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AVIAN RESEARCH CENTER



*The*

**SUTTON**

**NEWSLETTER**

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

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*Volume 39, Winter 2012*

# ***On Top of New Mexico...***

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**Cover:** This hen and her brood of nearly full grown chicks wander across the alpine slopes of South Jicarita Peak in the Pecos Wilderness Area. Ptarmigan live above the tree line which is visible in the background at a lower altitude.  
*Photography by Don H. Wolfe.*

## White-tailed Ptarmigan Surveys, 2012 Update

by Don H. Wolfe

Those who read the Fall 2011 Sutton Newsletter may recall the almost countless adversities that we faced in the summer of 2011. I am very pleased to report that the 2012 field season was as near perfect as one could wish for while doing field research in difficult terrain. In May 2012, we deployed temperature data loggers in the Latir Peak Wilderness Area, where we failed to find any sign of ptarmigan during extensive surveys in 2009 and again this year. We compare data from Latir to data collected in the Pecos Wilderness Area, where numbers of ptarmigan can still be found, over the same time period and at the same elevations. This was essentially an effort to determine WHY ptarmigan appear to not occupy the peaks and ridges of the Latir Peak Wilderness Area, even though this alpine habitat is within 17 km of two other ptarmigan subpopulations in New Mexico. We theorized that these mountains, apparently of ample elevations (above 12,700 feet), do not have the climatic conditions that make them suitable for ptarmigan. Being on the western portion of the Sangre de Cristo Range, these mountains abruptly rise from the Rio Grande Valley, thus, as moist air rises and condenses, the cooling rains that are so

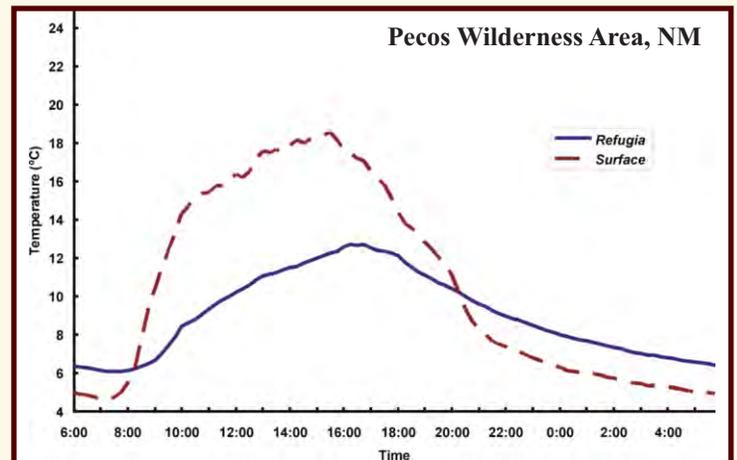
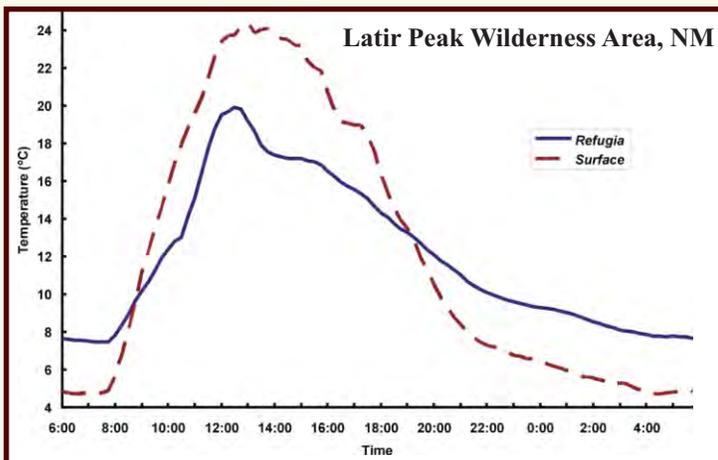
common in the summer throughout the Rocky Mountains mostly occur further east. Data collected from our data loggers support that theory, as afternoon high temperatures for August on the surface averaged 5°C warmer in the Latir Peak Wilderness Area than in the Pecos Wilderness Area, while temperatures in thermal refugia locations averaged 8°C warmer (see figures).

In August, we surveyed portions of the Vermejo Park Ranch, including a vast amount of privately owned alpine habitat, and observed 13 ptarmigan, including two different hens with broods. In September, we also observed a third hen, this one with a brood of five chicks, in the Pecos Wilderness Area. This year, a total of 23 individual ptarmigan were located. That number more than doubles what we had seen in any previous year.

It was a relief to not deal with heavy snow accumulation early in the season, to not plan routes around forest fires or severely dry conditions, and to not face unseasonably early, heavy snow in early September. Mountains are only predictable in their being unpredictable; who knows what next summer will bring?



**In June 2012, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service completed their initial finding on the 2010 petition to list the Rocky Mountain population of White-tailed Ptarmigan as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The initial finding was that the petition was valid, so after a comment period that ended in August, the Service will further review the status and make a recommendation sometime in the next few months. Meanwhile, in New Mexico, the U. S. Forest Service has approved a new ski lift and an expansion of an existing ski lift in the Taos Ski Valley to Kachina Peak, which is occupied by ptarmigan, and adjacent to the Wheeler Peak Wilderness Area.**



Average surface and refugia temperatures (1 August through 31 August 2012) recorded by data loggers.

