

*April 17, 2013*

## **Pete Wise, Instructor for BC Trappers Association: Predators**

Pete gives a course for trappers. Primary predators are coyotes (in our area) and wolves, but cougars and bobcats are also here. Cats will grab with their front paws, then bite the neck – very efficient. Dogs are also predators.

- ✚ The number 1 killer of all ungulates is bears. They go through thickets and take fawns and calves.
- ✚ The phone number to call if you have to report a kill is 1-800-663-WILD. This is the contact for Conservation Officers, but they are overrun with calls so Pete often gets called in.
- ✚ Once at the scene, Pete is looking for scat, hair on fences, footprints etc, then looks at the victim – where it was grabbed, bite or claw marks – which are not always evident until the carcass bloats.
- ✚ Pete will split the carcass and skin it, looking for bruising under the skin. Are there bite marks on the back of the neck, flanks, or back end? –If there are no hematomas, the animal has died of natural causes.
- ✚ Ravens will pick out the eyes of lambs, also pads of feet on calves. Eagles will also take lambs.
- Controls: Common sense and reasoning: -pasture management is important – are there gullies or heavily wooded areas, in which predators can hide.
  - ✚ Electric fences can work.
  - ✚ Guard dogs and donkeys are often effective.
  - ✚ A pipe on the top row of wire can stop predators from getting purchase on fences.
  - ✚ Bring sheep in at night if predators are around.
- Pete has taken 160 – 180 coyotes already this year. He uses firearms, traps and snares. If using traps on your property, lock dogs and livestock out of areas where traps are set. Snares are particularly lethal.
- Pete demonstrated 3 traps: #3 soft catch, #3 go-to trap, and a 36 Belisle foot snare.
- If called in Pete says to stay away from the site. Coyotes are led by their noses, and can smell your presence. The number 1 prey of coyotes is mice. Pete uses them in traps.
- If no one can come out in a reasonable time, take pictures, look for scat, footprints, and try to determine which predator it is.
- Pete left us with this formula for washing skunk off dogs: 1 liter peroxide, ½ cup baking soda, and 1 teaspoon liquid soap!