useful to the Mexican government, and landowners. Develop your own plan, whether it is for long-term bear conservation, or just for the duration of your MS or PhD. And remember, when you hear the words "Why am I doing this?" it may not be such a bad thing.



Opportunity

Volunteers Needed for Grizzly and American Black Bear Habitat Research

The U.S. Geological Survey and the National Park Service are initiating a comparative study of food habits and habitat use of American black and grizzly bears in Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming, USA.

Volunteers are needed to assist ground crews in visiting GPS collar locations, performing habitat use reconnaissance and scat collection for DNA and food habits analysis. The work involves extensive hiking and backpacking in very remote,

grizzly bear inhabited areas. Previous outdoor and orienteering experience is a plus. Field work will be performed June-November 2004. We're looking for dedicated budding wildlife biologists who are willing to commit three or more months to this project. The work is hard, the hours are long, the pay is almost non-existent (per diem allowance), and the housing is primitive, but this is an incomparable opportunity to gain experience doing wildlife research.

For more information, or to send a resume and references, contact:

Dr. Charles C. Schwartz
Team Leader

Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team
USGS Northern Rocky Mountain
Science Center
PO Box 172780

Forestry Sciences Lab - MSU
Bozeman, MT 59717, USA

Phone (406) 994-5043

Email chuck_schwartz@usgs.gov

Hunting for Common Ground

Christine Clarke
11345 40th Avenue NE
Seattle, WA 98125, USA
Email genetics@wildtypes.com

Imagine you've moved into a quiet, rural neighborhood, perhaps not too far from a large metropolitan area. There are plenty of woods, streams and farms. If you live in northwestern New Jersey, American black bears may be your closest neighbors. In one of the most densely populated states in the United States, humans and bears are living in close proximity to each other. As more people across the nation move into rural areas and previously deforested regions mature to provide suitable wildlife habitat, the line between urban and rural habitat has blurred. This encroachment into each other's territory does not rest comfortably with either bear or human. Additionally, human attitudes toward bear management are increasingly disparate and finding common ground seems remote or nearly impossible.

Historically, people's attitude towards the bear (and other potential predators) was predominantly the same: hunt it to eat, or eliminate it as an unwanted pest. With increased settlement in New Jersey in the early 1900s, nearly all its forests were cleared for lumber, fuel and agricultural purposes. American black bears were viewed as vermin and their population plummeted. Although bears were designated as game animals in 1953, and limited hunting seasons took place in 1958 and in 1962-1970, only 46 bears were killed over a 10 year period, leading the New Jersey

Division of Fish and Wildlife (NJDFW) to close the season in 1971.

As forests gradually matured and suitable habitat recovered, so did the population of bears. In 2001, the population was estimated at 1,146 bears in their primary range in northwestern New Jersey. By 2003, the estimate was 3,200 bears in over 16 counties, with complaints increasing as well. Whereas bear complaints numbered 285 in 1995, the number



soared above 1,400 in 2002. The seriousness of complaints also escalated from relatively minor garbage can or bird feeder raids to more major problems: house break-ins (58 in 2003), vehicular accidents (50), livestock kills, domestic pet attacks, and personal injury (hiker knocked down, homeowner mauled while attempting to rescue pet, young child sitting on porch swatted by bear).

Despite a national award-winning black bear education program, ongoing aversive conditioning, trapping and removal or euthanization

of problem bears, it was becoming clear to the NJDFW that these methods alone were not going to reduce conflicts to an acceptable level to the people whose property and safety were at risk.

Citing public safety concerns, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bradley Campbell announced in mid-2003 that there would be a six-day bear hunting season December 8-13, 2003, in northwestern New Jersey.

Opposition was voiced immediately. Protesters, many clutching teddy bears, rallied in Trenton and over 82,000 signed an anti-hunt petition. In a public opinion poll cited by the Humane Society, 58% of registered New Jersey voters believed the hunt should be stopped, while 67% believed that non-lethal methods should be used to reduce bear-related incidents. Then, on December 1, a lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court by the Fund for Animals, the Center for Animal Protection, and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) against the National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Department of Interior. The plaintiffs claimed that bear hunting in the Delaware

Water Gap National Recreation Area violated the NPS's Organic Act and National Environmental Protection Act, as well as causing the Fund for Animals members' irreparable harm and that it was against the public interest. A preliminary injunction was issued on December 5, putting the hunt on hold in the Recreation Area only.

