



WINGS ACROSS THE AMERICAS
Conservation Awards

2010



WINGS ACROSS THE AMERICAS

2010 Conservation Awards Ceremony

Hilton Milwaukee City Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
March 25, 2010 | 6:00 – 7:30pm
75th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference

INTRODUCTION

Carol Lively

Wings Across the Americas Program Coordinator
US Forest Service

REMARKS

Winged Messengers for Landscape-Scale Conservation

Tom Tidwell

Chief
US Forest Service

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Logan Lee

Deputy Regional Forester, Region 9
US Forest Service

Butterfly Conservation Award
Bat Conservation Award
Habitat Management and Partnership Award
International Cooperation Award

COCKTAIL RECEPTION



BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION AWARD

AWARD RECIPIENTS

US Forest Service

- Heather Keough, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Thomas Walter, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Alger Cline, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Joseph Kelly, retired Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Michaela Knorr, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- District Employees on the Baldwin/White Cloud District, Huron-Manistee National Forests

Partners

- Ferris State University
- Grand Valley State University
- Michigan Entomological Society
- Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc.

Please note: A list of certificate recipients for each award can be found on page 6.

Karner Blue Butterfly Program

Looking more like a silvery blue flower than an insect, the Karner Blue butterfly lives in the northern oak and pine savannas that stretch from Minnesota to New Hampshire. A federally-endangered species, the butterfly has declined dramatically over the past century as its natural habitats have been replaced by mature forests.

Since 1992, efforts have been made to recover the Karner Blue butterfly. This work has intensified in Michigan, home to some of the largest populations of the insect. Thanks to a forest plan revision conducted in 2006, the Huron-Manistee National Forest is playing a lead role. Activities include reducing tree and shrub density, protecting savanna remnants and promoting the growth of native grasses and nectar plant species, especially wild lupine—the sole food source for the Karner blue butterfly caterpillar. Since 2006, there has been more than a five-fold increase in restoration work, resulting in invaluable contributions to the conservation of the Karner Blue Butterfly.

Concurrent with the increase in restoration activities, the Forests have increased monitoring efforts. The goal is to compare the current status of the Karner Blue with recovery goals, and to evaluate the effectiveness of different management strategies. Between 2006 and 2009, the number of acres the Forests monitored increased more than three-fold. This dramatic increase in effort was possible due to volunteer participation. In 2007, 2008, and 2009, volunteers from private and public partner organizations provided a total of 533 volunteer days. This program illustrates how a Forest Plan, dedicated volunteers, land managers and scientists working together can make a real difference for this fragile and beautiful butterfly.



Bat Blitzes: A Partnership Program Between the US Forest Service Southern Region and the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network



In 2001, biologists and members of the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network came up with a new idea—the bat blitz. The goal is to provide much needed baseline data on local bat populations. The bat blitz was envisioned as an intensive, short duration survey of local bat communities using experienced volunteers. The good news is the idea came into fruition: eight bat blitzes have been completed to date, with another planned for 2010.

The blitzes take place on three consecutive nights, with experienced bat biologists leading teams to predetermined net sites to survey bats from dusk until 2:00 am the next morning. The teams capture bats using mist nets and harp traps, collect relevant data on them and release them at the capture site. Endangered and rare bat species are often banded to aid in population monitoring efforts. The blitzes have revealed information about maternity roosts—important because so little is known regarding bat maternity habitat. Fur and tissue samples have aided partners in research regarding migration and genetic structuring of populations.

The Southeastern Bat Diversity Network, as the key partner in all blitzes, has led efforts on a national park, two national wildlife refuges, two state wildlife management areas, a state park, and a state historic area. Blitzes have also occurred on seven national forests involving fourteen ranger districts. Habitats surveyed are diverse, ranging from bottomland hardwood forests to high elevation spruce fir forests. Hundreds of volunteers, students, partners and organizations have teamed up to make these efforts successful. More than 16,000 hours with a value of over \$350,000 have been donated to date.

The blitzes are valuable because data from them improves planning and management activities, provides educational opportunities for local communities, provides training to graduate students working on bats, and facilitates positive media exposure for bats and their conservation. This partnership has contributed to the knowledge of local bat populations and the conservation needs of bats in the southeastern US. The blitzes have led to several new records, filling in gaps in species distributions.

The data collected over the past eight years has taken on new importance because of white nose syndrome, a disease that has killed more than one million bats in New England and mid-Atlantic states. Unfortunately, this scourge is moving southward. All partners involved hope that blitz data may be useful in assessing impacts and, potentially, in mitigating the impacts of the serious disease.

