

# On The Wild Side

## WILDLIFE PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



USDA  
FOREST SERVICE

OCTOBER 2004



Where is your orange?

## News

### NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION (NWTF) REMINDS HUNTERS TO HUNT SAFELY

September 17, 2004

For more information, contact: James Powell or Jonathan Harling, 803-637-3106



In continued support of hunting safety, the National Wild Turkey Federation is making its **Hunt Safely** stickers available free of charge to hunters across the country.

The safety stickers are neon green and designed to be placed on firearms to remind hunters to hunt safely as they take aim on their targets. "It's helpful to every hunter to have a quick safety reminder right before squeezing the trigger," said Tom Hughes, NWTF biologist and hunter safety coordinator. "It reminds the hunter to be sure of the target and what's behind the target." The stickers are part of the NWTF's hunter safety promotion, which includes hunter safety tips, defensive hunting tactics and the NWTF's turkey hunter's code of conduct. "The Federation has gone to great lengths to inform and educate the public about safety strategies while turkey hunting," Hughes said. "The results have been that turkey hunting is one of the safest types of hunting."

With more than 20 million participants per year, hunting is a safe outdoor sport, and turkey hunting is one of the safest types of hunting. In fact, according to the National Sports Council, you're more likely to have to go to the hospital for swimming laps in a pool or playing a few sets of tennis than turkey hunting. In fact, you are four times more likely to be injured playing ping-pong than turkey hunting, and you are 50 times more likely to take a trip to the emergency room if you play golf. The stickers are available to NWTF chapters as part of the NWTF's seminar packs, as well as hunting safety instructors and anyone wanting to promote safe hunting. The first 150 stickers are free, but larger amounts can be ordered at a nominal fee. While only limited quantities of the stickers are currently available, more stickers will be available soon. For more information about the NWTF and its turkey hunting safety tactics call 803-637-3106, or go online at [www.nwtf.org](http://www.nwtf.org).

About the NWTF: In 1973 when the National Wild Turkey Federation was founded, there were an estimated 1.3 million wild turkeys and 1.5 million turkey hunters. Thanks to the work of wildlife agencies and the NWTF's many volunteers and partners, today there are 6.4 million wild turkeys and approximately 2.6 million turkey hunters. Since 1985, more than \$186 million NWTF and cooperator dollars have been spent on over 27,000 projects benefiting wild turkeys throughout North America. The NWTF is a nonprofit organization with nearly 525,000 members in 50 states and 12 foreign countries. It supports scientific wildlife management on public, private and corporate lands as well as wild turkey hunting as a traditional North American sport.

For more information about the National Wild Turkey Federation, call 803-637-3106, check out their web site at [www.nwtf.org](http://www.nwtf.org) or e-mail questions to: [nwtf@nwtf.net](mailto:nwtf@nwtf.net).

## **HUNTERS ENCOURAGED TO LEARN ABOUT CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD)**

**September 07, 2004**

**Source: National Shooting Sports Foundation**

**Contacts: Steve Wagner, 203-426-1320, [swagner@nssf.org](mailto:swagner@nssf.org)**

Deer and elk hunters hunt for a variety of reasons. Harvesting meat is an obvious one. But most hunters are also inspired by enjoying recreation, being close to nature and spending time with family and friends. All are valuable components of good hunting. Whatever your motivations for going afield, take time now to learn about chronic wasting disease (CWD) and whether it may influence your expectations for this fall's hunt.

The disease, which affects deer and elk in certain areas of the country, has been extensively covered in the media. Unfortunately, misinformation persists. An accurate and reliable source of information is the Web site of the CWD Alliance, a collaborative project to help hunters learn more about the disease, at [www.cwd-info.org](http://www.cwd-info.org). According to information posted at the site, neither public health agencies nor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have found any evidence suggesting that CWD is transmissible to humans. The disease is still being studied. Until scientists thoroughly understand CWD, hunters should be prudent when handling game from areas where the disease has been identified. Don't harvest animals that look sick. Avoid handling body parts where the disease agent concentrates - lymph nodes, spinal cord, and brain. Hunters can have their animal tested for CWD and should avoid eating meat from any animal that tests positive.

### **Shedding Light on Chronic Wasting Disease**

A DVD titled, *Shedding Light on Chronic Wasting Disease*, developed by American Outdoor Productions of Fort Collins, Colorado, is now available. The CWD Alliance is distributing the video which shows field dressing and meat processing techniques. The DVD-format video explores the realities CWD disease and how hunters can continue to enjoy their time afield. *Shedding Light on Chronic Wasting Disease*, may be ordered through the CWD Alliance website.



Development of the DVD was coordinated with the CWD Alliance, a collaborative communications project involving prominent wildlife conservation organizations working to promote responsible and accurate communications regarding CWD. The Alliance's objective is to support strategies that effectively control and eradicate CWD, to minimize impact of the disease on wild, free-ranging deer and elk populations.

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the trade association for the firearms industry, is one of many partners supporting the CWD Alliance, <http://www.cwd-info.org/index.php>.

## **EFFECTS OF RECREATION DEVELOPMENT ON FOREST- DWELLING BIRDS IN U.S. NATIONAL FORESTS**

**A New Publication from the "Citizen Science" programs on National Forest Lands**

**Authors: Kenneth Rosenberg, B. Kott, R.S. Hames, R.W. Rohrbaugh, Jr., S.B Swarthout, and J. D. Lowe, 2004**



In 1999, the Forest Service entered into a National Challenge Cost Share project with The Cornell Lab of Ornithology (CLO) to promote and implement the "Citizen Science" programs on National Forest Lands. Using Citizen Science as a research tool, the aim of the research was to analyze the effects of recreational development on U.S. National Forests. Throughout the three years of the project 29 forests participated annually. The primary goals of this study were to: 1) Develop and refine protocols for evaluating the effects of recreational development and activities on forest birds, 2) Compare high use recreation areas with undisturbed sites in similar habitats and 3) Develop recommendations for mitigating the impacts of recreational activities on bird populations.

Overall, the study documented significant activities on breeding thrushes in extensively forested national forest lands. This study (the third for the CLOs Birds in Forested Landscape citizen-science project) documents a number effects that high use campgrounds have on forest-dwelling thrushes, and it offers seven very doable recommendations that managers of the National Forest (and can use to make campground can implement to make campground development and improvement more "forest bird" friendly.

This publication can be downloaded for free from the web: <http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/wildlife/index.html>

## Recommendations for Campground Management

Based on the results of this study of breeding thrushes at campgrounds, as well as additional studies in the literature, the authors make the following recommendations for management of campgrounds on National Forests:

- Minimize disturbance to natural vegetation in and around campgrounds, especially understory shrubs and saplings that provide shelter and nest sites for forest birds. This could include restrictions on gathering small branches and downed woody materials for firewood.
- Retain islands of protective vegetative cover within larger campgrounds; disperse campsites to create a mosaic of suitable and disturbed habitats.
- Restrict the availability of food to predators. This could be done by asking campers to keep food in sealed containers and making sure that refuse containers are sealed and emptied frequently. Educational materials aimed at preventing campers from willingly feeding camp visitors, such as chipmunks or jays, may also be warranted.
- Where predator densities are artificially high and impacts on birds and other wildlife are measurable, local and limited control may be warranted.
- Minimize or manage human traffic to and from campgrounds and campsites; restrict traffic to trails, and keep dogs on leash.
- Restrict high-disturbance activities (e.g., ball fields, pavilions) to core areas of campgrounds to minimize disturbance effects close to the forest edge.
- Avoid placement of campgrounds in rare or sensitive habitats, where a buffering effect of surrounding vegetation on bird populations may not exist.