On the second day of the hunt, U.S. District Court Judge Reggie B. Walton lifted the prohibition in Delaware Water Gap, stating that "[c]ontrary to the plaintiffs' alarmist predictions, the black bear popula-

Bears in Culture

Hunting for Common Ground, cont'd.

tion at the [Recreation Area] is not going to be decimated, or even significantly impacted, by this bear hunt." The court was also concerned about the potential harm to others if the hunt was not allowed to proceed, and it concluded that "the public interest favors permitting the State of New Jersey to conduct its limited hunt in order to manage its wildlife resources and hopefully promote a healthy and safe habitat for the residents who live in the vicinity of the Recreation Area as well as for the black bears."

After the six-day season closed, roughly 5,200 licensed hunters had killed 328 black bears, representing about a tenth of the estimated population. While it's too soon to know if this reduction will cause fewer bear/human conflict, it's clear that human conflict over hunting will remain. Despite being a cost-effective option that offers a recreational benefit for some and a realistic way to manage burgeoning animal populations for others, some people view hunting as an archaic hold-over from the past that is inhumane. The alternatives, however, are fairly limited. NJDFW has a bear contraceptive trial (in partnership with HSUS) in preliminary stages, but the drug hasn't been approved by the FDA for use in bears and it carries with it a hefty price tag. Additional bear habitat is being purchased and NJDFW is hopeful that animal

advocacy groups will join them in picking up the tab. Even something as seemingly simple as providing bear-proof garbage cans — when it is to 16 counties — takes on a large financial significance. Before pointing fingers and placing blame, we should all be clear on what we are willing to pay for when we share our backyards with wildlife.

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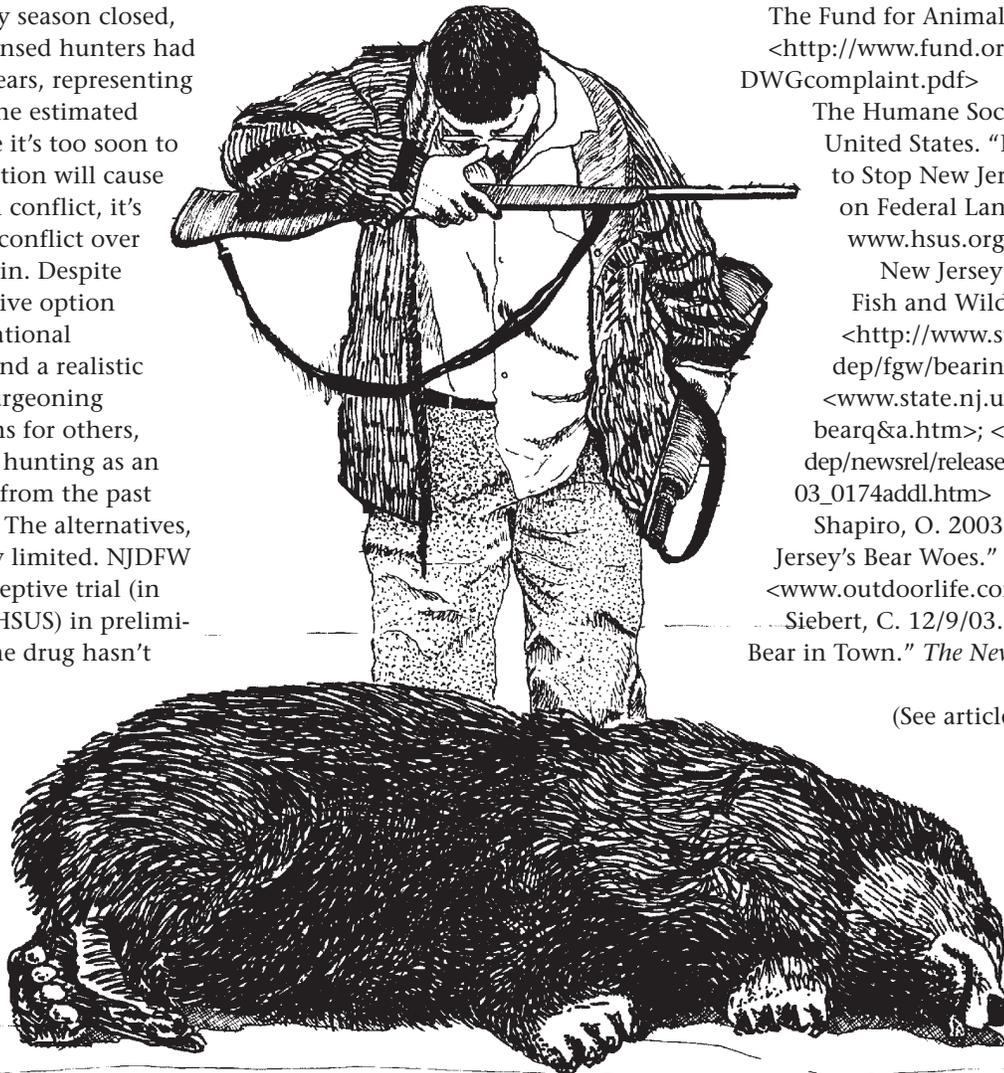
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(See article on page 20.)



