

SOUNDCHECK

DNA research transforms deer pellets into 'libraries'

by Robert Woolsey, KCAW

April 1, 2013 7:43 pm

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To researcher Todd Brinkman, the fecal pellet of a Sitka black-tailed deer is a "library" of information.

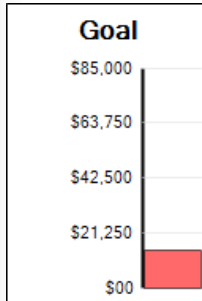
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Estimating wildlife populations in Southeast Alaska has always been a difficult problem for biologists. The Tongass Forest both sustains and conceals large numbers of Sitka black-tailed deer. For decades, scientists have relied on fecal pellet studies to gauge populations, but deer scat is not a fingerprint. There's no way of accurately determining how many individual deer produce a given number of pellets – until now.

Todd Brinkman is a researcher with the Institute of Arctic Biology in Fairbanks. Jon Martin is an assistant professor of Biology at the University of Alaska Southeast. The two scientists make the case that DNA is revolutionizing the study of Sitka black-tailed deer.



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Dr. Todd Brinkman works at the Institute of Arctic Biology in Fairbanks.

Besides his ground-breaking DNA studies on deer populations, Brinkman is also interested in the relationship between deer, the environment, and people. He calls this relationship a "hunting system," and believes it could play a larger role in forest management in the future.

Read an article by Todd Brinkman in [Fairchase](#), his scientific writing on [estimating deer populations](#), and his work on [hunting systems](#).



Jon Martin, assistant professor of Biology at UAS Sitka, with an impressive black-tailed buck last December. (Jon Martin photo)



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- Diving Class
- HS Testing
- Keet Testing
- 12:00pm Violence Task Force
- 4:30pm Family Library Program
- 4:30pm Library program
- 5:30pm Pioneers of AK

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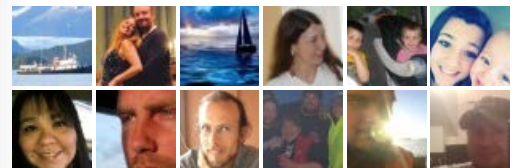


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