

2011 Northeast Wildlife Trackers Conference Speakers List – Presentation & Brief Biography

Alexej Siren - “Applicability of Snow-Tracking Surveys for Marten and Lynx Research”

We will explore the various ways in which snow tracking is used to supplement marten and lynx research. Survey methods such as track transects and backtracking will be discussed to provide the audience with an overview of the applicability of snow tracking for these two species. We will also discuss the research opportunities that exist in the northeast to inspire another generation of trackers wanting to contribute to traditional research projects.

Alexej Siren is currently researching American marten in northern New Hampshire and worked as a lynx biologist in northern Maine. During five years with White Pine Programs Daniel Hansche and Alexej co-developed the annual lynx tracking expedition. This program, in particular, gave Alexej the impetus to pursue a career in wildlife. Though he is not tracking as much as he would like, these two species have kept him busy over the past several winters. Marten and Lynx leave conspicuous tracks and sign during the winter, providing ample opportunity to collect qualitative and quantitative data. Researchers use snow tracking to gain insight into habitat selection, winter diets, and to collect genetic samples. Especially with marten, backtracking provides qualitative assessments of life history requirements, as they are typically only monitored via traditional telemetry methods. Also, recent techniques such as path tortuosity allow for quantitative measures of habitat preference.

Cynthia Menard – “Wolves in New England, Past, Present and Future”

Cynthia Menard will present the history and current status of wolves in our region. She will discuss how to differentiate between New England’s canids and each species’ needs relating to habitat protection and diversity.

Cynthia Menard has her Master’s of Science Degree in Conservation Biology and has worked as a professional naturalist for more than a decade. Although she loves teaching and learning about all aspects of the natural world, her specialty areas are wild canines and tracking. While working on her Master's degree at Antioch University in New England, Cynthia co-coordinated a trip to Yellowstone National Park to study wolves and other large mammals within the Yellowstone ecosystem. Her thesis focused on tracking the movements of coyote, bobcat, fisher and whitetail deer in northern Massachusetts, and mapping wildlife corridors from northern Massachusetts into southern New Hampshire. You can find out more about Cynthia at her website: <http://www.WithywindleNaturePrograms.com>.

Sarah Haggerty – “BioMap 2: Biodiversity Conservation Blueprint”

BioMap2 is an updated and enhanced biodiversity conservation blueprint designed to protect the state’s full breadth of biodiversity in the context of a changing climate, and built on the success of NHESP’s initial *BioMap* and *Living Waters* biodiversity conservation plans. This presentation will describe the process and results of identifying, mapping, and geographically balancing Core Habitats and Critical Natural Landscapes across the state. *BioMap2* and supporting data focus on the state’s rare species, as well as additional species and habitats of conservation concern as described in the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife’s State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP).

In her sixth year at MA Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), Sarah Haggerty was recently named as the Acting Chief of Information and Program Development. Prior to accepting this position, Sarah was the NHESP Information Manager and also worked as an Endangered Species Review Biologist for NHESP. Sarah spent several years in the Pacific Northwest where she

worked seasonally as a wildlife biologist for the U.S. Forest Service, CA Department of Fish and Game, and the CA Department of Water Resources, primarily surveying for a variety of rare species to evaluate impacts of land use practices. She received an M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in 2006.

Dan Foster – “Become a Better Tracker with a Motion-Sensing Wildlife Camera”

Dan Foster will explain why every tracker should own a motion-sensing wildlife camera. None of us can track as often as we'd like, but a camera lets us track 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Nothing sways people to conserve land like a pretty picture or video of an actual animal using that property. A wildlife camera allows us to go beyond absence/presence surveys and document individual animals and their behavior. And because your camera can only monitor a few hundred square feet, it forces you to hone your tracking skills to find the best possible location.

Dan Foster built his first wildlife camera in 2003, and has been tracking and photographing the wildlife around his town ever since. He still gets a rush of excitement every time he downloads the new photos off of one of his cameras. In winter 2010, Dan trained a dozen volunteers to photograph wildlife on conservation lands managed by Sudbury Valley Trustees. Many of Dan's wildlife photos and videos can be seen at <http://stowoutdoors.wordpress.com/>

Dr. Charlie Perakis - “The Art of Tracking and the Art of Medicine: Common Features”

Dr. Charlie Perakis will present common features of the art of medicine and the art of tracking. Both disciplines require: presence, observation, holistic connections, practical reasoning and appreciation and gratitude. He believes interdisciplinary study opens each field of study to creative insights and new learning.

Charlie Perakis is a family physician currently teaching medical students and family medicine residents at the Maine-Dartmouth Family Medicine Residency in Maine. He has a Masters in Education in arts and learning from Endicott College. He has studied tracking with Paul Rezendes and White Pine Nature Education trackers and achieved Level II certification in track and sign. He enjoys carving tracks in wood while sitting on the deck of his cottage on Criehaven, an island in outer Penobscot Bay in Maine.

Jonathan Way – “Eastern Coyote/Coywolf Movement Patterns”

Dr. Jon Way will talk about his research on the ecology and behavior of the Eastern Coyote. Jon's unique photographs and personal experiences provide insight into the lives of these highly successful predators. He is particularly interested in how coyotes can occupy and travel even through areas that are human-dominated.

Jonathan G. Way, Ph.D., is the leader of the Eastern Coyote/Coywolf Project in eastern Massachusetts. He received his B.S. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst (1997), M.S. from the University of Connecticut at Storrs (2000), and Ph.D. from Boston College (2005). He has studied free ranging coyotes on Cape Cod and in Boston using radio telemetry. Some of his projects have involved high school students. He developed and evaluated a coyote-based curriculum. Jon Way has also hand-reared a wild-born litter of eastern coyote pups in order to conduct a behavioral and morphological study. His main interest concerns the study of predators inhabiting urbanized ecosystems. More information on these coyote projects, including his book, *Suburban Howls*, can be found by visiting <http://www.EasternCoyoteResearch.com>.