



the wyoming game & fish department

# LANDER REGION newsletter

## With the Carnivores

Mountain lion relocated out of Dubois



Brian DeBolt moves closer to a male mountain lion to get a clean shot with his dart gun.

Brian Baker and Brian DeBolt captured and relocated a mountain lion from a subdivision just east of Dubois. The lion was a two-year-old male, and was hanging out near the Painted Hills subdivision. They waded into the river downstream from the lion and darted it out of the tree. They were prepared to fish the lion out of the river if that was where he fell, but he ran onto dry land before the drugs took effect. By the time they captured him it was dark and he was still under the effects of the immobilization drugs so he was kept inside a secure area overnight and released early the next morning.

*...carnivores continued on page 2*

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Serving Dubois, Rawlins, Lander, Riverton and places between

# With the Carnivores, continued

## Bear safety

Large carnivore section personnel have been busy in July and August with bear conflicts around the state. Bears become more active this time of year as they travel to fill their bellies with moths, berries and nuts to name a few. Unfortunately a few bears have been getting into unacceptable food sources like garbage.

One such bear was a black bear outside of Lander that had to be relocated due to it's taste for nearby garbage it smelled while following ripe chokecherries through the Sinks Canyon area.

Some of a bear's natural food sources grow in close proximity to houses and subdivisions and if bears become habituated to people there are negative results for bears and humans. It is therefore everyone's responsibility to care for the health and well being of these animals by storing attractants out of reach around your rural home or campsite. Attractants include: horse grain, dog food, bird feed, grills, garbage and anything else with odor. Bears are very tenacious about finding food when they've discovered a way to get an easy meal through improperly stored attractants and food-stuffs.

Please report **any bear incident** immediately to local Game and Fish personnel. On weekends you can call your local game warden (listed in the phone book), large carnivore section personnel or the Game and Fish dispatch office 24/7 at 1-800-442-2767 and they can reach department personnel.



*Grizzly bear obtaining food rewards from unsecured attractants. This incident was staged to film a captive bear literally destroying attractants that would be considered improperly secured. These films and photos will be used in upcoming educational programs and featured on the department's website.*

### Safety Tips for Hunting in Bear Country

- Hunt with a partner.
- Have ready and know how to use a bear deterrent, like bear spray.
- Learn to recognize bear scat, diggings, and tracks.
- Be cautious in dense timber or brush and along creeks and waterways.
- Always remain alert for sudden encounters.
- Know where seasonal food sources are and avoid or be very cautious.
- Beware, the presence of ravens and other scavengers is a good indication that a carcass and a bear may be in the area.
- Separate carcass from entrails, and remove carcass from area as soon as possible.
- If you must leave the carcass, place it where you can view it from a distance. That way you can observe it as you return.
- If a bear has claimed your carcass, leave the scene and report the incident to Game and Fish.



# On the Ground

## Can grazing help wildlife habitat?



*Matt Pollock and Greg Hiatt clipping forage for estimating production*

Brady Frude, Amy Anderson, Greg Hiatt and Matt Pollock collected habitat data (production and species composition) on the Morgan Creek Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WHMA) to determine potential livestock stocking rates and to collect baseline information to monitor the effects of grazing in the future.

The Morgan Creek WHMA is located in the Seminoe Mountains just above Seminoe Reservoir, and is an interesting and unique habitat within the Lander Region. The WHMA offers a variety of habitat types that are important to wildlife throughout the seasons of the year. Mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, dusky (blue) grouse,

several species of hummingbirds and many migratory bird species all make use of the area.

The Lander Region is interested in working with local ranchers to find a way to offer some livestock grazing opportunity in a way that would benefit the wildlife resources on the WHMA. Like many areas in the state, Morgan Creek has fallen victim to an infestation of cheatgrass due both to road corridors and wildfires. There are also areas of expanding basin wildrye that offer limited utility to wildlife later in the summer. Both cheatgrass and basin wildrye offer opportunity for grazing early in the season, and can be managed with intensive livestock grazing systems over short durations, if the timing is right.

