Oso Bär Björn Orso Bjørn Samxe 熊 Bhalou Άρκτος
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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

May 2005 vol. 14, no. 2

Gobi Brown Bears

The Gobi bear is critically endangered — as few as 20-25 individuals may remain in the Gobi of Mongolia, where the bear is a national treasure (second photo page 13). Despite development of a workable strategy to bring together research, applied conservation, and involvement of local people, national government and scientists, funding has not materialized. To learn more, see http://www.bearbiology.org/intnl_gobi_recc.html and *International Bear News*, February 2005, 14(1):3.

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International Bear News, ISSN #1064-1564, quarterly newsletter of the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA).
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.
Back issues are available at www.bearbiology.com.

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 August 2005 issue is July 15, 2005.

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

Membership

Use the form on the page 53 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 ibapresident@bearbiology.com
harry_reynolds@fishgame.state.ak.us

Spring has arrived in the north. A month ago ravens began courtship flights and carrying sticks for building or repairing nests. By the 10th of April, I heard the magical sounds of the season's first Canada geese, fresh from their wintering grounds in California, Texas and Mexico. In Fairbanks, Alaska, we eagerly look forward to signs of spring other than the increasing daylight and temperatures above freezing in the middle of the day. By April 14th, over the still snow-covered fields outside my window, over 40 Canada geese honk wildly, in concert with a few white-fronted geese and mew gulls. Soon the calls of sandhill cranes will fill the skies and loons will return. In the high country 60 km south a few brown bears — mostly males — are out of winter dens, and cubs will get their first glimpse of the world outside in another three weeks. No sightings of American black bears have been reported here, where the latitude is 64ºN, but in Anchorage, latitude 61ºN, they have already caused problems at urban bird feeders. It is another sure sign that spring is here. Life is good.

IBA Goals and Member Involvement

IBA's purpose is to achieve conservation and restoration of the world's bears through science-based research, management and education. Progress towards this goal is made by working towards our objectives, listed on the back cover of this newsletter. Members throughout the world are using innovative variations on these approaches to benefit bear populations. The Research and Grants Program, Bear Conservation Fund and the recently-established Experience and Exchange Program (page 6) support crucial conservation programs and activities that provide the greatest benefit to bears for the funds expended. These have been funded primarily through foundation grants and generous donations from committed individual IBA members (page 5). This year a total of $54,000 in IBA grants were distributed to 11 conservation efforts by the (page 7).

Our goals are achievable and are vital to making the world a better place for bears. Let me or any member of the IBA Council (page 52), the Bear Specialist Group or the Polar Bear Specialist Group (page 13) know where and how you can best contribute. There are many ways this can be done. It may be as easy as donating frequent flier miles to enable someone to attend an IBA conference who would not be able to afford travel costs otherwise. A very effective way of furthering conservation is to exchange experiences and understanding of dilemmas faced by others across the globe. You can do this by inviting a member from another country or another discipline to participate in your project. By opening such contacts, both participants benefit. The Experience and Exchange Program can help coordinate exchanges and has limited funds to assist with travel costs. Remember, we are an organization whose members volunteer their time, effort, expertise, enthusiasm, and even their money. IBA has no employees and no officer or member of Council receives compensation for work on behalf of IBA.

Nominations for IBA Council

The Council carries out the day-to-day business required to meet IBA goals and objectives, to address issues important to bear conservation, and to respond to IBA members. Every three years prior to the Eurasian conference, IBA holds Council elections for Vice President Eurasia and two Councilor positions. This year's Nominations Committee, Koji Yamazaki (chair), Andy Derocher, Lydia Kolter and Frank van Manen, is pleased to provide the following initial slate of candidates.

Vice-President Eurasia

(must reside in Eurasia):
Piero Genovesi,
National Wildlife Institute, Italy

Council

(no residency requirement):
Djuro Huber
University of Zagreb, Croatia
David Mattson
U.S. Geological Survey, USA
Stanislav Puchkovskiy
Udmurt State University, Russia
Mike Vaughan
Virginia Coop Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, USA

Although it is the responsibility of the Nominations Committee to recruit qualified candidates, we recognize there are many qualified members who may be interested in running for these positions. For this reason we publish this initial slate of candidates before the ballot is finalized so that members may nominate others or volunteer themselves. Nominees must be IBA members, agree to run before submitting their names, and be willing to work hard on behalf of the association. Maintaining communication with members and within the

From the President, cont'd.

Council is a must. Other duties that must be performed by candidates are listed below. This is your association and its effectiveness will be a reflection of how you contribute to it. **IBA Secretary Joe Clark must receive all additional nominations no later than 28 June 2005, along with candidate statements** (contact information on page 52).

IBA Bylaws require that ballots be provided in the newsletter or by mail and that only ballots returned to the IBA Secretary by mail can be accepted. Ballots and candidate statements will be mailed to all members during July.

IBA Council Job Descriptions

Councilor

The duties of a councilor are to understand, comment on and propose issues to help achieve IBA goals and objectives. Council members should have access to email and respond promptly with their comments and votes. Council members should be able to attend at least one and preferably all of the regularly scheduled conferences and be willing to serve on standing IBA committees when asked (e.g., nominations, conferences, etc.) A councilor should be prepared to spend at least two hours per week on IBA issues.

Vice President Eurasia

The Vice President Eurasia must reside in Eurasia and be especially knowledgeable about bear conservation problems and issues in Eurasia. Duties are the same as those of council members; however, in addition, the Vice President Eurasia and Vice President Americas act for the president on occasions when the president is unavailable. The vice president should be prepared to spend at least two hours per week on IBA issues, but at times significantly more.

Ursus Excellence Recognized

Ursus, the official scientific journal of IBA, has joined the ranks of peer-reviewed journals indexed by BIOSIS/ Biological Abstracts/Zoological Record, Wildlife Worldwide (NISC) and Thomson Scientific Citation Index system (*Current Contents*). This is a substantial accomplishment due in large part to the skilled hand of *Ursus* editor Rich Harris, who has been supported in his efforts by past and present members of the Publications Committee. It is recognition that publication in *Ursus* meets the high standards set by academic and government institutions and is tangible evidence of the quality of our journal. It is also a tribute to the quality of papers contributed to *Ursus* (page 6).

Conferences & Workshops

There is still time to make arrangements to attend what promises to be a very exciting 16th International Conference on Bear Research and Management in Riva del Garda, Italy, 27 September-1 October, 2005, in the heart of Italy's bear habitat (conference information on pages 42-47). Participants will have a great opportunity to learn about the advances in bear conservation, and problem areas around the globe that require immediate attention and our best efforts. The tentative program is on page 44. Remember, all IBA members are welcome to attend Council and Bear Specialist Group meetings.

IBA's first conference in Asia, where challenges for bear conservation may be most critical, will be in Japan, 2-6 October 2006 (page 50). Abstracts for papers will be accepted starting 1 October 2005. A year later, our first Americas conference to be held outside the USA or Canada will be held in Monterrey, Mexico during Fall 2007 (page 51).

The site for the 2008 Eurasian conference has not been selected. Because planning and organizing a conference takes three years, any country interested in hosting an IBA meeting should contact any Council member. Mike Vaughan chairs the Conference Advisory Committee and will be happy to provide a copy of the latest conference guidelines (contact information on page 52).

During April, the 18th Eastern Black Bear Workshop was held in Florida (page 31), Bear Awareness activities were held in Tennessee in conjunction with the a workshop held by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association Bear Taxon Advisory Group and The American Association of Zoo Keepers. In Alaska, the annual Alaska Bear Forum was held to help educate the public on the importance of bears as a wide-ranging species whose conservation helps ensure protection for Alaska's biodiversity. While these few events and workshops occurred in the U.S., far more very likely occurred throughout the world. Wherever such gatherings take place, it is very probable that IBA members are involved.

Bear Specialist Group — Expert Team Workshops

The 16th IBA conference in Italy will provide the first opportunity for many Expert Teams of the Bear Specialist Group (BSG) to meet and discuss matters of mutual concern among members of the 12 Expert Teams. If you are a member of an Expert Team or are interested in the BSG, please plan on attending. (pages 13, 42-47) .

Thanks You Donors!!!

Karen Noyce
IBA Vice President Americas
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

On page 7 of this newsletter, you will read that this year IBA has awarded over $54,000 in Research and Conservation Grants. In addition, IBA is starting a new grants program! Our ability to do this rests entirely on the generosity of those that believe in the work and mission of IBA. We wish to take this opportunity to express our hearty thanks to the following organizations and individuals, for their generous and continuing support:

The John Sheldon Bevins Memorial Foundation (Alaska, USA)

Bear Trust International (Montana, USA)

Helen and Deane Stahmann (Queensland, Australia)

Robert A. Johnston Foundation (Ohio, USA)

JoAnne Bratt (Florida, USA)

Joan Rog (Ohio, USA)

Polly Hessing (Alaska, USA)

Anonymous Donors (you know who you are!)

Six Russian brown bear cubs from one female (see page 17)

IBA's New Experience and Exchange Grants Program

Karen Noyce
IBA Vice President Americas
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

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The IBA is very pleased to announce a new grants program beginning this year. Experience and Exchange Grants will help enable biologists to participate in inter-project work and training exchanges. Working visits to other projects offer biologists and wildlife managers enormous opportunities for learning, sharing expertise, collaborating in on-site problem solving, technical training, and professional growth. Moreover, these experiences broaden perspective and understanding of the biological and cultural context within which bear conservation programs must operate in different regions.

IBA's Experience and Exchange Grants program will be designed to benefit a wide variety of people. Young biologists seeking specific types of technical training in preparation for their own projects may desire to work on an established project. Biologists starting new projects or dealing with stubborn research questions may benefit from hosting a field visit from someone who has dealt with similar questions, problems, or research logistics in the past. Mid- or late-career biologists who want to collaborate with biologists from other countries, or broaden their understanding of bears worldwide, can learn enormously from an international field experience and can benefit host projects by sharing their many years of experience. Bears benefit when biologists spend more time applying shared knowledge and less time re-inventing the wheel with each new project.

Despite the obvious value of work exchanges, it can be difficult to find support for them. IBA's Experience and Exchange Grants will fund travel for participants in well-conceived exchanges. Grants will be awarded annually through a competitive process based on submitted proposals. Although details regarding the granting process and judging criteria remain to be worked out, the program is looking for proposals for project visits lasting several weeks to several months, in which tangible benefits are identified by both the host and hosted project personnel, and which offer reasonable prospects for on-going inter-project relationships to develop.

The new Experience and Exchange Grants committee will be working in the coming months to flesh out this new program. Committee members include Ole Jakob Sørenson (Chair, Norway), Glen Contreras (USA), Isaac Goldstein (Venezuela), Petra Kaczensky (Germany), and Karen Noyce (USA). The program will start small, funding one to several exchanges in the first granting cycle, dependent on the size of requests. Guidelines for applying will be announced in the August issue of this newsletter.

Ursus Now in *Current Contents* and *BioOne!*

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

Some new developments regarding the IBA's technical journal *Ursus* are worth noting (and celebrating). First, *Ursus* has been selected for coverage in *Current Contents/Agriculture, Biology & Environmental Sciences* and the *Science Citation Index Expanded*, both products of Thomson ISI, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. Coverage began with *Ursus* 15 (calendar 2004), and will continue with each issue. This not only enhances our visibility and reputation, but also allows those authors whose institutions require them to publish in "SCI-covered journals" to submit manuscripts to *Ursus* without fear of losing appropriate credit.

Secondly, beginning shortly, the full text of all *Ursus* articles will be available online (either in "full-text" or pdf versions) to all subscribers of BioOne®. BioOne® is a non-profit consortium of scientific societies, libraries, academic institutions, and private companies, that bundles a number of biological journals (currently about 76) published by small, membership organizations, and sells the electronic product to libraries, institutions, and individuals. There are currently almost 700 subscribing libraries/institutions in about 76 countries, and BioOne® is continuing to expand internationally. Beginning with *Ursus* 15 (and each issue thereafter), published articles can be viewed and downloaded to anyone with access to the BioOne® system. In addition, we are pursuing the possibility that back-issues of *Ursus* can be digitized and made available through the JSTOR® archiving service, which many libraries also subscribe to. Check to see if you have access to BioOne®, and if not, encourage your library or institution to subscribe! Since you'll want *Ursus* on your own bookshelf, remember that it is automatically sent to full IBA members (page 53).

Research and Conservation Grants Awarded

Frederick Dean, Chair
Research and Conservation
Grants Committee
810 Ballaine Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709, USA
Email deansfs@alaska.net

The Research and Conservation Grants Committee, composed of Julia Bevins, Jörg Rauer, Jon Swenson, Gordon Warburton, and myself, has been busy this year. Three of us had completely unforeseeable delays interrupt the reviewing process. Since these delays were almost sequential rather than simultaneous, our final selection work occurred almost a month after the date everyone had expected. This left many people uneasy as the season advanced. Our apologies, but the group has worked remarkably well together and, I believe, been very effective.

There were 34 proposals submitted for the 2004-2005 review; the total amount of money requested from IBA was about $190,000. We had a total of $54,042 to distribute. Several very generous donations supplemented the funds IBA received from the John Sheldon Bevins Memorial Foundation (page 5). In two cases grantees returned or forfeited grants made in earlier years because the work proposed could not be accomplished. That situation is all too common in this unstable world; and bears will not benefit from the effects of political conflict.

This year it would have been very easy to justify making grants to the great majority of the proposals we received. The task to inform applicants that their projects will not receive an IBA grant in a given year is always a difficult. However, IBA's stated priorities of supporting sound projects addressing what appear to be the greatest conservation needs make that necessary. We attempted to select proposals to fund based on the conservation need, the soundness of the project design, and also a reasonable spread across species and geographic areas. The latter factors cannot be met equally every year, but our hope is to address concerns for all species and in each major region over a period of years.

This year we had the benefit of information from several Bear Specialist Group Expert Teams (page 13). We find this very useful and hope to have more indications of species and regional priorities in future years. In line with this, it may be worth noting that we received a

Table 1. Species and Regional Distribution of IBA Research and Conservation Proposals and Grants, 2004-2005.

Proposals submitted	Species & Region	Grantee(s)	Grants awarded	Total $ granted for species in region	Proportion of request funded
0	*Ailuropoda melanoleuca*		0		
2	*Helarctos malayanus*				
	Southeast Asia	Aditya & Fredriksson	1	$4,030	1.00
3	*Melursus ursinus*				
	Southern Asia	Yoganand & Seidensticker	1	$5,800	0.78
6	*Tremarctos ornatus*				
	South America	Viteri	1	$5,592	0.93
	South America	Velez-Liendo	1	$4,500	0.94
5	*Ursus americanus*		0		
13	*Ursus arctos*				
	Europe, Scandinavia, Western Russia	Baskin & Radeloff	1	$4,320	1.00
	Northern Asia	Reynolds et al.	1	$6,000	0.63
	Southern Asia	Nawaz	1	$4,000	0.80
0	*Ursus maritimus*		0		
5	*Ursus thibetanus*				
	Northern Asia	Zhu et al.	1	$5,200	1.00
	Southern Asia	Holte	1	$5,000	0.94
	Southeast Asia	Galbreath	1	$4,600	1.00
	Southeast Asia	Simms & Olsson	1	$5,000	0.50
	TOTAL		**11**	**$54,042**	

Research and Conservation Grants Awarded, cont'd.

good proposal for a planning workshop. Workers from one country would come together to determine priorities and discuss methods. It was tempting to fund this, but we could not justify it in our minds. We expect that IBA will do its best to assist workshops held by various Expert Teams. However, there will never be adequate money to permit funding such efforts on a country-by-country basis. We recommend that any such efforts be species- or species/region-wide as well as advertised widely and open to any interested workers.

Eleven proposals were selected (see Table 2.) for funding this year. There is always balancing to do between increasing the number of proposals to support and trying to award enough to each applicant to insure the work's completion. Table 1 (page 7) shows the proportion of each request that was funded; an important factor in this is our perception of the chance for getting additional funds from sources other than IBA. In each case where a grant has been offered for less than was requested, the grantee has either been able to make slight adjustments, assure us of supplementary funding from other sources, or the money is being held by IBA pending receipt of additional money.

I want to take this opportunity to express the thanks of the committee to the many people who wrote references regarding the proposals. These have been a great help, and we really appreciate the time and effort put into them.

I believe that all the Research and Conservation Grants Committee members have enjoyed the work; I certainly have in spite of having to tell a large number of applicants that they were not successful. Additionally, we've met some great people (at least electronically). There is a lot of good and interesting work going on in the world of bear conservation.

Keep watching the grants programs webpages (www.bearbioogy.com) for information on applying for IBA grants and for more details on some of the projects.

Table 2. IBA Research and Conservation Grants Awarded 2004-2005

Grantee(s)	Project Title	Species	Country/Region
Aditya & Fredriksson	Malayan sun bear distribution mapping in Sumatra.	*H. malayanus*	Sumatra, Indonesia
Baskin & Radeloff	Forest fragmentation as a limiting factor.	*U. arctos*	Russia
Galbreath	Mitochondrial DNA map for the Southeast Asian moon bear, *U. thibetanus*	*U. thibetanus*	Cambodia, Thailand, Laos
Holte	Population trends and degree of isolation for Asiatic black bears in Nepal's Protected Areas	*U. thibetanus*	Nepal
Nawaz	Genetic studies of Himalayan brown bears (*Ursus arctos isabellinus)* in Deosai National Park, Pakistan	*U. arctos*	Pakistan
Reynolds et al.	Assessing size and habitat use patterns of the critically endangered Gobi bear population in Mongolia	*U. arctos*	Mongolia
Simms & Olsson	Bear conservation in Southwest Cambodia	*H. malayanus, U. thibetanus*	Cambodia
Velez-Liendo	Andean bear population estimation using noninvasive methods and DNA in two parks in Bolivia	*T. ornatus*	Bolivia
Viteri	Population estimation, genetic diversity and structure of the Andean bear (*T. ornatus*) in Ecuador	*T. ornatus*	Ecuador
Yoganand & Seidensticker	Mapping sloth bear distribution in Mizoram and Tripura States in the remote northeastern region of India	*M. ursinus*	India
Zhu et al.	Development of a method for mapping and monitoring populations of Asiatic black bears in China	*U. thibetanus*	China

Issues and Conservation Priorities from the Asiatic Black Bear Expert Team

Dave Garshelis
Minnesota Dept. Natural Resources
Grand Rapids, MN 55744, USA
Email dave.garshelis@dnr.state.mn.us
&
Rob Steinmetz
WWF–Thailand Program Office
Klong Luang, Patumthani, 12120
Thailand
Email rob@wwfthai.org

Species and Team Name

Ursus thibetanus once ranged throughout Europe, from the Urals of Russia to the west coast of France, but since the late Pleistocene this species has existed exclusively in Asia. The type specimen was taken from the Sylhet region (presently divided between Assam, India and Bangladesh), and other early collections were from the Himalayan foothills of Nepal; thus, it is often called the Himalayan black bear. Inexplicably, its scientific name suggests a stronghold in Tibet (former spelling *Thibet*), but for a time authors debated whether it actually occurred in Tibet (it does, but only in a small portion). In the early 1900s the generic name was changed to *Selenarctos*, meaning "moon bear", in reference to the prominent crescent-shaped marking on the chest, but ultimately it was put back in *Ursus* (although *Selenarctos* is still used in some areas).