## Lesser Prairie-Chicken Updates

by Lena C. Larsson and Don H. Wolfe

### NEW CONSERVATION PLAN

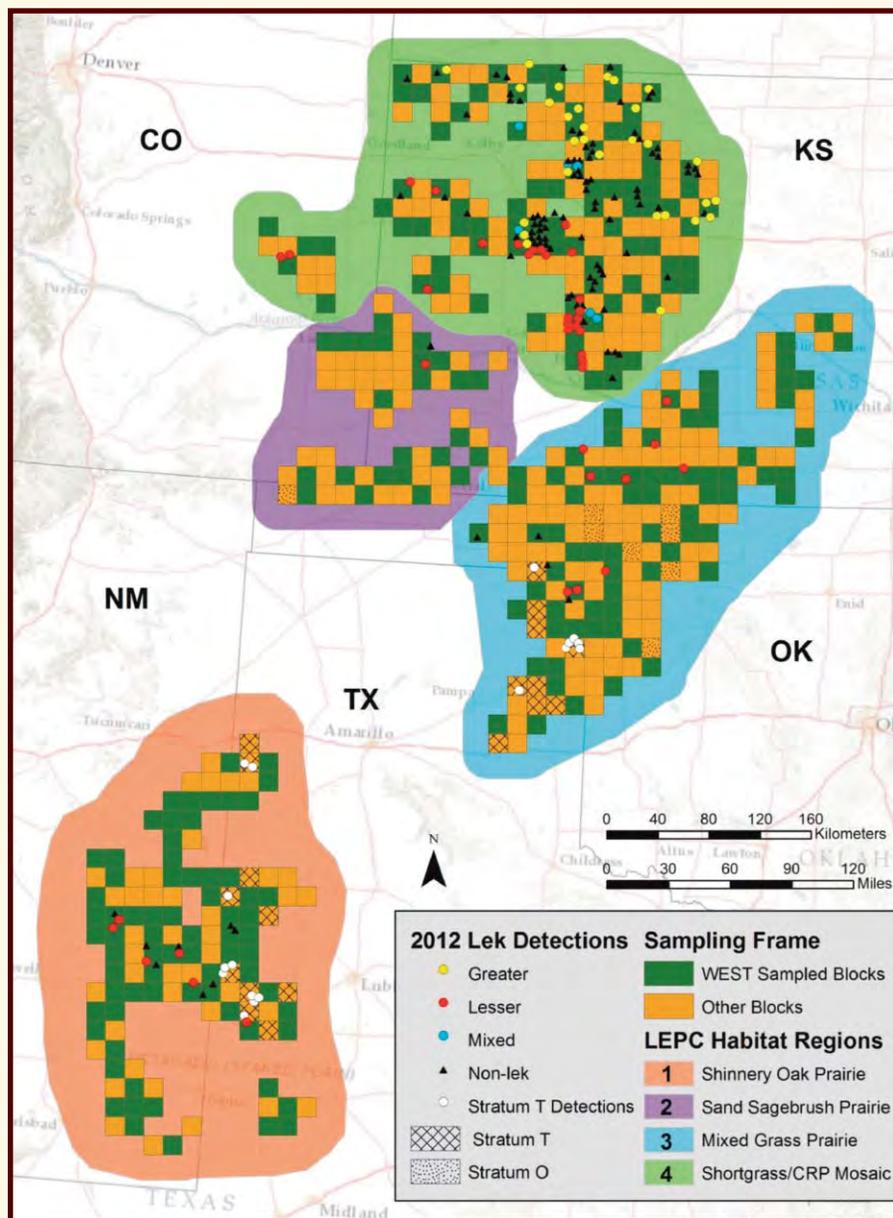
A management guide for the lesser prairie-chicken was published in 2009 (Elmore, Bidwell, Ranft, Wolfe; available at [http://www.suttoncenter.org/pages/lesser\\_prarie\\_chicken](http://www.suttoncenter.org/pages/lesser_prarie_chicken)). An additional tool for lesser prairie-chicken conservation is soon to be implemented. An Oklahoma State Legislature resolution in 2011 directed the Secretary of the Environment and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) to develop the Oklahoma Lesser Prairie-Chicken Conservation Plan (OLEPCCP) to “protect, enhance, and restore their habitat while also addressing other factors leading to their decline.” OLEPCCP is available at [http://www.wildlifedepartment.com/wildlifemgmt/lepc/action\\_plan.htm](http://www.wildlifedepartment.com/wildlifemgmt/lepc/action_plan.htm). This plan is intended to provide a framework for effective management and habitat improvement; it focuses on maintaining and restoring high quality lesser prairie-chicken habitat within core conservation areas to facilitate population increases.

### CCAA FOR LANDOWNERS IN THE OKLAHOMA LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN RANGE

The US Fish and Wildlife Services and ODWC have drafted a Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA). This agreement is an incentive for landowners to implement conservation measures for the lesser prairie-chicken. Non-federal property owners who enter into a CCAA commit to pursue voluntary conservation measures and receive assurances that additional conservation measures will not be required and additional land, water, or resource use restrictions will not be imposed should the species become listed in the future.

### RESULTS FROM AERIAL SURVEYS

The lesser prairie-chicken (LPCH) surveys literally took flight this last spring. Aerial line transects were conducted throughout the five states where the lesser prairie-chicken occurs (see map). The surveyors found 36 LPCH leks and 5 lesser and greater prairie-chicken hybrid leks on 512 transects. These data were used to estimate a total (“worldwide”) LPCH population size ranging between 23,632 – 50,704 birds (90% confidence interval). The Oklahoma LPCHs were included in a region together with south central Kansas and the northeast Texas panhandle (Region 3 in map). The estimate for this region was 8,444 birds with a 90% confidence interval of 2,637-14,250. The surveyors were uncomfortable using the data to estimate abundance of LPCH for each state. The effort to count the chickens in Oklahoma continues...