A decrease in these plant species, while managing for beneficial native grasses and riparian vegetation, would offer a distinct benefit to wildlife in the area. In addition to other types of treatments, livestock grazing has the potential to be a valuable tool to combat cheatgrass. Use thresholds have been designed to protect aspen, willow and riparian habitats, and are based upon guidelines generated by the Game and Fish Statewide Mule Deer Working Group.

This adaptive approach requires significant flexibility by the livestock operator and the department and demonstrates willingness by both to find mutually beneficial management solutions.

We have a new user friendly Wyoming Game and Fish Department website with Lander Region Webpage. On the regional page you will find local news, monthly newsletters, and soon volunteer opportunities.

Check it out here: <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Regional-Offices/Lander-Region>

# Behind the Badge

## Imprinted birds of prey



*Young Swainson's hawk found in Hudson*

Last month at least two different cases of imprinted raptors came through the Lander Region.

One began when Rawlins Warden Teal Joseph received a call from Seminoe State Park Ranger Lonnie Porter regarding an injured eagle in the Sunshine Beach Campground. Ranger Porter reported that the bird was acting very tame and had landed on his truck. When Teal arrived she discovered an immature bald eagle perched on the bed rails of Ranger Porter's truck. After capturing the eagle and consulting with local raptor experts it was determined that this bald eagle's unusually pleasant attitude toward humans indicated he may have been an imprint bird (potentially captured out of the nest and then set free). It was determined that the eagle had no further injuries.

The second case involved a young Swainson's hawk found in the town of Hudson. When Warden Linnea Sailor arrived at the reporting party's home, the hawk was perched on their riding lawn mower. The hawk was approachable and the homeowner reported unusual behavior of it flying into tree trunks and vocalizing in the yard all day.

After the bird was captured it was determined to be very thin and likely dehydrated, but with no other injuries. After consulting with a local rehabilitator it was determined that the vocalizations were food begging calls the bird exhibited anytime a human came near. In addition this bird does not recognize itself as a bird or know how to hunt natural food sources. Because of all of these reasons, it is believed to have potentially been captured out of the nest, raised and now set free.

Both of these cases are under investigation as to who may have been responsible for the illegal capture and imprinting of these birds. These birds are both with rehabilitators who will determine if they can be released back into the wild.



*Imprinted immature bald eagle perched on Seminoe State Park Ranger' Lonnie Porter's truck.*



## Sage grouse and rabbit poachings

Warden Teal Joseph investigated a cottontail rabbit poaching in Rawlins. It was reported that two teenage males started shooting rabbits at approximately 11:30 PM, from the road, in the west part of Rawlins. Two dead cottontails were recovered. Teal discovered the rabbits had been shot with Gamo Red Fire Pellets, from a pellet gun. Joseph has several leads that she is still investigating.

She also recently responded to a report of dead turkey vultures that had been discovered in a business's dumpster. After having the pleasure of dumpster diving, she discovered what had been dumped were actually four dead sage grouse, that had been shot. She went through the entire dumpster, but was unable to find any useful leads as to who the suspects may have been. Teal continues to look for information regarding who shot and dumped the sage grouse.



On upper left: poached cottontail skinned to show Gamo Red Fire Pellet; left below: poached cottontail; on right: some of the poached sage grouse found in the dumpster outside a Rawlins business.

If you have any information on any of these cases please let us know through either our Stop Poaching Hotline: 1-877-WGFD-TIP (1-877-943-3847), contacting a regional office, by sending a text to 847411 (TIP411) with WGFD as the first word of the message, or on-line at <http://gf.state.wy.us/wildlife/enforcement/stoppoaching/submitTip.aspx>.



# Of Interest

## Parades

Personnel across the region were involved in local parades recently.



The Dubois fish hatchery entered one of its fish distribution trucks into the Dubois 4th of July parade. They handed out candy and cooled down the crowd with some soakers.



Lander and Green River regions participated in the Carbon County Fair parade in Rawlins.



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