

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

George
Miksch
Sutton
AVIAN RESEARCH CENTER



The **SUTTON** NEWSLETTER

Volume 47, Winter 2016

A "bird's eye" view of the buildings at the Attwater's Prairie-Chicken Breeding Facility.
Photo by: Dwight Boesiger.

Attwater's Prairie-Chicken Breeding Facility Grows!



The APC crew in front of the facility main gate. *Photo by: Steve Sherrod.*



MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Dear Sutton Center supporters,

While writing this, we are driving to Sequoyah National Wildlife Refuge for installation of new web cameras at a bald eagle nest. Last season, although the field surrounding this nest flooded and the trailer with the solar cells and camera communication setup was partially submerged, these bald eagles successfully raised two young. We hope that they will repeat this feat during the upcoming season, giving a chance for thousands of people to observe another wonder of nature through our cameras.

We just found out the presidential election results. Few specifics have been shared thus far regarding conservation and environment policies, but it is our sincerest hope that the new administration will be good stewards of our natural heritage. The conservation community will need to be prepared to provide positive oversight in regards to environmental strategies.

We hope that policy uncertainty will not cloud the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1916. Unregulated killing for fashion feathers and food markets caused extinctions and put many migratory birds at risk in the late 1800's and early 1900's. For example the heath hen, the great auk, the Carolina parakeet, and most astonishingly, the passenger pigeon, whose populations that once darkened the sky, plummeted to the lone female named Martha who took her last breath at the Cincinnati Zoo in 1914.

The Migratory Bird Treaty between USA and Canada was the first international agreement to protect wild birds. Similar treaties were later signed with Mexico (1936), Japan (1972), and the former Soviet Union (1976). The Migratory Bird Treaty Act, implemented by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, promotes habitat restoration and protection, as well as partnerships among federal and state agencies, universities, non-government organizations, and private citizens to protect and conserve migratory birds. Nevertheless, as we celebrate the centennial, one third of all North American birds are at risk of extinction, and conservation actions must be initiated or continued. This is where dedicated efforts by wildlife conservation organizations (public, private, state, national, and international) are and will continue to be paramount for wildlife protection. Now, more than ever, we need your help to make this happen. Please consider sharing your generous support to help efforts toward the mission of the Sutton Avian Research Center. It is an investment in a wildlife legacy for future generations.

Lena Larsson, Ph.D.
Acting Executive Director

Steve K. Sherrod, Ph.D.
Executive Director Emeritus

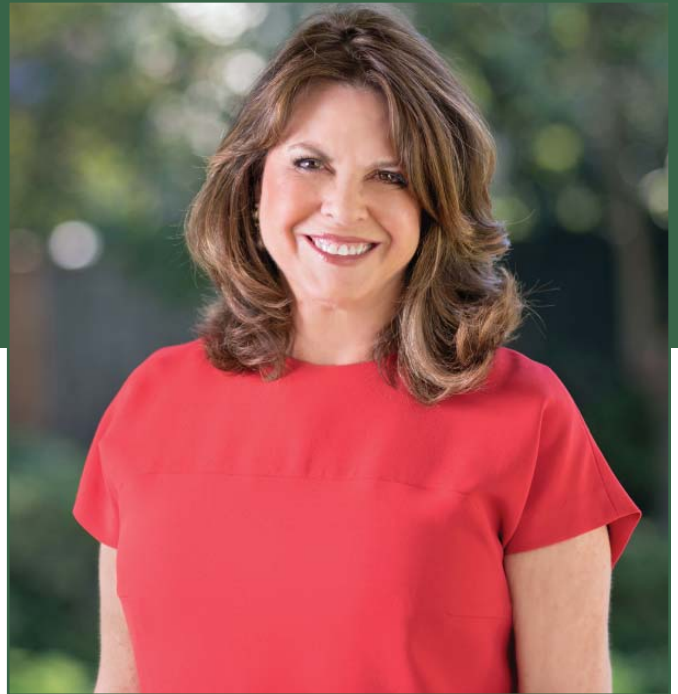
Below: Sutton eagle projected on the Empire State Building.