Map courtesy of WEST/LPC Interstate Working Group

# GROUSE IN JAPAN - The International Grouse Symposium 2012

*Story by Lena C. Larsson, Photography by Steve K. Sherrod*



Grouse worldwide (well, actually the northern hemisphere since that is the natural range of grouse) gather every three years to exchange ideas and current research. The International Grouse Symposium (IGS) was supposed to take place in the summer of 2011 in Matsumoto, Japan. Due to the devastating earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear crisis in the spring of 2011, IGS was postponed a year. Steve Sherrod, Don Wolfe, and I convened with other grouse researchers and managers in the small (by Japanese standards at ¼ million residents) city of Matsumoto, located in the foothills of the Japanese Alps in late July 2012.



The Japanese Alps are inhabited by the Japanese rock ptarmigan (*Lagopus muta japonica*; the “raicho”), and our host Professor Nakamura, who has studied these birds for over 30 years, brought us up to the research sites on Mount Norikura to see the habitat, birds, and their nests. In the Japanese religion, *kami*, the spirit, inhabits the mountain. The mountain worship (*Shugendō*) historically kept people away and mountaineering was generally absent until the 20th century. The Japanese rock ptarmigan, “God’s bird,” was not hunted, so it never evolved fear of humans and tolerates relatively close human presence. The current estimate is that there are fewer than 3,000 Japanese rock ptarmigan left. The separation of the mountaintop populations has resulted in very large genetic differences between the southern and northern Japanese Alps. Warming temperatures have changed their alpine habitat; it is being invaded by additional predators such as foxes, and lowland herbivores like monkeys and sika deer that disturb the vegetation.



We had four days of oral and poster presentations; Don presented data from our white-tailed ptarmigan research in New Mexico. Other North American researchers presented data on rock/willow/white-tailed ptarmigan, ruffed/sooty/dusky/spruce grouse, and Gunnison/greater sage-grouse. I had the single prairie-chicken talk within my presentation about effective population size in the lesser prairie-chicken. The Japanese considered our North American prairie grouse very exotic.

We also had a special round-table discussion regarding the conservation issues of the Japanese rock ptarmigan. While their lifespan is about 10 years, the chick survival is very low, and the small population sizes make this subspecies very vulnerable. Captive breeding using Svalbard ptarmigans as surrogates for learning the techniques is being attempted. They are also developing methods to protect broods to increase their chances of survival. Steve shared his experiences from the Attwater’s prairie-chicken recovery efforts.



Besides a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas and to get to know fellow grouse, I was very impressed by the hospitality and organizational skills of our Japanese hosts. They were so very accommodating and showed great concern at making everybody feel welcome and comfortable. They arranged for a dinner with traditional Japanese cuisine, a friendship reception with the citizens of Matsumoto, early morning birding excursions, and a special guided tour of their national treasure, the 400-year old Matsumoto Castle. We were also treated to a presentation by Princess Hisako Takamadonmiya who is an avid birder. It was a very intensive and memorable conference.

# A Multi-Decade Path to Parrot Conservation in Nicaragua

*Story and Photography  
by graduate student David C Hille*

**Background:** One of many volcano peaks jutting up from the Nicaraguan skyline.

**Insert:** Psittacids captured from the wild are a common sight throughout Nicaragua.



Motorized riverboats to maneuver wide and fast-flowing rivers, ferries to cross the largest lake in Central America, and a 4 × 4 rig to navigate jaw jarring back-country roads are all needed while passing through cloud forests, rain forests, dry forests, mangroves, and traversing from coast to coast within the views of quintessential volcano peaks. As this image suggests, it is an adventurous and physically challenging endeavor to determine the state of parrot, parakeet, and macaw (Psittacidae) populations that reside within the Central American country of Nicaragua, a nation with immense tropical biodiversity that faces similar ecological threats as other developing countries around the world.

As a component of my graduate education I am conducting a nation-wide survey of the Psittacids of Nicaragua. This national survey is a large project demanding a two-month commitment to complete a set of 410 point counts that range from coast to coast and border to border. After a preliminary field season this past summer for site verification and selection as well as logistical preparation, the foundation is laid for a spring 2013 field season to conduct the survey fully. The end result will be national population estimates along with other abundance measures for these species of interest, including the IUCN-listed endangered Great Green Macaw (*Ara ambigua*). Beyond this snapshot of Psittacid

population numbers, I anticipate a greater application of the conclusions.

The optimism for a significant impact from this work hinges on it's being a continuation of surveys completed three times prior to my study. This monitoring program was inaugurated by David A. Wiedenfeld, former Research Director of the Sutton Avian Research Center and now with the American Bird Conservancy. In collaboration with the CITES-Nicaragua group and the Nicaraguan government, Wiedenfeld conducted nation-wide surveys in 1994/1995 and in 1999 to guide suggestions for a sustainable export quota for the international pet industry. A Nicaraguan project collaborator, Martín Lezama Lopez, repeated surveys in 2004. These surveys showed a general trend of population declines, especially for species of value to the pet trade industry, and after the 2004 results the Nicaraguan government shut down all legal capture and trade. But, almost twenty years removed from the original counts and 10 years from the most recent counts, what is really happening in the current political, social, and environmental reality, and what does the progression look like since 1994? The completion of the survey a fourth time allows for a 20-year data set that will be used to analyze the population trends over time. Knowing the

change over twenty years is valuable, but, of course, the most value comes with knowing why changes have occurred. If population numbers have continued to decline, can those changes be attributed to habitat loss, land use change, or poaching? With the appropriate analyses, we will be able to answer questions such as above.

