

George
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AVIAN RESEARCH CENTER



The

SUTTON

NEWSLETTER

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

Volume 36, Summer 2011

*Living
on
the
Edge ...*

Dr. Mia Revels cradles the elusive Swainson's Warbler in her hand. *Photography by Eric Enwall.*

What's Inside...

- 2 Swainson's Warblers
 - 3 Sutton/NatureWorks Awards
 - 4 Grouse News
 - 6 Crossing Paths
 - 9 A Special "Suttonite"
Quail House Renovations
 - 10 Education, Sutton Style
-

...Swainson's Warblers in Oklahoma

by Mia Revels

I have been studying Swainson's Warblers in Oklahoma for nearly twelve years, and I am not tired of it yet. I honestly don't think that I ever will be. Sure, the habitat can be tough – dense thickets full of ticks, mosquitoes, cottonmouths, poison ivy, and greenbriar. The weather gets pretty hot and humid by mid-July. But, to me, nothing is equal to the beauty of a bottomland forest in the springtime—the spider lilies and swamp irises in full bloom, the majestic cypress trees and water oaks, the sloughs and drainages that are home to so many creatures, the large rivers winding through the forest on their way to somewhere else, usually at a leisurely pace, and the Swainson's Warblers and other birds! These wetlands are home to many species found nowhere else in the state.

What is so special about Swainson's Warblers? For one thing, they are very mysterious. Swainson's Warblers are secretive birds. They spend most of their time foraging on the ground in dark, dense vegetation, and are rarely seen except by the most persistent of searchers. The easiest way to locate them is by listening for the male's song, which is quite loud and carries for a long distance. Seeing them, however, usually requires entering their dark forest world. When people ask me where to look for Swainson's Warblers nests, I tell them to look around for the place that they would most want to avoid in normal circumstances, and then go look there!

The other thing that is special about Swainson's Warblers is that they were once



Mia Revels

The nests of Swainson's Warblers are difficult to locate due to the scarcity of the bird itself and the fact that its habitat has been described as "impenetrable."

widespread in bottomland hardwood habitat throughout southeastern North America, but are now considered to be uncommon to rare across most of this range. One reason for this decline may be loss of breeding habitat caused by reservoir construction and conversion of bottomland hardwood forest to croplands, livestock grazing, and other purposes. Our remaining bottomland forests are precious resources and should be preserved and restored. Oklahoma's Swainson's Warblers are living on the edge – the western edge – of their range in North America.

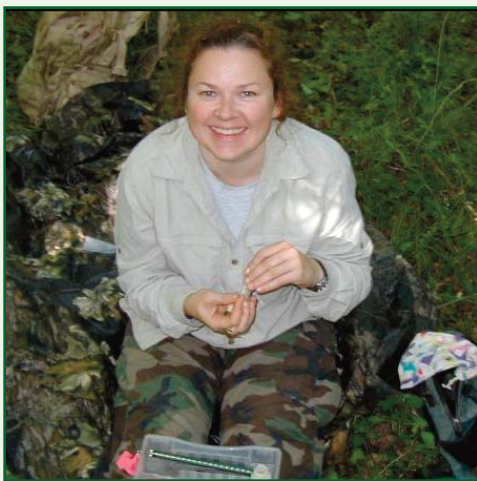
Much of my work has been conducted on the Little River National Wildlife Refuge, as this is where Swainson's Warblers are found in the largest numbers. I have also spent a considerable amount of time searching for other locations where Swainson's Warblers might be found, mostly on public lands including Wildlife Management Areas and National Wildlife Refuges. This study was initiated by the Little River National Wildlife Refuge through the Sutton Avian Research Center when Berlin Heck was the refuge manager. He has since retired, but the work has gone on with the support of David Weaver, the current refuge manager. The project has been supported by other agencies including the Okla-

homa Department of Wildlife Conservation, the University of Arkansas, and Northeastern State University. Individuals have also contributed, including many undergraduate students and other volunteers.

The main focus of the project was to determine the current abundance and distribution of Swainson's Warblers in Oklahoma. Since they are a bottomland hardwood species, in Oklahoma that pretty much limits their potential distribution to the easternmost portion of the state. In this study, I systematically searched for Swainson's Warblers by driving, biking, hiking, paddling and crawling through appropriate habitat – all the while listening for the song of a Swainson's Warbler male on territory. Twenty-seven Oklahoma Wildlife Management Areas and National Wildlife Refuges were surveyed. Swainson's Warblers were detected in eleven of these, while the other 16 locations did not have suitable habitat.

All of the habitat in the world is not going to help Swainson's Warblers if they are not nesting successfully in that habitat. Figuring this out involves finding and monitoring nests in order to see if they are successful and if not, why. The first Swainson's Warblers nests in Oklahoma were located by Albert J. B. Kirn in 1914 and 1917. Since then, no nests had been reported in Oklahoma prior to this study. The absence of nesting records reflects both the scarcity

Continued on page 3



James Waffle

Dr. Mia Revels banding birds in the field.

Sutton/NatureWorks Awards

by Hillary A. Parkhurst

of Swainson's Warblers and the difficulty of locating their nests. The nests of many birds can be located by using cues provided by the adult birds, but Swainson's Warblers are difficult to see and follow through the dense vegetation that they inhabit. In fact, this habitat has been described as "impenetrable" by many researchers. In spite of all these obstacles, in 2001, I documented the first record of a Swainson's Warbler nest in Oklahoma since 1917! Sadly, that first nest was eventually depredated before the nestlings fledged. However, I located 71 more Swainson's Warbler nests between 2001 and 2009. Thirty-one of these were both active and monitored to conclusion to determine their fate. Of these, 19% were abandoned, 48% were depredated, and 32% were successful.

How can we help the Swainson's Warbler in Oklahoma? In areas with good habitat that harbor large numbers of this species, little to no management is needed. In areas where they occur in small numbers, the main thing that will benefit them is habitat regeneration or restoration. Riparian forest, in particular, should be restored. In many surveyed areas, the riparian forest corridor was very narrow, or in some cases, totally absent. Whenever possible, efforts should focus on maintaining or restoring giant river cane, which seems to be the preferred nesting substrate for Swainson's Warblers.

I am finishing writing this article just as I am getting ready to go back to the LRNWR and re-examine the population there. I have to dig out my nets, poles, models, GPS unit and other equipment and get down there in time to find that first Swainson's Warbler of the year. When I hear that first song my heart will race. I will charge into the thicket to see if he is already banded or instead a new male that will soon be wearing a ring before I release him once again to spend his summer foraging, attracting a mate, and—hopefully—raising a new brood of Swainson's Warblers.

Dr. Mia Revels is a biology professor at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah. An expanded version of this article is available in the Research and Conservation section of suttoncenter.org. The funding and banding authority for the study has been administered by the Sutton Center from the outset of the project.



Above: "What is Our Plan Bee?", First Place: Taylor Fogle (Bartlesville High School).



Above: "Flamingos: Nature's Ballerinas", Third Place: Christina Crowder (Metro Christian Academy).



Above: "Eye of the Tiger", Top Ten: Jake Jones (Skiatook High School).



Despite the snow, this year's Sutton Award competition was again a great success! Seventy-two applicants from across Oklahoma competed for a chance to win scholarship awards for continuing education, and over seventeen thousand dollars of funding were distributed to twenty high school students and teachers. Five judges spent countless hours reviewing each piece of art, which accounted for two-thirds of the vote, and each essay, which represented one-third of the vote. This year's judges included Jean Little, Frisco Title Corporation; Deborah Burke, Gilcrease Museum; David Nunneley, NatureWorks; Tom Sears, Sutton Board; and Steve Sherrod, Executive Director of the Sutton Center.

Taylor Fogle, a Bartlesville native, earned first place for her inspiring piece on the plight of bees. Fogle's essay was thought provoking and her art piece was based on a talent she developed from her grandmother. She used wool from sheep that she raised, in a process called felting, and natural dyes to create the vibrant colors. Her work was greatly admired at the Nature Works Art Show.

The top ten Sutton Award winners were displayed at the NatureWorks Art Show and were a hit during the event. Several pieces were sold, including Fogle's, and overall, the patrons were impressed by not only the talent of the students' art but by their research and writing capabilities as well.

The Sutton Center is especially grateful to its sponsors, including NatureWorks, Riggs, Abney, Neal, Turpen, Orbison, & Lewis, Bama Pie Corporation, and Frisco Title Corporation. If you didn't have the opportunity to make this year's show, be certain to mark your calendars for next year because Oklahoma has incredibly talented youth!

Left: NatureWorks attendees peruse student entries in the Sutton booth at the art show.

