Wolf-Dog Hybrids Called “Wild” in Virginia

In May the Virginia Board of Game and Inland Fisheries passed regulations that place wolf-dog hybrids in the category of “nonnative exotic animals.” Beginning July 1, 1993, a permit will be required to import, possess, or sell the hybrid progeny of dogs and wolves.

The HSUS submitted written testimony to the state Wildlife and Boat Committee citing our position strongly discouraging private ownership of wild canids and wolf hybrids. According to Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., wolf expert and HSUS vice president, Field Services, “The breeding of hybrids is, I feel, a big step backward, since it produces an animal who usually cannot live safely and humanely in human society yet is not really a wild animal either.”

Humans have spent more than 12,000 years transforming the wolf from a predator into the domestic dog. Wolf hybrids tend to be confused—torn between their instincts for life in the wild and life in a household. Every year at least one or two of the fifteen to twenty fatal attacks by dogs on humans involve wolf hybrids. They bite out of fear or from predatory instinct. Wolf hybrids, due to their size,

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Tennessee Reevaluates Pigeon Shoot

In many communities the sight of pigeons roosting on downtown buildings has become all too common. The nooks and crannies typical of historical architecture make ideal nesting sites for this adaptable species. Unfortunately the resourcefulness of pigeons often creates problems for the people with whom they share the city.

In Clarksville, Tenn., officials have become quite concerned over the increasing numbers of pigeons. Gary Hamm, Montgomery County director of building and maintenance, reported two documented cases of histoplasmosis (a disease spread to humans from bird droppings), including one in a county maintenance worker, which may have come from contact with pigeons.

Efforts to restore and maintain the county’s historical buildings were being seriously hindered by the pigeons as well. Hamm had tried several methods of control, including live trapping and relocation, use of owl effigies, even hiring a professional falconer. None permanently drove

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the pigeons away from the downtown area.

Hamm contacted the SCRO for our opinion on pigeon shoots as an option. In such events trapped pigeons are released in the presence of several hunters who use them as animated targets. At some pigeon shoots, children are paid to retrieve dead birds and kill injured ones.

The HSUS strongly opposes pigeon shoots. Not only are they extremely inhumane, but they also do nothing to prevent more pigeons from settling into the niches vacated by the massacred birds. In some cases, we believe, pigeon shoots could be in violation of state or local laws.

Any successful solution to dealing with pigeon problems involves making man-made structures less desirable as roosting places. The SCRO provided Montgomery County with information on nonlethal methods of controlling wildlife damage. At press time the proposal to hold a pigeon shoot in the county had been put on the back burner.

The HSUS will continue to speak out against indiscriminate cruelty in the name of wildlife-damage control. For further information on humane solutions to urban-wildlife problems, please contact the SCRO.

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strength, and temperament, are unsuitable as pets. They are often impossible to train, unpredictable, destructive, and hard to confine. There is at present no rabies vaccine approved for use in wolves or wolf hybrids.

The HSUS believes that a reduction in- and eventual elimination of privately owned wolf hybrids can be accomplished by restricting the sale, trade, release, import, or export of animals across state and local boundaries. The action taken by the Virginia Board of Game and Inland Fisheries is a step in that direction.

The HSUS advises on pigeon control convinced officials to reevaluate plans for a pigeon shoot in Montgomery County, Tenn.

Coexisting with Urban Wildlife Is a Challenge

Greenboro, N.C., was the site of a recent workshop, “Human Solutions to Problems with Urban Wildlife,” co-sponsored by The HSUS and the North Carolina Animal/Rabies Control Association. The workshop featured John Girand, Ph.D., HSUS vice president, Wildlife and Habitat Protection, and Guy R. Hodge, director, data and information services.

Many of us in the field of animal care and control receive countless calls regarding squirrels in the attic or pigeons roosting at the old county courthouse. All too often, frustrated callers feel that their only recourse is to “exterminate” animals they perceive as pests. At this workshop almost one hundred participants were provided with information on the nonlethal methods that can reduce or eliminate damage caused by wildlife. In many cases the solution involves, quite simply, eliminating access or creating more suitable environments for wildlife by eliminating access or creating nuisances.

Anyone interested in learning more about urban-wildlife control can order the Pocket Guide to the Humane Control of Wildlife in Cities and Towns. This very helpful book is available through the HSUS publications catalog. For your complete list of HSUS publications, write or call the SCRO.

The HSUS offers the following rewards:

- up to $2,500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person who organizes illegal cockfights, fights dogs, promotes cockfighting, or officiates at cockfights;
- up to $1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone who willfully poisons or attempts to poison a dog or cat.

If you have any information regarding any of the above-described acts you may call the SCRO at (615) 588-1843 weekday between 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.

Reward, Reward, Reward

The HSUS is a source of information, direct assistance, and moral support. We plan to continue providing training in areas of interest and concern to this region. When feasible, we will assist local investigators, and we will struggle for better animal-protection laws in all four states. Through the SCRO the collective know­ledge of the entire HSUS staff is only a phone call away. I know of no more highly qualified and dedicated group of people.

Whether you are overseeing a major shelter renovation, lobbying for more effective local animal-cru­elty laws, or investigating alleged cru­elty, you are never doing it alone. By combining our strengths and working together, we can—and will—make a difference!
KENTUCKY—Animals suffered two blows in Kentucky’s 1992 legislative session. H.B. 20 exempted certain activities permitted for those with a hunting license, including dog training that uses live animals and the cruel “shake-out” hunting season (when young animals may be shaken from trees and destroyed by dogs). The SCRO and several other animal-advocacy groups urged Gov. Brereton C. Jones to veto the bill, which he did. Unfortunately, his decision was overridden by the state General Assembly and the bill became law.

State Rep. Pat Freibert introduced H.B. 529, which would have changed the statutory definition of “animals” to include birds. Freibert’s intention was to provide protection to birds under the state’s anti-cruelty laws. The main objective of the bill was to make cockfighting illegal. Because of pressure from a few powerful legislators, however, the bill was killed before it was even heard by the House Natural Resources Committee! National, state, and local animal-protection organizations plan to work for passage of similar legislation in Kentucky’s next legislative session.

Seized fighting cocks await their fate; The main objective of Kentucky’s H.B. 529 (which was killed before reaching committee) was to make cockfighting illegal.

Reflect for a moment . . .
HOW CAN I HELP ANIMALS EVEN WHEN I NO LONGER SHARE THEIR WORLD?

By your bequest for animal protection to The Humane Society of the United States, your will can provide for animals after you’re gone. Naming The HSUS demonstrates your lasting commitment to animal welfare and strengthens the society for this task. We will be happy to send information about our animal programs and material that will assist in planning a will.

Please send will information to:

Name ___________________________ Address ___________________________

City ___________________________ State __________ Zip code __________

Mail in confidence to Murdaugh S. Madden, Vice President/Senior Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L. St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.