



OPINION

Change In Direction Long Overdue

Of 900 species listed as endangered since the early 1970's when the Endangered Species Act was first enacted, only two have moved up the list out of danger. The endangered species issue is a very important one, and the world around us is diminished if a species vanishes. However, the way the implementation of the law has evolved has little to do with the purpose of the law when it was written.

We want to get endangered species off the list and recover them for the future, but we've got to do that in such a way that our economy can continue to thrive.

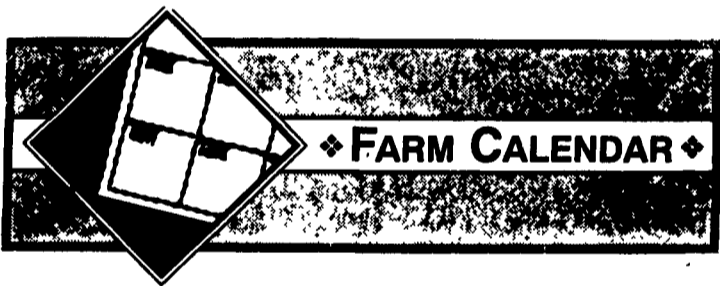
The expense of navigating broad environmental laws, as well as the bureaucracy and mandates of the endangered species act should not fall exclusively on the individual's shoulders.

What is especially revolting about this situation is how a particular species got on the list in the first place. Species have been placed on the list because some people wanted them on the list, not because there was data to support putting them there. This is wrong. Listing should be based on good science and data. And a definite process to remove a species from the endangered category should be established. If a species recovers to a predetermined benchmark, then it must be removed.

In a speech to the federal and state conservation officials and a broad audience from the nation's farm community, Dr. Jim Tate said one of the most glaring perversions to evolve from the current endangered species law is known in Texas as "shoot, shovel, and shut up." This means that rather than risk high-handed government interference, landowners simply destroy endangered species that otherwise might be saved. One of the selling points for property is that there are "no birds" on the land, referring to the absence of endangered species on that parcel compared to endangered species on other land that make it unmarketable.

There is some national legislation to be proposed in the near future that would address this issue and place guidelines on when a species is endangered and benchmarks to follow when it should be taken off the list. This criteria is to be based on scientific evidence. This makes a lot more sense than the way we are operating now.

Of course, there will be a lot of opposition from those who want to continue to regulate agriculture in a backhanded way. But the change in direction is long overdue.



◆ FARM CALENDAR ◆

Saturday, August 2

4th Annual Lancaster County Conservation Expo at the Shirktown Threshing Festival, Bob Shirk Farm, Churchtown, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Pa. Performance Tested Ram Sale, State College.

Clinton County Fair, Mackeyville, thru Aug. 9.

Greene County Fair, Waynesburg, thru Aug. 9.

Old Time Wheat Threshing Steam and Gas Engine Show, Federalburg, Md., thru Aug. 3.

Sunday, August 3

Bedford County Fair, Bedford, thru Aug. 9.

Schuylkill County Fair, Summit Station, thru Aug. 9.

Union County West End Fair, Laurelton, thru Aug. 10.

Monday, August 4

Co-op Education Conference, Pittsburgh, thru Aug. 7.

Tioga County Fair, Tioga Co. Fairgrounds, Whitneyville/Wellsboro Aug. 4-9.

Butler Farm Show, Butler, thru Aug. 9.

Cochranon Community Fair, Cochranon, thru Aug. 9.

Dawson Grange Community Fair, Dawson, thru Aug. 9.

Sykesville Ag and Youth Fair, Sykesville, thru Aug. 9.

Warren County Fair, Pittsfield, thru Aug. 9.

Ag Education meeting, Milton Hershey School, 8:45 a.m.

Tulpehocken Adult Young Farmer Tour, DuBrow's Tree Farm

and Nursery, Host 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, August 5

Woody Plant Identification Workshop, Small Flowering Trees. Sweet Corn Field Day, Landisville Research Station, 5:30 p.m.-8:45 p.m.

Pasture Walk and Conservation Tour, Aaron M. King, Ronks, 10 a.m.-noon.

EAYFA Bus Trip to York Co., departing Elite Coach, Ephrata, 7:45 a.m.

National Envirothon, University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown, thru Aug. 10.

Warren Co. Fair, Pittsfield, thru Aug. 9.

Empire Farm Days, Stanley, NY Aug. 5, 6, 7, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues. & Wed., 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Thurs.



◆ FARM FORUM ◆

Editor:

On July 28 the first meeting of the Commission on Small Farms and Ranches was held in Memphis, TN.

2000 miles and a full day of hearings in two days and two hours. All because time is so short to make use of this court ordered investigation. I was questioned for

**Now Is
The Time**
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Manage Alfalfa Fields

Robert Anderson, Lancaster County Extension Agronomy Agent, reports that he has seen many alfalfa fields looking extremely bad. The dry weather did not allow the alfalfa to grow very tall. However, the biggest problem is the potato leafhopper which is feeding heavily on alfalfa. When the leafhopper feeds it injects a toxin into the alfalfa plant that plugs the plant's vascular system. This stops the flow of water and nutrients within the plant. Fields where the leafhopper have been controlled are short but green in color. Once an alfalfa field shows signs of leafhopper feeding it must be mowed to get the plant functioning again. Fields that are showing yellowing or "leafhopper burn" need to be mowed and then sprayed with an insecticide. If the field has begun to bloom, it will not add height, it will only lose feeding value. These fields should be harvested immediately. If the alfalfa is too short to bale, it should be clipped and the stubble sprayed for leafhoppers.

