

Bandelier National Monument

1963

Annual Wildlife Report

The winter months of 1963 produced 33.3 inches of snow and 13.95 inches of precipitation which did much to continue the upward increase in the amount of wildlife to be seen in the Monument. It was rather an open winter with the snow storms scattered sufficiently so that foraging was not too difficult for the wildlife and provided plentiful food. An abundant acorn and moderate pinyon crop were produced and provided ample food for both birds and mammals that rely on mast for food. The chokecherry and other wild fruits produced only a moderate crop because of the drought in the spring and early summer. The late summer rains greatly improved the grass and browse so that game animals wintered very well.

The greatest number of animals are observed in the Monument during the months of November to March. In early summer the larger animals make their way to higher elevations (7,500 - 10,000 ft.). This accounts for the relatively few animals seen by visitors and Rangers on patrol during the summer. However, deer can be seen in the vicinity of headquarters at anytime of the year. Bear have been observed near Ceremonial Cave in July. The size and weight of the deer appears to be better than it has been for some time, which can possibly be attributed to better food conditions.

The New Mexico State Department of Game and Fish added significantly to our information of the deer population by helping to locate an old transect established by them in 1957 on Frijolitos Mesa. This transect has been reestablished and read once during the fall. It is hoped to establish additional transects in the Monument and to make more frequent checks of these plots. At present, no population comparisons are feasible with past estimates other than relative abundance due to the few number of actual pellet counts.

The San Alamos Conservationist trapped and tagged several deer at the 22 33 Site near the Monument (both bucks and does) to study their migratory movements and some of their habits. A report of this trapping and marking is to be furnished the Monument. So far six of the marked deer have been seen in the canyon. They are marked as follows: Bucks - left ear cropped and metal tag with blue ribbon placed on each ear, Does - left ear cropped and metal tag with orange ribbon placed on ear.

Aside from some illegal hunting activities along the south and west boundaries, the only management problem of the Monument is the ever increasing number of feral burros inhabiting the backcountry. Burros

have been observed on Frijolitos Mesa overlooking Frijoles Canyon and as far west as the Alamo Springs area. Since it is thought that the present range conditions will not support the present deer population, control of this exotic species is imminent.

During the fall of 1963 hunting patrols observed several groups of burros (largest was 25 in number) and many tracks throughout the backcountry area. The hunting patrols covered nearly all sections of the Monument southwest of Frijoles Canyon.

A more concentrated effort will be made this summer to determine the number and species of the wildlife that may be found in the Upper Frijoles area (new addition) of the Monument and the effect the new campground and residential area will have on the wildlife.

Two wildlife patrols were made in the new addition - one was to determine the range forage conditions and the amount of use the area was getting from the wildlife and the other was to determine species and amount of wildlife present. The range conditions were very good and it appeared that it was not getting as much use as some of the other areas of the Monument. This could be that it is a summer range for some of the animals. As for the other part, very few sightings were made, however, deer, bear, elk and turkey were observed.

The following are some comments on some of the animals of the area:

Baldpate: This animal appears to be on the increase after several years of decline. Unmistakable evidence was found in the backcountry and recent in the new campground area. Two were seen in the detached Forest Section.

Bears: These animals appear to be on the increase in the Monument despite the active hunting outside the boundaries. Bears have been observed in the vicinity of Ceremonial Cave and bears were observed raiding garbage cans in the backgate area. Four bears were observed in the Upper Frijoles. Many signs in the backcountry.

Cougars: Several tracks have been observed in the backcountry and one deer kill apparently by a Cougar was found on Frijolito Mesa.

Snakes: Observations of this animal during the report period were less frequent and the campground problem with them has virtually disappeared.

Elk: A few observations were reported during the report period. State Department of Game and Fish reports that a small number may be still present in Santa Fe National Forest adjoining the west boundary.

Golden Eagle: Several observations of this bird were made during the report period. The hunting patrol in the southwest corner of the Monument came within 10 feet of one before the bird flew off. The bird appeared to be in excellent condition.

The estimated numbers in the following census are based on six wildlife patrols made during the report period and reports from visitors and employees.

1961)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ANNUAL WILDLIFE REPORT

Submit in triplicate to the Regional Director who will submit the report in duplicate to WASO. Use symbols in Columns 3 and 4 as follows: RELATIVE POPULATION: Abundant Generally (AG); Abundant Locally (AL); Common Generally (CG); Common Locally (CL); Rare (R); Infrequent (I). POPULATION TREND: Up (U); Static (S); Down (D). See reverse for detail explanation of symbols. If all important facts on wildlife have not been covered, a narrative report should be prepared as outlined on the reverse.

Park Bandelier National Monument							Prepared by Charles A. Rowe Supervisory Park Ranger				Date April 28, 1964						
SPECIES (1)	ESTIMATED POPULATION (2)	RELATIVE POPULATION (3)	POPULATION TREND (4)	NO. MOVED OUT ALIVE (5)	NO. STOCKED IN PARK (6)	REDUCTION KILL (7)	ACCIDENT AND POACHER KILLED (8)		SPECIES (1)	ESTIMATED POPULATION (2)	RELATIVE POPULATION (3)	POPULATION TREND (4)	NO. MOVED OUT ALIVE (5)	NO. STOCKED IN PARK (6)	REDUCTION KILL (7)	ACCIDENT AND POACHER KILLED (8)	
							Car	Other								Car	Other
Antelope									Peccary								
Armadillo									Pika								
Badger	10	R	U						Porcupine	15-20	R	U					2
Bat		CL							Prairie Dog								
Bear, Black	10-15	R	S						Rabbit, Cottontail	25-30	R	S					7
Bear, Grizzly									Rabbit, Jack								
Beaver									Rabbit, Snowshoe								
Beaver, Mountain									Raccoon	20-25	R	U					
Bighorn									Rodents, Small		CL						
Bison									Seal								
Bobcat	10-15	R	S						Sea Lion								
Caribou									Skunk	25-50	AL	S					2
Cat, Ringtail	20-25	R	U						Squirrel, Ground		AG	U					4
Chipmunk		CL	U				3		Squirrel, Tree		CG						3
Coati-Mundi									Weasel								
Cougar		I							Wolf								
Coyote	30-50	AG	U						Wolverine								
Deer, Blacktail									Alligator								
Deer, Mule	550	AG	U				11 2		Crocodile								
Deer, Whitetail									Turtle, Green								
Elk	4	I	D						EXOTICS								
Fox, Gray	5-10	R	S						Boar								
Fox, Kit									Burro	50-75	AL	U					
Fox, Red	4-8	R	D						Goat								
Fisher									Horse								
Goat, Mountain									Mongoose								
Gopher, Pocket		CL							Nutria								
Lynx									Rabbit								
Manatee									Birds		AG	U					10
Marmot																	
Marten																	
Mink																	
Moose																	
Muskrat																	
Ocelot																	
Oppossum																	
Otter, River																	
Otter, Sea																	
Additional Species																	

Merriam's Turkey 50-75 AG U