WINGS ACROSS THE AMERICAS

wings across the americas

2015 CONSERVATION AWARDS

CELEBRATING 12 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 2011 and spent nearly $55 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

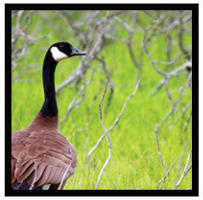
Bats are vital to the health of ecosystems and human economies world wide. As primary predators of night-flying insects, bats consume enormous quantities of agricultural pests and reduce the need for chemical pesticides. Some bats are critical pollinators and seed dispersers for plants, many with great 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 habitats. 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 conserve 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 their 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 over wintering 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.

BAT CONSERVATION AWARD
Project EduBat – Education Taking Flight!

Project EduBat – *Education Taking Flight!*

White-nose syndrome has killed more than 6 million bats in 6 years. The disease continues to spread across bats as they hibernate in caves and mines. This devastation has had far-reaching effects on agricultural production, forest health, cave ecosystems, and much more. Sadly, many people do not fully understand what the loss of these fascinating animals really means. There is still a pervasive fear of bats—one that stems from a lack of knowledge about their environment—and a scarcity of easily accessible, high quality information in the public domain. In order to build support for the protection of bats, future stewards must be fostered.

One way to advance bat conservation and management is through robust environmental education programs. Recognizing the need to fill critical information gaps, Project EduBat convened the unique skills and expertise of the US Forest Service, the US Geological Survey, Project Underground, National Cave and Karst Research Institute, Bat Conservation International, and Prince William County Schools. Together, these organizations shared resources and worked to create citizen awareness and encourage public engagement. Project EduBat also worked closely with the White-Nose Syndrome Communication/Outreach Working Group to create resources that could be shared with people of all ages.

Project EduBat's has managed to leverage limited resources to successfully accomplish several activities over the past year. Together, partners have developed a wealth of new curriculum materials and resources for both formal and non-formal educators, including the only existing activity about white-nose syndrome. All materials are currently available online and through educational bat trunks, which contain information and outreach on bats and which will be distributed to every region of the US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service and other organizations. Together with the US Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation and Training Center, a 1.5 hour webcast (*http://bit.ly/1FSQm6i*) about Project EduBat has been shown and archived. Several train-the-trainer workshops have also been implemented and more are planned for the future. Project EduBat has also worked with Bat Conservation International to revise and publish posters on eastern and western bats.

Lastly, many of the organizations that are part of Project EduBat helped complete the Battle for Bats-Surviving White Nose Syndrome video (English Version *https://*

vimeo.com/76705033 and Spanish Version *https://vimeo.com/96528882*), which has been viewed online 126,000 times in over 150 countries. It has been embedded in 155 websites and distributed to teachers across the United States.

For more information:
- *http://batslive.pwnet.org/edubat*
- *https://www.facebook.com/ProjectEduBat*

Award Winners

- Cindy Sandeno,
  Region 9, US Forest Service

- Carol Zokaites,
  Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

- Catherine Johnson,
  Monongahela National Forest, US Forest Service

- Kimberly Winter,
  Watershed, Fish, Wildlife, Air and Rare Plants, US Forest Service

- Brittnee Shows,
  Region 9, US Forest Service

- Sandy Frost,
  Watershed, Fish, Wildlife, Air and Rare Plants, US Forest Service

- Gail Moede Rogall,
  National Wildlife Health Center, US Geological Survey

- Randy Robinson,
  National Conservation and Training Center, US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Bat Conservation International

- Dianne Odegard,
  Bat Conservation International

- Dan Taylor,
  Bat Conservation International

- Andrea Futrell,
  Virginia Department of Conservation and Resources and Project Underground

Certificate Recipients

- Rob Mies,
  Organization for Bat Conservation

- Jane Knowlton,
  Office of Communication, US Forest Service

- Kristin Stockton,
  Appalachian Forest Heritage Area, Americorp

- Dianne Joop,
  National Cave and Karst Research Institute

- Mike Warner,
  Speleobooks

- Emily Davis,
  Speleobooks

- Ann Froschauer,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Prince William Network

- Kristy Liercke,
  Prince William Network

- Richard Shahan,
  Prince William Network

- Leslie Sturgis,
  Save Lucy the Bat Campaign

- Brian Pope,
  Lubee Bat Conservancy

- David McGowan,
  Ravenswood Media

- Catherine Hibbard,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Tracy McCleaf,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Jennifer Redell,
  Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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Pages 10-12: Photos courtesy of Project EduBat and its partners.

BIRD CONSERVATION AWARD
Puerto Rican Parrot Recovery Milestone

Puerto Rican Parrot Recovery Milestone

Due to the loss of its preferred tropical coastal habitat and the reduction of its population from human uses, the Puerto Rican Parrot (*Amazona vittata*) has been protected by the Endangered Species Act since 1967. Once estimated at a million individuals (when Christopher Columbus first arrived), this iconic and socially complex bird of the Caribbean has been in need of protection. By the 1970's, there were only 13 individuals left and were only found on the US Forest Service's El Yunque National Forest in the eastern part of the island. Although the tropical rainforest served only as a refuge, field biologists provided substantial assistance to help the parrot meet much of its ecological needs. The interagency Recovery Plan for the parrot has been an example of a successful international conservation partnership. On August 26, 2014, it was confirmed and documented that in the established second wild flock in western Puerto Rico, there were two active nests in completely natural cavities. Unassisted by field biologists, one of those nests had two nestlings that were born, raised and then accepted into the wild flock. This is an important milestone towards achieving a self-sustaining population, ascending out of threat of extinction in the wild.

This success can be attributed to a partnership between the El Yunque National Forest, the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program, Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources and private partners. Through this collaboration, tropical rainforest habitat conservation was conducted on 3,200 acres on the El Yunque and 10,000 acres on the Rio Abajo State Forest, the location of the second wild flock in western Puerto Rico. In addition, the recovery effort's experience with high-risk techniques of fostering and releasing captive reared parrots into the wild led to important information on the bird's ecological and population dynamics. This has been presented to and shared with other Central and South America parrot recovery efforts. The partnership also laid the foundation for future parrot population growth and for managing human use conflicts. The interagency recovery effort members are now launching a third wild flock in western Puerto Rico and hopefully will have local migration provided through natural corridors crossing private land.

Award Winners

- Pedro Rios,
  El Yunque National Forest,
  US Forest Service

- Felipe Cano,
  El Yunque National Forest,
  US Forest Service

- Marisel Lopez,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Pablo Torres,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Jafet Velez,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Dr. Thomas White,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Dr. Miguel A. Garcia,
  Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources

- Gustavo E. Olivieri Cintron,
  Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources

- Ricardo Valentin,
  Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources

- Dr. James D. Gilardi,
  The World Parrot Trust

Certificate Recipients

- Anastacio Gomez,
  El Yunque National Forest,
  US Forest Service

- Benjamin Fuentes,
  El Yunque National Forest,
  US Forest Service

- Wilfredo Abreu,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Miguel Toledo,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Limary Ramirez,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Iris Rodriguez,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Gabriel Benitez,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Jesus Rios,
  Puerto Rican Parrot
  recovery program, US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Arelis Johnson,
  Puerto Rican Parrot recovery program,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Alberto Alvarez,
  Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources

- Brian Ramos,
  Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources

- Jong Piel Banchs,
  Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources
- Magaly Masanet,
  Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources
- Eddie Velez,
  Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources
- Tanya Martinez,
  Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources
- Dr. Antonio Rivera, DVM

The Puerto Rican Parrot is the icon of the Puerto Rican people. The bird's resilience and the success of the recovery effort inspire and strengthen the robust partnershiphis is a sample of some of the local, national and international news coverage from the press event on August 26th at the Rio Abajo aviary announcing the success of the endangered parrots outside of the El Yunque National Forest.

TV/video (Spanish)

- *http://www.telemundopr.com/telenoticias/ultimas-noticias/Reportan-primer-nacimiento-de-cotorras-puertorriquenas-en-nido-natural-fuera-de-El-Yunque-272769021.html*

Print - English:

- *http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the_americas/official-puerto-rico-parrot-births-mark-comeback/2014/08/26/bd9a6242-2d6d-11e4-be9e-60cc44c01e7f_story.html*
- *http://www.foxnews.com/world/2014/08/26/officials-birth-in-wild-2-puerto-rico-parrots-marks-comeback/*
- *http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-2735144/Official-Puerto-Rico-parrot-births-mark-comeback.html*
- *http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2014/aug/26/official-puerto-rico-parrot-births-mark-comeback/*
- *http://www.caribbeanbusinesspr.com/news/milestone-in-pr-parrot-recovery-100071.html*
- *http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/official-puerto-rico-parrot-births-mark-comeback-25136929*

RESEARCH MANAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIP AWARD

The North American Bat Monitoring Program

THE NORTH AMERICAN BAT MONITORING PROGRAM

North American bats have been facing unprecedented threats from continuing and emerging stressors, including habitat loss and fragmentation, white-nose syndrome, wind energy development, and climate change. Given these threats and lack of baseline data on bat distributions across North America, an effective and efficient monitoring program—The North American Bat Monitoring Program (NABat)–has been developed to address the lack of large-scale, long-term monitoring data for North American bats. It will document the impact of stressors on bat populations, identify priority species for conservation actions, and measure the effectiveness of agencies' conservation and management actions to mitigate stressors. Monitoring data is critical for determining species' risks of extinction, providing an early warning sign for species that may be experiencing declines from unknown causes, and managing for healthy bat populations.

NABat is a multi-agency, multi-national effort, developed by a Core Team of bat biologists and statisticians from the US Forest Service, U.S. Geological Survey, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Department of Defense, Canadian Wildlife Service, Wildlife Conservation Society Canada, and Bat Conservation International, with assistance and input from many additional scientists and natural resource managers from the US, Canada, Mexico, and the United Kingdom. Because many species of bats and threats to their survival are wide-ranging, and because bats migrate over hundreds of kilometers annually, often across international borders, NABat's scope is extensive. It will attempt to track changes in the distribution and abundance of all 47 North American bat species that are shared among the US, Canada, and Mexico.

During 2012 and 2013, four workshops were held to gather input on sampling methods, sampling design, analytical methods, database management, organizational matters, and logistics. The Core Team continued to flesh out ideas on sampling designs, analytical approaches, database design, and survey protocols throughout 2014. The result of this process was a document that describes the NABat program. It includes the background and need, the sampling design, response variables, survey methods, analytical approaches, database management, and organizational structure, which will be published as a Forest Service General Technical Report.

Several states and provinces have begun using the NABat design and protocols to begin monitoring bats. In 2014, NABat pilot programs were implemented in Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Missouri, New Mexico, Rhode Island, and South Carolina in the U.S. and in Alberta, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island in Canada. In 2015, programs will begin in or expand to many other states and provinces. Involving citizen scientists will be important for gathering needed data and inform the public about the importance of bats and the threats that they are facing as well as engage them in bat conservation and management.

Award Winners

- Susan Loeb,
  Southern Research Station,
  US Forest Service

- Thomas Rodhouse,
  National Park Service

- Laura Ellison,
  US Geological Survey

- Cori Lausen,
  Wildlife Conservation Society, Canada

- Jonathan Reichard,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Kathryn Irvine,
  US Geological Survey

- Thomas Ingersoll,
  US Department of Defense

- Jeremy Coleman,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Wayne Thogmartin,
  US Geological Survey

- John Sauer,
  US Geological Survey

- Charles Francis,
  Canadian Wildlife
  Service

- Mylea Bayless,
  Bat Conservation
  International

- Thomas Stanley,
  US Geological Survey

- Douglas Johnson,
  US Geological Survey

- Patrick Field,
  Consensus Building
  Institute

Certificate Recipients

- Sybill Amelon,
  Northern Research Station, US Forest
  Service

- Kate Barlow,
  Bat Conservation Trust

- Eric Britzke,
  Environmental Laboratory,
  US Army Engineer Research and
  Development Center

- Brian Cade,
  US Geological Survey

- Kevin Castle,
  National Park Service

- Matthew Clement,
  US Geological Survey

- Stephen Corn,
  US Geological Survey

- Paul Cryan,
  US Geological Survey

- Peter Dratch,
  US Geological Survey
- Winifred Frick,
  University of California, Santa Cruz
- Cris Hein,
  Bat Conservation International
- Kate Jones,
  University College London
- William Kendall,
  US Geological Survey
- A. Marm Kilpatrick,
  University of California, Santa Cruz
- Subash Lele,
  University of Alberta
- Kirk Navo,
  Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Anthony Olsen,
  Environmental Protection Agency
- Patricia Ormsbee,
  Region 6, US Forest Service
- Sarah Oyler-McCance,
  US Geological Survey
- Luis Viquez Rodriguez,
  Universidad de Costa Rica
- Amy Russell,
  Grand Valley State University
- Robin Russell,
  US Geological Survey
- Patrick Sullivan,
  Cornell University
- Jennifer Szymanski,
  US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Maarten Vonhof,
  Western Michigan University
- Ted Weller,
  Pacific Southwest Research Station, US Forest Service
- Craig Willis,
  University of Winnipeg
- Tushar Kansal,
  Consensus Building Institute
- Rita Dixon,
  Idaho Department of Fish and Game

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Page18 (top): Photo courtesy Ryan von Linden/New York Department of Environmental Conservation; (bottom) Photo courtesy Ann Froschauer/US Fish and Wildlife Service