USFWS undergoing listing action for Lesser Prairie-Chicken

In 1995, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was petitioned to consider listing the Lesser Prairie-Chicken as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. In 1998, the Lesser Prairie-Chicken was given a “warranted but precluded” status, and a listing priority of 8. This listing priority was elevated to 2 in 2008. In January 2011, due to continual population declines and retractions, the USFWS began the comprehensive process of determining whether protection under the Endangered Species Act is necessary. The process is expected to take approximately 18 months, and a decision will likely be announced in 2012.



Joel Sartore, National Geographic

Update on the Lesser Prairie-Chicken Surveys

by Lena C. Larsson and Don H. Wolfe

In the previous newsletter (Winter 2010), we wrote about the Lesser Prairie-Chicken surveys that the Sutton Center began last spring. We have been assessing habitat suitability for the chickens in their range in northwestern Oklahoma and recorded all our current observations of the birds’ whereabouts. The survey has been funded by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. Six people have been active in the field this year, and they covered a lot of ground. An additional 3,126 stopping points were surveyed beyond the 2,019 stopping points from last year in 11 different counties: Cimarron, Texas, Beaver, Harper, Woods, Ellis, Woodward, Dewey, Custer, Roger Mills, and Beckham Counties (Figure 1). The field personnel drove 23-mile routes stopping every mile to assess the habitat within a half-mile radius and record any birds observed (heard and/or sighted). The observation surveys were done in the early mornings during the spring when the males are active on gobbling grounds. We have covered accessible areas where there is possible connectivity between Lesser Prairie-Chicken populations, areas where we consider there is a likelihood of encountering birds, and where there are historical records of their presence.

The gathered data will fine-tune the current knowledge of where there are Lesser Prairie-Chickens in Oklahoma, and we are mapping where habitat remains suitable for them. This information will be used to update the spatially based planning tool designed to reduce the negative effects of development on the Lesser Prairie-Chicken (*Sutton Newsletter Winter 2010*). We want to extend our gratitude for the tireless efforts of our field technicians.

