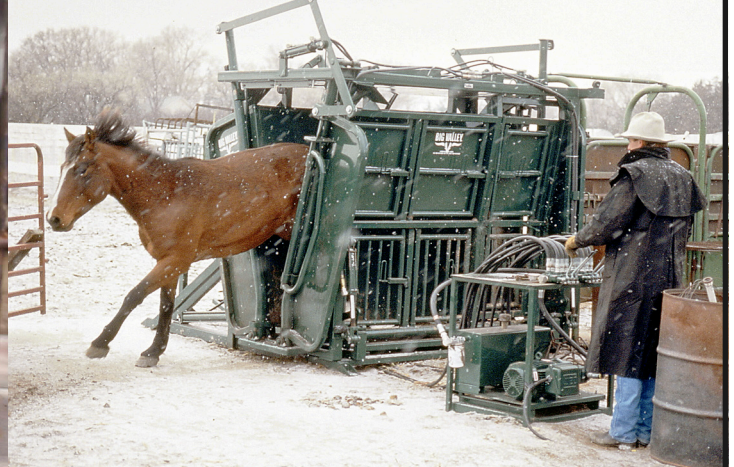


D V E A

# NATURE'S NEWSLETTER

ONLINE EDITION



WILDLIFE AND THE ENVIRONMENT





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# DISCOVERING NATURE



© Marcelo del Puerto, Photographer  
*Wild blue lupine is a spring-blooming perennial wildflower. Its beautiful spikes of purple flowers bloom in mid-May through early June. Look also for their palmate compound leaves..*

## Wildflowers Right Outside Your Door

You can find wildflowers just about anywhere! Look for wildflowers at your local park, in your backyard, in fields and forests, and along roadsides. Not only are they nice to look at, but can be food for wildlife, including pollinators. Wildlife may eat the leaves, flowers, seeds or stems.

Learn more in "Conservationist for Kids" pollinator issue ([https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration\\_pdf/0417c4kpollinators.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/0417c4kpollinators.pdf))

Below are some species of native wildflowers:

- butterfly weed—orange flowers, found in dry fields throughout summer
- wild blue lupine—blue/purple flowers, found in dry, sandy areas from late spring to summer
- selfheal—light purple flowers, found on lawns, fields, and roadsides from late spring to fall
- black-eyed susan—yellow/orange flowers, look in dry to moist open areas from summer to fall
- jack in the pulpit—green and purple striped hood, grows in moist woods from spring to early summer

Want to know more about a certain species? Look up specific wildflowers on the New York Flora Atlas website (<http://newyork.plantatlas.usf.edu/>).

Try planting wildflowers in your backyard (<https://pss.uvm.edu/ppp/articles/wildflower.html>). Choose native species whenever possible ([https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands\\_forests\\_pdf/factnatives.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/factnatives.pdf)). Short on extra space? Use a container.

**Resource: Wildlife, Fish & Marine Life Newsletter (6/10/20)**  
**For more information: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/>**

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*A pangolin rescued from the wildlife trade is released back into the wild.*

© Photo By Prof. Ray Jansen Francois Meyer / The African Pangolin Working Group

# WILDLIFE MARKETS

by Kathryn Kullberg

*Director, Marine and Wildlife Protection, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)*

Most people are familiar with the probable link between the current COVID-19 pandemic and a wildlife market in Wuhan, China, and the devastating human toll that resulted from its spread. How can we reduce the risk that another pandemic of wildlife origin does not once again bring life as we know it to a standstill? The key is understanding that our treatment of animals informs the consequences we face.

In live wildlife markets, wild mammals, birds, reptiles, and other species are kept in unhygienic, stressful, cramped conditions to be sold for human consumption. They are often slaughtered on site, and bodily fluids such as feces, blood and saliva are

mixed to make disease transmission possible.

A bat was likely the original carrier of a coronavirus that, once it infected another animal in the wildlife market chain, mutated into the virus that causes COVID-19 that then infected humans working and shopping in the market.

Zoonotic diseases, like COVID-19, are those that can be spread from an animal to a human. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, animals spread more than six out of every 10 known infectious diseases to people, and three out of every four new or emerging infectious



© Photo Courtesy of Pan Nature  
*A pangolin being sold for consumption at a wildlife market in Vietnam.*

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## WILDLIFE MARKETS



*A coati in Guatemala.*

© Photo By Manuel Solano / For HSUS

diseases in people are zoonotic in nature. And the risk is only increasing given the growing trade in wildlife worldwide and human encroachment of wildlife habitats.

