SOCIETY FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BIGHORN SHEEP

The Sheepherder

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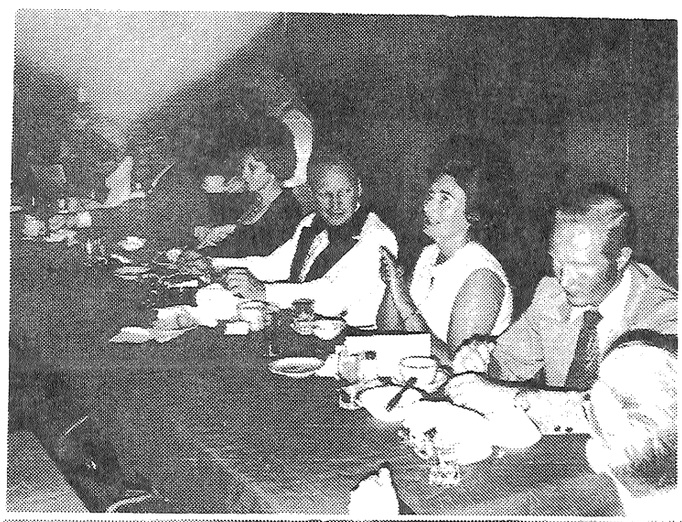
NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 1973

NOTES FROM THE FALL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY HELD AT FONTANA

There were only 38 members of the society and their ladies who gathered at Harold's Club in Fontana the evening of October 27th. This was the smallest ever Annual Dinner meeting of the Society. The weather was perfect, the program was excellent and the food delicious. President Loren Lutz introduced the guests at the head table--pictured at the right, Mrs. Lutz Dr. Harold Hochmuth PhD and Mrs Hochmuth; Mr. and Mrs .Roy Cutter, Banquet Chairman; and Mr. and Mrs. John Massie. John is the hard working Habitat Supervisor for the Department of Fish and Game, Region 5. Dr. Lutz reported that the Secretary John Larronde was away on a hunting trip and that Donald M. Swathout was at present recuperating from a recent severe illness and that he would appreciate phone calls and letters and cards. (A recent letter from Don tells me that he was sorry to miss the dinner and the sheep census in July and that he has intentions to be among those present at the counts in the summer of 1974. At present he is "chomping-at-the-bit' from inactivity. He says that calluses on his feet are OK but elswhere--its not for him.) The other men then introduced themselves, their ladies and guests. Bob Johnson reported that Director Marvin Wood could not make the meeting-- the reason being that a recent rainstorm had wet his cotton fields and also his raisins which were drying in the fields. With the present price of raisins they needed tender loving care.



Lutz gave compliments to the Department of Fish and Game and the Bureau of Land Management for their cooperative efforts to improve water conditions for the bighorns in the deserts..... He stated that he believed the counts of sheep according to the DFG were much too conservative..... He remarked that the ratio of rams to ewes that came in to water was too small at 1 : 4. As he said"Perhaps this indicates that the rams can hold their water better"..... Dick Thompson has been making progress on the Martinez Canyon Project...During 1974 there is a very good chance that m oney may be set-aside from the $250million State Bond Act for wildlife habitat. It is expected that some $10 million will be going to the Department of Fish and Game. W hen and if this occurs the Department will probably purchase the property needed in the Martinez Canyon to safeguard the wildlife of the area.

Wayne Dickson showed some slides of the Blue Springs Project in which two additional tanks(donated by Pennzoil) were installed together with another check dam and some