In various parts of the range, this bear is still referred to as the moon bear, himalayan black bear, Tibetan bear, white-breasted bear, or some other local name. In the English language, Asiatic black bear is the most widely-used common name for this species. This name could be confusing, as two other Asiatic bear species are also black, but no other common name for *U. thibetanus* is more commonly accepted and understood throughout the species' range. Thus, we use the name Asiatic black bear for our team, and suggest that this name be used when referring to this species to a multi-national audience; however, popular local names may be more effective in gaining support for regional conservation.

Species Range and Team Membership

The Asiatic black bear is the most widespread ursid in Asia, ranging east to west from Japan to Iran, and north to south from the Amur region

© John Goodrich

Asiatic black bear in Russia

Issues and Conservation Priorities from the Asiatic Black Bear Expert Team, cont'd.

of Russia to the southern tip of Thailand (near the Malaysian border). This range encompasses 18 countries.

During the past two years we assembled a team of 30 people knowledgeable about this species of bear, representing 15 range countries. All but seven team members are range country nationals (and three of the seven non-nationals live in a range country). The countries not yet represented include Nepal, Bangladesh and North Korea. Team members (one-to-three per country) include wildlife conservation officials from government departments, and conservation biologists from non-governmental organizations. In many countries there are no experts with species-specific research experience; thus, one indirect but important role of the Asiatic Black Bear Expert Team will be to build such capacity, both among our members and within the wider conservation community in each country.

Asiatic Black Bear Expert Team Members

(given name, family name, country)
Vladimir Aramilev, Russia
John Goodrich, Russia
Sang-Hoon Han, South Korea
Hang Lee, South Korea
Koji Yamazaki, Japan
Toshio Tsubota, Japan
Jien Gong, China
Ren-Zhu Piao, China
Mei-hsiu Hwang, Taiwan
Ying Wang, Taiwan
Nguyen Xuan Dang, Vietnam
Chanthavy Vongkhamheng, Laos
Joe Walston, Cambodia
Budsabong Kanchanasaka, Thailand
Supagit Vinitpornswan, Thailand
U Saw Htun, Myanmar
Gary Galbreath, SE Asia
Sonam Wangchuck, Bhutan
S. Sathyakumar, India
Anwaruddin Choudhury, India
N.P.S. Chauhan, India
Iftikhar Ahmad, Pakistan
Kashif M. Sheikh, Pakistan
Mayoor Khan, Pakistan/Afghanistan
Abdul Wali Modaqiq, Afghanistan
Peter Zahler, Afghanistan
Ramazanali Ghaemi, Iran
Bernhard Gutleb, Iran
Dave Garshelis, USA
Rob Steinmetz, Thailand

Identifying Issues and Conservation Priorities

A first goal of the Asiatic Black Bear Expert Team was to identify conservation issues and priorities. Team chairs sent out a four-question, multiple-choice questionnaire to all team members, and tabulated results. Members sometimes selected multiple answers to some questions. We analyzed these two ways: by weighting all responses the same, and by weighting each person the same (e.g., if a person gave two responses to one question, each would be given half weight). We found that the two analyses yielded virtually identical results, so for simplicity, only the former are shown here.

Responses to the first question, about conservation issues, suggested that hunting was generally more

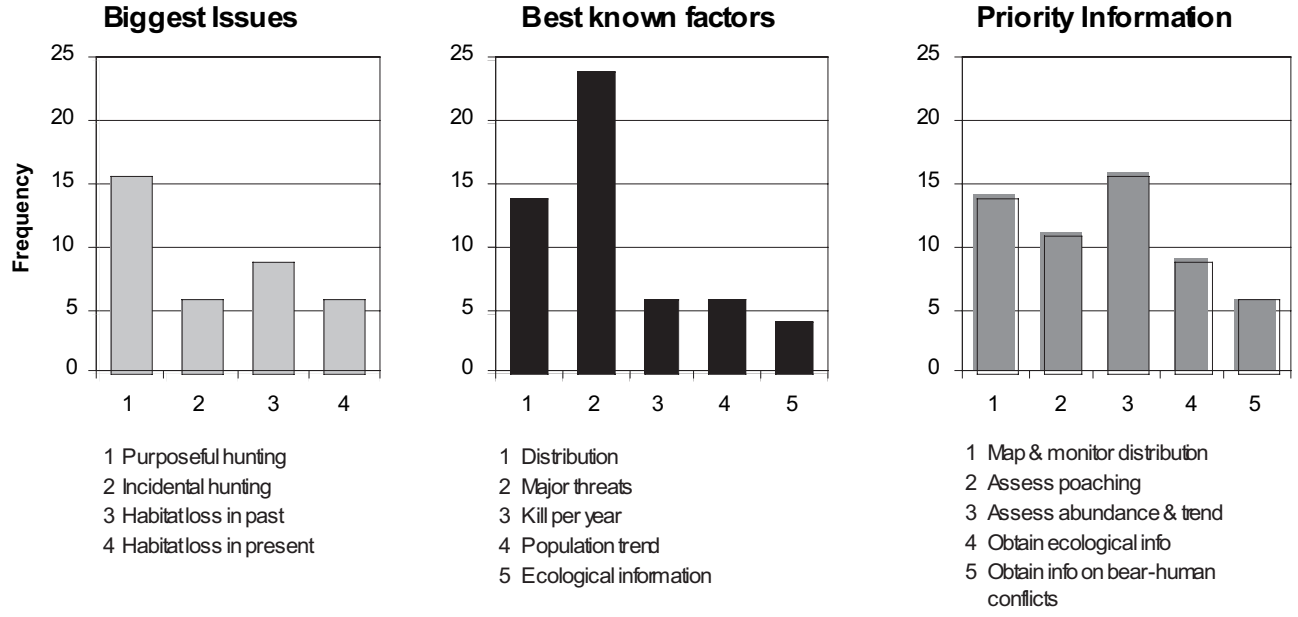

Fig. 1. Responses to survey by members of the Asiatic Black Bear Expert Team of the IUCN Bear Specialist Group.

problematic than habitat loss (Fig. 1). This result, however, is somewhat deceiving. The questionnaire only gave four choices: two related to hunting (purposeful or incidental) and two related to habitat loss (past or present). Purposeful hunting was selected most often as the biggest issue, but the two categories of habitat loss pooled together were comparable (the distinction of past and present being a somewhat artificial distinction). Notably, though, purposeful hunting was considered a far bigger issue than habitat loss in all Southeast Asian countries (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar).

© Dave Garshelis

The "nest" of an Asiatic black bear in China

The second survey question asked what conservation-related factors were best known. Here, there was general consensus among team members indicating that they best understood the major threats to bear populations. They agreed that little information existed on the number of bears killed each year, population trend, and aspects of bear ecology (although good ecological studies have been conducted in Japan, Russia, and Taiwan).

The third question, regarding highest priorities for information gathering, drew the most widely disparate answers (Fig. 1). To some extent opinions varied geographically: in the northern part of the range, team members seemed most intent on obtaining information on abundance and population trend; in Southeast Asia, members wanted to know more about distribution; whereas in South-central Asia, answers were much less consistent. Overall, information on bear-human conflicts was deemed least important.

The last question asked about the accuracy of a range map for each country. Detailed range maps (defining distinct populations) are available for Japan, and to a lesser extent, India. Nearly 60% of range countries reported having only very general range maps (large blobs encompassing the general area where bears are thought to exist), and 30% reported having no range map for bears.

This exercise was meant to serve two purposes: First, as members responded to the survey by email, copying all in the team, the process

Issues and Conservation Priorities from the Asiatic Black Bear Expert Team, cont'd.

enabled us to learn more about Asiatic black bears not only in neighboring countries, but also in far off places. Second, it was hoped that we could begin to develop an overall conservation strategy for the species. Results of the survey, though, did not paint a clear picture in that regard. We learned instead that problems and priorities differ greatly by area. Opinions even differed among members within some individual countries. This does not mean that these results are unhelpful. Instead, they point to the diversity of existing situations and expert opinions. They also reflect a species distribution that spans an enormous range of ecological conditions (temperate coniferous forest to lowland rainforest), human population densities, and resource use practices.

© Koji Yamazaki

Bark stripping by an Asiatic black bear in Japan

As chairs of the team, we hope now to find more common ground than revealed by this simple survey. This might be relatively easy to do if members could get together at a workshop, but it is difficult by email (several of our members are away from email for many months at a time, and as English is not the primary language of most members, misunderstandings are likely to be common in email communications and subtleties lost).

Our suggestion, as a starting point, is to review information on bear distribution. We are trying to work out a way of drawing and revising range maps online. Once such maps become available, we hope to categorize bear occurrence in specific areas as either known, probable, uncertain, or recently extirpated, and then use these categories to help monitor population change (i.e., range collapse or expansion) and to direct future research efforts.

Bear Specialist Group Coordinating Committee

Please note the following changes to the Bear Specialist Group Coordinating Committee:

Lydia Kolter is chair of the new Captive Bears Expert Team;

Isaac Goldstein is the new chair of the Andean Bear Expert Team.

There are new email addresses for Shymala Ratnayeke and Christopher Servheen.

Gobi brown bear (see front cover) @ B. Mijiddorj, Mongolia Ministry of Nature and Environment

Bruce McLellan
Coordinating Committee Co-chair
email bruce.mclellan@gems9.gov.bc.ca

Dave Garshelis
Coordinating Committee Co-chair
email dave.garshelis@dnr.state.mn.us

Harry Reynolds
IBA Representative
email hreynolds@fishgame.state.ak.us

Diana Doan-Crider
email d-crider@tamuk.edu

John Seidensticker
email seidenstickerj@nzp.si.edu

Isaac Goldstein
Andean Bear Expert Team Chair
email igoldstein@wcs.org

Dave Garshelis
Asiatic Black Bear
Expert Team Co-chair
email dave.garshelis@dnr.state.mn.us

Rob Steinmetz
Asiatic Black Bear
Expert Team Co-chair
email robtyn@hotmail.com

S. Sathyakumar
South Asian Brown Bear
Expert Team Chair
email ssk@wii.gov.in

John Paczkowski
North Asian Brown Bear
Expert Team Chair
thebearsare@hotmail.com

Djuro Huber
European Brown Bear
Expert Team Co-chair
email huber@mavef.vef.hr

Jon Swenson
European Brown Bear
Expert Team Co-chair
email ibnjsw@ibn.nlh.no

Lydia Kolter
Captive Bears Expert Team Chair
email lkolter@zoo-koeln.de

Lu Zhi
Giant Panda Expert Team Chair
email luzhi@pku.edu.cn

Shyamala Ratnayeke
Sloth Bear Expert Team Co-chair
email sratnaye@utk.edu

K. Yoganand
Sloth Bear Expert Team Co-chair
email slothbear_research@yahoo.com

Gabriella Fredriksson
Sun Bear Expert Team Co-chair
email gmfred@indo.net.id

Siew Te Wong
Sun Bear Expert Team Co-chair
email wongsiew@hotmail.com

Christopher Servheen
Trade in Bear Parts Expert Team Chair
email grizz@umontana.edu

Scott Schliebe
Polar Bear Specialist Group
email Scott_Schliebe@fws.gov

Kamchatka Governor Cancels Spring Brown Bear Hunt

John Paczkowski
IBA North Asian Brown Bear
Expert Team Chair and
Kamchatka Field Coordinator
Wildlife Conservation Society
Email thebearsare@hotmail.com

The governor of Kamchatka, Mikhail Borisovich Mashkovtsev, has cancelled the 2005 spring brown bear hunt in the southern portion of Kamchatka in an effort to conserve the bear population of the peninsula and increase the number of large animals. Since opening up to the western world in 1991 the Kamchatka Peninsula, in the Russian Far East, has increasingly become a brown bear hunting Mecca where hunters experience an almost 100% success rate. The spring hunt is especially easy as snow machines allow swift access to bears which are easily visible on snowy slopes. The Kamchatka peninsula is divided into two administrative areas, the Kamchatka and Koryak Regions, which are allocated 500 and 260 bear licenses respectively. In the Kamchatka Region (the southern portion) 500 licenses are typically split between the spring and fall hunt but now the entire quota has been transferred to the fall hunt. The decision was met with vehement opposition by most local biologists, hunters, NGOs, and the Kamchatka Hunting Department which sets quotas and manages the hunt. They argue that the population of about 10,000 animals is stable or increasing and unsuccessfully took their case to court in an effort to overturn the governor's decision. They have appealed the decision to a higher court but it may be years before the case is heard, although many people are hopeful the spring hunt will resume in coming years. The governor promises to fund an aerial census of the Kamchatka Oblast within the next few years which was completely surveyed in 1997.

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Alaska brown bears

According to Alexander S. Valentsev, Senior Scientist with the Kamchatka Branch of the Pacific Institute of Geography, many biologists, wildlife managers and outfitters fear that bear poaching will increase as a result of the cancellation of the spring hunt. Enforcement capacity of government agencies is almost non-existent and on average there are two bear poaching prosecutions from up to 700 bear poaching incidents annually. The Kamchatka Oblast is divided into 80 hunting leases, and lessees are essentially responsible for policing their own lease(s). As one hunter explained, "I can make a good living by guiding a few foreign hunters a year. As a result, I patrol my hunting lease, maintain and patrol my cabins, and make sure no one is poaching bears or salmon in my hunting lease. There is no one else who will do this if I am not there. Helicopters are expensive ($1,400 an hour). If they cancel the spring hunt I may have to shoot as many bears as I can just to sell their gall bladders to survive. I don't want to have to do that but...". Fortunately the price of gall bladders in Kamchatka has remained stable at about $1.50 to $2.00 per gram and there is no indication it will rise.

Developing a Reliable Monitoring System for the Brown Bears of Kamchatka: Conclusions and Recommendations

John Paczkowski
IBA North Asian Brown Bear
Expert Team Chair and
Kamchatka Field Coordinator
Wildlife Conservation Society
Email thebearsare@hotmail.com

Kamchatka brown bears, *Ursus arctos piscator*, are facing escalating threats from illegal harvest, increased human access to bear habitat, oil and gas development, and mining. There is no consensus on the number of bears presently living on the Peninsula; the estimates by local wildlife biologists range from 8,000 to 20,000. Despite the lack of reliable data on population size — and consequently sustainable harvest levels for the population — approximately 500 tags are sold and filled annually to local and foreign trophy hunters for spring and fall hunting seasons (see previous article), while as many as 700 more bears are killed illegally. The mounting pressures from the illegal bear harvest, salmon poaching, and development necessitates an ecologically and economically sustainable brown bear management regime, based on reliable population estimates to ensure the long term health of the Kamchatka bear population.

Internationally, goals of brown bear management vary geographically. In some areas attempts are made to manage bear populations to reduce competition with humans over ungulates and salmon. In other places bear populations are protected, while around human settlements the goal is to minimize human-bear conflicts. Ecotourism defines management regimes of bear populations in some locales. In many regions bear populations are managed for trophy and/or subsistence harvest. All of these management goals are relevant in Kamchatka, with trophy hunting being dominant.

During the first week of August 2004, the Wildlife Conservation Society with generous support of the Trust for Mutual Understanding held the workshop, Developing a Reliable Monitoring System for the Brown Bears of Kamchatka, in the city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky and at the Kurilskoye Lake, in the South-Kamchatsky Sanctuary. The workshop brought together over a dozen local and North American bear biologists to discuss the main approaches utilized to ascertain the status and trends of bear populations in North America and Kamchatka. The goal was to develop a consensus on which methods should be used to most effectively estimate population size and monitor trends to provide a solid basis for managing brown bear population in this region.

Several methods have been used to estimate and monitor bear population size in Kamchatka. Long-term data on bear numbers have been opportunistically gathered throughout the peninsula as part of annual salmon aerial surveys conducted by the Kamchatka Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography. However, these important data have not as yet been extracted from field notebooks. Springtime aerial bear surveys have been periodically conducted throughout Kamchatka by the Kamchatka Department of Wildlife Conservation and Management (KDWCM); however, methods and survey areas have varied so results are not generally comparable among years. Ground-based surveys using track and animal counts have been conducted at the Kamchatka Branch of the Pacific Institute of Geography (KBPIG) Sobolevsky Research Station. Fall counts of bears on berry patches in Kronotsky Zapovednik have been conducted since the 1980s. The data from these ground-based surveys have not been summarized or analyzed. All of these approaches have their limitations, and there is a great need to standardize bear survey and monitoring methodology in Kamchatka to create the foundation for a cost-effective and statistically valid long-term monitoring program of the Kamchatka bear population.

Workshop Conclusions

The current state of the art of bear population census and monitoring in Kamchatka is a quadrat-based design developed and implemented by the World Wildlife Fund, KBPIG, and KDCWM in 1995-1997 and modified by KDCWM in 2000-2001. This approach attempts to derive a minimum population estimate that can be used to set a conservative harvest quota. Such a conservative population management system is necessary when illegal harvest is unknown but believed to be high, which is the case in Kamchatka. With a high but unknown illegal harvest, a system to monitor population change would be highly beneficial, in case the level of exploitation is, or becomes, higher than presumed. Current bear population estimation techniques in Kamchatka are inadequate because they do not correct for sightability, which most likely varies from year to year. This interannual variability may mask actual population changes until it is too late to avert a catastrophic population decline. Hence, a more sensitive monitoring system is needed, in addition to better information on the level and causes of unreported harvest.

I. Variation in sightability must be considered when estimating Kamchatka bear population trends.

Developing a Reliable Monitoring System for the Brown Bears of Kamchatka: Conclusions and Recommendations, cont'd.

There are two primary aspects related to sightability during spring bear surveys:

1. Some bears, in particular females and cubs, remain in dens longer than other sex and age classes and therefore are unavailable to be seen.

2. Some bears, while out of dens and thus available to be seen, are simply missed.

Both of these factors will vary among years due to environmental factors (e.g., snowfall, early spring temperatures). In order to monitor population trends this variability must be considered. Accounting for sightability will, of course, produce a more accurate, but no longer conservative estimate for setting harvest quotas. Wildlife managers could still use a conservative estimate for managing bear harvest by using non-corrected (minimum) estimates of population size, while using estimates corrected for sightability for monitoring population trends. Or, managers could use corrected (higher) population estimates in quota setting, but also incorporate higher estimates of illegal harvest.

Several approaches could be used to control for variation in sightability. Year-to-year variation in dates of den emergence could be largely controlled by omitting females with cubs from the datasets used to make inter-annual comparisons. Estimating probability of sighting bears out of their dens is a more complex problem that could be addressed in four ways:

1. Combining aerial and ground counts, where the ground survey is assumed to be a (nearly) complete count;

2. Recounting the survey area at much higher survey intensity;

3. Conducting line transect surveys instead of quadrat surveys; and,

4. Using radio-marked and/or GPS-collared bears within plots to ascertain the proportion of animals missed.

II. Sex and age distribution of bear harvest must be monitored.

Changes in sex and age composition of the harvest may also be reflective of a change in the population size. Ages of harvested bears can be determined by counting cementum annulations from extracted teeth. Although these data are often relatively easy and inexpensive to collect, care must be taken to ensure that the sample is unbiased and that the sex and age data are linked. Moreover, large changes in population size may occur without a correspondingly large change in population structure; thus, this technique is only an adjunct to more direct methods of population monitoring.

