Wolf-Dog Hybrids Called “Wild” in Virginia

In May the Virginia Board of Game and Inland Fisheries passed regulations that place wolf-dog hybrids in the category of “nonnative exotic animals.” Beginning July 1, 1993, a permit will be required to import, possess, or sell the hybrid progeny of dogs and wolves.

The HSUS submitted written testimony to the state Wildlife and Boat Committee citing our position strongly discouraging private ownership of wild canids and wolf hybrids. According to Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., wolf expert and HSUS vice president, Field Services, “The breeding of hybrids is, I feel, a big step backward, since it produces an animal who usually cannot live safely and humanely in human society yet is not really a wild animal either.”

Humans have spent more than 12,000 years transforming the wolf from a predator into the domestic dog. Wolf hybrids tend to be confused—torn between their instincts for life in the wild and life in a household. Every year at least one or two of the fifteen to twenty fatal attacks by dogs on humans involve wolf hybrids. They bite out of fear or from predatory instinct. Wolf hybrids, due to their size, continued on page 3

Wolf hybrids rarely conform to people’s expectations of pets. When a hybrid’s owner discovers the animal cannot be controlled, the owner often dumps him/her at a local shelter, which usually has no option other than euthanasia.

Tennessee Reevaluates Pigeon Shoot

In many communities the sight of pigeons roosting on downtown buildings has become all too common. The nooks and crannies typical of historical architecture make ideal nesting sites for this adaptable species. Unfortunately the resourcefulness of pigeons often creates problems for the people with whom they share the city.

In Clarksville, Tenn., officials have become quite concerned over the increasing numbers of pigeons. Gary Hamm, Montgomery County director of building and maintenance, reported two documented cases of histoplasmosis (a disease spread to humans from bird droppings), including one in a county maintenance worker, which may have come from contact with pigeons.

Efforts to restore and maintain the county’s historical buildings were being seriously hindered by the pigeons as well. Hamm had tried several methods of control, including live trapping and relocation, use of owl effigies, even hiring a professional falconer. None permanently drove continued on page 2
The HSUS believes that a reduction in and eventual elimination of privately owned wolf hybrids can be accomplished by restricting the sale, trade, release, import, or export of animals across state and local boundaries. The action taken by the Virginia Board of Game and Inland Fisheries is a step in that direction.

Although beautiful to look at, wolf hybrids are often impossible to train, unpredictable, destructive, and hard to confine.

The HSUS offers the following rewards:
- up to $2,500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person who violates the state's laws regarding wildlife.
- up to $1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person who willfully poisons or attempts to poison a dog or cat.

Whether you are overseeing a major shelter renovation, lobbying for more effective animal-protection laws, or providing in-the-field assistance to local animal-control agencies, you are never doing it alone. By combining our strengths and working together, we can—and will—make a difference!
KENTUCKY—Animals suffered two blows in Kentucky’s 1992 legislative session. H.B. 20 exempted certain activities permitted for those with a hunting license, including dog training that uses live animals and the cruel “shake-out” hunting season (when young animals may be shaken from trees and destroyed by dogs). The SCRO and several other animal-advocacy groups urged Gov. Brereton C. Jones to veto the bill, which he did. Unfortunately, his decision was overridden by the state General Assembly and the bill became law.

State Rep. Pat Freibert introduced H.B. 529, which would have changed the statutory definition of “animals” to include birds. Freibert’s intention was to provide protection to birds under the state’s anti-cruelty laws. The main objective of the bill was to make cockfighting illegal. Because of pressure from a few powerful legislators, however, the bill was killed before it was even heard by the House Natural Resources Committee! National, state, and local animal-protection organizations plan to work for passage of similar legislation in Kentucky’s next legislative session.

Seized fighting cocks await their fate: The main objective of Kentucky’s H.B. 529 (which was killed before reaching committee) was to make cockfighting illegal.

Reflect for a moment . . .

HOW CAN I HELP ANIMALS EVEN WHEN I NO LONGER SHARE THEIR WORLD?

By your bequest for animal protection to The Humane Society of the United States, your will can provide for animals after you’re gone. Naming The HSUS demonstrates your lasting commitment to animal welfare and strengthens the society for this task. We will be happy to send information about our animal programs and material that will assist in planning a will.

Please send will information to:

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City __________________________ State ______ Zip code ____________

Mail in confidence to Murdaugh S. Madden, Vice President/Senior Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.