A similar continent-wide study of breeding tanagers had previously shed new insights into the effects of forest fragmentation resulting in, *A Land Managers Guide to Improving Habitat for Scarlet Tanagers and other Forest Interior Birds*, Rosenberg and others 1999. Continuing with the participation of the Forest Service a second publication, *A Land Managers Guide to Improving Habitat for Forest Thrushes*, Rosenberg and others, was published in 2003.



Cornell's Citizen Science program in collaboration with the Forest Service has proven a highly successful partnership for advancing knowledge about forested birds,

and for participants to learn about the issues surrounding bird conservation locally and globally. The Birds in Forested Landscape citizen-science project, in collaboration with the Forest Service, and the many citizens that participated around the country, is a demonstration of what can be accomplished on a continent-wide basis for migratory birds.

**A note from the editors:** Barb Kott, of the Pacific Northwest Region, has been the U.S. Forest Service national coordinator for the citizen science program since its inception. Barb's enthusiasm and dedication has been contagious and contributed greatly to the success of this project and partnership with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. We extend a **very** big thank-you to Barb Kott, Ken Rosenberg of Cornell and all the authors, and to all the participants that helped make this project happen!

## FOREST SERVICE AND QUAIL UNLIMITED RENEW PARTNERSHIP WITH NEW MOU

September 28, 2004

Atlantic City, NJ



At the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency (IAFWA) annual meetings in Atlantic City, N.J., the Forest Service and Quail Unlimited signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding to continue the highly successful partnership that has been a part of the Forest Service Get Wild Program, for many years. Our first MOU was signed in 1988; it was renewed again in 1993. Today, the Forest Service and Quail Unlimited re-affirm this commitment.

Both entities are proud that through our "Answer the Call" partnership, we have enhanced over 200,000 acres of habitat for quail and associated wildlife. We look forward to continued success together conserving and restoring many more acres for these species that depend on healthy forests and grasslands. The Forest Service appreciates the leadership and commitment of Quail Unlimited for advancing habitat management, research and public education that benefits quail and upland game birds. We also appreciate the willingness of Quail Unlimited to share the expertise of QU's staff and volunteers to help us ensure that the "call of a quail" will always be heard on national forests and grasslands.

The signing ceremony was held at the Forest Service hosted, Partners Meeting on September 28, 2004. On hand to sign the MOU were Fred Norbury, Associate Chief for the National Forest System, and David Howell of Quail Unlimited.

**A note from the editors:** A gracious thank-you goes to Gail Tunberg, U.S. Forest Service Wildlife Program Leader for Region 3, and Roger Wells of Quail Unlimited, for leading this effort!



### Answer the Call

Answer the call is an exciting partnership program between QU and the U.S. Forest Service emphasizing quail management throughout the United States. The Forest Service and QU have teamed up to increase supplies of food, cover and water, resulting in healthy quail populations on national forests and grasslands.

## NEW HIGHWAY CROSSINGS TARGET WILDLIFE SAFETY

(Excerpt from the Billings Gazette, September 20, 2004)

By Mike Stark, Billings Gazette Staff

Of all the problems that grizzly bears face in the West, one of the toughest may be your favorite 40-foot-wide ribbon of asphalt. Roads and highways have become a major barrier for bears. It's not just that bears get hit by vehicles. Highways also divide up the landscape and act to keep the ever-cautious bears from moving back and forth between safe areas and other bear populations. "To my way of thinking, that's the serious threat to bears in the wild in the long run," said Bill Ruediger, a Missoula-based Forest Service expert on wildlife and highways.

### **More crossings**

Over the next six years, more than 70 wildlife crossings will be added to roads and highways in Montana. They range from culverts to underpasses to a dirt-covered, 150-foot overpass expected to cost more than \$1 million. The crossings in northwestern Montana are intended to cut down on problems not only for bears but for all wildlife. "These things are expensive but in order to maintain our wildlife heritage, we're going to have to do this," Ruediger said.

Wildlife and transportation officials are hurrying to preserve those bear crossings before development and other disturbances become too much for the grizzlies. "In another 10 or 15 years, our opportunities will be a lot less than they are now," Chris Servheen, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's grizzly recovery coordinator, said during a presentation in Cody, Wyoming last year. European countries have been building wildlife crossings for four decades. More recently, several have been installed in Canada's Banff National Park and in Florida, Wyoming and Idaho.

Like most conflicts between grizzlies and people, this one has its roots in the two species sharing the same piece of land. People and bears both like to travel through valleys and mountain passes, avoiding the steepest routes in favor of the easier passages. Although black bears aren't too hesitant to cross highways, most grizzlies steer clear, especially females with cubs. Sometimes grizzlies make the crossing safely - males tend to fare better than females, statistics show - and other times they don't. Along Highway 93 in Western Montana, three grizzlies have been killed in the last four years. Ruediger said "Interstates 90 and 15 in Idaho and Montana are probably one of the main reasons why grizzlies from the northern parts of those states don't seem to be making it to prime grizzly habitat in central Idaho."

### **Correcting the problem**

So with highways cutting off bear travel corridors - to the detriment of population growth and genetic diversity - wildlife managers began looking for a fix. "We're not going to remove highways. In fact, they're probably going to become bigger and bigger and more prevalent over time," Ruediger said. "The real challenge is how do we get them across the highways?"

Most of the new highway crossings in Montana will be built as part of larger highway reconstruction projects. Many will be culverts ranging from 8 to 13 feet tall. Others will be small bridges. One will be a long, dirt-covered overpass. Most will have fencing to help funnel animals toward the crossings. More and more states and countries are building wildlife crossings, not only for grizzly bears but for any animal that's trying to wander from one place to the next. Crossings in Florida, Canada and, soon, Montana will likely become models for others looking to do the same, Ruediger said. "It's theoretically possible in 10 years or so for an animal to move from Canada to Mexico without having to cross a highway," he said.



## **TWO NEW CARNIVORES FROM AN UNUSUAL LATE TERTIARY FOREST BIOTA IN EASTERN NORTH AMERICA**

(Excerpt from *Letters to Nature*, *Nature* 431, pages: 556 – 559, 30 September 2004, doi 10.1038/nature02819)

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Late Cenozoic terrestrial fossil records of North America are biased by a predominance of mid-latitude deposits, mostly in the western half of the continent. Consequently, the biological history of eastern North America, including the eastern deciduous forest, remains largely hidden. Unfortunately, vertebrate fossil sites from this vast region are rare, and few pertain to the critically important late Tertiary period, during which intensified global climatic changes took place. Moreover, strong phylogenetic affinities between the flora of eastern North America and eastern Asia clearly demonstrate formerly contiguous connections, but disparity among shared genera (eastern Asia - eastern North America disjunction) implies significant periods of separation since at least the Miocene epoch. Lacustrine sediments deposited within a former sinkhole in the southern Appalachian Mountains provide a rare example of a late Miocene to early Pliocene terrestrial biota from a forested ecosystem.

We show that the vertebrate remains contained within this deposit represent a unique combination of North American and Eurasian taxa. A new genus and species of the red (lesser) panda (*Pristinailurus bristolii*), the earliest and most primitive so far known, was recovered. Also among the fauna are a new species of Eurasian badger (*Arctomeles dimolodontus*) and the largest concentration of fossil tapirs ever recorded. Cladistical analyses of the two new carnivores strongly suggest immigration events that were earlier than and distinct from previous records, and that the close faunal affinities between eastern North America and eastern Asia in the late Tertiary period are consistent with the contemporaneous botanical record.

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## LOOK WHO'S TALKING: PARROTS SPEAK IN TONGUES

(Excerpt from NatureNews.com, Published online: 06 September 2004 doi: 10.1038/news040906-1)  
By Helen Pilcher

Ever wondered what makes parrots so good at mimicking human speech? It turns out that the feathered impressionists use their tongues to create vowel-like sounds, just as we do. In human speech, noise is produced in the larynx and can then be modified by the movement of the tongue in the mouth. This helps us to make complex vowel and consonant sounds.