For Sutton supporters who prefer to read our newsletter in digital form, please email your request to info@suttoncenter.org. We can then email you the newsletter rather than mailing a paper version. As we move forward into 2017, we want to share our accomplishments at the Attwater's Prairie-Chicken Breeding Facility. We plan to invite you to a special viewing of the facilities, likely in early March prior to the birds' upcoming breeding season. We prefer to send out special invitations via email (it's free), but are lacking many of your email addresses. Please send us a note now and tell us if you are interested in attending. We will not share your addresses with other organizations!

BOARD MEMBER RECOGNITION —

BECKY DIXON INDUCTED INTO OKLAHOMA HALL OF FAME!



We are extremely proud to announce that Sutton Center Board member Rebecca Dixon has been selected for induction into the 89th class of Oklahoma Hall of Fame honorees! The Sutton Center asked Becky to join the board in 1998 as we sought to diversify our board structure with an additional ranching representative, but in addition Becky has an impressive background in broadcasting and marketing.

Becky grew up on a ranch in Nowata County and graduated from the University of Tulsa with degrees in education and journalism. She began her TV career at KTUL in 1980 as news and sports anchor, and then became the first female host for ABC's national

"Wide World of Sports." She covered horse races, college football, the Super Bowl, Olympic Games, and world championships. Starting in 1991, she served as the co-producer, writer, and host of a 20-year long run of the TV series "Oklahomans." Becky interviewed numerous Oklahomans who "shine brightly and make their talents felt by many," including sports icons like Mickey Mantle, Nadia Comăneci, and Wayman Tisdale, businessman T. Boone Pickens, actors Ron Howard and Wes Studi, singers Garth Brooks and Carrie Underwood, among many others. Becky now owns the marketing company AyerPlay that offers services such as on-hold message recordings, public relations, video and book production, and social media implementation.

Becky and her husband Patrick Keegan co-chaired Sutton's 2012 Wild Brew fundraiser, and Becky hosted the Sutton Center's 30th anniversary gala as the event chair at the Mayo Hotel in 2014. For the gala, she also voiced and helped produce a celebratory video "Birds of a Feather – 30 years together" that highlighted the Sutton Center's history and accomplishments.

We extend our hearty congratulations to Becky for well-deserved recognition – we are so very proud of you!



Sutton Award 2017

by Karen A. Kilbourne

The Sutton Avian Research Center would like to announce the 13th annual Sutton Award Scholarship Program and is presenting this opportunity to Oklahoma high school students grades 10 – 12. Winners of this award will receive funding for

their continuing education or other aspects of their futures by utilizing their talents in the arts as related to wildlife conservation. The Sutton Center is seeking to recognize those students who demonstrate the ability to communicate current conservation topics in compelling ways.

The information sheet and a downloadable application form can be found online at www.suttoncenter.org/art, the natureworks.org website on the page for "Student Art Competition," or willowbrush.com. We are very grateful to Willowbrush Gallery + Studio for hosting our event again this year, and to the Oklahoma Center for Art Education for helping provide a new Edmond drop off location!

Fundraising for this award has begun, and the Sutton Center is again proud to have **NatureWorks, Inc.** as an additional, primary scholarship partner. Every dollar counts toward supporting Oklahoma's young artists, and we hope you can help in this endeavor. The winning entries will be featured at the NatureWorks Wildlife Art Show and Sale, February 24th – 26th, 2017, at the Renaissance Convention Center in Tulsa. If you would like to contribute funding towards the scholarships or need information about submitting entries from your school/students, please contact Karen Kilbourne at 918-336-7778 or email karen@suttoncenter.org.

FROM THE SOCIETY OF TYMPANUCHUS CUPIDO PINNATUS/HAMERSTROM GROUSE CHAIR – John Toepfer

The field work for the Nebraska greater prairie-chicken research project initiated by STCP in 2012 is now finished, and the less exciting part is now beginning: compiling, computerizing, analyzing, and writing up the information. I am moving south to the Sutton Center in Bartlesville, OK where I will be working on the final report for the Nebraska project as well as processing a vast amount of other field work data, all in support of accomplishing our mission with prairie grouse conservation. I will share more of my experiences and results in a future newsletter. In brief, the Nebraska project was designed to study and contrast the ecology of greater prairie-chickens in a large population associated with 30 million acres of contiguous sandhill grassland landscape with a smaller northwestern Minnesota population living in grassland parcels within an agricultural landscape. This approach is in contrast to most past prairie grouse research projects that have studied small, remnant, isolated populations. Especially interesting observations were that we documented for the first-time, migratory behavior in adult hens with up to 80% leaving the sandhills by the end of October and most of them returning in March and April to their previous year's nesting area.



