

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

September 25, 1948.

Robert

33

20 bunnies were seen during the year. Tracks have been seen occasionally following along the sand dunes.

ANNUAL WILDLIFE REPORT FOR BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT, 1948

Species	Estimated Number	Comment
Badger	10	2 badgers were seen. Both were outside of monument boundaries. A few fresh diggings were noticed on both sections of the area, but they are predominant on the Otowi Section where ground squirrels and other rodents are more prevalent.
Bats	Common	Although a lesser number of bats now occupy the natural cave in the ruins area they are still quite common. Reports were received from visitors that they had seen a large number of bats frequenting a cave farther up the canyon. There was more moisture this season and the bats will probably become more numerous with a continuance of the recovery from two years of drought. During the drought seasons of 1946 and 1947 a decrease in the number of bats was noticeable.
Bear, black	10	4 bear were observed on the monument during the past year. 1 bear was taken by a hunter on Burnt Mesa just east of the boundary during hunting season last fall. This year the bears seem to be remaining in the higher altitudes until later in the season, although sign of 1 bear was seen in the orchard early in September. As yet no one has located a place on the monument where the bear hibernate.
Beaver	10	A few beaver were working about 3 miles above the headquarters during the early Spring but later in the summer this activity seemed to cease. Beaver have not returned to the site below the Upper Falls where two beaver were found dead last year. It was believed that they had gone over the falls, dropping about 85 feet to the pool below. Signs of considerable activity have been noticed on the Rio Grande River along the South boundary. Also, a large colony is at work about 3 miles

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above the North boundary in Frijoles Canyon. It is believed that beaver could be successfully stocked in both the Frijoles and Capulin streams on the monument area and it is hoped that this project may soon be started.

Bebeats 10

No bebeats were seen during the year. Tracks have been seen occasionally following along the sandy bottoms of dry arroyos. Because of their nocturnal habits it is quite possible that our estimate is low.

Cat, ring-tailed 100

None were reported during the past year but it is believed they are still quite numerous on the area. We attribute the relative scarcity of mice around the headquarters area to be due to these cats.

Chickaree Common

Again this season these squirrels have been noticed at the higher altitudes on the monument and are rarely seen near the headquarters. One of the most common experiences is to find them high in the fir or spruce trees cutting off cones and dropping them 50 to 60 feet to the ground. It is amazing how fast they can work.

Coyote Common

Coyotes are commonly seen along our entrance road and on the area itself. Their tracks are very numerous following along trails and dry arroyo beds. They seem to be more prevalent at altitudes less than 7000 feet.

FOX, GRAY

During last winter while on patrol the writer came very close to witnessing a battle between a buck and four coyotes. Riding along the trail through yellow pine-mountain mahogany-pinyon-juniper coverage, the rider suddenly heard a great commotion about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the right. Such barking and yelping the writer had never before heard. The noise came from a shallow canyon. The battle had ended before arrival at the scene of the fray, but a clear record was left in the snow. The coyotes had encircled the buck and had approached him from all directions simultaneously, thereby cornering him. There was ample evidence of the ensuing skirmish but I saw no signs of blood. As far as could be determined the coyotes finally gave up and went on their way, leaving the deer, which had leisurely left the scene. Tracks did not indicate that the coyotes intended to resume the attack. I am quite certain that my presence was not known at the end of the fight and that the buck had bested his opponents.

Deer, mule 270

Two patrols were made after fresh snowfalls for the purpose of attempting wildlife estimates. One was made

lion, mountain

Fishes, trout

Partridge

Doves, turtle Common

Partridge

Elk

5

Fox, grey 20

Wolves

Squirrel, short

Squirrel, striped

Monkey, howler

Fox, red 20

Grouse, blue Rare

Jay, crested blue Common

on the morning of November 21 and the other on January 19. Figuring from the results of these counts we now believe there are about 270 mule deer on the area. It is common to observe the deer on almost all portions of the monument, but they are most numerous in and near Capulin and Frijoles Canyons. Both of these canyons have running streams of water the year around.

Doves are numerous on both sections of the monument. Hunters report comparative ease in obtaining their limits in the flats along the Rio Grande valley to the east of Bandelier.

This is the first report of elk on the Bandelier area. In early May of this year 28 elk were introduced to the higher Jemez mountains to the north and east of the monument by the State Fish and Game Department. On July 9 the tracks of a bull and cow elk were observed on trails in the upper portions of Bandelier. On September 15 four bulls were seen in the lower end of Alamo Canyon near our southern boundary. We shall watch with keen interest the activities of these newcomers during the winter months.

7 grey foxes were seen during the year. At one time 5 were seen together near the talus house ruins near the headquarters. The grey foxes which have been seen appeared to be relatively unafraid of human presence. One was seen to leisurely cross the trail just ahead of a mounted patrolling ranger. He stopped for just a moment to scrutinize the ranger and then continued, unconcerned, about his business.

The fox mentioned in last year's report and which growled at people at night was back again this summer and caused visitors some anxiety on several occasions. He was closely observed this summer on only one occasion. This was the only red fox reported and it is believed that the red foxes are more wary of humans than the grey.

Although blue grouse are quite numerous north and west of Bandelier beginning at about 9000 feet altitude none were reported on the monument.

These jays are very numerous at this altitude from September to June. Along in June they go to the higher country and are not seen much until about September 1.

Lion, mountain 10

None were seen this year. On several occasions tracks were reported to have been seen in and near Capulin Canyon.

Pigeon, band tailed Rare

None reported this year.

Porcupine 30

1 porcupine seen in Frijoles Canyon in July. Considerable signs of where they had been eating bark from pine trees have been seen on almost all sections of the area. They work on the pinyons and cottonwoods in addition to the yellow pine.

Raccoon 10

1 raccoon seen on entrance road outside monument boundaries.

Rattlesnakes Common

Rattlers are numerous along the Rio Grande River on the South boundary. 1 was seen near the ruins trail in the headquarters area. Several have been reported on the entrance road. Road workers at work on the new road through the Otowi section report rattlesnakes to be very numerous in that area. During the summer a deep trench was dug for a water pipe line and part of the time the 10" pipe was laying uncovered in this trench. Workers reported that the rattlers in large numbers would secure themselves under this pipe during the night.

Skunks Common

Numerous in campground and headquarters area.

Squirrel, Abert Common

Found on all sections of the monument and always a delight to visitors.

Squirrel, Ground Common

Turkey, Merriam 25

18 turkeys were seen in one flock near base camp in Capulin Canyon just before Christmas. Visitors have reported seeing large flocks in the higher altitudes west and north of the monument during the summer.

The estimates presented above are made mostly from general observance by visitors and monument personnel, from ranger and fire-guard patrol, and from two wildlife counts made last winter. The winter counts threw new light on our deer situation. The establishment of the Rabbit Mountain game preserve on the north and west sides has already begun its effect on the monument. Elk are reported this year for the first time.

Sylvester J. Keeffe.
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Park Ranger.