

WILDLIFE COMMITTEE

October 3, 2025

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

NOTES:

Folders: [Invasive Species Folder](#)
[Mediterranean Gecko Folder](#)

Attendees:

Joy O'Keefe

Liza Lehrer

Scott Meister

Michael Eichholz

Laura Adamowicz

John Lough

- Welcome to new members of the committee
 - Introduction of Laura Adamowicz – wildlife veterinarian, PhD in reptiles and amphibians at U of I. Committee members introduced themselves.
 - Joy introduced new members, not in attendance. Stephany Lewis, veterinarian at U of I and Robin Warne, Natural History Survey, not able to be here.
- Outdoor Cat Proposal,
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UCRawHk4CuuhdU6JMYpdw9GDcGVRW13i/edit>
The IL Invasive Species Council discussed the proposal and stated they were not going to vote on the designation of outdoor cats as an invasive species. The State is going to discuss the proposal. There was no feedback or input. The decision was to stay on top of this with the state.
- Joy summarized previous species worked on.
- Discussion of selection of Mediterranean gecko
 - The pet trade should be considered.
 - Economic impacts and potential to change with changing climate. What could be the potential impact?
 - Some of the literature stated that the Mediterranean gecko was beneficial.
 - Should the committee focus on this species?
 - Does it fill a niche?
 - There is a need to explore the literature more.
 - Should the committee focus on another species that has more impact (pet release), e.g. red eared sliders? They are native but can be invasive with area expansion due to climate change.
 - Other species to consider – yellow bellied slider, Brahminy blind snake
 - The implications of trade could be good to explore. Example of exotic bats being sold as trinkets on online platforms. Potential to spread pests and pathogens even when dead.
 - The committee would be interested in hearing Robin's perspective.

- The IL population of gecko seems to be pretty small and this could be a good time to make recommendations for management – before it gets out of control.
- It was recommended that the committee will review information on geckos a bit further before committing fully to this species. If the committee decides not to move forward with a full review, they could produce a report on why the committee did defer this species for now.
- Review of state regulations spreadsheet located in the Mediterranean gecko folder:
 - Katie put in some information on Louisiana and some articles in the literature folder.
 - Liza provided some information from Florida
 - The Community Science program at the Natural History Museum is interesting.
 - The state of Texas has general information and recommends that this species “warrants concern” based on their food source.
 - In Illinois they are primarily located in a one block areas in Carbondale.
- Assignments:
 - Everyone will take a look at the articles folder. There are 12-15 articles there. Perhaps each person could review 2 or 3 to see if there is any significant information.
 - Ecological and economic impacts tabs will be added.
 - Michael – will explore distribution and resources, including a student’s master’s thesis on gecko and share. He will also look at other literature on how gecko’s may have displaced other species.
 - Liza – will explore the value of community science programs to track impacts. What are they finding out? (Natural History Museum page)
 - Laura – will pull existing health and disease information on other gecko and lizard species when they invade other places.
 - Scott – will explore potential ecological impacts
 - Joy – will explore potential economic impacts. She will also start a proposal document for the committee to drop information into.
 - John – will search around a little bit.
 - State regulations?
- The committee will determine if this species merits a full proposal and looks forward to hearing from Robin at the next meeting.
- Joy has requested a replacement participant from IDNR.
- Next meeting date: November 21, 1:00 p.m. Joy will double-check this date with the new committee members.