COVID-19 is not the first disease caused by a coronavirus to have a global impact – in the last two decades, we saw the spread of MERS, which was a deadly respiratory illness that originated from animals in 2012, and SARS, which was linked back to a wildlife market that killed almost 800 people worldwide in 2003. The impact of COVID-19 has been exponentially higher, and although the warning was on the wall long before 2019, we did not heed its warning.

Given this clear link, our international arm, Humane Society International, has released a white paper (<https://www.hsi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Wildlife-Markets-and-COVID-19-White-Paper.pdf>) calling for an immediate closure of live wildlife markets globally because they are inhumane and pose a threat to human health.

Aligning with these efforts, the Humane Society of the United States and the Humane Society Legislative Fund are advocating for state and federal legislation to address the threat of wildlife markets in the United States, along

with risks associated with the import and interstate transportation of injurious species. Although wildlife markets in the U.S. may not sell the same species as those

**Humane Society of the U.S. (HSUS)** is the nation's largest and most effective animal protection organization. HSUS and its affiliates provide hands-on care and services to more than 100,000 animals each year, and professionalize the field through education and training for local organizations.

HSUS is driving transformational change in the U.S. and around the world by combating large-scale cruelties such as puppy mills, animal fighting, factory farming, seal slaughter, horse cruelty, captive hunts and the wildlife trade.

**For More Information:** [www.humanesociety.org](http://www.humanesociety.org)

**Humane Society International (HSI)** works around the globe to promote the human-animal bond, rescue and protect dogs and cats, improve farm animal welfare, protect wildlife, promote animal-free testing and research, respond to natural disasters and confront cruelty to animals in all of its forms.

**For More Information:** [www.hsi.org](http://www.hsi.org)

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## WILDLIFE MARKETS



**LEFT:** Turtles being sold at a wildlife market in Vietnam; **RIGHT:** Figurines carved out of ivory in Washington, DC.

found in wildlife markets abroad, the threat for zoonotic disease transmission is the same and should be mitigated.

However, permanently closing live wildlife markets is just a piece of the puzzle for ending the harmful international wildlife trade. We must also do more to end the sale of wildlife in the exotic pet trade, for display in roadside zoos, to be eaten as food, and the trade of their parts and products for medicinal, decorative, or any other use. Animals suffer from egregious cruelty while species are being pushed to the brink of extinction in part because of the wildlife trade.

In Pennsylvania, Senate Bill 605 has been introduced to prohibit the trade in many wild animal species including giraffes, lions, pangolins and sharks. Reducing demand for their parts and products will protect their wild populations.

You can make an impact by avoiding unaccredited zoo facilities, by not purchasing trinkets or artwork made with wildlife parts, not consuming shark fin soup, and not wearing jewelry or other products made from wild animals. The best place for wildlife is live in the wild.

**The current pandemic has brought to light our close connection to animals, and how cruelty and exploitation can lead to destructive global outcomes for animals and humans alike. We need to rethink our relationship with these sentient creatures and initiate urgent policy reform to protect both human health and animal welfare.**

### ABOUT WILDLIFE “TRADE”

**Wildlife trade poses a major threat to wild animals across the globe. It puts a price tag on species, leading to unsustainable population declines and causing undue pain and distress to animals killed for their body parts or smuggled long distances for the pet trade.**

- Wildlife parts sold in the trade include skins, leathers, teeth, bones, trophies, live animals and more.
- Live animals in the trade may be used as exotic pets, stock for game farms, zoo animals and biomedical research subjects.
- The line between legal and illegal wildlife trade is blurred, as poachers and traffickers often try to pass off illegal wildlife products as legal. In addition, consumers may unknowingly break the law by bringing wildlife products across borders without proper permits.
- Tiger bones and rhino horn are often bought for medicinal purposes, but they have no scientifically proven medicinal value.
- Wildlife traders sometimes breed animals in captivity, kill them and sell their parts. These facilities are sometimes disguised as sanctuaries.
- The illegal wildlife trade is linked with organized criminal syndicates involved in arms, drugs and human trafficking.
- Endangered species are highly valued in the wildlife trade because of their rarity, leading to overexploitation and black market trade, and pushing these species further toward extinction.