Parrots can shape sound with their tongues  
© Kathleen Carr

Until now, many researchers thought that birds produced and modified their song in the avian equivalent of the larynx, the syrinx, and that the tongue played no role at all. But parrots are known to bob their fleshy tongues back and forth when they talk, so Gabriel Beckers from Leiden University in the Netherlands and colleagues decided to see whether these movements contribute to the birds' great talent for mimicry. Their results are published in *Current Biology*<sup>1</sup>.

The team studied five feral monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*), which had been caught and killed as part of a government pest control program in Florida. In each bird, they replaced the syrinx with a tiny electronic speaker and then used a hook to move the tongue around as the amplifier played bursts of sound. Tongue movements of less than a millimeter made a big difference to the quality of emerging vowel-like sounds, called formants, the team found. "It is larger than the difference between an 'a' and an 'o' in human speech," says Beckers.

Beckers thinks that the birds' ability to manipulate their tongues to articulate vowel sounds probably underpins their talent as impersonators. Parrots are likely to use these sounds in natural communication,

says Irene Pepperberg from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who studies bird vocalizations. "Subtle differences in sound are very important to these birds," she says. Male songbirds, for example, tend to sing only at certain times of the year and for a specific reason: to attract females. But male and female parrots communicate all the time, says Pepperberg. They probably use formants and other vocalizations to convey complicated information, such as individual identity and predator threats.

The discovery "suggests that parrot communication may be more complex than we thought", says Beckers. Pepperberg has first-hand experience in this area. Her team has studied an African Grey parrot, called Alex, in the lab for 27 years. Alex can articulate sounds for objects, shapes, colors and materials, knows the concepts of same and different, and bosses around lab assistants in order to modify his environment. Pepperberg claims that the ability to form vowel-like sounds is no accident. She says that it contributes to the richness of parrot 'language'. The recent study suggests that the ability to produce formants evolved at least twice, once in parrots and once in humans, says Beckers. Tongue articulation gives an extra dimension to vocal complexity, a phenomenon that must have proved useful to both species.

**References:** Beckers G. J. L., Nelson B. S. and Suthers R. A. 2004. *Current Biology* (14), pages 1592 – 1597.

## **DNA BARCODES TAG SPECIES: GENETIC SEQUENCE COULD GIVE AN INSTANT BIOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION**

(Excerpt from NatureNews.com, <http://www.nature.com/news/2004/040927/full/040927-2.html>)

Published online: 27 September 2004; doi: 10.1038/news040927-2)

By Helen Pearson



**Birds of closely related species can be differentiated using the DNA sequence of just one gene.**

© PLOS

Wouldn't it be great if every animal had an easy-to-read label, telling you to which species it belonged? Scientists are now one step closer to making this idea a reality, thanks to two studies showing that the DNA sequence of just one gene can tell very closely related species of birds and butterflies apart, and even flag up previously unrecognized ones.

The concept is called DNA barcoding. And if it works, it could find numerous uses. When a foreign ship docks, for example, inspection services could automatically scan ballast water for nasty species that they are keen to keep out. Or researchers in remote locations could use a handheld scanner to get an instant species identification. At the moment, identifying species is a laborious process, based on characteristics such as the shape of a beak or the color of a wing. But with DNA barcoding, scientists simply work out 650 letters in the genetic sequence of a single gene, called cytochrome c oxidase I.

This gene tends to vary a lot between species. Proponents of the method believe it is so variable that most different species will have a characteristic code, but many researchers are more skeptical.

### **Birds and butterflies**

To show the system can work, Paul Hebert of the University of Guelph, Canada, and his colleagues read and compared the DNA barcodes from museum specimens of 260 species of North American birds. They found that birds in different species had very different barcodes, whereas birds within the same

species did not. They also support suspicions that some of the birds fall into four new species, they write in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences<sup>1</sup>.

Working with a different team, Hebert focused on skipper butterflies in the forest of Costa Rica. The group analyzed the DNA barcodes of over 480 specimens that had previously been grouped as one species (*Astraptes fulgerator*). The barcodes fell into clear groups that suggested the butterflies belonged to ten distinct species. The researchers report in PLoS Biology that the result matches known differences in their choice of foods and caterpillars<sup>2</sup>.

### DNA database

Researchers have used the genetic sequences of animals to help work out their evolutionary relationships for over two decades. But they use a variety of different genes, whereas barcoding focuses on just one. The idea gained credence last year, when Hebert showed that DNA barcodes could tell apart almost 2,000 species<sup>3</sup>. Now a series of projects around the world is showing that the system works in different animal groups. Supporters ultimately aim to catalogue the DNA barcode of each species, with its name, in a central database.

Daniel Janzen at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, who collected the butterflies used in the recent study, is enthusiastic about DNA barcodes. To identify a species of caterpillar, he currently has to rear it until it transforms into a butterfly and then send it to an expert taxonomist. A DNA barcode would allow him to classify caterpillars on the spot, he says, and work out the "gazillion species that give taxonomists nightmares". The system has two other advantages over traditional taxonomy. It can be used to identify species from only a fragment of tissue or shell. And if barcode scanners become available, they could be used by amateurs.

But some researchers have reservations, seeing barcodes as a threat to traditional taxonomy. And even supporters acknowledge that the system will struggle to distinguish species whose genetic sequence is extremely similar, such as ones that have only recently diverged from one another. "We have to be a little bit cynical about where it works and where it doesn't," says ecologist Craig Moritz at the University of California, Berkeley. Moritz says that, in some cases, it may be necessary to analyze more than one gene to properly identify a species. "There's strong debate about whether one gene fits all," he says.

### References

- 1 - Hebert P. D. N., Penton E. H., Burns J. M., Janzen D. H. and W. Hallwachs, 2004. PNAS.
- 2 - Herbert P. D. N., Stoeckle M. Y., Zemplak T. S. and C. M. Francis, 2004., PLoS Biology.
- 3 - Herbert P. D. N., Ratsingham S. and Dewaard J. R., Proceedings of the Royal Society, B 270, S596-599 (2004).



# NEWS

## U.S. Department of the Interior

### **SECRETARY NORTON ANNOUNCES MORE THAN \$70 MILLION IN GRANTS TO SUPPORT ENDANGERED SPECIES**

Office of the Secretary

September 23, 2004

Contact: Shane Wolfe, 202-208-6416

Interior Secretary Gale Norton announced more than \$70 million in grants to 28 states and one territory to support conservation planning and acquisition of vital habitat for threatened and endangered fish, wildlife and plant species. The grants will benefit species ranging from the Delmarva fox squirrel in the East to peninsular bighorn sheep in the West. "The strength of our partnership with the states is clearly one of the keys to the Bush Administration's success in conserving and recovering threatened and endangered species throughout this country," Norton said. "Grant awards support state efforts to build and strengthen important cost-effective conservation partnerships with local groups and private landowners to benefit wildlife."

Funded through the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund and authorized by Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act, the grants will enable states to work with private landowners, conservation groups and other agencies to initiate conservation planning efforts and acquire and protect habitat to support the conservation of threatened and endangered species.

The Cooperative Endangered Species Fund this year provides \$49 million through the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants Program, \$8.6 million through the Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants Program and \$13.5 million through the Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program. The three programs were established to help reduce potential conflicts between the conservation of threatened and endangered species and land development and use.

"These grant programs are some of the many tools we have to help landowners conserve valuable wildlife habitat in the day-to-day management of their lands," U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Steve Williams said. "They help landowners finance the creative solutions to land use and conservation issues that ultimately lead to the recovery of endangered and threatened species."

The Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Program provides grants to states and territories to support the development of Habitat Conservation Plans, through funding of baseline surveys and inventories, document preparation, outreach and similar planning activities. A Habitat Conservation Plan is an agreement between a landowner and the Service that allows the landowner to incidentally take a threatened or endangered species in the course of otherwise lawful activities when the landowner agrees to conservation measures to minimize and mitigate the impact of the taking. A Habitat Conservation Plan may also be developed by a county or state to cover certain activities of all landowners within their jurisdiction and may address multiple species. There are more than 357 Habitat Conservation Plans currently in effect, covering 458 separate species on approximately 39 million acres, with some 407 additional plans under development, covering approximately 100 million acres.

Under the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Program, the Service provides grants to states or territories for land acquisitions associated with approved Habitat Conservation Plans. Grants do not fund any mitigation required of an HCP permittee, but are instead intended to support acquisitions by the state or local governments that complement actions associated with the HCP.

The Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program provides funds to states and territories to acquire habitat for endangered and threatened species in approved recovery plans. Acquisition of habitat to secure long-term protection is often an essential element of a comprehensive recovery effort for a listed species.

For more information on the 2004 grant awards for these programs (Catalog of Domestic Federal Assistance Number 15.615), see the Fish and Wildlife Service's Endangered Species home page at <http://endangered.fws.gov/grants/section6/index.html>.

**We encourage you to view the entire list of grants awarded at <http://www.doi.gov/news/040923b>.**

## SAGE-GROUSE GET BOOST FROM FARM BILL FUNDING



(Excerpt from *Outdoor News Bulletin*, Richard E. McCabe, Editor, September 13, 2004, Number 9, Volume 58)

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Washington, DC 20036  
Phone 202-371-1808, Fax 202-408-5059 WMI Website:  
<http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced that \$2 million of Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) funds would be specifically targeted to help protect sage-grouse habitat in Colorado, Idaho, Utah and Washington, the Wildlife Management Institute reports.

Each of the four western states will receive \$500,000 from the Farm Bill conservation program this year to protect and enhance sage-grouse habitat on GRP easement lands. The funds are intended to provide technical assistance and boost existing financial assistance to states and private landowner partnerships for efforts that will improve the viability of the sage-grouse. The \$2 million is in addition to the nearly \$70 million funding made available this year to enroll land in GRP (\$54.2 million financial assistance and \$15.3 million technical assistance). In early August, USDA announced that \$350,000 would be provided under another Farm Bill conservation program-the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)-to protect habitat of sage-grouse at Parker Mountain, Utah.

Sage-grouse populations in western North America have experienced a long-term decline. According to the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Conservation Assessment of Greater Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Habitats, the overall decline in greater sage-grouse abundance has averaged 2 percent per year since 1965. While most sage-grouse habitat is on publicly owned lands, conservationists note that Farm Bill conservation programs, such as GRP and WHIP, for private lands are important because approximately 30 percent of the lands dominated by sagebrush cover (40 million acres) is privately owned. GRP is a voluntary conservation program administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency.

Under the program, eligible lands are enrolled through easements and rental agreements to help farmers and ranchers protect, enhance and rehabilitate grasslands, rangelands and shrublands. WHIP, another voluntary conservation program administered by NRCS, provides technical and financial assistance to landowners to improve fish and wildlife habitat on upland and aquatic areas on their property. It offers landowners 1-year, 5- to 10-year, and 15-year or longer agreements.

## MULE DEER IN THE MIDDLE: LESSONS LEARNED FROM A CONFLICT OVER NUMBERS

**Press Release, September 28, 2004**

The Wildlife Society

5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814

Contacts: David J. Freddy, [dave.freddy@state.co.us](mailto:dave.freddy@state.co.us) or Bill Rooney, [Bill@wildlife.org](mailto:Bill@wildlife.org), 301-897-9770

**Media note:** The mail date for this issue of the Wildlife Society Bulletin is October 11. An electronic copy of this article will be available from Bill Rooney, Managing Editor, The Wildlife Society, 5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814-2197 Phone: 301-897-9770 Fax: 301-530-2471 <http://www.wildlife.org/>

Trust and credibility were the commodities at stake in a recent conflict-resolution process involving a faction of sportsmen and the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW). The process itself was revealing, but the real lessons were learned in an evaluation of the results, described in detail in "How Many Mule Deer Are There? Challenges and Credibility in Colorado," featured in the Fall 2004 edition of the prestigious Wildlife Society Bulletin, a journal of The Wildlife Society. Squabbles between sportsmen and state wildlife agencies are nothing new. Often they involve numbers of game or fish.

This one began when a group of hunters challenged CDOW on the agency's aerial-sampling methods to assess populations of mule deer in game unit 10 near the town of Rangely in northwestern Colorado. The sportsmen's estimate of 1,750 deer differed widely from the state's number of 7,000. All parties (other wildlife stakeholders were involved as well) agreed to settle their disagreements in a conflict-resolution process that led to an aerial survey to reassess deer number in Game Unit 10. When the survey, which required 35 hours of helicopter time, largely validated CDOW's original findings, the sportsmen refused to accept the estimates, even though they were involved in the design, analysis, and interpretation of the survey. Thus a hoped-for cooperative effort to help deer degenerated into an adversarial debate.

What's it all mean? Were the risks of entering into this validation process outweighed by potential gains, or vice versa? CDOW's risks included its own credibility, public confidence in its deer management programs, and the safety of its personnel (aerial surveys have claimed the lives of more than a few biologists in the recent past). The cost of the entire process was about \$100,000. The article's nine authors, led by senior author David J. Freddy of CDOW, believe the process was undone by the sportsmen's inherent mistrust of agency experts. The authors say that in hindsight, an effort should have been made to clarify the root cause of the sportsmen's mistrust, and a neutral facilitator and/or an independent scientific review of deer survey methods may have helped temper the disagreements. Finally, they believe that aggressive marketing of the science of deer management to the general public may in the future help build public trust.

The Wildlife Society, founded in 1937, is the association of professionals dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. It works to develop and maintain professional standards, advance professional stewardship of wildlife and its habitats, and increase public awareness and appreciation of wildlife management. It has members in more than 70 countries.



## **RICHARD LANCIA NAMED PRESIDENT OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**

**The Wildlife Society**

**5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814**

**Contact: Bill Rooney Managing Editor, [Bill@wildlife.org](mailto:Bill@wildlife.org)**

Richard A. (Dick) Lancia, Director of the Fisheries and Wildlife Program at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, has been installed as President of The Wildlife Society (TWS) at its annual conference in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Lancia, who is also a Certified Wildlife Biologist, has been a member of TWS since 1968. Highlights of Lancia's long service to wildlife and the Society include stints as

Editor-in-Chief of the prestigious Journal of Wildlife Management, President of the Society's Southeastern Section and later its Representative on the TWS Council, author or co-author of more than 75 technical publications (on diverse subjects ranging from boars to beavers and songbirds to snakes), and work as an officer on many committees, including the Technical Review Committee on Wildlife Research.

A dedicated and conscientious teacher, Lancia's academic accomplishments include being named NCSU Alumni Distinguished Professor two years in a row (1996-97), the mentoring of more than 30 graduate

students who have gone on to exemplary careers in the wildlife profession, and 20 years of teaching in a summer field camp. His field-based research has cooperated with government organizations, forest industry, and NGOs to find sound answers to forestry-wildlife interactions. Especially revealing about the man are comments from two of his students: "In my opinion, Dick Lancia personifies what it means to be a professional," and "Dick showed me how important nurturing and friendship are to the success of a graduate student."

Lancia also served his country as a Marine Lieutenant in Vietnam (1969-70), earning a Purple Heart. Each TWS President serves a one-year term. The Wildlife Society, founded in 1937, is the association of professionals dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. It works to develop and maintain professional standards, advance professional stewardship of wildlife and its habitats, and increase public awareness and appreciation of wildlife management. It has thousands of members in more than 70 countries.