Threatened or not...

Confusion regarding status of grouse according to the Endangered Species Act continues. As previously reported, the Lesser Prairie-Chicken's "threatened" status was vacated by a Texas judge last year. In July 2016, USFWS removed this species from the Endangered Species list and removed all federal protection for the species. The Agency will undertake re-evaluation of its status, threats and associated conservation efforts, and can reconsider listing if deemed warranted. However, riders on the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act and other bills have restrictions on allocating funds for any listing action. The range-wide population estimate in 2016 was 25,261, down from 29,162 in 2015. This apparent 13% drop, however, could be an artifact of surveying or normal annual fluctuation, and actual population size could be as little as half or as much as double the official estimate.

Some six years after submission of the initial petition and over four years following a finding by USFWS that the petition warranted further consideration, there are rumors that a listing decision is forthcoming for the southern (Colorado and New Mexico) subspecies of White-tailed Ptarmigan. In our geographic area of research, a new ski lift to the top of Kachina Peak (adjacent to Wheeler Peak Wilderness Area, New Mexico) was erected five years ago, despite our official opposition due to the documented presence of ptarmigan on that peak and proximity to additional extant occupied habitat. Now, the U.S.D.A. Forest Service is considering erecting avalanche cannons nearby the new lift to increase safety for skiers. While these devices themselves likely will have only minor impacts when compared to the original infrastructure, the increased usage of this peak and associated ski runs could further disturb this already small ptarmigan population.

Masked Bobwhite Update

by Donald H. Wolfe

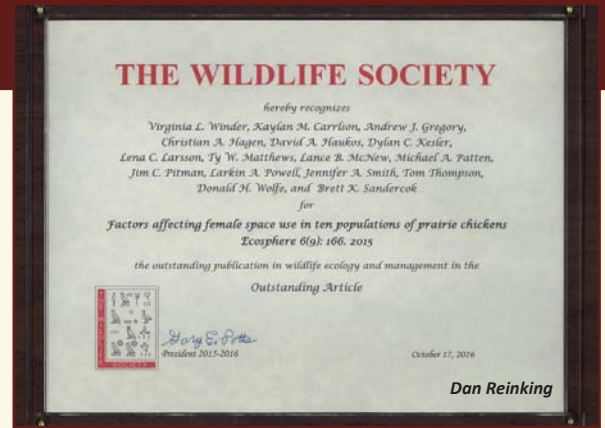


A sign on one of the ranches in Sonora, New Mexico which translates as "Ecological Reserve for the Masked Bobwhite."

In May of this year, I travelled with several other members of the Masked Bobwhite Recovery Team to visit three large ranches in Sonora, Mexico that were the source for most of the existing captive population, and are the primary focal areas for future reintroductions or augmentations in Mexico. Future releases are intended to be in suitable areas at least 10 miles from any extant populations. This is a safeguard to avoid diluting local genetics, to guard against disease transmission, and to deter excessive predation on existing birds. A number of ARU (automatic recording units) were deployed in July on these same ranches as well as on some nearby ranches to attempt to detect the presence of bobwhites through their vocalizations. It may be several months before all the listening data can be reviewed. Meanwhile, initial plans are ongoing for renovating our existing Coturnix quail facility to accommodate breeding Masked Bobwhite, and a grant request has been submitted by the USFWS Region 2 Office to cover the renovation and operating costs.

Major Award from The Wildlife Society

The Wildlife Society (TWS) is by far the largest professional organization in our chosen profession. It has a membership of around 12,000, and publishes *The Journal of Wildlife Management*, *Wildlife Society Bulletin*, *Wildlife Monographs*, and *The Wildlife Professional*. The annual TWS conferences are regularly attended by 1500-2000 wildlife biologists, and each year at the conference, four publication awards are presented for “Editorship”, “Book”, “Article”, and “Monograph.” We are pleased to announce that an article coauthored by Sutton staff members Lena Larsson and Don Wolfe and former Sutton staff member Michael Patten, was selected as the “Outstanding Article” this year. This work was selected from over 1000 wildlife articles published in the past year, and is a fine example of collaborative contributions from numerous agencies and universities. It includes analyses of both greater and lesser prairie-chicken tracking data by the Sutton Center.



Winder, V. L., K. M. Carrison, A. J. Gregory, C. A. Hagen, D. A. Haukos, D. C. Kesler, L. C. Larsson, T. W. Matthews, L. B. McNew, M. A. Patten, J. C. Pitman, L. A. Powell, J. A. Smith, T. Thompson, D. H. Wolfe, and B. K. Sandercock. 2015. Factors affecting female space use in ten populations of prairie chickens. Ecosphere 6(9):166.



Above: Madeline Wolfe holds a captured WTPT. **Below:** Gregg Wann (CSU) prepares to band a ptarmigan being held by John Bulger (NMDGF).



White-tailed Ptarmigan Update

by Donald H. Wolfe

After taking a year off from surveying for White-tailed Ptarmigan (WTPT) in New Mexico, we have received a contract with New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) to extend our survey and vegetation mapping efforts. Thus, we will be making at least four trips to the magnificent Sangre de Cristo Mountains next summer. Chris Hise from The Nature Conservancy will be assisting us with GIS mapping of willows and other alpine woody vegetation. Although we did not conduct any surveying in 2016, my daughter, volunteer Madeline Wolfe, and I made a trip to Jicarita Peak in the Pecos Wilderness Area in August to guide others to where ptarmigans can be found. Together with John Bulger (NMDGF), Gregg Wann (Colorado State University), and Katie Langin (US Geological Survey) we captured 3 males and 2 females and took blood samples to use for mapping the entire genome of this species. These birds were also radioed so their movements can be tracked – a first in New Mexico. A graduate student from Colorado State University will be doing the tracking and hopes to capture more birds in the future.

New Book by Johnsgard

Dr. Paul Johnsgard, author of dozens of high quality bird books including a number of books on grouse, has published a new book that provides a comprehensive and up-to-date overview of North American grouse. Unlike most new publications, this entire book can be downloaded for free! Johnsgard, P. A. 2016. *The North American Grouse: Their Biology and Behavior*. University of Nebraska–Lincoln. Zea Books, Lincoln, Nebraska.. Zea E-Books. Book 41. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/zeabook/41>.

THE ATTWATER'S PRAIRIE-CHICKEN BREEDING FACILITY BUILDING, BOOMING, BREEDING, HATCHING, & RAISING...

*by Ryan N. Christensen, Bonnie L. Gibson, Lena C. Larsson,
Eric R. Lynch, Carla A. Potts, Steve K. Sherrod, Donald H. Wolfe*

Photography by Steve K. Sherrod and Eric R. Lynch



It was a busy summer here at the Attwater's Prairie-Chicken Breeding Facility, and we are excited to give you an update on what we have accomplished and where we are heading next! As many readers already know, the Attwater's prairie-chicken (APC) is one of the most endangered birds in North America. Once inhabiting the coastal plains of Texas and Louisiana, this species numbered a million or more. Efforts have been underway to recover this species for 25 years, but the process is much more complicated than one might have first surmised. In collaboration with multiple parties (see inset), the Sutton Center has undertaken efforts to breed this species in captivity in significant numbers fit for release, survival, and reestablishment in the wild, and we have made great strides towards this goal since last winter!

When our Winter 2015 update left off, we had just finished construction of the netted enclosures in our first chick building. Our facility has grown quite a bit since then with the completion of our main headquarters building and a large breeder barn! The headquarters is equipped with offices and dedicated clean rooms for each step of the egg and early chick raising process. This includes rooms for processing eggs, incubation and hatching, separate rooms for housing newly hatched chicks for imprinting and for release, a veterinary lab, food preparation kitchen, and remote monitoring of the entire APC facility via webcam. The headquarters also features a large kitchen and showers for our staff as well as space for conference meetings. Despite some setbacks with the timing of construction, we were able to begin using the headquarters for a very active first breeding season. In the breeder barn, we are just about finished installing netted enclosures on the west half of the building to house individuals for artificial insemination and pairs or trios (one male and two females). Finally, as we write this, a cement foundation is being laid for a broody hen house in which initial incubation of prairie-chicken eggs will be performed by domestic chickens. With all of these buildings at our disposal, we are now able to test what works and what can be improved as additional breeder barns, chick buildings, broody hen houses, and outdoor netted flight enclosures are built.