III. Unreported bear harvest must be monitored.

Population trend is linked to both legal and illegal harvests, but only legal harvest is easily measurable. Estimating the rate and causes of non-recorded human-caused mortality is a notoriously difficult task. There are two main approaches for estimating this:

1. Questionnaires and/or face-to-face interviews with people who have some knowledge of such illegal activities;

2. Determining the fate of radio-marked and/or GPS-collared bears.

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Workshop Recommendations

1. Conduct a pilot study to assess sightability of bears within the existing quadrat sampling design and the efficacy of developing statistically robust sightability correction functions. The experimental design should include areas with high and medium bear densities, as well as high and lower sightability due to vegetative cover (dense and sparse) and differences in snow conditions. Quadrats sampled from the air (in this case a helicopter) should be immediately re-surveyed by air at double the intensity. The quadrats should also be surveyed by personnel on the ground before, during, and after the aerial observations. Additional information such as tracks in the snow could be used to assist in quantifying the actual number of bears in the quadrat. A concerted effort also should be made to include some radio/GPS-collared bears in the sample quadrats to more closely examine factors that influence sightability. If quadrat sampling is going to be employed in the future, universal kreiging methods should be incorporated into the estimation procedure used to obtain the population estimate.

2. Change the survey technique from quadrats to line transects. Line transect surveys account for differences in sightability related to measured distances from the sighting platform (helicopter, in this case). Hence, line transect surveys may be a better approach than quadrat surveys for assessing true (sightability-corrected) bear density estimates and population trend. Either this technique should be tested and compared against sightability-corrected quadrats, especially in terms of efficacy, or the survey design should be changed from quadrats to line transects,

Female Brown Bear with Six Cubs

which have many advantages. If the survey design is changed, there may be no need to conduct the quadrat sightability tests (recommendation #1), except that it could be used to help correct results of previous surveys (1997, 2000-2001), and thus provide a longer-term database from which to examine population trend.

3. Implement a tetracycline biomarker mark–recapture pilot study in order to develop an inexpensive parallel monitoring technique. The pilot study should be conducted in existing hunting areas with the cooperation of local outfitters and guides. The biomarker approach could be implemented in conjunction with the line transect aerial survey pilot study. Collection of genetic data from biomarked bears may improve the accuracy of this technique.

4. Collect teeth from all trophy bears harvested in Kamchatka in order to assess changes in age structure. Corresponding information about bear sex, location and date of the kill and other information must be recorded and entered into a database. If an effective monitoring system cannot be established in Kamchatka, then killed bears exported to Alaska should have samples collected by U.S. Fish and Wildlife during routine inspections.

5. Conduct a study to ascertain the degree of the unreported bear kill in Kamchatka. It is necessary to make a special effort to ascertain the magnitude, spatial distribution and causes of illegal bear harvest in Kamchatka. This study should be based primarily on techniques involving face-to-face interviews, key informants, and inter-community networking. It should be strengthened by monitoring fates of a sample of radio-marked or GPS collared bears.

Valentin S. Pazetnov
&
Sergey V. Pazetnov
Bear Cubs Rehabilitation Project
IFAW
172862 Tverskoy region
Toropecky district
p\o Pozhnja, Village Bubonicy
Russia
Phone 808268 21958
Email vpazetnov@mail.ru

In the central part of European Russia, in the Novgorod area (450 km northwest of Moscow), a female brown bear with six cubs was legally killed by hunters on 13 February 2005 (photo on page 5). The hunters did not use dogs. The bear cubs were taken to the IFAW rehabilitation center in the Tver Region. The cubs were 48-53 days old and weighed: females 1720, 2080 gr; males 1860, 1920, 2080, 2280 gr. These weights reflect normal development of male brown bear cubs in this region. One of the bear cubs had small wounds on the back and the left hind leg which were successfully treated with topical medications. The bear cubs were born about 22–27 December, earlier than the mean mid-January birth for brown bear cubs in this region. Hair coloration and length appeared similar in all six cubs.

Michael Rozov, the ranger for a society of hunters in the city of Staraya Russa, was looking for evidence of wolves. He saw the bear in a thicket of a young forest. The bear lifted her head from a snow hole when she heard him skiing by. After several days, the hunters checked the ranger's information. The bear remained lying in the upper part of a shallow den where the hunters found and killed her. The hunters took the six cubs and delivered them to the rehabilitation center the next day. The den was primitive in construction, which is not typical for a pregnant female. There are reasons to believe that the bear left her primary den probably due to melting snow in early December. There were persistent thaws during the first ten days of December 2004. Presumably, water penetrated into the den forcing the female to move and build a nest den of tree branches in the snow. The early birth of the bear cubs could have been induced by the the female's increased activity at the beginning of her winter hibernation. While rare, the birth of cubs in late December has been recorded.

In the initial period of their rehabilitation, the bear cubs exhibited behavior not observed in other orphan cubs (n=120). As with the majority of other cubs of this age, the six orphans refused to accept food for the first three days. Normally it takes about five days for a cub to accept a nipple and feed well, but in this case it took fifteen days. A cub would accept a nipple in its mouth, would not suckle and would then spit out the nipple. Only by offering the nipple a number of times would each cub finally calm enough to begin suckling and make feeding possible. The cubs' motor development has been normal as is their standing posture at age two months. Their development has continued normally.

Brown Bear Ecology in the Olekma River Basin

I. I. Mordosov
Yakut State University
Yakutsk, Russia

The brown bear of Yakutia is poorly studied, and while ecological information has been collected from 1968 to 2002, the most intensive investigations were conducted in 1998-2000. Ground surveys covered 725 km, and river surveys in a rubber boat totaled 800 km. The age of individual bears was determined by the size of the palmar callus. Feeding was studied by collecting 74 feces along a transect, and the activity of five individuals; 54 written questionnaires were collected and analyzed, and 30 respondents were interviewed.

The Olekma River basin is located in Southern Yakutia (57^0 and 60^o N/Lat, 119^o and 123^o E/Long). This elevated region is formed by the Lena-Aldan and Prilensky plateaus, Aldan and Olekma uplands, and northern spurs of the Stanovoy Mountain Ridge. Only the northern part is in the Lena-Aldan eroded plain, entering the Prilensky plateau.

In the Olekma River basin mean daily temperature is –33^o C; persistent snow cover averages 200 days; the growing season averages 101 days; permafrost is 100-200 m thick with a maximum melting depth of 2.5-4.0 m.

Forest cover is 87.9% of which 53.4% is hardwood and birch. The balance is *Pinus silvestris*, *Abies sidirica*, *Picea obovata,* and *Pinus sibirica*. On the plains and in the river valleys light-conifer hardwood and pine forests grow with *A. sibirica*, and *P. obovata*. High watersheds have dark coniferous forests of *P. sibirica*, *A. sibirica*, and *Picea obovata*. Above the forests *Pinus pumila* forms thickets and ground covers include mosses, lichens and shade-tolerant grasses. Bushy-grass cover includes *Vaccinium vitis-ideae*, *Vaccinium uliginosum, and Ledum polustre*. Bushy undergrowth includes birches *Betula exilis, Betula fruticosa, Betula middendorffii* and *Alaster fruticosus*.

There are 42 mammal species and 180 bird species. Invertebrates are poorly studied.

Brown bears populate all habitats in the region. Their seasonal distribution is associated with food accessibility and abundance. Bears leave their dens in May and gravitate to the pine forests on southern slopes of river valleys or climb hills, where *P. pumila* grows. Melting snow reveals *V. vitis-ideae* berries and grasses which attract bears. In the valleys of shallow rivers horsetail *Equisetum variegatum*, which has high food value, is eaten by all herbivores and the brown bear.

In summer, after the spring flood, brown bears concentrate in the floodplains of rivers and the banks of lakes where they feed on grassy vegetation and *Ribes rubrum* and *Ribes pauciforu* berries which ripen in July.

In August when berries of *V. uliginosum* and *V. vitis-ideae* ripen, the bears move to the forests biotopes. In years when seeds of *P. sibirica* and *P. pumila* are plentiful brown bears seek cedar forests in late August and into September.

Crop failures and forest fires can cause major bear movements. Thus, in September 1978, a large number of brown bears appeared in the Olekma River basin. Local brown bears accumulated sufficient fat to den in early October, but most migrants were awake all of October and subsequently some became shatuns (bears that do not accumulate enough fat for hibernation and do not sleep in winter).

Brown bear marking behavior has been observed 17 times: 12 scratches, four bites and one hair rubbing. All marks were made on conifers. The frequency of marks correlates with the frequency of visits.

Brown bears feed mainly on vegetation, primarily *V. uliginosum* and *V. vitis-ideae*, and seeds of *P. sibirica,* and *P. pumila*. Springtime foods are grassy plants, the previous year's *V. vitis-ideae* berries and ants. Respondents to questionnaires noted that in May brown bear feces reflect mostly ants, and to a lesser extent grassy plants. Ants are accessible, high in calories and apparently help the recovery of the digestive system after a long hibernation. Ant species in feces are *Componotus saxatilis* (57.4%), *Formica picea* and *Formica exectra* (42.6%). Other species of ants in bear feces include *Lasius niger, Lasius flavus* and *Myrmica ruginodis*. Brown bear prefer *Formica*, as these ants build big anthills. Among brown bear-devastated anthills (n= 56) 25 belonged to *Formica* and 31 to *Componatus*. Brown bears also find the Sachalin red carpenter ant (*C. h. sachalinensis*) by overturning stumps and windfall trees, and completely destroying the anthills. In search of above-ground ants, brown bears destroy the outer dome, damage the nest chamber and underground passages. Such anthills are not rebuilt (26.7%); if the pillow and underground passages survive, the anthill may be re-built.

From 1988 to 1998 the Olekminsky Nature Reserve recorded brown bears killing 11 elk, one reindeer, and one Siberian red deer. Questionnaires and interviews conducted from 1994 to 1999 reflect that brown bears preyed on 46 elk (68.6%), 15 Siberian red deer (23.0%) and six wild reindeer (8.4%). Brown bear kill elk in August-September and Siberian red deer in May-June. Brown bears often attack domestic stock. In

Olekminsky ulus, from 1994 to 1999, 102 cases of attacks by brown bear on domestic animals were recorded: 20 cattle, 45 horses, 32 domestic reindeer and five dogs. Frequent attacks by bears on cattle and horses are the result of stock left unattended to graze in remote areas.

Brown bear predation occurs in all seasons of the year, however most often in spring, when food availability is limited and ungulates are more vulnerable in the snow. In summer brown bears attack ungulates opportunistically. In years when there is a crop failure of primary brown bear foods, the bears search for ungulates. In such years some individuals do not hibernate and become shatuns. In this region shatuns were recorded in 1964, 1965, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1984, 1985, 1995 and 1999. In 1999 the appearance of shatuns was associated with an intensive thaw on October 20. Some bears left their dens, some never entered dens and became shatuns. They perished at the end of November from frostbite and exhaustion caused by severe cold.

Cannibalism in Yakutia brown bears is rare. Respondents to questionnaires noted only two such cases. In 1969 we registered a case in the Tokko River basin, a tributary of the Olekma River. In both cases the shatun attacked a denned bear, killed it, pulled it to the surface and ate it. Then the shatun entered the den.

The solonetzation of the brown bear is considered a case of lithophagia (Panichev, 1987). In June and July we observed brown bears on solonetzs. In other places evidence was found of bears who came out of their dens to lick alkaline soil. In analysis of feces small stones were found resembling chernozem dark substrate (n=8).

The male brown bear rut occurs in June-July when they become very excited and aggressive. Fierce fights over mates can result in males being killed, though usually a weak male runs away. The dominant male claims a female and the pair stays together 12-15 days. Cubs are born in January-February.

The estimate of female reproductive success is based on observing females with cubs, and does not reflect actual fecundity of females, as after coming out of dens the mortality of cubs is high. The maximum number of cubs per female is three in Yakutia and the mean index of fecundity 2.4. For females in the Olekma River basin, 53.06% have two cubs, 28.57% have one cub and 18.37% have three cubs. High mortality of cubs occurs in the spring of years in which there was a poor crop of berries the previous year. Moreover, the problem may be compounded by a late spring when grassy vegetation growth is retarded. In such years the bears are forced to wander widely in search of feed and the mortality of cubs increases considerably.

On the basis of questionnaire and interview data, descriptions of 314 dens have been collected, including 85 fresh dens. The absolute majority of dens were arranged under roots of trees and only two dens were in rocky areas. Bears enter dens in October, and come out of hibernation in late April-early May; females with cubs come out last.

At the present time the bear population is increasing. Within the Olekminsky Nature Reserve there were 45 bears in 1991 and 72 in 1992. According to questionnaire data 217 bears inhabit the Olekma River basin. The increase may be explained by the relatively favorable habitat conditions, the decrease in timber harvest and absence of industrial development in the region. Traditional local economic activities do not negatively affect the population of the brown bear.

The increase in the number of bears does have its negative effects: destruction of hunting huts, food supplies, equipment and provisions. From 1994 to 1999, 94 such incidents were recorded. For the same period nine bear attacks on humans were reported. In five cases brown bears attacked without evident cause, and in four cases the attacks were provoked by humans. We are faced with determining the optimal density of bears and creating management measures. These measures are necessary because in this region the brown bear is a carrier of *Trichinella spiralis* which can infect humans.

Status of Brown Bears in the Ukraine

Robin Rigg
Slovak Wildlife Society
P.O. Box 72
L. Hradok, 033 01, Slovakia
Email info@slovakwildlife.org
Website www.slovakwildlife.org

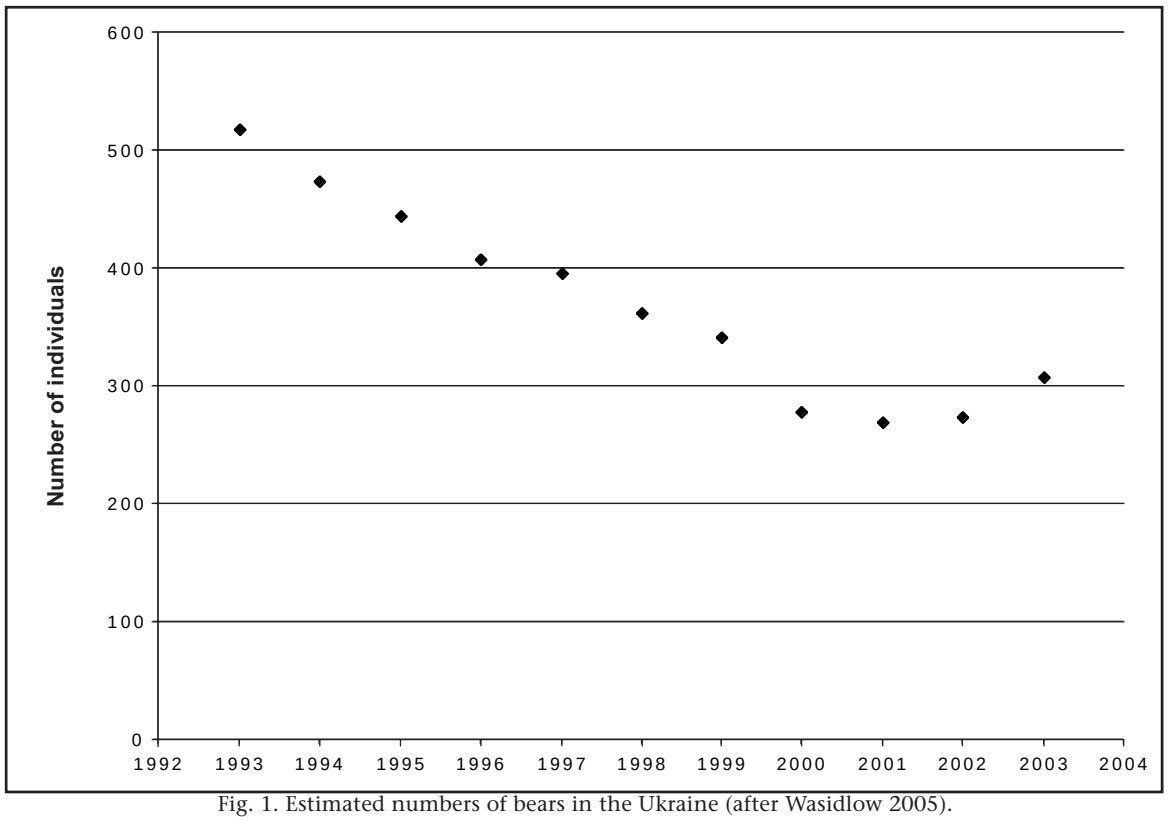

Fig. 1. Estimated numbers of bears in the Ukraine (after Wasidlow 2005).

Brown bears were formerly present throughout the Ukraine but are now restricted to the Carpathian Mountains. Very little information about them is available in English. Economic, political and language barriers have limited scientific research and publication, and hamper Ukrainians wishing to attend international meetings. The IUCN's *Bears status survey and conservation action plan* merely stated that numbers of bears were declining in the Ukrainian Carpathian Mountains. The Council of Europe's *Action plan for the conservation of the brown bear in Europe* added little to this besides giving an estimate of 400-970 bears over a distribution area of 11,400 km^2. Its authors noted that the population appeared to have become reconnected to that in the neighboring Slovak and Polish Carpathians.

At a conference on The European Brown Bear in Central Europe held in February 2005 in Bucharest (see next article) Yurij Wasidlow, president of Association "Our Home", gave a presentation on the current situation in the Ukraine. Numbers have apparently declined from more than 1,000 in the 1970s to a current population of c.300 individuals (Fig. 1). According to Wasidlow, the main threats are poaching (estimated at c.80 bears per year), conflicts with farmers and habitat destruction by clear-cut logging.

May 2003 was an important month for the brown bear in the Ukraine, when it was listed in the country's Red Data Book. During the same month the *Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians* was adopted at the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment for Europe held in Kiev. The Ukrainian parliament ratified this "Carpathian Convention" one year later, making it the first document obliging the government to protect large carnivores under Ukrainian law. Despite some optimism brought about by the overthrow of the previous regime following the Orange Revolution, Wasidlow fears that widespread political corruption and slow implementation of the convention might yet result in failure to protect the Ukraine's dwindling bear population and its habitats.

Wild, Captive and Illegally Traded Bears in Central and Eastern Europe

Robin Rigg
Slovak Wildlife Society
P.O. Box 72
L. Hradok, 033 01, Slovakia
Email info@slovakwildlife.org
Website www.slovakwildlife.org

In February 2005 a conference on The European Brown Bear in Central Europe was organized in Bucharest, Romania, by the Animal Welfare Institute, the Romanian Alliance for the Protection of Animals, the Biology Faculty, Bucharest, and The National Museum for Natural History "Grigore Antipa". The conference included three main areas of interest: the status and conservation management of wild bears; the welfare of captive bears; and illegal trade in bear parts.