RISKMAN Population Model Freeware

A Windows© compatible program named RISKMAN (RISK MANagement) for sustainability assessment of harvested wildlife populations was developed over the past several years by the Nunavut Department of Sustainable Development and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Canada. This population model specifically accounts for the extended parental care and multi-year reproductive cycle of bears — options allow selection of two or three year breeding intervals for modeling black bears (two years) or brown bears and polar bears (three years). An annual option is also available that is suitable for species without extended parental care. The program may be downloaded from the following website hosted by Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario:

<http://www.nrdpfc.ca/RISKMAN/>. There is no charge for the software, but users are asked to register in order to facilitate them being notified about updates.

Information:
Martyn Obbard
Email martyn.obbard@mnr.gov.on.ca
or
Bruce Pond
Wildlife Research
and Development Section
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
300 Water St.
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M5, Canada.

Panda Cub on Web

The new panda cub at the San Diego Zoo, San Diego, California, USA, is on the web. View the panda cub at PandaCam at www.sandiegozoo.org.

Educational Posters for Grizzly and American Black Bear

Chris Morgan, Executive Director
Insight Wildlife Management
PO Box 28656
Bellingham, WA 98228-0656, USA
Phone (360) 734-6060
Fax (360) 734-0800
Email chrismorgan@insightwildlife.com

New educational posters are available for use in Washington, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. The posters were designed and produced by Insight Wildlife Management, with funding from the World Society for the Protection of Animals. They can be provided for the cost of shipping and handling.

The full color posters provide information on American black bears and grizzly bears, including bear facts, bear identification, grizzly bear recovery, and safety and sanitation tips. One version is for use in Washington State, while the other is for Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. The Washington poster has been approved by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Washington State Parks.

International Studbook for the Andean Bear (Tremarctos ornatus) 2000-2002

Mark A. Rosenthal
International Studbook Keeper
Lincoln Park Zoo
2001 N. Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60614, USA
Published by The Lincoln Park
Zoological Society. 365 pages. Parts in
English, Spanish, German and Russian.

Contents:

- Changes in Andean Bear Population: births, deaths and transfers 2000-2002.
 - Official Historical Registration of all Andean bears.
 - Living Animals Collection.
 - Article Section:
- Cowan, K. (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust), Darwent, M. (Colvin

The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee provided bear identification, and recovery ecosystem map graphics.

The posters measure 16.5 x 23 inches. Some are laminated for outdoor use (campgrounds, etc.). Unlaminated posters have a tear-off section that contains "Tips for living, hiking, and camping in bear country" so that people can take that information with them.

We're a small outfit with limited labor resources so we're looking for additional ways to distribute the posters efficiently throughout the four states. If you have ideas, please let me know. For example, if we could ship to central federal and state agency locations, or partner with other wildlife organizations for further distribution that would be very useful.

Small, low-resolution versions of the posters can be viewed as pdf files: for the Washington State poster — www.insightwildlife.com/PosterWA.pdf; and for the Idaho, Montana, Wyoming poster — www.insightwildlife.com/PosterGeneric.pdf

and Moggridge Landscape Architects) and Riva, C. (Architect), *The design of First Impressions, a new multi-species enclosure at Jersey Zoo*. Desbiez, Arnaud and Jardin, T., Centre d'Etude et de Recherche Zoologique Augeron (CERZA), *The Spectacled Bear Exhibit at CERZA*. Kolter, Lydia (Köln Zoo), Having a closer look at bears in zoos and in the wild— the spectacled bear project in Chaparri. No author, Some ethological aspects of *Tremarctos ornatus* "Andean bear" in captivity.

- Directory of Spectacled Bear Holding.
- Information of Bear Related Organizations and Internet Sites.



COLUMBIA MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE OF APPLIED ECOLOGY

Announcing CMI's Spring 2004 Events

CMI Annual Researchers' Meeting and Annual General Meeting

April 28, 2004

Senior's Centre, Nakusp, British Columbia, Canada

Cost: \$45.00 + GST for CMI Members

\$55.00 + GST for non-members

\$35.00 + GST for students

Every year CMI members get together to hear about ecological research and related new initiatives in southeastern British Columbia. Members provide updates on their projects, catch up on the news, and identify areas for collaboration. It's an informal atmosphere and non-CMI members are welcome.