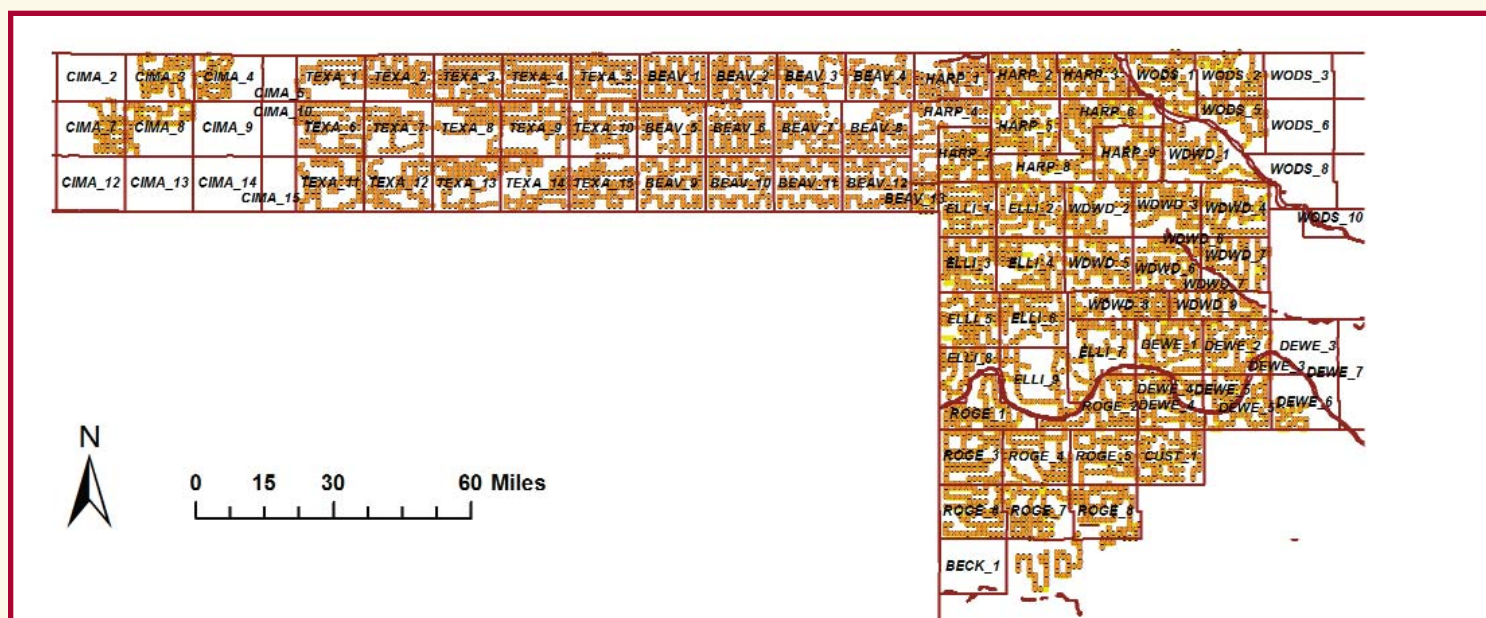


Figure 1. The 5,145 stopping points on 219 routes of Sutton Avian Research Center’s Lesser Prairie-Chicken survey in northwestern Oklahoma in 2010 and 2011.

Gyrfalcons & Ptarmigan in a Changing World – Symposium in Boise Idaho, January 31 – February 3, 2011

by Don H. Wolfe

While Bartlesville was being smothered by a snowstorm that pretty much shut down the city, Steve Sherrod, Ryan VanZant, Jay Tuttle, and I went north to sunny skies and a snow-free Idaho. Equally as ironic, we were there for a special symposium on climate change and its realized and projected effects on Gyrfalcons and ptarmigan (the primary prey of most Gyrfalcons). About 150 attendees were present and at least 12 countries were represented, including Russia, Finland, Norway, Sweden, France, and Iceland. While the ratio of papers and posters presented were about 3:1 falcons to ptarmigan (much to the satisfaction of Steve and Ryan), there were still many interesting talks on the latter, mostly dealing with vegetation responses to climate change, and the effect on ptarmigan distribution and abundance. The symposium also provided an opportunity to present some of the results of our White-tailed Ptarmigan research in New Mexico. Thanks to our colleagues at the Peregrine Fund for hosting the symposium, and for providing the lovely weather. A proceedings from the symposium will be published in the near future.