© Djuro Huber

European brown bear cub

Presentations covering the majority of countries in the region confirmed that estimates of the status of European brown bear populations in Central and Eastern Europe tend to vary widely among different sources. In particular, results based on monitoring by hunters are frequently rejected, particularly by environmentalist NGOs but also by some wildlife biologists. Even the question of whether numbers are increasing, decreasing or stable is sometimes disputed. As had been expected, opinions regarding the situation in Romania were particularly divided. Conference participants highlighted a critical need for improved research on the status of bear populations as well as evaluation and protection of habitat. Fragmentation of habitat by road building, especially of large highways, was seen as a potential danger to the long-term viability of brown bear populations in the Carpathian Mountains and on the Balkan Peninsula.

The current welfare status of captive bears in the region was felt by many to be unacceptable. Cases were described of animals being kept in very poor conditions regarding food, space, veterinary assistance, etc. Participants urged institutions with bears in Romania to meet the requirements of the European Union's (EU) directive regarding minimum standards for keeping bears in captivity ahead of the country's expected entry to the EU in 2007. There were calls to greatly reduce the number of zoos and to investigate the status of circus animals.

The Born Free Foundation's CITES specialist, Adam Roberts, urged brown bear range states in Central and Eastern Europe to publish more information on bear population status and exploitation, illegal killing and trade. He also urged CITES authorities in such states to explore the possibility of submitting a proposal to the CITES Conference of the Parties 14 for the up-listing of all Central and Eastern European brown bears from Appendix II to Appendix I.

Shortly after the conference it was reported by the press that a woman had been arrested at Kiev airport, Ukraine, while apparently attempting to illegally export live bear cubs.

Bears in Greece: Cars and Power Poles

Alexandros A. Karamanlidis
Department of Genetics
School of Biology
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
54124 Thessaloniki
Email alkar@bio.auth.gr
Phone +30 6976362844

Greek Bear Mortality

Riding on the pre-Olympic construction wave, major infrastructure projects continue to pop up like mushrooms in the Greek landscape. One of the major priorities of past and present governments has been the construction of a modern road network. Unfortunately, within this developmental frenzy, nature in general and bears in particular are often the losers. Despite some encouraging measures, such as mitigating the effects on the environment by the construction of the Egnatia Highway (*International Bear News* August 2003, 12(3):8; February 2005, 14(1):21), the existing road network continues to threaten the bear population in Greece. Since the last report of a fatal bear-car collision in October (*International Bear News*, November 2004, 13(4):24)) three more bears have been killed by cars, raising the toll in the last three years to at least five. Initially, this number might not seem disturbing; but considering the endangered status of the species in the country and the fact that several demographic parameters (such as annual birth, cub survival and death rate) are still poorly understood, the impact of this threat on the brown bear population could be significant. With the continuing expansion of the road network, we might be witnessing the dawn of a new mortality factor in Greece. It is too early to assess the impact, but this issue should be closely monitored.

Special thanks to Y. Mertzanis, L. Georgiadis and ET3 channel for providing relevant information.

Power Pole Marking in the Pindus Mountains

Power pole marked by Greek brown bears

A special kind of chemistry is often required for humans to successfully interact. With brown bears in Greece it doesn't seem to be just a matter of chemistry but more a matter of electricity. One of the primary goals of the Egnatia monitoring project (*International Bear News*, February 2005, 14(1):21) has been the genetic study of brown bears in this part of the Pindus Mountain range. In the beginning of the project a working protocol for the non-invasive collection of hair was established based on the deployment of baited hair traps. Unfortunately this method did not yield the expected results, leaving the field team in search of alternative ways to collect data. The problem was solved by a highly fortunate observation. Although bear species are well known to mark a large variety of objects throughout their range, the intensity and frequency with which brown bears display this type of behavior on power poles in this part of Greece is impressive. More than 50% of the poles inspected in the initial phase of the project in 2003

had been marked by bears; in several instances marking intensity was so high, that poles had to be replaced by the electric company. Throughout 2003 and 2004 power poles were regularly inspected in order to gather information on this interesting marking behavior. In addition, several of the heavily used poles were fitted with barbed wire in order to facilitate the non-invasive hair sampling required by the project. As a result, a power pole monitoring protocol has been created and more than 150 hair samples have been collected and are currently being analyzed. Preliminary results of the genetic analysis indicate that the majority of power pole marking activity is being carried out by males.

In the second phase of the study which is planned for the spring and summer of 2005, and depending upon the availability of funds, all the power poles in the wider study area will be sampled and environmental and anthropogenic parameters recorded. The results of this phase will be included in a GIS database in order to model brown bear marking activity and habitat use.

This study is a Ph.D thesis of the Department of Genetics of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in Greece. The first part of the study has been supported by Egnatia S.A. and the NGO Arcturos while the second phase is supported by the Department itself and private funds.

Special thanks go to Y. Mertzanis for helping set up the study and K. Kendall and D. Mattson for sharing their experiences on brown bear marking behavior. The help of M. de Gabriel Hernando, S. Dalrymple, M.L. Rubio Guillamon and C. Milcent in developing the power pole monitoring protocol is greatly appreciated.

Anja Schoettler
Zoological Institute
University of Hamburg
Germany
Email amaroq76@aol.com

Reintroduction of Bears in France

The death of Cannelle, the last native Pyrenean female brown bear, has caused a national outcry in France (*International Bears News*, February 2005, 14(1):22).

On December 7-8, 2004, an opinion poll was conducted in all of the municipalities of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques. Four hundred people (older than 18 years) were asked for their opinion concerning the reintroduction of bears in the Pyrenees. Seventy-seven percent (81% of all people younger than 50) favored the reintroduction while 14% were opposed.

In only 1.5 months a petition in favor of the reintroduction of bears was signed by 56,288 people.

Serge Lepeltier, the Environment Minister of France, decided to double the current bear population during the next three years. Five bears will be reintroduced in autumn 2005, and up to five more in 2006, and in 2007 depending on whether any cubs are born during that period. The new bears might come from Spain, Croatia or Slovenia.

The current bear population in the Pyrenees consists of 14-18 bears in two core areas: four male bears in Béarn and 11–15 bears in the central Pyrenees.

Stockbreeders and hunters are against this initiative. Hunters are afraid of losing their hunting rights. The stockbreeders don't believe that bears and agriculture can coexist. Jean-Mark Prim, of FDSEA (Fédération départementale des syndicats d'exploitants agricoles), is one of the opponents. He wants the bears to be released in a reservation where they can't do any damage to livestock. One farmer claimed that he lost 60 ewes to bears last year.

Livestock owners receive compensation worth 150 percent of the sheep's value and subsidies to cover the costs for guarding dogs, electric fences and shepherds (which have been shown to reduce attacks).

Still it will be very hard to convince hunters and livestock owners that a coexistence with bears is possbile.

Thank you to Fapas for information (www.fapas.es).

Andean Bear Distribution in the Andean-Amazonian Piedmont: Exploration of the Cofán Territories

Robert Marquez
&
Victor Guerrero
&
Isaac Goldstein
WCS Venezuela
Andean Bear Research Team
PO Box 833
IPOSTEL, Merida
Estado Merida, Venezuela
Email igoldstein@wcs.org

The exploration of the Cofán Territories in the Amazonian-Andean piedmont is a Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Andean Bear Research and Conservation Program project in the Northern Andes to determine distribution and habitat use of the Andean bear in its northern range. The research addresses Andean bear distribution, use, and importance along different habitat types in the Andean-Amazonian piedmont at 1,000-2,000 masl. We also want to determine the feasibility of developing an association with the Cofán people for large mammal monitoring in the territory, with particular focus on the Andean bear. We would like to monitor the presence and use of certain habitat types along the gradient in the upper part of the Condor Bioreserve. The exploration of the Cofán territory is the first of five planned in the next three years along the Andean eastern piedmont in Ecuador.

Andean bears occupy approximately 260,000 km of forested habitats in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. The species' range in the western Andes reaches from 250 m, in Peru's coastal deserts, to snow level at 4,750 m. In the eastern Andes the lowest reported distribution is 900 m in parts of Ecuador and Peru, and 500 m in Bolivia.

The best habitat for the species is the humid to very humid mountain forests and páramos at 2,000-3,500 m, which contain most of the Andean bear's food sources. In many areas, particularly in the inter-Andean mountain valleys, most of the humid and very humid forests have been replaced by agriculture and grazing areas up to 2,500 m. Moreover, even the páramo areas above 3,200 m are being replaced with high altitude crops and extensive grazing. That limits the remaining forest to a very narrow and fragmented band at 2,500-3,000 m. We do not know if Andean bear populations are viable with the resources or size of the areas in this altitudinal belt.

Forests are continually being converted to agriculture and grazing, particularly in the inter-Andean valleys of the western and central mountain ranges. Due to its inaccessibility, intervention and habitat replacement have been slower in the eastern range of the Andes, leaving intact the majority of the remnant forests at 1,000-2,000 m. Most of the remaining big blocks of Andean forest wilderness where an estimated 85% of the Andean bear population exists are in the eastern range of the Andes. These areas are thought to have bear populations of over 1,000 adults which would increase the species' long term chance of survival.

Habitat fragmentation along the altitudinal gradient may be a very important factor in the loss of habitat quality and incremental vulnerability of Andean bear populations. However, little is really known about the importance of habitat configuration and diversity for Andean bear populations, or the movement of Andean bear individuals through the altitudinal gradient and its different habitat types.

The persistence of the mountain forests in the Andean-Amazonian slopes of the Andes at 500+ m is a consequence of the lack of human occupation due to inaccessibility. Where there are no people we also have little information about the natural history of the area. Andean bear information has been biased towards the areas or altitudinal belts with human activity access. Along Andean-Amazonian slopes, human occupation below 250 m is quite high in some areas, but information about Andean bear presence is scant, which suggests a lack of bears below 250 m. The distribution, use and importance for the Andean bear populations of the different habitat types in the 500-2,000 m range is unknown.

From 10 to 26 February 2005, we surveyed the area surrounding the Sur Pax Mountains, north of the headwaters of the Bermejo and Sarayacu Rivers, at 1,200-2,340 m elevation, in the eastern foothills of the Ecuadorian Andes. The vegetation transitions from upper hill forest, to a gradual shift between species of the Amazonian and Andean forests, to cloud forest, and then species of the Andean forest. The regional flora is estimate at 2,000-3,000 species. Topography in the area varies from the flat-topped valley, in the Sarayacu River valley, to steeply tilted and twisted formations with sheer-walled cliffs and gorges around the Sur Pax mountain range, closer to the main body of the Andes. The climate in the Cofán foothills is unrelentingly wet. Rain falls all year, punctuated by weak dry seasons of short duration in January and February. Temperatures in the Cofán foothills vary in the upper hill forest and mountain forest from 20ºC at 1,000 m to 15°C at 2000 m.

We used linear transects to survey along seven mountain ridges and in

Table 1. Data on Andean Bear Activity Signs, Kms of Transects and Game Trails

# Game Trail		1	2	3	4*	5	6	7*	Total
Activity Signs									
Claw Marks		**31**	**3**	**1**	**17**	**3**	**8**	**11**	**74**
Hair Sample		**7**	**12**	**3**	**17**	**3**	**0**	**28**	**70**
Resting Sites			**2**		**3**		**2**		**7**
Bear Trails Intersected		**4**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**15**
Scats		**3**	**1**			**1**		**1**	**6**
	no ident.	*1*	*1*			*1*			*3*
	Cordia bifurcata, seed	*2*							*2*
Feeding Sites		**22**	**25**	**6**	**7**	**79**	**4**	**1**	**144**
	Pitcairnia spp.	*10*	*19*	*2*		*61*	*1*		*93*
	Guzmania scuarrosa					*3*	*1*		*4*
	Guzmania sp.	*4*				*2*			*6*
	Bromelia 1 (no ident.)	*1*			*6*				*7*
	Cyclantus spp.	*1*	*3*			*3*			*7*
	Geonom a spp.	*1*			*1*	*4*		*1*	*7*
	Geonoma undata	*3*				*4*	*1*		*8*
	Aiphanes sp	*2*				*2*	*1*		*5*
	Palm 1 (no ident.)		*3*	*3*					*6*
	Palm 2 (no ident.)			*1*					*1*
	Palm 1 (no ident.)		*3*	*3*					*6*
	Palm 2 (no ident.)			*1*					*1*
Total		**67**	**44**	**11**	**46**	**90**	**15**	**43**	**316**
# Signs/km of Trail		18.2	47	13.7	30.3	52.9	15.9	26	28.1
Km of Total Trail Surveyed		3.681	1.156	1.446	1.731	3.097	1.883	1.657	13.205
Km of Game Trail surveyed		3.681	0.937	0.803	1.520	1.700	0.941	1.657	11.239

*transects where camera traps were placed.

two valleys around the Sur Pax Mountains. Along the transects we looked for game trails and signs of large mammals, especially Andean bear activity. We looked for game trails with fresh bear signs to place camera traps. Along each ridgeline transect we found game trails through most of the length of the transect. Three-hundred-sixteen (316) Andean bear signs (claw marks on trees, hair samples, feeding sites, scats, resting sites and bear trails) were found along all mountain ridge transects (Table 1). The rate of encounter (number of signs and type of signs) varied among transects from 13.7 to 52.9 bear signs/km of trail (Table 1). Bear signs were encountered equally at all elevations. Seventy (70) hair samples were found in bear-marked trees along six of seven transects. A clear difference was found among transects regarding the number of feeding signs and the number of bear mark signs (claw marks and hair samples), encountering an inverse relationship among them (Table 1). Feeding signs and scats contained 11 different foods (Table 1). Among them, only *Cordia bifurcata* is a fruit, the others are vegetative parts of mainly palms and bromeliads. Four camera traps were set along two transects that showed recent signs of bear use. The cameras were placed in each transect for 2.5 to 4.5 days and a total of four Andean bear pictures were taken (two in each transect), representing one individual in each transect. No Andean bear signs were found in the two valley transects (2.4 km total).

We want to thank Randy Borman, Director of the Cofán Survival Fund, for the invaluable help and enthusiasm showed for the project. Jaime Camacho, Director of the EcoCiencia Andean Bear project, who did not think twice about support. The Cofán community of Alto Bermejo which helped us throughout the exploration. This project was supported by WCS project "Spectacled Bear ecology, conservation genetics and population monitoring", and by Ecociencia project "Consolidación del sistema de monitoreo biológico para las poblaciones Cofán ubicadas dentro de las Reservas Ecológicas Cofán-Bermejo y Cayambe-Coca".

Ecuador Andean Bear Project

Armando Castellanos
Fundación Espíritu del Bosque
Barcelona 311 y Tolosa
Quito, Ecuador
Phone 593 2 2239 703
Fax 593 2 2504 452
Email iznachi@yahoo.com.mx

The Andean Bear Project, Fundación Espíritu del Bosque, has been conducting research in the Intag zone, northwestern Ecuador, to help determine appropriate conservation and management alternatives for the Andean bear population. We have radio tracked eight bears (four females; four males) from September 2001 to January 2005. However, in February 2005, "Dolores" (an adult female) removed her radio-collar 28 months after tagging (the fine steel cable spacer disintegrated). Similarly, at the end of March, "Juanito" (an adult male) was recorded 22.5 km from his capture site with an "inactive" radio collar (we plan to investigate in April). We caught and radio collared a sub-adult female named "Fiona" at the beginning of April. We are currently radio tracking four bears: three females and one male. The radio collars do not appear to interfere with the reproductive behavior of the females since two radio-collared females, "Porraca" and "Amanda", have been observed with cubs.

A second research project is being conducted in northeastern Ecuador in the Cordillera Virgen Negra (near the Colombian border). This area contains a 12 km² forest fragment with two main habitats: upper montane forest and *frailejon* paramo (flat highland grassland). The Cordillera Virgen Negra is inhabited by endangered fauna species including the Mountain paca, *Agouti taczanowskii,* and Andean coati, *Nasuella olivacea*. The cordillera has become fragmented due to logging, burning and conversion of forests into crops (mainly potatoes).

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Andean bear "Andrés" caught in the Frailejon

Our research project in the Cordillera Virgen Negra was initially financed to stop bear attacks on cattle. However, we have also used the funds to study Andean bear ecology. In February 2004 we captured and radio collared one adult male bear, "Andrés". After 10 months of tracking, the preliminary home range calculation for "Andrés", using a 100% minimum convex polygon estimate, was 7.5 km². This home range size is small in comparison with the data obtained in the Intag for two male bears (108.6 km²). However, "Andrés" can cross into Colombia where we cannot radio track him because of Colombian guerrilla activity. Additional home range size data will be obtained using GPS collars. Previous observations suggest that the Andean bear in the Cordillera Negra depend on the *frailejon*, *Espeletia pycnophylla ssp. angelensis* for refuge, marking behavior and food (the bears eat the soft center of the plant).

Further research planned for 2005 (funding permitting) is the release of three bears (two males; one female) of different ages in the cloud forest of the Yanahurco Hacienda (250 km²). The Hacienda is surrounded by the Antisana Reserve (1,200 km²) and Cotopaxi National Park (330 km²). Our experience has shown that reintroduction success is dependent on releasing bears in a large and inaccessible area (such as the Hacienda). This reintroduction will contribute to the conservation of the species in Ecuador, reinforce the natural bear population in northeastern Ecuador and reduce the loss of genetic diversity and consanguinity

The research in Cordillera Virgen Negra would not be possible without the support of the Environmental Ministry of Ecuador, Carchi Provincial Government and the help of my field assistant Wilfrido Urresta, Dr. Mery Montesdeoca and Lic. Gabriela Montoya. This project is currently supported by small grants from Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, Salisbury Zoological Park, Clark Waldram Conservation Fund, an anonymous donation, and volunteers.

Hunters Win Hike in Polar Bear Quota

Reprinted from *Grizzly Commons* online by Tamara Grüner, April 4, 2005.

Conservationists are worried that polar bears may not be bouncing back as hunting advocates claim.

Canadian authorities have increased quotas for polar bear hunts by almost 30% in the country's Nunavut region. But conservationists fear that the move is not backed by adequate scientific assessment.

In January, the total quota for hunters in Nunavut was raised from 403 bears to 518. Permission to kill more bears was granted following both requests from indigenous Inuit hunters, who said that they had observed more bears in the region this year, and advice from local wildlife organizations.

Polar bears, besides seals and walrus, are a major source of meat, fat and skin for Eskimos, who live in small enclaves in coastal areas of Canada, Greenland, Alaska, and northeastern Siberia. Numerous polar bears are also killed for sport by hunters, mainly from the United States, who pay up to US$28,000 for a hunting permit.

But scientists say that the decision violates the 1973 Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears. This was signed by Canada, Denmark, Norway, the United States and the Soviet Union, as it then was, to protect polar-bear populations and their habitats from excessive hunting. The agreement aims to ensure sustainable, science-based management of the mammals, and requires consultation between signatory parties before quotas can be changed.

"The observed increase in local density alone does not justify a higher quota," says Øystein Wiig, a mammalogist at the University of Oslo's Zoological Museum, and an expert on polar bears with the World Conservation Union. "The amount of harvest could be much higher than the populations in the Baffin Bay can actually take."

