



Monthly Newsletter

August 2024



Living with bobcats

A number of WDDNA members have recently shared videos and images taken of a bobcat in the American River Parkway in the vicinity of Rio Americano High School. (See the above video taken by David Zavislan.)

While the presence of bobcats in a riparian area like ours is no surprise, some residents have expressed concern about having predatory animals in close proximity to a residential neighborhood.

According to Rachel Roberts, senior environmental scientist and bobcat specialist with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, humans have nothing to fear from bobcats and, in fact, can be glad that they are around to help keep the ecosystem in balance.

“Human communities attract a lot of rats, mice and other rodents,” Roberts noted. “Bobcats help keep those pests under control.”

She explained that bobcats, usually weigh between 20 and 25 pounds. Their diet consists of such things as rabbits, wood rats, porcupines, raccoons, birds, amphibians and reptiles. Turkey chicks are one of their favorites. And they will even hunt rattlesnakes. They also will opportunistically hunt pet cats or chickens, so Roberts advises that such animals be kept indoors or in a secure enclosure.

Roberts was involved in a statewide study of bobcats called for by the State Legislature after passage of a bobcat trapping and hunting ban in 2020. Known as the California Statewide Bobcat Population Monitoring Project, the two-year study ended in 2022. Using the resulting data, a state bobcat management plan is expected to be completed soon.

One of the study sites that Roberts monitors is at Folsom Lake and she believes the bobcats seen along the parkway likely are permanent residents. They prefer areas with

dense brush and vegetation, which the parkway provides in abundance.

“Male bobcats range pretty far,” she explained. “But females generally don’t. They stick close to their chosen territory.”

Roberts said bobcats may occasionally wander into backyards in pursuit of prey but they don’t stay. However, if the yard provides an inviting environment, a female bobcat may decide to return when she is looking for a place to have her kittens.

“As a property owner, I advise you to pay attention to what’s in your yard,” said Roberts. “Part of that is to make sure that you are not providing a comfortable place for a bobcat to have her kittens. You may think the kittens are cute, but you won’t when they come out of their den and start killing rats on your patio.”

Roberts offered the following advice to avoid that problem:

- Keep brush cleared away. Don’t allow it to provide a hiding place.
- Feed dogs and cats indoors and clean up after them.
- Clear away fruit that falls from trees that may attract rodents.
- Don’t feed wildlife. Predators follow prey.
- Keep poultry in a secure outdoor enclosure.
- Use scare devices to temporarily frighten bobcats away.
- A medium- to large-size dog in the yard is one of the best ways to deter bobcats.

The bottom line, said Roberts, is that bobcats should not be feared. They are a valuable part of the natural environment and help keep the beautiful American River Parkway in balance.

Additional information:

- Download a “Living with Bobcats” flyer here
<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=202579&inline>
- CDFW bobcat website page
<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Bobcat>
- CDFW bobcat research page
<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Bobcat#science>

Dues to increase for 2025

We all know that everything costs more than it did five years ago. Despite that, WDDNA’s annual dues have remained unchanged since 2020.

How did we manage that? In part, our continuous marketing efforts helped us grow our membership, which modestly increased revenue.



More importantly, however, during the pandemic we experienced a dramatic deputy shortage. Due to illness, retirements, the closure of the Sheriff’s Department training academy (which cut off the supply of new deputies) and the need for deputies to work overtime to fill the departmental vacancies, we were unable to keep all our shifts filled.

As a result, despite dramatic increases in the hourly rate charged by the Sheriff’s Department, our costs fell for two years and we were able to build our reserves and use those reserves to cover our revenue deficits for the following two years.

That will no longer be possible. In 2023, the Sheriff’s Department increased the hourly rate we pay for our patrols by 25.44%. This year, we received another 5% increase and it is estimated that 2025 will bring an 8% increase.

Despite these rate increases, we opted to get through this year without increasing dues. We did this by reducing the number of our patrols from 11 to nine each week. Even so, we still are drawing down our reserves to cover expenses. We cannot afford to do that for 2025.