300 feet of 2" pipe. He had numerous good pictures of bighorns.
Dr. Luts then re-introduced Dr. Hochmuth , President of the California Wildlife Federation and a former Associate Director of the Bureau of Land Management and at present associated with the MacDonald-Douglass Corporation in Santa Monica. Harold remarked that this was the first time over the years and many speaking engagements in which his wife had ever heard him speak. He spoke concerning the problems on our public lands. The abuses perpetrated by the early-day cattle and sheepmen was not a contrived abuse, but was done through ignorance of what they were doing .(There is a related article in this issue). ....The modern land conservation movement began with President Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt.....- Ecology has been practiced by a great many of the sportsmen-conservation people and their organizations for a great many years, but it is only recently that this subject has become a popular subject..... Local controls of land uses and practices has not been effective.. Many bills have been intorduced into State and legislation, but these bodies are loath to make any decisions. Nationally these bills are referred to the House Interior and Insular Committe--always controlled by Representatives from the Western States, and they seem to always safeguard the interests of the livestock, mining and timber interests. Consequently here any worthwhile legislation dies. However, now the Env ironmental Protection Agency (EPA) is setting up requirements and regulatiions on land use practices..... Power Plant Siting is being restricted by the EPA...Requirements are being standardized for the various Air Sheds.....The Courts are requiring Environmental Impact Reports and Statements on projects.....How the land is u sed is a respons iblity of the landowner and no longer just considered as bing a right.....The California Wildlife Foundation is the money raising arm of the Californai Wildlife Federation. CW Federation is the State affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation and has been the watchdog in Sacraamento attempting to protect all of California and its interests in wildlife , land-uses and the environment. Every person interested in anyphase of recreation and the fish and wildlife of California should be a member of CWF
On November 15, 1973 there was to be a dinner in San Francisco in an effort to raise money for the Foundation. The dinner is expected to raise about $75,000.. Another dinner is to be held in the Los Angeles area a little later and is expected to raise another $100,000. The greater part of these funds is to be used for wildlife. One project to use money will be for the bighorn sheep and another will be for the purchase of wetlands in Northern California.....There are some 18 million acres of land in southern California . Most of this land is under the management of the Bureau of Land Manag ement, which at one time was designated as the land disposal Agency of the Federal Government. . School districts were originally given sections 16 and 36 of each Township. Railroads were given alternate sections along their rights-of-way; much of the land was homesteaded, origianlly in 160 acre parcels, and more recently in small home-site homesteads. The Anza-Borrego State Park area was granted to the State of Californai by a special act of the Congress specifically for park purposes....Recreation for Public Purposes Act transfers land from Federal to State ownership at a rate of $2.50 per acre..About 1962 the Federal Government cut off the small tract homestead and since that time would sell only by public auction.....The ORV's (Off-road-vehicles)are creating a problem of administration for the BLM. The numbers and uses of these vehicles have increased very rapidly the past few years. In many places irreversible damage has been done. The BLM and other land holding agencies of the Federal Government have been required by executive order to formulate management plans for their lands.. For the desert areas the BLM has catalogued and specified certain areas which are to remain open to unrestricted use; some are to be closed to all uses; in some areas travel will be restricted to present roads only, some areas will require special use permits. Hochmuth does not believe that the present plan is a workable one....

Roy Cutter reported that he had obtained money from the San Bernardino County Fish and Game Perservation Fund for use on waterhole projects within San Bernardino County. This fund is one derived from Court assessed fines for violations of Fish and Game laws and regulations occuring within the County. Half on this money is allocsted to the Department of Fish and Game for Hunter Safety Education, training of W ardens and patrol activities. The other half must be used within the County for enhancement and preservation of fish and wildlife and for education in related matters. There is to be a work project in the Old Woman Mountains December 1 at Sheep Camp Spring. This is on the western side and toward the southend of this chain of mountains. Some 60 people are needed for this project . Another project to be planned for is at the Mopah Spring in the Turtle Mountains in Mid-January. The April project will be in the Chemehevi Mountains. See page 8 for info on directions

