

TRACKING 2009 Schedule of Presentations and Presenter Bios

FRIDAY October 16

12:30 ARRIVAL
 4:45 SETTLE IN - MEET
 6:00 DINNER
 7:15 INTROS

8:00	<p><u>NASAR's Tracking Education Task Group (TETG) A Progress Report</u> A presentation on where the TETG is at "to date" as it applies to our primary project off National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) Course Material and our intended NASAR Course format. We will outline future TETG project intentions and projected timelines. We will have a presentation of who makes up the current Committee as well as handouts of "draft" materials that have been approved to be shared. We will outline what is being readied for ASTM* submission as potential national search and rescue tracking standards and NASAR Credentialing. We will provide an open platform for feedback and input as well as invitations for other trackers to join this committee or ASTM as well as other feedback options. We will show how we are doing everything in our power to assure openness and transparency to the tracking community as this project proceeds forward.</p>	<p>Del Morris Del is the current chair of NASAR's [National Association of Search and Rescue] Tracking Education Task Group. Charged with the application of tracking oriented products for NASAR.</p>
9:00	<p><u>Tracking White Nosed Coatis in the Arizona Borderlands</u> White nosed Coatis are tropical relatives of the raccoon whose distribution includes the southern borders of Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. They are unique among carnivores in having separate social organizations of group living females and solitary males. A review of a 5 year study of coati behavior which was conducted in Southeastern Arizona which included social organization, home range, food habits and predators. Relationships of coati ecology to coati sign and how to distinguish it from other carnivores commonly found in the same area will be discussed.</p>	<p>Christine Haas Dr. Chris Haas is a wildlife ecologist and has been conducting research on wildlife in the western United States for more than 25 years. She is currently the Assistant Director of Audobon-Whittel Research Ranch in southeastern Arizona.. She has studied the large and the small such as bighorn sheep in Montana, Nevada, and New Mexico. Dr, Haas is currently studying white-nosed coatis and four species of skunks in Arizona and New Mexico. She uses her tracking skills to detect wildlife presence, determine food habits and explore social behavior, predation and movement patterns. Dr. Haas is interested in developing and refining non invasive techniques for monitoring wildlife in time and space using tracks and remote camera survey.</p>

SATURDAY October 17

7:00 WAKE
 8:00 BREAKFAST

9:30	<p><u>Western Tracking Institute Project Update</u> Western Tracking Institute was requested to perform a habitat assessment and wildlife corridor analysis in a fragmented open space area in San Diego County. Wildlife tracking was used to accomplish this during the four phase project that included an overall habitat assessment , trailing to establish activity centers and extent of range data for our umbrella species(mule deer), track traps, cameras and our use of SDTT data for comparative corridor analyses. Our presentation will outline our methodology and how we justified conclusions and recommendations submitted to the client. The methodology may provide a working model for how track and sign based surveys can be used to promote projects that will conserve blocks of habitat/habitat islands via a "corridor complex" system.</p>	<p>Barry Martin</p>
10:45	<p><u>Teaching tracking : Many Audiences , Many Needs</u> Teaching tracking to audiences ranging from middle school students and the general public to professional field biologists and rangers requires flexible approaches and a series of curricula that meet the students' varied needs. Not only must a teacher convey practical techniques (such as track ID, gaits, track patterns/behavior as it relates to tracks and signs) but also underlying principles contained in the art of tracking (focus, openmindedness, perspective, and visualization among others). The tracking teacher must also recognize individual students' strengths and learning styles so as to challenge the advancing tracker to adopt a complete approach to tracking.The speaker will present many examples of teaching methods for both lay and professional students from workshops taught over the past 22 years. There will be descriptions and illustrations of seminars on technique (track reading for motion, gaits and animal movement from captive wild animals) on tracking and biology (bighorn sheep, mountain lion and pronghorn workshops among others) : on on-the-job field training of biologists (for example, a mammal survey using transects and track stations at Edwards Air Force base) and on tracking technique for educators and naturalists to fit into school and nature center programs.</p>	<p>Jim Lowery Jim Lowery, founder and principal teacher of Earth Skills, has taught tracking since 1987 to audiences ranging from middle school and high school students to field biologists, naturalists and rangers. Specialized workshops he has taught include track interpretation, animal movement and classes on tracking bighorn sheep, bears, pronghorn, kit foxes, Tule elk and mountain lions. He is the author of The Tracker's Field Guide (Globe Pequot, 2006) which is based on twenty years of field research and photography in tracking as well as on extensive research in mammal behavior. He has been an expert consultant for two mammal research studies at Edwards Air Force Base and annually trains State of California field staff on the Central Coast in predator track interpretation, for their monitoring of endangered snowy plover nesting. Jim also teaches wilderness survival, plant uses and traditional skills through his school. Besides tracking, his passion is the art of teaching.</p>

