

California Fish and Game 100(3): the special wildlife issue

Welcome to issue 3 of the 100th Anniversary volume of *California Fish and Game*. As Chair of the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee, I am pleased to introduce this special issue devoted to terrestrial wildlife and ecosystems. The fact that this is California's longest-running, continuously published scientific journal is a testament to the commitment of our state scientists, their pursuit of knowledge, and their dedication to our exceptionally diverse wildlife populations. It also reflects the increasing interest of world-renowned scientists in publishing in *California Fish and Game*.

The work of scientists at the Department of Fish and Wildlife and elsewhere has helped guide decisions and the direction of natural resource conservation and management programs for more than a century. It has also helped educate the public, with the result that they are able to provide better informed comments to their elected representatives regarding legislation or regulations.

As a result of careful research by scientists throughout the world—some of which has been published in *California Fish and Game*—we have learned how to prevent, mitigate, or correct some ecological challenges. The recent expansion of the 24-year-old California Oil Spill Prevention and Response Act is a good example of this. The law enabling the state to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and mitigate oil spills in our *marine* waterways now protects *all* of California's waters. Another example is the recent state-wide requirement for use of non-lead ammunition for hunting, which will reduce wildlife exposure to lead as that law is phased in by the Department and Commission.

In 1914 the human population in California was around 2.5 million. Today 15 times as many people live in our state, and the development that made that level of population increase possible has destroyed a tremendous amount of wildlife habitat. An educated public's concerns and positive attitudes toward wildlife have led to mitigation for some impacts to ecosystems, but there is much more work to do, and new challenges to address.

One hundred years ago most people had never heard of invasive species, but now we are painfully aware of them and the devastating effects they can have on native ecosystems. As a result of research published in *California Fish and Game*, we now have programs designed to minimize the potential for new non-natives from being transported into the state. Climate change and cyclical droughts also affect our wildlife by changing habitat conditions. Our scientists are on the cutting edge of coping with those forces. At the same time, we know we have much more work to do, particularly with regard to climate change adaptation, and time is of the essence in addressing these needs. Meeting these and other challenges requires, and will continue to require, decisions founded in solid science.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife is a leader in the conservation of natural resources and the scientific papers published in *California Fish and Game* demonstrate that admirably. Congratulations to Director Charlton H. Bonham, and all the managers and employees of the Department, for your excellent work. "Conservation of Wildlife Through Education" is more than a motto; it is your way of life. Thank you and much continued success to you all.

Anthony Rendon, Chair
Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee