

Presence of Domestic Dogs and Humans on Wildlife

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Introduction

Many of the wildlife located in Wildwood Park are not thoroughly recorded or observed. In order to research the wildlife, we are able to use camera traps to take accurate pictures without having to capture the wildlife and take them away from their home (Kelly and Hulub, 2008). Camera traps use infrared sensors to detect animals in the camera's vicinity and take a flash photo to document the animals in their environment (Hance, 2011).

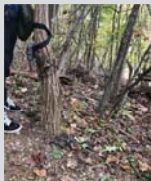
Research Methods

- In order to capture the wildlife accurately, the camera traps were set up throughout the trails running through Wildwood Park.
- Each camera was set up about 3-4 feet off the ground, no more than 15 meters away from the trail, at an elevation of ~500-600 meters, and locked in place to prevent theft/disruption of data. The trial ran from October 4th-October 25th, 2018, and cameras operated 24 hours a day.
- Each human and domestic dog that moved in front of the camera trap, as well as any wildlife, was captured on camera & recorded on a data sheet.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

- Does the presence of domestic dogs and humans on Wildwood Park trails affect the amount of wildlife appearances?
 - What species seem most or least affected by domestic dogs or humans on the trails?
- We hypothesize that if there is a high presence of humans and domestic dogs within Wildwood Park trails, then there will be a significantly lower presence of wildlife.

Wildwood Park

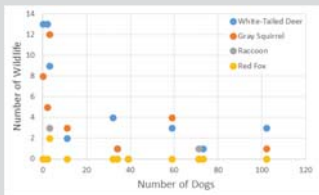
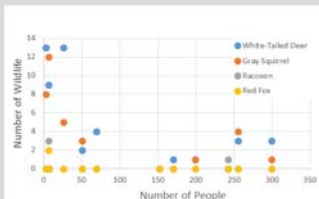


Camera Set-Up shown above, & a domestic dog captured on our camera traps below.



Results and Conclusions

After setting up the camera traps throughout Wildwood Park, the number of humans and dogs recorded were significantly more than the number of wildlife present on the cameras.



In our graphs, the amount of wildlife seen decreased as more humans/domestic dogs were on the trail. White-Tailed Deer seemed to be affected the least; although their numbers decreased, they were still fairly present. On the other hand, the Red Fox was affected the most as their numbers dropped as soon as a few dogs/humans were active.