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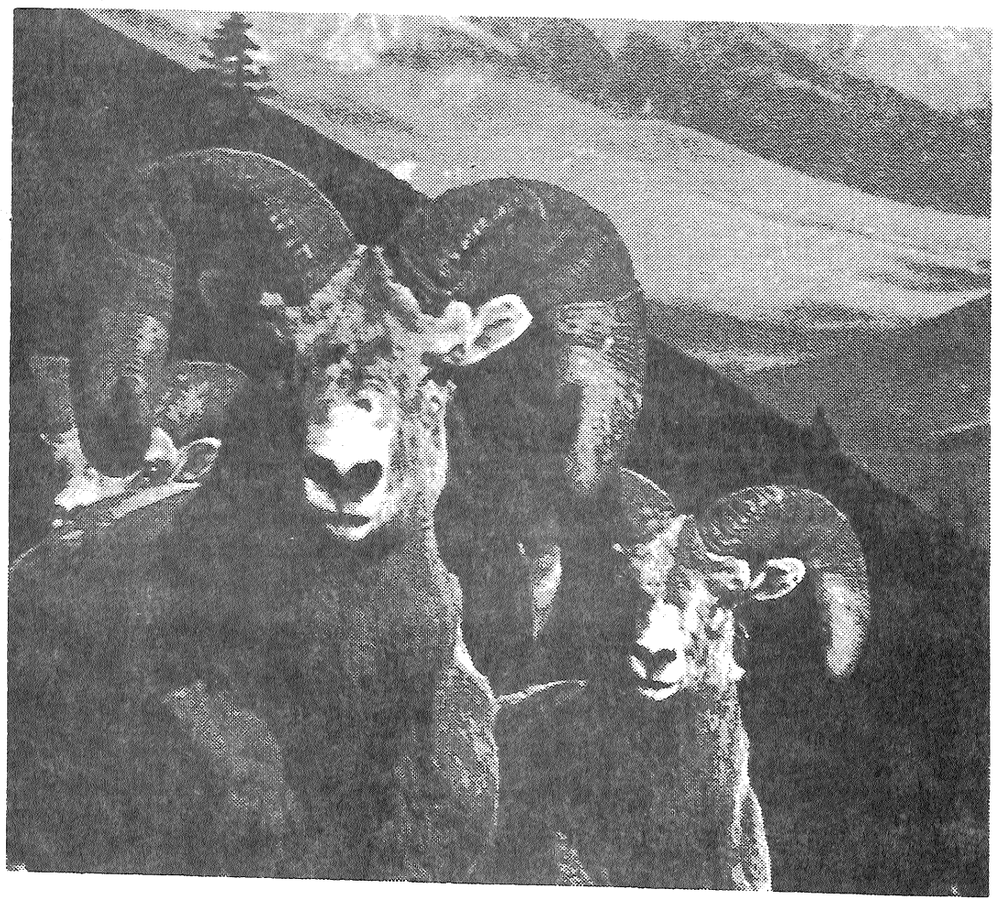
A report just received (11/21/73) from the Oregon State Game Commission:
Although all ten Oregon hunters who received bighorn sheep tags participated in the week-long season last month, only three were successful in bagging rams, according to staff biologist Paul Ebert.
Both Hunters in the newly opened Owyhee Unit took legal rams, one a full-curl, measuring the third largest so far taken in Oregon. Only one hunter on Steens Mountain(and the only woman in this year's hunt) was successful in taking a ram. At least a dozen legal three-quarter curl rams were seen by hunters in the Steens

area but lady luck seemed to be on the side of the sheep. The east side of Steens Mountain where the sheep live is extremely rugged country, making it very difficult for hunters to get around. (In fact, some tag winners in the past have taken one look at the hunting area and headed for home without hunting at all.) The three rams taken were reported by field biologists to be healthy and in prime condition.

From THE RAM'S HORN - Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society, Inc.

The 7th Annual Sheep Hunters Clinic was held by the Society on Saturday, September 29, 1973. It was considered a success as there were 40 of the total of 68 permit holders who attended..... The Arizona hunt for Desert Bighorn sheep is run on a permit basis that allots 10 percent of the permits to non-residents. All permit holders are urged to attend, but many can not do this being at too great a distance. The program includes topics of trophy recognition and classification, hunt rules, and regulations, hunting techniques, habitat zones, sportsmanship, physical and attitude conditioning, trophy and carcass care, equipment selection and with emphasis on the all important and often misunderstood or misused binoculars and spotting scopes. Special instructions were given for groups going into specific areas.... Construction continues on the esert Bighorn sheep exhibit building at the Phoenix Zoo.

LAST STAND FOR THE BIGHORN



Permission was granted by the National Geographical Society to quote and excerpt parts of an article written and illustrated by James K. Morgan which appears in the September 1973 issue. Mr. Morgan has been vitally concerned with the problems and well-being of the Rocky Mountain Bighorn, especially in his home state of Idaho, for a number of years. He has actively fought for restoration of bighorn habitat denuded by the overgrazing of domstic livestock. He has been physically beated by livestock workers; he has been shot at; had his truck equipment destroyed and has been forced out of his job as a Biologist with the Department of Fish and Game. HE TELLS IT LIKE IT REALLY IS.

The realm of the Rocky Mountain Bighorn once stretched from British Columbia to New Mexico, and the sheep grazed by the hundreds of thousands. Now diminished by hunters, disease and competition from domestic foragers, they survive in only a few pockets of wilderness. Victims of an ever-shrinking habitat, the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep- like the four other American bighorn races- is in danger of becoming extinct.

The story begins and perhaps may end- with grass. Vast shrub-sprinkled grasslands that once carpeted multitudes of high mountain valleys and slopes of the Rockies.

Before the white man came to the West, a diversified animal community inhabited those productive grasslands. Burrowing animals rooted and aerated the soil. Eagles, weasels, hawks and coyotes pursued the burrowers and the fleet-footed cottontails.