## NEW COORDINATOR NAMED FOR WILDLIFE PARTNERS NETWORK

Celeste D. Ruth of Falls Church, Virginia, has replaced Kathryn Reis as coordinator of the Wildlife Partners Network (WPN), reports the Wildlife Management Institute. The WPN involves a number of major conservation organizations that support the coordinator position, which is dedicated to monitoring, tracking and providing information on administrative and legislative actions that are pertinent to the partners individually or collectively. Celeste is a graduate of Virginia Tech, with a degree in Wildlife Science. She most recently completed a wildlife policy internship with The Wildlife Society in Bethesda, Maryland. She can be contacted at [cruth@wildlifemgt.org](mailto:cruth@wildlifemgt.org) or 202-371-1808.



Kathryn Reis, who did an outstanding job as the WPN coordinator, has taken a position with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in Washington, D.C.

## FOREST SERVICE CENTENNIAL LEGACY AWARDS



**September 29, 2004**  
**U.S. Forest Service**  
**Headquarters, Washington DC**

**Objective** - To use the occasion of the Forest Service Centennial celebration to create a special series of awards, known as Centennial Awards, to recognize those individuals who are making significant contributions to the work of the Forest Service that will help carry the work of the Forest Service forward into the next century. The Awards will be granted jointly by the Board of the National Forest Foundation (NFF) and the Chief of the Forest Service in his capacity as member (ex officio) of the Board of the NFF.

**Rationale** - The establishment of Centennial awards presents a unique forum to recognize and give credit to those individuals who have made significant contributions to the work of the Forest Service and are important to its future. The presentation of Awards will serve as an anchor for key Centennial events around the time of the National Centennial Congress in Washington, D.C., in January 2005. The Centennial Legacy awards include the following:

### Eight External Awards

- **Special Centennial Legacy Award** - Individual having made the greatest contribution to the last 100 years of the Forest Service

- Public Service, Resource stewardship, University leadership, Science leadership, Community leadership, Professional Society leadership and Volunteer leadership

### Three Internal Awards

- Public service, Resource stewardship and Organizational leadership

**Nomination Process** - Nominations will be made to the Centennial Awards Committee. The Committee will evaluate nominations and forward them with recommendations to the NFF Board and the Chief for final selection.

The call for nominations will be sent out to a wide group of organizations and individuals in the award categories mentioned. The Committee will rely on and work closely with Forest Service staff with partnership expertise in each category area to disseminate information about the awards. The awards program will be announced and posted on the Centennial website hosted by NFF. The Committee will convene in November of 2004 (by phone) to determine its recommendations which will then be presented to the Board of the NFF and the Chief for their consideration.

**Centennial Award** - The awards will be a unique and meaningful incorporating slate from Grey Towers, the home of Gifford Pinchot, first Chief of the US Forest Service, not a cash award. Finalists will be invited to the Washington, DC Centennial events in Washington in January 2005 to participate in the award ceremony.

**Sponsorship** - These are intended as prestigious awards to help commemorate the Centennial. The costs are intended to be modest as the award presentation ceremonies will "plug-in" to events or receptions already being discussed for the Centennial. General sponsors of the Centennial Congress may consider including support for the award program as part of an overall sponsorship package.

**Honorable Mentions** - The Centennial Awards Committee may consider recommending runners-up for honorable mention in the respective award categories.

**For award criteria and nomination questions? Visit**  
[http://www.natlforges.org/centennial/legacy\\_awards.htm](http://www.natlforges.org/centennial/legacy_awards.htm)

## CALL FOR FOREST SERVICE NATUREWATCH PROGRAM AWARD NOMINEES



**Greetings once again:** It is time to recognize exemplary NatureWatch Program achievements. We sent out a separate document (that you should all have by now) which provides you with the NatureWatch Award categories, criteria, and instructions on how to submit a nomination. Remember, you do not need to write one bit of narration for a nomination. Simply copy the URL (website address) from the FY04 WFRP NatureWatch Project and paste it into an email to me, ([dvirgovic@fs.fed.us](mailto:dvirgovic@fs.fed.us)) along with the name of the Award Category you are submitting the nomination for. Please title your email "NatureWatch Awards"

It is as simple as that. **Please take time to make a nomination by November 15, 2004.** Recognition of exemplary efforts is an extremely important (and fun) element to our NatureWatch Program growth and visibility. No secrets this year - the awards will be digital cameras, and maybe a digital movie camera! If anyone is interested in helping evaluate the nominations, please send me an email about your interest. It will take about one full day of your time. Award selections should be completed in January.

**Don Virgovic, National NatureWatch Program Leader**  
USDA Forest Service  
Portland, Oregon  
[dvirgovic@fs.fed.us](mailto:dvirgovic@fs.fed.us)

## HAVE SKIN? PLEASE SEND

**Center for North American Herpetology (CNAH) research request**  
**The Center for North American Herpetology**  
**Lawrence, Kansas <http://www.cnah.org>**  
**September 15, 2004**

**Snake skins needed** - To facilitate preparation of a key to the shed skins of snakes found in eastern North America, shed skins for the following species are needed: Copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix*), Eastern Worm Snake (*Carphophis amoenus*), Scarlet Snake (*Cemophora coccinea*), Kirtland's Snake (*Clonophis kirtlandii*), Eastern Racer (*Coluber constrictor*), Eastern Fox Snake (*Elaphe gloydi*), Eastern Corn Snake (*Elaphe guttata*), Mud Snake (*Farancia abacura*), Rainbow Snake (*Farancia erythrogramma*), Eastern Hognose Snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*), Prairie Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis calligaster*), Common Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula*), Plainbelly Water Snake (*Nerodia erythrogaster*), Brown Water Snake (*Nerodia taxispilota*), **Rough Green Snake (*Opheodrys aestivus*)**, Pine Snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus*), Glossy Crayfish Snake (*Regina rigida*), Massasauga (*Sistrurus catenatus*), Southeastern Crowned snake (*Tantilla coronata*), Butler's Garter Snake (*Thamnophis butleri*), Plains Garter Snake (*Thamnophis radix*), Eastern Ribbon Snake (*Thamnophis sauritus*), Rough Earth Snake (*Virginia striatula*), Smooth Earth Snake (*Virginia valeriae*), and Mountain Earth Snake (*Virginia pulchra*). **If you can help, please contact Brian S. Gray, 1217 Clifton Drive Erie, Pennsylvania 16505-5215**



## NON-NATIVE SPECIES DATA SURVEY: YOUR HELP NEEDED

**Dr. Laura A. Meyerson Staff Scientist**  
**The Heinz Center 1001 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Suite 735 South**  
**Washington, DC 20004**  
**Tel: 202-737-6307 Fax: 202-737-6410**  
**[meyerson@heinzctr.org](mailto:meyerson@heinzctr.org) [www.heinzctr.org](http://www.heinzctr.org) <http://www.heinzcenter.org/ecosystems/index.htm>**

Dear Colleagues:

The Heinz Center's State of the Nation's Ecosystems project, in collaboration with Dr. Tom Stohlgren, Science Program Director at the Fort Collins Science Center, is conducting a review of existing non-native species databases in the United States.

This effort is part of the Center's work on the next edition of the State of the Nation's Ecosystems <<http://www.heinzctr.org/ecosystems/>> report, scheduled for publication in 2007, and will support work on identifying a consistent set of national indicators for describing non-native species. If you currently have or are working on a database that involves non-native species in the United States, we request that you participate in a short survey (5-10 minutes total) designed to collect general information about your database. We are gathering information on the types of data that are collected on non-native species in the United States. The results of this survey will be reported back to the community through a report and/or journal publication. Other goals of this effort are to ascertain the availability of data for populating the Heinz Center national-level non-native species indicators and to contribute to the development of a

larger meta-database of non-native species databases, now being developed by the National Institute of Invasive Species Science <http://www.niiss.org/>.

