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EVALUATION OF MAMMAL HAIR AS A POTENTIAL WILD PIG REPELLENT ON COWDEN PLANTATION IN JACKSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Evaluation of Mammal Hair as a Potential Wild Pig Repellent on Cowden Plantation in Jackson, South Carolina

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ABSTRACT

Invasive wild pigs (*Sus scrofa*) have a destructive impact across the world. The variety of cultures affected make the development of more effective and diverse management methods vital. Although wild pigs are often hunted with dogs, this method is not suitable or legal in all areas. Considering this, and pigs' highly developed sense of smell, the following hypothesis was developed: Can a natural scent function as a satisfactory pig repellent? To test our hypothesis, we attracted wild pigs into areas baited with corn and performed separate trials by adding hair from four different mammal species (dog, cat, horse, and coyote). Our experimental design forced pigs to interact with the hair before consuming the bait. Trail cameras monitored each location over a five-month period and wild pig behaviors were recorded. The presence and absence of pigs throughout the study trials was analyzed and compared with images captured during the control trials (with corn only). Image totals were evaluated to determine if the hair prevented pigs from entering any areas. The duration of any absences was noted. The results support our hypothesis that a natural scent (dog hair) can decrease wild pig activity and potentially serve as a repellent.

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