Trapping and mining brought the first white men to the western mountains. But the grass brought permanent settlers. Huge herds of domestic cattle were trailed up the Missouri River in search of the tantalizing golden pasture.....At first grass seemed forever. Ranchers believed that grass always rejuvenated itself, and any not eaten by livestock was wasted. But the overgrazed grasses rapidly began to disappear. By the early 1900's the great herds of livestock sent dust pluming into the sky as they moved across the nearly denuded land. The impact of livestock was catastrophic to mountain grasslands unable to cope with the hords of cattle, horses and sheep. Unprotected soil washed away to clog the rivers below, taking with it the nutrients of ages and the potential of tomorrow. The bighorns, because of their dependence

on the grasslands as a food source and their limited ability to adapt to conditions, best reflect the ravages of overgrazing....Other factors in the reduction of bighorn numbers have been market hunting and diseases introduced by domestic livestock. Fertile bottom lands have been homesteaded; The BLM and Forest Service have introduced roads into prime habitat. The Bureau has made efforts to re-vegetate much of these denuded lands, but, without at the same time reducing the numbers of domestic livestock using these lands. This does not give the land opportunity to restore itself, and so at least 30percent of these public rangelands remain in poor condition. Most is considered as improving, but still 15 percent is declining. The range of bighorn sheep continues to shrink....From the bighorn sheep's point of view fire is a constructive force, to some extent, the herds depend on fire to exist. If some areas aren't periodically burned, the grassland will dwindle and the bighorn habitat will shrink. Also, on winter ranges fire apparantly kill species of snail that harbors the intermediate stage of the lungworms that infest bighorns, predisposing them topneumonia. Migration tradition, passed on from generation to generation for centuries, benefits both bighorn and their limited winter ranges. They are highly susceptible to parasite anddisease when crowded together. They disperse in the spring during the critical early growth period of the grasses, and return in the fall when the grasses are dormant and little harmed by grazing. The migration pattern of the bighorn is highly important. If a particular herd becomes extinct, an introduced herd has no traditional migration pattern to follow. They therefore tend to stay together in a small area and cripple the future of the bighorn on that range, by overcrowding and overgrazing..-....After the rutting season, most rams spend winter in sites separated from the ewes. Winter doesn't seem to be a particularly interesting time in the life of the bighorn sheep, just a quiet, desparate struggle to survive. Morgan believes that the killing of cougars(mountain lions) was a disservice to the bighorn sheep, because deer by increasing each year and competing more and more with bighorns for a limited amount of forage. By keeping the deer numbers down the cougars had been alleviating at least some of the competion for food problem. Bureau of Land Management's range improvement program in some areas has had an adverse effect on all wildlife not on the bighorns alone. As range improvement money became available, the Bureau developes roads, trails, fences, waterholes, and water pipelines in remote parts of the range to facilitate the dispersal of livestock. This steady invasion of their last winter ranges subjects bighorns to intensified human activity and competition for preferred forage.

This picture dramatically shows the difference between the badly overgrazed BLM land in the background and the well-cared for privately owned land in the foreground.

Morgan states, and your editor agrees, "We need legislation to guard the total environment of public lands. The Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs recently held hearings on two such bills, one sponsored by U.S. Senators Henry Jackson , Frank Church and others. The Jackson Bill would make it Congressional policy that these regions be managed... under principles of multiple use and sustained yield in a manner which will, using all practicable means and measures, protect the environmental quality of such lands to assure their continued value for present and future generations; protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, and archeological values; preserve and protect certain areas in their natural condition provide habitat for fish and wildlife; provide for outdoor recreation; balance various demands on such lands; assure payment of fair market value by users of such lands; and provide maximum opportunity for the public to participate in decision making concerning such lands." Such legislation would help brighten the gloomy outlook for the Rocky Mountain bighorn in the United States by ultimately easing livestock pressure on public grazing lands. Thus the bighorn story begins- and unhappliy may end- with grass. Plants are the key to the quality of an environment. They are the energy fixers, soil builders, holders and protectors, water sponges and cover producers.
Bighorns are among the most majestic of the creatures that live at peace with the grass. The decline of these magnificent animals speaks sad volumes about what man is doing to his surroundings- and, ultimately, to himself."

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NOTE: At last report your editor has had, these bills alluded to by Morgan are still bogged down in the House Interior and Insular Committee. The majority of these Committee members come from those States having large Mining, Timber and Livestock interests.

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SUGGESTION: If you have not read the book SAND COUNTY ALMANAC by Aldo Leopold, then get hold of a copy and read it .

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TOO MANY PEOPLE THINK OF THE LAND AS A MINE--NOT AS A FACTORY.