Call for Presenters Closes April 2.

Wildlife Chemical Immobilization and Post Mortem Course

April 27-30, 2004

University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, B.C., Canada

Cost: \$600.00 + GST

The CMI is assisting the University of Northern British Columbia to host a three day course on wildlife chemical immobilization, followed by a one day session on how to perform a post mortem on wildlife under field conditions. Details will be posted at www.unbc.ca/conted.

Applying DNA Methods to the Study of Wildlife Distribution and Abundance

May 3-6, 2004

New Grand Hotel, Nelson, British Columbia, Canada

Cost: \$600.00 + GST

DNA collection and analysis has become part of many ecological and taxonomic studies of mammals, birds, reptiles, and fish. Topics covered in this course include: modern advances in DNA technology; methods to identify species, sex, individuals, and populations; and use of DNA data in animal inventory, census, and monitoring projects.

Statistics for Biologists — A Refresher Course

May 11-13, 2004

Coast Hillcrest Hotel, Revelstoke, British Columbia, Canada

Cost: \$500.00 + GST, plus \$100 for software

Been a long time since your last statistics course? This refresher course is for you! Includes: a review of the basic sampling and experimental designs used by ecologists; understanding what can and cannot be extracted from a set of data; and common pitfalls in the analysis of data. Learn how to use the highly recommended JMP-IN software (software cost is \$100).

**For more details and to register, visit www.cmiae.org
or call the CMI office in Revelstoke, British Columbia, Canada at (250) 837-9311.**

Carnivores 2004

Expanding Partnerships in Carnivore Conservation

Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA
November 14-17, 2004

Call for Papers

Defenders of Wildlife is pleased to announce our fifth biennial carnivore conservation conference. Defenders is accepting oral (15 minute talk) and poster presentation submissions. Abstract submissions must be received by 1 June 2004. While the conference focus is on partnerships in conservation, we will consider any papers covering topics such as biology, behavior, taxonomy, general ecology, recovery, management, and economic impacts of terrestrial, avian and marine carnivore species (canids, bears, cats, mesocarnivores, raptors, whales, dolphins, sharks, etc.).

Visit the conference website www.carnivoreconference.org or leave a message at (202) 789-2844 x315 for complete Carnivores 2004 and abstract submission details.

Bayou Teche Bear Festival Franklin, Louisiana, USA April 17-18, 2004

The first Bayou Teche Bear Festival will celebrate the Louisiana black bear, a native of St. Mary Parish and currently on the U.S. endangered species list as threatened.

The two-day festival will include educational exhibits and seminars, field trips to nearby Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge, and live music, arts and crafts, art exhibit, film festival, teddy bear repair clinic, 5k run/walk, and much more.

Most activities will be held in the downtown historic district and are free.

AZA Regional Workshops

Eastern Regional Workshop

Unlimited Potential — Limited Resources

Louisville Zoo,
Louisville, Kentucky, USA
May 12-15, 2004

Papers, workshops and panel discussions will focus on doing a lot with tight budgets, limited time and personnel. Share the "what" and "how" from conservation projects to exhibits to events and marketing campaigns. Topics include:

- Animal Health and Management
- Orangutan Training Workshop
- Strategic Preparedness
- Strategic Philanthropy
- Education and Theater Partnerships
- Conservation Partnerships

For developing or moderating a session, presenting a paper, hosting a workshop or leading a panel discussion, contact: John Walczak ((502) 238-5335, John.Walczak@loukymetro.org) or Marcelle Gianelloni ((502) 238-5328, Marcelle.Gianelloni@loukymetro.org).

The Bayou Tech Bear Festival is being organized by volunteers interested in regional wildlife and economic development. The purpose of the festival is to highlight the Louisiana black bear, increase public awareness of its presence, educate the public about living with the bear, and making it an asset to the city of Franklin and St. Mary Parish.

Information:

Karla Byron

Phone (985) 395-3126

Email kjbyron@cox-internet.com

Website www.bayoutechebearfest.org

Western Regional Workshop

Under Construction: Conservation in Progress

Santa Barbara Zoo,
Santa Barbara, CA, USA
March 17-20, 2004

The Western Regional Workshop at the Santa Barbara Zoo is quickly approaching. Deadline for early registration is February 16, 2004. After February 16, a late fee of \$25 per person will apply.

Register

Download a registration form at www.aza.org under conferences/workshops.

Questions?

Please contact Sue McCue, Santa Barbara Zoo, email smccue@sbzoo.org.

Room Reservation

Make your reservation today and mention AZA to receive the group rate! Rooms will be released on February 10th!

