

TRANSCRIPT:

INTERVIEWEE: Glynn Riley

INTERVIEWER: Diana Dwyer

DATE: July 10, 2006

LOCATION: Brownwood, Texas

SOURCE MEDIA: MP3 audio file

TRANSCRIPTION: Trint, David Todd

REEL: 4103

FILE:

Riley_Glynn_OralHistoryInterview_DianaDwyer_10July2006_USDA_APHIS_Part1_Track4_Audio_NoiseReduced&SignalAmplified_Reel4103.mp3

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Riley, Glynn A. (2006). Oral history interview by Diana Dwyer. 10 July 2006. Transcript. NWRC 0005 Trapping Oral History Initiative Records, National Wildlife Research Center Archives, Fort Collins, CO. <https://nwrc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16473coll10/id/581/rec/7>

Glynn Riley [00:00:04] Can you hear?

Diana Dwyer [00:00:07] Yes.

Glynn Riley [00:00:08] Unfortunately, political correctness has gotten out of hand and not with just government things, but with all sorts of things. And I have done a lot of work with kids with skulls and whatnot and try to teach them about animals. And I used to have a bunch of slides of some bad-looking animals that had mange and this and that and other, so they would realize it's not really a Walt Disney World. And I would always tell them ahead of time that I was going to show them the good, the bad and the ugly, more or less. And I had one, I had a shoebox top full of heartworms that I took out of an animal, and told them how it was just like spaghetti in the heart and killed the animal too. And it was wolf I had in the pen. I was in there cleaning it, and it just fell over dead. And I knew what it was. I cut him open, and his heart was about that big. Yeah. Just blown up like a balloon, there was so many heartworms in there.

Glynn Riley [00:01:15] So people, people think of the wilderness as a paradise and it's a hard place, you know. And people need to understand that, especially people who live in town and are not associated with outdoors and wildlife at all. They don't understand it at all.

Diana Dwyer [00:01:34] Lot of them don't know where food comes from.

Glynn Riley [00:01:35] No.

Diana Dwyer [00:01:35] They don't have a clue what it's like to be a rancher or kind of production thing or a sheep rancher kind of thing.

Glynn Riley [00:01:41] Yeah. And those articles I gave you, you'll see a lot of stuff that I've already told you. But one of the most interesting things I've had since I've been in this career is when I was dealing with those red wolvess. I went up to Washington and went over to the Smithsonian and stayed there two weeks, measured every wolf skull in the Smithsonian. And what really made it interesting, when I first went to work at Boonesville... hmm. This is going,

this is jumping back and forth, but it's going to tie in. John White told me there was an old trapper over at Wezzard Wells in Jack County, by the name of Bill Delong. He said he was one of the first six people they hired in 1915, and he was the best lobo trapper that they had.

Glynn Riley [00:02:40] So I beat it over there to talk to him, and I didn't go enough. I should have gone a lot more. And he told me about trapping lobo wolves or gray wolves in West Texas back at the turn of the century. And lo and behold, over there in the National Museum was a type specimen of a Texas gray wolf, *Canis lupus monstrabulus*. It was caught by Bill Delong ten miles, I think, southwest of Rankin in September of 1915 or so. So I knew the man called him and I looked at his skin and skull many years later, in 1972 or something. And knowing, knowing the man and knowing - I'd look at that skull: it was in the Wolves of North America, and I look at that skull many a times in the photograph. But I got to talk to him. That was a good experience. It meant a lot to me. I just didn't - I should have stayed over there all night long. I did take full advantage, though.

Diana Dwyer [00:03:50] It's a fascinating place. When we were still part of Fish and Wildlife, I got to go back there when we had a, the research center had an office back there. And I got to go in and see all of the specimens behind the scenes.

Glynn Riley [00:04:02] Was that John Paradiso?

Diana Dwyer [00:04:02] John Paradiso was there, and Don Wilson was there. He was a bird guy.

Glynn Riley [00:04:09] John Paradiso was there, and Don Wilson, who was Edward Goldman's son, I think. And holy cow, I've got a book in there with all the measurements of those wolf skulls, red wolf skulls. And John Paradiso told me that I had the largest collection of - I'd sent more canine skulls in up there than anybody else.

Diana Dwyer [00:04:37] You should have been a scientist; you should have been a researcher.

Glynn Riley [00:04:38] Well, yeah, I don't know. Maybe I missed something. But it was, that was a neat, neat, neat experience. And if you could go back and look again, I'd look at things that I missed. I didn't take, I missed a lot of stuff that I should have looked at. But that was really a neat thing. It really, really was.

Diana Dwyer [00:05:07] It's an amazing place.

Glynn Riley [00:05:08] Yes, it is. Yes, it is. And if I had, you know, I don't go on vacation. I work all the time. I lose my annual leave every year. I'm saving it for when I retire. I can save 240 hours. Give me a little more time when I retire. But if I had to go on vacation, a vacation to me would be to go to all the big museums - one in New York, one in Chicago. That's what I'd like to do. That wouldn't turn many people on, but it would me.