In our July newsletter, we included a survey asking members what we should do if our patrol costs exceeded our revenue. We received 147 responses. Of those, 13 suggested reducing shift hours, five suggested cutting the number of shifts and five suggested doing both. However, 124, or 84%, voted in favor of increasing dues.

Since we had already reduced the number of shifts this year and because we knew that maintaining our shifts at 8 hours gives us the best chance of retaining our current deputies, the board determined that the best option would be to increase dues.

Therefore, at its July meeting, the board voted unanimously to increase WDDNA's annual dues to \$350, with a \$25 early bird discount if you pay by Dec. 31. The invoice you receive on Nov. 1 will reflect this increase. If you pay by Dec. 31, your dues will be \$325, or the equivalent of just \$27 a month – about the cost of one pepperoni pizza and a latte at Bella Bru Café.

We truly appreciate your support of our association. If you have questions or comments, you may email us at wilhaggindeldayona@gmail.com.

WDDNA deputies prove their value

WDDNA's deputies not only patrol the neighborhood to help keep it safe. They also are experienced and get to know the community as "cops on the beat." They recognize when something is not as it should be and they can act quickly to solve problems.

A case in point occurred on Saturday, July 20.



A WDDNA member emailed our patrol deputy on Friday night, July 19, to report that an older Toyota Prius appeared to have been abandoned in front of their house on Cortlandt Drive right off Fair Oaks Boulevard early that day. The Prius had flaking paint and was dirty. It also had words scrawled on the front windshield indicating that it had been on some sort of car lot, was considered junk and did not have a catalytic converter.

The homeowner learned from the deputy that the car's registered owner was a charity in San Diego that accepts donated vehicles and sells them to provide revenue for other nonprofits. The deputy called that charity and left a message, but could do no more that night.

The next morning, the homeowner followed up and turned the information over to WDDNA's Saturday deputy, a highly experienced female officer. She investigated the situation and determined that the Prius had been delivered to an auction yard in Rancho Cordova two days prior and had been sold twice since then.

She tracked down the person who had abandoned it. He appeared to be in the business of buying junk cars, fixing them up and reselling them. He initially resisted the deputy's instructions to remove the car until she explained that she had already written a tow order and would have the car towed if he did not remove it within an hour. A few minutes later, the man arrived on scene, got the car running and drove it away.

WDDNA's deputies are personally invested in our neighborhood and the people who live here. They have the time and commitment to deal with problems that might take days or

even weeks for regular departmental units to resolve. It is that focused attention which your dues make possible.

WDDNA could not do it without you. Thank you for your continued support of our association.

County offers free building plans

Sacramento County now has a selection of detached accessory dwelling unit (ADU) plans available for use by residents who live in the unincorporated part of the County, free of charge!

These ADU plans meet all of the 2022 Residential Building Code requirements and come pre-approved by the Building Permits and Inspection Division of the Department of Community Development, meaning a faster permit process and significant savings for the interested ADU owner.



The [**“Shelf Ready” ADU plans**](#) offered through the program include two 460-square foot studio/one bedroom units, an 870-square foot two-bedroom unit, a 1,000 square-foot two-bedroom unit, and a 1,184 square-foot three-bedroom unit.

“We are excited to offer these shelf ready ADU plans to help streamline the approval process, enabling faster and more cost-effective construction for our residents,” said Troy Givans, Community Development Director. “This efficiency helps save residents money and supports the growth of vibrant, well-planned communities.”

Applicants will need to submit a site plan to show where on the property the ADU will be placed. Modifications to the pre-approved plans are not allowed.

These plans were made possible thanks to a grant awarded to the County by the State Department of Housing and Community Development.

For more information, [**visit the Building Permits and Inspection website.**](#)

Avoid passport scams

[**From the Federal Trade Commission \(FTC\)**](#)

Do you need to apply for or renew your passport? If you search online, the top results might show official-looking websites that say they can renew or get you a passport. Some of these websites are private companies that charge you for services that are free on the U.S. Department of State website. Others may be scammers.



