

The New Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management

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ABSTRACT: Since 1996, the Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management (ICWDM) has been a clearinghouse for research-based information on mitigating wildlife damage. In July 2006, the ICWDM underwent a major revision to better serve the needs of its visitors. The site received a new URL, <http://icwdm.org>, layout, architecture, and content. Plans for further site enhancement, includes creating an image library, expanding content to include non-North American species, and encouraging interested parties to join a Community of Practice in eXtension.

ICWDM 1996-2004

In 1996, Hygnstrom et. al envisioned a site that would meet the need for information on wildlife damage management of five key constituencies: property owners and managers; local, state and federal wildlife managers and biologists; professional wildlife control operators; extension personnel; and policy makers. Initial funding for the project (\$98,000) was provided by the North Central and Western Regions of the United States Department of Agriculture, Cooperative, State, Research, Education, and Extension Service, Integrated Pest Management Regional Grants Program (CSREES-IPM). The Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management (ICWDM) launched with the URL <http://wildlifedamage.unl.edu> with Dallas Virchow, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, serving as the webmaster. **ICWDM 2004-2006**

By 2004, the site's founders determined that the site needed an overhaul to keep pace with changing technology. The founders tapped Raj Smith of Cornell University to redesign the site, after receiving \$60,000 from The North Central and Eastern Regions of CSREES-IPM for site improvements in 2004. This conversion made the site more accessible to disabled viewers, and provided visitors the option of viewing "Prevention and Control of Wildlife Damage" in HTML or PDF formats. To better reflect the multi-institutional nature of the site, the founders decided to change the URL from <http://wildlifedamage.unl.edu> to <http://icwdm.org> and adopt a logo (Fig. 1).

In September 2004, Stephen Vantassel became the new webmaster. Vantassel was given the responsibility to transfer the material from the previous URL and to expand the site's content. During this time, the content and usability of the ICWDM has advanced dramatically.

I. Publications

To increase access to documents that deal with wildlife damage management, we established a cooperative agreement with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln library to use its Digital Commons program. The Digital Commons, <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/icwdm/>, allows Google®-like searches of the entire document collection or specific folders. The information below, through Roman Numeral II, lists the publications that have been or will be added to the Digital Commons.

A. Publications Previously Unavailable in Digital Format

Publication	# of Publications	# Uploaded to Digital Commons as of 9/1/06
<i>Proceedings of the Vertebrate Pest Conference</i>	Vols. 1-16	Vols. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 13
<i>Proceedings of the Bird Control Seminar (note: proceedings were not published for the first seminar).</i>	Vols. 2-8	All
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission	13	All
<i>The Probe</i> (National Animal Damage Control Association newsletter)	241	223

B. Training Materials

- *Prevention and Control of Wildlife Damage (1994). (currently under revision).* This publication is now available in HTML as well as PDF formats.
- *Best Practices Manual for Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators in New York State (2004).*
- Electrical Safety PowerPoint.
http://icwdm.org/education/ProfessionalEducation.asp#Safety_Training
- Zoonotic Awareness PowerPoint by Colorado Public Health Dept.
<http://icwdm.org/diseases/avianinfluenza.asp>

II. Cooperative Agreements and/or Sharing of Information

- **National Wildlife Research Center Publications** (645 articles awaiting upload by library personnel to Digital Commons. Estimated time September, 2006).
- **The Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study newsletters** (entire list awaiting upload by library personnel to Digital Commons. Estimated time September, 2006).