12:30 LUNCH

1:45

Orange County Trackers

While Orange County, California is the most densely populated county in the State it still affords great tracking opportunities. Our involvement with the U.S. Geological Survey, The Nature Conservancy and the Irvine Ranch Conservancy has provided us with the opportunity to track, capture, collar and use radio telemetry while learning more about the wildlife, particularly the bobcats and cougars that call the Santa Ana Mountains and the Cleveland Forest their home.

We started OTRACKERS as an educational outreach for local park rangers, wardens, animal control officers, naturalists and docents to enhance their tracking skills and to encourage them to share their interest in tracking with others.

Some of the programs that we will discuss at the I.S.P.T. conference include:

- * Running weekly digital trap-lines: Protocols, alternate funding options, equipment testing and evaluations, etc.
- * Hosting monthly tracking workshops for experienced trackers.
- * Training programs for rangers and other professional interpreters who want to enhance their wildlife interpretive skills through tracking.
- * Bobcat and cougar research opportunities.
- * An intensive study of one bobcat family over the past four years.
- * Our role as an Intervention Response Team for animal control officers.
- * Posting an educational presence on the Internet via www.otrackers.com.

Dick Newell and Don Millar

As a volunteer members of the Irvine Ranch Conservancy's field research team, Dick Newell and Don Millar monitor the status of the natural resources on the ranch's 50,000 acres of protected land in Orange County, California. They are also volunteer trackers for the U.S.G.S. and in conjunction with these agencies have participated in many wildlife captures and radio tracking experiences. They currently monitor a digital trap-line of some 30 wildlife cameras deployed in the more rural parts of the county. Dick has a long work history in trailing criminal suspects and has brought some of those skills over to the more peasant business of monitoring our natural wildlife.

3:30

Employment opportunities for Trackers in South Africa

Tracking skills had largely remained intact in South Africa due to the traditional lifestyles lived by some of the native peoples until well into the second half of the twentieth century and the utilization of these skills in various forms in new fields. This includes search and rescue, law enforcement, eco-tourism, etc...

Due to the climate and the area available for outdoor recreation in South Africa, tracking is seldom used in search and rescue operations. It is however a field that needs more skilled trackers than what is available. In law enforcement. Most trackers are employed in anti-poaching teams in both the private and government game reserves and wildlife areas. Some are also involved in border patrol, forensics, and the tracking down of criminals. The bulk of fulltime trackers in South Africa are involved in the eco-tourism industry. The bulk of them are involved in the tracking of dangerous game in the photographic safari or lodge industry.

This is also the area where most of the Cybertracker evaluations had taken place. A smaller component of trackers are also involved in the hunting industry: some to guide foreign tourists who are mainly trophy collectors and others to guide local hunters who mainly hunt for meat.

Adriaan Louw

Adriaan as a seven year old, the South African born Adriaan looked at lion tracks for the first time in 1973. This was during a family holiday in the Kruger National Park. Growing up as an avid hunter and outdoorsman, he learned to become a keen observer of wildlife. He started his career in nature conservation in 1989 in the Kruger National Park, initially with the research department, and later as wilderness trails ranger, providing both armed escort and natural history interpretation to tourists on foot. Later he trained conservation staff for one of the provincial agencies. Late in 2000, now working for himself, he was exposed to the Cyber Tracker evaluation for the first time. During this time he became one of the leading trainers of guides for the eco-tourism industry in South Africa, focusing on rifle training and the handling of dangerous animals. In 2003, after nine grueling evaluations, he qualified as Cyber Tracker Senior Tracker and Evaluator, earning him the prestige's title of Scout from the Field Guides Association of Southern Africa.