Fess Parker's Doubletree Resort
Santa Barbara, California, USA
800-879-2929 reservations
805-564-4333 phone
805-564-4964 fax

Airline

Use AZA's group discount number! American Airlines (800) 433-1790, Star File #A1434AI.

Program

Papers, workshops and panel discussions will focus on how and what zoos are building, bringing conservation programs to new levels. Sessions include:

- Keynote Speaker, John Cleese.
- Building Conservation Partnerships
- Can Zoos Go Pop?
Pop Culture and Your Programs.
- Oceans Session.

Events

16th International Conference on Bear Research and Management September 27-October 1, 2005 Trento, Italy



INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE
ON BEAR
RESEARCH AND
MANAGEMENT

9th Western Black Bear Workshop 2006

Rick Winslow
Large Carnivore Biologist
New Mexico Dept. of Game and Fish
PO Box 25112, #1 Wildlife Way
Santa Fe, NM 87505, USA
Phone (505) 268-6347 or (505) 476-8046
Email rwinslow@state.nm.us

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and Philmont Scout Ranch are hosting the 9th Western Black Bear Workshop, tentatively scheduled for spring 2006. Details will be provided as they develop.

Claudio Groff
Email claudio.groff@provincia.tn.it
Provincia Autonoma di Trento,
Servizio Faunistico
Via Trener n. 3
38100 Trento, Italy
Phone +39 0461 494961
Fax +39 0461 494972
&
Piero Genovesi
National Wildlife Institute
Via Ca' Fornacetta 9
I-40064 Ozzano Emilia BO, Italy
Fax ++39 051 796628
Email infspapk@iperbole.bologna.it

The 16th IBA conference is being organized by the Provincia Autonoma di Trento and the National Wildlife Institute. The meeting is being chaired by Romano Masé, head of Wildlife Service, Provincia Autonoma di Trento; with co-chairs Piero Genovesi, National Wildlife Institute; and Claudio Groff, Wildlife Service Provincia Autonoma di Trento.

Trento is the chief town of the area where the last autochthonous bears of the Alps survive. Since 1999, a translocation of bears was started by the Adamello Brenta Natural Park,

the Provincia Autonoma di Trento, and the National Wildlife Institute with the support of Slovenian authorities. So far 10 individuals, captured in Slovenia, have been released. An adult female died in winter 2001 under an avalanche; the first two cubs were born in 2002 and two more this year.

Trento has 101,000 inhabitants and is located in the Adige valley, very close to the bears' range, in the most spectacular region of the entire Alpine arch, between Lake Garda and the Dolomites. It is a very charming town, with plentiful historical monuments and museums, castles and sanctuaries, wine cellars and restaurants, and opportunities for archeological, historical and nature tours. In Trento there is a very active university, and the town hosts several important festivals and meetings.

The town is on a major motorway, 244 km from Milan, 153 km from Venice (where we plan to organize an excursion). It is also well connected by train with Austria. The closest airports are Verona (103 km) and Bolzano (50 km).

We look forward to meeting you all in our wonderful mountains!

18th Eastern Black Bear Workshop 2005

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will host the 18th Eastern Black Bear Workshop. Tentative plans are for the meeting to be held in central Florida, mid-March 2005. Details will be reported as they develop. For more information contact:

Stephanie Simek
Assistant/Acting Bear Management
Section Leader
Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
Bryant Building
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600, USA
Phone (850) 413-7379
Fax (850) 921-1847
Email stephanie.simek@fwc.state.fl.us

IBA Officers & Council

Harry Reynolds, President*

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, AK 99701, USA
Phone (907) 459-7238
Fax (907) 451-9723
Email
harry_reynolds@fishgame.state.ak.us

Jon Swenson**Vice President for Eurasia[^]**

Department of Ecology and
Natural Resource Management
Agricultural University of Norway
Postbox 5003
N-1432 Ås, Norway
Phone 47 64 94 85 30
Fax 47 64 94 85 02
Email jon.swenson@ina.nlh.no

Sterling Miller**Vice President for Americas***

National Wildlife Federation
240 North Higgins, Suite 2
Missoula, MT 59802, USA
Phone (406) 721-6705
Fax (406) 721-6714
Email millers@nwf.org

Joseph Clark, Secretary*

U.S. Geological Survey
Southern Appalachian Field Laboratory
University of Tennessee, 274
Ellington Hall
Knoxville, TN 37996, USA
Phone (865) 974-4790
Fax (865) 974-3555
Email jclark1@utk.edu

Frank van Manen, Treasurer*

U.S. Geological Survey
Southern Appalachian Field Laboratory
University of Tennessee, 274
Ellington Hall
Knoxville, TN 37996, USA
Phone (865) 974-0200
Fax (865) 974-3555
Email vanmanen@utk.edu

