

**50-YEAR MISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN AFFECTS PUBLIC'S  
COYOTE PERCEPTIONS  
10/26/99**

I have always enjoyed hunting and fishing and still do. My hunting has been tempered by the constraints of old age and changing game patterns. This is particularly true in the case of deer. In spite of the spin State biologists feed the public, Adirondack deer are at all time lows.

How can that be you ask, when the village streets of Old Forge are overrun with deer? They are at nuisance levels near any human habitation, but woefully absent in areas beyond any human habitation.

Since deer are normally among the wildest of wildlife what has caused them to abandon their once preferred habitat? What has prompted that change?

When I began extensively traversing the hinterlands in the late 40s and 50s the backwoods were full of deer. They were not the domesticated nuisances we harbor in the populated areas today. Their main enemies were the elements, lack of forage and man. Fisher, foxes and bear preyed on fawns in their first six weeks of life. Bobcats, especially large, mature individuals, took deer of all ages.

In the late 40s the equation changed when the Eastern coyote arrived on the scene. This was not the little brush wolf of the West whose chief prey are jackrabbits, prairie dogs and the occasional antelope or deer fawns. This was the larger Eastern coyote whose size has been altered by Adirondack winters and liberal infusions of domestic dog.

The domestic dog influence has diminished now that a stable breeding population of pure coyote is established. The result is a super predator that has been refined and adapted to the harsh Adirondack winters.

Lest some radical left wing rabid environmentalist accuses me of playing God by deciding what lives or dies, now hear this: I greatly admire the Adirondack coyote. I take my hat off to anyone or anything, human or animal, that can make a living in New York's Adirondacks - a region unique in our free world where the economy, population, development and environment is principally dictated by nonresident social engineers.

This article is prompted by one reason alone. It is 50 years of academic campaigns to convince the public the coyote has had no effect on present Adirondack deer populations. Most of it has been espoused by academicians who were never alive to experience the Adirondack deer populations we once enjoyed.

Before my formal qualifications are questioned as to what makes me an expert on the subject, I admit they are very little. My opinions and knowledge are based on over 50 years of observations and common sense in the bailiwick in question. It is the same common sense I rely on when I decide not to waste my time watching a State of the Union address by the biggest liar in history.

I have just one lament in this whole dissertation. It's the fact that the scarcity of deer has increasingly made it more difficult to experience quality deer hunting.

By quality deer hunting I do not mean murdering tame deer. I have always, for the most part, considered myself a deer hunter and not a deer murderer. Let me clarify that by stating I did avail myself of some easy meat with the doe permits promoted in the 60s by the DEC.

I drove around an exclusive private hunting club and murdered a few does in what I believed to be an effort to insure an even larger supply of deer down the road. It has been proven to have had the opposite effect and records kept over the time span I have considered prove it.

This missive is, of course, an effort in futility as far as convincing anyone on the left that coyotes do, indeed, affect Adirondack deer populations. It would not make any difference if it did because there is little anyone can do to alter this situation. The coyotes came here on their own initiative and have become an integral part of the Adirondack scene. They are much more welcome by me than all of the tweedy-birders governing our lives.

It would be a refreshing and honest departure from the pattern held by those these many years to finally admit they are a force to be reckoned with when it comes to deer. The deer know it and have become refugees in their own land wisely taking sanctuary in the hamlet areas.