III. Additions to the ICWDM Site

- **Wildlife Damage Inspection Training Course**--Approved by the National Assoc. of Home Inspectors. <http://icwdm.org/Inspection/Course/default.asp>
- **Wildlife Damage Inspection Key**-- <http://icwdm.org/Inspection/Default.asp>

- **Damage Prevention Strategies for Homeowners**—Page dedicated to providing specific tips for reducing the risks of encountering wildlife problems around structures. <http://icwdm.org/Prevention/Default.asp>
- **Ask the Expert**--Professional & Public- This allows visitors to receive personalized responses to their questions. The ICWDM receives an average of 5 per week.
- **Animal Handling Information**-- <http://icwdm.org/wildlife/euthanasia/default.asp>
- **Trapping Information**—For example, we provide information on how to release a trapped skunk, and setting pocket gopher traps.
- **Wildlife Damage Management Glossary**—We define common terms and acronyms used in the wildlife control industry. <http://icwdm.org/Glossary/default.asp>
- **Wildlife Damage Management Career Information**—Page contains tips on getting started in the wildlife damage control industry. <http://icwdm.org/Professional/gettingstarted.asp>
- **Wildlife Damage News Links**—News information is gathered by Gretta McIntyre. <http://icwdm.org>
- **Mystery Photo of the Month**--A fun way for people to test their skills in identifying wildlife damage. <http://icwdm.org>
- **Image Library**-- In cooperation with the National Wildlife Research Center, the ICWDM embarked on the creation of a royalty free image database. Through the generous donations of individuals and organizations (Table 1), the ICWDM has collected over 10,000 images. Though still in the early stages, the site can be seen at <http://libtextcenter.unl.edu/content/custom/wildlife/wildlifesplash.php>. The database will be searchable and will contain a function that allows images to be directly utilized in PowerPoint presentations. We believe this photo library will help educate the public about all aspects of wildlife damage management.
- **ICWDM newsletter**—The free monthly e-zine provides 109 subscribers with a quick, bulleted list, of improvements to the site.
- **Online Store**—*Wildlife Control Technology* magazine--ICWDM has exclusive rights to sell digital copies of complete issues and individual articles from its first ten years, 1994-2003. Other items, including DVD's and reference guides, are also available through the ICWDM. Recently, we have been granted permission to sell issues from 2004 to the present. A complete listing of products is available at <http://icwdm.org/credits/store.asp>.
- **Over 7800 external links.** The ICWDM remains the premiere portal for finding information on all aspects of wildlife damage management.

IV. Upcoming Projects & Goals

- **Create non-English materials**-- We need translators and reviewers. Spanish translation would be the logical choice but we are open to translating documents into any non-English language. One document has been translated and we hope to add more as translators and reviewers become available.
- **Address international species/problems**--Historically, the ICWDM has focused on North American wildlife problems. We would like to broaden our scope to

include wildlife damage management information on non-North American species, including both native and invasive species.

- **Create additional learning modules**--The public needs understandable educational materials that explain the fundamentals of wildlife damage management. We believe that by addressing the public’s most common wildlife damage problems, the ICWDM can reduce the workload of educators and biologists, allowing them to delve into other issues on wildlife damage management.
- **Expand youth education**--We are planning to develop Flash and “Ag in the Classroom” learning modules. We will also provide information on the career opportunities available in the field of wildlife damage management.
- **Expand use of non-print media**—We are beginning to embark on the use of podcasting to disseminate published material for people to download to their iPods or other MP3 players. Presently, two publications have been adapted to audio format. Additionally, we are collecting video footage with the goal to provide educational content through video streaming.
- **Expand wildlife disease information**--With emerging diseases, such as Hantavirus, West Nile virus, and avian influenza, the public’s need for factual information has dramatically increased.

V. eXtension

The ICWDM has been selected as a Pioneer Community of Practice with eXtension, a recent national program sponsored by CSREES. We have created 300 FAQ’s for the eXtension database and are recruiting individuals to join our Community of Practice. We believe eXtension will provide a marvelous way to provide information to the public. To learn more, please contact us via our website, <http://icwdm.org>.

IMPACTS

The information below gives a snap shot of the effect the changes in the ICWDM has had on fulfilling its mission. The anonymous nature of the internet makes it extremely difficult to evaluate the impact of our work. Visitors rarely write back to tell us how we saved them time, money and further damage. We plan on performing a comprehensive analysis of our impacts at a future date.