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Morgan spoke concerning needed Federal Legislation. The National Resource Management Act of 1973--Senate 1041 authored by Senator Jackson. Your editor as Legislative Chairman for the Fresno County Sportsmen's Club wrote a resolution in support of this bill, in May 1973. The resolution was then adopted by the Sportsmen's Council of Central California, of which he is the Secretary, and then by the California Wildlife Federation and then by the National Wildlife Federation. Hopefully the House and Senate committees will act favorably on this bill commonly known as the BLM Organic Act of 1973.

From the Bighorn Bulletin of the Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn (nevada)

Personnel at Corn Creek are in the process of expanding the Sheep pens. They are hoping to have the job completed by the end of this year. Two lambs born this spring have managed to survive. 1 female appears to be healthy, but the male is still stuggling along.

At the present time the plans to transfer the Desert National Wildlife Range to State ownership seems to be dormant. From all indications it appears that the ange will remain in the hands of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Jack Cooper has begun the sheep inventory, concentrating in the Lake Mead area at the present time. In addition to the inventory Jack has captured 12 sheep in the Boulder Beach area and attached ear tags and other marking devices to the animals. Telemeters have been attached to four of them. This marking program is a joint effort between the Fish andGame Department and the Lake Mead National Recreation area personnel.

The transfer of 12 Nevada Sheep to Zion National Park has been completed. The 3 rams and 9 ewes have been captured and transported to a small enclosure East of the Park Headquarters in southern Utah. 10 of the animals,(1 ram and 9 ewes) were trapped in the Boulder Beach area and 2 rams were transferred from the Hawthorne enclosure. NOTE: plans for this project were mentioned in the September-October issue of the Sheepherder.

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HOPEFULLY THIS MAY BE OF ESPECIAL INTEREST TO SOCIETY MEMBERS LIVING IN THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA.

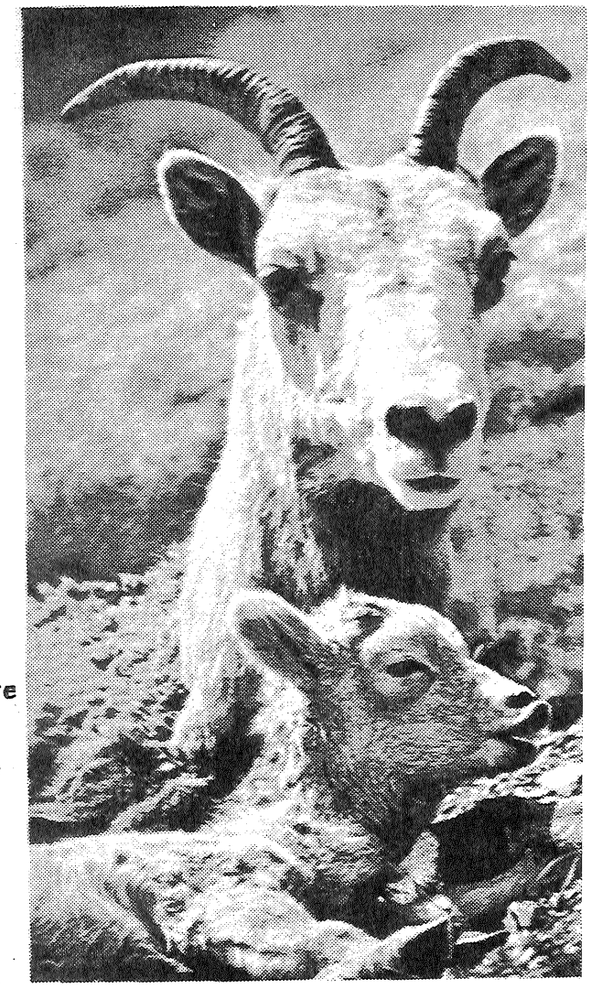
The Depatment of Biological and Physical Sciences -- University Extension UCLA is offering a Lecture Series/Credit Couse titled MAMMALS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA Adaptations to their environment. The last two lectures are November 27--Deer, Pronghorn and Bighorn Sheep Environmental Adaptations--Jack Turner, PhD, University of Wyoming; and on December 4--Can the Desert Environment Adapt to the Feral Burro? Richard Weaver, Associate Wildlife Manager, California Department of Fish and Game. Time of these lectures 7:30 p.m. Tickets sold at the door if space permits.

Karotype and Hemoglobin Characteristics of the desert bighorn and semen collection, storage and insemination in bighorn,---J.J. Spillett.