[**Travel.State.Gov**](#) is the official government website for passport services. Some companies registered with the U.S. Department of State charge extra fees to submit your application. But according to the FTC, you won't get your passport faster than if you applied on your own.

Scammers also set up sites claiming to offer passport services. But if you use one of them, you'll lose your money and might be giving your personal information to scammers who could sell it to identity thieves.

To avoid passport scams, know this:

- The [U.S. Department of State](#) is the government agency that handles passport services, but your top online search results might be phony passport application websites. So, you should go directly to [Travel.State.Gov](#) to avoid clicking on a scam website.
- There's a charge to get a passport, but the forms to renew or apply are free. Anyone who asks you to pay for forms is a scammer.
- It's free to set up an appointment if you need a passport to travel right away. The Department of State's passport agencies and centers don't charge for appointments, and paying someone to set it up for you won't get your passport faster.

Contact PassportVisaFraud@state.gov if you spot a scam passport application, website or if you paid someone who turned out to be a scammer. And tell the FTC at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](#). Visit [IdentityTheft.gov](#) if someone has misused your personal information.

Beware of calls about bank accounts

From the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

Did someone supposedly spot fraud or criminal activity on one of your accounts? Did they offer to help "protect" your money by moving it from your bank, investment or retirement account? If so, according to the FTC, such calls are scams.

To protect yourself from bank fraud scams, the FTC offers the following advice:

- **Never move or transfer your money to "protect it."** Your money is fine where it is, no matter what they say or how urgently they say it. Someone who says you have to move your money to protect it is a scammer..
- **Never share a verification code.** Banks and retirement and investment companies use these codes for online accounts to prove you're really you. If you share that code, the scammer can use it to prove they're you. No caller — especially someone from your bank or investment company's fraud department — will ever ask for the verification code. That's always a scam.
- **Stop and check it out.** If you're worried, call your real bank, broker or investment advisor. Use the phone number you find on your statement — never the number the caller gave you, which will take you to the scammer.

Your bank or investment company cannot protect your accounts from fraud. Bank accounts have different (and fewer) protections than credit cards. If you are scammed into moving your money out of your account, you won't be protected and you probably won't get that money back.

If you get a call, text or message like this, tell your bank or fund right away. Especially if you moved money or shared a verification code. Then tell the FTC: [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](#).

Member Q&A

Q: Who do I contact if I find an injured wild animal?

A: Wildlife Care Association is a nonprofit, volunteer-based association that is permitted by the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to care for injured wildlife.

Its volunteers receive more than 6,000 animals a year. Contact them if you find injured or abandoned baby songbirds, raptors, squirrels, opossums, rabbits, raccoons, reptiles or amphibians.

- For the Wildlife Care Association, go to <https://wildlifecareassociation.com/>
- For fawns, contact Kindred Spirits Rescue at <https://kindredspiritsfawnrescue.org/>
- For bats, contact Norcal Bat Rescue at <https://norcalbats.org/>

HOW TO CALL FOR HELP

IN AN EMERGENCY

If you have an immediate emergency - if your life or property is in immediate danger, if you feel threatened by someone on or near your property, if you have just become the victim of a crime or if you are witnessing a crime in progress:

- CALL 911 from a land line.
- Or, if calling from a cell phone within Sacramento County, call (916) 874-5111.

TO REPORT A CRIME

There are two ways to report a crime to the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department:

1. Call the Sheriff's Department NON-EMERGENCY LINE at (916) 874-5115. To bypass the recorded messaging when you call, dial 0 after the line is answered.
2. File a report online through the Sheriff's Department website. Click on this link to begin the process: https://www.sacsheriff.com/pages/crime_report.php

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY (Not an emergency)

If you see someone engaged in suspicious activity but it is not an emergency, call 916-874-5115 (Sheriff's Department non-emergency line).

GENERAL CONCERNS, REPORTS OR QUESTIONS

If you have an issue that can be addressed later, you may contact our neighborhood patrol officers about it. The best way is via **EMAIL** at wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com.

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