AWARD RECIPIENTS

US Forest Service

- David Saugey, Ouachita National Forest
- Susan Loeb, Southern Research Station
- Dennis Krusac, Southern Region

Partners

- Jacqueline J. Belwood, Georgia Bat Working Group and National Wildlife Federation
- Mary Kay Clark, Southeastern Bat Diversity Network
- Matina Kalcounis-Ruppell, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
- Tim Carter, Ball State University
- Blake Sasse, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
- Darren Miller, Weyerhaeuser Company
- Joy O'Keefe, Clemson University

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HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP AWARD

AWARD RECIPIENTS

US Forest Service

- Thomas Wagner, White Mountain National Forest, US Forest Service
- Susan Mathison, White Mountain National Forest, US Forest Service
- Kenneth Crevier, Hoosier National Forest, US Forest Service
- Leighlan Prout, White Mountain National Forest, US Forest Service

Partners

- George Bald, New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development
- William Carpenter, New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development
- Carol Foss, Audubon Society of New Hampshire
- John Kanter, New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game
- Pamela Hunt, Audubon Society of New Hampshire
- Laura Deming, Audubon Society of New Hampshire

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Mittersill Land Exchange: Partnership Protects Bicknell's Thrush Habitat and Welcomes Skiers Back



Blue green forests comprised of spruce and fir trees cover the mountain peaks across northern New England. These glorious forests form the breeding habitat of the Bicknell's thrush—the only bird endemic to the northeastern U.S. and adjacent Canada—and considered one of the songbirds most at risk of extinction. In fact, population declines throughout the bird's range

and concern over winter habitat have made Bicknell's thrush the highest priority species for conservation planning in the northeast.

In May, 2007, the State of New Hampshire proposed a land exchange to obtain 100 acres of White Mountain National Forest lands adjacent to the state-owned Cannon Mountain Ski Area. Acquiring these acres would enable the State to incorporate the network of remnant ski trails at the dormant Mittersill Ski Area next door. However, the White Mountain National Forest supports a significant part of the U.S. population of Bicknell's thrush and much of the proposed acreage to be exchanged contained high quality habitat. Working towards a goal of balancing habitat protection and winter recreation opportunities, the Forest and State enlisted the help of their long-time partner, the Audubon Society of New Hampshire. Together they developed a Memorandum of Understanding that allows winter recreation opportunities on existing ski trails but prevents any new expansion into the surrounding habitat. The agreement also includes monitoring requirements, provisions for summer operations to reduce disturbance, and commits all parties to a long-term partnership to ensure habitat protection.

The exchange and vital partnership were celebrated in the Governor's chambers in March 2009. Several days later approximately 500 skiers attended the official re-opening of Mittersill. The Memorandum of Agreement provides the framework for this partnership and documents the critical federal/state/non-government/public cooperation for management of the people's lands and resources. When the abundant snow came to New Hampshire in 2010, skiers enjoyed the re-opened trails – and the Bicknell's thrush at Mittersill will enjoy habitat protection long into the future.

Bird Conservation Partnerships for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Sustainability in Mesoamerica

Starting in 1996, the US Forest Service-International Institute of Tropical Forestry started training Nicaraguan university students and aspiring biologists, local NGO staff, and local community members in bird conservation methods and sustainable community-based tourism. The emphasis has been on migratory birds and tropical resident species, and the surrounding forest ecosystem. Programs have been designed to conserve cultural and biodiversity resources, to enhance local community and economic development, and to provide a high quality visitor experience.



The major work has taken place in across many part of Nicaragua, but smaller projects have taken place across the Caribbean and Mesoamerica. Many habitat types have been addressed including: marine, coastal and interior wetlands; dry, moist, wet, and cloud forest; elfin woodland; and coffee plantations in Nicaragua's North and Central highlands, the endangered dry forests, costal estuaries, and marine habitats in the southern Paso del Istmo Green Corridor.

Though developing partnerships, leveraging resources and effective publicizing of the work, the work has been productive. With a focus on building in the human resources necessary to sustain the work, training has been conducted for hundreds of people in many areas of conservation, including wildlife techniques, tourism development and small and medium size enterprise development. The project has also generated some spectacular news for the birding world including:

- The rediscovery of the Golden-cheeked Warbler (*Dendroica chrysoparia*) in Nicaragua more than a century after it was first reported in 1891;
- The first documented records of Red-breasted Blackbird (*Sturnella militaris*) and Buff-breasted Flycatcher (*Dendroica fulvifrons*), and the rediscovery of the Common Raven in Nicaragua, and second sighting of Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) in continental Mesoamerica;
- The discovery and documentation of Thryothorus wrens; and
- The substantial improvement of survival probabilities for several species of Nearctic-Neotropical migrant birds, some of which fly from Alaska to Argentina.

At the core of this work is a strong belief in the ability and desire of the local communities to conserve the beautiful birds that decorate the landscapes of Mesoamerica.

AWARD RECIPIENTS

US Forest Service

- Gerald Bauer, International Institute of Tropical Forestry
- Wayne Arendt, International Institute of Tropical Forestry
- Frank R. Thompson, Northern Research Station
- Mariamar Gutiérrez, International Institute of Tropical Forestry
- Marvin A. Tórréz, International Institute of Tropical Forestry

Partners

- Dr. Juan Carlos Martínez-Sánchez, University of Washington
- José Manul Zolotoff, Fundación Cocibolca
- Salvadora Morales, Fauna and Flora International
- Osmar Arróliga, Fundación Amigos del Río San Juan
- Juana Isabel Matamoros, Rainforest Alliance
- Sara Otterstrom, Paso Pacífico
- Liza González, Paso Pacífico
- El Jaguar Private Wildlife Reserve, Organic Coffee Farm and Bird Sanctuary
- Montibelli Private Wildlife Reserve
- Mark Willuhn, Mesoamerican Ecotourism Alliance