Canadian officials dismiss this view. Mitch Taylor, the Nunavut government's chief polar bear biologist, says that scientific studies were certainly considered before increasing the quota. And officials in Nunavut claim that traditional Inuit knowledge about population size deserves more trust than it has had in the past.

Half the Arctic region's estimated 25,000 polar bears live in northern Canada. Worldwide, roughly 1,000 animals are killed each year by hunters. The species is not classified as endangered, but scientists are concerned that environmental changes may pose an increasing threat to the mammals.

Norwegian researchers revealed in 2003 that bears that roam large distances accumulate relatively high levels of industrial pollutants such as polychlorinated biphenyls in their bodies.

Moreover, there is growing concern about habitat losses associated with global warming. The rise in the world's temperatures is particularly pronounced at high latitudes, and the resulting ice melt threatens to leave many bears homeless. To survive, animals are forced into smaller areas, and increasingly stay on land during summer. This is the most likely explanation for the observed concentration of bears in the Nunavut region, Wiig believes.

He adds that he is not challenging the Inuit's right to hunt polar bears. "There is nothing wrong with hunting as long as their harvest is sustainable," he says.

Scientists Urge Listing Alberta Grizzlies as Threatened

Press release, March 2, 2004
by Paul Paquet, phone (306) 376-2015.

Some of North America's most experienced grizzly bear biologists and other scientists have urged the Alberta government to list the grizzly bear as a threatened species under the province's Wildlife Act.

Scientists from Canada and the U.S., including conservation biologist Dr. Paul Paquet, director of the Eastern Slopes Grizzly Bear Project and former co-chair of the IUCN Bear Specialist Group Dr. Stephen Herrero, Dr. David Suzuki, and Killam Award winner Dr. David Schindler, are among 19 scientists who have sent a letter to Premier Ralph Klein imploring the government to recognize the recommendations of its own advisory committees and list the grizzly bear as threatened in Alberta.

"Most knowledgeable scientists will agree that the grizzly bear in Alberta is on a slow slide to extinction. If the government wants to reverse this trend, they need to sincerely and effectively control human activity that threatens bears, protect grizzly bear habitat vital to the species survival, and stop the hunt," says Dr. Paul Paquet.

Citing the small size of the population, decreasing amounts of quality grizzly bear habitat, unsustainable grizzly bear mortality rates and an unknown and potentially decreasing population size, the scientists make a strong case for the need to immediately list and protect the Alberta grizzly bear.

Paquet warns, "the rate of industrial expansion in grizzly bear habitat is accelerating so rapidly that scientists cannot keep pace in predicting how these activities influence the survival of Alberta's grizzly bears. At best, we are left with monitoring the species demise."

This call for listing comes just one week after Dr. Stephen Herrero released results from the Eastern Slopes Grizzly Bear Research Project showing

Scientists Urge Listing, cont'd.

that high rates of human-caused mortality of grizzlies, a poor reproductive capacity and increasing human activity in grizzly bear habitat were leaving the grizzly bear population vulnerable to serious decline.

This is not the first time scientists have asked the government to list the grizzly bear as threatened. In 1998 The Endangered Species Conservation Committee (ESCC) was formed, under the auspices of the provincial Wildlife Act, to provide advice to the Alberta government on the status and management of species at risk. In April 2002 the ESCC and their Scientific Subcommittee, using internationally accepted and government endorsed criteria for evaluating species, reviewed the status of the grizzly bear and recommended it be listed as "threatened".

Dr. Fiona Schmiegelow, who chaired the Scientific Subcommittee that recommended the threatened listing in 2002, is concerned that the government has failed to follow the procedures laid out for operation of the ESCC, undermining the credibility of the process. "This is the first instance where a recommendation of the Scientific Subcommittee that was endorsed by the parent Endangered Species Conservation Committee has not been accepted. It is particularly troubling that there has been no formal response or explanation provided in the two years since the recommendation was forwarded, despite additional confirmation of the threatened status by a second, independent scientific panel also appointed by the provincial government."

According to the best-available science and expert opinion, there are approximately 700 grizzly bears in Alberta (including national parks) which leaves approximately 500 grizzly bears on provincial lands.

Alaska

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

Bear Hunts & Boardwalks

It's been some time since news has filtered down from Alaska. It's not that things are not happening in Alaska, because they are! Many items are in the process — or making headlines. Both brown and American black bears have been included in predator control programs within the state to help boost sagging moose populations (for example: http://www.adn.com/news/alaska/story/6350411p-6227704c.html). These programs (past and present) include capture/relocation efforts as well as baiting, liberalization of harvest seasons and bag limits in many areas. Also, read about brown bear reactions to the new elevated boardwalk recently built at Katmai National Park in the latest issue of the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* (32[4]:1132-1140).

Bear-human Interaction Data Goes Computer

The National Park Services' Alaska Regional Office has developed a Bear-human Information Management System (BHIMS) to standardize the collection of bear data across national parklands in the Alaska Region. BHIMS facilitates data entry, storage, and analysis of bear-human encounters. The system has the capacity to store bear-human conflict, bear observation, bear harvest, and bear natural history records. Scanned images of original Bear Management Report Forms, narratives, reports, and/or photos can be linked to each incident. BHIMS also facilitates data input, retrieval, and printing of Case Incident Records, eliminating duplication and handwriting of this form if the user chooses.

Another benefit of BHIMS is a dynamic link to ArcView which displays maps of incidents based on user-selected criteria. A link tool can be used to query incidents in Access or ArcView, and then display the corresponding data in the other application. Altogether, this system represents a powerful resource management tool that allows easy data entry and analysis, and enables informed bear management efforts in Alaska's national parkland.

We plan to present a paper on the system at the IBA conference in Italy this fall.

Also working on this project has been Angie Southwould of the National Park Service Alaska Regional Office, Tom Smith, USGS, Biological Resources Division, and Jim Wilder, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Regional Office.

Submitted by
Terry D. DeBruyn
Regional Wildlife Biologist
National Park Service, Alaska Region
240 West 5th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99501, USA
Phone (907) 644-3443
Email terry_debruyn@nps.gov

Northern Divide Grizzly Bear Project Completes Field Sampling

Katherine C. Kendall
USGS Glacier Field Station
Glacier National Park
West Glacier, MT 59936-0128, USA
Phone (406) 888-7994
Fax (406) 888-7990
Email kkendall@usgs.gov
Website http://nrmsc.usgs.gov/staff/kendall.html
http://nrmsc.usgs.gov/research/beardna.htm

What did it take to sample bear hair on 31,400 km^2 in northwestern Montana in 12 weeks? For the Northern Divide Grizzly Bear Project it took two years of planning, four months of preparatory fieldwork by 60 technicians the previous year, and 207 dedicated people to organize and conduct the sampling.

From June 15 to September 1, 2004, technicians headed into the field to collect bear hair for genetic sampling to determine the size and distribution of the grizzly bear population in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem. Half of the study area is roadless wilderness that is surrounded by forest, range and private lands. When the dust had settled in September, we had collected 33,700 hair samples. We used two methods concurrently to sample bear hair. During four 14-day sampling sessions, 20,700 samples were collected from 2,560 baited hair snag stations distributed on a 7x7 km grid. Another 13,000 hair samples were found on unbaited bear rub trees, posts, and poles located on trails, roads, and fence and power lines.

During the project, we used a total of 106 km of barbed wire at hair snag sites, on rub trees, and to build 410 fences to prevent cattle from trampling snag stations. More than 7,700 liters (equal to approximately 8,300 kg) of liquid scent lure was used to attract bears to the hair snag stations. Fortunately, no serious bear encounters occurred during the 40,000 km of hiking that crews logged during fieldwork, usually carrying scent lure in their packs, and field crews experienced no major accidents or injuries. We believe that the two weeks of training all employees received that included wilderness first aid, backcountry safety, river crossing techniques, and defensive driving contributed to this safety record.

Logistical challenges weren't only encountered in the field. We produced 12,000 custom field maps to guide crews to pre-selected snag sites and designated rub trees. Office staff coordinated a fleet of 76 rental, agency, and private vehicles used on the project. Entry of the field data alone involved four million keystrokes even though all sample numbers were bar-coded and entered by scanning. The project's employment website, that received 17,000 visits from December through May, did not eliminate hundreds of phone calls, emails, and letters from job seekers.

We currently are involved in metadata documentation, building database queries as genetic results arrive, and conducting simulation modeling to explore the performance of various population models using individuals identified through concurrent sampling methods. Genetic analysis began in October 2004 and is expected to be complete by the spring of 2006. Data analysis is scheduled for summer and fall with a final report due in December of 2006.

Visit our research website at http://nrmsc.usgs.gov/research/NCDEbeardna.htm.

Northern Divide Grizzly Bear Project Crew

Northcentral USA

Northcentral news by:
Pam Coy
Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources
Forest Wildlife Populations and Research Group
1201 East Highway 2
Grand Rapids, MN 55744, USA
Phone (218) 327-4159
Email pam.coy@dnr.state.mn.us

Michigan

Information provided by David Bostick.

The goal of the Michigan Department of Natural Resource's (MDNR) American Black Bear Management Program is to maintain a healthy black bear population that provides viewing and hunting opportunities for residents, yet does not create excessive bear problems for people living near bear habitat. The current program focuses on continued monitoring of black bear populations, regulated hunting to manage the size of the bear population, public education, and technical assistance for landowners with unwelcome bear encounters. A statewide planning process for black bear management will begin in late 2005, with a goal of producing a long-term Black Bear Management Plan within two years.

The continuing loss and fragmentation of suitable bear habitat is of special concern for Michigan's black bears. In addition to increased urban sprawl in most of the northern Lower Peninsula, bears continue to expand their range southward in the southern Lower Peninsula, which has more people, urban areas, and roads, and very little public land. Due to these factors, the MDNR anticipates an increase in bear-human encounters. Michigan is in the process of finalizing its new Problem Bear Guidelines, as well as response protocols for high profile bear encounters in urban areas. Public education continues to be a focus of MDNR's bear management program, and will become even more critical in the future. Ultimately, it will be public attitudes and the success of public education efforts that determine how many bears Michigan's landscape will have in the future.

Research and monitoring of bear populations is an ongoing and essential element of the Bear Management Program. Although no formal research is planned at the present time, the state of Michigan has instituted several new bear population monitoring projects over the last two years. Following a successful experimental project by Michigan State University graduate student Brian Dreher, the MDNR has adopted a bear hair snare mark-recapture estimation method as the technique of choice for estimating the number of bears in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan. This genetic-based estimator will be used periodically in the future, with field work for the first MDNR hair snare survey planned for summer 2005. Upper Peninsula bear populations will continue to be monitored using the tetracycline marking technique.

A two-year den monitoring project was started in February 2005, with a goal of keeping up to 16 adult sows collared for a minimum of five-to-ten years, depending on funding. This project will monitor long term productivity, provide opportunities for public education and training of MDNR personnel, and may provide an occasional surrogate mother for orphan cubs.

For further information, contact David Bostick, MDNR bear specialist, or Dwayne Etter, MDNR bear research specialist, phone (517) 373-9336 or (517) 373-1263.

Maryland's First Black Bear Hunt in 51 Years

Harry Spiker
Black Bear Project Leader
Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources
Wildlife and Heritage Service
1728 King's Run Rd.
Oakland, MD 21550, USA
Phone (301) 334-4255
Email hspiker@dnr.state.md.us

Maryland's American black bear population is part of a regional, contiguous population shared with neighboring Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. In Maryland, black bears predominante in the western four counties, with highest densities recorded in Garrett and western Allegany Counties. Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) research and population monitoring have shown an increasing black bear population since the 1980s.

To slow the growth of Maryland's black bear population, DNR proposed a limited black bear hunting season in Garrett and western Allegany counties in fall 2004 — the first black bear hunting season in Maryland since 1953. The use of regulated hunting to manage the black bear population is consistent with Maryland's 2004 Black Bear Management Plan.

Bear management decisions must be made based on biological parameters, but must also consider social impacts. DNR has worked diligently to include the public in decision-making. A 2002 Black Bear Task Force of 12 stakeholders and private citizens was charged with gauging public opinion and offering recommendations to DNR prior to developing Maryland's 2004 Black Bear Management Plan. In 2004, DNR also surveyed public opinions and attitudes on black bear management issues including bear hunting. Finally, DNR offered several public comment opportunities generating thousands of responses.

DNR proposed a quota-driven black bear hunting season split between October and December 2004 — six days in late October and six days in mid-December. Required daily hunter check-ins determined if the quota of 30 bears was reached and if the hunt would continue the next day. All harvested bears were required to be checked-in.

Two hundred bear hunting permits were issued via a random drawing process (selected from 2,372 applicants). Each of the 200 successful applicants could authorize two additional hunters to join them (only one bear could be harvested per permit).

DNR faced several obstacles in initiating the 2004 bear hunting season. Legislation to prohibit a bear hunt in Maryland was introduced in 2004, but did not pass out of the House Environmental Matters committee. Similar introduced legislation in 2003 also failed. A special review of DNR bear hunting regulations was conducted by the Administrative Executive Legislative Review (AELR) committee, a panel of legislators charged with reviewing proposed regulations. AELR recommended that the regulations not be adopted. The governor then approved the recommendation of the secretary of DNR, and authorized adoption of the bear hunting regulations. In late September 2004 the Humane Society of the United States, the Fund For Animals, and three private citizens filed a lawsuit in Prince George's County Circuit Court seeking a stay, or preliminary injunction to prohibit DNR from implementing the bear hunting regulations. On October 18, 2004 the court denied the motion.

On October 25, 2004, DNR administered a successful one-day black bear hunt in western Maryland. Twenty black bears were harvested on the opening day of the season, prompting DNR to close the season at the end of the first day to avoid exceeding the conservative harvest goal of 30 bears. Eleven males and nine female bears were harvested, ranging in size from 84 pounds to 496 pounds (estimated live weights). A safe and effective hunting season was conducted with no injuries, conflicts, or illegal activity reported.

Eastern Black Bear Workshop Summary

Sandra A. Jonker
Email sandra.jonker@MyFWC.com
&
Stephanie Simek
Bear Management Program
Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
Division of Habitat
and Species Conservation
620 South Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32899-1600, USA
Phone (850) 410-0656 x17328
Fax (850) 921-1847

The 18th Eastern Black Bear Workshop was hosted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Bear Management and Research Program in Tallahassee, Florida, USA, April 3-7, 2005. Participants were welcomed Sunday evening to a Taste of Florida with cheerful music from JB's Zydeco Zoo band. There were approximately 100 registered participants at the workshop with representatives from 27 states and three Canadian provinces (Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Vermont, Wisconsin, West Virginia, Wyoming; and Quebec, British Columbia, and Ontario Canada).

The workshop featured several panel sessions to encourage dialogue regarding numerous topics such as the New Jersey Case Study, People and Bears in Who's Space, Private Lands: The Missing Link, Bear Ecology and Management, CSI: Bear Science, and Florida Perspectives. In addition, attendees had the opportunity to participate in several break out sessions on: Program MARK; Genetics; Identifying priority needs for stakeholder engagement; Management issues not being addressed by research; and a discussion regarding *Ursus floridanus* and neighboring states. Posters and several featured special topics were presented throughout the workshop. A business meeting was held regarding the vision for future workshops and a summary of the state status reports was presented. In addition, the workshop hosted a public lecture given by Kerry Gunther of Yellowstone National Park, as well as a special lecture for attendees given by Charles Jonkel from the Great Bear Foundation. Finally, participants enjoyed field trips including birding, exploring bear habitat, hiking, and canoeing — with a special introduction to the canoe and vehicle versions in Florida!

The Bear Management and Research Program would like to thank all the speakers, poster presenters, and vendors for participating in the workshop as well as all the sponsors who made a successful workshop possible.

Training Zoo Bears

Susan Euing
P.O. Box 7683
San Diego, CA 92167, USA
Email n2nmlz@yahoo.com

This article showcases techniques and applications for behavior training of captive bears from Carrie Weitz, Lincoln Park Zoo, and Diana Clemens, Silver Springs World of Bears, a nature theme park.

Lincoln Park Zoo Bear Training

Lincoln Park Zoo has 1.1 polar bears (one male, one female), 1.1 sun bears and 2.0 Andean bears. Three bear keepers teach specific behaviors to individual bears. The behaviors facilitate daily husbandry, veterinary care and building/maintaining the relationship between bear and keeper.

One keeper works on a specific behavior with a specific bear to build a strong rapport and to insure consistency in training. When the behavior is completely trained (repeatable between that trainer and bear), then another keeper trains the same behavior to the same bear, thus increasing the number of trainers who can work with a specific animal.

It is important to note that an animal sometimes shows preferences for certain people. Hence, starting with one trainer, and adding others later in the training process allows the animal to adapt and accept more trainers while keeping the behaviors consistent. Accurate communication and consistency among the trainers is essential to avoid confusion for the animal, and regression and errors during the training process.

Below are behaviors taught at Lincoln Park Zoo for husbandry, veterinary and/or research purposes: Target, Open Mouth, Follow/Shift, Foot Presentation, Lean In, Pole Injection, Hand Injection, Ear Presentation, Ultrasound, Vaginal Swab, Semen Collection, Brush Teeth, Crate Training, Scale Training, Extended Target.

Below are descriptions of selected behaviors:

Target has an animal touch a specific object (target) with a specific body part (nose, paw, shoulder, etc.). The target might be the back of a trainer's hand, or a hand-held object like a ball attached to the end of a rod (photo page 32). An extended target might be a much longer rod, or a laser light spot on a wall.

Courtesy Carrie Weitz

Carrie Weitz training sun bear at Lincoln Park Zoo

Lean In behavior has the animal press and hold a body part against a wall or cage bars, usually close to the trainer or veterinarian so it can be touched. Example: a bear leans a shoulder against bars for inspection or to receive an injection.

Crate Training begins with desensitizing an animal to the presence of a crate and getting him/her to comfortably move into and out of a crate on command. Advanced training includes the animal remaining comfortably in the crate for increasing periods; adding closed doors on the crate; moving a crate on wheels with the animal inside; or applying a squeeze apparatus.

Scale Training has the animal step on a scale for weighing.

Lincoln Park Zoo has the following veterinary training goals:

All Bears

Tolerate light source for eye exams

Present paws/ears/rear end for exams/thermometer/culture samples

Blood draw using a sleeve

Male Sun Bear

Semen collection

Female Sun Bear

Ultrasound abdomen

Vaginal swab collection

Andean Bears

Nail trims

Sun and Andean Bears

Auscultation of heart and lungs

Crate training in a squeeze cage with door closed

Scale

Eye drops during eye exams.

Silver Springs World of Bears Training

Silver Springs World of Bears houses 11 bears: 4.1 Kodiak bears, 2.0 Andean bears, and 3.1 American black bears. They train weighing, nail trimming, open mouth, paw presentation, and crate training.

Their newest goal is to teach bears to receive needles in forearms, which is useful for annual vaccinations, medical injections and blood draws.

Safety is the first priority during training. For example, the Silver Springs' keepers train their bears for nail trims in the den area which has a smaller steel mesh (2"x 2" as compared to the 4"x4" yard area mesh). Two keepers are always present. For example: one does target training while the other trims nails with horseshoe nippers.

