



WINGS ACROSS THE AMERICAS
2013 Conservation Awards



CELEBRATING *10* YEARS OF CONSERVATION





Wings Across the Americas
is a program to conserve
birds, bats, butterflies and dragonflies.



The US Forest Service—National Forest System, State & Private Forestry, Research & Development and International Programs—works with a wide range of partners here in the United States and overseas to conserve habitats and populations of birds, bats, butterflies and dragonflies.

Conserving Priority Birds

Wildlife watching is an increasingly popular American activity--and birding represents the lion's share. More than 71 million people, age 16 and older, fed, photographed or observed wildlife in 2006 and

spent nearly \$45 billion on their activities. Birds are indicators of national and international environmental health and trends. Unfortunately, many bird populations are significantly declining due to habitat loss,

climate change, development, fragmentation, invasive species, and other causes both here and abroad.

The 193 million acres of National Forests and Grasslands managed by the US Forest Service are critical to maintaining bird populations. However, more than 350 bird species migrate to Latin America and the Caribbean each year. Habitat conservation on our nation's forests and grasslands is not sufficient. Conservation is needed range-wide, in breeding,

migration and wintering areas to ensure habitat and populations; otherwise, investments we make here at home for bird conservation will not be enough for us to see common migrants in the future.

Wings Across the Americas invests in international conservation and uses Forest Service experience and expertise to improve bird conservation at home and abroad. Scarce Federal dollars are leveraged through partnerships with other agencies, non-governmental conservation organizations, local communities and private/corporate sources, both in the United States and abroad, to ensure long-term sustainable projects that benefit birds throughout their range.

Conserving Bats Worldwide

Bats are vital to the health of ecosystems and human economies world wide. As primary predators of night-flying insects, bats consume enormous quantities of agricultural pests and reduce

the need for chemical pesticides. Some bats are critical pollinators and seed dispersers for plants, many with great economic value such as the durian (high-priced Asian fruit), or the agave (source of tequila), closer to home in North America.

Protected bat colonies all over the world have become popular and valuable tourist attractions. A colony in downtown Austin, TX, adds some \$10 million tourist dollars a year to the local economy. The city boasts that it is the "Bat Capital of America".

Bats are threatened worldwide. Populations are in alarming decline because their colonies and habitats are destroyed both intentionally and inadvertently. Development, agriculture, climate change, and lack of scientific understanding of bat ecology lead to the inadvertent destruction of their habitat. With more than 1,200 species, bats account for nearly a quarter of all mammals, but they

are among the least studied. In fact, population status and conservation needs of most bats have never been documented. Tragically, their populations also suffer from intentional destruction due to myths and misinformation.

Wings Across the Americas is working to assist in bat research, conservation management and capacity building to maintain healthy ecosystems in our National Forests and Grasslands, as well as provide Forest Service expertise and experience for bat conservation internationally. Our investment at home and abroad increases our scientific knowledge of bats and creates a cadre of trained scientists and managers to bring about positive conservation action for an important group of mammals that is often ignored by conservation planners.

Conserving Monarch Butterflies

The Monarch butterfly, while not endangered, is in serious decline. The loss of habitat on the wintering grounds and in the breeding areas is a continuing concern. In fact, this loss could severely affect the



migration of the monarchs, as well as threaten its population. Current land use practices in the United States and in northern Mexico are degrading the pathways. There are fewer milkweed plants (for larvae) and nectar resources (for adults) available, and hence, fewer suitable breeding sites. Furthermore, in Canada and the United States, land use and farming practices (i.e. pesticides and herbicide resistant crops) are unfriendly to milkweed. In the overwintering areas, habitat is threatened by deforestation and pressure exerted by human settlements, like in areas around the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve. There, local communities greatly depend on both the Monarch and the forests for their livelihood and identity.

As part of the Wings Across the Americas program, the Forest Service is working with partners to address habitat issues in Canada, the US and Mexico for the Monarch, through the Monarch Joint Venture and educational and outreach efforts for inner city youth and wildlife biologists.

***Wings Across the Americas* Program:**

Supports habitat conservation activities on National Forests and Grasslands, and from Canada's Boreal Forest to the Grasslands and Wetlands of South America;

Organizes an annual awards program to recognize conservation partnerships involving Forest Service employees and their cooperators;

Provides training opportunities for biologists, land managers and administrators; Participates in national and international conservation initiatives;

Enables partners and Forest Service employees to become more knowledgeable about global conservation needs.



Protecting Dragonflies and Wetland Habitats

Although dragonflies are an endless source of fascination, they have received little attention from biologists. Consequently, little is known about them. Flying over ponds, streams and rivers, these charismatic species are derived from an ancient order of insects that emerged 300 million years ago. Fossil records show that little has changed in their design over time. Dragonflies are efficient predators. They use their extendable lower lip and teeth to snag mosquito larvae, tadpoles and even small fish. They are used as indicator species for assessing habitat and water quality in wetlands, riparian forests and lakeshore habitat around the world. In North America, citizen monitoring networks—involving teachers, school groups, birders, nature societies and other partners—are forming to gather information and to collect data on dragonflies.

In North America, there are 9 migrating dragonfly species. There is not, however, much information on the natural history or ecology of their migration. The best known of these nine species is the Common Green Darner, which travels south in the fall and whose offspring return in the spring. Various reports have specified sightings of the Common Green Darners in Chicago, IL; Cape May, NJ; Crescent Beach, FL; and Veracruz, Mexico.

Through the *Wings Across the Americas* program, the US Forest Service is exploring the development of a flyway level collaborative project that will increase the awareness of the importance of dragonflies and their habitats as well as link projects and partners in Canada, the United States and Mexico for research, monitoring, capacity building, outreach and education. Recently scientists and conservationists with an interest and expertise in migrating dragonfly research convened to discuss issues related to its migration in Canada, Mexico and the United States. A Migratory Dragonfly Action Plan that includes research, citizen science and education priorities related to migration, range shifts due to climate change and conservation of key habitats in North America is being developed.



**HABITAT MANAGEMENT &
PARTNERSHIP AWARD**
Foresters for the Birds



Wings Across the Americas recognizes Foresters for the Birds—an innovative, successful, and on-going partnership between Audubon Vermont and Vermont Forests, Parks & Recreation—with the Habitat Management and Partnership Award. This program is designed to provide the tools and training that foresters and other forest professionals need to help private landowners integrate timber and Neotropical migratory bird habitat management practices to protect and enhance

to maintain or improve forest breeding habitat conditions for Neotropical migratory birds. The work of the partnership promotes the use of ecologically based, stand-level silvicultural techniques among private landowners who would otherwise be uninterested in or against traditional forestry practices. Local community involvement in the project included members of the Vermont Land Trust, Vermont Woodlands Association, Vermont Coverts, Merck Forest and Farmland Center, and The

forested land. It was initiated with a two-year grant from US Forest Service State and Private Forestry, with matching contributions from Audubon Vermont and workshop participants.

The project is based on the knowledge that forest management can be used

Nature Conservancy.

Vermont is the ideal location for a project such as this one because the state is a hotspot for breeding Neotropical migrants, including three species on the national Watch List: Olive-sided Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, and Canada Warbler. Each of these species has specific habitat needs that can be met through the forest management techniques promoted by Foresters for the Birds.

The partnership organized four workshops across Vermont with a total of 112 participants, including 66 consulting foresters, all of Vermont's county foresters, and 11 state lands foresters. Two-thirds of the foresters attended more than one workshop and are now assessing bird habitat while conducting timber inventories. More than 50,000 acres of forest land on 77 privately-owned properties received habitat assessments by Audubon conservation biologists. Participating foresters collectively manage more than 1 million acres of private forest land in Vermont. One-third of landowners who were

HABITAT MANAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIP AWARD

reached through the program implemented forest bird management practices in the management plans for their properties; and another 60 percent of landowners said they planned to do so in the future.

Foresters for the Birds includes development and distribution of a four-part toolkit:

- “Birds with Silviculture in Mind: Birder’s Dozen Pocket Guide for Vermont Foresters”
- “Silviculture with Birds in Mind: Options for Vermont Foresters”
- “Guide for Incorporating Bird Habitat Data into a Forest Inventory”
- “Songs of the Forest” CD of forest breeding bird songs

This project meets the conservation goals of the Vermont State Wildlife Action Plan and fulfills the requirements for international sustainable forestry certification programs. In addition to the positive impact it has on migratory bird populations, it also addresses the habitat needs of many other wildlife species by developing and evaluating forestry practices that improve habitat. Some important practices include retaining coarse woody debris and snags, emulat-

ing natural disturbances, and maintaining structural complexity and a diversity of age classes.

As a direct result of this project, Natural Resources Conservation Service in Vermont developed a forestry conservation practice for improving breeding habitat for interior forest birds which Vermont landowners can now apply for funding. Foresters for the Birds also serves as a catalyst for similar initiatives throughout New England and has led to another grant award to the partners by US Forest Service State and Private Forestry to establish forest study areas demonstrating silvicultural activities that can benefit Neotropical migratory birds. The National Audubon Society is now working to expand this program to other forested states in the Atlantic Flyway as part of its strategic goal to implement full-life cycle bird conservation across the Americas.





Award Winners

- Jim Shallow, Audubon Vermont
- Steve Hagenbuch, Audubon Vermont
- Kristen Sharpless, Audubon Vermont
- Katherine Manaras, Audubon Vermont

- Michael Snyder, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation
- Nancy Patch, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation

- Roger Monthey, Northeastern Area, Forest Stewardship Program, State & Private Forestry, US Forest Service
- Mike Huneke, Northeastern Area, Forest Stewardship Program, State & Private Forestry, US Forest Service

Certificate Recipients

- Steven Sinclair, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation
- Ginger Anderson, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation



**HABITAT MANAGEMENT &
PARTNERSHIP AWARD**

Dusky Canada Goose
Nest Island Partnership



The Great Alaska Earthquake of 1964—which registered a magnitude of 9.2 on the Richter scale—triggered landslides and avalanches and destroyed large swaths of land. The quake damaged the nesting habitats of the Dusky Canada Goose and allowed nest predators easier access to goose nests. As a result, the goose population has decreased from a high of over 28,000 birds in the mid-1970s to a low of fewer than 7,000 birds in

2009. These declines in population and breeding success prompted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify Dusky Canada Goose as a focal species for conservation. Additionally, it is the top-ranked species on the Alaska Audubon Watch List and is listed as a US Forest Service sensitive species. The overall management goal for this species is between 10,000 and 20,000 birds.

In response to these declines, the Dusky Canada Goose Nest Island Partnership was initiated in collaboration with Ducks Unlimited Inc. to increase and protect artificial nest islands for Dusky Canada Geese in their primary nesting area on the Copper River Delta, which is located on the Cordova Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest in Alaska. The US Forest Service, with direction from Alaska National Interest Lands

HABITAT MANAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Conservation Act, manages this area for the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats.

Research on the Copper River Delta has shown that breeding success on artificial nest islands averages almost twice the rate of success of nests located on shore. Therefore, one of the key actions identified by the partnership is the placement of 250 additional nest islands—the maximum number possible given the available area and the need to spread the islands out. The most successful islands are those that are 40 meters or more from shore, contain approximately 50% brush cover at one meter in height, and are approximately 2.5 square meters in size. They can raise or lower in response to water level, and they don't have a substrate that can grow pond vegetation. The life expectancy of each artificial nest island is 30 years.

Using these criteria, 117 new nest islands have been installed, with an expected result of about 190 additional Dusky Canada Goose goslings per year. Once all 250 new nest islands are in place, approximately 406 goslings will be produced annually, which should at least allow for population maintenance at 5,000 individuals when added to the existing gosling production.



Although most of these geese breed in the Copper River Delta, the majority winter in the Willamette Valley of Oregon and southern portions of Washington State near the Columbia River. Migrating birds often stop in the Queen Charlotte Islands and Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Formerly, these geese provided for sport and subsistence needs of

residents along the flyway. Now, the low population numbers have led to restrictions on the take of these geese. Thus, the work of the partnership in a small part of Alaska affects geese and people in a much wider region.

Wings Across the Americas honors the Dusky Canada Goose Nest Island Partnership with the Habitat Management and Partnership Award. The award recognizes that the research and management of this population is a multi-organizational effort that includes the Chugach National Forest, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Regions 1 and 7), and Ducks Unlimited.

These conservation partners have developed an interagency management plan for Dusky Canada Goose through the Pacific Flyway Council. The US Coast Guard, Lyndon Transportation, USGS Biological Research Division, Alaska, and Oregon State University provide additional support.



Award Winners

- Erin Cooper,
Chugach National Forest,
US Forest Service
- Jason Fode,
Chugach National Forest,
US Forest Service
- Tom Dwyer,
Western Regional Office,
Ducks Unlimited Inc.
- Brad Bortner,
Pacific Region,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Eric Taylor,
Region 7,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Krystyna Wolniakowski,
Western Partnership Office,
National Fish and Wildlife
Foundation
- Bradley D. Bales,
formerly of Oregon Department
of Fish and Wildlife



- Don Kraege,
Washington Department
of Fish and Wildlife
- Tom Rothe,
formerly of Alaska
Department of Fish and
Game
- Dan Logan,
formerly of Chugach
National Forest,
US Forest Service
- Robert Trost,
US Fish and Wildlife
Service

Certificate Recipients

- Tom Fondell,
Biological Research
Division, US Geological
Survey
- Jim Holley,
Alaska Marine Lines/
Lynden Transport
- LCDR Jeffrey Owens,
US Coast Guard
- LT Bernard Garrigan,
US Coast Guard
- AMT2 Brian Dugal,
US Coast Guard



**RESEARCH MANAGEMENT &
PARTNERSHIP AWARD**
Eastern Golden Eagle Working Group



The population of the Golden Eagle in the eastern United States is sparse. Although there are as many as 35,000 individuals west of the Mississippi River, there are significantly fewer to the east; in fact, as few as 1,000 – 2,500 exist in the region. To make matters worse, a variety of factors—including urbanization, habitat loss, wind turbines, transmission corridors, and lead poisoning—threaten

the survival of this species. Little is known about the basic ecology and demography of the Eastern Golden Eagle. Consequently, there is a great deal of concern regarding its conservation status.

Wings Across the Americas honors the Eastern Golden Eagle Working Group (www.egewg.org) with the Research and Management Partnership

Award. This Group—an international collaboration of biologists and wildlife managers from more than 20 institutions in the USA and Canada, including the US Forest Service—is dedicated to studying the Eastern Golden Eagle and improving its management. The objective of the Working Group is to ensure the long-term sustainability of Eastern Golden Eagle populations and to make

the species a flagship for landscape-scale conservation. Survival of a large and regal species such as the Golden Eagle signals that the eastern United States can support healthy populations of a variety of wildlife species close to areas with large human populations. The Eastern Golden Eagle Working Group works to identify gaps in knowledge, prioritize research needs, promote science-based conservation and management actions, increase public and governmental awareness, and coordinate the activities of managers and biologists.

Since its inception in 2010, the Eastern Golden Eagle Working Group has had a number of successes. One of its most important achievements has been the publication of an assessment of the status of the Eastern Golden Eagle

in *The Auk* (2011), the journal of the American Ornithologists' Union. As a result of this paper and the work of the Group, eastern states and provinces have increased their focus on Golden Eagle conservation. Members of the Eastern Golden Eagle Working Group have also promoted the responsible development of wind energy across eastern USA and Canada. When irresponsibly implemented, methods of harnessing wind energy can present a major threat to the viability of the species. Additionally, researchers and managers have documented migratory patterns, flight behavior, key habitats of concern (contiguous forest), and new threats (e.g. lead poisoning). The Working Group has also been working with Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture and other regional groups to coordinate conservation

and research efforts for Golden Eagles in the Appalachian region.

Another successful activity of this Working Group is the "camera trapping" program. About 200 volunteers and organizations have supported 150 trail camera stations across the eastern USA. These cameras capture images of eagles and other predators and scavengers and will allow researchers to evaluate the population status not only of Golden Eagles, but also of other species including Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, eastern spotted skunk, fisher, and bobcat, among others.

The Eastern Golden Eagle Working Group has also developed outreach efforts to share its images and information with the public. It has developed a web site (www.appalachianeagles.org)

that shares images captured at the camera trapping sites and encourages additional volunteers to join the effort. The reach of the program has also extended to future generations of biologists and ornithologists, as teachers use the Working Group's Golden Eagle data and images in the classroom and share lesson plans with other educators through the website.

Award Winners

- Todd Katzner, Northern Research Station, US Forest Service, and West Virginia University, Division of Forestry and Natural Resources
- Charles Maisonneuve, Ministère des Ressources Naturelles, Direction de l'expertise Faune-Forêts-Territoire du Bas-Saint-Laurent



Certificate Recipients

- Keith L. Bildstein, Center for Conservation Learning, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary
- David Brandes, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Lafayette College
- Dan Brauning, Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas, Pennsylvania Game Commission
- David F. Brinker, Natural Heritage Program, Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Robert P. Brooks, Riparia, The Pennsylvania State University

- Tony E. Chubbs,
Canadian Department of National Defence
- Jeff Cooper,
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
- Carol Croy,
George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, US Forest Service
- John Curnutt,
Eastern Region,
US Forest Service
- Andrew Dennhardt,
West Virginia University
- Adam Duerr,
West Virginia University
- Chris Farmer,
Tetra Tech, Inc.
- Guy Fitzgerald,
Faculté de médecine vétérinaire, Université de Montréal
- Rolf Gubler,
Shenandoah National Park, National Park Service
- Sergio Harding,
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
- Mark Hopey,
Southern Appalachian Raptor Research
- Christine Kelley,
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
- Ulgonda Kirkpatrick,
Region 4 Migratory Bird Program,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Craig Koppie,
Chesapeake Bay Field Office,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Dave Kramar,
Virginia Tech University
- Mike Lanzone,
Cellular Tracking Technologies, LLC
- Mark Martell,
Audubon Minnesota
- Scott Mehus,
National Eagle Center
- Trish Miller,
West Virginia University
- Elizabeth K. Mojica,
Center for Conservation Biology,
College of William and Mary
- François Morneau,
Consulting Biologist
- Kieran O'Malley,
West Virginia Division of Natural Resources
- Brady Porter,
Duquesne University
- Brian Smith,
Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture,
American Bird Conservancy,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Scott Somershoe,
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Charlie Todd,
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
- Joe Tomcho,
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
- Junior A. Tremblay,
Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement, de la Faune et des Parcs, Québec
- Bryan D. Watts,
Center for Conservation Biology,
College of William and Mary
- Kendrick Weeks,
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
- Maria Wheeler,
Duquesne University





**RESEARCH MANAGEMENT &
PARTNERSHIP AWARD**
Black Swift Migration and
Wintering Grounds Investigation



For more than 10 years, Kim Potter of the White River National Forest has been working with biologist Jason Beason from the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory and veterinarian Carolyn Gunn from Colorado Parks and Wildlife (as well as other organizations

and volunteers) to piece together baseline ecological data on the Northern Black Swift, a rare subspecies found in the mountains of Colorado.