It has been pretty well agreed that the bighorn sheep of North America came by a land bridge from Asia. However, there seems to be two schools of thought concerning where in Asia the sheep did actually originate. The original belief was that the sheep had spread from the Mediterranian area across Asia and thence to North American areas. Another suggestion has also been advanced. This is that the sheep had originated in Northern Asia and then had spread to both the Mediterranian and North American areas. The Dall sheep and the Desert Bighorns are considered the more rudimentary of the North American sheep and the Stone and the Rocky Mountain sheep the more advanced types..... Crosses have been obtained between the Rocky Mt. sheep and the domestic sheep.....Types A, B, C, and D hemoglobin are found in the Domestic sheep but only type B is found in the wild sheep. The Dall and California sheep have 54 chromosomes---The Stone and Rocky Mt. have 56 and 58 chromosomes.----The Barbary sheep which is not considered either a true sheep or goat has 58 chromosomes.....The first record of artificial insemination is credited to a priest in 1690. First record of semen being frozen is in 1950. By 1957 artificial insemination had become fairly common and by 1971 there were thousands of cattle, horses, pigs, goats, turkeys and sheep artificially inseminated. Experimentation is continuing on the wild sheep.... There is now a portable electro-ejaculator which weighs as little as ten pounds.....Semen has been collected from Stone and Rocky Mt. sheep and then used in domestic sheep. Two domestic ewes did conceive from semen of the Rocky Mt. Bighorn.

Water Balance Studies at the U. C. Riverside Deseert Research Center--
Dr. Jack C. Turner.

This is a summary of a study begun by Turner in 1968, and which hs- been reported on previously. The study was to determine the amount of water needed and in its relationship to the activity of the animal. Activity has to do with energy and the amounts of energy produced by the various foods utilized and their water content. Some of the forage plants contain as high as 50% moisture at times during the year. There is a shift in diet following a rain storm. At the Research Center there is no free water. Therefore a complete record of use amounts could be kept when available daily or on a 2 day, 3 day, 4 day or 5 day intervals for watering. In this manner a daily average requirement could be arrived at. The intercellular structure of the tissue changes with dehydration, also the urine becomemes more concentrated and the discharge decreases significantly. (another study has shown that the kidney structure of the desert sheep is such that the body moisture content is recycled). With the dehydration the rumen content decreases in moisture content as also does the plasma. Normally the rumen content contains about 22% of the body fluids. Turner dies not believe that watering of sheep during transit is necessary, at least not under 48 hours from trapsite to release site , during times of normal tempeatures. Studies have shown that the body temperature of the bighorn is lower at night than in the heat of the day. This helps to eliminate transpiration of moisture. During hot weather food requirements are down--due to lesser activity--up to the time of the rut. The fat especially on the back helps to act as insulation from heat, and this fat is utilized for energy instead of foraging. As the weather changes from cool to hot the plants used as food sources also changes.



Rocky Mountain Bighorn: Horned protectress watches over her week-old youngster (above), born in late May, six months after mating. Able to walk

Report from Death Valley Monument

In a letter recently received from Mr. Harold E. Thompson, Chief Park Ranger, he states:, " The September Desert Bighorn Count was carried out primarily through the use of volunteers, of which we had 23. In addition, two employees of California Department of Fish and Game and six employees of the Death Valley National Monument staff participated. The count was conducted over the period September 5 - 8, the first day set aside for general orientation. The weather was excellent, clear and warm, with some wind encountered the evening of September 7. A total of 18 springs and water sources were monitored with 78 different sheep observations made. The breakdown is as follows: rams (31), ewes (29), yearlings (4), and lambs (14).

The projected total Monument population is approximately 400 sheep, which indicates no significant decrease since the 1971 census conducted by Dick Weaver, California Department of Fish and Game. The population is down significantly, however, from the 1961 census projections by Welles and Welles, which was 915. The 400 figure for this year is a very rough estimate at best. I had hoped to forward all data gathered to Dick Weaver, who is much better qualified to make such an estimate than myself. I still have some work to do in compiling material and as soon as I am done I will send it to him.

We did install a new water system at Quartz Spring this summer, replacing the older system that was almost completely destroyed by feral burros. The new system consists of a collection box, storage tank, and drinker. It is completely underground except for the drinker. The storage tank has acapacity of 1,050 gallons and measures 3" by 21' . Both the storage tank and drinker were constructed by the Environmental Plastic Engineeering Company, Burbank, California. Both the storage tank and drinker were imbedded in a hillside approximately 10' above an existing wash bed. Due to the location of the drinker, several problems have been encountered. One is that sheep and burros using the drinker prefer to stand upslope from the drinker. This causes considerable silt and rock to be kicked into the drinker, making it necessary to carry out frequent maintenance. Secondly, the existing float valve in the drinker does not respond quickly enough to maintain a fairly constant water level as it is being used. Both of these problems we hope to resolve prior to the next summer season.