Working with animals (including humans) can be challenging, especially conducting behavior training. One method may work with one bear but not another. Events may occur that negatively impact a learned behavior.

Their Andean bears used to pace wildly while on public display. The keepers first tried moving the bears off-exhibit and placing food enrichment items in the exhibit before returning the bears. However, when the treats were gone, the pacing returned and the bears gained weight. Next, they placed a large orange traffic cone in the pacing path. Whenever the bears approached the cone while pacing, water was sprayed in the cone area (not always at the bears). To avoid the spray, the bears started avoiding the cone. Over a week's time, the bears were rewarded for avoiding the cone/spray area. Not long after, the bears stopped pacing altogether and the cone was removed.

In another instance, a male Kodiak bear was walking to the scale for his usual scale training when a guillotine cage door fell off its track and hit him, frightening but not harming him. The keepers worked several months to regain the bear's trust. Today, his weight is measured monthly without problems.

When keepers at Silver Springs World of Bears started training, they didn't understand how much time and commitment was required from both the keepers *and* the bears. They began with once weekly training sessions, using simple commands (sit, stay, up, down) and thought the process would be very easy and quick. They developed a training guide with goals, step-by-step methods, and a list of rewards to encourage bears. They spent a lot of time researching and observing bears' natural behaviors. It became obvious that food is the best motivator for the Kodiak bears, while American black and Andean bears prefer one-on-one attention and verbal praise during training. The interaction is the reward.

The most difficult obstacle for the keepers was finding time to train, and initially other tasks were set aside. Today, training is part of the daily routine, like feeding and cleaning.

Thank yous for submissions to:
Carrie Weitz
Acting Lead Keeper Bearline and African Journey
Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago, IL, USA
Phone (312) 742-7680
Email cweitz@lpzoo.org
and
Diana Clemens, Lead Bear Keeper
Tracy Herman, Keeper
Misty Roup, Keeper
Silver Springs World of Bears
18274 SE 22nd Place
Silver Springs, Fl 34488, USA
Phone (352) 236-2121 ext.1242
Email LODI1030@aol.com

Courtesy Diana Clemens

Diana Clemens trains male Kodiak "Max" (1,330 pounds, 9.5 feet tall).

Captive Bears

A New Vieu

M.V. Andrés E. Bracho S.
Red Tremarctos Coordinator
Programa de Estudios para Graduados
Facultad de Ciencias. Veterinarias
Universidad del Zulia
Maracaibo, Venezuela
Phone +58-416-3676814
Email andresbracho@cantv.ne

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Vieu, the Asiatic black bear

An error in species identification has been corrected thanks to feedback from Dave Garshelis (Co-chair, Bear Specialist Group) and K. Yoganand (Co-chair, Sloth Bear Expert Team), who suspected a misidentification when they saw the front cover photo of the February 2005 *International Bear News* ("The Adventures of the 'Bears of Montecristo' or How Four Old Bears Escaped from an Island," *International Bear News* 14(1):34-35). After exchanging emails, we established that "Vieu", the old female bear who had been misclassified as a male and died in 2004 in Venezuela, was also misclassified by me as a sloth bear, *Melursus ursinus,* and transported to Venezuela with that identification. She was really a very old Asiatic black bear, *Ursus thibetanus,* who had lost her upper incisors as a result of age, and had white claws with white hairs on the front part of the feet. The reclassification was possible thanks to sharing existing unpublished color pictures. The Venezuelan records have been corrected.

I appreciate the help in correcting Vieu's identity.

Student Forum

Diana Doan-Crider
IBA Student Coordinator
Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute/King Ranch Institute for Ranch Management
MSC 218
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Kingsville, TX 78363-8202, USA
Phone (361) 593-5407
Email d-crider@tamuk.edu

IBA student? Join the List Serve!

- 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 so other members will receive your message.

Preparatevi per L'Italia!

Preparations are being made for the Student Forum Brainstorming Session at the 16th IBA conference in Italy (pages 42-47), on Friday, September 20, 2005, 12:30-3:30 p.m. This will be an opportunity to welcome IBA students and introduce them to IBA professionals who can assist with research study design problems or challenges. Students will be allowed five-to-ten minutes for project presentations. Afterwards, we will enjoy lunch while we divide into discussion groups based topics such as population dynamics, genetics, landscape analysis, behavior, etc. This will give you ample time to talk about your projects, and get new ideas from IBA professionals and students. To present a project, submit a **brief** statement (**250 words or less**) about your project with the following information to Diana Doan-Crider (address above) by **August 15, 2005**:

- Name, address, email, phone
- Affiliation or school
- Project title
- Project objectives
- Status of project (time frame, current success)
- Specific challenges or problems with which you need help.

¿Boca Cerrada No Entra Mosca?

If you keep your mouth shut, no flies will get in?

I must confess that I am a bear biologist, and I have issues. Or maybe I should say tissues...samples, that is. While most biologists have not had to deal with the dark side of international tissue import/export and CITES regulations, those of us who choose to work on bears across international lines have often found ourselves being tempted to bend the rules. Under normal circumstances, our honesty and integrity shine forth like the sun, helping make the IBA one of the most respected and illustrious organizations on the planet. Some of us are so honest that we are willing to turn in our own family members for expired parking tickets before we'd fudge on our research permits...all for the sake of integrity. But in the dark shadows of the bear researcher's mind lies the common demon that often surfaces when least expected. It generally rears its ugly head at border crossings when you suddenly realize that you do not have all of the paperwork for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Form 3-177, the Port of Entry Exception Permit, or the CITES permit needed for the highly black-marketable bear hair and tooth samples. Don't get me wrong. I am sure that our wildlife enforcement heroes are doing their best, trying to keep track of illegal drugs, work-hungry aliens, and God forbid, those ever-threatening black market fiends that transport bear hair and teeth which will eventually be used, I'm sure, for *something* illegal. But that doesn't help me when, in making every effort to "do the right thing", I am tempted to succumb to the pressure to get the age data on my PM1s (bear pre-molar teeth) across the border because the publication for the IBA is only one month away from being ready to submit. Even I will admit that in a last minute panic, I have been tempted to throw honesty and integrity out the window and start looking for creative places to stash the contraband — briefcase, Dorito's bag, uh, inside the CD player, camouflaged on the dog... But the penalties for such a quick-fix are rather serious, and can mean jail time and up to $10,000 in fines, not to mention a scarlet letter on your chest for the rest of your wildlife career, and the possibility of being banned from conducting research in a foreign country.

Why do I know this? With the risk of incriminating myself, I will divulge one of my experiences with a down-on-his-luck bear that was captured by a group of Mexican firefighters, and put in a Mexican jail. Sadly he died. The local authorities called me soon after to ask what samples I might need for a genetics project we were conducting. I clearly informed them about the procedure for collecting hair samples for DNA, and then asked that the samples be mailed to my address in *Mexico*. I planned to export them later when I secured permits. The hair sample was connected to an approximately 1/4 kg slab of bear fat and skin, shoved into a manila envelope and innocently flown (undeclared) in someone's briefcase via international airport to Dallas, Texas, USA, and then shipped to me via the U.S. Postal Service. About one month later, not only did the slab of fat, skin, hair, and greasy envelope make it intact, but it also passed an array of "inspection" barricades and

¿Boca Cerrada No Entra Mosca? cont'd.

made it to my U.S. address without any kind of CITES permit! I quickly cleaned up the mess, sprayed the office with Lysol, and apologized to the secretaries. I then contacted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to explain a *hypothetical* situation that had happened to a *friend* of mine, and they proceeded to tell me horror stories about what happens to people when they go to jail. So, I took the samples *back* to Mexico like any goody-two-shoes would. David, the Mexican landowner I worked with, was just as appalled as the readers of this column.

It was for situations like this that David liked to preach the Mexican proverb, *boca cerrada, no entra mosca* (which means: if you keep your mouth shut, no flies will get in). Apparently, he felt that I often divulged too much information during my frequent border crossings, which surprisingly didn't get me too many pats on the back, and usually ended up in some sort of dramatic escapade that I could later write about in the IBA newsletter. Soon after the slab-of-fat incident, I was again caught in this tangled web we weave when transporting about one year's worth of hair and blood samples to the USA. I innocently misread my CITES permit and did not notice that my numbers were incorrect. Upon crossing at the first booth onto U.S. territory, I put my hands up and loudly declared in my IBA voice of integrity that I was carrying highly illicit material and needed to talk to an official. With the wave of a secret hand signal, highly trained super-dogs and the white-shirted Aggies mobbed my truck like we were a bunch of farmers trying to smuggle cows with mad cow disease. They notified me that confiscation would likely result in the disposal of the samples, since they would not take responsibility for holding them in their facilities. Much to my comfort, one of the supervisors was an alumnus from my institution, so he was willing to listen. I begged that I be allowed to return to Mexico with the samples to find a safe place to leave them until we could correct the permits. After several calls to their superiors, and about an hour's wait, I was granted clemency, and allowed to return to Mexico and drive 45 miles down the river to leave the samples with a friend. I was tired, but proud. Despite David's constant preaching, I felt I had done the right thing. The next day, upon arrival to my home base, I strolled into the office to pick up my mail. To my horror and dismay, there it was...another manila envelope that had slipped through our rigorous and omnipotent U.S. intelligence barriers. Yes, you guessed it...more illicit bear hair samples sent from a well-meaning biologist in Mexico, but not a federal agent in sight. Was David right?

Thank goodness for new regulations implemented by our governments that now allow scientific samples to be somewhat exempt from the rigors of CITES red-tape. Researchers can now apply for a CITES permit exemption (Article VII, paragraph 6 of the Convention; *http://www.cites.org/eng/disc/text.shtml*). CITES now maintains a register of academic institutions and museums subject to this exemption; guidelines to register are made available through CITES management authorities, and can be found at *http://www.cites.org/eng/resols/11/11_15.shtml*. Good luck, and I hope this helps!

Student Spotlight: Harendra Singh Bargali, India

Photo courtesy H. S. Bargali

I chose Harendra ("Haren") for this Student Spotlight despite the fact that he has already received his Ph.D. When I met Haren at the IBA San Diego meetings, he was still a student, and I had the opportunity to take note of his determination despite daunting obstacles. Haren remains very involved with the IBA Student Forum, and has been an inspiration to many of us. He received a research fellowship from the Wildlife Institute of India during 1998-2001, and conducted his research on sloth bear ecology and mitigation of human-bear conflict. Working conditions in the field were very difficult (mentally and physically), given the nature of the reports he investigated about human maulings and killings. Like many of our students, he had to deal with the never-ending shortage of funding and red-tape. Fortunately, Haren was accompanied by great team members, who collaborated with him to present ten papers at the IBA meetings, and publish two papers in *Ursus*. As a Senior Project Officer, Haren now works with WWF-India whose focus is to develop a conservation plan for the world famous Keoladeo National Park in India. Part of this plan includes the development of a detailed bear map of India with information about status and distribution, human conflict, and crop and livestock damage, so that priority conservation areas can be identified. Part of his responsibility includes raising the funds to develop this conservation strategy. He has been tireless in writing proposals and networking to get the job done. Despite many disappointments and challenges, Haren is a perfect example of someone who is determined to complete his vision. Haren, never give up — never surrender! We're behind you all the way!

Bears in Culture

Yeti — a Bear?

Anne Ruggles
Sr. Wildlife Ecologist
Bear Canyon Consulting, LLC
Phone (303) 938-0490
Email aruggles@igc.org
Website www.bear-canyon.com
&
Visiting Scholar
Center for Science
and Technology Policy Research
1333 Grandview Ave., Campus Box 488
Boulder, CO 80309-0488, USA
Phone (303) 735-3751
Website http://
sciencepolicy.colorado.edu

Dremu, Dzuteh, Alma, Migio, Meti, Mirgu, Migoi, or Yeti — a Sherpa word in which Yah means rock and Teh means animal — are all names for a mysterious being that wanders the mountain ranges of Nepal, Bhutan, western China, and Tibet. The names have been translated to mean stone man, snow bear, strong man, magical creature, man-like-thing-that-is-not-a-man, and mysterious animal.

There is no consensus as to what it is, whether it even exists, or if it does, what it looks like. Peter Matthiessen noted, ''The yeti is described most often as a hairy, reddish-brown creature with a rigid crown that gives it a pointed-head appearance; in size, despite the outsized foot...it has been likened to an adolescent boy, though much larger individuals have been reported.'' Others have described a larger individual with dark, almost black, fur that walks upright on two legs or on all four legs, and leaves footprints that look similar to human tracks. It is primarily nocturnal, thus seldom encountered by humans, can kill a yak with one blow, and is known to attack when disturbed. Its scats contain plant and animal remnants, and yak kill sites are associated with neatly skinned carcasses. In traditional paintings, it is depicted as a human-like creature with long, shaggy hair.

According to Tibetans, stories of the yeti date to the 4th century B.C. with references in the poem *Rama and Sita*. Qu Yuan (340-270 B.C.), a Chang Dynasty poet recorded the sighting of a very hairy "man-like" creature in the mountains. The late 18th century Tibetan book *Anatomical Dictionary for Recognizing Various Diseases* by Lovsan-Yondon and Tsend-Otcher describes the wild man — yeti — as living in the mountains, resembling a human-like bear and having enormous strength. Its meat was eaten to treat mental diseases and its gall cured jaundice.

Westerners, especially climbers, have been intrigued by the yeti since the 19th century. Occasional reports of an ape-like creature in the Himalayas made their way to the west in the 1800s. In 1832 B.H. Hodson, the United Kingdom's representative to Nepal, described a hairy creature that reportedly attacked his servants. The natives called it "rakshas" or "demon". In 1889 Waddel wrote that his Tibetan guides described footprints belonging to a large ape-like creature which he concluded belonged to a bear.

The frequency of reports increased in the early 20th century, when westerners began climbing the mountains of Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and China and reported seeing odd creatures or strange tracks in the mountains. In 1921, members of a British expedition climbing the north face of Mount Everest reported seeing dark figures moving on a snowfield above them. When they reached the spot, at about 17,500 feet, the creatures were gone but left large, human-like footprints in the snow. In 1925 a Greek photographer, N. A. Tombazi, a member of the Royal Geographical Society, glimpsed a creature he later described as "exactly like a human being, walking upright and stopping occasionally to uproot or pull some dwarf rhododendron bushes." When Tombazi, who was at about 15,000 feet, reached the spot he found large human-like tracks in the snow.

In 1938, Captain d'Auvergne, curator of the Victoria Memorial in Calcutta, claimed that he was injured while traveling alone in the Himalayas and was saved from death by a nine-foot tall creature resembling a pre-historic human which, after carrying him several miles to a cave, fed and nursed him until he was able to travel.

The Nazis supposedly financed an expedition led by Ernst Schaefer to search for the yeti, because they believed it represented the evolutionary "missing link". Schaefer reported the yeti was a Tibetan bear.

In 1948, a Norwegian uranium prospector, Jan Frostis, claimed he was attacked by one of two yetis near Zemu Gap, Sikkim. His badly mangled shoulder required extensive medical treatment.

Western interest in the yeti peaked in the 1950s. While attempting to scale Mount Everest in 1951, Eric Shipton photographed a number of large prints in the snow, at about 20,000 feet. These photos have been the source of intense debate: some arguing they are the best evidence of a yeti and others arguing they are the tracks of a large animal distorted and enlarged by the melting snow. The *London Daily Mail* financed an expedition in 1954 to hunt and catch a live yeti. The expedition found footprints and scat which contained plant and animal material.

In 1955, Slavomir Rawicz a Polish soldier captured by Soviet troops and

exiled to Siberia, reported seeing two large, ape-like creatures while escaping across the Himalayas to India.

In 1959, American actor Jimmy Stewart reportedly smuggled the remains of a yeti, the Pangboche Hand — stolen from a Buddhist monastery in Pangboche, Tibet — by hiding it in his luggage when he flew from India to London. Primatologist Osman Hill identified the hand as human but reportedly later recanted saying it was a Neanderthal specimen.

In the 1950s, the USSR organized the Commission for the Study of the Snowman Question of the Academy of Sciences to systematically study yetis. The commission published reports in 1958 and 1959.

Mountaineers Reinhold Messner and Sir Edmund Hillary also hunted yetis. Hillary was part of a 10-month expedition in 1960 to prove the yeti's existence in the Khumbu Valley, to the south of Everest. The most convincing evidence he found was a scalp in a Khumjung monastery that was later identified as a serow (*Capricornis sumatraensis*), a Himalayan goat.

In 1992, Julian Freeman-Attwood and two others, while camping at a secluded spot on a remote glacier in Mongolia, reported finding an unusual trail of footprints made by a creature larger and heavier than a human on the snow outside their tent. In 1998, while descending the Chinese side of Everest, American climber Craig Calonica reported seeing a pair of yetis. They had thick, shiny black fur and walked upright.

During an inventory of biodiversity in the Annapurna Conservation Area a guide for the project described a brown bear as "Chuktey", a docile form of yeti.

In his 1998 book, mountaineer Reinhold Messner maintained the yeti was really a bear, similar to a grizzly but with longer hair. Others, implying that Messner's view may be the result of significant brain damage due to high altitude oxygen deprivation, claim that the mountaineer is wrong; that the yeti legend is 3,000 years old and Tibetans would not confuse a bear with another creature.

In 2003, Makoto Nebuka, a senior member of the Japanese Alpine Club, who spent 12 years researching the yeti by conducting a series of interviews with local people in Nepal, Tibet, and Bhutan, announced that he had found that "yeti" is a regional dialect word for "meti" a Tibetan dialect word for the brown bear.

Explanations for yetis vary dramatically, though all emphasize a similarity to humans. Some posit they are a relict species of early human, driven into dense forests by the surge of *Homo sapiens*. Others believe they are the "missing link" in human evolution. Some think yetis are large, reclusive apes. Others believe they are Asiatic black or Himalayan brown bears, which inhabit the Himalayas of India, Nepal, Tibet, China, and Bhutan. Today, the black bears are declining and the brown bears are probably extinct.

In the depths of the forest, high on the mountaintops, deep down in any wild place, there are tales of terror, of the not-quite-human, of the supernatural, of the savage, and of very old creatures. Strange creatures do dwell in the deepest, darkest places in the world, but even stranger ones thrive *inside* of us. These are the supernatural demons of the woods, the phantoms of hunger, savage creatures, or simply the loneliness in the woods felt by lost hunters or trekkers. *This* is probably the yeti.

Most scientists consider evidence of the yeti's existence unpersuasive — the result of hoaxes, legend, or misidentification. However, the government of Nepal officially declared the yeti to exist in 1961. And Bhutan has established a sanctuary to protect them — Sakten Wildlife Sanctuary, a 650 sq km (253 sq mi) sanctuary, in the easternmost part of the kingdom. Yetis have not been seen in the sanctuary, but it does provide protection for Asiatic black bears.

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Publications

Review — *On Nature's Terms: Predators and People Co-existing in Harmony*

Video, 25 minutes,
WildFutures, 2001.
www.earthisland.org/wildfutures
A project of Earth Island Institute.

