

PROGRAM ACTIVITY REPORT (PAR)



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & NECROPSY TRAINING

Wildlife Disease Biologists with the NWDP recently participated in a training activity conducted by the Southeast Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS). The program combined 2 trainings which have been conducted independently in the past. The first session was a 2 day course on Necropsy and Biological Specimen Collection, which consisted of one day of formal lectures and another day gaining hands-on experience performing necropsies on a variety of animals and birds. The second session was a 2 ½ day program on Wildlife Disease Emergency Preparedness. Wildlife Disease biologists from 32 WS state offices and 3 NWDP staff members from the program office in Fort Collins attended. In addition to all the training, many of the biologists completed their respirator fit-testing, which is required annually for first responders.

Although SCWDS has provided previous training to the NWDP this necropsy course was the first time it has

been held in the SCWDS facility located at the University of Georgia, Athens, GA. The necropsy laboratory in Athens features an overhead cam-



era operated remotely by a technician, which gives all students a good view of the instructor's demonstration necropsies on video monitors. There was a diverse assemblage of animals available, including opossum and armadillo. The wet laboratory part of the training enabled biologists to practice necropsy techniques, and sample collection, handling and shipping. Classroom lectures were devoted to diseases of birds and wild mammals, clinical signs and lesions, specimen collection and sterile techniques, along

with proper interpretation of diagnostic test results.

The Wildlife Disease Emergency Preparedness activity was conducted over 2.5 days. Topics presented included diseases of wild birds, tick-borne diseases, bovine tuberculosis, and risk assessment. Dr. Thomas Gidlewski, NWDP Program Manager, conducted sessions on brucellosis, foot and mouth disease, and chronic wasting disease. As a concluding exercise the biologists split into teams and prepared response plans to hypothetical emergency disease scenarios.

Annual mandatory respirator fit testing also was conducted during the meeting. NWDP staff certified to conduct testing worked with biologists during the evenings. This approach allowed the certifications to be completed without causing biologists to miss any of the targeted training.

For more information please contact John Baroch.

John.A.Baroch@aphis.usda.gov

The original artwork on this page was created by the National Wildlife Disease Program's Erika Kampe and Sarah Goff