With your cooperation, we hope to obtain metadata associated with all major non-native species databases to accurately assess currently available data and identify where gaps exist. Data contributors will be given the opportunity to establish links to the entire "shared database" through the NIISS website, thus providing access to other non-native species data sets and facilitating data-sharing among researchers, agencies, and organizations. All survey participants will be acknowledged for their contribution on the NIISS website, all necessary permissions will be obtained, and all data will be properly cited and attributed. Please specify in the comments portion of the survey if you would prefer to remain anonymous, and we will gladly honor your request.

After reviewing the survey results, we may ask your permission to use selected data for inclusion in the 2007 State of the Nation's Ecosystems report or other publications. If you are willing to complete this survey, please contact Alycia Waters at [mawaters@nrel.colostate.edu](mailto:mawaters@nrel.colostate.edu). To learn more about the National Institute of Invasive Species Science, please go to [www.niiss.org](http://www.niiss.org).

If you have questions about the Heinz Center Non-native Species indicators, please contact Laura Meyerson, [meyerson@heinzctr.org](mailto:meyerson@heinzctr.org), 202-737-6307. Thank you for your help and cooperation.

## **IMPORTANT UPDATE ABOUT THE NON-NATIVE SPECIES SURVEY, OCTOBER 5, 2005**

Due to an overwhelming response and interest in our survey, we have decided to extend the deadline once again to Friday, October 15, so contacts that were out of town or in the field have a chance to participate. This will be our last deadline extension. Following this date, we will begin analyzing the results we have at that point. Please take the time to complete the survey using the directions that we sent in our initial e-mail. It should only take about 5 minutes. If you forgot your login information, please e-mail me at [mawaters@nrel.colostate.edu](mailto:mawaters@nrel.colostate.edu), and I will send it to you. If you do not have a database, please e-mail me at [mawaters@nrel.colostate.edu](mailto:mawaters@nrel.colostate.edu), with "NO DATABASE" in the subject line. If taking the survey, it is important to note that there are two submit buttons. After you have completed it, you click submit and are given a confirmation page. At this confirmation page, you will need to click submit again. This seems to have been the major problem with some surveys not downloading into our database. Thanks for your help with the survey and let me know if you have any questions! **Alycia**

**Alycia Waters, Research Associate**  
NESB/Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1499  
970-491-2302  
[mawaters@nrel.colostate.edu](mailto:mawaters@nrel.colostate.edu)

**Note: The National Invasive Species Coordinator of the U.S. Forest Service, Mike Lelmini, has requested that you send him a copy of your survey results, his email address is [mlelmini@fs.fed.us](mailto:mlelmini@fs.fed.us).**

**Mike Lelmini, National Invasive Species Program Manager**  
USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C.  
Voice: 202-205-1049, Fax: 202-205-1096

# Coming Events

## ALL- BIRD CONSERVATION WORKSHOPS

Deborah Hahn, IAFWA Migratory Bird Coordinator  
dhahn@iafwa.org

International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 725, Washington, DC 20001  
Voice: 202-624-8917, Fax: 202-624-5260/7891



IAFWA is delighted to report the completion of 24 highly successful **All-Bird Conservation Workshops** which involved 1,500 participants. These workshops, funded by a Multi-state Conservation Grant and supported by IAFWA's Migratory Bird Coordinator, have provided outstanding opportunities for state agency personnel and their bird conservation partners to learn about regional and national bird initiatives, identify common interests and develop plans for bird conservation projects. These workshops are also providing input to state wildlife strategies. Eight other workshops are currently planned to occur during the remained of 2004, these are listed below.



- October 26-27, Rio Rancho, NM
- November 15-16, Sacramento, CA
- November 17-18, Loudonville, OH
- November 17-18, Milesburg, PA
- December 7-8, Bismarck, ND
- December 7-9, Bird Conservation Region 30
- December first week - Puerto Rico
- South Carolina will have one sometime in early 2005.

**Status:** A state fish and wildlife agency has hosted each workshop and each has employed either a statewide or a regional (BCR) approach. In the statewide approach, the participants receive presentations from representatives of the various bird conservation initiatives and then break out into smaller groups to focus on resolving issues specific to the host state. In the BCR approach, participants from several states meet at a central location to receive presentations on the bird conservation initiatives and then work on regional issues, often involving multiple states. Leading experts in the field share their experiences and answer questions regarding how to integrate the habitat needs of multiple bird species.

**Future Plans:** IAFWA's goal is to conduct all-bird conservation workshops across the entire U.S. continent. To that end, I have contacted states throughout to country to determine future workshops and have received many positive responses (see Future Workshops below). As word of the benefits these workshops provide becomes more widespread, we anticipate a continued demand for them - **Debbie**

**A note from the editors to Forest Service biologists:** We encourage you to attend these all-bird workshops when they occur in your area. You may contact the state agency for workshop locations and other information. Or if need be, I would be happy to track specific location information for you – **jina**

## 70<sup>TH</sup> NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONFERENCE, MARCH 2005, ARLINGTON, VA

### Who will manage our Natural Resources?

#### First Special Session

Looming personnel crises in natural resource agencies will be the focus of the first Special Session at the 70th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, which will be held March 16-19, 2005, in Arlington, Virginia. Special Session # 1-“Retirements and Outsourcing: *Who Will Manage Our Natural Resources?*” - will feature presentations that address the exodus of baby boomers from public service during the next 5 to 10 years. Additional presentations will consider the effects of outsourcing on professional management of natural resources, the role of the private sector in wildlife management and succession planning in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This Special Session, on Wednesday afternoon, March 16, will wrap up with an audience-participation panel, to develop ideas for dealing with the imminent, wholesale changes. How serious is the personnel crisis? According to a report issued by the Renewable Natural Resources Foundation, more than half of the senior executive service officials in the US Department of the Interior, Forest Service and the Environmental Protection Agency will retire by 2007. The soon-to-be-released results of a study of state fish and wildlife agencies show that 42 percent of employees in leadership positions in state agencies will retire by 2010 and 76 percent will retire by 2015.

Although the number of employees leaving natural resource agencies is dramatic, the situation appears even bleaker when the age composition of agency work forces is examined. More than 40 percent of the federal government work force is older than 50 and only about 6 percent are under 30. In state fish and wildlife agencies, nearly 60 percent of employees are 50 years of age or older and less than 7 percent are age 30 or younger. Data show that about 24 percent of the civilian work force is over 50 and 38 percent is under age 30.

How will these changes in personnel affect natural resource agencies? “The biggest impact,” according to Ryan Colker, Director of Programs at the Renewable Natural Resources Foundation, “will be on the agencies’ ability to maintain their scientific capability, because the people who are leaving are primarily senior scientists, managers and leaders.” Colker also suggested that the ability of agencies to address natural resource management problems will be diminished at a time when those problems are becoming increasingly complex and controversial. Agencies’ will be strained to replace retiring professionals and to perform their missions, says Colker, because “shifting national priorities and budget cuts are diminishing government’s historic role in natural resources science and management as federal natural resources agencies must compete with other demands for less and less available discretionary funding.”

Natural resource agencies must effectively transfer knowledge from retiring senior employees to junior employees and new hires if they are to maintain their effectiveness in the future. Each of Special Session speakers will offer strategies for dealing with the personnel crisis and the audience will have an opportunity to contribute to an action agenda.

**For additional information about all sessions, visit <http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/>.**

## INTRODUCTION TO DISTANCE SAMPLING WORKSHOP, COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY, FORT COLLINS, CO JANUARY 5-7, 2005



Description: This introductory-level workshop will provide biologists with the basics in estimating density of a population using distance sampling theory. We will also introduce program DISTANCE, a software package for analyzing data derived from distance sampling surveys. Participants will be exposed to the philosophy behind density estimation from distance sampling data. Studies using line transects, point transects, trapping webs, and trapping lines will be described. Design considerations and the use of covariates in density estimation will also be covered.

