



California Fish and Game Commission
FGC@fgc.ca.gov
(916) 653-4899

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY



California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Coyotes in the Urban Environment, Workshop #2
May 28, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

Agenda

- I. Welcome**
- II. Goals of the Workshop**
- III. Education Campaigns**

Presentation: Dr. Michelle Lute – Project Coyote

Dr. Michelle Lute is the National Carnivore Conservation Manager for the California-based, national organization Project Coyote and former wildlife biologist at the New Mexico State Land Office where she worked for biodiversity protections across nine million acres of the fourth largest state in the lower 48 states. She is a conservation scientist and advocate with fifteen years' experience in conservation on public and private lands around the globe. Dr. Lute holds a PhD in wildlife management from Michigan State University and an MS in animal behavior and ecology from the University of Notre Dame. She started her environmental career in the National Park Service, worked for large and small non-governmental organizations, and held research positions at universities across the U.S. Dr. Lute has authored more than 30 publications in ecology and social science disciplines to develop evidence-based approaches to human-wildlife coexistence. Across her career, she dedicates her professional life to promoting human-wildlife coexistence through effective public engagement, equitable participatory processes, and evidence-based decision-making.

Presentation: Dr. Eric Strauss and Dr. Melinda Weaver – Loyola Marymount University

Dr. Eric Strauss is President's Professor of Biology at Loyola Marymount University and Executive Director of the Loyola Marymount University Center for Urban Resilience (CUREs). His research includes collaborative studies of coyotes, crows, hummingbirds and urban forest ecology, with a specialty in understanding animal-human relationships, humane management responses to wildlife problems and urban greenspace program development. He has co-written multi-media textbooks in biology (Biology The Web of Life) and urban ecology (Urban EcoLab) as well as hosting multiple video series on the life sciences and ecology. In collaboration with photographer Daniel Gottlieb, Dr. Strauss has authored a natural history and photography book on the ecology of hummingbirds. He received a Bachelor of Science in Mass Communication from Emerson College and a Ph.D. in Biology from Tufts University in 1990. Prior to coming to Los Angeles, he held teaching fellowships and faculty appointments at Tufts University, The University of Massachusetts Boston, and Boston College.

Dr. Melinda Weaver, CUREs' postdoctoral fellow, is an urban ecologist who will primarily be responsible for the coyote long-term management project. Her primary questions involve how urbanization affects animal populations and how animals respond to changes in their environments. She is especially interested in the interactions between humans and animals in

urban areas, which is why she is so excited to work on urban coyotes. Dr. Weaver received her Ph.D. in animal behavior at Arizona State University, studying behavioral differences in birds across an urban gradient. She also spent six months in India studying urban wild dog populations. While working toward her Ph.D., she also served as an adjunct professor and teaching assistant for many courses, such as human anatomy, animal behavior, behavioral ecology and introductory biology, and has mentored more than 75 undergraduate students who worked on her field team. Dr. Weaver received her B.S. in Journalism at the University of Kansas. She has worked as a sports reporter and owned a dog training business.

Questions and Discussion

IV. Coyote Management Plans

Presentation: Kent Smirl – Wildlife Watch

Kent Smirl works for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Southern Enforcement District as an Associate Governmental Program Analyst, hired part-time to assist in developing CDFW's Wildlife Watch program model. Kent has a Bachelor of Science in Fisheries from Humboldt State University. In 2017, he retired from CDFW's law enforcement division where he worked for 27 years. In 1978, he started his career working as a seasonal aid in the CDFW Anadromous Fisheries Branch. In his early years, he worked primarily in the marine environment as a contract biologist in the CDFW Artificial Reef and Drift Longline Program. In 1990, he was deputized and specialized in commercial fishery enforcement. In 2002, he helped develop the CDFW Natural Resource Volunteer Program (NRVP), formerly known as the Senior Volunteer Program. Kent helps model a leadership style that teaches respect and stewardship towards people and wildlife.

Presentation: Jonathan Young – The Presidio Trust

Jonathan Young was born and raised in the foothills of the Angeles National Forest on the outskirts of Los Angeles County. After receiving his bachelor's degree in Biology from San Diego State University he moved to San Francisco. It was then that he began his long-term relationship with the Presidio National Park. Starting as a volunteer habitat steward, Jonathan worked his way through several Presidio natural resources internships while completing his master's degree at San Francisco State University, studying urban amphibian conservation and disease ecology. Upon the completion of his studies, he was hired by the Presidio Trust as the first dedicated staff member with a sole focus on wildlife. Since then, he has been developing the Presidio's wildlife program which includes surveying, monitoring, managing, and restoring the diversity of animals found in the park.

Presentation: Michael Bruckner – City of Arcadia

Michael Bruckner has a BA in Political Science from Sonoma State University and a Master's in Government from the Fels Institute of Government at the University of Pennsylvania. He started at the city of Arcadia in 2016 as Assistant to the City Manager and was promoted to Deputy City Manager in 2019. Prior to that, his city work experiences included Palo Alto, Leesburg (Virginia), and Anaheim, among others.

Questions and Discussion

V. Conclusion and Next Steps