Knowing population estimates of the 16 species of parrots, parakeets, and macaws within Nicaragua is a time consuming, expensive, and physically demanding task. But, the knowledge that comes of this brings the hope of better management and conservation of Psittacids, a family that faces serious conservation threats worldwide. The conservation value of these birds is important simply to insure their existence, but these special birds also provide economic and social value for the people of Nicaragua. As ecotourism becomes an increasingly important option for developing countries to establish viable economies while avoiding devastating environmental destruction, this flashy, noisy, and all-around enigmatic bird family represents sustainable economic value if it persists in the wild with a healthy abundance. The beginning of this article paints an exciting image of scientific research in the tropics. I hope the conclusions of this research and the subsequent benefits wrought for biological conservation will be equally exciting.

Figure 1. Recent locations for Sand Springs female eagle fledged in 2010.



Figure 2. Recent locations for Sand Springs male eagle fledged in 2010.



Figure 3. Recent locations for Sequoyah NWR male eagle fledged in 2011.

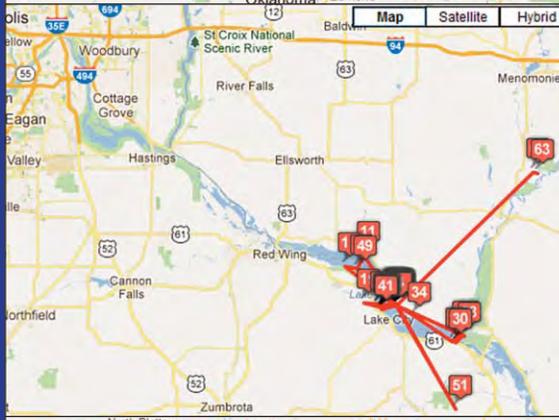
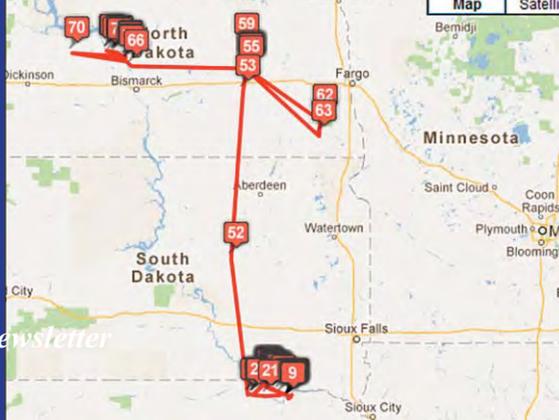


Figure 4. Recent locations for Sooner Nest D female eagle fledged in 2011.



Figure 5. Recent locations for Turnpike Nest female eagle fledged in 2011.



# They Went Where?

by Dan L. Reinking

When we began satellite tracking of juvenile Oklahoma Bald Eagles over two years ago, our hypothesis was that young birds would move north in the months after fledging, perhaps to escape oppressive Oklahoma summer heat. This was based on the work that now retired Sutton assistant director Alan Jenkins had done in 1987 by following a recently fledged eagle in an epic airplane and ground tracking effort using radiotelemetry (and described in the summer 2011 issue of this newsletter available at [suttoncenter.org](http://suttoncenter.org)). That eaglet had rather rapidly moved north to the Great Lakes region, with Alan in hot pursuit trying to stay within the limited range of the transmitter. The cost and difficulty of that tracking effort meant that only one eaglet could be tracked, and broad patterns should not be inferred from lone samples.

Newer satellite communication and GPS technology available today make following wildlife much easier, although the current size and weight of these devices limits their use to larger animals such as eagles which are capable of carrying it. We recognized the potential of this technology to revisit the question of dispersal in juvenile eagles, and made plans to begin deploying enough of them to provide a more generous sample size. When we placed the first two satellite transmitters on two sibling eaglets raised in a nest in Sand Springs, OK in the spring of 2010 and began following their movements, we were soon forced to reconsider our expectations. Instead of moving well north as anticipated, both birds independently moved south into Texas during their first months after leaving the nest.

We succeeded in placing four additional transmitters on eaglets in 2011, and six more in 2012. We documented the first mortality in our marked eagles in 2012 when one eaglet fatally collided with a power line shortly after fledging (see page 8 of this issue). That bird's sibling also stopped transmitting early on for unknown reasons, leaving us with a total of 10 birds now being tracked. Of the four birds we added in 2011, three went north during their first six months, and one moved into southeastern Oklahoma during the same time frame. The four 2012 birds we are still tracking have all gone north in the months following fledging.

Even among the birds which move north during the summer, there remains variability in how far north they go, as well as how far east or west they travel. Figures



This young male eagle from Sequoyah National Wildlife Refuge receives its backpack-style tracking device in 2011. The hood helps keep it calm until it is returned to the nest. The tracker would later show that this eagle spent its first two summers near Red Wing, Minnesota and its first winter closer to home.

## You can follow each eagle, along with our staff, by visiting the tracking page at [suttoncenter.org](http://suttoncenter.org)

one through ten show some of this variability; they indicate the locations of the ten eagles we are currently tracking during parts of the summer and early fall of this year. Some, like the initial Sand Springs eaglets we marked in 2010, have stayed relatively close to home (Figures 1 and 2). Others spent much of their recent time in states including North Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota, and even as far north as the province of Ontario. With an expected working life of three to five years, these transmitters will enable us to learn much more than just where eagles go immediately after fledging. Year-round movements for several consecutive years can be obtained. Some may even last long enough to track an eagle through its first breeding season at age four or five.

You can follow each eagle, along with our staff, by visiting the tracking page at [www.suttoncenter.org](http://www.suttoncenter.org). Each map shows one eagle during a period of up to 100 selected recent tracking locations. Archive maps showing the prior movements of each eagle are also available. Clicking on the Satellite button will help you visualize the types of habitats in which the eagles are spending their time. Our special gratitude goes to private landowners and Sequoyah National Wildlife Refuge whose cooperation and support has made this project possible.



Figure 6. Recent locations for Turnpike Nest male eagle fledged in 2011.

Figure 7. Recent locations for Vans Lake female eagle fledged in 2012.

Figure 8. Recent locations for Vans Lake male eagle fledged in 2012.

Figure 9. Recent locations for Jackson Bay female eagle fledged in 2012.

Figure 10. Recent locations for Jackson Bay male eagle fledged in 2012.

# Survival of Fledgling Bald Eagles

by Steve K. Sherrod and Ryan A. VanZant



Please note the power lines running across the back of the picture. Power lines can prove deadly for young eagles. *Photography by Ryan A. VanZant.*

In 2010, 2011, and 2012, the Sutton Center has placed a dozen satellite transmitters on young Bald Eagle nestlings in north-central OK prior to their first flights. Five circling satellites report daily locations for these birds and allow us to determine exactly where our young eagles go during their years prior to reproductive maturation. Once on the wing, these birds were tracked as they hung around the nest area and were fed by their parents for weeks, and then initiated hunting on their own and eventually dispersed. Their dispersal routes and movements are available at [www.suttoncenter.org](http://www.suttoncenter.org) thanks to Sutton personnel who have downloaded the locations, and these movements vary significantly with each individual eagle.

Some of the nests were located along rivers, or near ponds or lakes, and some were hidden within forest edges. A few nests were in suburban areas with quite a bit of human activity around them as compared to most nests situated in more rural areas with relatively little human activity.

We have tried to place transmitters on fledgling eagles from nests at which we had cameras mounted so that web site ([Track Eagles at www.suttoncenter.org](http://www.suttoncenter.org));

viewers could follow the same youngsters they had watched grow up and begin flying. This is not always easy, however, since eaglet ages must be just right, within a few days, for transmitter placement. There must be allowance under backpack chest straps for additional muscle growth built up from flying, yet these units must not be too loose either; to gain access to the birds at the right age can risk early nest departure for the fledglings and for the biologist, although this has not been a problem to date.



*Above:* The suburban area in which these two young eagles fledged last year. *Next column:* Jennifer Reeder inspects the dead eagle and a close up of the wing damage on the bird. *Photography by Ryan A. VanZant.*



In 2012, for the first time since we began mounting any of the 12 transmitters, we experienced tragedy. Within a month of its first flight from a suburban nest, we were notified that local residents observing this eagle family reported that one of the fledglings had been seen on the ground, apparently in trouble. Sutton staff was dispatched to the area, but the young eagle was dead when they arrived. One wing had a compound fracture and the other was worn and raw at the “wrist” joint, under the alula feathers. It appeared this bird had run into a nearby power line in flight, hooking both wings over the line, hung up, with the eagle dangling above the ground. Its transmitter was still working. However, for the first failure out of 12, the transmitter on the second eaglet from that same nest, just quit working within a few weeks of the bird’s first flight. Thus, we do not know if the second bird is still alive or whether it may have been electrocuted.

The fact is that a certain number of youngsters departing from Bald Eagle

nests all over North America just don't make it, and where the nest is placed can apparently have a correlation with survival of its youngsters. Our good friend, Dr. Brian Millsap, currently with USFWS and formerly with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, along with several of his colleagues at FFWCC, studied survival of young eagles fledging from some of the approximately 1100 occupied nest sites in Florida.

They studied survival of young from 60 suburban sites in comparison to young from 60 rural nests. Bald Eagles in both categories raised an average of 1.3 young to 8 weeks of age (first flight at 11-12 weeks), and most of these Florida young (same stock from which the Sutton Center reintroduced eagles into Oklahoma) migrated northward to Chesapeake Bay and coastal North Carolina with some going as far north as Newfoundland.

Survival of both groups was similar (approximately 91%) until dispersal, but during the first northward migration, mortality of suburban eagles increased disproportionately. One year after fledging, survival of rural fledglings was 89% compared to 65-72% survival for suburban fledglings. Survival of the two groups was similar (84-90%) thereafter, but suburban eagles died more often from anthropogenic causes (primarily electrocution and vehicle collisions) than did rural eagles. Millsap and colleagues suggest that suburban eagles were more acclimated to dangerous landscape features associated with humans, and thus did not regard them with the same degree of caution as did eagles from rural nests.

The end result, however, is that in spite of the difference in first year mortality, population models for both groups show that each is experiencing a positive population growth rate. Most nests from Oklahoma's Bald Eagle nesting population can be classified as rural, and while it is now too large to census annually with a limited budget, it would appear that it is continuing to grow.