To Harvest Silage to Optimize Quantity and Quality

Even with recent rains, this summer's drought may have lasted too long to expect great things of corn and other crops, according to Robert Anderson, Lancaster County Extension Agronomy Agent. The decision to harvest silage should reflect 1. the potential the field has for recovery, 2. the moisture content of the crop and 3. any yield losses which could be expected due to the loss of lower leaves. As we get later into the growing season, the likelihood of yield increases due to late season rains diminishes rapidly.

Elk County Fair, Kersey, thru Aug. 9.

Harold's Fair, Greensburg, thru Aug. 9.

Sewickley Township Community Fair, West Newton, thru Aug. 9.

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Corn and other plants quickly loses its ability to maintain leaves. Drought stress causes a high rate of abortion of kernels further limiting plants ability to recover from drought. Consider harvesting drought crops as soon as the moisture content of the whole plant is in the range of good storage.

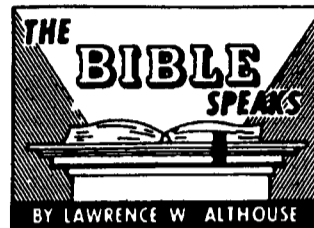
To Be Aware of Silo Gases

A dry season, like we are having, increase the danger of silo gas. This deadly gas from fermenting forage can make filling silos particularly dangerous during dry weather, according to Penn State safety specialist, Dr. Dennis Murphy.

Silo gas or nitrogen dioxide can cause severe irritation to the nose and throat and may lead to an inflammation of the lungs. It can cause unconsciousness or

death especially in the first 12 to 72 hours after filling the silo. Silo gas is heavier than air. It tends to accumulate just above the silage in the silo. It has a strong bleach like odor and appears as a low lying yellow, red or dark brown gas. The gas may flow down the chute and collect in the feed room or other areas near the base of the silo. To prevent silo gas poisoning, provide good ventilation in and around the silo when silage is fermenting. Keep the door between the barn and feed room and silo closed. Keep children out of the area.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "There is little difference in people, but that little difference makes a big difference. That little difference is attitude. The big difference is whether it is positive or negative."



GROW UP!
August 3, 1997

Background Scripture:
Hebrews 5:11 through 6:12
Devotional Reading:
Hebrews 6:13-20

Our text for this week is one example of where we could easily "miss the forest for the trees."

It can be a very confusing and frustrating passage. We're not certain the writer means to say what it sometimes seems he is saying. For example, in Hebrews 6: 1,2 he seems to imply that the "first principles" of Christianity are "repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, with instruction about ablutions, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment." Note that he does not mention the Lord's Supper, the Holy Spirit or the atoning sacrifice of Christ—all of which we would include as part of the "first principles." So what does he mean here?

Another troubling passage here is his assertion that those who commit apostasy—a rejection of God or the Church—cannot possibly be restored through repentance. Is this an "impossibility" because God will not accept the apostate's repentance or because the apostate's heart has been hardened to the point that repentance is impossible?

These are just two of the problems that occur in this brief selection from Hebrews and the problem is that, if we become bogged down in these perplexing questions, we may very well miss what is of primary value for us as Christians today. Regardless how we solve the problems noted above or interpret what Hebrews is saying, there seems to be little doubt that he is telling us here to "Grow up!"

And that is a very relevant and timely message for us today!

WHERE YOU GOT IN

The writer of Hebrews says his readers have "become dull of hearing" (5:11) and later warns them against becoming "sluggish" (6:12). He is concerned, not because they have become blatantly immoral or heretical, but because they have simply become inattentive. They are in danger of God's judgment because of the complacency and indifference that characterizes their relationship with God in Christ. I'm afraid that diagnosis fits all

too many of us. We're like the little boy who fell out of bed one night with a loud crash. To his anxious parents he explained: "I guess I fell asleep too close to where I got in." Many of us have fallen asleep too close to where we entered life in Christ!

Do you remember when you first started school? How much more do you know now? 100%? 200%? 500%? Or think back to when you began to learn to play tennis or golf. How much have you grown in your understanding of the sport and your skill?

Now, think of the level at which you became a Christian. Have you grown or matured in your discipleship? Is your faith stronger or the same? Is your capacity for love greater or is it still pretty much at the same level? Has there been growth since you began following Christ? Enough?

NOT 'HOW LONG'; BUT 'HOW MUCH?'

A certain teacher at a private boys' school was passed over for promotion when a vacancy occurred in his department. "How could you ignore my 20 years of experience here?" he demanded of the headmaster. "Actually," the headmaster replied, "you haven't had 20 years of experience—just the same year of experience twenty times over." That's also true of us. The question is not how many years have we been following Christ but how much have we grown in that experience?

I hope this doesn't come as a shock to you but we are not simply called to become Christians and to join the Church! What we are called to do is continue to grow to Christian maturity. I may not be able to spell out just exactly where "Christian maturity" is for you, but I do know that it is considerably beyond where a lot of us find ourselves.

Is your Christian walk and talk that of a mature follower of Jesus or are you still a babe in Christ? And if you answer is the latter, then the next question you need to ask yourself is "Why?"

(Larry & Valere Althouse will be following the footsteps of Paul and John with a tour to Turkey, October 17 to November 2. For information, write them at 4412 Shenandoah, Dallas, TX 75205)

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