Mark Waller

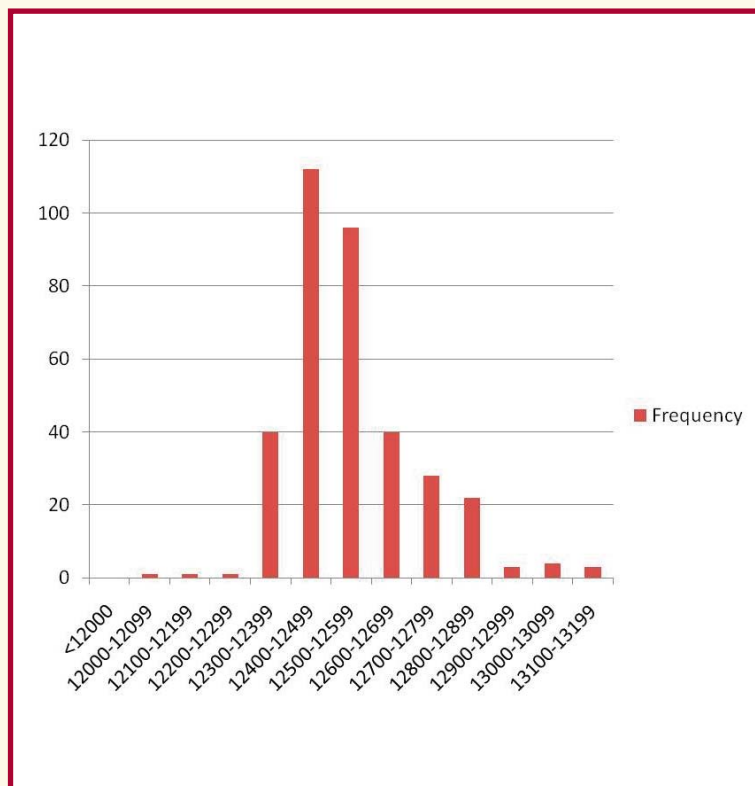


Don Wolfe

White-tailed Ptarmigan Surveys

by Don H. Wolfe

As the hot Oklahoma summer approaches, some Sutton personnel will once again be temporarily escaping the heat by heading to the hills; 12,000-13,000 feet above sea level, to be exact. For the past 5 years, we have been surveying the alpine peaks and ridges of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in northern New Mexico for White-tailed Ptarmigan. Since our last update (*Sutton Newsletter, Winter 2010*), we have presented some of our preliminary results at the Gyr Falcon and ptarmigan conference in Boise, Idaho, and have submitted a manuscript for inclusion in the proceedings of that conference. Four survey trips are planned again for 2011, one each in June, July, August, and September. Over 87% of all White-tailed Ptarmigan sign was found at over 12,400 feet (3,780 meters), and over 99% of all sign was found over 12,300 feet (3,750 meters), even though the majority of alpine habitat in New Mexico is between 12,000 feet (3,660 meters) and 12,300 (3,750 meters; see figure, right). Little by little, we are getting closer to having all potential ptarmigan habitat in the state surveyed. We are also beginning a collaborative effort with other White-tailed Ptarmigan researchers to conduct range-wide genetics analyses to determine if there are genetic consequences due to isolation.



Frequency of White-tailed Ptarmigan sightings or sign (feathers or feces) by feet of elevation.

CROSSING

PATHS



by M. Alan Jenkins



Alan Jenkins

Alan with the mobile tracking antenna rig.

During our 8-year (1985-1992) Bald Eagle Reintroduction Project the Sutton Center banded and marked more than 275 juvenile Bald Eagles before releasing them back to their wild fates. We attached radio transmitters to them so that we could find, recover, and help them if they encountered problems, as some indeed did. These radios give out 'beeps' that we can use to determine their locations based on the volume of the beeps when using a directional antenna. Sweeping the receiver antenna around and listening to the loudness of the signal lets us determine the eagle's azimuth (its relative direction) from us. The signal sounds loudest when it's pointed toward the radioed eagle.

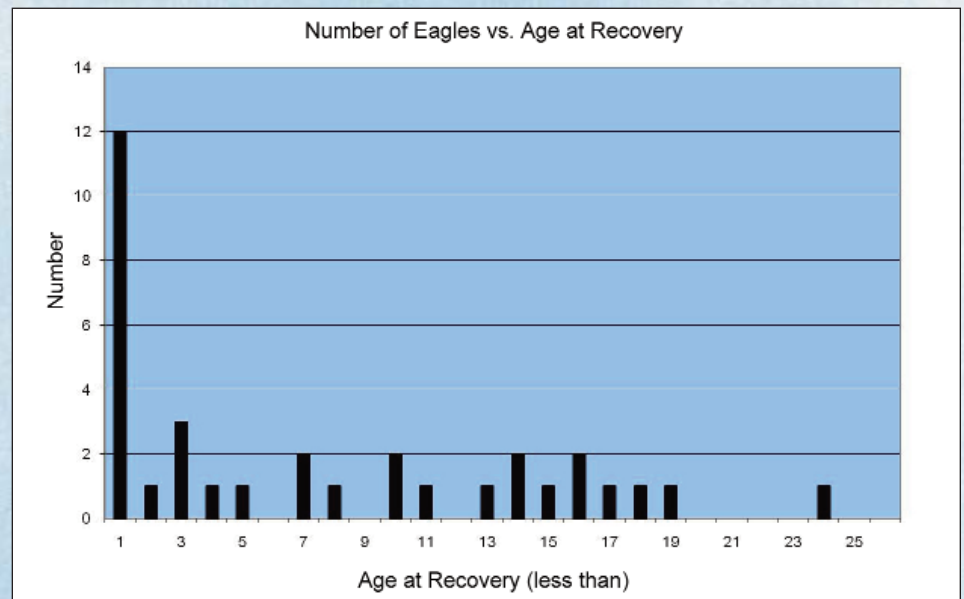
We also banded the eagles we released with aluminum U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service bands which are uniquely numbered. These metal bands last the life of the eagle. They are riveted together so even the strongest of eagles can't tear them off. We also "marked" each eagle with a large white patch by bleaching a section of feathers, different sections on each bird, with Lady Clairol

Hair Lightener. Unlike a band, the blonde patch (preferred by gentlemen biologists) can be seen from long distances, even without aid of binoculars or spotting scopes. For example, one of our eagle release technicians saw an eagle he had helped release months previously by noticing its bleach mark when he crossed under its flight path, as he was driving on I-95 in Minnesota. We also adorned the eagles with plastic bands bearing 1-inch high alphanumeric codes that could be more easily read at a distance than metal bands. These bands are termed color bands, and our assigned colors were black letters and numbers on a white background. Color bands are an important element in this story.