Millsap, B., T. Breen, E. McConnell, T. Steffer, L. Phillips, N. Douglass, and S. Taylor. 2004. Comparative fecundity and survival of Bald Eagles fledged from suburban and rural natal areas in Florida. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 68:1018-1031



**Jennifer Reeder and Fiona, a Southern Bald Eagle, at the Wildlife Expo in Guthrie, OK. Good luck Jen, we will miss you!**



**Kimberly Lobit gets to know Zephyr, a Harris's Hawk, at the Sutton Center. Welcome Kim, it is great to have you aboard!**

## *Change comes to our Education team*

*Story and Photography by Ryan A. VanZant*

This past summer, Jennifer Reeder and her husband moved from Bartlesville to Houston, TX. Jennifer has been a very important part of our education team for the past 5 years, first as an intern, and then as our educator. She was vital to the development and expansion of our "It's All About Birds!" program, as well as, creating and modifying many of our current lesson plans. Jen had very little bird experience when she came to the Sutton Center but quickly became very competent and confident in her bird handling and training abilities. We wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

Replacing Jennifer as the new Environmental Educator at the Sutton Center is Kimberly Lobit. Kimberly grew up in the suburbs near Chicago, IL, and moved to Myrtle Beach, SC where she studied Marine Biology and Early Childhood Education. She graduated with a B.A. in Early Childhood Education and received her Teaching Certificate at Coastal Carolina University. Her love for birds began while working as the Head Intern at Wildlife in Crisis, a rehabilitation center in CT, where she nurtured and cared for all of the songbirds and birds of prey. From there, Kimberly worked as an Environmental Educator at the University of Georgia/4-H Rock Eagle Environmental Center in GA. She led a variety of outdoor classes and was the primary caretaker of the center's birds. Last summer, Kimberly worked as an Outreach Educator and Field Assistant at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center at the National Zoological Park in Washington, DC. She played a role in building Urban Nestwatch, the first bird banding program represented by underserved citizens and students in the DC and Baltimore areas. She hopes to incorporate her skills and experience by helping to continue and advance our education programs. Kimberly is very excited to be working with us here at the Sutton Center, and has spent her free time exploring her new home towns of Bartlesville and Tulsa.

# Spotlight on the Tarantulas of Oklahoma

Story and Photography Ryan N. Christensen



**Figure 1:** Mature Oklahoma Brown female tarantula found near the Sutton Center outside Bartlesville, Oklahoma. While in captivity she laid an egg sac. Figure 3 is one of her many progeny.



**Figure 2:** The more spindly male is on the left, bottom. He is drumming as he approaches the female to announce his intentions of mating. The female on the right has more girth and depending on how hungry, may eat the male after breeding.

I'm sure that most people have seen the large brown spiders along the country roads during the summer and early fall here in Oklahoma. These large spiders are actually a species of tarantula known as the Oklahoma Brown Tarantula (*Aphonopelma hentzi*). The individuals that you see along the roadways are usually males in search of a female's burrow for a mating opportunity. Seeing an adult female attempting to cross the road is much less likely, because they generally spend a great deal of time in or around their burrow for protection. Males, on the other hand, die within a few months of reaching sexual maturity. During this time the male must stay on the move in search of a willing female with which to mate before he expires. However, if a male comes into contact with a female



**Figure 3:** This comparison with a dime shows the size of one of her spiderlings after the second instar (about three months). An instar is a developmental stage of arthropods, such as insects, between each molt (ecdysis), until sexual maturity is reached.<sup>[1]</sup> Arthropods must shed the exoskeleton in order to grow or assume a new form. Differences between instars can often be seen in altered body proportions, colors, patterns, or changes in the number of body segments.

that is unwilling to mate, chances are high that the much larger female will attempt to eat him. Unlike males, females may live 15 to 20 years and lay 300 or 400 eggs at one breeding. Tarantulas are very interesting animals to learn about and can be great pets, but it is ill advised to randomly pick up one of these animals off of the road. Not only do they harbor a mild venom but special hairs (known as urticating hairs) can cause skin irritation or eye damage upon contact. While we at the Sutton Center have a real passion for birds, other wildlife can be equally interesting to discover. Consider the biology of tarantulas the next time you see one crossing a road. *Ryan Christensen is an intern with our education program and keeps tarantulas as a hobby.*

1. Allaby, Michael: A Dictionary of Ecology, page 234. Oxford University Press, USA, 2006.

# Fly Fishing Film Tour 2012

by Hillary A. Parkhurst

A new and exciting event was added to the Sutton Center lineup this past October. The Fly Fishing Film Tour is “fly fishing’s most anticipated annual event” according to Stonefly Magazine. The tour is a series of short films shot all over the western hemisphere in some of the most desirable places to fish. This year’s tour is currently being shown in 110 places across the nation. The Sutton Center, thanks to efforts by certain board members, was able to bring the tour to Green Country for a two part event in October to benefit the center. Event Chairs Kristopher Koepsel, Gary Neal and Jerry Parkhurst, Sutton Board and Advisory Board members, worked diligently to make sure this new fundraising event would be a huge success and their hard work paid off. We are very grateful for their continued support for the Sutton Center.

The main event took place at Five Oaks Lodge located in Jenks and sold out immediately. Several local vendors, who helped sponsor the event, set up booths with merchandise and information pertaining to local fly fishing and outdoor sporting organizations while attendees browsed and nibbled on a delicious spread of heavy hors d’oeuvres. Door prizes from various vendors and sponsors were given away throughout the night. The films were shown on two large screens in the main room, and the excited reaction by the crowd was the crowning achievement of a successful evening!

The second event was more low-key, but a crowd pleaser as well. Circle Cinema, in the historic Kendall-Whittier neighborhood in Tulsa, was the perfect location for the evening. As the crowd filled into the sold out theatre, more door prizes were given away and a new group of attendees had the chance to view the films in a cinema setting.

We would like to give a special thank you to our sponsors for making this event possible. Their support of the Sutton Center is truly appreciated and we were thrilled to provide a new and exciting event for the Tulsa area! For more information about the Fly Fishing Film Tour, please visit their website at [www.theF3T.com](http://www.theF3T.com) and for event pictures, please visit our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/FlyFishingFilm-TourTulsa/>. Based on the excitement for the Fly Fishing Film Tour, we are entertaining the possibility of having another event in 2013, so please stay tuned for more details!

Sponsors included: Riggs Abney Neal Turpen Orbison & Lewis, Attorneys at Law, Jim Norton Toyota, Gadget Company, Ascent, F&M Bank, Spring Valley Anglers, Woodland West Animal Hospital, Holmes Organisation, Old Village Wine & Spirits, George Kamp, Dena and Dr. Bob Hudson, Hesselbein Tire, Oklahoma Veterinary Specialists, Eller & Detrich Attorneys at Law, Dr. and Mrs. Mike Eimen, Blue Energy Fuels, Bob Austin, KS Adams Foundation.



Event Chairs Gary Neal (left) and Kris Koepsel (right) greet Ryan VanZant and Fiona at the Five Oaks Lodge in Jenks, OK. Gary and Kris are with the Riggs Abney Neal Turpen Orbison & Lewis, Attorneys at Law, an event sponsor. *Photography by Kimberly Lobit.*



From left to right: Event Chair Jerry Parkhurst, Philip Shain of Ascent, Sutton Board Member Todd Yeagley and his wife Nora O’Neill. Ascent was also a sponsor of the tour. *Photography by Kimberly Lobit.*



**Wild Brew**

*by Hillary A. Parkhurst*

Due to another fantastic volunteer committee, and many others, Wild Brew 2012 proved to be the greatest party ever hatched once again! Wild Brew is the Sutton Center's largest annual fundraising event and Oklahoma's largest beer tasting festival. This year's volunteer committee was chaired by Haley Downing of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Oklahoma and Kristopher Koepsel of Riggs Abney Attorneys at Law and Sutton Center Board Member. The Honorary Chairs of the event were Rebecca Dixon of Taylor Communications and Sutton Board Member with her husband Patrick Keegan.

Over 1500 attendees enjoyed a wide variety of fare from 30 local restaurants and of course a fantastic selection of beer from all over the world. Patron guests enjoyed an early admission with musical artists Shelby Eicher and Mark Bruner, and for the second year, patrons also enjoyed a lounge upstairs in Central Park Hall featuring several specialty restaurants as well as the opportunity to chat with local craft brewers. Steve Lidell jammed in the lounge while patrons overlooked the crowd dancing below to the fabulous Mid Life Crisis Band on the main stage. Mid Life Crisis has contributed annually to the success of Wild Brew! That evening, Lisa Riggs, a longtime Wild Brew committee member, was awarded with the Sutton Center's Appreciation Certificate for her loyal support of the event. We could not put on an event of this size without the incredible talent of the Wild Brew Crew!

A special thank you goes out to all of the beer vendors and restaurants for their generosity and contributions to the event. A complete list can be located at [www.wildbrew.org](http://www.wildbrew.org).

Each year the "Golden Tap" award is presented to the beer brewery, distributor or group who contributed "above and beyond" at the event the year before. This year's award was presented to FOAM, THE FELLOWSHIP OF OKLAHOMA ALE MAK-





# 2012

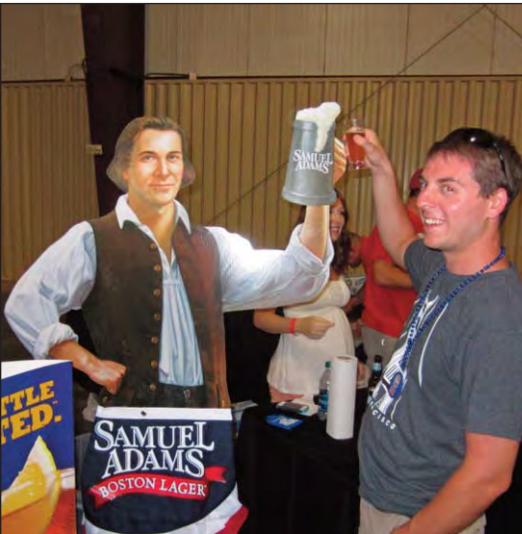
*Photography by Dan L. Reinking, and Ryan N. Christensen*

ERS. For the past two years, FOAM has had one of the most popular tables at Wild Brew, and, they have brought their top beer contenders from the local home brewers club adding a new and unique element to the event. They also collaborated with Choc Brewery again for the second year on the Wild Brew beer. This year's Wild Brew beer was a delicious rye saison produced in April at the Choc Brewery in Krebs, Oklahoma and launched at Fassler Hall in downtown Tulsa in June. Wild Brew beer was sold in liquor stores across Oklahoma and in parts of Arkansas to help promote the event. We greatly appreciate the support of FOAM and Choc for everything they have done to make this event one of a kind.

