

# Preface

*Arbore deiecta, quivis ligna colligit*

(Latin proverb)

*Go there, where nature leads*

(Francis Bacon)

It is with great trepidation and honour that I write this introduction after a long work concluded in close cooperation with all authors of this book. I am very happy to have finally finished this work!

The theme is very composite, very intriguing and, at the same time, extremely hot and current. The ‘Problematic Wildlife’ is certainly an argument really great and varied.

I fought a lot for this to come true, we have worked hard with all the authors, and I hope that the common effort had generated a useful product. It all began with the organisation of two international conferences held in Italy; in 2007 and in 2011, they succeeded very well. But although some authors of this book have participated in these events, specifically now this book is not a collection of conference proceedings, at all! Most of the contributions were born in a total independence; those congresses have only increased my interest for these issues of wildlife management, which already existed for a long time.

Problematic species? What does it mean? In fact there is no single definition. In this volume, in which many experts of various fields of ecology, zoology and animal biology and conservation biology have worked actively, with cross-cutting and interdisciplinary approaches, we will try to clarify what is meant by this definition or, better, what can be understood. Specific cases as examples and other contributions will be considered; by contrast, they will address more general and wide-ranging reviews on the subject.

The reason for this book is precisely to grope to make a little sum of the various cases in which wildlife can cause problems to humans, problems of various kinds, of course. And bear always in mind that the man is the main cause, if not unique, of

issues related to wildlife. Following the altering intervention of man over nature, the wildlife can sometimes create ‘problems’ that often requires human intervention again to ensure that it can again be sustainable and in harmony with human activity and habitats remain now irrevocably altered.

It is clear that without the impact of human activity, there would not be ‘Problematic Wildlife’.

Of course it has not been possible to treat all existing cases, but the text is divided into sections that cover the most important case studies, with some examples that perhaps make the idea to entire classes of events. But the purpose of this book is also to try to highlight how the various issues should be addressed in wide range, with the participation and synergy of different professionals, who face various cases from different points of view of course, but that all should be most possibly coordinated for obtaining the common objective, namely, the resolution, or at least mitigation, of problems.

Each section is preceded by a brief presentation that makes continuity and connection between different themes easier. I’ll be glad to get advice or reports of individual and explanatory cases, in the event of a future updated edition.

The book has been compiled for a broad audience. It is, of course, intended for industry insiders, i.e. anybody who is interested in the profession of wildlife and wildlife management, animal biology and ecology. Yet it is also a book that addresses some issues related to trade, trafficking in endangered species and bushmeat. Problems of human-wildlife conflict will also be dealt with, from the species that are ‘managed’ to those that become invasive pests, including problems related to species that are in decline, already extinct or endangered. Therefore, this book is also of use to university students in disciplines such as ecology, animal biology, wildlife conservation and so on, as well as to those involved in legislation related to the protection of fauna, engineers and teachers of natural science or ecology. It is also of interest to people working in protected areas, national parks, reserves, etc., in short, to all those who have to manage the land optimally so that it is preserved in the best possible way.

The issue of cryptic species (do they exist or not?) has also been added simply because this argument often creates some rather unusual situations, attracting the attention of the general public, in addition to that of scientific authorities and wildlife management institutions.

Naturally, I would like to thank all the authors, who were the true architects of this book, because they were the ones who, from the outset, have believed in its significance and realisation and have waited a long time to see its birth. I wish to thank Springer Verlag International for its adherence to this initiative and for giving value to our work and making it concrete. Thanks is also owed to all those listed below for their unpaid efforts to foster the creation of a high-quality product, for their great professionalism and for their comments and suggestions such as those published in high-profile or scientific journals.

The book is dedicated to the memory of Marco Flavio Angelici. Thinking of him gave me the strength to continue to work hard, especially when I was not in very good health and in those moments when the project seemed to be at a stalemate.

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