

South Florida Deer Research Project Quarterly Update

July 1 - September 30, 2018

Survival Monitoring

- During this quarter, we investigated 2 female deer mortalities.
- The mortalities were categorized as a panther predation and as an unknown. 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.
- Three collars were remotely dropped off (due to low battery) and retrieved when possible and two additional collars stopped transmitting during this period.
- We are currently monitoring 37 collars.
- We continue to compile and process GPS collar data. To date, we have 758,300 locations of individual deer.

Camera Trapping

- We are currently working with Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge staff to remove all remaining trail cameras on the Refuge.
- During this quarter, we processed 2,660 camera images. We continue to proof images for species, group size, and sex from camera data collected in 2015–2017 from the camera grids within Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, Bear Island, and Addition Lands.

Additional Notes

- The South Florida Deer Team gave 3 presentations at the 9th International Deer Biology Congress meeting in Estes Park, Colorado. Kristin Engebretsen presented her work on estimating spatial and temporal variation on fawn survival and recruitment in south Florida. Heather Abernathy-Conners presented her work on white-tailed deer movements and habitat selection during Hurricane Irma. Elina Garrison presented on the challenges of managing the South Florida deer herd with regards to ecosystem restoration, game management, and endangered species conservation. In addition, Lydia Stiffler attended the Georgia Chapter of The Wildlife Society meeting in Tifton, GA. She presented her work on combining camera and telemetry data to understanding population dynamics of deer in South Florida. Elina Garrison and Mike Cherry wrapped up the quarter with presentations updating the status of the South Florida Deer Study to the Everglades Coordinating Council.
- Field work, including monitoring deer for mortalities, will continue through the end of 2018. Any remaining collars at that point will be remotely dropped and retrieved when possible.