Page 19: Photo courtesy Craig Stihler, WVDNR

Page 20: Photo courtesy Ann Froschauer/US Fish and Wildlife Service

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AWARD

The Latin American Reserve Manager Training Program (RESERVA)

THE LATIN AMERICAN RESERVE MANAGER TRAINING PROGRAM (RESERVA)

With support from the US Forest Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Latin American Reserve Manager Training Program (RESERVA) started in 1989 as the first internationally focused, hands-on, protected area training program in Latin America. The program's principal function is to provide fundamental, practical skills to effectively manage wildlands. The course is open to Spanish speaking employees of forests, refuges, national parks and other protected areas from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. RESERVA graduates manage habitats throughout Latin America that are vital for migratory species that breed on U.S. national forests and grasslands and winter south of our borders. The US Forest Service International Programs works in partnership with many of those graduates to promote migratory species conservation.

The training course is conducted in Spanish and lasts for two months. It includes 18 instructors with proven experience on each of the instruction themes of the course, including: Applied GIS for Natural Resources Management, Conservation Biology, Environmental Education, and others.

Other activities in the program include analyzing and discussing strategies and instruments for conservation in the region, evaluating work experiences and public use programs in natural protected areas, and hosting seminars on climate change, economics and conflict management.

Through the program, participants learn to identify watersheds and other areas that influence a protected area, learn map reading and aerial photo interpretation, learn GIS design and application, design a management plan for a protected area, learn techniques of habitat analysis and public use planning, understand administration, budgeting, writing, and fundraising techniques, master working effectively with the public, including communities living around protected areas, and work as an interdisciplinary team.

COOLPIX

This type of course is unique to Latin America, and the potential benefits to preserve biological diversity resources in Latin America are enormous. To date, 40 RESERVA sessions have been completed. The 41st session (spring session) will be carried out from April to June, 2015, and the 42nd (fall session) will be conducted from September to November, 2015. Thus far RESERVA has graduated 458 professionals, representing 23 Latin American & the Caribbean countries, and one from the West African country of Guinea Bissau.

Award Winners

- Ducks Unlimited de México, A.C.
- Biol. Eduardo Carrera González,
  Ducks Unlimited de México, A.C.
- David Alonzo,
  Ducks Unlimited de México, A.C. (DUMAC)
- Victor Bedoy, State University of Guadalajara
- Pedro Cesar Cantú,
  State University of Nuevo Leon

HABITAT MANAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Central and Southern Great Plains Migratory Bird Habitat Conservation

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS MIGRATORY BIRD HABITAT CONSERVATION

The Rainwater Basin and Playa Lakes Joint Ventures work with partners to manage 200 million acres of native grassland, wetland, river and stream habitats for many important bird species across Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. The region is home to over 400 avian species, like the lesser prairie-chicken. In addition, more than 560,000 sandhill cranes, the endangered whooping crane, and 8 million waterfowl also migrate through the area.

For more than two decades, both Joint Ventures have been dedicated to restoring and maintaining these habitats. The activities have supported and met the goals identified in the four established national bird plans (North American Waterfowl Management Plan, North American Landbird Conservation Plan, U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, and North American Waterbird Conservation Plan). These longstanding partnerships rely on sound science to guide their conservation planning. They constantly work together to foster and maintain strong relationships among nearly 70 conservation organizations and government agencies, like the US Forest Service, to achieve conservation delivery across the Southern High Plains. Recognizing that about 97% of this landscape is privately owned, the Joint Ventures collaborate with landowners to find “win-win” solutions, where conservation actions become an as-

set within local farm and ranch operations. Through this public-private engagement, the Joint Ventures been able to advance their mission of habitat restoration and species conservation.

Over the past year, the Joint Ventures have completed several activities, including leveraging funding, focusing on regional planning and landscape design, developing outreach and promotional materials, and working together on conservation efforts with landowners. These Joint Ventures also often provide important planning and conservation tools and data to federal, state and NGO partners.

The US Forest Service has worked with both Joint Ventures for several years. Together, they have collaborated on numerous activities, including playa restorations, spatial and data analyses for the greater prairie-chicken, plains sharp-tailed grouse, black-tailed prairie dogs and the federally endangered blowout penstemon. The US Forest Service and the conservation community have benefitted from outstanding partnerships with the Joint Ventures, which drive conservation, improving habitat for birds.

