

Acadia National Park
Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

N16

February 26, 1965

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Acadia NP
Through: Chief Park Ranger, Acadia NP

From: District Ranger Stamey

Subject: Deer Management Program Report - September 1964
through January 20, 1965

The following is a brief resume of the Deer Management Program in Acadia during the 1964-65 season. This report to cover live-trapping, capchur gun operation, and direct reduction by shooting.

Live-trapping and Capchur Gun Operations

Our five live traps were set and baited with apples the last week in September. Activity was observed near the traps immediately and we expected results momentarily; however, this was not the case. It was the latter part of October before we began to have success in our live trapping venture. This doesn't mean we should wait until the latter part of October to start live trapping. For best results, traps should be in the trapping location before apples start falling to the ground; where feasible, they should be left in the trapping location year long.

The study of movements of Acadia deer as a result of the banding is beginning to bear fruit. A six point buck banded at Parkman Mountain in November 1963 was observed in November 1964 by two different individuals near Southwest Harbor, which is approximately thirteen (13) miles from the area where it was banded. Another crotch horn buck drugged near the Precipice area in August 1964 was observed near the Chief Ranger's residence in Halls Cove in November. This is 5.5 air miles from the Precipice. Still another buck, this one a buck fawn, has been observed to have travelled as far as 4.5 miles.

So far, bucks have travelled greater distances than the does; however, does have been observed that travelled in excess of two (2) miles from capture site. For instance, a doe banded at Jordan Pond was seen near Bubble Pond. Another doe banded at Dane Farm has been seen in Seal Harbor and at Jordan Pond.

Six of the animals banded during 1964 were fawns. Their first winter's travel will be dictated by the mother. Next fall, most of them will be on their own and we can look forward to some valuable information on the movement of Acadia deer.

Four of the fifteen deer were captured and banded by using the capchur gun with Cap-Chur-Sol (Nicotine alkaloid) as the immobilizer. Runs were started in late October when deer began to frequent the roadsides. This was especially true along the Lower Mountain Road and undoubtedly due to the lush green grass on road shoulders as a result of prior seeding by a road contractor. After six animals were hit with the dart in a period of about two weeks and made good their escape, we suspected that the drug, which was over one year old, had lost its potency. We immediately ordered a new batch which didn't arrive until the middle of November, after which, we succeeded in capturing three animals in eleven days, then the majority of the deer left the roadsides. We believe far greater results would have been evident had we foreseen the above and procured new drugs in October.

Reduction efforts with the capchur gun in the fall of 1965 should begin as soon as the deer start frequenting the roadsides which usually is in September. New drugs should be purchased yearly in order to avoid the misfortune we experienced last fall.

The following data on deer captured and banded during 1964 may be of interest.

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Place captured</u>	<u>How captured</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Number of Observations</u>	<u>Farthest Distance Travelled</u>
*Male, crotch horn	Precipice area	Drugged	8/11/64	6	5.5 miles
Female Fawn	Dane Farm	Entangled in fence	8/17/64	3	1.3 miles
Female	Jordan Pond	Trapped	10/5/64	5	0.2 miles
Male Fawn	Dane Farm	Trapped	10/25/64		
Female	Jordan Pond	Trapped	10/28/64	2	2.1 miles
Male Fawn	Hardwood Hill	Trapped	11/2/64		
Female	Dane Farm	Trapped	11/4/64	3	1.5 miles
Male, crotch horn	Parkman Mountain	Trapped	11/4/64		
Female Fawn	Dane Farm	Trapped	11/9/64		
Male, spike horn	Parkman Mountain	Trapped	11/10/64	1	2.2 miles
Male Fawn	Lower Mtn. Road (W. side Cadillac)	Drugged	11/12/64	1	4.5 miles
Male Fawn	Witch Hole Pond	Drugged	11/15/64	3	0.6 miles
Male, spike horn	McFarland Hill	Trapped	11/16/64	1	0.1 miles
Female	Otter Point	Drugged	11/23/64	1	0.2 miles
Male, 8 point	McFarland Hill	Trapped	12/2/64		

* Killed by automobile on November 22, 1964

Reduction by Shooting

Because funds were not available to conduct the reduction program on the same scale as in previous years, it was necessary to modify the program. At first it was thought that there would be sufficient funds to carry the program through ten weeks, however, this was not the case. It was to last only four weeks and three days after which it was terminated on January 20.