Unlike many other Neotropical migratory birds, information has been lacking

on the migration paths and wintering locations of the Northern Black Swift. Only a few records exist outside the breeding season—and none from the wintering grounds. One reason for the challenges in studying this species is that field identification outside of North America has been difficult: Black Swift is very similar in appearance to other swift species in Central and South America, and swifts fly extremely rapidly and at a high altitude.

Kim, Jason, Carolyn, and their partners have worked diligently to find the secret nesting locations of the Black Swift in Colorado, including on cliffs behind waterfalls and in moist caves. These efforts have yielded data on nest site conditions and the species' high fidelity to breeding colonies and individual nest sites. Over the last several

years, these baseline ecological investigations have turned into studies on the migratory paths and winter destinations of the Northern Black Swift.

Wings Across the Americas honors Kim Potter, Jason Beason, Carolyn Gunn and their partners with the Research and Management Partnership award for their work on Black Swift Migration and Wintering Grounds Investigation. Together, they have worked to protect this rare bird species during the summer months and to discover its migration and winter habitats.

To track the birds, Carolyn Gunn created a “bird backpack” and attached a small, lightweight, battery-powered geolocator, newly developed by the British Antarctic Survey. Thin ribbons of Teflon fit around the body of the swifts, with wings

laced through the straps. The weight of the entire geolocator plus the backpack is about 1.5 grams, or 3% of the bird's weight. The geolocator contains a light sensor that records ambient light levels at fixed intervals and allows for calculation of longitude and latitude each day.

After walking in and carrying ladders, nets, and ropes to reach the hidden nest sites inside the Flat Tops Wilderness and in Box Canyon near Rifle and Ouray, Colorado, Kim and her partners captured four adult Black Swifts and fitted them with geolocators in August 2009. Taking advantage of the Black Swifts' nest-site fidelity, the team returned the next summer and successfully recaptured 3 of the 4 original birds. The information from the geolocators was then analyzed by Jason Beason and his

staff at the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory.

All three birds were tracked to a remote rainforest in the state of Amazonas in western Brazil, approximately 4,300 miles from their Colorado nest sites. These three now comprise the first records of this species in that country. Through the geolocators, researchers discovered that the birds migrated quickly, covering on average 244 miles/day over 18-23 days. Deforestation in the state of Amazonas, Brazil, is estimated to increase rapidly in the next several decades, potentially resulting in a 30% loss of forest cover by 2050 and threatening the populations of migratory birds like the Black Swift, as well as endemic, local species. This study creates a new opportunity to develop international conservation planning for the preservation of these

species, having proven that the fate of the Black Swift breeding in Colorado is in fact tied to the fate of Amazonian rainforest.

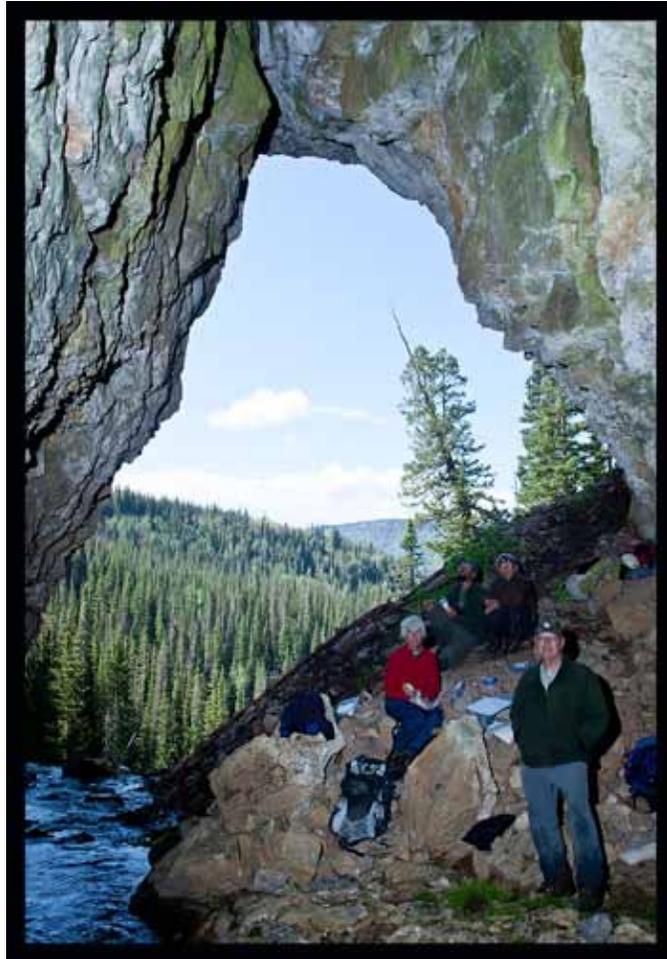
Award Winners

- Kim Potter,
White River National Forest, US Forest Service
- Jason Beason,
Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
- Carolyn Gunn,
Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Certificate Recipients