<https://www.hsi.org/issues/wildlife-trade/>



# FLYING FOX *the Largest Bat in the World*



© Drawing by Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio

Last year, after a very long absence, I finally picked up my pencils and began to draw again.

My focus is wildlife and botanicals. And so, this past April 17<sup>th</sup>, also known as National Bat Day, I decided to pay homage and draw a flying fox (fruit bat). The flying fox is a genus of megabats which are among the largest in the world. As the common name “flying fox” suggests, their heads resemble that of a small fox because of their small ears and large eyes. They lack tails. Weighing up to 4 lbs with a wingspan up to 6 feet, they live in the tropics and subtropics of Asia (including the Indian subcontinent), Australia, East Africa, and some oceanic islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. They benefit ecosystems by pollinating plants and assist in the regeneration of forests via seed dispersal. There are at least 60 existing species in the genus.

Flying foxes roost in large numbers high in the tree canopy of tropical and subtropical forests, and in woodlands. Forming camps in mangrove islands in river estuaries, paperbark forests, eucalypt forests and rainforests. Locating food with their keen sense of smell, most, but not all, are nocturnal. At dusk, individuals fly out to feed on blossom and fruits (and occasionally consume insects)

and return to their roost at dawn. They navigate with keen eyesight and are able to fly at a top speed of 25+ miles per hour. They have long life spans – 12 to 15 years (but can exceed 30 years in captivity). Females of most species have low reproductive outputs, producing only one offspring per year.

Young are completely dependent for up to 4 weeks. At this point they are left at the camp at night while their mothers forage. By 2 to 3 months, the young are able to fly and will start to leave the camp at night to feed as well. Weaned by about 5 months, they become sexually mature at about 2 years old (but most females will not reproduce before 3).

I decided to draw the black flying fox (*Pteropus Alecto*), native to Australia, Papua New Guinea, and Indonesia.

Black Flying Fox Stats Include:

Weight - range 1.1 to 2.2 lbs;

Length - typically up to 10 inches;

Wingspan - more than 3 feet.

The black flying fox is generally black all over, often with a reddish-brown fur around its neck.

What I found most compelling about the black flying fox is how cute this creature is, especially its face, and I worked hard to convey that in my drawing. **This drawing can be also viewed, along with my other drawings, on instagram at: [www.instagram.com/yokebauerdigorgio/](http://www.instagram.com/yokebauerdigorgio/).**

**Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio**

**Wildlife Artist / Co-Founder and Editor Nature's Newsletter / Co-founder and Director DVEA**

## DID YOU KNOW?

Flying foxes, have the greatest brain size relative to body size of any bat family (comparable to a domestic dog).

They display behaviors that indicate they are able to store information for a long time and can also be conditioned to perform behaviors (For example: In a study where they were trained to pull a lever using juice as a reinforcement, they were followed up 3.5 years later and could still pull the lever to receive juice).

## Resources and Additional Information:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsSbpGRw0gE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FK9tWT5pA4>

<http://animalia.bio/black-flying-fox>

<https://australianmuseum.net.au/learn/animals/mammals/black-flying-fox/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pteropus>

<http://www.allaboutbats.org.au/black-flying-fox/>





Mustangs running on Mustang Meadows Ranch, SD.

© Photo courtesy H. Alan Day

# Establishing the 1st Government-Sponsored **WILD HORSE SANCTUARY**

by H. Alan Day, *Author*  
with Lynn Wiese Sneyd, *LWS Literary Services*

## INTRODUCTION

For decades, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) had been faced with a growing dilemma on what to do with our country's overwhelming surplus of wild horses. In the 1980's, more than 55,000 wild horses lived on the open range, but that range could only sustain about 27,000 horses. Another 35,000 wild horses lived in off-range pastures, but those pastures were reaching capacity.

In 1988, H. Alan Day proposed to the BLM the idea of a private landowner providing quality care for some of these wild horses. Alan had recently purchased a 35,000-acre ranch in South Dakota and was casting about for an operating plan. At that time, the BLM had 2,000 excess unadoptable wild horses locked up in feedlot prisons. It occurred to Alan that his ranch could give those horses a fine retirement home on a sea of prairie grass. Alan was able to successfully lobby Congress and the 35,000 acres became Mustang

Meadows Ranch, the first government-sponsored wild horse sanctuary established in the U.S.