Early this year, with the completion of the first chick building and "prairie field" (an outdoor double netted enclosure the size of an American football field), we were able to move last year's greater prairie-chicken chicks out of the farmhouse and into the chick garage where we experimented with several breeding arrangements. Initially, we set up two chambers each containing a female/male pair. We separated all other males into their own individual chambers. The remaining hens were able to roam throughout a larger common area, but also had access to each of the isolated males through one-way pigeon bobs. The purpose of this "female choice" option was to simulate natural lek behavior, where males perform and display nearby one another and females choose which males to mate with, while giving us an opportunity to keep track of who is mating with whom. Frustratingly, many hens had problems figuring out how to enter the males' chambers despite clearly showing that they were interested in mating, but on the wrong side of the netted walls. As a result, the majority of the hens' first clutches were infertile. Luckily, the pairs were more successful with the hens laying 19-20 eggs each!

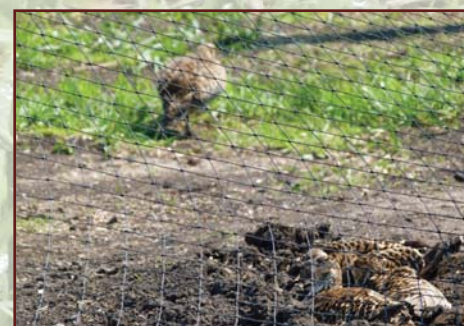
The breeding season really kicked off in early April when the hens and cocks that were part of the female choice experiment were released into the football field size outside enclosure. Here, they had access to natural vegetation for forage and shelter, exposure to healthy sunlight which is thought to boost mating behavior, and open air in which to reach high flight speeds and develop flight musculature. Also, the males had plenty of room to spread out from one another, establish their own booming territories, and really get to work on impressing those females! For several months, each morning was filled with the booming and stomping of the males, at least two of them persisting all day long, rain or shine. In what seemed like no time, we began finding eggs laid in nests scraped out of the grass and soil, and it was suddenly time to break in that new incubator room!

By August, we had collected just shy of 200 eggs, 75% of which were fertile. Even with some incubator issues and bacterial infections, over half of the fertile eggs hatched, and nearly two thirds of the hatched chicks survived the first week, a stressful period during which generally a certain number “fail to thrive.” We are happy to report that we currently have 50 healthy greater prairie-chicken chicks in addition to 13 adults from the previous year. Several of the new male chicks are already discovering their booming calls and postural displays – like father, like son!

Now October, the breeding season has come to an end, and we are focusing on further construction and experimentation. Adult and chick mortalities that occurred over the summer have shed light on unanticipated obstacles that we are working hard to overcome. For example, while the very large size of the outside enclosure allows birds to reach peak flight speeds for flight muscle development, collisions with the netted walls have led to several broken necks. We hope to stop these mortalities by using finer meshed netting and remodeling the enclosure to have vertical rather than sloped walls. Additionally, many of our fertile eggs “died in shell” while inside the artificial incubators. By reevaluating incubation parameters such as sterilization, temperature, humidity, type of incubator used, number of days spent in pre-incubation storage as well as in artificial incubators, and starting eggs with natural incubation by domestic hens, we hope to increase the number and percentages of eggs that successfully hatch as well as chicks that survive. Finally, several deaths early in the year may have resulted from prolonged exposure to terpenes in the pine shavings used as litter. We switched to the more expensive aspen shavings and are currently experimenting with alternative substrates, specifically pea gravel and well sand.

Ultimately, the success of our breeding program hinges on breeding two separate populations of prairie-chickens that differ significantly in how they are raised and housed, and how we interact with them. One population consists of breeders, either imprinted or tame-raised birds from the start, that are isolated or paired in smaller enclosures. We will handle these birds frequently from the day they hatch so they do not fear us and this will reduce stress when we enter their enclosures for maintenance, health checks, or for egg collection or artificial insemination. We are testing these methods now by transitioning roughly half of this year’s chicks into the breeder barn, incorporating additional interactions with these birds into our daily routine, and hand-feeding them crickets. The second population consists of birds intended for release into the wild. Though, we are not planning to release greater prairie-chickens, we will practice raising strategies with them by wearing camouflaged costumes so they do not become comfortable with humans, and by releasing these birds into the outside netted field where they can become acclimated to natural prairie surroundings, interact freely with one another, prey on local invertebrates, and practice predator avoidance behaviors.