- Robert A. Sparks,
Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
- James W. Fox,
Migrate Technology Ltd.
- Todd Patrick,
Todd Patrick Photography





- Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
- Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society
- Richard G. Levad Memorial Fund and the Levad Family
- Colorado Field Ornithologists
- Black Canyon Audubon Society
- Evergreen Audubon Society
- Grand Valley Audubon Society
- Roaring Fork Audubon Society
- Sue E. Hirshman, Citizen Scientist
- Rick Noll, City of Ouray
- Natasha Goedert, Blanco Ranger District, US Forest Service
- Chuck Reichert, formerly of Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Bruce Cousens, Georgia Basin Ecological Assessment and Restoration Society
- Danielle Morrison, Georgia Basin Ecological Assessment and Restoration Society
- Grand River Health Perioperative Services Department
- Hugh and Urling Kingery
- Lily Patrick
- David Elwonger
- Andrea Robinsong
- Bill Schmoker



BAT CONSERVATION AWARD
BatsLIVE!



“BatsLIVE! A Distance Learning Adventure” is a comprehensive education and outreach program that encourages innovative partnerships through a variety of events to reach more than 220,000 people with high-quality, engaging information on bat conservation. Using distance learning methods, the partners presented a series of live webinars and live webcasts, offered through a dynamic web platform (<http://BatsLIVE.pwnet.org>). Because of these successes, it is the winner of the *Wings Across the Americas*’ Bat Conservation Award.

Beginning in 2010, the US Forest Service convened a coalition of federal and state land management agencies, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations to plan, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive bat outreach and education project. The aim was to reach several key audiences such as children, educators and land management professionals, as well as interested members

of the general public. Outreach techniques included innovative distance learning methods and multi-media technology, including live webcasts, websites and live webinars, along with more traditional outreach techniques such as field trips, presentations, publications, and other written materials.

The project emphasized the ecological significance of bats and their dependence on cave and karst ecosystems, educating participants about the vital role that bats play in our environment. Many bats eat large quantities of insect pests. Other species pollinate important plants, allowing them to reproduce. Still others eat fruits, disperse their seeds, and help the plants colonize new habitats.

BatsLIVE! built awareness, understanding, and appreciation of bats and the conservation challenges they face, with a special focus on White Nose Syndrome (WNS), a spread- ing disease that is currently afflicting bats

in the eastern United States. It also helped participants understand the role of citizens, public land management agencies, and non-governmental organizations in protecting and conserving habitat.

The program was delivered during the United Nations Environmental Program’s International Year of the Bat. In addition to education and outreach, the programs also encouraged participants to take action to help bats, by building bat boxes, becoming community bat “champions,” or becoming more actively involved in bat conservation efforts.

The BatsLIVE! partnership reached more than 220,000 people through the BatsLIVE! website and six educational programs. The first live webcast featured Rob Mies, of the Organization for Bat Conservation, and five of his bats—from a tiny vampire bat to a Malayan flying fox. The second webcast was broadcast live from Bat Conservation International’s Bracken Bat Cave in Texas, bringing

BAT CONSERVATION AWARD

the spectacle of the evening emergence of millions of Mexican free-tailed bats to viewers across the country.

The online BatsLIVE! platform is easily accessible from classrooms, libraries, nature centers, museums, and individual homes. Each of the programs is now available as an archive on the website, ensuring that the effectiveness and impact of BatsLIVE! extends beyond the 2012 “live” component. Evaluation was a key component of each program component. The evaluation assessed student learning based on pre- and post-tests. On average, students scored 49% correct in the pre-test and 73% correct in the post-test, validating significant learning as a result of their participation in the program. Quite notably for the agency, there was an increase of 27% in the percentage of students who learned the name of the Forest Service!

Strong partnerships have been the cornerstone to the success of BatsLIVE! At least 50 individuals, representing more than 17 organizations, generously contributed their time, talent, and treasure to this partnership with both in-kind and cash contributions. Though the initial project objectives are now complete, the group is still working together to generate exciting innovations in bat conservation and education.