Published in 2014, *THE HORSE LOVER: A Cowboy's Quest to the Save the Wild Mustangs*, was written by Alan with Lynn Wiese Sneyd and foreword by Sandra Day O'Connor, is Alan's personal memoir and amazing recollections of establishing and running the sanctuary. Included, is the story about the herd modification-training program which Alan had developed for his 2,000 head of cattle and was successfully used with the 1500 wild mustangs.

We are honored to be able to share with you an excerpt of *THE HORSE LOVER: A Cowboy's Quest to Save the Wild Mustangs*:

## EXCERPT

*"My life seems to have run on the spur railroad line more often than the main line. So it went the day I made an offer on a thirty-five-thousand-acre ranch in the Sand Hills of*

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## Establishing the 1st Government Sponsored *WILD HORSE SANCTUARY*

*South Dakota. I definitely didn't need this ranch. At the time, I was wearing the wings off my plane managing two ranches, the Lazy B, a two-hundred-thousand-acre ranch in Arizona, and the Rex Ranch, a forty-five-thousand-acre spread in Nebraska. Between the two, I was running four thousand mother cows. I was cattled out. So why did I buy a third ranch? Ever hear of love at first sight? The minute I set eyes on that lush grass, those towering trees, wild turkeys, pheasants, ponds, a creek, a river, I tumbled head over heels. The problem was I had no idea what I was going to do with that gorgeous sea of grass.*

*I hadn't even closed on the property when fellow rancher and horse lover Dayton Hyde gave me the lowdown on the plight of our country's wild horses. He said the Bureau of Land Management gathered wild horses from government lands when the herds grew too large and overgrazed the grasses. Helicopters buzzed them into makeshift corrals. From there, they were transported to feedlots. Families were split. They had no room to run. Dayton said some horses were so bored they would eat each other's tails and manes. Most of the pretty wild horses went into public adoption programs, while the old, the scarred, the one-eyed were destined to spend the rest of their days in horse prison. This was 1988. About two thousand horses were in captivity in various feedlots around the West, not the forty thousand or more than that currently suffer in captivity.*

*Before Dayton finished his horror story, a crazy idea grabbed me. Maybe, just maybe, I could turn the South Dakota ranch into a sanctuary for government-owned wild mustangs. The horses would regain their freedom, and the government would have a hands-on caretaker. A few days later, I pitched the idea to the BLM. The higher-ups cautiously shared my excitement, but said that Congress, the BLM's boss, would need to authorize the deal. Dayton and I donned our cowboy hats and boots and made a lobbying trip to Washington D.C. With the help of Arizona's Senator Dennis DeConcini, Congress attached a rider to a bill that gave me the green light to take fifteen hundred imprisoned wild horses, put them on the best piece of land those animals had ever seen, and keep them happy for the rest of their lives. That's when I poured myself a stiff scotch. I knew horses, but I'd never worked with wild horses, and I was about to get a whole bunch of them.*

*I needed to get the ranch in shape. I bought it on foreclosure and it badly needed repairs. I flew up some workers from Arizona and set them to mending pasture fences, building up corral fences, and painting the barn and main house. I contracted a local company to drill more wells in the pastures, and I spread phosphorous on the hay meadows. It would make more and better hay for the horses, and we needed a plentiful supply to get through harsh winters. By*



© Photos courtesy H. Alan Day

**TOP:** H. Alan Day; **CENTER:** Mustang Meadows Ranch Entrance; **BOTTOM:** Mustangs run through gate.

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## Establishing the 1st Government Sponsored **WILD HORSE SANCTUARY**



*Mustangs pushing through gate at ranch headquarters.*

© Photo courtesy H. Alan Day

*the time the horses started arriving, Mustang Meadows Ranch was spit-polished and ready to receive them. But was I?*

*I knew from talking to cowboys who worked in one of the Nevada feedlots that wild horses fear humans more than any other creature. Rightly so. The humans who professed to love them do nothing but traumatize them. As a result, when the wild horses notice a cowboy on horseback heading toward them, they bolt in the opposite direction. This did not bode well for Mustang Meadows Ranch or me. Furthermore, my motto always has been to leave the land healthier than how I found it. Horses are rough on land. A large herd can quickly overgraze a pasture that can take years to repair itself. So the herd would need to be moved to new pastures on a regular basis.*