This year a new award was created to honor an outstanding restaurant for their contributions to Wild Brew. Rib Crib was the recipient of "The Golden Spoon" award, recognizing their annual, generous contribution of ample, delicious food insuring that Wild Brew attendees did not go hungry. They have been a great past supporter of this event, and we look forward to having them as part of this event for many years to come!

This event would not be possible without the support of our sponsors, especially the Tulsa World, Shamrock Communications, Idea Studio, JD Young and One2One Marketing, John Steele Zink Foundation, Oklahoma Magazine, Paragon Films, Chapman Foundations Management, Tim Jessell, GWACS ARMORY: Light Weight Tactical Weapons, and Riggs, Abney, Neal, Turpen, Orbison & Lewis.

The committee and the Sutton Center would also like to thank Lisa Riggs and Gary Meek for hosting the Wild Brew thank you party, once again, in their lovely home and lastly a huge thank you goes out to our incredible committee of volunteers who worked tirelessly to provide a fun and vibrant event. Their support for the Sutton Center is truly appreciated! Mark your calendar for next year – July 27th, 2013.



## Sutton Center's Recent Publications

- Boyd C, Petersen S, Gilgert W, Rodgers R, Fuhlendorf S, Larsen R, **Wolfe D**, Jensen KC, Gonzales P, Nennman M, Danvir R, Dahlgren D, and Messmer T (2011) Looking toward a brighter future for lekking grouse. *Rangelands* 33(6):2-11. (Greater Sage-Grouse, Gunnison Sage-Grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Greater Prairie-Chicken, Lesser Prairie-Chicken).
- Dusang DE (2011) Impacts of energy development on the Lesser Prairie-Chicken ecology and management. M. Sc. Thesis. University of Oklahoma. 66pp.
- Oklahoma Bird Records Committee (2011) *The Oklahoma Ornithological Society Checklist of Oklahoma Birds*. 4th edition. Oklahoma Ornithological Society, Norman, Oklahoma. Authors: Grzybowski JA, Arterburn JA, Cox JA, Fazio VW III, Gall BL, Loyd MJ, **Reinking DL**.
- Patten MA**, Pruett CL, **Wolfe DH** (2011) Ecological aspects of diurnal home range size and movements in the Greater Prairie-Chicken. Pp. 51-62 in Ecology, conservation, and Management of Grouse. *Studies in Avian Biology* 39.
- Wolfe DH**, **Larsson LC**, Oldenettel JR, Walker HA, **Patten MA** (2012) Status of populations of the White-tailed Ptarmigan at the southern edge of its range. IN: Watson RT, Cade TJ, Fuller M, Hunt G, and Potopov E (Eds.) Gyrfalcons and Ptarmigan in a Changing World - Conference Proceedings.

## Sutton Center's Recent Presentations

- Larsson LC**, Pruett CL, Johnson JA, **Wolfe DH**, **Patten MA** (2012) Effective population size in lesser prairie-chicken. The International Grouse Symposium, 22 July.
- Larsson LC**, Pruett, CL, **Wolfe DH**, **Patten MA** (2012) Fine-scale habitat selection by the lesser prairie-chicken. The International Grouse Symposium, 22 July.
- Larsson LC**, Pruett, CL, **Wolfe DH**, **Patten MA** (2012) Fine-scale habitat selection by the lesser prairie-chicken. The Wildlife Society Annual Conference, 15 Oct.
- Reinking DL** (2012) Bald Eagle projects of the Sutton Avian Research Center. Oklahoma Ornithological Society spring meet ing featured speaker. 12 May.
- Wolfe DH**, **Larsson LC**, **Sherrod SK**, Walker HA, **Patten MA** (2012) Sustainability of White-tailed Ptarmigan populations and the importance of thermal refugia at the southern extent of their range. International Grouse Symposium, 24 July.
- Wolfe DH**, **Larsson LC**, **Sherrod SK**, **Patten MA**, Walker HA (2012) Sustainability of White-tailed Ptarmigan populations and the importance of thermal refugia at the southern extent of their range. Poster presentation. The Wildlife Society Annual; Conference, 15 Oct.



## Sutton Award 2013!

by Hillary A. Parkhurst

We are pleased to announce the eighth annual Sutton Award Scholarship Program. This is a great opportunity for Oklahoma high school students, grades 10th-12th, to receive funding for their continuing education or for other aspects of their future!

The Sutton Avian Research Center, a renowned ornithological research and conservation organization affiliated with the University of Oklahoma and based near Bartlesville, OK, is offering its annual scholarship competition for the Sutton Award. This award recognizes those students who demonstrate the ability to communicate current conservation topics in compelling ways.

We are now fundraising for the Sutton Award scholarship program, and student art submissions will be due by February 1, 2013 for judging. The winning scholarship entries will be featured at the NatureWorks Wildlife Art Show, March 2nd and 3rd at the Renaissance Convention Center in Tulsa (see [www.natureworks.org](http://www.natureworks.org))! Every dollar counts towards supporting Oklahoma's youth and its futures, and we hope that you can help in this endeavor. If you have questions or need information about the Sutton Award scholarships, please contact Hillary Parkhurst, 918-629-4591 or [hparkhurst@riggsabney.com](mailto:hparkhurst@riggsabney.com). Thank you for your continued support of the Sutton Center!

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