Andrew Derocher*

Department of Biological Science
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E9, Canada
Phone 1 780 492 5570
Fax 1 780 492 9234
Email derocher@ualberta.ca

Isaac Goldstein[^]

PO Box 833
IPOSTEL Merida
Estado Merida, Venezuela
Phone 58-414-7176792
Email igoldstein@wcs.org

John Hechtel*

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
1800 Glenn Highway, Suite 4
Palmer, AK 99645, USA
Phone (907) 746-6331
Fax (907) 746-6305
Email john_hechtel@fishgame.state.ak.us

Djuro Huber[^]

University of Zagreb
Biology Department, Veterinary Faculty
Heinzlova 55, 10000 Zagreb
Republic of Croatia
Phone 385 1 2390 141
Fax 385 1 244 1390
Email huber@mavef.vef.hr

Bruce McLellan, Past President*

British Columbia Forest Service
Research Branch
RPO #3, Box 9158
Revelstoke, B.C. V0E 3K0, Canada
Phone (250) 837-7767
Fax (250) 837-7626
Email bruce.mclellan@gems9.gov.bc.ca

Karen Noyce*

Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources
1201 East Highway 2
Grand Rapids, MN 55744, USA
Phone (218) 327-4432
Fax (218) 327-4181
Email karen.noyce@dnr.state.mn.us

Chuck Schwartz*

Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team
Forestry Sciences Lab, Montana State
University
Bozeman, MT 59717, USA
Phone (406) 994-5043
Fax (406) 994-6416
Email chuck_schwartz@usgs.gov

Michael R. Vaughan[^]

Virginia Cooperative
Fish and Wildlife Research Unit
148 Cheatham Hall, Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0321, USA
Phone (540) 231-5046
Fax (540) 231-7580
Email mvaughan@vt.edu

Teresa DeLorenzo (non-voting)**International Bear News Editor**

10907 N.W. Copeland St.
Portland, OR 97229, USA
Phone (503) 643-4008
Fax (503) 643-4072
Email ibn@bearbiology.com

Diana Doan-Crider (non-voting)**IBA Student Affairs Coordinator**

Caesar Kleberg
Wildlife Research Institute
MSC 218
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Kingsville, TX 78363-8202, USA
Phone (361) 593-3959 or 593-3922
Fax (361) 593-3924
Email d-crider@tamuk.edu

Richard B. Harris (non-voting)**Ursus Editor**

218 Evans
Missoula, MT 59801, USA
Phone & Fax (406) 542-6399
Email rharris@montana.com

*term expires 2004

[^]term expires 2005

Bear Specialist Group

About the Bear Specialist Group and Expert Teams

The World Conservation Union's (IUCN) mission is "to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable." Through its Species Survival Commission (SSC), IUCN-established Specialist Groups determine the population status and risk potential for most plant and animal species. Because IBA is a recognized leader in bear conservation and our goals mirror most of those for Specialist Groups, IUCN/SSC asked IBA to appoint and administer the Bear Specialist Group, for all bear species except polar bears because it is a treaty-regulated species.

The core of the BSG is Expert Teams of knowledgeable and effective individuals who have expertise for each bear species. These have been formed for each of the seven bear species, plus a team to deal with trade in bear parts issues. Because of the distribution of brown bears, two teams have been formed. There will be separate teams for American black bears and North American brown bears.

During the last three months, each Expert Team of the Bear Specialist Group identified important conservation needs for the species and range of their responsibility and submitted project proposals for consideration for inclusion in the Bear Conservation Fund initiative. These were evaluated by the Economic Development Committee in

consultation with the Grants Program Committee and submitted to potential funders. In the future, the Expert Teams will publish their assessments of crucial conservation issues in *International Bear News* and any individual or group, including but not limited to the Expert Teams, will be invited to submit proposals for project funding to the Grants Program to address those issues.

Individuals within the range of any bear species who may be able to help with the duties of the Expert Teams are encouraged to contact the team chair(s). Anyone involved in bear conservation, research or management within the range of a specific species can strengthen the impact of their work by coordinating with the appropriate Expert Team.

