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Proceedings of the Vertebrate Pest Conference

Title

Opening Remarks - Eleventh Vertebrate Pest Conference

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/79g9g2rb>

Journal

Proceedings of the Vertebrate Pest Conference, 11(11)

ISSN

0507-6773

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Publication Date

1984

OPENING REMARKS—ELEVENTH VERTEBRATE PEST CONFERENCE

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On behalf of the Vertebrate Pest Council, it is my pleasure to welcome all of you to Sacramento and to the 11th Vertebrate Pest Conference.

The first Vertebrate Pest Conference was held 22 years ago here in Sacramento in 1962. The conference is now over two years into its third decade of existence. In all this time, the basic goals of the Conference have not changed; that is, to provide a basis for dissemination of information on vertebrate pests and their control.

Some things have changed in these 22 years, most of which have been for the good. The first obvious and noticeable change is attendance at the conference--from 268 at the first conference to quite likely over 500 at this meeting. The length of the conference is now three days instead of two. Participation and attendance of representatives from outside the United States and from all over the United States has continued to be outstanding. At the last conference, the council initiated a workshop format as part of the program. This was very successful and we are continuing with an expanded workshop session which will occupy all of tomorrow's program. This year we are having displays and exhibits by some of the major manufacturers and suppliers of vertebrate pest control materials. These exhibits will be open throughout most of the conference.

The conference has always been a working conference with a minimum of planned social activities. We continue in this vein, but we are still having a no-host social hour to allow everyone to get to know one another a little better. We invite you all to attend here tonight between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m.

We have our program certified to qualify for continuing education credits for pest control advisors. This year, our program fulfills 17-3/4 hours towards this need.

A new innovation this year was the bus trip and tour of selected sites in the Sacramento Valley area. This was held yesterday and I hope that those of you who were able to take the tour found it enjoyable and profitable.

In the 22 years since the first Vertebrate Pest Conference, one thing has remained fairly constant--that being the membership of the Vertebrate Pest Council. The composition of the Vertebrate Pest Council remains a nucleus of hard-working professionals dedicated to putting on the best possible program to further our goals. It is the hard work and dedication of these people that make the Vertebrate Pest Conference a continuing success. My deepest thanks go to these people and their helpers for all their work in making this conference possible.

In the last four years, one aspect of the Vertebrate Pest Council has changed, that being the lack of one member. In 1979 we lost a colleague and friend, Warren V. Johnson, better known to many of us as "Bud." Bud was an active member of the Vertebrate Pest Council, and was the chairperson of the 6th Vertebrate Pest Conference, which ironically was also held in Sacramento. As chairman of this conference, I choose to exercise the prerogative of my chairmanship and hereby dedicate the 11th Vertebrate Pest Conference to the memory of Warren V. "Bud" Johnson. In his memory I would like to officially begin the 11th Vertebrate Pest Conference.

Thank you all for being here.