Diana Dwyer [00:05:39] I'd like to be a librarian in a natural resource history museum.

Glynn Riley [00:05:45] Oh yeah.

Diana Dwyer [00:05:46] I would like to run it, but I know all the research areas.

Glynn Riley [00:05:49] Oh, yeah. Libraries are neat places. I read a lot. And matter of fact, the fourth of July, I read an entire book. I.

Diana Dwyer [00:05:58] Must have been a slow day.

Glynn Riley [00:06:00] Well, I've read a pretty light. But a fellow brought me that. It was about a guy in Arizona that used to be head of the Arizona Rangers, and it had a lot of history and stuff in it, and I like that sort of thing.

Glynn Riley [00:06:14] So you got any more questions?

Diana Dwyer [00:06:16] Let's see. What's the biggest challenge you think facing the Wildlife Service guys, the people that are your peers?

Glynn Riley [00:06:20] Oh, dealing with people, by far that's the biggest challenge.

Diana Dwyer [00:06:29] Like the public, or is it like other agencies?

Glynn Riley [00:06:34] Both. And even within our own agency. Gee, I don't know where it's going. And a lot of us spend a lot of time wondering about that. And it's never going to stay, I mean, I'm glad that I was here when I was here, because in the future, it's not going to be the same. And you can get so technical it takes all the fun out of it.

Diana Dwyer [00:07:03] That's when people complain a lot about when they do the environmental assessments, and all the permits and regulations that they have to deal with.

Glynn Riley [00:07:09] And they do a lot of that is brought upon us by people who were against what we do and want to tell us what we do. And so you wind up having to spend millions and millions and millions of taxpayer dollars on stuff. And it's unnecessary. And yeah, that's something you have to live with. And I don't know if it'll ever reach a point where more common sense prevails or not, but I kind of doubt it.

Glynn Riley [00:07:44] So we're it's going, where wildlife management as a whole is going, I don't really know. But it's turned into a big business. So I think that if you look at Texas - of course, this is a private land state - high fences are going up everywhere.

Diana Dwyer [00:08:08] Is land being subdivided, like these ranchettes and stuff you see in Colorado?

Glynn Riley [00:08:15] Mmm-hmm. But even big ranches: we've got one out here, it's over 3000 acres, and a guy has fenced that and he's raising deer and people come out and pay 6000 dollars, 7000 dollars to shoot a buck that's been fed and bred. It's just like the cattle business. And I don't see how you can consider yourself a hunter, you know. And that's the way things are going.

Glynn Riley [00:08:47] First of deer season (I'm not a deer hunter; I just deal with predators, that's my thing), but the first of deer season, I go down here to the locker where they bring them in, because I want to get stuff to make bait out of - tallow, brains, and whatnot. And it's, it's very amusing to sit there and watch the circus. It really, really is. I won't say much more about that, but it's something else.

Glynn Riley [00:09:20] You mentioned lures, baits. What's your favorite lure? I don't have a favorite lure or bait. I've made a jillion of them; I've bought a jillion of them. And gee, I just mix stuff up and if it smells right, it usually works.

Diana Dwyer [00:09:41] Smells bad.

Glynn Riley [00:09:43] Smells bad to most people. Yeah. But, so I don't know, I don't think there is the perfect lure, because for works here, won't work someplace else. I've got one or two, though, that I've used a long time. And I've used them in Minnesota and they worked. There's a game warden up there, Ray Thorpe. He went with me one day and I taught him how to make some bait, and he wrote me a letter and told me it was a great fisher lure.

Glynn Riley [00:10:15] And one time he, that when I went up to Ash Lake and caught those 20 wolves. He went with me one day, and I had a pair of wolves caught. It was neat. It came a little cool spell for August, and we found this pair of wolf tracks on the road. We were following them along; we'd come to a corner, and I think we would pull off. We followed him five miles, right to the traps. And I had the male in one, and the female in the other. And that old male was the meanest thing I ever saw. Got a picture of him too.

Glynn Riley [00:10:50] And Ray Thorpe, after he carried me across the line in Canada to talk to some wildlife people over there about catching wolves. I don't want to lie, but he says, "Come on, what do you put in your bait?" And I sprinkle my traps. I carry some plastic drink bottles of water, and I spinkle them all, which most people don't. He said, "I thought it was in that water, but you stopped and just filled it up in the creek."

Glynn Riley [00:11:24] I said, "Ray, I'll tell you what the magic ingredient is. It's hustle. You've got to work." That's what it is.

Glynn Riley [00:11:42] He came down here to see me one time since I've been here.

Diana Dwyer [00:11:47] I'm going to have to change the CD because we're almost to the very end.