Bear Specialist Group Expert Team Members

Chair

Harry Reynolds
(harry_reynolds@fishgame.state.ak.us)

Vice Chair

Bruce McLellan
(bruce.mclellan@gems9.gov.bc.ca)

Andean Bear

Francisco Cuesta
(pancho_osos@hotmail.com)

Asiatic Black Bear

Dave Garshelis
(dave.garshelis@dnr.state.mn.us)

Brown Bear — Asia

Mikhail Kretchmar
(mkretchmar@wwfrfe.ru)
&
S. Sathyakumar
(ssk@wii.gov.in)

Brown bear—Europe

Djuro Huber
(duro.huber@zg.tel.hr)
&
Jon Swenson
(ibnjsw@ibn.nlh.no)

Panda Bear

Lu Zhi
(luzhi@pku.edu.cn)

Sloth Bear

Shyamala Ratnayeke
(sratnayeke@yahoo.com)
&
K. Yoganand
(slothbear_research@yahoo.com)

Sun Bear

Gabriella Fredriksson
(gmfred@indo.net.id)
&
Siew Te Wong
(wongsiew@hotmail.com)

Trade in Bear Parts

Christopher Servheen
(grizz@selway.umt.edu)

Polar Bear Specialist Group

The BSG coordinates with the Polar Bear Specialist Group, chaired by:

Scott Schliebe
(Scott_Schliebe@fws.gov)

IBA Membership Application

Please Complete Both Sides of Form. Mail or Fax to Address Below.



Name _____
 Affiliation _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State/Province _____
 ZIP+4 or Postal Code _____ Country _____
 Telephone _____ Fax _____
 Email _____

- New Renewal Address Change You may share my membership information with similar organizations.

MEMBERSHIP

- Standard Membership US\$50.00/year, US\$45.00/year for three or more years.
 Includes *International Bear News* & *Ursus*. # Years _____ US\$ _____
 Please donate my copy of *Ursus* to a library or deserving recipient.
 Institutional Membership US\$100.00/year, US\$250.00/three years. # Years _____ US\$ _____
 For those who cannot afford a Standard Membership, US\$25.00/year.
 Includes *International Bear News*. If needed, a free copy of *Ursus* may be requested. # Years _____ US\$ _____
 Please send *Ursus*. I have no access to it, need it & cannot afford Standard Membership.
 Donation (if possible!) included to help defray costs of sending *Ursus*. US\$ _____

GIFTS & CONTRIBUTIONS

- Gift Standard Membership US\$50/year, US\$45/year for three or more years.
 Includes *International Bear News* & *Ursus*. # Years _____ US\$ _____
 Gift Institutional Membership US\$100/year or US\$250/three years. # Years _____ US\$ _____
 Gift Low-cost Membership US\$25/year. Includes *International Bear News*, not *Ursus*. # Years _____ US\$ _____

_____ Gift Membership for: _____

_____ IBA Please Choose a Deserving Gift Recipient.

- Tax Deductible Contribution to IBA. US\$ _____
 TOTAL AMOUNT US\$ _____

- Check or Money Order in US\$. Make payable to IBA. MasterCard VISA

Cardholder Name _____

Card # _____

(government cards include customer #) _____

Signature _____ Expiration Date _____



SEND TO: Joseph Clark, IBA Secretary
 USGS-SAFL, University of Tennessee
 274 Ellington Hall, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996, USA
 Fax (865) 974-3555 or Email jclark1@utk.edu

Please fill out both sides of the form!
 Download form at www.bearbiology.com.

OFFICE USE ONLY

February 2004, Vol. 13, No. 1

Date Received _____ Amount Received _____ Start Issue _____ End Issue _____ Date Entered DB _____

IBA Member Application, cont'd.

Please Complete Information on Both Sides of Form!

Please check columns in which you have expertise and/or are willing to assist/advise IBA:

	1. Expertise	2. Advise/Assist IBA		1. Expertise	2. Advise/Assist IBA
Accounting			Legal		
American Black Bear**	years		Legislative Processes		
Asiatic Black Bear**	years		Life History		
Andean Bear**	years		Management		
Awards*			Member Concerns*		
Bear-Human Conflict			Media Relations		
Bears in Culture			Mentoring/Training*		
Behavior			Newsletter*		
Bylaws*			Nominations*		
Brown Bear**	years		Nuisance/Damage Management		
Conferences*			Nutrition		
Conservation*			Organizational Development		
Disease			Pathology		
Economic Development*			Physiology		
Education/Outreach*			Polar Bear**	years	
Enforcement			Policy*		
Ethics*			Population Dynamics		
Evolution			Quantitative Analysis		
Field Research			Sloth Bear**	years	
Financial Management			Strategic Planning*		
Food Habits			Sun Bear**	years	
Genetics			Toxicology		
Giant Panda**	years		Travel Grants*		
GIS			<i>Ursus</i> Journal*		
Grant Review*			Veterinary		
IBA History/Archive			Website*		
Habitat Evaluation			Wildlife Rehabilitation		
Husbandry/Zoo			Other—Specify		

**Please indicate number of years of experience with each species *Indicates an IBA committee

Please check all academic degrees earned: BA/BS _____ MA/MS _____ PhD/DVM _____ Other (list) _____

Please list major field of study _____

Please list all countries in which you have worked with bears. _____

Please list languages in which you are fluent. _____

What changes/improvements would you like to see in the IBA (newsletter, *Ursus*, conferences, etc.)?