Since then most of his time had been spend conducting tracker evaluations and tracker training in South Africa, Botswana and the United States. Using tracking as metaphor, he also co-facilitates with Callie Roos, leadership development and change in corporate groups with a product called OnTrack. In 2007 he was appointed as an External Evaluator for Cyber Tracker Conservation. Adriaan is a professional member of the Game Rangers' Association of Africa, a member of the International Society of Professional Trackers, and a member of the Field Guides Association of Southern Africa, where he served for five consecutive terms on the executive committee, three of it as chairman.

4:45

Form, Function,& Discrimination of Various NA Hoofed Mammal Feet

The distinct feet and tracks of unguligrade mammals provide a fascinating window into the relationship the evolution of body shape and mechanics(form) in order to accommodate a specific lifestyle (function). Beyond the basic premise that hoofed feet evolved to serve the needs of a running lifestyle, the feet of various hoofed mammals show further specialized adaptations to their specific niche. We will explore the anatomy of unguligrade feet and tracks , basic and specialized adaptations of selected North American ungulates and review techniques for identifying various species as well as subclasses(e.g. juveniles verses adults, males verses females) through both track characteristics and contextual clues.

Dave Moskowitz

6:00 DINNER

7:15

Tracking Bobcats and Mountain Lions

Christine Haas

Dr. Chris Hass is a wildlife ecologist and has been conducting research on wildlife in the western United States for more than 25 years. She is currently the Assistant Director of Audobon-Whittel Research Ranch in southeastern Arizona.. She has studied the large and the small such as bighorn sheep in Montana, Nevada, and New Mexico. Dr. Haas is currently studying white-nosed coatis and four species of skunks in Arizona and New Mexico. She uses her tracking skills to detect wildlife presence, determine food habits and explore social behavior, predation and movement patterns. Dr. Haas is interested in developing and refining non invasive techniques for monitoring wildlife in time and space using tracks and remote camera survey.

9:00

ISPT
Annual Meeting-RAFFLE

SUNDAY October 18

7:00 WAKE
8:00 BREAKFAST

9:30

Tracking the African Lion

The lion is the largest terrestrial predator in Africa. In South Africa their distribution range has been reduced to the Greater Kruger Park, the Kalahari Desert and a number of smaller national and provincial parks and privately owned game preserves. The lion is one of the "big five" and a visit to South Africa would be incomplete without seeing lions in their natural environment.

Tracking these animals can be very difficult and challenging. It is especially hard in the private game reserves where these animals are tracked on a daily basis to be viewed by high paying foreign tourists.

Although lions may move in daylight, most of the day is spent sleeping and they normally move during the night. Most of the hunting is also happening at night as they rely heavily on their superior night vision to stalk their prey. Deciphering and trailing these animals nightly maneuvers is difficult. Locating them without them becoming aware of you is even more challenging.

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10:45

Methods of Preserving and Documenting Tracks

Tracks need to be preserved for various reasons. One of the most common is footprint and tire track evidence found at crime scenes. Animal tracks are often preserved for scientific interest or for the trackers personal study collection. A variety of methods can be used to preserve tracks. This presentation will examine such methods as photography, casting and drawing. Each method will be examined and best practices will be discussed. Examples will be provided of both good and poor quality track documentation so that the student has a visual example for comparison. Plaster casting has been used for generations, but newer materials are available that produce a better quality cast. These materials will be discussed and their pros and cons weighed. Participants will get a hands-on lesson in casting tracks during the field portion of this presentation. ☺

Participants may practice the techniques of proper track documentation with photographs. Drawings do not require the tracker to be an artist. A simple, inexpensive drawing method will be introduced and participants will have a chance to try this technique in the field. Participants will come away with a new understanding of the variety of methods that exist for documenting their track finds, how to properly document them and an eagerness to experiment on their own.

Kim Cabrera

12:30 LUNCH and Break Camp
2:00 CLOSING
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR