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# The SUTTON NEWSLETTER

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Dickcissel at sunrise. Photo by Dan Reinking



Your generous donation helps us with our mission of “finding cooperative conservation solutions for birds and the natural world through science and education.”  
Join us in protecting our natural heritage for the next generation!



# CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

VOLUME 63 | WINTER 2024

“finding cooperative conservation solutions for birds and the natural world through science and education”



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ON THE COVER:  
A bald eagle from the current Sutton Center eagle nest cam soars past Sutton Center headquarters.  
Photo by Dan Reinking

# A Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Sutton Center friends,

As another year of great accomplishments by the Sutton Center goes on record, we share a timeline in this issue for remembering some achievements and milestones from our first forty years. We struggled to squeeze as much in as we could, but there is so much to share! As you can see from the numerous project date ranges that extend to the present day, many of our projects are not one and done. We have to keep our noses to the grindstone to reach long-term conservation goals. For example, over a period of years, we have transferred 695 Attwater's prairie-chickens and over 5500 masked bobwhite since we started raising them for release. The surveys for a second breeding bird atlas are complete, so now comes the large task of compiling all the data, determining illustrations, and publishing.

We hope you remember a gift for Sutton Center's birthday! Ten years ago, we celebrated our 30th anniversary with a wonderful gala. It was also a fundraiser to cover the cost of purchasing the land for our prairie-chicken facility. We would like to have another gala, as there are needs to cover the expenses of running two endangered species recovery programs, and among other projects, continuing our education program to introduce Oklahoma students to the wonder of birds and broader conservation concerns. However, we decided to postpone our 40th anniversary gala, as we need some additional time to have "our ducks in a row" to pull such a party together. Speaking of parties, our annual Wild Brew fundraiser was yet again a super fun event, and even though our new office and communications administrator Kyla had never been to a Wild Brew before, she was able to pull off an impressive amount of juggling - thank you Kyla! Wild Brew couldn't be done without the volunteer committee, including our chairs Lisa Riggs and Tom Gilbert, Sandy Thompson coordinating the silent auction, and many others who helped making it a fantastic party. We are so very grateful to all of you who supported and came to the event. We are still working on plans for another special celebration, so if you know of potential sponsors, please let us know.

Part of the decision to wait with our 40th anniversary celebration is that Sutton Center's former assistant director and go-getter Audra Fogle was offered a new position that she could not pass up. We were sorry to see her go, but she remains a champion for our causes. Life will throw us curve balls, and a thing that is certain is change. We just have to work hard to make change positive. I was invited to attend the third meeting of the International Avian Genetic Rescue Consortium, and got to meet many dedicated individuals trying to do just that. How to plan for resilience in a changing world? Our host, Revive & Restore, aims to restore genetic diversity that will help animals adapt, and also to rebuild and enhance declining biodiversity by returning missing species to ecosystems. It is not an easy task, and as we work together to keep and save birds and their habitats, we will all be healthier and better off. Thank you for being part of the solutions!

  
Lena Larsson, Ph.D.  
Executive Director



## Cheers to Beers and 40 Years of the Sutton Center

This year, the Sutton Center is able to celebrate its 40th anniversary, thanks to the many loyal supporters throughout the years; and the many thousands of past Wild Brew attendees!

The Sutton Center's largest, annual fundraising event, **Wild Brew**, was another success in 2024 with approximately 2,000 attendees gathering to sip in support of the Center's ongoing wildlife conservation efforts at Oklahoma's longest-running craft beer and restaurant festival in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Wild Brew 2024 marked the 26th annual event and **brought together** more than 30 local restaurants and 40 breweries under one roof offering hundreds of beers and delicious samplings - all made possible by this year's participating vendors and many generous sponsors.

The Sutton Center would like to thank the Wild Brew 2024 sponsors, volunteers, restaurants and breweries, as well as all those who joined us again for 'the greatest party ever hatched'!

Event and sponsorship information for Wild Brew 2025 will be available soon at [wildbrew.org](http://wildbrew.org).

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2024 SPONSORS



Photos by Dan Reinking



Don Wolfe (right) presented a gift of appreciation to Mike Schroeder (left) for his contributions to the Center. Photo by Lily Grant

# New Sutton Board Member – Michael Schroeder

by Don Wolfe

Michael (Mike) Schroeder from Sedona, Arizona was invited to join the Sutton Avian Research Center’s Board of Directors in June 2024. Mike brings a unique blend of business sense and conservation passion. Mike was one of a handful of early visionaries that jumpstarted the satellite TV and communications business over 40 years ago, and still serves on the board for DISH/Echostar. Mike certainly has a passion for wildlife conservation, and he uses his private pilot’s license and plane to fly numerous flights for LightHawk, a non-profit conservation organization that matches pilots with various conservation flight efforts. His flight donations have included transporting Mexican wolves from breeding facilities to release areas, as well as providing flights for our masked bobwhite from Oklahoma to Arizona since 2020. Mike’s daughter is a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and his wife, Christine, is an artist who has donated some of her artwork for the auction at our Wild Brew fundraiser. In addition, Mike also flies veterans for medical treatment through Veterans Airlift Command. He is certainly one of those people who unselfishly gives back to society and conservation from the accomplishments he has made and the blessings he has received.

## 40 Years at the Sutton Center

Don Wolfe was one of the first staff members hired at the Sutton Center. Fresh out of college in Bartlesville, he began assisting with everything from maintenance to helping with early Sutton Center projects including bald eagle restoration. His passion for birds, research and field studies made him an invaluable member of the staff, and his responsibilities have grown over the four decades he has worked here. He has helped develop and lead research projects with grassland birds, raptors, greater and lesser prairie-chickens, and white-tailed ptarmigan. Now appointed as the Masked Bobwhite Recovery Team leader, he oversees our captive breeding and restoration program for this imperiled bird. Along the way, he has mentored seasonal technicians and interns, represented the Center at many conferences, networked extensively with colleagues around the world to benefit bird conservation, and developed an innovative method of marking fences to reduce grouse collisions that is now used in many states and countries. Congratulations, and thank-you to Don for four decades (and counting!) of dedication to the Sutton Center’s mission!

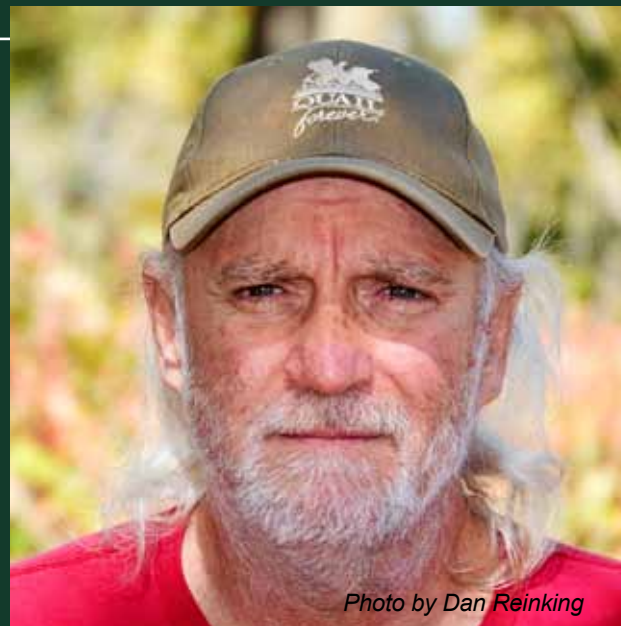


Photo by Dan Reinking

# Where are They Now? Spotlight on Matt Leslie

by Don Wolfe

During Sutton Center’s 40 years of avian conservation efforts, some volunteers and employees stood out particularly. In fall of 1997, we received an inquiry from a Collinsville High School senior about volunteering. Matthew Leslie (Matt) then came here to discuss things further, and we made use of his enthusiasm caring for birds as a volunteer during the 1997-98 holiday season. At the time, we were still raising Coturnix quail as a food source for our resident birds of prey. While not the most pleasant of jobs, Matt was eager to help in any capacity, and excelled in the most mundane tasks. In early 1998, we offered him a weekend bird care position, so our regular personnel could have time off. Matt continued to go above and beyond; when we returned on Monday mornings, not only had our quail and education birds been well taken care of, but the floors were mopped, counters cleaned, and windows washed. Matt graduated from high school in May, and soon afterwards, I needed another technician for our greater prairie-chicken research. I interviewed several qualified applicants, however something lingered about offering the position to a recent high school graduate without experience, but with an incredible amount of enthusiasm and a great work ethic. That turned out to be one of the best decisions I have made. Matt quickly learned the intricacies of radio telemetry and vegetation measurements, and performed his duties exceptionally well with very little supervision.

Matt started his academic career at Oklahoma State University fall 1998, but his ties with the Sutton Center did not end there. While a student at OSU, he worked in Dr. Ron Van Den Bussche’s genetics lab, and in a somewhat coincidental turn of events, Matt assisted with DNA extraction and genotyping of blood samples collected as part of our research on lesser prairie-chickens in Oklahoma and New Mexico. Although his assistance didn’t merit co-authorship on the resulting publication, he was named in the acknowledgments for his significant contribution. But most importantly, it was a small step toward his ultimate career as a cetacean geneticist. In fact, after graduating from OSU, Matt worked a few years working as a cetacean biologist in Madagascar and at the American Museum of Natural History, and later completed both a M.Sc. and Ph.D. on dolphin genetics at the University of California San Diego. He then completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the Smithsonian Institution, and has since served as a professor at several universities. He currently is a tenure-track professor at Ursinus University in Pennsylvania. Throughout

his career, Matt has published over 30 peer-reviewed journal articles on whales, dolphins, and other marine mammals.

I recently had the opportunity to catch up with Matt, and learn more about his personal life over the past 20+ years. Matt married Phaedra Doukakis in 2010, and has two lovely daughters, Kaia and Emerson, who enthusiastically help with bird banding, and as Matt describes, are “real bird nuts.” Matt’s wife Phaedra is also a Ph.D. biologist, working as a policy analyst for NOAA. Although Matt has travelled the world, and spent most of his career on the East Coast and West Coast, he still considers Oklahoma home, and credits his start of a career in conservation to his volunteering and employment at the Sutton Center, albeit that was but a small cog in a whale-sized gear wheel. Still, I am honored to have known Matt for over 25 years, and to consider him a close friend, even though we have been physically separated for most of those years.



Matt Leslie working on Sutton Center’s greater prairie-chicken study in Osage County in 1998.

Photo by Lena Larsson

# Adventures in Eagle Cam Maintenance

by Daniel Harris



There I was, dangling from a rope slung over a branch just 10 feet from the underside of the eagle nest. The nest was not the issue I was facing at the moment. The ground was another 50 feet below me, and my old friend gravity would have liked us to have been much, much closer. There was a bucket truck nearby and at that moment I wondered if leaving the safety of the bucket was such a good idea. Nonetheless, there I was. This is the story.

The 2024 nesting season was a great one. We had a new eagle camera that was streaming on multiple platforms and would generate over 82,000 views before the eagles left for the season. The installation was good, but the camera had not been camouflaged with duct tape and we worried that it might be an annoyance for the birds. While the eagles did occasionally give the camera a curious look, the shiny exterior did not deter them from laying a beautiful clutch of eggs and raising two young eaglets to adolescence. The view from the camera was great... until early summer growth added a few undesired leaves directly in front of the lens. The camera's auto-focus would switch back and forth from the growing eagles to the wavering leaves and we were powerless to remove them until the eagles had finished with their nest for the season.

Autumn has a way of sneaking up on you. This autumn was particularly sneaky, and the adult eagles were starting to show up in the mornings to pick at the nest before we had removed the encroaching foliage. The eagles were spending most of their day away from the nest, so we still had time. Calls were made, emails were sent, hands were shaken, but it seemed the bucket trucks available for us were either too short (less than 60 feet tall) or out of commission. I feared we would be climbing or hiring a climber at some expense. Then it happened. After a brief conversation through texts, "Sure! We can have someone come out to look at it this afternoon and we might be able to do it this evening." Great! Perfect! What could go wrong?

First, I need to tell you how awesome these guys were. They were excited about this once in a lifetime chance to do the kind of work we were looking for around an active eagle nest. I did have to remind them that keeping an eagle feather was still off the table, but they were OK with that. The eagles were in the area, but out of sight while we were at the nest. I heard reports, after the fact, that they were hanging out closer to our headquarters, just a couple thousand feet away. We defined the scope of the project and they returned with their 60-foot bucket truck within the hour. I returned with a roll of camouflage tape.

The work was done quickly and efficiently. The boom (arm) on the truck reached the top of the bucket just barely to the edge of the nest at full extension. Extendable poles were used to trim the limbs that could be reached, and at one point, stepping into the nest facilitated reaching limbs on the other side of the camera... and taking a selfie. Who could blame them? What an experience! As work was being completed, the

harness was dropped to the ground and the bucket lowered. Then came the question: "Do you want to come up and take a look?" Naturally, I did!

Fear of heights is a useful thing. It keeps you from doing the kinds of things I should probably know better than to do. As a young man, I sprained joints or broke a number of bones falling out of trees and learned nothing. I had watched this bucket go up and down and it did its job well. I trusted this bucket could do me no harm. I got in this bucket. I rose 50 feet into the air in this bucket. The bucket stopped. It would not budge. My trust betrayed, the bucket seemed satisfied staying all of 50 feet in the air and there was nothing I nor the operator could say or do that would convince it otherwise. Safety features had activated after a hydraulic hose had blown from its position on the truck. This bucket would work again, but not while I was in it. At least the cellular reception was good this far up!

After some maneuvering with poles, the operator and I were delivered the previously discarded harness and a thick rope. The operator attached the harness to himself, tossed the rope over a tree limb, climbed a few feet down the boom, and proceeded to lower himself to the ground. I was alone in the stubborn bucket and was offered to wait for a rescue via fire truck. "Hey! I'm going to pull the harness back up. Don't detach it." I said. I saw how it was done and thought that surely it couldn't be that hard, right?



Photo by Sutts Photography



You re-think your choices once you're dangling from a rope. I find it helps to just smile through it (see photo).

