
(7) PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF REMOVING BEARS TO INCREASE MOOSE CALF SURVIVAL ON THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER, ALASKA

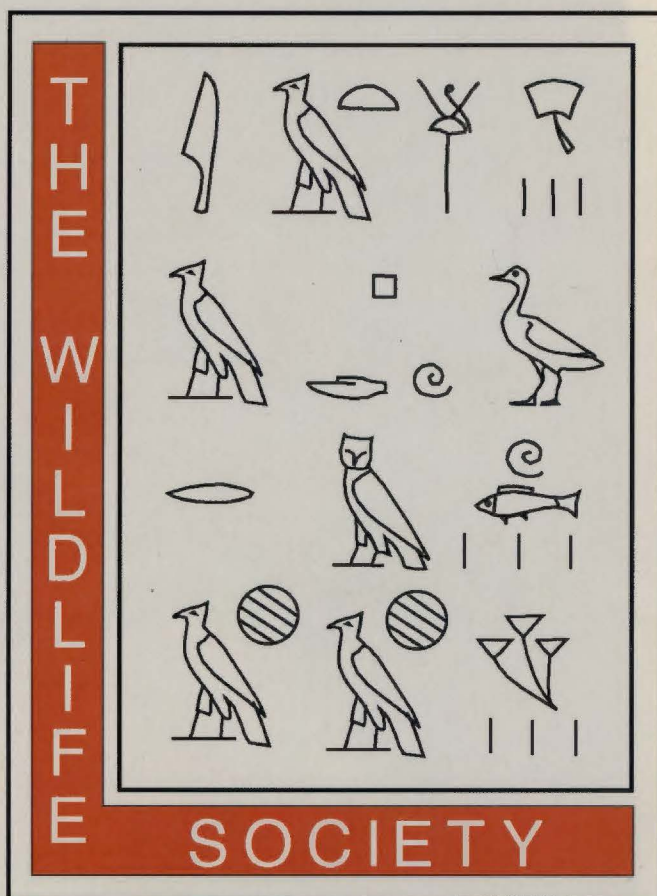
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Abstract: During 2001, 2002, and 2003 we radiocollared and monitored moose calves to document causes and timing of moose (*Alces alces gigas*) calf mortality in western Interior Alaska along the Kuskokwim River. Immediately prior to and during early calving in 2003, we removed black bears (*Ursus americanus*) and grizzly bears (*Ursus arctos*) from a 1350-km² portion of the study area in an attempt to reduce bear predation on calves. Prior to moving bears in 2003, bears killed 45% of all calves captured during 2001 and 39% of all calves captured during 2002. The overall summer survival rates for newborns were 45% and 39% during 2001 and 2002, respectively. During 2003, when we moved bears during 11 May–31 May, bears killed 23% of all calves captured, and the overall survival rate from birth to late summer was 68%. In addition, overall survival of the 2003 cohort of radiocollared calves to early spring 2004 was 56%, compared to 33% and 27% for the 2001 and 2002 cohorts, respectively. Currently, these data indicate that calves saved from bear predation did not die from other causes, suggesting that bear predation is largely additive to other causes of mortality.



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