

Spojo

The Sportsman's Journal

PACKING IN THE WOLF FUNDING; GOOD NEWS FOR EAGLES; ALBERTA'S ANCIENT GIANTS; VANCOUVER HERRING AID

TUNING INTO SNAKES

AN ONTARIO RESEARCHER LEARNS MORE ABOUT RATTLESNAKES

transmitters will help him find out more about the snakes' behavior patterns.

The radio transmitters are about an inch long and a quarter inch wide, and Parent inserts them just under the rib cage of the snakes,

which grow to a length of about three feet.

The whole procedure takes about 24 hours from start to finish.

"What takes the time," says Parent, "is the anesthetic. Snakes can be very difficult to put under. If you used the same amount of gas on a dog as on a snake, the dog would be dead."

Once Parent has inserted the device, he puts the snake back where he found it.

Then he tracks its movements with the use of a handheld antenna.

Parent says that when he has implanted radios

in enough snakes — the park reportedly has about 300 — he'll learn how close rattlers live together and how far they travel. He hopes to find out if the snakes are disappearing, and what impact people have on them.

Parent has already learned that for the most part, these well-camouflaged snakes have very little impact on people. One day, after locating a rattler with his radio equipment, he watched 30 people walk right beside the coiled snake. Not one person knew it was there.

—Karen Hood-Caddy



Tom Kitchin

decided to do something about it.' It recently announced a plan to buy properties in the valleys to form the core of an eagle preserve. The Forest Alliance of B.C. (a coalition of logging companies) has already pledged \$2 million to the project, and the Conservancy expects to raise another \$1 million from business and private donations.

Robert Carswell of The Nature Conservancy says the river valleys have a unique combination of features, including a later-than-normal run of coho salmon, that makes them ideal eagle habitat. "The continued success of the area depends on a biological chain that starts with insects that feed on young salmon and extends to undisturbed stands of

Eagles flock to the valleys near Squamish, B.C., to feast on salmon.

BUYING EAGLE FUTURES

A NEW PLAN AIMS TO BUY UP PRIME B.C.

EAGLE HABITAT

Every winter, the Squamish and Cheekamus river valleys just north of Vancouver host the largest concentration of bald eagles in the world — up to nearly 3,800. But in recent years, development in the area and, ironically, the influx of tourists coming to see the eagles have threatened the birds' roosting grounds.

Fortunately, the Nature Conservancy of Canada has

How do you implant a radio transmitter in a rattlesnake?

The tier, according to Chris Parent, a rattlesnake researcher, is very carefully. And Parent should know. As part of his Masters work for Carleton University, he's been putting tiny radios into Eastern Massasauga rattlers in Ontario's Killbear Provincial Park, near Parry Sound. Parent hopes the



Chris Parent (right) implants transmitters into rattlers so they can then be tracked (above).