This workshop is intended for biologists with an interest in distance sampling. This workshop is particularly suited for those conducting terrestrial surveys (e.g. birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles). Participants should be facile with the Windows computer interface and have a working knowledge of basic statistics.

**Format:** The workshop format will include a combination of lectures and hands-on computer lab exercises. The workshop will begin on Wednesday, 5 January 2005, at 8:00am and end Friday, 7 January, at 5 pm. Evening sessions will be provided as needed to cover the workshop material. The workshop will take place on the Colorado State University campus in Fort Collins, Colorado. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own data for analysis to the workshop, but should recognize that a thorough analysis will not be completed in the time available. Contact the instructors for details regarding the manner in which data should be formatted prior to arrival at the workshop.

**Cost:** Cost for the 3-day workshop is \$700 (US). There is a \$50 late registration fee after December 1, 2004. Cost includes all course materials, CD with Program DISTANCE and supporting documentation and examples, facilities for the workshop, and morning and afternoon refreshments. Those planning on bringing a notebook computer should first contact one of the workshop instructors.

Registration is available online at <https://kiowa.colostate.edu/CSUConferenceReg/>. For additional information visit <http://www.cnr.colostate.edu/FWB/Workshops/distance2.htm>

**Instructors:** Eric Rexstad ([e.rexstad@uaf.edu](mailto:e.rexstad@uaf.edu)), Associate Professor of Quantitative Wildlife Biology, Institute of Arctic Biology, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks AK 99775

Kenneth Wilson, Professor Department of Fishery and Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523

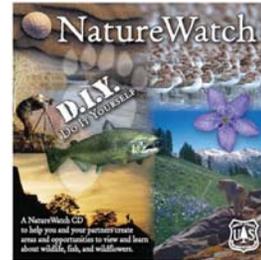
Paul Doherty, Assistant Professor, Department of Fishery and Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523

Questions? Please contact Dr. Ken Wilson ([kenneth.wilson@colostate.edu](mailto:kenneth.wilson@colostate.edu)); 970-491-7755 or Dr. Paul Doherty ([paul.doherty@colostate.edu](mailto:paul.doherty@colostate.edu)); 970-491-6597.

# Training, Tools and Information

## FOREST SERVICE RELEASES NEW “DO IT YOURSELF NATUREWATCH” CD

Don Virgovic, National NatureWatch Program Leader  
USDA Forest Service  
Portland, Oregon



The Forest Service NatureWatch Program has just released a new CD-ROM titled: “DIY NatureWatch,”– a “Do It Yourself” CD designed to help you, and your partners, create areas and opportunities to view and learn about wild-life, fish, and wildflowers.

The CD is designed for people in the field who are active in their NatureWatch Program. The materials collected on this 2-CD set are some of the finest efforts ever developed on the subjects of wildlife, fish, and wildflower viewing, nature-tourism, and environmental education/interpretation. Using these materials for the development of your NatureWatch Program will ensure that your efforts are efficient, economical, and state-of-the-art. The benefits of being able to see what is currently available instead of re-inventing the wheel or starting from scratch are immeasurable. Copies of the CD are being distributed to all Forest Service biologists, botanists, and Recreation/Interpretive specialists, through mailings to Regional Program Leaders.

National Forests provide some of the finest nature viewing opportunities in the world. Wildlife, fish, and wildflower viewing has become the second most popular outdoor activity in the United States, second only to gardening. Nature-based tourism is a booming worldwide industry that is growing daily. Although it is encouraging to see this growing interest, we have a responsibility to ensure that nature viewing on public lands does not impair the protection and conservation of our precious natural resources. We also have the responsibility to raise the level of public awareness and appreciation of these natural resources to help ensure future generations can experience the wonders of nature, be responsible for their actions, and become advocates of proper and ethical behavior. Blending these two responsibilities is the challenge we all share.

Thanks to everyone from the Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Natural Resources Conservation Service, state government agencies, partners, educators, and individuals who contributed materials for the development of the DIY NatureWatch CD. Their willingness to take time and freely share materials that you developed speaks volumes of their unselfish commitment to natural resources conservation and appreciation. In particular, I would like to thank my Forest Service colleagues Dan O’Connor, Barbara Kennedy-Fish, and Sandy Frost for their incredible creativity, dedication, and “never give up” attitude in completing this CD. Simply, you can not find better people to work with!

I hope this CD helps you do the work you love to do – **Don.**



**A note from the editors:** Don Virgovic continues to do an outstanding job for the Forest Service’s National Naturewatch Program to advance the benefits brought to our National Forests and Grassland natural resources from “people watching nature.” Good job on this CD Don, and **thank-you!**

## BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS MAP — A MAP OF THE WORLD'S 25 MOST CRITICALLY ENDANGERED BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS

Biodiversity Hotspots – Conservation International

<http://www.biodiversityhotspots.org/xp/Hotspots/home/>



Hotspots are highly threatened habitats of extraordinary biodiversity. On this map, hotspots are identified, described, and ranked by the extent to which they are at risk. This attractive, informative map poster is a resource for conservationists, teachers, students, and anyone interested in the hotspots.

Currently available in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese:  
[cabspubs@conservation.org](mailto:cabspubs@conservation.org)

## UPDATE TO PARTNERS IN FLIGHT (PIF) WEBSITE

I'm pleased to announce another update to the PIF website <http://www.partnersinflight.org>. The PIF Organizational Structure document and chart approved by the PIF Council last September has been slightly reformatted and is now on the website as the text for the "What is Partners in Flight?" section on the main website menu. This updates the previous text from a very out-dated description of PIF's organizational structure. The "sister" document in Spanish entitled "Que es Compañeros en Vuelo?" which has always been a translation of "What is PIF?" has not yet been updated. But we are in the process of getting the new document translated and will then make that available as well - Cheers, Janet

**Janet M. Ruth, Research Ecologist and PIF Co-Coordinator for USGS Arid Lands Field Station**

UNM Biology Department MSC03 2020 1

University of New Mexico Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001

Phone: 505-346-2870 or 2872 Ext. 14

[janet\\_ruth@usgs.gov](mailto:janet_ruth@usgs.gov)

## PARC ANNOUNCES NEWLY DESIGNED WEBSITE

### Dear Herp Conservationist:

Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC), is proud to announce the launch of their newly designed national website: <http://www.parcplace.org>. Your favorite pages are still available and you can still look for herp jobs (and list jobs), check out the Southeast Educational Materials, access the popular SPARC program, and read national conservation articles by Whit Gibbons and other. You can also download PARC's popular publications and join our international herp conservation network for FREE.