*The big question hanging in the humid South Dakota air: Could I make friends with a large herd of wild mustangs and train them to follow a cowboy on horseback through gates and into fresh pasture? During the summer, I planned to move the horses almost weekly. If they weren't trained, they would jump fences and scatter across two counties. The horses started arriving in mid-September. We had until*

*May tenth of the following year, the day summer grazing officially began in that part of the world, to get them trained.*

*The roping arena next to the barn became the training arena. It was one hundred fifty feet by five hundred feet. I decided to train one hundred horses at a time. During the first training session, the frightened horses gathered at one end of the arena, shaking their heads and whinnying nervously. Three cowboys and I mounted our horses and rode into the opposite end of the arena.*

*"Let's spread out and take it at a walk," I said. "No quick movements. Just ride toward the group." The men, all professional horse handlers, nodded. "And at the same time, we're going to talk to them. Out loud. Real friendly-like."*

*The cowboys looked at me like I was crazy, but they followed the game plan. We were about halfway down the arena, all talking in soothing voices, when one of the horses charged away from the group and started a stampede. Horses raced by us. As abruptly as the stampede started, it ended, with the horses bunched in the opposite corner.*

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## Establishing the 1st Government Sponsored **WILD HORSE SANCTUARY**



© Photo courtesy H. Alan Day

*Mustang exiting the chute.*

© Photo courtesy H. Alan Day

The cowboys and I turned our horses and repeated the drill. Again and again, we repeated. After twenty minutes, the horses started looking harassed.

"Let's give them a break, boys," I said.

We returned to the barn to unsaddle. That's when I told the guys that I'd see them back in two hours. Now they looked at me baffled. I reminded them it was all about repetition. Building trust through repetition. Little did the cowboys know repetition would mean every two hours, every day until the horses agreed to do what we wanted them to do. I had no idea how many days that would take.

Turned out the mustangs' behavior changed significantly after about four or five days of intensive training. They realized that we weren't like other men who had chased them with helicopters and forced them into corrals. They began looking at us as the alpha males.

The next lesson they learned was to follow a cowboy around the arena without running past him. Then, they learned to follow their cowboy leader through a gate. After that, the

cowboy would lead them through grassy lanes separating pastures. Their last exercise was to follow the cowboy around a small pasture as a group, with none bolting or running ahead.

Except for Thanksgiving and Christmas, the cowboys and I trained the horses every day from fall through winter and into spring. After one hundred horses graduated from training school, we started training another one hundred. The trained horses were kept in a pasture, while the untrained horses remained in corrals. As the program began to work, the cowboys began to believe in it.

Finally, May arrived. The big move to summer grazing was about to happen. Twelve hundred wild horses now lived at Mustang Meadows. We needed to move all of them from the small pastures near headquarters, across open range to the large pasture at Mud Lake. The six-mile trek was the litmus test of our training and the backbone of the sanctuary's success. Would the horses stick together, or would they spread out across the open range and disregard what we had taught them?

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## Establishing the 1st Government Sponsored *WILD HORSE SANCTUARY*



**LEFT:** Colt and mares; **RIGHT:** Mustang on the open prairie.

© Photos courtesy H. Alan Day

*On the morning of May tenth, I was a bundle of nerves. Seven of us rode into the heifer pasture where the horses were grazing. I'll always remember their scent, that strong pungent smell of wildness. When they saw us coming, they shook their heads and threw snorts into the spring breeze. Our group spreading across the pasture told them that some drama was about to unfold, and they were to be part of it. They stomped and called for each other, then began to gather into one large herd.*

*I looked down the line of riders, checking our formation. At a measured pace, we swept around the pasture. The leaders of the herd felt the gentle pressure and moved toward the corner where the gate led into the next pasture. The foreman and I peeled away from the line and galloped in front of the leaders to set the pace. We rode side by side about twenty feet apart. The lead horses were so close to us that we could hear their rhythmic breathing. Like a rope uncoiling, the herd began to string out and lengthen. The forty-eight hundred hooves beating the sandy soil sounded like the muted thunder of Indian drums. The sound reverberated into the ground, into my horse, my saddle, my bloodstream. Even then, I knew this was the pinnacle ride of my ranching career.*

*Two hours later, horses and cowboys arrived safely at Mud Lake. Each got their graduation certificate— a meadow of beautiful green grass for the horses and a pat on the back and a ham sandwich for the cowboys.*

