

# Use of Winter Dens by Porcupines, *Erethizon dorsatum*, in Wisconsin

MICHELLE SOMERS and RICHARD P. THIEL

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Sandhill Wildlife Area, Box 156, Hwy X, Babcock, Wisconsin 54413 USA

Somers, Michelle, and Richard P. Thiel. 2007. Use of winter dens by Porcupines, *Erethizon dorsatum*, in Wisconsin. *Canadian Field-Naturalist* 122(1): 45-48.

Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*) dens were monitored in Sandhill Wildlife Area in central Wisconsin between 1996-1997 and 2002-2003 to determine whether they displayed fidelity. Fidelity declined between years, with a higher proportion of Porcupines displaying fidelity to a specific den within a single winter than between winters. Yearlings displayed higher fidelity to den sites than adults. Fidelity was stronger among Porcupines occupying rock vs. tree dens. Familiarity with home spaces and onset of snowfall and snowfall depth also probably influence selection of dens.

Key Words: Porcupine, *Erethizon dorsatum*, winter, dens, denning behavior, den-site fidelity, Wisconsin.