Of the 275 eagles we consider 'successfully released' we have gotten notices from the Bird Banding Laboratory about the fate of 34 thus far. There are

many ways for eagles to die: due to Mississippi alligators (4!), collisions with wires or bread trucks, powerline electrocutions (a mated nesting pair near Red Oak, OK), shooting, poison, territorial disputes, and even as you incubate eggs while your mate eats and relaxes, and you are unexpectedly struck by lightning. A-03 (his color band number), our third-ever released Bald Eagle, was thus killed.

A remarkable factor in the survivorship of Bald Eagles is that most of their post-fledging mortality comes in the first year (see the bar graph below). Surviving its first winter is the young eagle's toughest problem. No statistical analysis is necessary to see that the number of eagles recovered (found dead or injured and taken into captivity, and the band reported to us) is significantly higher in their first year. It's not easy being young.

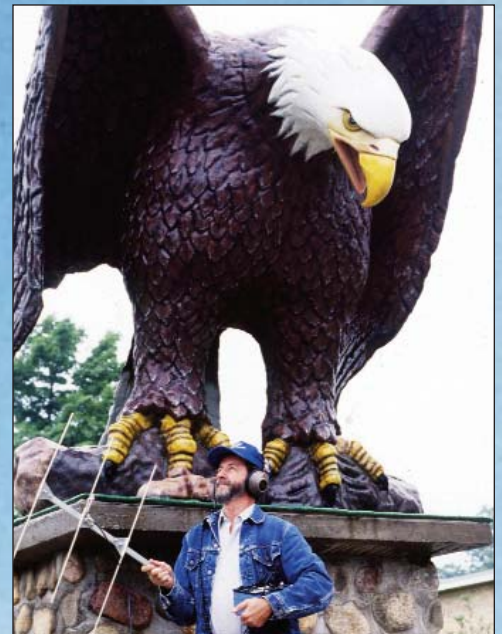


Another path in this story begins in 1987 when the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company gave us a one-time research grant to study where the young eagles went after they were independent of our care and feeding at the release tower; we were also studying their survivorship and mortality after dispersal. We (I) would follow the radio-equipped eagles as they left the release tower area at Sequoyah National Wildlife Refuge south of Vian, OK. On June 21 of that year I was stationed a few miles to the north of the refuge scanning the radio frequencies for each eagle when I detected a signal that was now north of me---one eagle (called A-26 after his color band) was making a move to migrate, close to noon, a time of maximum thermals. After excitedly double-checking my signals, I phoned home to say I wouldn't make supper that night and began tracking the bird's progress. I got to Delaware County, OK, and lost A-26's signal because the scarcity of section line roads there prevented me from following the eagle in the direction it had taken. Disappointed, I drove to Miami, OK to rent an airplane (and a pilot to go, please). After some fast talking I strapped 2 bulky antennas to his wing struts and we flew north. Soon I heard the radio signal for eagle A-26 so we flew back to the airport. I hurriedly tossed some dollars at the pilot and charged off in my truck to intercept A-26 near where I had last heard his signal from the plane. We reconnected only to come to a sad parting at Baxter Springs, MO. Owing to smothering radio interference which, I was to learn, is common near cities and towns, I couldn't hear his signals. While rushing to hire another plane, my scanner announced reassuring beeps from eagle A-31's trusty radio. This was my last chance to succeed.

A-31 led me on some wild adventures (who knew eagles migrated through downtown Omaha, and how can Nebraskans follow their migrating eagles in such traffic!). Once A-31 crossed the Platte River twice in areas where there were no bridges. I doggedly followed her north and east until I found myself on the extreme northern end of the Keweenaw Peninsula in the Upper Peninsula of

Michigan as A-31's signal faded away. She was flying north toward Thunder Bay, Ontario (my goodness, that's CANADA!) and crossing the remote island national park in Lake Superior, Isle Royale (there be wolves there!). I turned back to finally get to my supper; I had missed 11 such home-cooked feasts---but for such an adventure!

August 1987 came with its oppressive "Green Country" humidity and heat. "I need a vacation," I decided. Taking a cue from the eagles, I drove north to cooler latitudes and rented a plane in Duluth, MN. I soon located signals from A-31, A-28, and even a third eagle. Evidently A-31 had not liked or had been deported from Canada, and had moved to Wisconsin. I spent four very pleasant days on the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage, a reservoir near Mercer, WI, camped on a tiny island monitoring her movements, mostly by using the radio. Only a few times did I actually lay eyes on her; the first was when she was very forcefully being invited out of the nesting territory of a local Bald Eagle. At other times I detected her soaring high above me, unresponsive to my shouted salutations and arm waving. On August 10th I left her



Alan Jenkins

Telemetry makes it easy to find Bald Eagles!

to monitor the third eagle, A-28, who was established on Lake Winnibigoshish, MN not far from the headwaters of the Mississippi River.