In addition to the above a new burro trap and holding pen was constructed at Wildrose last spring and a second trap is being constructed at Goldbelt Springs. Burros

trapped at Goldbelt will be trucked to the holding pen at Wildrose to be given away to the pblic having valid permits from California Department of Agriculture . To date, a total of 45 burros have been trapped at Wildrose and we have permits for at least 35 more.

Trapping is not the solution to our overall burro problem but it is a part of our management contro plan. Trapping and transportation is a costly operation and is only feasible up to a point.....

We plan to m ake the volunteer sheep census an annual event and this year, if conditions permit, hold it in August. I will keep you informed as we proceed.

Thanks for your interest in Death Valley and the Desert Bighorn program . If we can be of any further assistance, please contact us."

Sincerely,
Harold E. Thompson
Chief Park Ranger,

Excerpts from a report by Pete Sanchez, Resources Specialist - Death Valley National Monument, November 1973..

Burros and Wildlife in Death Valley

Burros range on 777 Sq. Miles (497,000 acres) = 25.6% fo the Monument lands. There are approximately 1500 burros in the MOnument. The largest concentration of burros occurs in the Death Valley Region--within and adjacent to monument lands. Burro numbers continue to increase and their range is expanding
Terrain used by burros includes alluvial fans, canyons, intermontane valleys and rolling uplands.

Wildlife species within the monument area includes 51 native mammals; 36 reptiles; 3 amphibians and 6 fishes.

Bighorn sheep are now of greatest concern because their numbers and habitat area are declining. Their present range now occupies only 384 Square Miles on non-contiguous enclaves (isolated areas). Their former range totalled some 1,400 sq. Mi. and included all mountainous areas of the monument.

Sheep populations during the pre-pioneer era was some 4,800. The (1972) population 583 with a potential at present of an estimated 2,800. 1961 census had shown 915.

The problem is that burros have been introduced into an ecosystem operating under nominally natural conditions characterized by a normally marginal water supply, low forage production, severe climate(even for arid regions), and infrequent but devastating erosive forces (reduction of forage by flashflooding). The system is unable to incorporate the addition of a new, and large consumer modifier (burros).

Competition exists with native wildlife for forage, water and space. In the Cottonwood Mts. in 1939 bighorn sheep used 3 key springs, there has been no significant use of these springs by bighorn in the last 25 years. A similar condition exists in Cottonwood Canyon and is worsened by the presence of trespass cattle. Bighorn used the Eagle Spring in the Panamints in 1935. Burros entered the area in 1938 and bighorn use dropped to zero. Bighorn fed in Butte Valley in the early 1930's. By 1935 bighorn were replaced by herds of more than 200 burros. Saller mammals, especially rodents, are affected by the presence of large umbers of burros. Field observations suggest that further study is desirable to specifically determine the effects of habitat disturbance, especially destruction fo burrows by trampling. Also seed production. An Ecosystem health in the long term can be equated with species diversity.

Desert shrub - grassland communities contain the most burros. Both browse and grass species are utilized. Ten usually abundant plant species were found to be absent in a 1971 survey of Wildrose basin in the Panamint Mts. Similar conditions exist in the Hunter Mt. - Goldbelt - Cottonwood basin area and in Butte Valley. Many burro grazed areas are now shrubland instead of shrub-grassland believed to be unmodified vegetative cover. One area is used by a small herd of approximately 25 wild horses. Vegetation which is not eated is often damaged by trampling or uprooting during feeding. Repetetive feeding upon the same plant has resulted in heavy plant mortallity in areas where burro concentrations are great. Flowering and seed production has been severely reduced. The existence of introduced burros exerts a great pressure on a natural ecosystem unadjusted to the presence of burros or similar animals. Relict plant communities(plant communities left unchanged over a great period of time0 may be affected by burros. REcent studies suggest that burro damage, by trampling, as a probable cause for the low reproduction of Bristlecone pine on Telescope Peak in the Panamint Range, Formerly abundant sacaton grass at Eagle Borax has been so heavily eaten by burro that many plants are now dead. This has happedned since 1969. Mesquite, saltbush, and Death Valley Golden eye is also heavily utilized. Creosotebush is being eaten in some areas of heavy burro concentration. This plant is rarely eaten by any animal. It is an indication of range depletion.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE JANUARY _ FEBRUARY ISSUE

A RECENT LETTER from George A. Leja of Yucaipa, hopefully will spur some other members of the Society to let your editor know what is transpiring in the field.

