



Wildlife Disease News Digest

WDIN provides information on wildlife health and wildlife-human-domestic animal disease interactions.

Background

The National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) www.nbio.gov is an electronic information network that provides access to biological data and information on our nation's plants, animals, and ecosystems. Data and information maintained by federal, state, and local government agencies; non-government organizations; and private-sector organizations are linked through the NBII gateway and made accessible to a variety of audiences including researchers, natural resource managers, decision-makers, educators, students, and other private citizens.

Implementation of the NBII is being accomplished through the development of nodes that serve as entry points to the NBII and the information held by partners. These nodes function as fully digital, distributed, and interactive systems that focus on developing, acquiring, and managing content on a defined subject area or a geographic region. The NBII Wildlife Disease Information Node (WDIN) addresses the need for information on a variety of wildlife diseases and their implications, including those affecting wildlife, domestic animals, and humans. WDIN operations are managed through the cooperation of its major partners: the USGS

National Wildlife Health Center, and the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Wildlife Disease News at Your Finger Tips

WDIN – a gateway to wildlife disease information and data – offers a number of publicly available services to help people connect and integrate wildlife disease information. The Wildlife Disease News Digest <http://wdin.blogspot.com> is one of the most popular services, as reflected by its universal appeal. Almost everyone is curious to learn what diseases may lurk near their own proverbial “backyard.” It is estimated that as high as 75 percent of emerging infectious disease in humans have a wildlife connection.

Published almost daily, the Digest compiles information about wildlife disease from authoritative national and international media sources and brings the stories together into a concise, easy-to-read summary. Readers can quickly browse the Digest for the

day’s headlines or select stories to read in depth. The range of news topics covered include:

- Detection or spread of disease,
- Latest research discoveries,
- Significant wildlife-human-domestic animal health interactions,
- Ecological issues impacting wildlife health (e.g., climate change, population decline, pollution), and
- Interesting trivia about wildlife or ecology.

The Digest provides a number of ways the news can be delivered to a reader's electronic-doorstep, depending on how they want to receive the information, e.g. e-mail or RSS feed. Learn about subscription options here at <http://wildlifedisease.nbio.gov/wdindigest.html>.

Filtering the News - The Process

To create the Wildlife Disease News Digest, over 125 RSS feeds, linking to national and international media

The screenshot shows a workflow diagram with three main components: (a) RSS feeds, (b) Google Docs, and (c) Yahoo Pipes. The RSS feeds are represented by a list of URLs in a Google Docs spreadsheet. The Yahoo Pipes interface shows a 'Filter' step that blocks items that match all of the following rules: 'item.y.published.utim is less than' and 'datetime.utime'. The final output is a 'dateinput1 (date/time)' widget.

Figure 1: Graphical example of the flow of information from RSS feeds (a) which produced about 900 possible references organized through Google Docs (b) and filtered by Yahoo Pipes (c), resulting in about 300 needing review.

sources, are collected and organized into a formatted list using Google Docs docs.google.com. Yahoo Pipes pipes.yahoo.com, a tool to aggregate and manipulate web content, filters this list using a custom set of over 100 keywords to eliminate irrelevant content, remove duplicates, and limit the output by publication date, as shown in Figure 1.

Offering More than Just News Global Wildlife Disease News Map – Putting News on the Map

In addition to aggregating wildlife disease news from around the globe, the Digest offers a number of features to enhance the reader's news experience. News stories that cover the detection or spread of disease are geocoded and placed on the Global Wildlife Disease News Map. Direct links from the Digest join the stories to the Map, allowing interested readers to view the news in relation to other geolocations. From the Map, visitors can choose to expand their view to clusters of stories by different categories (e.g., by species, disease name, or date).

Updates From the Wildlife Disease Information Node Web Site

The Digest also brings in relevant content from the WDIN home site through conventional hyperlinks as well as RSS feeds. Anytime new resources (e.g. maps, images, and reports) are added to the WDIN Web site, or its meeting and events calendar, select RSS feeds push a summary of this newly added content onto the Digest.

In addition to getting the latest wildlife disease news, readers can also quickly scan newly discovered Web resources added to the expanding WDIN electronic library. As a result of this linkage, the Digest becomes a rich source of wildlife health information and news.

An Expanding Wildlife Disease Publications Collection

For the individual, monitoring all the available news on wildlife disease can be a challenge, and so it is for monitoring scientific journal publications. Very much like how the Digest filters and



Figure 2: Shows (a) the home page of Connotea, keeper of the Digest's wildlife disease citation collection and (b) how the journal references appear in the Digest's feature segment, the Wildlife Disease Journal Digest.

collects the news, it also selects and manages wildlife disease publication citations (e.g. citations from journals, professional organization bulletins, and technical reports) to help readers stay abreast of current wildlife disease research developments. Current articles are made available through the Digest in the weekly segment, the Wildlife Disease Journal Digest. The entire collection is accessible through the open source citation manager, Connotea, www.connotea.org. Using Connotea, visitors can search the Digest's archived citation collection, or export it to their local reference manager. In addition, an RSS feed is available to get updates on recently added articles.

Special Friday Edition: In the Spotlight

Instead of providing a news summary, each weekly Friday post showcases an assortment of interesting and useful links to wildlife disease information, such as Web resources that may have been overlooked, a summary report of a past wildlife disease event, or a reminder list of upcoming wildlife disease related conferences.

Wildlife specialists as well as anyone who has a professional or personal interest in wildlife disease issues will find the Digest makes it easy to stay current on wildlife disease developments.

For More Information

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Access most of WDIN useful tools the Get News Web page <http://wildlifedisease.nbii.gov/getnews.html>.

WDIN News Digest
<http://wdin.blogspot.com>

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