

# our environment

## Federal Aid for Indiana Bat

The Indiana bat's chances for survival in the east central United States have recently been improved by the establishment of a team of experts who will give priority to restoring populations of this animal to their former healthy state. This bat is one of ten endangered species that have been selected by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for priority treatment.

"Recovery teams" are being established for the American alligator, red wolf, eastern timber wolf, Delmarva fox squirrel, Kirtland's warbler, dusky seaside sparrow, Mississippi sandhill crane, Everglade kite, and blue pike. These are the first of an anticipated fifty such teams that will begin work on or after July 1, 1975, to rehabilitate endangered species populations. There are currently 109 animals listed as endangered in the United States.

The primary objective of the Indiana bat recovery team is to coordinate action to restore Indiana bat populations to a healthy balance in the wild after drawing up a detailed recovery plan which will schedule specific actions needed.

The Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) is a medium-sized, grey-colored bat. The original range of the species extended from eastern Oklahoma to Vermont and as far south as Florida. Distribution is associated with limestone caves. The species may still be found over much of the same region, but in reduced numbers, and there is evidence that many previously occupied caves have been abandoned.

The primary reason for the decline of this bat, as well as for a number of other bat species, is disturbances of caves by man. Many thousands of bats have been killed outright by vandals, and other colonies have been disrupted by cave explorers or scientists. If people disturb hibernating bats in the winter, their temperature rises and thus the demand on their body fat rises. In many cases, because of disturbances, the bat has insufficient fat to sustain it through the remainder of the winter. In order to protect the Indiana bat, several roosting sites have been purchased by conservation agencies or barred from public access.

There is little question that this bat and its habitat are threatened by a number of

man-induced factors, and conservation measures are fully warranted. Moreover, the problems of the Indiana bat exemplify the plight of many other species which depend on restricted habitats that are being increasingly subjected to detrimental influences of man.

## Do I Hunt What?

As state and federal conservation offices seek information on the population status of various animal species, one of the techniques used is the telephone survey. Since 1967, some 20,000 phone calls have been made by the Southeastern Cooperative Fish and Game Statistics Project as they attempt to assess the status of the mourning dove in the southeastern states. A great deal of valuable data has thus been gained for the project, but the survey has also elicited responses which, for one reason or another, seemed deserving of notice. The girls who did the surveying would introduce the project with something like:

"We are calling from Raleigh, N.C., to conduct a study of mourning dove hunting for the game and fish departments of several southeastern states. Would you mind answering a few questions for us?"

A Tennessee hunter replied that he would not give any information to anyone from North Carolina. Other responses included the following:

"Whose husband died last season?"

"Daddy, it's important. It's a woman." "You have the wrong number. We don't have any of that kinda stuff around here."

"Hunt doves? Yeah, I'll hunt doves with you."

"It's just me and my man living here and we're too old to do anything. He'll be 93 come April 5th and I'm 86. And I still do all my own wash."

"Yeah, he went hunting, but not in the morning."

"My ex-husband used to hunt them, but he doesn't live here anymore, thank goodness."

"No, nobody in this house hunts doves. Nobody in this house does anything."

"Nope, nobody hunts no doves 'round here. I kilt one, but he wuz in the corn

stack eating the corn, and I kilt him with a ear o' corn."

"Am I on Candid Camera?"

"I'm sorry, he's on the commode."

"He just carried the slop out to the hogs—call back."

"I'm not interested in door openers. What in the world are door openers?"

"Are you calling from the funny farm? I may have hit a few with my car or my tennis racket. Do they count?"

"No, my husband couldn't hit the broad side of a barn if he was laying on it."

## Grand Canyon View Threatened

The future of the Grand Canyon looks "hazy," according to biologists reporting the first signs of an air pollution problem for one of America's most famous national park areas.

Monitoring devices on the rim of the canyon show a definite increase in particles during the past three years. Although the canyon is still relatively unpolluted, its magnificent vistas are not as distinct as they once were.

Particulates are carried by wind hundreds of miles from Los Angeles and other cities. However, greater dangers to the park are posed by pollution from energy development in the Southwest. Within a 100-mile radius of the canyon, there are six huge coal-burning power plants either in use or under construction. Some 100,000 tons of coal soon will be burned each day by the plants to produce power for Phoenix, Los Angeles, and other cities. Just north of the canyon is the Navajo plant at Lake Powell, the world's largest power plant, which eventually will burn almost a fourth of those 100,000 tons—using coal from Black Mesa strip mine in Arizona.

Even if these plants could achieve federal air quality standards, which many observers doubt, the small percentage of total pollutants that escapes would spread a distressing mass of contaminants over the national park area.







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