*During the four years the wild horses remained at Mustang*

*Meadows, they never stopped trusting us. We moved them and gathered them as easily as you'd push a fork into a slice of peach pie. Each time I rode with the horses, I thrilled at having those mustangs galloping behind me, thundering through the thick grass and reminding me why I took a chance and did something that had never been done before, and did it well, much to my delight and the delight of fifteen hundred wild horses."*

**H. Alan Day**

**For more information and / or to order the book:**

**[www.alandayauthor.com](http://www.alandayauthor.com)**

**<http://lwsliteraryservices.com/>**



*Alan visiting the ranch in 2013.*

© Photo courtesy H. Alan Day





© Marc Weinstock, Photographer

## URBAN WILDLIFE

### Why Are We Seeing More Animals?

by Barbara Russo  
*Naturalist*

Staying indoors during the COVID-19 crisis took some getting used to for many of us. For Jordan McKay of Staten Island, N.Y., the extra time inside gave her a chance to witness something she doesn't often see in New York City- a mother bird feeding her young.

The beautiful scene took place in her own yard.

*"My father-in-law spotted them. Since he's been working from home, he set up a little office in the living room in front of the window," McKay said. "He called me down to see it. I absolutely love animals and to have the experience to see a mama bird feeding her babies was just so beautiful."*

The little avian family turned out to be robins, and they weren't the only wild animal friends McKay has seen since the worldwide pandemic brought most New Yorkers out of the wild and into their homes.

*"I've definitely seen more animals recently," McKay said. "We've had a plethora of raccoons and other critters visit our yard."*

McKay isn't the only New Yorker seeing more animals during these days of lockdown. Social media is flooded with posts from city dwellers seeing foxes on highways, eagles soaring above and rabbits and other small creatures nesting on lawns.

Laura Stroming, another Staten Islander, has spotted interesting



© Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio, Photographer

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## URBAN WILDLIFE / Why Are We Seeing More Animals?

wildlife since spending more time at home and in local parkland with her husband and stepson. She remembers the day she encountered a gathering of turkeys near her house- not an unusual site in the borough's residential mid area and southern end, but rare in her neighborhood located north.

*"On March 20 we had a small herd of turkeys pass by our house, which I had never seen before. We are in Castleton Corners, and turkeys generally aren't up here," Stroming said. We've been spending time at Clove Lakes Park usually around dusk to avoid other people and as a result have had more animal experiences. The owls have been awesome. I didn't know we had owls in the park!"*

Manhattan resident Linda Danz is a frequent Central Park visitor. While she often spots wildlife during her visits, she's noticed one section of the park has more cute critters lately.

*"I've seen more chipmunks in the North Woods," Danz said.*

### WHY ARE WE SEEING MORE ANIMALS?

All these urban animal sightings during the crisis beg the question: Are we seeing more animals in the city as humans stay inside?

According to Seth Wollney, an urban ecologist from Staten Island, the answer is yes, but not because there are more animals reproducing or moving here. It's because of behavior- both ours and theirs. Animals might feel it's safe to explore areas void of humans. Simultaneously, we as humans have a lot less distractions in life lately, thus we are more likely to notice the beauty of nature. Time spent in offices, movie theaters and bars is replaced with time spent in backyards and parks. Less traffic means a better field of vision to spot animals along roads.

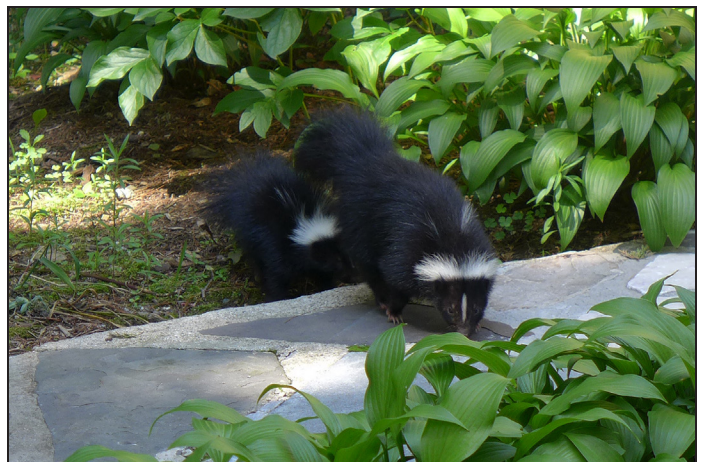
*"It's a bit of observer bias. It's a basic rule in ecology science that the more observations you do, the more you're going to see," Wollney said. "People are noticing birds more because they aren't as distracted. They are watching their backyards more."*

Although most species who live in urban areas are acclimated to human activity, they might be more apt to explore areas with less people.

