

To: PABIODIV@webmail.upb.pitt.edu
From: Sally Zaino szaino@earthlink.net
Subject: Re: PABIODIV: coyotes
Sender: owner-pabiodiv@webmail.upb.pitt.edu
Date: Wed, 23 Mar 2005 12:12:15 -0500 (EST)

Well written and thoughtful response, though I do take issue with the first paragraph. I do not think most hunters are selfish (and certainly not John Laskowski!), and I do believe they serve a purpose in helping to manage the deer overpopulation problem. But we have altered the natural relationship by eradicating the wild predators, and we are paying the price. I know that in some parts of the state there are complaints of too few deer, but in our area, they are so plentiful that it is impossible for our woods to regenerate and diversity at all levels is suffering. Hunters are unable to be an effective predator, given the suburban sprawl that is overtaking Pennsylvania. We have 11 deer in our woods, only a stone's throw from our house--too close for us to allow hunters. From what I have read, the coyotes are filling the niche left open by the wolves. Whatever managed the wolf population (probably not a predator, but the availability of prey) should also manage the coyote population at some point.

The problem that repeats itself all over the country in various forms is the conflict between humans and the predators which either are a direct danger to us, or take our livestock (or pets). I don't see this problem being resolved in a feasible way until we learn to do our land use planning in such a way that residences are clustered together and wild areas are allowed to flourish. The problem is that in these localized conflicts, humans almost always win, but in the big picture, we will lose on a grand scale, if we do not learn to co-exist with healthy naturally balanced wild lands.

Sally.

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