SITE	http://wildlifedamage.unl.edu 1996-2004	http://icwdm.org July 2005-present	% Change
Date of Data	September 2004	July 2006	
Visitors/month*	4,500	44,238	+983%
Countries	80	87	+8.75%
Proceedings, Articles, other downloadables	>1800	2,656	+140%

*We chose to list the number of site visitors rather than listing the number of hits, because visitor counts provides a clearer indication of the quantity of people receiving information.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The ICWDM needs your help to achieve its goal of helping people resolve wildlife damage problems in responsible ways. First, we always appreciate new content. Articles (both published

and unpublished), PowerPoint files, videos, research summaries, extension fact sheets, bibliographies, worksheets, and reading lists are of great interest to us and to the site's visitors. Additionally, we welcome images on all aspects of wildlife management, including damage, sign, human-interactions, techniques, research, equipment, animals in their natural setting, and more. For more information on the types of images we desire, visit <http://icwdm.org/credits/photocredits.asp>. We will scan your slides and/or hard copy photos, create high and low resolution digital versions, and return the originals along with digital copies of all the images we use. We will also ensure that due recognition is provided for your generosity (Table 1).

Finally, we are looking for individuals and organizations who wish to partner with us in our work with eXtension. We have many opportunities for people to assist us and we are open to new ideas as well.

LITERATURE CITED

Hynstrom, S.E., R.M. Timm, and G.A. Larsen, editors. 1994. Prevention and Control of Wildlife Damage. University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension. Lincoln, NE.

Hynstrom, S. E., R. H. Schmidt, P. D. Curtis, and G. K. Yarrow. 1998. Development of an internet center for wildlife damage management (<http://www.ianr.unl/wildlife>). Proceedings of the Vertebrate Pest Conference 18: 420-421.

Curtis, P.D., J. Shultz, and L.A. Braband. 2004. Best Practices Training Manual for Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators in New York State. Cornell University Cooperative Extension, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.



Figure 1. The logo for the Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management, adopted in 2005.

Table 1. Contributors of images on wildlife damage management to the ICWDM

Name	Business-Organization
Kent Aden	The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District
Erin Bauer	University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Stephen Bis	http://www.floridaevergladesalligator.com
Justin Boner	University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Brian Bussey	Private Citizen
Kevin Clark	Critter Control Inc.
John Consolini	Northwest Nuisance Wildlife Control
Bob Gilman	Private Citizen
Matthew Grady	http://www.BatGuys.com
Steve Hamm	Private Citizen
J.P. Hansma	Muskrat Department of the Province of Groningen
Alaine Hudlin	Private Citizen
Alan Huot	Wildlife Control Supplies
Mark Jones	Amtech Pest & Nuisance Wildlife Control Inc.
William Krupicka	Private Citizen
E. Lunquist	Private Citizen
Tim Julien	A & T Wildlife
Kirk LaPierre	A1 Saver
Kyle McDowell	Northern Wildlife Control
Mike Merchant, Ph.D	Texas Cooperative Extension
Sean Met	A Wildlife Pro
Nebraska Game & Parks	NEBRASKAland Magazine
Jeff Norris	Nuisance Wildlife Relocation
Jerry Pickel	Pickel's Wildlife Services
Dave Purwin	Desert Wildlife Services, Inc.
Glen Robertson	Robertson's Wildlife Removal
Bill Rogers Jr.	Animal Damage Control
Robert Ryan	Ryan's Wildlife Control
Rick Shadel	S & S Professional Wildlife Control Services
Dirk Shearer	The Wildlife Control Co. Inc.
Kenton Shepard	Peak to Prairie Inspection Service
Ron Scheller	Nuisance Wildlife Control
Eric Stehlik	Private Citizen
Gary Storms	Storms Wildlife Control
Michael Tucker	Wildlife Removal Services
Stephen Vantassel	ICWDM webmaster
Dallas Virchow	ICWDM webmaster
Gary Watters	Private Citizen
James White	http://www.animalcontrolsolutions.com