### New Features of the Site

- Each PARC region has its own page which is currently undergoing content development and transfer from existing pages.
- If you would like to be listed in your region, please send your email or website to [webmaster@parcplace.org](mailto:webmaster@parcplace.org).
- A history of PARC through universally formatted Meeting Minutes



**PARC**

PARTNERS IN  
AMPHIBIAN  
& REPTILE  
CONSERVATION

- A "What You Can Do" page including volunteer based activities such as Herp Atlas programs and the North American Amphibian Monitoring Program.
- A new "Links" page that lists partnering organizations and programs is now included as well as state level links with information for all PARC member interests.
- Take a look at the new PARC website ([www.parcplace.org](http://www.parcplace.org)) and let us know what you think. The content is going to be revised and developed on a regular basis, so keep us up-to-date on your herp conservation work and send us your ideas <http://www.parcplace.org/contact.html>

Special thanks goes to the Environmental Protection Agency and a consortium of Federal and State Agencies who funded this initiative and continue to support the broad based amphibian, reptile, and habitat conservation pursued by PARC. PARC would also like to acknowledge all the photographers who contributed photos. The website would not have achieved the same look and feel without their generous donations. Names of contributing photographers, special acknowledgments, and contact information for the talented marketing firm who designed the website can be found at <http://www.parcplace.org/credits.html>

**Cheers, Luke A.**

Luke A. Fedewa, National State Coordinator  
Arizona Game and Fish Department  
2221 West Greenway  
Phoenix, AZ 85023  
602-789-3374

**Eric Raffini, Federal Coordinator**

U.S. EPA -Office of Wetlands,  
Oceans & Watersheds  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, 4502 T  
Washington, DC 20460  
202-566-1390

**WATERSNAKES SUBJECT OF NEW BOOK**

**Contacts: Marie Hamilton, Public Information, [mhamilton@srel.edu](mailto:mhamilton@srel.edu) or  
Rosemary Forrest, Public Relations Coordinator, [forrest@srel.edu](mailto:forrest@srel.edu)  
803-725-9724 (desk)**

Watersnakes enjoy the dubious reputation of being among the most-feared snakes in North America. As with so many fears, this one often stems from ignorance. Whit Gibbons and Michael Dorcas have brought their experience as field and laboratory herpetologists to the task of dispelling misconceptions and perhaps even provoking some respect for these much-maligned animals with the publication of their new book, North American Watersnakes: A Natural History.

Gibbons is a Professor of Ecology at the University of Georgia, Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL) and Michael Dorcas is an Associate Professor of Biology at Davidson College. Gibbons says, "Everybody in the eastern part of the country is familiar with watersnakes, and we wanted to offer the public, as well as ecologists and conservation biologists, a summary of everything science knows about this fascinating group of animals. One goal of the book was to consolidate all of the known facts about watersnakes in an attempt to inform people that these harmless creatures are integral parts of our natural ecosystems"

Full color photos of each species, distribution maps, tables and pen-and-ink-illustrations by Peri Mason allow the lay reader to gain a fuller understanding of the subject matter. A hefty comprehensive bibliography testifies to the solid scholarship behind the book and allows enthusiasts to do further reading in their areas of interest. The heart of the book, however, is its accessibility. Each species is not only well illustrated, but the information on each is arranged under subheads such as “Description,” “Common Names,” “Taxonomy and Systematics,” and so on, so that readers may easily select which passages address their concerns. In addition to the expected passages on the natural history are other passages on the care of snakes in captivity, conservation, and personal accounts by the authors.

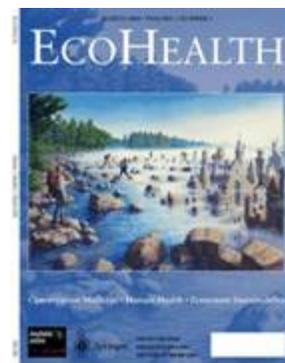
Gibbons is the author the popular books: “Their Blood Runs Cold,” “Keeping All the Pieces,” and “Ecoviews: Snakes, Snails, and Environmental Tales” as well as other academic books. Dorcas is also the author of “A Guide to the Snakes of North Carolina.” Watersnakes of North America, A Natural History is published by the University of Oklahoma Press and has a forward by Roger Conant.



The Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL) is a research unit of the University of Georgia located on the Savannah River Site (SRS) in Aiken, South Carolina. For more than 50 years ecologists and other scientists here have been doing research on this former nuclear materials production site. The 310-square-mile SRS is also a National Environmental Research Park (NERP) where studies are conducted in both near-pristine and contaminated areas. More than 2,700 papers have been published in the scientific literature by the research faculty and staff at SREL. The subjects have included such varied topics as soil and water remediation, reptile and amphibian conservation, natural attenuation, and much more. Though the SRS is a federally secured site, the media are encouraged to learn more about the research being done here. Except in times of high national crisis, access to the site itself is possible with advance notice. Contact names and numbers are below if you would like to arrange a visit.

## ECOHEALTH

The Editors and Wildlife Trust announced the publication of EcoHealth, a new international journal, network, and website which will focus on issues of Conservation Medicine, human health, and ecosystem sustainability. Pioneered by Wildlife Trust, Conservation Medicine is a new paradigm for the study of links between wildlife, human, and ecosystem health, the creation of which was a response to the growing threat of environmental degradation and disease on animals and humans alike.



### Some of the articles in the first issue include:

- EcoHealth - A Transdisciplinary Imperative for a Sustainable Future
- Impact of W. Nile virus on American Crows in the NE U.S. and Its Relevance to Existing Monitoring Programs
- Wildlife Trade: Threat to Global Health
- Role of Introduced Aquatic Species in the Spread of Infectious Diseases
- Mosquito-borne Diseases as a Consequence of Land Use Change
- Biocomplexity and a New Public Health Domain
- Medical Geology - Emerging Discipline on the Ecosystem-Human Health Interface

### Global Politics and Multinational Health-care Encounters:

- Assessing the Role of Transnational Competence - Trade-related Infections
- Global Traffic and Microbial Travel and Henipaviruses – Gaps in the Knowledge of Emergence

The EcoHealth website is [www.ecohealth.net](http://www.ecohealth.net). EcoHealth is an international, peer-reviewed journal published quarterly by Springer-Verlag New York, LLC, and is available by subscription. The journal

provides a timely forum for research, policy and practice that integrates the ecological and health sciences. EcoHealth is the merger of the complementary journals Ecosystem Health and Global Change and Human Health, and a planned journal of the Consortium for Conservation Medicine.

## Happy Halloween!



**Reminder to FS Regional Biologists:** WFRP-MS databases are due for completion by November 12, so the WO can start National validation.

## Vacancies

Federal job announcements can be found at:

[http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/agency\\_search.asp](http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/agency_search.asp)

## Hotlinks!

Wildlife, Fish and Rare Plants: <http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/wildlife/>

Working with Partners for Bird Conservation: <http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/>

2004 News Releases: <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/2004/releases.shtml>

FS Today Newsletter: [http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/pao/fs\\_today/](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/pao/fs_today/)

National Fire Plan: <http://www.fireplan.gov>

Roadless Area Conservation: <http://roadless.fs.fed.us/>

Large-Scale Watershed Restoration Projects: <http://www.fs.fed.us/largewatershedprojects/>

Land and Resource Management Plans: <http://www.fs.fed.us/forum/nepa/nfmalrmp.html>

Watershed and Air Management: <http://www.fs.fed.us/clean/>

Lands and Realty Management: <http://www.fs.fed.us/land/staff/>  
Road Management: <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/roads/>  
Recreation, Wilderness and Heritage Resources: <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/>  
Forest Management: <http://www.fs.fed.us/land/fm/>  
International Programs: <http://www.fs.fed.us/global/>  
Research: <http://www.fs.fed.us/research/scientific.html>  
Healthy Forests Initiative: <http://www.fs.fed.us/projects/HFI.shtml>  
Partners in Planning: <http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/planning/guide/index.html>  
Landowner Assistance Programs: <http://www.fs.fed.us/cooperativeforestry/programs/loa/index.shtml>  
Forest Service's Annual Fall Foliage Hotline: <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/fall-colors.shtml>

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Once you select a link, please be sure to hit the "Refresh" button to ensure that you are loading the most current version of the web page!

On The Wild Side is a monthly update provided by the National Forest System Wildlife Program of the USDA Forest Service. Contributions are welcome and should be submitted to Debbie Pressman at [dpressman@fs.fed.us](mailto:dpressman@fs.fed.us) or Jina Mariani at [jmariani@fs.fed.us](mailto:jmariani@fs.fed.us) no later than the 25th of each month. We reserve the right to edit contributions for clarity and brevity.

Positions listed are for outreach purposes only and are not full announcements. Interested individuals should contact the forests referenced or consult the USAJOBS website.

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