Following more development of techniques, we are looking forward to obtaining our first Attwater’s prairie-chicken eggs and making the next pivotal leap in contributing to repopulating the Gulf Coast with these incredible birds!



We have very many to thank for their support and advice, including: Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, Emirates Center for Wildlife Propagation, Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge, Attwater’s Prairie-chicken Recovery Team, Fossil Rim Wildlife Center, Houston Zoo, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Keleher Architects, Dwight Boesiger, and Beavers Game Farm. Also thank you to all other supporters including foundations, individuals, and corporations that are helping us along the way!

NEW FACES AT THE APC BREEDING FACILITY



Bonnie Gibson

Hello – I am Bonnie Gibson, the newest member of Sutton Center’s Attwater’s Prairie-Chicken team! Although I began working full time for the Sutton Center last April, I have had passion for wildlife conservation as far back as I can remember. My interest in birds became more intense after college.

After graduating from Oklahoma State University in 2009 with a Bachelor’s degree in Natural Resource Ecology and Management with a focus on Wildlife Ecology, I accepted an internship in Wisconsin where I spent six months working for the International Crane Foundation (ICF). At ICF I had the privilege of working with all fifteen species of the world’s cranes, including the endangered Whooping Crane. I spent the majority of that spring and summer alongside aviculturists learning how to perform artificial inseminations on Whooping Cranes, techniques for the artificial incubation of their eggs, and hatching/raising their chicks for release onto a wildlife refuge in WI. At the end of my internship I had fallen in love with the work and knew I wanted to continue down this career path. Prior to leaving ICF, I was fortunate enough to receive my first job offer!

By the end of my internship I had landed a full time position working as an aviculturist at the Audubon Center for Research of Endangered Species (ACRES) in New Orleans, LA. For two years I continued breeding and raising endangered crane chicks for release and also began caring for a variety of exotic birds, cats, and hoofstock at ACRES. But, in December of 2012 my husband and I made the difficult decision to leave New Orleans when he received a job offer in Oklahoma he could not pass up. It was then I first came into contact with the Sutton Avian Research Center and was offered an opportunity to spend a month in western Oklahoma to conduct field research on Lesser Prairie-Chickens.

While keeping in touch with Sutton staff over the next two years, I worked as a zookeeper for the Tulsa Zoo with a large collection of birds and small mammals. As much as I enjoyed my time at the Tulsa Zoo, I was very eager to return to a job that focused on my passion: endangered species recovery. I became a full time Aviculturist for the Sutton Center in April and have spent the last seven months learning as much as I can about the captive propagation of prairie-chickens. I hope that my previous experiences in this field will prove beneficial for the Attwater’s Prairie-Chicken breeding program.

Hello there! My name is Eric Lynch, and I am a recent addition to the aviculture team at the Attwater’s Prairie-Chicken Breeding Facility. Working with an endangered species breeding program represents a bit of change of pace for me. Since my college years, I have pursued a career in vertebrate paleontology. Though originally drawn to the field by dinosaurs (what kid isn’t?), my academic interests have diversified. As part of my Bachelor of Science from Bucknell University, I conducted original research on the role of bacteria in the fossilization of vertebrate remains, challenging reports of dinosaur blood vessels preserved in the fossil record. Then as a Master’s student at East Tennessee State University, I focused on using skeletal morphology and biomechanics to infer the locomotor behavior of the extinct North American red panda and giant short-faced bear. Though I have been attracted to birds since I was a child, romping around the forests of Maine and New Hampshire with my parents, it wasn’t until I took several ornithology courses at ETSU that I considered an avian-centric career. My professor frequently joked that birding would change my life, and he wasn’t wrong! I have since become an avid hobbyist birder, keeping close track of my life species list and planning domestic and international vacations specifically with birding in mind. Seeking volunteer experience while working on my Master’s degree, I worked for six months at Bayes Mountain Raptor Center in Tennessee, learning to care for and handle a variety of owls, hawks, and vultures. After grad school and a year spent teaching geology as an adjunct professor, my wife and I moved to Tulsa where she is pursuing a doctorate degree in Vertebrate Anatomy and Paleontology at Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences. Shortly after moving to Tulsa, I reached out to the Sutton Center in search of volunteer opportunities and found myself in the New Mexico alpenes with Don Wolfe later that summer, scouring the rocky landscape for White-tailed Ptarmigan. After a two-year stint working in the Oklahoma oil industry as a mud logger and geosteerer, I joined the Sutton Center in April 2016 to work fulltime on the APC breeding project. I am excited to be part of such an important species conservation effort, especially for such a charismatic bird! From the perspective of a paleontologist, it is a privilege to experience and interact so intimately with a population of living, breathing theropod dinosaurs! In the next two or three years, I intend to go back to school to complete my own PhD in vertebrate paleontology, perhaps focusing my research on the behavior and evolution of fossil birds. I look forward to finding ways in which my experience with the Attwater’s Prairie-Chickens and observations of their behavior will inform my future paleontological research endeavors.