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CERTIFICATE RECIPIENTS

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION AWARD: Karner Blue Butterfly Program



US Forest Service

- Leslie Russell, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Diane Federoff, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Kristopher Kovar, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Steven Hatting, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Robert Little, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Felipe Venegas, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Bruce Rose, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Tania Hanline, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Matthew Sands, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Christopher Frederick, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Patricia McGhan, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Jim Purrenhage, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Mark Shermak, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- John Huschke, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Kory Borgman, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Kevin Sherretz, Huron-Manistee National Forests
- Desmond Lyon, Huron-Manistee National Forests

Partners

- Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment
- Michigan State University
- Kent/Michigan State University Extension, Master Gardeners
- Kent/Michigan State University Extension, Master Naturalists
- Big Rapids High School
- The Nature Conservancy - Michigan
- Michigan's Conservation Districts
- Land Conservancy of West Michigan
- Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
- Central Michigan University
- Wayne State University

- Michigan Conservation Foundation
- Pine River Audubon Society
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Mason County Central High School
- Pine River High School
- Reed City High School
- Williamson High School
- Holton High School
- Morley Stanwood Middle School
- CASMAN Academy
- Fremont Christian School

BAT CONSERVATION AWARD: A Partnership Program Between the US Forest Service Southern Region and the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network



US Forest Service

- Frances Rothwien, Ouachita National Forest
- Shawn Cochran, Ouachita National Forest
- Daniel Miller, Ouachita National Forest
- Clay Vanhorn, Ouachita National Forest
- Mary Lynn Mentz, Ouachita National Forest
- Joe Neal, retired, Ouachita National Forest
- Gary Peters, Francis Marion Sumter National Forest
- MaeLee Hafer, Francis Marion Sumter National Forest
- Laura Lewis, Cherokee National Forest
- Scotty Myers, Cherokee National Forest
- Joe McGuinness, Cherokee National Forest
- Marcia Carter, Cherokee National Forest
- Brittany Bird, Cherokee National Forest
- Thomas Scott, Cherokee National Forest
- Mary Dodson, Cherokee National Forest
- Shelly Parrish, Cherokee National Forest
- Gary Watson, Cherokee National Forest
- Anita Bailey, Cherokee National Forest
- Mark Robison, Cherokee National Forest
- Tom Counts, Bankhead National Forest
- Allison Cochran, Bankhead National Forest
- Dagmar Thurmond, National Forests in Alabama
- April Crawley, National Forests and Grasslands in Texas
- Megan York-Harris, Mark Twain National Forest

- Angie Trombley, Mark Twain National Forest
- Ruth Stokes, Chattahoochee National Forest
- Cindy Wentworth, retired, Chattahoochee National Forest
- Charles Dashlet, retired, Southern Research Station

Partners

- Maarten Vonhof, Western Michigan University
- Mark Gumbert, Copperhead Consulting
- Keith Langdon, National Park Service, Great Smoky Mountain National Park
- Heather York, Doane College
- Eric Britzke, US Army Corps of Engineers Research and Development Center
- Joe Szewczak, Humboldt State University
- Lisa Gatens, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences
- Meg Goodman, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Michael St. Germain, Virginia Tech
- Austin Trousdale, Lander University
- Alison McCartney, Bureau of Land Management
- John Lamb, Arnold Air Force Base
- Gary Libby, Skybax Consulting
- Pete Wyatt, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Scott Dykes, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Richard Kirk, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Bree McMurray, Missouri Department of Transportation
- Tony Elliott, Missouri Department of Conservation
- Jason Lewis, Fish and Wildlife Service, Mingo National Wildlife Refuge
- James Gracey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Wapapello Lake
- Eva Kristofik, Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge
- Keith Hudson, Alabama Department of Conservation, Wildlife Division
- Mary Bunch, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
- Katrina Morris, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division
- Jim Ozier, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division
- Nikki Castleberry, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, State Parks Division
- Mick Harvey, Professor emeritus, Tennessee Tech



HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP AWARD: Mittersill Land Exchange

- John DeVivo, Cannon Mountain Ski Area, New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development



INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AWARD: Bird Conservation Partnerships for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Sustainability in Mesoamerica

US Forest Service

- Peter L. Weaver, International Institute of Tropical Forestry
- Joseph M. Wunderle, International Institute of Tropical Forestry
- Olga Ramos, International Institute of Tropical Forestry
- Iván Ramirez Barrera, International Institute of Tropical Forestry
- Marlon Sotelo Reyes, International Institute of Tropical Forestry
- Norma Jovel Amaya, International Institute of Tropical Forestry

Partners

- Jennifer Reidy, University of Missouri, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
- Steven Fondriest, US Agency for International Development - Nicaragua

WINGS ACROSS THE AMERICAS

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All photos are courtesy of the
US Forest Service and its partners.

www.fs.fed.us/global/wings





Wings Across the Americas is a partnership across:

**International Programs
National Forest Systems
State & Private Forestry
Research & Development**