The video *On Nature's Terms: Predators and People Co-existing in Harmony* covers a wide variety of topics related to conservation of predators. It's a whirlwind tour of issues, some briefly mentioned, some covered in a bit more depth including: predator viewing and its economic benefits, the reduction of wolf and grizzly ranges, educating people about predators, living in areas with cougars, predator control programs, livestock losses, subdivisions, food-conditioned grizzlies, wildlife rehabilitators, predators living near urban areas, a predator-friendly sheep ranch, a hunter who seeks common ground for hunters and environmentalists, road closures, wolf reintroduction, and a grassroots effort to buy land for connectivity — all that in just 25 minutes!

On the positive side the video highlights a wide variety of people who are passionate about predators and touches on lots of issues. Many are the same ones talked about in most such programs, a few are heard about less often.

Some good issues were raised. For example, an attempt to produce predator-friendly lambs and wool stresses the need for consumers to be willing to pay for the higher costs associated with alternative livestock production. The importance of habitat, wildlands and connecting protected areas to allow movement of predators was also featured.

For the most part, this is a predictable film: people thought predators were bad and almost wiped them out. The tide is now turning, people realize predators are good and without them ecosystems cannot function. People want to have predators around, and even pay to go see them. Educating children will ensure a brighter future for predators.

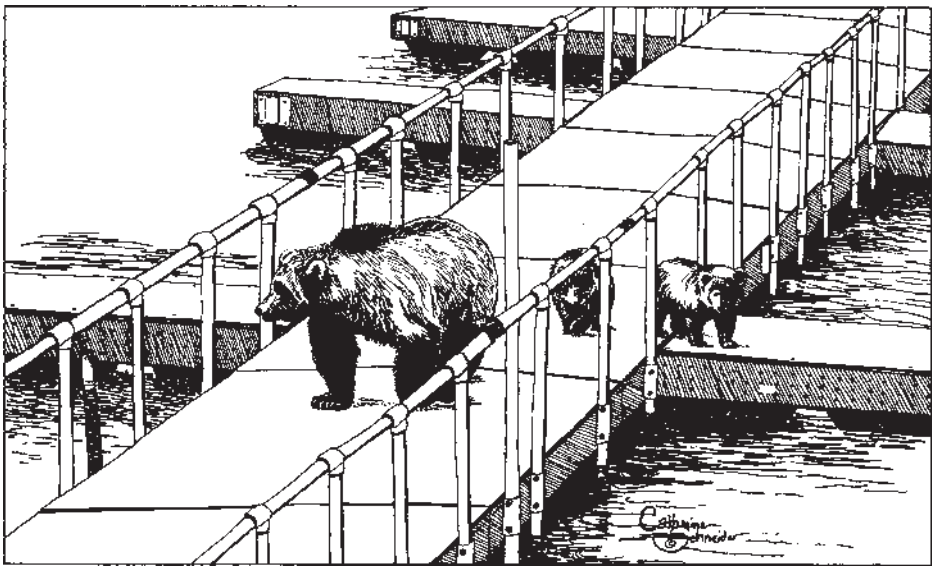
I think this is simplistic, preachy and not always accurate. References are made to "upsetting the balance of nature", the "delicate balance of nature", and how without top predators the ecosystem will "collapse". That after showing that over 90 percent of wolf and grizzly habitat has been vacant for many decades. Are all the Rocky Mountain ecosystems outside of the few with both wolves and bears "collapsed"? Of course there are detrimental changes in ecosystems when native predators are lost, but such losses aren't always catastrophic to the point of ecosystem collapse. We have to be careful about crying wolf, so to speak, by always implying that the sky is falling — especially when including stories about animals as adaptive as coyotes.

While the video tried to give an overview of many issues, I found it didn't work for me, and seemed a bit too much of a hodge-podge of topics dealt with superficially. Maybe as a whole we're too busy to look at issues in depth anymore; all we want is "information lite". But I think the reality and true challenges lie in addressing the subtleties and complexities whenever people try to coexist with large predators.

The title itself put me off a bit — "living together in harmony". And later in the narrative the phrase "living together in balance and harmony". What exactly does that mean? The bottom line is we are competitors with large carnivores, and humans won the competition. Humans must now decide where and how to conserve carnivores and how much of their habitat we are willing to protect. Competing interests and compromises are part of all such decisions. I'm not sure conservation efforts will ever be more balanced and harmonious than nature itself.

And let's not ignore that elephant in the living room looming behind all these conservation challenges — human population growth and our insatiable demands for resources.

Review by
John Hechtel
Alaska Dept. of Fsh and Game
Email john_hechtel@fishgame.state.ak.us



Border Bear Workshop Proceedings

Sterling Miller
National Wildlife Federation
Email MillerS@nwf.org

The biological and management problems facing recovery of the extremely small and threatened brown (grizzly) bear populations in the U.S.-Canada transborder area were the subject of a workshop held in December 2002 co-sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation and the state, provincial, and federal agencies involved in management of these populations. These papers should be of special interest and utility to people involved in management of small brown bear populations around the world. A selection of papers from this conference were reviewed and published in volumes 15(1) and 15(2) of *Ursus* (2004). With permission from the IBA, these papers have been compiled into a special volume now available as pdf files on two websites:

http://www.huntingandfishingjournal.org/archives/issues/index.php#GB

and

http://www.nwf.org/resourceLibrary/index.cfm?officeID=F8FFA276-65BF-0A01-06DEE8A7C7A358A8 [under "grizzly bears"].

This volume may be downloaded and printed for personal use but may not be reprinted or sold without written permission from the IBA.

In addition to the papers previously published in *Ursus*, this workshop proceedings includes appendices with summaries of two public outreach sessions held during the workshop. These sessions served to bring the local community and community leaders into the discussions about the future management direction for these small and endangered populations.

A small number of hard copies of this volume were also printed and distributed to the conference co-sponsors: U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Wildlife Society, Wilburforce Foundation, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, British Columbia Habitat Conservation Trust Fund, and Northwest Section of the Wildlife Society, IBA, and Bear Trust International.

Ontario Bear Wise Program E-book

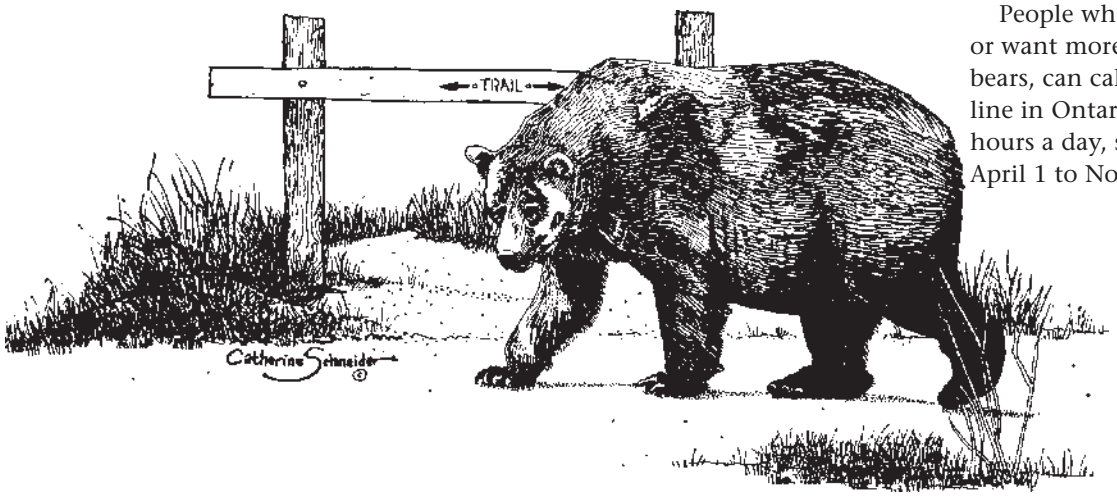
Press release April 15, 2005, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/csb/news/2005/apr15nr_05.html, Commmunications Services Branch Phone (416) 314-2106

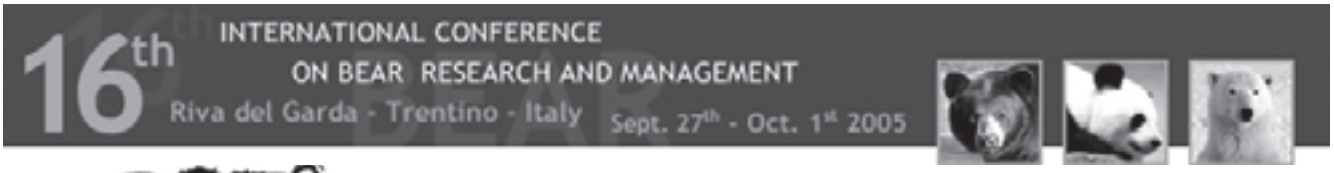
Helping young people be bear wise and bear safe is the goal of an educational web-based book launched by Ontario Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay. "We are building on the success of last year's Bear Wise program and making learning about American black bears fun for students," said Ramsay. "By sharing what they've learned with their family and friends, we'll have fewer bear problems and that means safer communities."

Designed for youth between the ages of 10 and 14, the e-book highlights facts about black bears, ways to avoid bear problems and includes mini-movies of bears in action. The ministry is distributing the book to schools in a mini-CD format. It is available on the ministry's bear website at bears.mnr.gov.on.ca.

Now in its second year, the Bear Wise program aims to reduce human-bear conflicts through education and awareness, reporting, response and prevention.

People who have bear problems, or want more information about bears, can call the Bear Wise toll-free line in Ontario at 1-866-514-2327, 24 hours a day, seven days a week from April 1 to November 30, 2005.





16th
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BEAR RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT
SEPT. 27th - OCT. 1st 2005
RIVA DEL GARDA - TRENTINO - ITALY

Maurizio Zanin
Planning Committee Chair
Provincia Autonoma di Trento
Forest and Wildlife Service
Via G.B. Trener 3
38100 Trento, Italy
&
Claudio Groff
Planning Committee Co-chair
Provincia Autonoma di Trento
Forest and Wildlife Service
Via G.B. Trener 3,
38100 Trento, Italy
Phone ++39 0461 494961
Email claudio.groff@provincia.tn.it
&
Piero Genovesi
Planning Committee Co-chair
National Wildlife Institute
Via Cà Fornacetta 9
40064 Ozzano dell'Emilia
Bologna, Italy
Phone ++39 051 6512228
Email infspapk@iperbole.bologna.it

Scientific Committee

Piero Genovesi
INFS-National Wildlife Institute, Italy
Luigi Boitani
University of Rome "la Sapienza", Italy
Djuro Huber
University of Zagreb, Croatia
Marko Jonozovic
Slovenia Forest Service, Slovenia
Javier Naves Cienfuegos
Universidad de Oviedo, Spain
Ettore Randi
INFS-National Wildlife Institute, Italy
Joerg Rauer
WWF, Austria
Jon Swenson
Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway
Lisette Waits
University of Idaho, USA

Conference Program

The conference begins Tuesday morning September 27 and ends Saturday afternoon October 1. Program details are posted on the conference website and are updated regularly. A tentative schedule is on page 44.

Conference participants are welcome to attend IBA Council and Bear Specialist Group meetings.

Website and Updates

For more information on the conference program (page 44), travel grants (page 47) and registration (page 45), use the conference website www.provincia.tn.it/foreste/16IBAconference or www.bearbiology.com/workconf1.html and watch this newsletter.

Registration

We encourage participants to register online and take advantage of the early registration fee. Use the form on the conference website or on page 45.

Conference Fees

Conference fee is 270 euros for those registering before 31 July 2005 and late registration is 320 euros. Student fee is 125 euros, and late registration is 150 euros. The fee includes coffee breaks but not the conference banquet.

Travel Grants

A travel grant application is available on the conference website and on page 47.

Banquet

The conference banquet is scheduled for the second day of the conference, September 27, in the Toblino Castle, about 20 km from Riva del Garda. This is one of the most beautiful castles in Trentino (XII-XVI century), on a lake shore surrounded by a Mediterranean forest of evergreen oaks (*Quercus ilex*).

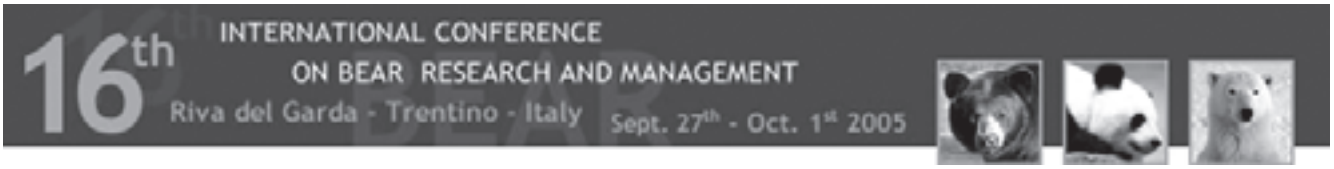
Excursions

Visit the website excursion page for more information.

Hiking in Bear Habitat

Enjoy the Tovel Valley, where the last native bears survived and Slovenian bears are being translocated. Organized in cooperation with the Adamello-Brenta Natural Park, the trip visits the very heart of the park in the wonderful Brenta massif, one of the most beautiful areas of the entire Alpine arch. Look for wildlife including chamois, red deer, roe deer, marmot and golden eagle. The hike is moderately difficult; bring hiking shoes and rain clothing.

Euro 30.00 fee covers transport by coach and lunch. Led by an English-speaking park ranger.



Venice

A three-hour tour of the city of Romanesque-Byzantine origins which has eight monuments proclaimed UNESCO Heritage of Humanity sites. The program includes a visit to Piazza San Marco, the Basilica, the Ducal Palace, the prisons and the world famous Ponte dei Sospiri (Bridge of Sighs).

Eat lunch at Do Spade restaurant and wine cellar, located just a few meters from the Rialto and active since 1400. With his style, charm and dadaistic spirit, the owner will recommend Venetian dishes and good red wines.

Euro 90.00 fee covers travel by coach, lunch, English-speaking guide and entry to museums (minimum 15 participants).

Art, History (and Wine)

Tour the new, beautiful Contemporary Art Museum (MART) in Rovereto, and visit Isera, an agricultural village opposite Rovereto on the banks of the Adige River.

Lunch at the Casa Del Vino includes tasting genuine Trentino cuisine together with prized autochthonous wines produced by the adjoining cellar.

Visit Trento, a beautiful Renaissance city and capital of Trentino Province, whose colors and buildings make it unique among Alpine cities. It was the seat of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) and has always been a meeting point between Italian and Central European cultures.

Euro 50.00 covers travel by coach, lunch, English-speaking guide and entry to museums (minimum 15 participants).

Post Conference Trip Abruzzo, October 2-6

In cooperation with the National Forest Service, we are organizing a visit to the Abruzzo Mountains which has one of the very few remnant bear populations (30–50) in Western Europe. The range of this highly threatened bear population is primarily located within the Abruzzo National Park, in the beautiful mountains of Central Italy.

Euro 30.00 fee covers one way coach travel from Riva del Garda to Abruzzo. Other costs (accommodation, meals, local transportation, return trip) will be paid to local organizers in Abruzzo (minimum 15 participants).

On Sunday October 2 we will travel by bus from Riva del Garda to Abruzzo (700 km). From the 3rd to the 5th we will visit some of the most beautiful sites within the bear range, including the Abruzzo National Park (http://www.parcoabruzzo.it/), the Majella National Park (http://www.parcomajella.it/en_home.htm) and one national forest. On the 6th (or evening of the 5th) transport to the international airports of Rome (200 km) and Verona (600 km) will be arranged.

Workshops and Meetings

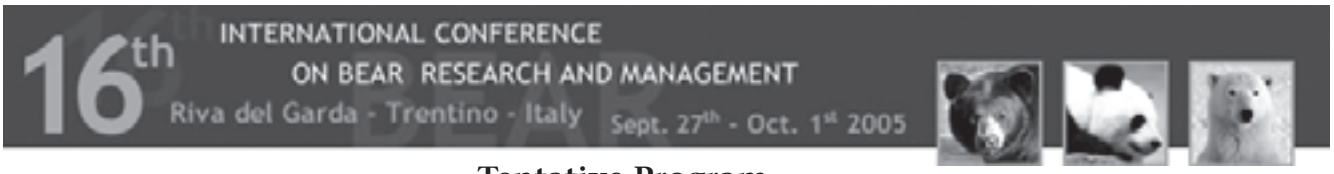
IBA standing committees, IBA working groups, and workshop organizers who wish to schedule meetings or workshops during the conference please contact Claudio Groff at claudio.groff@provincia.tn.it.

Ursus Submissions

Submission of a full manuscript to *Ursus* (the peer-reviewed journal of the International Association for Bear Research and Management) is encouraged and will be a factor in selecting papers. Authors of poster presentations also are encouraged to submit full papers to *Ursus*. Applicants are asked to indicate whether their presentation will be accompanied by submission of a manuscript to *Ursus*. Consult the journal website (www.ursusjournal.com) for instructions to authors and other information.

Authors submitting *Ursus* manuscripts are reminded that page charges (US$90/printed page) are their responsibility, and are encouraged to budget accordingly. Typically 2.5 pages of double-spaced manuscript equals one page of final printed text.

An application can be made to the IBA for a Publication Grant to fully or partially cover page charges for papers from projects where these charges cannot be met. A letter to the IBA Treasurer (address on page 52) outlining the request for an exemption from page charges should be made as early as possible.



16th
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON BEAR
RESEARCH AND
MANAGEMENT
SEPT. 27th - OCT. 1st 2005
RIVA DEL GARDA - TRENTINO - ITALY

Tentative Program

Monday 26 September
- Registration
- IBA Council Meeting
- Ice Breaker

Tuesday 27 September
- Registration
- Welcome
  - Town Mayor
  - President of Provincia Autonoma di Trento
- Opening remarks
  - Minister, Environment and Protection of Landscape
  - Head, Natural Heritage and Biological Diversity Division, Council of Europe
  - President, Istituto Nazionale per la Fauna Selvatica
  - President, IBA
- Session: Bear Conservation in Europe
- Session: Human-bear Conflict Management
- Workshop: Human Dimensions in Bear Conservation in Europe hosted by Alistair Bath and sponsored by Council of Europe

Wednesday 28 September
- Session: Bear Translocations
- Session: Population Management
- IUCN Bear Specialist Group Teams Meetings
- Poster Session
- IBA Business Meeting
- Gala Dinner in Castel Toblino

Thursday 29 September
- Excursions

Friday 30 September
- Session: Conservation Genetics and Non-invasive Genetic Monitoring
- Student Session
- IUCN Bear Specialist Group Meeting
- Visit to Valle dei Laghi Wine Cellars
- Public Event to be announced

Saturday 1 October
- Session: Conservation of Bears in Asia and Latin America
- Workshop: Non-invasive Genetic Techniques: Case Studies, Problems, Potentialities hosted by E. Randi, L. Waits, P. Taberlet
- Session: Bear Biology
- Awards Ceremony
- *Ursus* Editor Comments
- IBA President's Closing Remarks

Sunday 2 October
- Post Conference Trip to Abruzzo

16th IBA Conference Registration Form

- Payment by credit card is only possible with online registration.
- If you register by mail/fax, you can pay either by bank transfer or by check.

