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**Wildlife 'highways' fall prey to growth**

August 7, 2001

By NANCY LUNA  
The Orange County Register

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Urban sprawl is cutting off pathways used by native wildlife, threatening the existence of critical habitats across the state, according to a study released Monday.

The report -- the first to map such pathways statewide -- identified 234 wildlife corridors. Scientists and researchers say the study shows the importance of preserving these corridors, used by everything from mountain lions to eagles to toads to roam between larger areas.

The report found that the most serious threats to corridors are in Southern California, including eight links that run through Orange County. Some areas, including habitat serving migratory birds, lions and coyotes, were tagged as "severely threatened." The El Toro corridor in south county was among those.



**Field biologist Shalene George**, who is working on a coyote study, checks a special camera she uses in the Limestone Canyon area.

Photo: Jebb Harris / The Register



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