South Florida Deer Research Project Quarterly Update

January – March 2017

Capture Activities

- During this quarter, we captured 62 deer (23 males; 39 females) with aerial and ground capture efforts. Of the 62 deer, 50 (31 females, 19 males) were fitted with GPS-telemetry collars while the remainder were too small to be collared and were ear-tagged only.

Survival Monitoring

- During this quarter, we investigated 13 (3 males; 10 females) mortalities.
- The mortalities were categorized as follows: 10 panther predation events, 2 capture myopathy, and 1 illegal harvest. In some instances we cannot definitively eliminate the possibility of scavenging, and the causes of all mortality data should be considered preliminary until all reviews are completed.
- We currently have 132 (43 males; 89 females) deer radio-collared.
- We continue to compile and process GPS collar data. To date, we have 469,534 locations of individual deer (male: 134,394; female: 335,140)

Camera Trapping

- We continued to monitor the 180 cameras in the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge and Big Cypress National Preserve.
- Each camera trap was visited at least three times during the quarter to download data and to maintain the trap site (i.e., clear vegetation, replace batteries, and exchange any malfunctioning cameras).
- We continued to compile and process photo data, date, to date we have processed and catalogued 319,226 images by species or group (Addition Lands 89,038; Bear Island 102,741; FPNWR 127,447).

Other Activities

- The South Florida Deer Team gave 3 presentations at the 40th Southeast Deer Study Group (SEDSG), meeting St. Louis, MO.
    - Kristin Engebretsen, UGA graduate student on the project, won the 3rd place award for the best student presentation at the meeting for her work on estimating fawn recruitment using camera trapping and spatial capture-recapture methods.
    - Dr. Karl Miller, Co-Principal Investigator on the South Florida Deer Study, was awarded the prestigious "Deer Management Career Achievement Award." The award was established in 1995 to recognize outstanding contributions to the understanding of white-tailed deer ecology and management in the southeastern United States.

Although spotted fawns can be detected on our cameras throughout the year, the peak fawn drop in our study area occurs in late February.