Please fill in, print and return this form, together with check or receipt of bank transfer, to the organizing secretariat:

Orikata organizzazione congressi
Via Zell, 138050 COGNOLA (TN)
Phone + 39 0461 234411
Fax + 39 0461 233282

Bank account: OriKata organizzazione congressi
BANCA BOVIO CALDERARI
Filiale Top Center Trento (Italy)
Account Number 052443850130
ABI 03064CAB 01802
IBAN = IT49 N 03064 01802 052443850130

Fill in the form (PLEASE USE ALL CAPITAL LETTERS):

First Name * _____

Last name * _____

Address *_____

Zip code * _____ State/province * _____

City * _____ Country * _____

Organization * _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail *_____ * = required information

Conference Registration Fees:

Registration Fee ☐ 270.00 euros (320.00 euros after July 31, 2005.)
Student Fee ☐ 125.00 euros (150.00 euros after July 31, 2005.)
To be entitled to pay the reduced fee, students must provide evidence of university registration by sending a registration certificate by fax to +39 0461 233282.

No registration fee is required for companions.

TOTAL CONFERENCE AMOUNT: Euro _____

Registration for the Gala Dinner on September 28, 2005:

- Gala dinner euro 35.00 each Number of Participants: _____ Total Euro_____

Continued on Next Page...

Registration for the Mid-conference Trips on September 29, 2005. I am interested in:

• Hiking in the Bear Range
Fee includes transport and lunch. euro 30.00 each Number of Participants: ___ Total_____

• Excursion to Venice
Fee includes all transport, lunch, museum entrance fees and an English speaking guide.
euro 90.00 each Number of Participants: ___ Total_____

• Art, History (and Wine)
Fee includes all transport, lunch, museum entrance fees and an English speaking guide.
euro 50.00 each Number of Participants: ___ Total_____

Post Conference Trip

• Transfer to Abruzzo euro 30.00 each Number of Participants: ___ Total_____
Fee only includes bus transport to Abruzzo. Accommodation, meals, local transports and return trip costs shall be paid in Abruzzo.

Hotel Reservation

A reservation fee equal to one night's stay per person will be charged for hotel booking placed using the registration form. The remaining amount can be paid by cash, credit card or check at the conference.

Arrival Date _____ Departure Date _____ Total Nights_____

Hotel Rates (VAT included) — B&B per person, per night:
Rooms will be assigned in chronological order of booking. Should the requested category be fully booked, we will book you in a different one. The confirmation will be sent from the Organizing Secretariat by fax or email.

Category	Double as single use room	Double room	Total	Reservation Fee (= 1 night)
A (4 star/3 star sup.)	☐ euro 78.80	I pay the rate for one person only, euro 58.85, and I will share the room with:		
		I pay for two persons, euro 117.70.		
B (3 star)	☐ euro 56.75	I pay the rate for one person only, euro 39.90, and I will share the room with:		
		I pay for two persons, euro 79.80.		
C (2 star)	☐ euro 38.35	I pay the rate for one person only, euro 27.30, and I will share the room with:		
		I pay for two persons, euro 54.60.		
Hostel		I pay the rate for one person only, euro 18.00, and I will share the room with:		
		I pay for two persons, euro 36.00.		

TOTAL AMOUNT: euro _____

Cancellation/Refund

Written cancellations received before September 1, 2005 will receive a full refund subject to a 20% processing fee.

Privacy Information

In accordance with the Italian Legislative Decree 196/2003, Orikata will use your personal data only for purposes related to the IBA Conference and is therefore responsible for its use. Should you wish to cancel or change your address at any time, please contact Orikata: Organizzazione Congressi - Via Zell, 1 I-38050 Cognola di Trento (TN), Italy, email orikata@orikata.it.

16th IBA Travel Grants Application — Deadline July 31, 2005

Fill in the form (PLEASE USE CAPITAL LETTERS) and fax it to the organizing secretariat + 39 0461 233282
Travel grant award/rejection will be communicated by the organizing secretariat by fax or email.

First Name *_____

Last Name * _____

Address *_____

Zip code * _____ State/province * _____

City * _____ Country * _____

Organization * _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email *_____ * = required information

Title and abstract of presentation submitted to the organizing committee (maximum 100 words):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Travel Information:
☐ Airplane — Please issue a prepaid ticket to Verona. I would like to depart from the following airport:
First choice _____ Second choice _____
☐ Train — I will buy the ticket (2nd class) and I will submit the receipt for reimbursement.
From _____ to _____(Verona or Rovereto)
☐ Car — The organization will reimburse the equivalent of the train ticket (2nd class) for the same itinerary.
From _____ to Rovereto

For reimbursement of travel expenses, you must submit receipts to Orikata in Riva del Garda (original tickets or vouchers must be shown to confirm the purchase of a ticket on the Internet) or no later than October 30, 2005 to:
OriKata – Organizzazione Congressi, Via Zell 1, 38050 Cognola (Trento, Italia).

Hotel Accommodation:
• Type of room: ☐ single ☐ double ☐ other
• Organization will cover accommodation from September 26 (IN) to October 1 (OUT) 2005 — 5 nights in total, in a 3 star hotel.
• If different from above, please indicate your arrival and departure dates:_____/09/2005; _____/10/2005.

Privacy Information

In accordance with the Italian Legislative Decree 196/2003, Orikata will use your personal data only for purposes related to the IBA Conference and is therefore responsible for its use. Should you wish to cancel or change your address at any time, please contact Orikata: Organizzazione Congressi - Via Zell, 1 I-38050 Cognola di Trento (TN), Italy, email orikata@orikata.it

Events

First Mexican Black Bear Workshop

June 2-5, 2005
Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico

On June 2–5, 2005, the Coahuila Department of Ecology is conducting the First Mexican Black Bear Workshop in Mexico, hosted by the Museo del Desierto in Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico. Collaborators include the IBA and IUCN Bear Specialist Group, the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, the King Ranch Institute for Ranch Management, the Secretaria de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT – federal wildlife agency), and the Coahuila Cattleman's Association. The workshop will focus on principles of bear biology, ecology, behavior, and management, and is open to Mexican wildlife officials, biologists, landowners, and students. Dave Garshelis and Steven Herrero will present special evening sessions, open to the public, on bears of the world and bear-human interactions. Field trips to nearby ranches with bear populations will be offered on the last day of the workshop. Registration is limited to 250 participants. For more information, please contact:

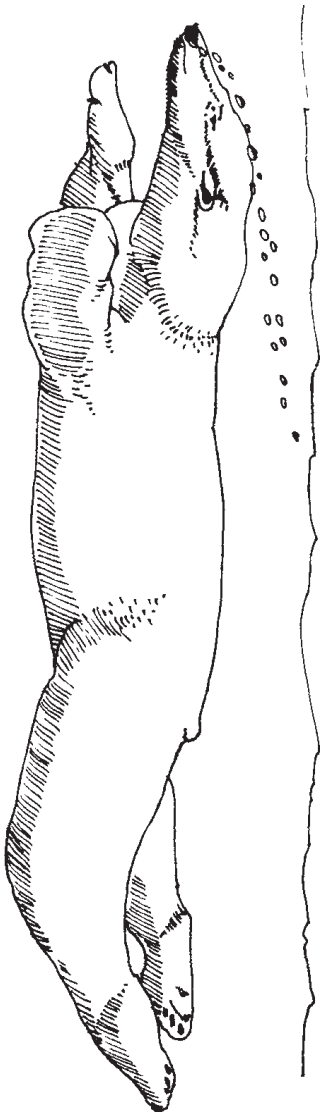
Diana Doan-Crider
King Ranch Institute for Ranch Management
MSC 137
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Kingsville, TX 78363-8202, USA
Phone (361) 593-5407
Email d-crider@tamuk.edu
Web http://www.ecoah.org.

American Zoo & Aquarium Assn. Annual Conference

September 13-18, 2005
Chicago, Illinois, USA

The AZA (American Zoo and Aquarium Association) 2005 annual conference is being hosted by the John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, Illinois, USA.

For information go to AZA's website: www.aza.org.



© Joan Skidmore

Ninth Western Black Bear Workshop

April 19-22, 2006
Raton, New Mexico, USA

The Ninth Western Black Bear Workshop will be held April 19–22, 2006, at the NRA Whittington Center in Raton, New Mexico, USA. Conference fees will be US$120 (US$65 for students). Attendees will be responsible for their lodging and meals. The Whittington Center has limited space and is approximately US$45/night, single occupancy. Room sharing is encouraged. Some primitive "bunk houses", camping, and RV sites will be available. The town of Raton is only 15 minutes from the conference center and has ample lodging. Field trips will be offered on Saturday, April 22.

For more information, please contact (email preferred):
Rick Winslow
Large Carnivore Biologist
New Mexico Game and Fish Department
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504, USA
Phone (505) 268-6347
Email RWinslow@state.nm.us.

First European Congress of Conservation Biology

August 23-27, 2006
Eger, Hungary

Owen T. Nevin, Secretary
Society for Conservation Biology
(European Section)
Email europe@conservationbiology.org

The European Section of the Society for Conservation Biology is pleased to announce the First European Congress of Conservation Biology (ECCB). We are determined to promote the development and use of science for the conservation of European species and ecosystems, and to make sure that conservation policy is firmly supported by the best available scientific evidence. For this reason, and because of the multi-disciplinary nature of conservation biology, we aim to attract a wide array of academics, students, policy makers, stakeholders, natural resource managers, and media and NGO representatives from all over Europe to attend the ECCB. To achieve this multi-disciplinary representation, it is vital that we circulate this announcement widely, not only in the academic channels but also to policy makers, independent scientists and biodiversity managers. Being involved with the conservation and management of bears worldwide, you will, I am sure, appreciate the critical importance of a coherent and science-based conservation policy; this is especially true in Europe. By bringing together diverse groups we hope to establish a multi-disciplinary network of conservationists across Europe drawing on global expertise in conservation biology. The ECCB will also be hosting a meeting of the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe enabling you to gain the greatest benefit from your travel budget! While August 2006 may seem a long way off, we are all aware of the lead time required to prepare papers and secure funding. It is important, therefore, to draw attention to the timetable for the submission of symposium proposals and abstracts outlined below:

May 2005
Call for Symposium Proposals

August 31, 2005
Deadline for Symposium Proposals

September 2005
Call for Abstracts

February 2006
Deadline for Abstracts

For current information, visit the ECCB web page (www.eccb2006.org).

I look forward to meeting many of you at the September 2005 IBA conference in Italy, and hope that carnivore conservation will be well-represented at the ECCB in 2006.

Events

17th International Conference on Bear Research and Management
October 2-6, 2006
Karuizawa Town, Nagano, Japan

Toshiki Aoi, Planning Committee Chair
Faculty of Agriculture
Iwate University
3-18-8 Ueda, Morioka-city
Iwate 020-8550, Japan
Phone & Fax +81 19 621 6136
Email aoi@iwate-u.ac.jp
&
Koji Yamazaki
Planning Committee Secretary General
Zoological Laboratory
Ibaraki Nature Museum
700 Osaki, Iwai-city
Ibaraki 306-0622, Japan
Phone +81 297 38 2000
Fax +81 297 38 1999
Email yamako@j.email.ne.jp

The 17th IBA conference will be the first IBA conference held in Asia. The planning committee has been coordinating with government agencies, NGOs, and local organizations to arrange for a successful meeting. We hope that the conference will inspire more research and effective management plans for bears in Asia.

Conference Venue

Karuizawa is a popular resort town located in the central part of Japan. Half of the town is within the Jyoshin-etsu Plateau National Park which has 2,000 m mountains, several volcanoes, and many hot springs. The park has a rich natural environment. Large mammals, such as Japanese black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*), wild boars (*Sus scrofa*), sika deer (*Cervus nippon*), Japanese serows (*Capricornis crispus*), and Japanese macaques (*Macaca fuscata*), have healthy populations.

Since the 1990s, bear-human conflicts have been a major concern in Karuizawa. Food-conditioned bears repeatedly visit garbage stations in residential areas. In 1998, efforts to manage garbage bears were organized and started by a private institute established by a resort company.

The conference site, Hotel Bleston Court of Hoshino Resort, has sophisticated facilities. There are many other types of lodging nearby. Leisure opportunities include: hiking and bicycle trails, tennis courts, golf courses, shopping malls, art museums, and historic sites.

Using the super-express, travel time is about 2.5 hours from Narita International Airport to Karuizawa.

Websites and Updates

More information about the conference will be announced in upcoming issues of *International Bear News* and on the conference website (http://www.japanbear.org/iba/). For more details on Karuizawa town, visit http://www.town.karuizawa.nagano.jp/html/English/index.html

Call for Papers and Posters

(tentative schedule)

Please prepare your papers. Abstracts for an oral, poster A or B can be submitted beginning 1 October 2005, and the deadline is 31 March 2006. Abstracts may be submitted online using our website. More information on presentations will be posted in *International Bear News* and on the conference website. All aspects of bear biology, conservation, and management will be covered, but presentations on Asian bears are especially encouraged.

Workshops

Space for about six workshops is scheduled during the conference. Two workshops have already been planned on the topic of Asian bears by conference organizers. We invite four additonal workshops on other topics. Details are posted and will be updated on the conference website and in the August 2005 *International Bear News*.

Field Trips

After the conference we will offer several enjoyable, reasonably-priced excursions. Some trips will visit bear habitat guided by Japanese researchers. Now is the time to plan your schedule to attend the conference. We look forward to seeing you in Japan!

18th International Conference on Bear Research and Management Fall 2007 Monterrey, Mexico

Diana Doan-Crider
King Ranch Inst. for Ranch Management
MSC 137
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Kingsville, TX 78363-8202, USA
Phone (361) 593-5407
Fax (361) 593-5404
Email d-crider@tamuk.edu
&
David G. Hewitt
Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Inst.
MSC 218
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Kingsville, TX 78363-8202, USA
Phone (361) 593-3963
Fax (361) 593-3924
Email david.hewitt@tamuk.edu
&
Rodrigo Medellin L.
Centro de Ecologia
Universidad Autonoma de Mexico
Apartado Postal 70-275
04510 Mexico, DF, Mexico
Email
medellin@miranda.ecologia.unam.mx
Phone +52-5-5622-9042
Fax +52-5-5622-8995

Monterrey, Mexico's third largest city (two hours south of the USA), is beautifully situated in the Tamaulipan thornscrub/Chihuahuan desert at 800 masl next to the Sierra Madre Oriental Mountains which rise dramatically 2,000 m to pine/oak forests. Autumn promises bear activity and pleasant weather.

Nearby increasing bear-human conflicts make interest in bears high. Bear research and management has state and federal attention, but there is no active conservation strategy. This conference will focus attention on bear conservation at a critical point, and will encourage biologists to seek bear research and management training.

Monterrey is very progressive, and conference facilities are ideal. An international airport has 250 daily direct flights from major cities. The Monterrey Office of Conventions and Visitors (OCV) has coordinated UN meetings at the CINTERMEX Conference Facility, and will help organize the IBA conference at the same venue (www.cintermex.com.mx/ and www.parquefundidora.org/) including translation services (Spanish, Russian, Japanese, et al), field trips, travel permits, and logistics. Five-star lodging (US$80/night/2004) is connected to the 350-acre enclosed site, which includes an eco-park, museums, banks, restaurants, family areas and an immaculate, newly renovated international hostel (225 beds, US$6/night/2004). Cheaper hotels (US$30-45/night) are within a five-minute metro-ride. Corporate sponsorship should support conference meals, field trips, and special events, keeping registration costs at a minimum. The OCV is funding organization and printing.

Monterrey's two distinguished universities are assisting so student participation should be high. Direct communication with the Mexican Consulate will ensure smooth travel for non-North Americans. Canadian and USA visitors need a Tourist Visa on entry which requires a passport or birth-certificate (2004 regulations).

Nearby are the historic downtown, natural, and scenic areas. Field trips will include Chipinque, Sierra los Picachos, and Cumbres National Parks (American black bear study areas), Garcia Caves, Horsetail Falls and Mina Archeological Area. Nature watching includes red-fronted parrots, migratory songbirds and monarch butterflies. The OCV will also coordinate discount travel for those wishing to visit more of Mexico.

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 ibapresident@bearbiology.com
harry_reynolds@fishgame.state.ak.us

Jon Swenson
Vice President for Eurasia^
Department of Ecology and
Natural Resource Management
Norwegian University of Life Sciences
Postbox 5003
N-1432 Ås, Norway
Phone 47 64 94 85 30
Fax 47 64 94 85 02
Email jon.swenson@umb.no

Karen Noyce
Vice President for Americas*
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

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^
Wildlife Conservation Society
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
Heinzelova 55, 10000 Zagreb
Republic of Croatia
Phone 385 1 2390 141
Fax 385 1 244 1390
Email huber@mavef.vef.hr

Ole Jakob Sørensen*
Nord-trondelag University College
Faculty of Social Sciences and
Natural Resources
Box 2501
N-7729 Steinkjer, Norway
Phone +4774112052
Fax +4774112101
Email ole.j.sorensen@hint.no

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

Koji Yamazaki*
Zoological Laboratory
Ibaraki Nature Museum
700 Osaki
Iwai-city, Ibaraki 306-0622, Japan
Phone +81 297 38 2000
Fax +81 297 38 1999
Email yamako@j.email.ne.jp

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 ibanews@bearbiology.com

Diana Doan-Crider (non-voting)
IBA Student Affairs Coordinator
King Ranch Institute
for Ranch Management
MSC 137
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Kingsville, TX 78363-8202, USA
Phone (361) 593-5407
(361) 593-5401 KRIRM Office
Fax (361) 593-5404
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 2005
*term expires 2007

IBA Membership Application

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

Name_____

Affiliation_____

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City_____**State/Province**_____

ZIP+4 or Postal Code_____ **Country**_____

Telephone_____**Fax**_____

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❑ 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$_____

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❑ 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 General Fund.** US$_____

❑ **Tax Deductible Contribution to IBA Bear Conservation Fund.** US$_____

TOTAL AMOUNT US$_____

❑ Check or Money Order in US$ 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

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

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			*Ursus* 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

*Ursus Journal & IBA Conference Proceedings**			Cost*	Quantity	Total
4th	1980	Montana 1977	$30.00		
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*40% discount for 3 or more volumes, except *Ursus 13, 14, 15 & 16.*				Less 40% Discount	(-$)
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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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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 500 members from over 50 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.
9. Encourage full international participation in the IBA through the siting of conferences, active recruitment of international members and officers, and through financial support for international research, travel to meetings, member ships, and journal subscriptions.
10. Through its integrated relationship with the Bear Specialist Group of the World Conservation Union (IUCN)/Species Survival Commission, identify priorities in bear research and management and recruit project proposals to the IBA Grants Program that address these priorities.
11. Build an endowment and a future funding base to provide ongoing support for IBA core functions and for the IBA Grants Program.
12. Support innovative solutions to bear conservation dilemmas that involve local communities as well as national or regional governments and, to the extent possible, address their needs without compromising bear conservation, recognizing that conservation is most successful where human communities are stable and can see the benefits of conservation efforts.
13. Form partnerships with other institutions to achieve conservation goals, where partnerships could provide additional funding, knowledge of geographical areas, or expertise in scientific or non-scientific sectors.

Deadline for the August 2005 issue is July 15, 2005

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