How can IBA better serve its membership and/or help you? _____

Check here to include your name in the IBA member directory _____

Thank you for completing the survey, please tear out and mail or fax!

IBA Publications Order Form

<i>Ursus Journal & IBA Conference Proceedings*</i>	Cost*	Quantity	Total
4th 1980 Montana 1977	\$30.00	_____	_____
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13th 2002 <i>Ursus 13</i>	\$45.00	_____	_____
14th 2003 <i>Ursus 14 inc. w/ Std. Membership</i>	\$45.00	_____	_____
*40% discount for 3 or more volumes, except <i>Ursus 13 & 14.</i>		Less 40% Discount	(-\$) _____

Eastern Black Bear Workshop Proceedings, USA

10th 1991 Arkansas 1990	\$15.00	_____	_____
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15th 2002 Massachusetts 1999	\$15.00	_____	_____
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Western Black Bear Workshop Proceedings, USA

1st 1979 Arizona 1979	\$15.00	_____	_____
4th 1993 California 1991	\$15.00	_____	_____
6th 2003 Washington 1997 NEW!!!	\$15.00	_____	_____
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Safety in Bear Country Videos

<i>Staying Safe in Bear Country</i>	\$20.00	_____	_____
<i>Staying Safe in Bear Country & Working in Bear Country</i>	\$30.00	_____	_____
<i>Staying Safe in Bear Country Public Performance Rights</i>	\$69.00	_____	_____
<i>Staying Safe in Bear Country/Working in Bear Country PPR</i>	\$129.00	_____	_____

Monographs of the IBA

<i>The Status and Conservation of the Bears of the World</i> (#2, 1989) By C. Servheen	\$10.00	_____	_____
<i>Density-Dependent Population Regulation of Black, Brown and Polar Bears</i> (#3, 1994) Edited by M. Taylor	\$10.00	_____	_____
<i>Population Viability for Grizzly Bears: A Critical Review</i> (#4, 2001) By M. Boyce, B. Blanchard, R. Knight, C. Servheen	\$10.00	_____	_____

Make US\$ Check or Money Order PAYABLE to IBA TOTAL US\$ _____

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Expiration Date_____ Customer # (for government cards)_____

Signature on Card_____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zipcode/Country _____

Phone, Fax & Email _____

SEND TO (Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery): Terry D. White, Southern Appalachian Field Laboratory, 274 Ellington Hall, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996, USA; Fax (865) 974-3555

Please fill out form legibly!



TM

Form also available at www.bearbiology.com.



International Bear News

The Newsletter of the International Association
for Bear Research and Management (IBA)
10907 Northwest Copeland Street
Portland, Oregon 97229-6145, USA

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Join IBA

**Membership Includes *International Bear News* and *Ursus*.
Consider donating a membership to a deserving biologist.
Use the form on page 33 or www.bearbiology.com.**

About the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA)

The International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA) is a non-profit tax-exempt (USA tax # 94-3102570) organization open to professional biologists, wildlife managers and others dedicated to the conservation of all bear species. The organization has over 700 members from about 60 countries. It supports the scientific management of bears through research and distribution of information. The IBA sponsors international conferences on all aspects of bear biology, ecology and management. The proceedings are published as peer-reviewed scientific papers in the journal *Ursus*.

IBA Mission Statement

Goal: The goal of the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA) is to promote the conservation and restoration of the world's bears through science-based research, management and education.

Objectives: In support of this goal, IBA's objectives are to:

1. Promote and foster well-designed research of the highest professional standards.
2. Develop and promote sound stewardship of the world's bears through scientifically based population and habitat management.
3. Publish and distribute, through its conferences and publications, peer-reviewed scientific and technical information of high quality addressing broad issues of ecology, conservation and management.
4. Encourage communication and collaboration across scientific disciplines and among bear researchers and managers through conferences, workshops and newsletters.
5. Increase public awareness and understanding of bear ecology, conservation, and management by encouraging the translation of technical information into popular literature and other media, as well as through other educational forums.
6. Encourage the professional growth and development of our members.
7. Provide professional counsel and advice on issues of natural resource policy related to bear management and conservation.
8. Maintain the highest standards of professional ethics and scientific integrity.

Deadline for the May 2004 issue is April 15, 2004

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