Bonnie Gibson



WILD BREW 2016

Story by Karen A. Kilbourne

Photography by Marcus Montgomery and Dan Reinking

Our many thanks go out to Stephanie Williams and Coleman Miller, the co-chairs of Wild Brew 2016, for all of their hard work this year! The entire Wild Brew committee went above and beyond this year and once again created “The greatest party ever hatched!” We at the Sutton Center are truly grateful for their outstanding efforts.

We are also very thankful for donation of the beer by area breweries and distributors. It made the event a true success! This year the “Golden Tap” Award went to F.O.A.M.: Fellowship of Oklahoma Ale Makers. They have offered many different and exciting beers to Wild Brew attendees through the years, and we are proud they have been so involved in our event.

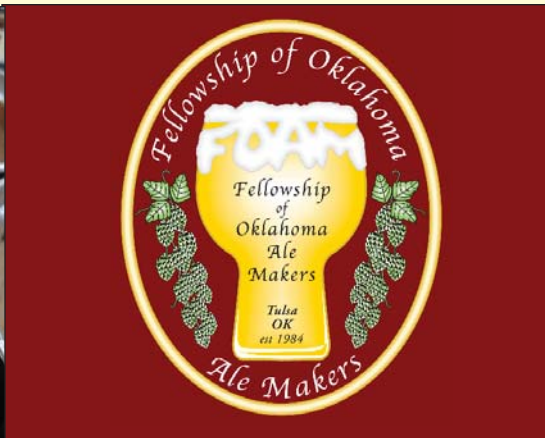
This year Wild Brew was filled with fabulous tunes by Shelby Eicher and Mark Bruner followed by My So Called Band, a Norman, Oklahoma based 90’s cover band.

This event would not be possible without the support of our sponsors, especially SilverTree Technology, JD Young, Idea Studio, Grace and Franklin Bernson Foundation, John Steele Zink Foundation, Sapien brand experience, Mythic, Chapman Charitable Trusts, filters4me.com, ABCO Party Rentals, PediStat, Red Cat Event Audio & Digital Recording along with many others.

For the second year there has been a silent auction held at Wild Brew with a wide diversity of enticing items. Sandy Thompson headed it up this year and did a fantastic job! The auction was a great success.

We had a variety of t-shirts to sell this year thanks to Cole Cunningham. Cole also did a wonderful job keeping up the Wild Brew website; thanks Cole! Keep checking the website as there may be some special holiday t-shirt deals.

Find us on Facebook: Wild Brew Tulsa, and Twitter: #wildbrew, and download our app in the Apple or Android app stores by searching: Wild Brew. Visit wildbrew.org for more info on the event, pictures, and the upcoming 2017 event!



Sutton Center's Recent Publications

Fritts S R, Grisham BA, Haukos DA, Boal CW, Patten MA, **Wolfe DH**, Dixon CE, Cox RD, and Heck WR. 2016. Long-term lesser prairie-chicken nest ecology in response to grassland management. *The Journal of Wildlife Management* 80:527–539

Oyler-McCance SJ, DeYoung RW, Fike JA, Hagan CA, Johnson JA, **Larsson LC**, Patten MA. (2016) Rangewide genetic analysis of lesser prairie-chicken reveals population structure, range expansion, and possible introgression. *Conservation Genetics* 17:643-660. doi:10.1007/s10592-016-0812-y.