Direct reduction by shooting started on December 7. Two seasonal rangers, Robert S. Miller and Aldene Robbins, were to carry out the programmed operation under the direct supervision of District Ranger Stamey. Miller had participated in the program in the past.

The Chief Park Naturalist recommended that a minimum of 60 animals be taken from the following 8 areas: Norumbega Mountain, Valley Cove, Western Mountain, Witch Hole, West Sargent Mountain, Hardwood Hill, Black Woods, and Jordan Pond. No ~~minimum~~ ^{MINIMUM} number was set for the overall operation.

On the assumption that the reduction by shooting would last for ten weeks, plans were then made accordingly and reduction efforts were started in all areas except Norumbega and Valley Cove. These latter two areas would be worked later when deer there started to concentrate or yard. However, we never did hunt these areas due to the curtailment of the reduction program on January 20.

Twenty-eight deer were reduced by shooting during two weeks of December. Weather conditions the first week were very poor, with practically every day being overcast and light snow occurring. Also rangers were forced to snowshoe during this period due to a prior heavy snowstorm. Conditions improved the second week and were good until the shooting ceased for the Christmas holidays on December 18. Greater success may have been realized during December had it not been for dogs running deer. This was a period of increased dog-deer activity.

Forty-six deer were taken by shooting during January 4 through 20. Weather conditions during this period was excellent thus accounting for the good kill which average out to slightly over 3.5 animals per reduction day.

Final area breakdows are as follows:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Reductions</u>
West Sargent Mountain	27
Jordan Pond (East & West side)	16
Black Woods	6
Hardwood Hill	9
Otter Point	5
Witch Hole Pond	3

<u>Area</u>	<u>Reduction</u> (continued)
Western Mountain	3
Beaver Dam Pool	4
Lakewood (starvation)	<u>1</u>
Total shot	74
*Miscellaneous Reduction	<u>9</u>
Total	83

*Miscellaneous Reduction - three car kills, three poacher kills, and three dog kills.

This year, as was last year, our greatest success was had on West Sargent Mountain. This area is definitely a wintering area. Deer begin concentrating in this area after the first appreciable snow.

During the 1964-65 season, rangers worked 23 reduction days to remove 74 animals which is an average of slightly over three animals per day. Miscellaneous reductions (see breakdowns) brought this year's total to 83. Looking at the deer management program since its inception in November 1960, the total stands at 591 deer removed. Of this total 554 were killed by shooting, 4 were live-trapped and removed, 6 were removed by capchur gun, 13 were killed by cars, 7 were killed by poachers, and 7 were killed by dogs.

Had funds been available to allow us to hunt another month, I sincerely believe we could have removed another 40 animals which would have brought the total shot to 114 and nearer the annual increase of our deer herd.

Conclusion

I would again like to recommend as I have in previous years, that the hunting crews not be restricted with certain geographical bounds as outlined on a map. I think we now have enough data on the movement of our deer, taking into consideration the number of deer banded, to disprove the old theory that deer will never venture out of a one square mile area. Additional sightings of banded deer should continue to confirm this.

The exception to the above would be the Champlain Mountain Management Area (Champlain Mountain to Thunder Hole) which has been set aside for the general public to observe deer. I would like to suggest that this area be extended to include the whole of Otter Point. All evidence indicates that deer move into Otter Point from the Champlain Mountain vicinity to seek shelter during the cold winter months. In order to leave an appreciable number of deer at the Champlain Mountain area, we should cease reduction at Otter Point.

We need data on the movement of deer on the Western side of the island. Therefore, it is recommended that additional live traps be constructed this coming summer and at least two of them be

set in the Western District this coming fall, one near the ranger station and the other on the Long Pond truck road.

As future changes in browse affect our deer herd, management needs will also change. If we adhere to the principle of maintaining a healthy herd in balance with their range, we can expect a continued need for yearly reductions. Therefore, funds for wildlife management should be automatically allocated so that plans can be formulated.

Over-browsing is still evident on lots of our deer range; this is particularly true on our winter range. In some areas, Great Hill, Witch Hole, etc., browse is starting a slow recovery. However, I have yet to find any recovery of browse in the wintering areas such as West Sargent, Cedar swamps in Southwest Valley, Jordan Pond, etc. Reduction efforts, consequently, must be directed into these areas to ensure more winter browse in the future.

Further reduction of the deer herd in Acadia National Park is recommended for 1965-66. If this is approved, we will need an allocation of approximately \$3500 to finance the program from September 7 to February 28.

(SGD) ROY W. STAMEY

Roy W. Stamey
District Park Ranger