



## In the Air

### Bats and rabies



*Nongame Biologist Brian Zinke removes a bat from a mist net during survey work.*

The Nongame Section of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department has been getting many questions about bats lately. The onset of fall weather often brings an increase in bat encounters as bats are moving to their winter ranges and juveniles are trying to make it on their own. Many people associate bats with rabies and get nervous when they see a bat. Bats are wonderful and important mammals and with some insight into them and into rabies, you can feel more confident about when you need to be concerned and when you don't.

Rabies is an infectious viral disease that affects the nervous system of humans and other mammals. People get rabies from the bite of an animal with rabies. Any mammal, like a raccoon, skunk, fox, or bat, can have rabies and transmit it to people. It is also possible, but quite rare, that people may get rabies if infectious material from a rabid animal, such as saliva, gets directly into their eyes, nose, mouth, or a wound. Awareness of the facts about bats and rabies can help people protect themselves, their families, and their pets.

Bats are just one mammal that can carry rabies, and the disease can only be confirmed in a laboratory. Any wild animal that is easily approachable should be suspected to be sick or stressed. Because there is no guar-

antee that a rabid animal will behave any differently than a normal one, it is best never to handle any wild animal. In the case of bats, any bat that is found in a place where bats are not usually seen (for example, in a room in your home or on the lawn), or is unable to fly, is more likely than others to be sick or injured. It could also be a juvenile just learning to navigate. Such bats (sick, injured, or juvenile) are often the most approachable, but should be left alone.

If you are bitten by a bat – or if infectious material (such as saliva) from a bat gets into your eyes, nose, mouth, or a fresh wound – wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water and get medical advice immediately. Whenever

possible, the bat should be captured by Game and Fish or an animal control officer and sent to a laboratory for rabies testing. People usually know when they have been bitten by an animal. However, because bats have small teeth which may leave marks that are not easily seen, there are situations in which you should seek medical advice even in the absence of an obvious bite wound. For example, if you are a deep sleeper or if you find a bat in the room of an unattended child or near a mentally impaired or intoxicated person, seek medical advice and have the bat tested.

If you think your pet or domestic animal has been bitten by a bat or other rabid animal, immediately contact a veterinarian or your health department for assistance and have the suspect animal tested for rabies. Remember to keep vaccinations current for cats, dogs, and other animals. It is a good idea to keep your cats indoors and dogs supervised if you have bats nearby (this is safer for your pets and for healthy bats).



*Little brown bat*

If you have further bat questions or concerns, please contact the Nongame Section at the Lander Regional Office at 307-332-2688. If you want to find out more about rabies visit [www.cdc.gov/rabies](http://www.cdc.gov/rabies). For more general bat information see [www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org).

## On the Ground

### Water for wildlife



*Landowner Jerry Newmeyer (right), and friend Phil Hills, building a livestock enclosure fence around a watering facility designed for wildlife in the Red Desert northwest of Rawlins.*

**W**ater For Wildlife Foundation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department teamed up with Jerry Newmeyer, a private landowner, to install a solar powered watering facility this month in the Red Desert northwest of Rawlins. The project will provide a water source for migrating pronghorn, sage grouse, elk, and mule deer in an area where water is scarce.

A pump was installed into an existing well on the property, and water will be pumped into a 12 ft tire tank which was cost-shared by the Saratoga-Encampment- Rawlins Conservation District. From the tank, water will overflow into a small depression to provide easy drinking for birds and other small mammals. The area will be re-seeded with a mix of forbs and grasses to provide cover and forage within the enclosure for wildlife. The system is designed to provide water throughout the year. In an area of Wyoming with very limited water, these small projects can benefit many wildlife species.



*Serving Dubois, Rawlins, Lander, Riverton and places between*

# With the Families

## Caving

Forever Wild Families took a caving excursion in Sinks Canyon State Park recently. The spelunkers (that's what cavers are called) descended through small openings, rocks, large passageways, ladders and ropes while making their way through the maze. The group saw the Middle Popo Agie River flowing through the cave and looked for cave fish in a pond inside one of the inner rooms. They even turned off their lights and sat in complete darkness for about one minute (it was so dark, no ones eyes could even begin to adjust). Thank you Jones family for organizing another outdoor adventure.



# With the Carnivores

## Field season wrapping up

The Large Carnivore Section's grizzly bear monitoring crew wrapped up a very successful summer with a backcountry trapping operation on the Soda Fork drainage in the Jackson Region. The crew was able to capture an adult female and a subadult male grizzly bear, bringing the overall captures of the summer to 16 grizzly bears (7 female, 9 male). This summer was beneficial in increasing the sample size on independent



aged females for monitoring. In addition to the capture efforts, grizzly bear observation flights were completed in the Wyoming portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly bear population. During the crew's few minutes of time not horseback last month, they fixed up the backcountry cabin for the next users and cleared trail for future riders to have easier passage.

Also in August, the Section verified increased conflicts between people and large carnivores, especially livestock depredation involving grizzly bears and wolves.

While Game and Fish does not manage wolves, it is still statutorily obligated to compensate for wolf damage in the trophy game area. It makes sense with the increased abundance and distribution of wolves in Wyoming, an increasing amount of depredations have been verified throughout northwest Wyoming. All information pertaining to wolf



conflicts were provided to the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The field verification process takes the majority of our personnel's time, but in addition a great deal of effort goes into proactive measure to reduce conflicts through our Bear Wise Wyoming program. The reality of recovery for animals like grizzly bears and wolves is that some conflicts are inherent, and an immediate response from our trained professionals is necessary to maintain these animals on the landscape and provide for human safety.



*Pictures from top right, clockwise: Fixing the backcountry cabin, Brian DeBolt verifying a calf killed, Dusty Lassiter teaching kids how to properly store food in bear country, and clearing the trail.*



# At the Camp

An evening affair



Game and Fish hosted a fundraising evening at the Whiskey Mountain Conservation Camp as a part of an effort to raise \$2.5 million dollars towards the \$4.5 million needed for renovations. Thirty-four people attended the evening where they were led on a tour of the camp by Brain Parker, given a history presentation by Dita Daub, and a discussion of the future led by Director Scott Talbott. In the end many positive comments were received and lots of support for the project from those who attended the dinner. We also received several verbal commitments for funding as well a couple of individuals who were spearheading some additional local fundraising.

We are still actively raising funds for the renovation. To learn more and to help the future of wildlife conservation please visit [wgfd.wyo.gov/whiskeymtn](http://wgfd.wyo.gov/whiskeymtn).

**YOU can make a difference in the future! Will you?**

[wgfd.wyo.gov/whiskeymtn](http://wgfd.wyo.gov/whiskeymtn)

# In the Field

Jumping mice



Miranda DeSmith collects measurements from a jumping mouse in late June.

Nongame Mammalogist Nichole Bjornlie, with the help of other Game and Fish personnel, completed another season of monitoring for Preble's meadow jumping mice at Friend Creek.

Over two weeks, they captured 33 unique individuals, including five individuals previously captured in 2014 and 2015. Because of the morphological similarities between Preble's and the western jumping mouse, they collected an ear punch from each new individual for genetic analysis, which are currently pending.



*Western jumping mouse*

Preble's meadow jumping mice are federally threatened and the recovery team is currently in the process of finalizing the recovery plan for the subspecies.



# Around the Region

Photos from the field..by Linnea Sailor (eagle, grouse and porcupine) and Stan Harter (all others)