*"I think they might feel safer and maybe a little more adventurous to go into new locations," Wollney added.*

### HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Perhaps now is a good time for humans to take the time to enjoy the fruits of their ecological labor. Over the last several decades, steps have been taken to save species and their habitats. We continue to see the results of these actions, according to Wollney.



TOP: © Jennefer Bond, Photographer,  
CENTER: © John A. DiGiorgio, Photographer,  
BOTTOM: © Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio, Photographer

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## URBAN WILDLIFE / Why Are We Seeing More Animals?

*"The Clean Water Act of 1972 made a huge impact on our environmental health and pollution, Wollney said. "We saw the environment getting cleaner, lakes and streams getting cleaner. It helped the water. We see whales and dolphins more often now in the New York Harbor than we have in recent memory."*

According to the American Rivers website, the Clean Water Act resulted in billions of pounds of pollution being kept off our rivers and the number of waters that meet clean water goals nationwide has doubled, with direct benefits for drinking water, public health, recreation and wildlife.

We are also still seeing the effects of the ban of the chemical insecticide dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, widely known as DDT, in the United States in 1972. Bald eagle, osprey and other bird species were crashing out due to the effects DDT had on egg laying.

*"It took a good 30 to 40 years to get those populations back up," Wollney said. "We would be shocked to see one single osprey on Staten Island 40 years ago. Now we have a dozen different nests or more."*

The bald eagle is another success story, having been taken off the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's endangered species list in 2007 after populations increased thanks to the DDT ban and conservation efforts.

### REOPENING: WHAT IT MEANS FOR URBAN WILDLIFE

Now that life as we know it is beginning to reopen and stay-at-home orders appear to be easing up a bit through multi-phased plans throughout the state and city, New Yorkers are curious to see the effects on urban animals next year.

I am curious what the upcoming months will hold, and if we are still in some form of lockdown during the deer mating season, if next year there will be a noticeable increase.

**Wollney's hypothesis is pretty matter-of-fact:**  
***"I think it will be business as usual for them."***

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION / ARTICLES

<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-reasons-seeing-more-wildlife>

<https://www.popsci.com/story/environment/wildlife-in-cities-covid-shutdown/>

<https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20200609-the-photographers-changing-the-way-we-see-animals>

<https://www.the-scientist.com/news-opinion/with-humans-indoors-animals-go-wild-67434>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/facts-pictures/>



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## DISCOVERING NATURE



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### RED FOX DENS IN NYS SUBURBIA

Around the time spring flowers are blooming and migrating songbirds are arriving, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) starts receiving calls concerning fox sightings in and around rural and suburban areas. Red fox are small furbearers, typically 10 -12 lbs., about the size of a house cat. During the spring, fox seek out den sites to raise their young (kits). Sometimes, for homeowners, these den sites are not in ideal locations, including under sheds and porches.

#### So what you can do?

Do nothing. Enjoy watching fox kits grow up and play in your yard. They typically leave their dens by the end of June.

Scare it away. Making loud noises near the den could convince the parents to move their young to a new den. Fox typically have more than one den and will move their young if they perceive a threat.

Remove artificial food sources. Feed pets indoors and secure any garbage or compost stored outside.

Exclusion. Erect a fence around your yard or block holes or areas which fox may find desirable to make a den.

Make sure that the animals are not inside your yard or den before blocking them off.

#### Facts that may “debunk” common fox myths:

It is common to observe a fox in the daytime during the spring and summer. Typically, it is a healthy animal working to provide food for itself and young.

Kits observed alone during the day are not necessarily abandoned. Their parents leave them in the safety of the den while they are out hunting for food, sometimes for hours at a time.

Fox don't often attack house pets or children (unless they are rabid). Their typical diet consists of small mammals, including mice, squirrels, and rabbits.

**Resource:** *Wildlife, Fish & Marine Life Newsletter* (5/27/20)  
**For more information:** <https://www.dec.ny.gov/>

## THE DELAWARE VALLEY EAGLE ALLIANCE

*working towards the conservation of  
our wildlife and natural resources*

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*We believe that raising awareness and understanding will change attitudes toward conservation and our natural resources.*

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