Award Winners

- Andy Bishop, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
- Mike Carter, Playa Lakes Joint Venture
- Melanie Woolever, Region 2, US Forest Service
- Jeff Abegglen, Nebraska National Forests & Grasslands Wildlife Program

Certificate Recipients

- Roger Grosse, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
- Ele Nugent, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
- Tricia Dudley, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
- Jamie Stroup, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
- Niki Messmer, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
- Anne Bartuszevige, Playa Lakes Joint Venture
- Barth Crouch, Playa Lakes Joint Venture
- Alex Daniels, Playa Lakes Joint Venture
- Miruh Hamend, Playa Lakes Joint Venture
- Andrew Mackintosh, Playa Lakes Joint Venture
- Bob McCready, Playa Lakes Joint Venture
- Christopher Rustay, Playa Lakes Joint Venture
- Kyle Taylor, Playa Lakes Joint Venture

URBAN COMMUNITIES IN CONSERVATION AWARD

The Greater Atlanta Pollinator Partnership: A Model for Urban Pollinator Conservation

THE GREATER ATLANTA POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP: A MODEL FOR URBAN POLLINATOR CONSERVATION

Pollinators—butterflies, bees, hummingbirds and others—are critical to maintaining global food supply. Every third bite of food consumed is a product of pollinator-assisted plant reproduction. Sadly, though, pollinators are in decline worldwide. Habitat loss, pesticide use, and development are among the many threats to these species.

In the City of Atlanta—part of the Monarch butterfly migration route—a housing boom led to a significant loss of green space. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the population in the metropolitan area grew by nearly 2.4 million people, resulting in increasing development. An average of 54 acres of tree canopy and green space were lost daily—a total loss of 400,000 acres over 20 years. This had significant impact on pollinators across the region, including Monarch butterflies.

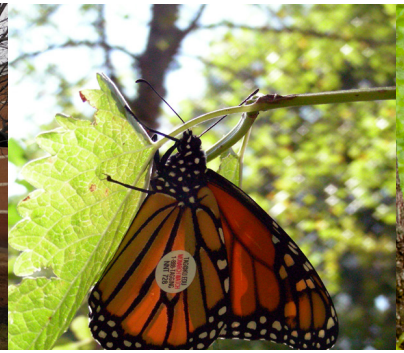
In response to these landscape changes, the Greater Atlanta Pollinator Partnership (GAPP) was created. It is a coalition of private and public partners that works with the communities in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area. The goal of the GAPP is to create and restore viable pollinator habitats by connecting private and publicly-owned lands through habitat corridors. The GAPP intends to create habitat at an ecologically-significant scale by focusing on a 25-mile radius around downtown Atlanta, Georgia. This represents nearly 1.2 million acres of potential pollinator habitat and involvement of hundreds of thousands of Georgia's citizens. This large scale project will eventually involve tens of thousands of participants across the region, and it could be a global model for community engagement and urban pollinator conservation.

For more information on GAPP, please visit the website (*http://gapp.org/*) that the US Forest Service and the Atlanta Botanical Garden developed.

Award Winners

- Dennis L. Krusac,
  Southern Region, US Forest Service
- David Schmid,
  Southern Region, US Forest Service
- Dr. Jacqueline J. Belwood,
  Georgia Highlands College
- Dr. Jennifer M. Cruse-Sanders,
  Atlanta Botanical Garden
- Na'Taki Osborne – Jelks,
  National Wildlife Federation
- Dr. Timothy L. Hawthorne,
  Georgia State University

Child Care
Guacam
MILD



- Jack Reed,
  Georgia State University
- Cory Berish,
  US Environmental Protection Agency
- Captain Planet Foundation
- Cincinnati Nature Center
- Ford Elementary School
- Atlanta Botanical Garden
- Greening Youth Foundation

Certificate Recipients

- Dr. Jennifer Leavey,
  Urban Honeybee Project,
  Georgia Institute of Technology
- Beech Hollow Wildflower Farm
- Lost Mountain Nursery
- Blue Heron Nature Preserve
- Chattahoochee Nature Center
- Cochran Mill Nature Center
- Davidson – Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve
- Monarch Across Georgia
- South Fork Conservancy
- West Atlanta Watershed Alliance
- Keeping it Wild
- Farmer D Organics
- Atlanta Public Schools
- Cobb County School District
- Fulton County Department of Water Resources
- Providence Missionary Baptist Church
- Trees Atlanta
- Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture
- Georgia Native Plant Society
- Marietta Gardeners Club
- Smith – Gilbert Gardens
- Pollinator Partnership
- Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation
- Sandra Frost, Watershed, Fish, Wildlife, Air & Rare Plants, US Forest Service

FOREST SERVICE
U S
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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