Global Wildlife Disease News Map

WDIN provides information on wildlife health and wildlife–human–domestic animal disease interactions.

Background

The National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) <www.nbii.gov> is an electronic information network that provides access to biological data and information on our nation's plants, animals, and ecosystems. Data and information maintained by federal, state, and local government agencies; non-government organizations; and private-sector organizations are linked through the NBII gateway and made accessible to a variety of audiences including researchers, natural resource managers, decision-makers, educators, students, and other private citizens.

Implementation of the NBII is being accomplished through the development of nodes that serve as entry points to the NBII and the information held by partners. These nodes function as fully digital, distributed, and interactive systems that focus on developing, acquiring, and managing content on a defined subject area or a geographic region. The NBII Wildlife Disease Information Node (WDIN) addresses the need for information on a variety of wildlife diseases and their implications, including those affecting wildlife, domestic animals, and humans. WDIN operations are managed through the cooperation of its major partners: the USGS National Wildlife Health Center, and the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Introduction

In our globalized world, disease can spread in unprecedented ways, making keeping abreast of wildlife disease occurrences and trends particularly challenging. Using the Global Wildlife Disease News Map <http://wildlifedisease.nbii.gov/wdinNewsDigestMap.jsp> you can, for the first time, follow the latest news reports of nearly 50 diseases and other health conditions by location on a user-friendly, interactive Google Map application.

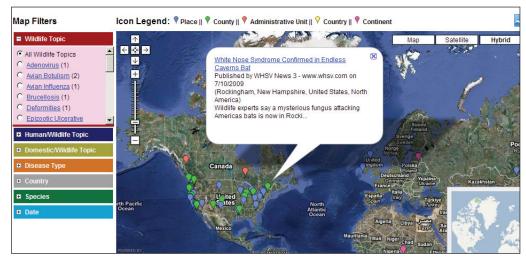## Organizing Unstructured Media Stories Onto a Map

Formal announcements about disease events might occur much later than when the media actually starts writing about them. Organizing media coverage from a variety of sources gives users the opportunity to identify potentially emerging issues. The map, which is simple and easy-to-use, quickly delivers a great deal of information about wildlife health news and trends both locally and globally. By clicking on a map pushpin, you can open an information window that provides access to a brief synopsis and link to any story connected to that location. It also lets you scan news headlines in a text listing. To find the story on the map, just click the pushpin next to the story headline.

Putting News on the Map

The Wildlife Disease News Digest combines information from authoritative national and international media sources about wildlife disease and other wildlife health related topics. From these articles, news of disease outbreaks or spread are selected to be displayed on the Global Wildlife Disease News Map.

In order to populate the map with the most recent news from the Wildlife Disease News Digest, the metadata for the article are cataloged into a Dublin-Core

Map filtering options are displayed along the left hand side of the application broken down into several topic groups. Users can click a filter option and limit the contents displayed on the map. When a colored pushpin is clicked, a window containing additional information pops open above the pin. The hyperlink in the pop up window will take users to the original news article, where they can find out more about the story.

based Microsoft SQL Server Database. The article's title, description, date published, source, publisher, and keywords associated with it are input along with information that gives it a geographic location. Keywords are standardized and applied to let users filter map contents by topic.

Making Your Own Maps – Tools for Mapmakers

For advanced users and mapmakers, the map information is also available as a GeoRSS feed and as a KML layer for Google Earth. These available formats let mapmakers create their own maps outside of the Global Wildlife Disease News Map application. These links can also be found on the Map Web site under the "About Map" tab.

GeoRSS: http://feeds.feedburner.com/wdinNewsDigestGeoRSS

KML: http://wildlifedisease.nbii.gov/wdinNewsDigestGoogleEarth.kmz

Next Destination – Future Plans for the Map

In the future, the map will be expanded to include domestic animal health and human health layers, illustrating the interconnection between human, domestic animal, and wildlife health. Another goal is to combine the map filter functions, allowing users to apply multiple filters to find news articles on more specific topics. The map may also incorporate even broader layers as opportunities arise. Please e-mail us at <wdin@usgs.gov> to discuss the potential for collaboration to enhance the map.

To stay on top of all the recent wildlife health news, visit the WDIN News Digest at <http://wdin.blogspot.com>.

The Benefits – Situational Awareness

Updated on a regular basis, the map is a gateway to not only reports on wildlife health news but to a comprehensive, electric library of background information on wildlife health topics. By clicking on a disease name in the map legend key, a query is sent to search the WDIN web site. Then a new window opens displaying all the search results for that particular disease name.

The information available from the Map is not only useful to wildlife disease specialists, but also to other science professionals who share the concern about wildlife disease because of the interconnection between human, domestic animal, and wildlife health.

For More Information

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