At the end of the day, I have some climbing experience and it wasn't my first time using the equipment that was available to me. I would advise anyone reading, "Do not try this at home." And do wait for the rescue vehicle. That said, two guys had the safety end of the rope around a tree and I felt comfortable with the situation and equipment available. The descent was smooth and I climbed down comfortably with no major issues. There is no lesson to this tale. Everything worked out and after a quick run into town they were able to repair the truck and drive away. Five-stars. Would recommend.

All that, so you can now see an unobstructed view from our fully operational eagle camera!

Scan the QR Code below to check on the nest throughout the season and let us know if you see anything, especially interesting.



## 2024 BALD EAGLE NEST MONITORING RESULTS

**386** NESTS CHECKED **348** OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

**323** CONFIRMED ACTIVE **244** CONFIRMED PRODUCTIVE **404-529** SEASON FLEDGLINGS

Thank you to our Bald Eagle Survey Team volunteers!  
Interested in joining BEST? Scan the QR code or call the Center!

# Eleven Years...

by Dr. John Hoolihan and Dr. Lena Larsson



APC hen looking over chicks. Photo by Cara Brown

How much we have learned since the Sutton Center embarked on the prairie-chicken conservation breeding program in 2013! Funding administration, purchasing property, permitting, construction, transferring eggs, and all the details of raising and taking care of these very special birds. In 2015, we collected eggs from wild greater prairie-chickens in Nebraska to gain captive breeding experience on a non-endangered species. We received Attwater's prairie-chicken (APC) eggs from zoos in Texas in 2019, making 2020 the first year of breeding adult APC at our facility. Since then, we have progressively improved our production to meet the needs of the recovery program.

Our 2024 APC breeding season was a resounding success, with more chicks surviving compared to previous years. None of this would have been possible without the hardworking and dedicated Sutton Center team being very passionate about the APC recovery program. Permanent staff, along with seasonal interns and volunteers stepped up to make this our best season ever.

We started the year with 21 adult hens. Of those, 20 laid a total of 370 eggs. Overall fertility was 95%, while hatchability was 79%. Chick survival to the benchmark age of 8 weeks was 88% (n = 242). This represents a marked increase over 2023 (20%, n = 202), thus supporting the practices of fostering and outside daycare of young, hand-reared chicks. Ample supply of crickets, mealworms, and prophylactic oral administration of antibiotics to young chicks also proved beneficial.

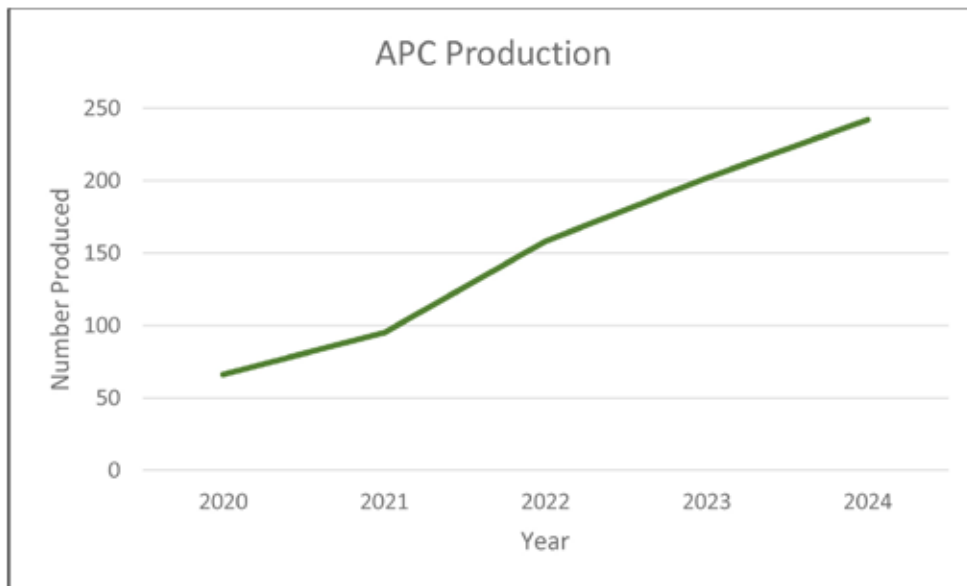


Figure 1. APC Chicks Produced

Four days were scheduled throughout the summer during which 224 APC were transferred to Texas for release into the wild. For next year, we are holding back additional adult APC with an aim to increase total production. Breeding chambers are limited in number, so in some cases we will pair two sibling females with one male. Anticipating more chicks in 2025, we have started the process of renovating the old domestic hen building for use as a new insect room, furthering our capacity to raise mealworms and crickets. Currently, we are in the process of cleaning and repairing the APC breeding facilities in preparation for what we hope is a banner 2025 season.



Young Attwater's prairie-chicken practices flying.

Photo by Cara Brown



Loading APC for transfer. Photo by Dan Reinking

## Sutton Center's Recent Scientific Publications:

Beck JL, Milligan MC, Smith KT, Street PA, Pratt AC, Kirol CP, Wanner CP, Hennig JD, Dinkins JB, Scasta JD, and Coates PS. 2024. Free-roaming horses exceeding appropriate management levels affect multiple vital rates in greater sage-grouse. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 88:e2269.

Johnson JA, Novak B, Athrey G, Sharo AG, Chase T, and Toepfer J. 2023. Phylogenomics of the extinct heath hen provides support for sex-biased introgression among extant prairie grouse. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 189(2023):107927.

Smith KT, Pratt AC, Lautenbach JD, North HM, and Beck JL. 2024. Survival of juvenile greater sage-grouse in Wyoming. *Wildlife Biology* e01199.

Wanner CP, Pratt AC, and Beck JL. 2024. Wintering greater sage-grouse preferentially select shrub microhabitat characteristics within the home range. *Rangeland Ecology and Management* 94(2024):1-6.

## Sutton Center's Recent Scientific Presentations:

Beck JL, Milligan MC, Smith KT, Street PA, Pratt AC, Kirol CP, Wanner CP, Hennig JD, Dinkins JB, Scasta JD, and Coates PS. 2024. Free-roaming horses exceeding appropriate management levels affect multiple vital rates in greater sage-grouse. 34th WAFWA Sage and Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse Technical Committee, Wenatchee, WA and Wyoming Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Conference, Cody and Society for Range Management Annual Meeting, Sparks, NV.

Gelling EL, Pratt AC, and Beck JL. 2024. Incubation behavior influences nest survival in greater sage-grouse. 34th WAFWA Sage and Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse Technical Committee, Wenatchee, WA.

Harris D and Larsson L. 2024. Endangered species recovery success. Environmental Federation of Oklahoma 33rd Annual Meeting and Trade Show, Midwest City, OK.

Hennig JD, Scasta JD, Pratt AC, Wanner CP, and Beck JL. 2024. Habitat selection and space use overlap between feral horses, pronghorn, and greater sage-grouse in cold arid steppe. Society for Range Management Annual Meeting, Sparks, NV.

Larsson LC and Mueller JM. 2024. Conservation of endangered galliformes: Attwater's prairie-chicken and masked bobwhite. 3rd Meeting of the International Avian Genetic Consortium, Toronto, Canada.

Lautenbach JD, Gregory AJ, Galla SJ, Pratt AC, and Beck JL. 2024. Using genetic, morphological, and ecological evidence to identify the subspecies of sharp-tailed grouse in south-central Wyoming. 34th WAFWA Sage and Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse Technical Committee, Wenatchee, WA and Wyoming Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Conference, Cody.

Senner P, Larsson LC, Morrow ME, Mueller J, Pardy K, Pratt AC, and Faust LJ. 2023. Living fast on the Texas prairie: Overcoming stochasticity to establish populations of an endangered prairie grouse. 3rd International Conservation Translocation Conference, Fremantle, Australia.

Wanner CP, Pratt AC, Reinking AK, Liston GE, and Beck JL. 2024. Novel environmental variables help explain winter weather effects on activity and habitat selection of greater sage-grouse. 34th WAFWA Sage and Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse Technical Committee, Wenatchee, WA.

Wolfe D. 2024. Masked bobwhite recovery. Western Quail Working Group, St. George, UT.



# 40 Years of Conservation Success

## 1984

### George Miksch Sutton Avian Research Center established

Shortly after the death of George Sutton, his surviving sister endorsed the idea to name our fledgling organization after the pioneering ornithologist and artist.



## 1986

Peregrine falcon research in Baja, Mexico

## 1988

Conducted nesting raptor surveys in the Oklahoma panhandle (1988-1995)

## 1991

Wildlife Institute of India collaboration

Altai falcon genetic sampling in Kazakhstan (1991-1992)

Conducted annual bald eagle nest surveys in Oklahoma (1991-present)

Surveys affirmed the success of our reintroduction efforts. Bald eagles were found nesting in Oklahoma again in 1991 followed by a near-annual increase of nests that continues today.



## 1994

Collaborated with Fort Sill on bird response to military training exercises

## 1995

Hosted a national grassland birds research conference in Tulsa

## 1992

Andean condor conservation breeding program (1992-1996)

Hosted Raptor Research Foundation conference in Tulsa

Conducted research study of roadside nesting birds in tallgrass prairie (1992-1996)

Conducted large-scale research study of the ecology of tallgrass prairie birds (1992-1996)

Collaborated with NASA using thermal imaging technology to examine incubation temperatures of bald eagles

Establishment and operation of 12 Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) bird banding stations in tallgrass prairie edge habitat (1992-1996)

Our eagle restoration program was featured in the November 1992 issue of *National Geographic* and an ongoing friendship and collaboration with photographer Joel Sartore began

## 1996

Conducted a Henslow's sparrow distribution and habitat research study in northeastern Oklahoma

Conducted a research study on shortgrass prairie nesting birds at Rita Blanca National Grassland in the Texas panhandle



## 1997

Launched suttoncenter.org website

Became affiliated with Oklahoma Biological Survey/University of Oklahoma

First *Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas* surveys the distributions of breeding birds statewide (1997-2001)

Conducted greater prairie-chicken research project in Osage County, Oklahoma (1997-2001)

## 1985

Bald eagle reintroduction project (1985-1992)

With a large barn under construction, the plan to remove eggs from southern bald eagle nests in Florida was initiated. Early season removal of full clutches stimulated laying of a second clutch and alleviated negative population impacts on resident Florida eagles. After hatching, the chicks were raised behind a one-way glass with eagle puppets. Once ready to fly, 275 Sutton-raised eagles were released into the wild in five southeastern states to help jump-start the recovery of our nation's symbol.

Cape griffon conservation breeding program (1985-1995)

Conducted Coturnix quail production to support husbandry of raptors held at the Sutton Center (1985-2016)



## 1998

Conducted migratory bird surveys at Camp Gruber (1998-1999)

Collaborated with Dr. Mia Revels on a Swainson's warbler study (1998-2011)

Coordination and compilation of local Christmas Bird Counts (1998-Present)  
At the request of The Nature Conservancy in 1998, Sutton staff initiated an additional Christmas Bird Count on the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, documenting more than 130 bird species to date, as well as a longer-running count at Hulah Reservoir.



## 2000

Held Eagle SOARS celebratory fund raiser event

Research study of dickcissels in Venezuela



## 2002

Sutton Center renovation of headquarters building (2002-2003)



## 2006

**It's All About Birds** educational program (2006-2016)

A unique free-flight bird education program that visited schools across the state. More than 350,000 K-12 students experienced the wonders of nature as they learned how much birds contribute to our economy, health, culture and art. The public was also reached through programs at events such as at libraries, museums, OK Mozart and the Wildlife Expo.



## 2007

Conducted white-tailed ptarmigan research on alpine peaks of New Mexico (2007-2017)



## 2008

Assisted Phillips 66 volunteers with bird surveys at company property along Eliza Creek in Bartlesville, OK (2008-2020)

Contributed or participated with over 280 *Tulsa World* columns about birds (2008-2020)

## 2009

Conducted lesser prairie-chicken research study on habitat selection (2009-2011)

## 1999

## 2001

Hosted Prairie Grouse Technical Council biennial conference in Woodward, OK

Hosted an annual *National Geographic* speaker series for Oklahoma students (2001-2008)

## 2003

Conducted Oklahoma's first *Winter Bird Atlas* examining winter bird distributions statewide (2003-2008)

## 2004

Developed Pathfinder Parkway interpretive bird trail signs in Bartlesville, OK

Conducted migratory bird research and monitoring at Camp Robinson

Conducted parrot surveys in Nicaragua

**Sutton Center director invited to White House reception**

On July 2, 1999, GMSARC was recognized at a White House ceremony hosted by the president. The invitation was coordinated by the USFWS for the Sutton Center's significant role in the recovery of the national bird and its status being improved from Endangered to Threatened on the Endangered Species list.

Conducted lesser prairie-chicken research studies in Oklahoma (1999-present)

Conducted lesser prairie-chicken research studies in New Mexico (1999-2006)



Hosted Inland Bird Banding Association conference in Bartlesville, OK

First *Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas* published by University of Oklahoma Press

## 2005

**Sutton Center became the beneficiary of the Wild Brew annual fundraiser in Tulsa, OK (2005-Present)**

Oklahoma's longest-running restaurant and beer tasting event combines local food, beer, wine, spirits, and non-alcoholic offerings with local artists, live music, and live birds to create a one-of-a-kind event that supports the conservation and education programs at the Sutton Center.

**Sutton Award (2005-Present)**

Establishment of the Sutton Award scholarship program for Oklahoma high school students who communicate a wildlife conservation topic through original art with collaboration from NatureWorks. Up to \$20,000 per year are given to students, teachers, and schools to promote art and conservation education in Oklahoma schools.

**Establishment and operation of numerous bald eagle nest cameras in Oklahoma (2005-Present)**

Our bald eagle nest cameras are viewed worldwide in schools, businesses, and homes. We use the cameras as an educational tool and as a way to keep people connected with Oklahoma wildlife while viewing the eagles as they build their nest, incubate eggs, and raise young.

Conducted bird surveys at Four Canyon Preserve for The Nature Conservancy (2005-2007)

Developed a practical and inexpensive method of marking barbed wire fences to reduce collision mortality in lesser prairie-chickens. Marked or helped landowners remove over 400 miles of fence in high priority areas (2005-2016)



## 2012

Cooperated with a BBC wildlife documentary named **Earthflight**

*Flew one of our trained bald eagles over the Grand Canyon wearing a camera*

Establishment of a **Bald Eagle Survey Team** and coordination of citizen scientists to help monitor Oklahoma bald eagle nests (2012-present)

Beneficiary of the **Fly-Fishing Film Tour** (2012-2013)



Photo by Ryan VanZant

## 2015

Assisted ODWC by conducting the second lesser prairie-chicken saturation survey in Oklahoma (2015-2016)

Developed a hunter education program to promote the use of solid copper rather than lead ammunition to reduce lead poisoning of eagles and other wildlife (2015-present)

## 2010

Assisted Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) by conducting the first lesser prairie-chicken saturation survey in Oklahoma (2010-2011)

Followed juvenile bald eagles using satellite trackers for a research study (2010-2021)

## 2013

Purchased land near Bartlesville to build a large-scale prairie-chicken conservation breeding facility



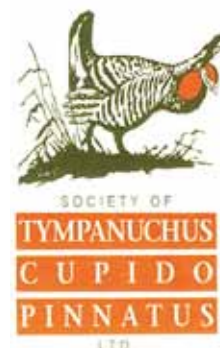
Photo by Drone Shift Media

Establishment of a **Prairie Grouse Research Chair** position through a major gift of assets from STCP, a former Wisconsin-based conservation organization

Research study comparing Nebraska and Minnesota greater prairie-chicken demographics (2015-2018)

Establishment of a greater prairie-chicken captive breeding flock (2015-2021)

Studied microclimate of various vegetation types at Buenos Aires NWR and habitat work to benefit masked bobwhite (2015-present)



## 2016

Legislative cuts to Oklahoma education funding end affiliation with OU and *It's All About Birds* education program

Collaborated on research study to examine lesser prairie-chicken range-wide genetics, population structure, range expansion, and possible introgression



Photo by Noppadol Paothong

## 2017

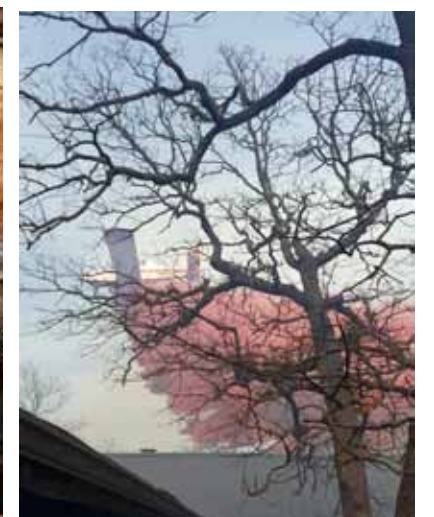
Completed a major renovation of our quail facility and began masked bobwhite conservation breeding program (2017-present)

Conducted Henslow's sparrow surveys across seven northeastern Oklahoma counties

Released and tracked captive-raised greater prairie-chickens in Nebraska (2017-2018)

First *Oklahoma Winter Bird Atlas* published by University of Oklahoma Press

Wildfire threatens Sutton Center, one shed burned



## 2018

Began masked bobwhite conservation breeding and release program (2018-present)

Began cataloging and archiving decades of data from prominent grouse researchers (2018-present)





## 2020

— Conducted statewide surveys for second Oklahoma breeding bird atlas (2020-2024)

— Re-established an ambassador animal outreach education program

*The Sutton Center's hands-on wildlife education program makes science learning come alive for Oklahomans of all ages. This program has traveled throughout the state to educate the public on the environment and share the message of conservation. The generosity of our supporters has allowed us to reach students in underserved communities with opportunities to explore interests in science. Classroom visits include flight demonstrations and STEM learning activities to be completed by students. We will soon complete renovations that will allow us to welcome additional ambassador birds, expanding the educational breadth of our programming!*



## 2019

— Collaborated with LightHawk for the fast and efficient transfer of masked bobwhite chicks to Arizona for release (2020-present)

— First endangered Attwater's prairie-chicken eggs transferred from Texas to establish conservation flock at Sutton Center

— Hosted Prairie Grouse Technical Council biennial meeting in Bartlesville

— Conducted greater sage-grouse and sharp-tailed grouse research studies in Wyoming and Montana (2019-present)

— Renovated a second building to house additional breeding pairs of masked bobwhite



## 2021

— Collaborated on a research study of greater prairie-chicken genetic structure within the central Great Plains (2021-2023)

— Initiated research project on greater sage-grouse and wind energy in south-central Montana (2021-present)



*Photo by Noppadol Paothong*

— Assisted U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by conducting bird surveys at Deep Fork and Neches River National Wildlife Refuges in Oklahoma and Texas

## 2022

— Assisted ODWC by conducting the third lesser prairie-chicken saturation survey in Oklahoma (2022-2026)

— Installed a bald eagle nest webcam near our headquarters (2022-present)

*Updated with the latest technology, we are now able to multi-stream and collect images and videos from a pair of eagles nesting on the Caney River, close to our office.*

— Hosted annual Ladies on the Wing Shooting Clinics (2022-present)

— Participated in greater sage-grouse conservation by marking and lowering fences in Wyoming to reduce mortality from collisions (2022-present)

— Collaborated with Discovery Lab in Tulsa on a bird biomimicry exhibit

— Collaborated with local artists to teach hands-on wildlife conservation through art and experience



## 2024

— Developed natural history content for interpretive signs along a trail at Turkey Mountain in Tulsa Riverparks

— Initiated research project on greater sage-grouse and wind energy in south-central Wyoming (2024-present)

## Awards

1990 Extended Meritorious Service to Science in Oklahoma award from Oklahoma Academy of Science

1991 Certificate of Merit from Oklahoma Ornithological Society

1992-1993 Volunteer Service Award from the Department of the Interior

2003 Keep Oklahoma Beautiful Award for interpretive bird trail signs

2009 Keep Oklahoma Beautiful Team Builder Award for eagle nest camera project

2009 Outstanding Organization Award from Oklahoma Association for Environmental Education

2013 Hamerstrom Award for grouse research to Sutton Center

2017 Hamerstrom Award for grouse research to Don Wolfe

2017 Chickasaw Nation ONE award finalist for excellence as a nonprofit organization

2018 Certificate of Merit to Dan Reinking from Oklahoma Ornithological Society

# Sutton Center's Grouse Heritage

by Dr. Aaron Pratt



John Toepfer and greater prairie-chicken, 2009



Lena Larsson holding young Attwater's prairie-chicken, 2023



Fumiko Sakoda and lesser prairie-chicken traps, 2001

visible to grouse to reduce collisions. This method is now used for other grouse species in other states and even other countries.

Senior biologist Don Wolfe and others supervised these projects. This culminated with both the Sutton Center and Don receiving the Hamerstrom Award from the Prairie Grouse Technical Council in 2013 and 2017, respectively. The Prairie Grouse Technical Council is a collection of prairie grouse researchers, managers, and other experts across the US and Canada who meet biennially to share ideas and updates from their respective areas of work. The Sutton Center hosted the meeting of the Prairie Grouse Technical Council in Woodward, Oklahoma in 2001 and Bartlesville in 2019. Recipients of the Hamerstrom Award are selected by peers and are given to individuals and organizations that make significant contributions to prairie grouse research or management. This award is in recognition of Drs. Frederick and Frances Hamerstrom, pioneers in grouse research and conservation.

During the last 10 years since our 30th anniversary, the biggest change relative to grouse research at the Sutton Center was merging with the Society of *Tympanuchus Cupido Pinnatus*, Ltd. (STCP; aka the Society), a wildlife conservation group from Wisconsin (Hamerstrom Award recipient in 2005). The Society was originally formed to prevent the extinction of the greater prairie-chicken in Wisconsin. It was founded in 1961 which made it the oldest conservation organization focused on prairie grouse. Its advisors were none other than the Hamerstroms. The original actions of the Society were purchasing land for the sake of the prairie-chicken, but later the mission expanded to include other species of concern in Wisconsin. Then, after renewed concerns over the security of the prairie-chicken in Wisconsin, they shifted their focus to grouse research and hired Dr. John Toepfer (a friend of the Hamerstroms and a Hamerstrom Award recipient in 2003), one of the foremost authorities on prairie grouse, as research consultant to oversee research efforts on the plight of the Wisconsin prairie-chickens. To accomplish this, Dr. Toepfer led investigations across much of the species' range.

In 2015, STCP dissolved its organization and gifted its funds to the Sutton Center, added four STCP board members to the Sutton Board of Directors, and created the STCP/Hamerstrom Prairie Grouse Research Chair to continue research on grouse ecology and

conservation. Dr. John Toepfer became the first grouse research chair. Dr. Toepfer continued his prairie-chicken research projects, then primarily in Nebraska, until he died in 2018. At his passing, he had 50 years of experience working with prairie grouse.

I came to the Sutton Center in 2019 to fill the vacancy for the STCP/Hamerstrom Prairie Grouse Research Chair. I conduct field-based research focused on the basic ecology and applied conservation of prairie grouse which under its narrow definition consists of the *Tympanuchus* spp. which includes the sharp-tailed grouse and the prairie-chickens, but also includes the sage-grouse under its broader definition. I worked for Dr. Toepfer and STCP on and off for ten years on the greater prairie-chicken in Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Illinois and the Attwater's prairie-chicken in Texas. Most of my current work is on the greater sage-grouse in Wyoming and Montana. I regularly combine the latest wildlife-tracking and remote-sensing technology with traditional in-the-field observations to estimate grouse habitat selection, behavior, and demographics oftentimes relative to anthropogenic disturbances.

Other grouse projects during the last ten years at the Sutton Center have included genetic analyses on prairie-chickens, continuing statewide surveys for lesser prairie-chickens in Oklahoma, captive breeding of greater and Attwater's prairie-chickens, evaluations of survival and reproductive success of released Attwater's prairie-chickens, and representation on the Attwater's Prairie-Chicken Recovery Team, the North American Grouse Partnership, and the International Grouse Specialist Group. The legacy of STCP and the Sutton Center is not just the knowledge gained through research or the success of conservation actions but also the development of people. I am part of the legacy of STCP. Our executive director, Dr. Lena Larsson, first came to the Sutton Center as an intern in 1998 to work on the greater prairie-chicken project. Fumiko Sakoda, long-time valuable staff member contributing to multiple Sutton Center projects, first came to work on the lesser prairie-chicken project in 2000. Please consider donating to our John Toepfer Prairie Grouse Research Scholarship fund. This scholarship is in honor of Dr. Toepfer's legacy of teaching and research and is awarded to a student of prairie grouse at the biennial Prairie Grouse Technical Council meetings.



Don Wolfe and lesser prairie-chicken, 2004



Aaron Pratt and greater sage-grouse, 2011

# The Masked Bobwhite Still Dreams of Flight

by Morgan Anderson and Lily Grant



Photos by Dan Reinking

In the span of ten years, Sutton Center's efforts with the masked bobwhite have contributed extensively to this critically endangered species' recovery program. Without our involvement, these birds would be at an elevated risk of extinction. Much like our quail chicks, we hit the ground running with field research, habitat management, conservation breeding, reintroduction, and tracking of released birds. Since the first eggs were transferred in fall of 2017 to start a new population at the Sutton Center, we have dedicated significant time and efforts to husbandry and chick production. In these past seven years, we have hatched ~7550 chicks on site, and transferred 5557 chicks and adults for release. This is a great accomplishment, but although it may seem like a large number, the wild population is nowhere near where it needs to be.

As an endangered species, these quail are vulnerable to countless difficulties. A number of these are out of our direct control, but most lead back to our failings as inhabitants of this planet. We believe in healing the hurt to the best of our abilities. As long as the Sutton Center continues to work as a team and with our collaborators, the masked bobwhite will have a safe place to land. This bird also relies on you, our reader and supporter. Without concern by the public, we would have no one to share the story of a little masked quail of the Sonora grasslands.

We extend a huge thank you for several generous donations this year! Jen Syrowitz purchased a dehumidifier that helps us maintain the proper humidity in our incubation room. Maintaining the humidity at the right levels helps to ensure the eggs are losing the ideal amount of weight and the chicks are developing properly. Thank you to the Lyon Foundation for our new washer and dryer installation, a new freezer, and an electric feed grinder! Being able to clean all those towels and covers in the same building, rather than hauling them back and forth over to administration is a large time saver. We can stock more frozen vegetables in the additional freezer and it is easier to prepare the chick diets using a new electric feed grinder.



We want to express much appreciation to our 2024 intern. Kathleen Arrañaga is a Lubbock Christian University graduate, where she studied Natural Resources Ecology. She spent her summer learning and aiding during the busy masked bobwhite breeding season. We are glad to have been a stepping stone for her professional journey in wildlife conservation.

Thank you so much Kathleen!

2024 summer intern Kathleen Arrañaga holding masked bobwhite chick in the photo (left).

# Because of YOU we are CELEBRATING these ACCOMPLISHMENTS in 2024!

by Dan Reinking



**GIVE NOW**



## MAKES PERSONAL CONNECTIONS WITH BIRDS THROUGH EDUCATION

Children who experience the wonder of birds up close, either in their classroom or at an event or on a tour at the Sutton Center, are more likely to hold a lasting impression of the experience, along with the educational message provided during the experience. More than 12,000 students were reached by the Sutton Center in 2024.



## STRENGTHENS ARTS AND SCIENCES

Our annual scholarship program awards Oklahoma high school students for communicating current conservation problems through original art and essays. Humanity flourishes with both artists and scientists doing their best work, and wildlife conservation depends on people learning and caring.



## KEEPS COMMON BIRDS COMMON

In this time of shortening attention spans, we recognize the value of long-term studies in assessing the conservation needs of wildlife. From 1997 to 2001, we conducted the first breeding bird atlas for Oklahoma. This statewide survey over a five-year period provided a benchmark against which to measure future changes in bird distributions. 2024 marked the completion of a second five-year survey, and we will be analyzing the results over the coming year to see which species may be increasing or declining.



## GIVES ENDANGERED SPECIES A FIGHTING CHANCE

We continue major captive breeding programs for two of the most endangered birds in North America. Our masked bobwhite husbandry program is a critical stopgap preventing possible extinction of this little-known, desert grassland bird. This year also saw a record production of Attwater's prairie-chickens at our custom-built conservation breeding facility, with 224 birds raised in captivity and returned to the wild.



## KEEPS A WATCHFUL AND CELEBRATORY EYE ON EAGLES

After our innovative bald eagle restoration program from 1985 to 1992, we continue to take hope and inspiration from the still-growing eagle population in Oklahoma and across the nation. Our volunteers dedicate their time and travel dollars to scour the state looking for and monitoring eagle nests each year.



# Sutton Center's Education Program

2024 is on track to be another banner year for the education department. This year we saw even more cooperative events with likeminded organizations where we got to share our mission in both small groups and with large presentations. Off-site events and conservation days drew the most attention in the second half of the year with the occasional group/school visit and a handful of owl pellet dissection events. Artemis, our resident red-tailed hawk, has been a real crowd favorite this year and she was recently invited to showcase Sutton Center's ongoing projects at the Environmental Federation of Oklahoma's annual meeting. With a handful of renovations at the education barn scheduled for the end of the year, we are looking forward to an expanded flock of education birds for 2025. To make it happen, we need your help! We are looking for donations to fund equipment and food for our new avian friends as well as a part-time trainer to help expand the scope of our events and help us reach even more students next year!



Daniel Harris and Artemis when giving a presentation at the Environmental Federation of Oklahoma annual meeting in Midwest City, OK. Photo by Jody Reinhart

The second season got off to a much faster start and provided a contrast to the first season. Due to warmer weather than the previous spring, it seemed like some species started to breed much earlier. Scissor-tailed flycatchers, for instance, hadn't even arrived in full numbers yet, but many were already working on nest building well before their June "safe dates," which are used by the project to exclude birds present during migration but not actually nesting. Other species of migrants, while not useful to the breeding bird atlas, seemed to have skipped over the state on their journey north resulting in many species that I simply didn't get to see and add to my list for the year.

Having done a previous summer with one strategy for how to cover the blocks, it provided an opportunity to reflect on what worked well and what didn't. In the first season, we had started surveys in the east since the chickadees, nuthatches, and titmice present there are some of the earliest breeders. We then worked our way west as the weather warmed and more western species started approaching their core nesting season. When we got to the point of repeating each survey for the later survey period, we took the same loop as the first time around. This resulted in us catching a lot of migrants in late May in the east and didn't see much of a difference in the number of species breeding, as eastern species mostly breed around mid-summer, which was still a couple weeks away.

So, for this second season, we started the same way, in the east, and worked west, but for the second round of surveys, we changed the strategy and started in the central part of the state where a few more species were within their safe dates and were breeding before the hot part of the summer came around. Then, while the largest number of species were breeding in the east, we circled back to confirm as many as we could before continuing through the rest of the blocks. This strategy turned out to be effective and allowed for a better distribution of breeding confirmations across the state.

This job with the Sutton Center provided many awesome opportunities. As a wildlife photographer, I had a lot of opportunities to take photos and even started doing some videography as well. As someone who loves traveling, I got to see a lot of new and unique places. But one of the most important aspects was the friends and connections made along the way. From my fellow surveyors as we spent many evenings together at our campsites, to the other birders, herpers, and neighbors I met while out in the field, and lastly to the staff at the Sutton Center who welcomed me to the team. I felt at home and appreciated working for the Sutton Center and I look forward to staying in contact and working with them again in the future!



This juvenile northern mockingbird provided confirmation of mockingbirds nesting within the atlas block where it was observed. Photo by Kendall Van Zanten

## Atlasing Oklahoma

by Kendall Van Zanten

Rewind five years and I wouldn't have guessed I'd be spending a couple of summers getting paid to go bird watching, but here we are at the end of my second summer being employed to watch birds. What could be better than waking up early to the dawn chorus every morning, spending all day looking for birds, then relaxing at that night's campsite or hotel for the night?

Two winters ago, I sat down to talk with one of my former supervisors from a college summer job. I was struggling to find work relating to my environmental science degree, especially ones that were related to my interests in conservation and birds. Using her connections, she got me in touch with Dan Reinking, and he sent me a list of Sutton Center's different projects. The one job that jumped out at me the most was working as a survey technician on the breeding bird atlas. How could I pass up an opportunity to travel throughout an entire state surveying birds for four months?

The first season had a bit of a learning curve to it for understanding behaviors and their breeding status correlation. The identification part came easy despite finding over 70 new life species. Years of studying birds had prepared me for that, but I had never spent much time looking at behavior itself and slowing myself down to observe more than just an ID. Even more difficult though, was the camping aspect. Constantly being on the move meant continuously finding new places to stay, sometimes in areas where easy access camping wasn't always around. Locating the nearest Wildlife Management Area or state park and occasional hotel was almost a daily task.



Canyon towhees can be found in a few locations in the Oklahoma Panhandle. Photo by Kendall Van Zanten



A well-camouflaged chuck-will's-widow chick occupies the leaf-covered forest floor and provides a rare confirmation of breeding for this species which is easy to hear but difficult to find nesting. Photo by Kendall Van Zanten

## WAYS TO SUPPORT THE SUTTON CENTER



### DONATE ONLINE

Your charitable donation will help the Sutton Center save birds in a changing world! Our online donation form is mobile-friendly, easy to use, and offers a variety of payment options for your convenience. Scan the QR code to make a one-time donation or set up a recurring monthly donation!

### SPREAD THE WORD

Follow us on social media to see the latest updates on the Sutton Center's programs! Check us out on Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Liking, sharing, and commenting on the Sutton Center's posts is a quick and easy way to help share the message of conservation with friends and family!



### DONATE GOODS OR SERVICES

Non-monetary contributions are much appreciated! Donations of goods or services help meet organizational needs and allow us to save on administrative and program expenses. If you would like to contribute goods or services, please call the Sutton Center at 918-336-7778.

### VOLUNTEER

Volunteer to support wildlife conservation! Sutton Center volunteers help with various tasks including animal husbandry, bird surveys, administrative work, groundskeeping, and more. Scan the QR code to view our current projects and submit your volunteer application today!



### PLAN A LEGACY GIFT

Leave a lasting legacy by including a gift to the Sutton Center in your estate plan. You can make a real difference for wildlife by protecting our natural heritage for generations to come. Contact your financial advisor to learn more about planning a legacy gift for the Sutton Center.

# The 2025 Sutton Award

*Celebrating Wildlife Conservation through the Arts*

by Daniel Harris



2023 student award winners have their art displayed alongside that of professional wildlife artists at the annual NatureWorks Art Show and Sale in Tulsa, OK. Photos by Kelly Bostian

The Sutton Center has been inspiring and awarding young artists for nearly two decades through the Sutton Award, thanks to our continued partnership with NatureWorks and the support of additional contributors each year.

Annually, up to \$20,000 is distributed directly to students and their teachers to support conservation education and the arts across Oklahoma.

We are inspiring students to think critically about the message they are sending and to be deliberate and meaningful in their choice of subject and medium. Every piece is accompanied by an essay describing its connection to wildlife conservation. Past winners have tackled global conservation topics, species and habitat-specific issues, and many have captured individually inspiring moments through their art.

We hope you will join us in celebrating the achievements of these budding conservationists and consider attending, donating, and supporting Oklahoma's youth.

The Sutton Award is free to enter for any Oklahoma high school student, grades 9-12.

Finalized details are published at: [2025suttonaward.artcall.org](https://2025suttonaward.artcall.org).



Photo by Sutts Photography

# 2024 VOLUNTEERS

Philip Alexander	Joy Farris	Dave Johnson	Jeremy Norton	Armand Spurgeon
Jeanne Allen	Brian Fennern	Cheryl Johnston	Chelsey Orcutt	Laura Stanfill
Colten Almy	Craig Fink	Jaron Johnston	Amy Osborn	Erica Stealer
David Arbour	Kristen Fitzsimmons	Sherri & Bob Kelley	James Otten	Ethan Stealer
Tracy Armstrong	Pete & Pam Fowler	Norval Kennedy	John & Linda Peaden	Kaylee Stealer
Kim Ashlock	Larry Foster	Esther Key	Mark Peaden	Tyler Stephens
Ashley Ayers	Ayden Freeman	Anna Kinder	Don Pearson	John Sterling
Caleb Barnum	Sherry Gamble	Christina King	Tony Peck	Betsy Stewart
Barbara Bartlett	Aaron Galloway	Spencer King	Cathy Pennetti	Courtney Stookey
Abigail Bauer	Neil Garrison	Jake Kirkland	Cole Penning	Tammy Strimple
Debbie Bechtold	Tom Gilbert	Desiree Knott	Mark Peterson	Hayden Taylor
David Biddinger	Kelsey Gingerick	Jarrold Kopp	Matalyn Phillips	Amie Teague
Donna Bode	Cheyenne Gonzales	Willi Kopp	Matthew Plett	Rex & Sandy Thompson
Earl Boesl	Kevin Goodman	Nathan Kuhnert	Lynn Pottz	Sierra Thompson
Karla Boggs	Wyatt Gudenkauf	Kurt Kuklinski	Tamara Pratt	Sarah True
Valerie Boudreaux	Pat Gwin	Holly Lackey	Jake Prill	Les Vandever
Jim Bradford	Leslie Hamilton	Erin Laine	Stephanie Rainwater	Nancy Vicars
Dillon Brown	Jenna Hansen	Barrie Lamberton	Travis Rakes	Karsten Villanueva
Dustin Browning	Jim Harman	Blake Lankford	Holly Ray	Michelle Wagner
Judy & Gary Bryant	Vonceil Harmon	Dave Latham	Cynthia Reese	Bryon Waits
Jessica Burke	Rod Harwood	Doug Latham	Jamie Reeves	April Wakefield
Amy Carnine	Janet Hasegawa	Wyatt Lowe	Lisa Riggs	Rasagna Wakka
Cheryl Cavert	TJ Hathcock	Linda Maholland	Justin Roach	Lori Walderich
Jason Childress	Jeff Hawkins	Carol Mabon	Britt Robertson	Sam Webb
Patty Clark	John Hays	Kathlene Marler	Maria Rojas	Andrew Weber
Crystal Comer	Brent & Susan Hemphill	Paige Mason	Mary Rounds	Andrew Week
Clay Cooper	Diane Hendrickson	Tytus Mason	Coby Rouse	Charlene Wells
Mike Corbett	Glen Hensley	Hope McGaha	Damon & Nicola Sacra	Cindy & Justin Williams
Steve Corbett	Bruce & Michelle Horgen	Nicole Meier	John Saltsman	Howard Wilson
Phillip Crawford	Tyler House	Gary Meek	Keith Shelts	Stephanie Williams
Priscilla Crawford	Zara Howerton	Shannon Messenger	Mike Shelts	Nate Wolf
Jim Culver	Mark Howery	Shobha Mirchandani	Lara Sheppard	Elizabeth Wolfe
Kevin Doggett	Steven Hufstetler	Daegon Moore	Bret Shoemake	Jimmy Woodard
Melinda Droege	Michael Husak	John Mulhouse	Linda Shuman	Connie & Ron Yott
Denise Epperson	Shi Ann Ingalls	Baylor Murray	Feather Smith	Josh York
Joel Erickson	Ken Irwin	Patricia Muzny	Rachel Smith	
Rhonda Fair	Shannon Jackson	Liz Nichols	Randy Soto	



Here is a “hot” (temperature was in the 90s) volunteer crew that regularly spend their work days at ConocoPhillips. They helped with cleaning, painting, and moving sand – thank you!

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Thanks to the Bartlesville Regional United Way, the Sutton Center received the help of volunteers from ConocoPhillips and Phillips 66 as part of the 2024 Day of Caring. Four teams of hardworking volunteers dedicated hours of their time and completed several projects including data entry, paper shredding, painting, sand removal from masked bobwhite enclosures, and other clean-up efforts. The contributions made by each team plays a pivotal part in the Sutton Center’s wildlife conservation efforts and leaves a lasting impact for years to come. The Sutton Center is extremely grateful for the help and support from its many volunteers!

# Thank you to Our Loyal Sutton Supporters!

October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024

### \$25,000 or more

Chapman Foundations Management, LLC; Commonwealth Foundation; The Lyon Foundation; Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation; Phillips 66 Company - Bartlesville; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Wolf Creek Charitable Foundation

### \$10,000 to \$24,999

Environmental Fund of Texas; Felburn Foundation; John Steele Zink Foundation; Pauline Dwyer Macklanburg and Robert A. Macklanburg Jr. Foundation; Jo Ann Payne; Williams

### \$5,000 to \$9,999

AmFund; Betty Bryant Shaul; ConocoPhillips; Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation; Dr. Kirby & Genny Lehman; The Sanford & Irene Burnstein Family Foundation

### \$1,000 to \$4,999

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### \$500 to \$999

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### \$100 to \$499

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### Up to \$99

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### Memorials and Honoraria

In honor of Barbara Bates: Beverly Smith. In memory of Chris Beauchaw: Bob and Leslie Pritchard. In honor of Danette Cassetty: Dr. Kirby and Genny Lehman. In memory of Randy Diveley: Nancy Diveley. In honor of Audra Fogle and Katie Heiman: Sandy and Jacquelyn Singleton. In memory of Keri Frahm: Burneta Venosdel. In memory of Bonnie Hope Gall: George and Suzy Harris. In honor of GMSARC employees: Alan and Sandy Jenkins. In memory of Mona “Gerry” Goins: Eugene Meints. In memory of Thomas F. Golden: Kyle and Laura Shannon. In honor of Lily Grant: Katherine Melhorn. In memory of Echo Kopp: Kay Barrett; Express Employment Professionals. In honor of Lewis & Clark Elementary students: Billye Reich. In honor of Carol Littleton: Charlene Lingo. In honor of Krusz Garrett Massad: Mike Massad. In honor of Madden Jet Massad: Mike Massad. In honor of Peggy Murray: Leslie Pritchard. In honor of Dan Reinking: Nan Reinking. In memory of Donna Jean Sharp: Michael Sharp. In memory of Dr. Steve K. Sherrod: Alan Beske; Suzanne Best; Brenda J. Blum; Roger and Angela Box; Wendy Brown; Craig Bryant; Katy Decker; David Paul Hendricks; Amy Johnson; Lena Larsson; Linda Maholland; Dan Reinking; Nan Reinking; Sharlie G. Rigby; Susan Sherrod; Kari Shults; Robyn Traxler; Luann S. Waters; Terry Williams. In memory of Dr. John Toepfer: Gary Huschle. In memory of Haydon Waehler: Christa Waehler. In memory of Joseph H. Williams: Terry Williams.