During this project I learned several important things about A-31, such as she had a 9 to 5 daily flight schedule, but took no lunch or coffee breaks; she didn't instinctively understand the effects of wind on flight---she was blown off course and would labor for hours flying into a

Continued on page 8



Alan Jenkins

An aerial view of the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage Reservoir where A-31 was located in August, 1987.

Crossing Paths, continued from page 7

headwind while making no forward progress; and I learned that when captured by hand, Wisconsin's crawdads will pinch.

A-31 was the only released eagle I was able to follow for any significant distance during the dispersal north, so the data analysis sample size is quite small. However, I analyzed her movements and calculated that, on average, she travelled 150 miles in one full day; but only progressed a mean of 76 miles north, some days even making negative progress north. She labored a mean 7.8 hours/day of uninterrupted flight, and her mean daily course was 025 degrees true, slightly east of the presumed northerly course.

Twenty-four years later: A letter from the federal bird-banding lab came in the mail; I didn't even open it until the next day. It contained a banding recovery report, a report that's generated when someone reports finding a band, usually on a dead bird. After translating the codes and looking up the numbers in our records, I saw that the eagle with the reported band was the one I had tracked all those years ago; A-31 had once again crossed my path. She had been found injured with a broken femur on the Keota arm of Robert S. Kerr Reservoir, OK, 10-15 miles from her release tower. I know of at least 3 different nesting territories on the Keota arm. It's pleasant to think that she was one of the birds nesting there during the 20 years I surveyed Oklahoma nesting Bald Eagles. And so, we meet



An immature hacked eagle with a transmitter on its back.

again; I admit to being emotional when I realized this eagle was "she."

Presently, A-31 is being cared for by the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma's Bald and Golden Eagle facility, the Grey Snow Eagle House near Perkins, OK. She has had surgery to repair her femur and will be evaluated for future release.

As for my path, I intend to retire from my life's work before the end of this year. Even so, it's still possible the paths that A-31 and I take will cross again.

Double your donation!

Many companies, including ConocoPhillips, will match your donation to the Sutton Center, even for retirees! Check with your human resources department for information on how you can boost your conservation impact!



A Special “Suttonite”

by Dan L. Reinking

Sutton volunteer Bonnie Gall has been associated with us for over 20 years, and is one of our longest serving and most faithful volunteers. Her love of birds and generosity with her time have combined to assist the Sutton Center with a myriad of projects during much of its existence. Now retired, she found time to help us even when she was working full time as a research chemist. Like many birders, she can remember a specific moment of discovery that sparked her interest in birds. For her it was the sight of a Painted Bunting on the deck of her family home not long after moving to Bartlesville. The fantastic but seemingly impossible combination of colors on a wild bird right in her own backyard led her to learn more about birds. And learn she did, becoming involved with a local chapter of the National Audubon Society, organizing a local Christmas Bird Count for many years, volunteering as editor of the Oklahoma Ornithological Society’s newsletter, completing Breeding Bird Surveys, and serving on the Oklahoma Bird Records Committee. But most important to us, she has helped with many Sutton Center projects.

Hundreds of extensive bird surveys by many volunteers were required to complete the Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas book, and Bonnie did more than her share. Her keen ears and careful work ferreted out even the shy species in the areas she surveyed. Her efforts on this project were highlighted on a television documentary by Tulsa journalist (now KOTV news anchor and Sutton board member) Scott Thompson. She also authored several species accounts in the Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas that resulted from this project, and assisted editor Dan Reinking with many tasks in the production of the book.

She has helped members of our staff over the years with lengthy, arduous tasks such as proofing reams of data from many of our research studies. She organized, shelved, and created a complete database of our library collection, making it possible for us to access books that were once packed away or scattered in various locations. She has led art tours of our administration building during open houses and worked the gift shop at our Wild Brew fundraisers. When we have a need, she is there, always cheerful and ready to help, and we love her for it. Thank you, Bonnie!

Top: Bonnie Gall on a birding trip at Big Bend National Park. Photography by Dan Reinking. Middle: A Painted Bunting, the species that sparked Bonnie’s interest in birds. Photography by Steve Metz. Bottom: Bonnie describing bird specimens to children at the Sutton picnic. Photography by Dan Reinking.