Award Winners

- Dennis L. Krusac,
Southern Region, US Forest Service
- Cynthia Sandeno,
Northern Region, US Forest Service
- Elise Snider,
Rocky Mountain Research Station,
US Forest Service
- Prince William Network,
Prince William County Schools
- James Eggers,
Bat Conservation International
- Fran Hutchins,
Bat Conservation International
- Rob Mies,
Organization for Bat
Conservation
- Ann Froschauer,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Georgia Jeppesen,
US Fish and Wildlife Service



- Chelsea McKinney,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Randy Robinson,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Eliza Russell,
National Wildlife Federation
- Patti Pride,
National Environmental
Education Foundation
- Carol Zokaites,
Virginia Department of
Conservation and Recreation

*from Watershed, Fish, Wildlife, Air
& Rare Plants, US Forest Service:*

- Anne Zimmerman
- Chris Iverson
- Sandra Frost

Certificate Recipients

- Organization for Bat
Conservation
- Shelly Grow,
Association of Zoos and
Aquariums

- Kimberly Winter,
Watershed, Fish, Wildlife, Air &
Rare Plants,
US Forest Service
- Sue Cummings,
Conservation Education,
US Forest Service
- Dianne Odegard,
Bat Conservation International
- Jim Kennedy,
Bat Conservation International
- Dr. Daniel Doctor,
US Geological Survey
- Nathaniel Hawley,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Brian Pope,
Lubee Bat Conservancy
- Michelle Tamez,
Research and Development,
US Forest Service
- Bradley Phillips,
Black Hills National Forest,
US Forest Service

- Kirk Navo,
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Dan Neubaum,
Colorado Parks and Wildlife

- Lea' Bonewell,
Fort Collins Science Center,
US Geological Survey
- Ted Weller,
Pacific Southwest Research
Station, US Forest Service
- Melody Wood,
San Antonio Zoo
- Dr. Richard Toomey,
National Park Service &
Mammoth Cave International
Center for Science and
Learning
- David Schmid,
Southern Region, US Forest
Service
- Greg Butcher,
International Programs,
US Forest Service
- Doug Holy,
Natural Resources
Conservation Service
- Terrell Erickson,
Natural Resources
Conservation Service
- Kimberly Winter,
Watershed, Fish, Wildlife, Air &
Rare Plants,
US Forest Service



- Sarah Ornstein,
DesignsbySarah
- National Wildlife Federation
- Dr. Jacqueline J. Belwood,
Georgia Highlands College
- Jane Knowlton,
Office of Communication,
US Forest Service

*from Prince William Network,
Prince William County Schools*

- Ben Swecker
- Kristy Liercke
- Richard Shahan
- Joe Long
- Bart Young
- Mollie Rosenburg
- Sam Altman
- Gabrielle Altman
- Tim Tewalt
- Angela Carey
- Deana McAllister
- Melissa Payne
- Anita Biroonak
- Mike Davis
- Mark Derflinger



Grow
Harvest
Eden
Place

Connecting People To Bird Conservation

Connecting People To Bird Conservation

Connecting People To Bird Conservation

**INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITIES IN
CONSERVATION AWARD**
International Migratory Bird Day



Public awareness and concern are crucial components of migratory bird conservation, and IMBD has been one of the most successful vehicles for public education on migratory birds. Participants go on bird walks, sing songs, paint pictures, wear costumes, watch speeches and plays, compete for prizes, eat chicken, sign petitions, pick up trash, remove non-native invasive plants, plant native plants, build ponds, and more. Bird Day fosters enthusiasm for birds, informs people threats, and empowered to become involved in addressing those threats. These reinvigorated participants can make a tremendous contribution to maintaining healthy bird populations.

Agencies, organizations, schools, museums, zoos, and other diverse groups with direct contact with visitors take the lead in hosting IMBD celebrations. These events are often held in areas set aside for wildlife, such as parks, national forests, refuges, and other places where wild birds can be seen firsthand. IMBD celebrations are also a perfect fit for indoor classrooms or urban settings. Teachers, interpreters, tourism boards, and shop owners celebrate IMBD in order to share information with their audiences and create the next generation of bird stewards and conservationists.

In the course of its twenty-plus years of existence, IMBD has inspired celebrants to develop a wide variety of activities to

International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) celebrates and highlights the importance of one of the most spectacular events in the Americas: bird migration. Bird migration is a worldwide phenomenon, but is especially spectacular in North America, where about 10 billion birds fly up to 20,000 miles round-trip each spring and fall. Because migration covers such a vast area, migratory birds face unusual risks and require safe habitats throughout their routes. Bird Day is celebrated in Canada, the United States, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. IMBD was instituted in 1993 by visionaries at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, and it has

grown to be the catalyst for more than 570 separate events per year, reaching tens of thousands of people. The main objective of IMBD is to prompt annual festivals and activities throughout the continent, but year-round awareness and education are the sought-after outcomes. IMBD focuses its attention on the life of a migratory bird – its journey between its summer and winter homes – and in the process has become a strong voice for bird conservation throughout the Western Hemisphere. As a result of its 20 years of success, Wings Across the Americas honors IMBD with the International Conservation Award.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES IN CONSERVATION AWARD



raise appreciation and concern for birds. These activities are most often designed for the general public, especially families; however, they also target local birders and other advocates who can serve as citizen scientists and local decision-makers who are instrumental in site protection. Many events are focused on birds, science, and conservation, but the arts, games, contests, and good food play an important role as well.