George says:

"I guess that I am one of the members whom you referred to as knowing about someone doing something for the Bighorn sheep but failing tolet you know about it.

Each year and sometimes twice a year, depending on the weather and transportation, Troop 9 Boy Scouts of America in Yucaipa, journey out to the New York Mountains and clean out a well-used spring located in the upper Carruthers Canyon area. We make this a conservation project and hunter-safety program combination.

The spring is the water source for Bighorn sheep, deer and other species of wildlife. The heavy growth of Tules and brush and rock caveins continually make it a real effort for the Scouts to keep the area open. But it certainly is well worth the work, judging by the way they pitch in.

I haven't been on any waterhole counts for sometime due to pressing duties but I did take my family on a trip to Dave Springs in April, during the Easter Holidays. We observed in one group, 16 ewes, 5 lambs and 5 fairly nice rams. They were all about 500 yards from us. I had a wide angle lens on my 35-mm camera with colored film . I experimented through one eyepiece of my binoculars and you can surely see a lot of sheep on that one slide. We watched the sheep for quite some time, which was a tremendous thrill to all of us."

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George is to be commended. How could he or any other person teach the younger generation better about wildlife and the conservation of our Natural Resources than by taking them on these field trips and having them work on actual projects? Too many of us tend to forget that very soon the responsibility of them taking over the duties we try to perform, by ourselves, will be theirs entirely.

December 1, 1973---THE PROJECT___ SHEEP CAMP SPRING---is on the western side of the OLd Woman Mountains--toward the south end. It is in the center of Section 5, Township 4 north, Range 17 east---In the MILLIGAN quadrangular topo map. TO GET THERE: From the North or West--turn off old Highway 66 at Danby, cross the rail road tracks, turn right for 300 yards, take the left fork. This is the road to Chubbuck---go through Skeleton Pass- about 25 miles± . Turn northeasterly up Browns Wash(there is a dim jeep road which is a cut-off which can be used instead of going on to Chubbuck). Distance about 5 miles. Camp on the flat north of the old Black Metal Mine.

From Southern California--turn northwesterly off Highway 62, go throug h Saltmarsh andMilligan to Chubbuck; Turn Northeasterly go up Browns Wash 5.1 miles to camp site noted above. The spring is about 2 miles north of this flat and will require walking to get to it. 60 workers are needed for the job. To date only 30 have signified intention of working that day----30 more are needed. WILL SOMEONE PLEASE TAKE PICTURES OF THE PROJECT AND WRITE UP A REPORT FOR THE SHEEPHERDER. Your editor can not attend as he being secretary of the Sportsmen's Council of C. C. must attend a conference that weekend.

The Board of Directors of the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep met at the home of Marvin Wood, after a successful day of hunting pheasants on the Wood Ranches..... The board has decided to offer a $500 reward for i nformation leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons who were guilty of shooting and killing one of the mature rams within the enclosure at the Lava Beds National Monument on October 20, 1973. No leads have as yet developed concerning this poaching effort.

March 9, 1974 is the probable date for the Annual Bakersfield Banquet Dinner Meeting of the Society. Dick Weaver and Dick Graham will be the speakers of the evening. Graham's topic will be " WILDLIFE, HUNTING AND CONSERVATION".. Location of the meeting will be the same as last year, 800 Truxton Ave., BAkersfield.

Safari Club International will have their spring meeting in Las Vegas, Nev. probably March 16th 88888888888888888888888888

Dr. Lutz reported that he had been into the Santa Rosa Mts. on a count the third week-end of September and had seen a ram estimated as having a 43" curl and wearing a ribbon. Proably one that Dick Weaver and Jack Turner had captured, then marked and released.....A project has been completed on Pyramid Peak in the Inyo Mts. Two tanks were installed---no further information

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Their is a great need for members of the Society to each act as emissaries for the bighorn sheep and wildlife in general. Make use of every opportunity to speak before clubs and groups of people. Nearly every one has a series of slides which can be incorporated into a worthwhile program both informative and entertaing--and will help sell our programs. Your editor has such a program and has made a number of talks before YMCA's; Audubon Club; Service Clubs and University environmental class.

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AGAIN ---REMEMBER: December 1---Sheep Camp S pring in the Old Woman Mountains; January _- specific date not known in the Turtle Mts.--Mopah Spring-probably the middle of January; Mid April---in the Chemehuevi Mts.

AGAIN PLEASE PICTURES AND STORIES .