Ross JD, Cavert CL, **Larsson LC**. (2016) Remotely-sensed tornado signatures indicate and ecological threshold for eagle nest destruction. bioRxiv (pre-print), 9pp. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1101/049387>.

Svedarsky, **Toepfer JE**, Westemeier 2016. Update of a review paper by Svedarsky et al (2003) for the USGS. See: [https // pubs.er.usgs.gov/publications/70159589](https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publications/70159589). (In Press)

Wolfe DH, **Larsson LC**, and Patten MA. (2016) The lesser prairie-chicken in the mixed-grass prairie ecoregion of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas. Chapter 16, pp 299-314 in D. A. Haukos and C. W. Boal (eds.), Ecology and conservation of Lesser Prairie-Chickens. *Studies in Avian Biology* No. 48. CRC Press, Boca Raton, Florida.

Sutton Center's Recent Presentations

Larsson LC, **Christensen RN**, **Gibson BL**, **Lynch ER**, **Sherrod SK** (2016) The Attwater's Prairie-Chicken Breeding Facility - An endangered species recovery effort in Oklahoma through Sutton Avian Research Center. Poster. *Oklahoma Wildlife Expo*, Guthrie, OK. 23-25 Sept.

Larsson LC, Lobit K, Cavert C (2016) Bald eagle nest monitoring in Oklahoma - citizen scientist data collection through Sutton Avian Research Center. Poster. *Oklahoma Biodiversity Forum*, Norman, OK, 5 March.



Sutton Center receives rifle once owned by “Doc” George Sutton

Story and Photography by Dan L. Reinking

This Savage pump-action rifle once belonged to George Sutton and is currently displayed above his portrait on the Sutton Center's large central fireplace.



From time to time, the Sutton Center is contacted by people interested in donating items related to our namesake, Dr. George Miksch Sutton. Often, these donations are prints of his numerous paintings, and occasionally they are letters or personal items. Ralph Gorton of Michigan State University recently contacted us about one such item formerly owned by Sutton. Ralph's uncle and aunt, Lawrence and Lucile Camburn, were good friends with Sutton in the 1930s and 1940s when Dr. Sutton spent time at the Edwin S. George Reserve that was managed by the Camburns in Michigan. Sutton raised young birds on the screened porch of the Camburn's house, and Lucile helped him catch insects to feed the birds.

Sometime in the 1940s, Sutton gave Lawrence a .22 caliber rifle that he owned, and that rifle was passed on to Ralph in the 1970s. Small-bore rifles and shotguns were once ubiquitous and important tools of ornithologists, and Sutton collected many birds from the wild to prepare as study specimens for future reference. Many of the finest examples of this craft currently residing in the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History were collected and prepared by Sutton for the ongoing benefit of bird researchers today.

While we do not know any specific information about where or how long Sutton might have used this particular firearm, we have determined that it is a Savage model 1903 pump-action rifle with a detachable magazine that was likely manufactured between 1909 and 1916. Ralph has generously passed this rifle on to the Sutton Center to join our small collection of items related to the life and career of George Sutton. We are thrilled to have this additional piece of Sutton history.

Thank You to These Loyal Sutton Supporters!

October 16, 2015 through October 15, 2016

Up to \$99

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\$10,000 to \$24,999

Devon Energy Corporation, NatureWorks, SilverTree Technology.

\$25,000 or more

Osage Wind LLC, Palo Duro Energy, Harold & Sandy Price, Wild Brew attendees 2016, Wolf Creek Charitable Foundation.

Memorials and Honoraria

In honor of Rebecca Dixon's induction into the Oklahoma Hall Of Fame: Barbara Bates, Warren Harden, Steve Sherrod, and Penny Williams. In honor of Lee Holcombe's birthday: Frederick & Janet Drummond. In honor of their son Dan Reinking: Carl & Nan Reinking. In honor of the Rorschach siblings: Robert Rorschach, Mollie Krumme, Elizabeth Rorschach, Barbara Rorschach and Janet Rorschach: Leigh Rorschach. In honor of Penny Williams: Margaret French.

Special Thanks

To all of the Breweries and Distributors at Wild Brew.

G. M. Sutton Avian Research Center
P.O. Box 2007
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