

In the News

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Rural squirrels ingesting more plastic due to pandemic

The *Wildlife Society* shared research released through Concordia College, Minnesota, USA, showing that local animals such as grey squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*; Figure 1) are ingesting more plastic than usual due to an uprising in single-use plastics. These single-use plastics are likely masks and gloves that have become extremely popular due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Researchers tested different plastics with squirrels currently on campus and necropsied deceased ones to analyze their stomach contents. They found that although urban squirrels are still consuming plastics, rural squirrels ingest more due to the unfamiliarity.

Pet dog trampled by moose in Colorado

While out on a hike on the Masontown Loop Trail in Frisco, Colorado, USA, a dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*) was surprised to encounter a moose (*Alces alces*) while running ahead of its owners. The dog was then trampled and remained unconscious after being retrieved by the owner. The dog later passed away from the injuries sustained. Colorado officials are continuing to remind locals and visitors to keep their dog on a leash and be aware of animals in the area. *Newsweek* stated the attack was likely due to the moose seeing the dog as a predator and threat.

Farm goats killed by mountain lion in California

A Mendocino County High School farm, California, USA, lost 2 domestic goats (*Capra hircus*) to a mountain lion (*Puma concolor*) attack one evening. The mountain lion was able to drag 2 goats to the edge of the fencing, while injur-

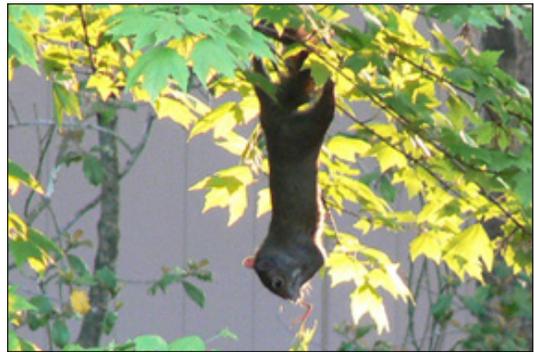


Figure 1. Grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) hanging from branch (photo courtesy of L. Perlick).

ing a third. The school and farm are located near a creek, which allows larger wildlife access to the area. The school district has notified students and parents about the attack but is unable to allocate funding to predator control. Local biologists state it is not a predator problem, but instead an infrastructure problem, according to *Ukiah Daily Journal*. This means if the school was able to update buildings and fencing, attacks would be limited. The school is continuing to evaluate the situation.

Feeding wildlife leads to visitor attacked by buck

A group of visitors who were feeding a mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) in Yellowstone National Park (Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, USA) allegedly spooked a buck, which prompted it to charge a member of the group and injure her with its antlers. According to *ABC News*, she sustained deep laceration wounds to her arm and chest. Yellowstone National Park has continuously stood by its laws that prohibit interacting with wildlife, fining multiple people this year for interactions that could have been avoided. Officials continue to share infor-

mation on what not to do as well as how to stay safe when any animal is in the area.

Coyote attacks two people in Toronto park

An “aggressive” coyote (*Canis latrans*) was reported to have bitten at least 2 people in a Toronto, Canada park. *CityNews* shares that coyote attacks have continued to happen in parks all across Canada, leading officials to continue removing the problem animals. The city of Toronto has advised people to stay away from the park as well as to limit outdoor time at night. The Bayview Village Park was closed to the public until the animal was removed. Locals have shared opinions about the removal of coyotes from parks, many of whom are against the removal. Officials state that when attacks happen, it is simply safer to remove the animal.

After recent wild boar attacks, Hong Kong declares fair game on species

After >30 attacks from wild boars (*Sus scrofa*; Figure 2), Hong Kong officials have decided to start removing the species from certain areas and limiting the population. The decision came after a police officer was bitten by a boar and sustained injuries. *AP News* states the Conservation Department has begun capture and extermination processes for some of the boars. Local

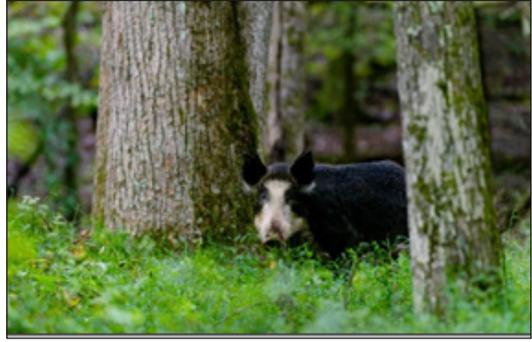


Figure 2. Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) in forest (photo courtesy of B. Lea).

animal rights groups have started speaking up about the issues of the removal of wild boars, mainly how Hong Kong loves the species when seen about. Petitions have begun circulating, but extermination continues through government support.

Disclaimer: The findings and conclusions in this article are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of Utah State University or the Jack H. Berryman Institute.

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