An expanding catalog of IMBD-related products, offered each year through Environment for the Americas, provides effective tools for bird education and inspiration throughout the year. From the catalog, celebrants can obtain outreach and educational products that include posters and t-shirts portraying artwork by well-known

wildlife artists, conservation-related activity guides and booklets, music, banners, and more. Downloadable materials, such as event flyers, press kits, and additional teaching activities, are also available.

IMBD officially takes place on the second Saturday in May in the U.S. and Canada and in October in Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean each year. But IMBD reminds groups that "every day is bird day;" therefore, IMBD is celebrated almost year-round.

Award Winners

- Susan Bonfield,
Environment for the Americas
- Russ Greenberg,
Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center
- Carol Lively,
formerly of International Programs,
US Forest Service
- Alicia King,
Migratory Bird Program,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Geoffrey Walsh,
Bureau of Land Management

- Chris Eberly,
Department of Defense Partners in Flight
- Janet Ruth,
US Geological Survey
- Carol Beidleman
- Peter Stangel
- Joni Ellis,
Optics for the Tropics
- Susan Carlson,
EnvironMentors

Certificate Recipients

- Peter Boice,
Department of Defense
- Dwight Fielder,
Bureau of Land Management
- Jerome Ford,
US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Mary Deinlein,
Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center
- Kim Winter,
US Forest Service
- Mike Rizo,
International Programs, US Forest Service

- Rachel Feigley, Gallatin National Forest, US Forest Service
- Cheryl Carrothers, US Forest Service
- Lisa Sorenson, Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds
- Sheylda Diaz, Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds
- Anthony Levesque, Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds
- Samuel Lopez, Museo de Aves
- Ted Cheskey, NatureCanada
- Jennifer Wheeler, Migratory Bird Program, US Fish and Wildlife Service
- David Case, D.J. Case & Associates
- Sara Lara, American Bird Conservancy
- Edwin Juarez, Arizona Game and Fish Department

- Heather Murphy, ¡Team Naturaleza!
- Jeffrey Cantrell, Missouri Department of Conservation
- Stephen Frye, Wild Bird Center, Boulder, Colorado
- Sonja Macys, Yampatika
- Natural Resources Department, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
- Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, US Geological Survey
- ProAves Colombia
- Birds of Vermont Museum
- Blue Jay Point County Park
- Effigy Mounds National Monument
- Great Salt Lake Bird Festival
- Reedy Creek Nature Center
- Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument

- Pine Woods Audubon
- Barr Lake State Park
- Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
- Klamath Bird Observatory

from the US Fish and Wildlife Service:

- Region 1
- Region 2
- Region 3
- Region 4
- Region 5
- Region 6
- Region 7
- Region 8
- Patuxent Research Refuge
- Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge

from the Bureau of Land Management:

- Yaquina Head National Monument
- Spokane District
- Buffalo Field Office
- Sheri Whitfield
- San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area
- Palm Springs Field Office
- Darren Williams, Pariette Wetlands



- Roseburg District Office
- Campbell Creek Science Center
- Lower Gorge Visitor Center

from the US Forest Service:

- Salmon/Scott River Ranger District
- Prescott National Forest
- Coronado National Forest
- Chugach National Forest
- Gallatin National Forest
- Helena National Forest
- Pisgah National Forest
- Cibola National Forest
- Umpqua National Forest
- Leadville Ranger District
- Medicine Bow – Routt National Forests
- Klamath National Forest
- Orleans Ranger District
- Ukonom Ranger District



wings
OF
AMERICAS

WINGS ACROSS THE AMERICAS

a us forest service program
to conserve birds, bats,
butterflies and dragonflies

un programa para
conservar aves, murciélagos,
mariposas y libélulas

un programme pour
la conservation des
oiseaux, des chauves-souris,
des papillons et des libellule

All the photos in this booklet were contributed by the award winning projects as well as partners, including Bat Conservation International, US Fish and Wildlife Service and Forest Service employees. Credit for the hummingbird and dragonfly photos go to Carlos Soberanes-Gonzalez and Dennis Paulson, respectively.

To view photos from the 2013 awards ceremony, please visit www.fs.fed.us/global/wings/.



WATA

www.fs.fed.us/global/wings