Quail House Renovations

by Luke A. Foster

Built in 1985 to produce food for nearly 300 growing eagles, the quail house has been a part of the Sutton Center for many years. Our quail have been sold to falconers, herpetologists, scientists and zoos all over the United States. Now, in 2011 the quail house is getting a new look under the direction of Luke Foster.

After a heavy scrubbing and cleaning, the barn is getting a fresh paint job and the brooder rooms are being remodeled with new energy efficient lighting, heat lamps and ventilation systems, not to mention fly control lights.

The grower rooms are also receiving new lighting as well as new stronger wire flooring and a new winch system to raise the floors for cleaning. The barn has new egg storage trays to protect the eggs until they are ready to go into the incubators.

These renovations not only give the barn that new barn look again, but they also make it more eco-friendly and provide more efficient quail production.



Quail project manager, Luke Foster stands in the newly painted hallway of the quail house.

Karen Kilbourne

EDUCATION, SUTTON STYLE!

by Ryan A. VanZant, and Jennifer N. Reeder

The Sutton Center Education team began this past semester with promise of a full calendar. With the “Blizzard of 2011” and “Snowmageddon” in January and February causing school closures of more than a week statewide, we were afraid our schedule would take a big hit as administrators and teachers tried to use each following day to make up for lost time before April testing. Indeed, we did have to cancel or reschedule a few shows in the Oklahoma City area, but what we thought were bad luck storms proved to be just the opposite. This spring was, by far, the busiest and most successful season “*It’s All About Birds!*” has ever seen. We were able to reach many new schools and school districts, as well as return to several that have enjoyed the Sutton Center’s free-flight education program in the past.

With a return to Norman and Oklahoma City from March into the first week of April, we had a chance to explore new parts of the capital city. The Oklahoma City area, like Tulsa, has a great diversity of schools and districts. “*It’s All About Birds!*” has been seen at schools in several of the suburbs and small towns that

surround OKC, but typically, it has been difficult to break into Oklahoma City Public Schools. The biggest problem has been finding the right contact in a district that large. Thanks to several connections made at the Wildlife Expo in September, however, we were able to get our foot in the door in the City. This year the education team was able to present at Marcus Garvey and Northwest Academy, both which are Oklahoma City Public Schools. We got rave reviews from both schools’ students and teachers! Next year we plan to expand our program throughout the district, and we already have a lot of interest.

The spring season took us to many parts of the state, from small town Tuttle to the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History in Norman to inner city Oklahoma City mere blocks from the state capitol building. We were finally able to return home to Bartlesville in mid-April where we geared up for our elementary school field trip season. Each of the 7 Bartlesville elementary schools and Riverfield Country Day School in Tulsa brought students up to the Sutton Center for a fun bird-filled day. These trips were a welcome change of pace for the education staff and our volunteers. While still exhausting, the younger kids are definitely livelier and the feedback is instant. We often receive enthusiastic and usually entertaining thank you letters from these students following their trips to the Center.

Once the middle schools finished their testing and our field trip groups were complete, it was once again time to hit the road. This time the “bird van” headed south to Tishomingo to take part in the Arbuckle-Simpson Nature Festival. Schools from across the region



Dan Reinking

The elementary kids play games at the Center which teach predator/prey relationships in the natural world.

were invited to take in the “*It’s All About Birds!*” program and filled the auditorium at Murray State College for two great shows!

We recently finished the school year closer to home. There are several schools in Green Country that are large enough for us to visit each year. Jenks was the first of our annual shows. In recent years we added Owasso 8th graders to the annual rotation with an end of the year spring show that always gets great reviews. Not to be outdone, this year the Union 6th and 7th Grade Center jumped on board. Many years, these schools have enrollment numbers nearing 1,000 students per grade, and it is a great way to kick off and end the “*It’s All About Birds!*” school year schedule.

Each year we schedule more programs into middle schools around the state of Oklahoma and the dates we have available are filling up quickly. If you are a teacher, parent, or just have an interest in bringing “*It’s All About Birds!*” to a school near you, please contact Jennifer Reeder [jcharles@ou.edu] or Ryan VanZant [rvanzant@ou.edu] by email or by calling the Sutton Center.



The Sutton Center’s “*It’s All About Birds!*” show always has good attendance by all ages when it is presented at the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History in Norman, Oklahoma.



Ryan VanZant

Students at Northwest Academy in Oklahoma City are surprised by the rats crossing the stage during the "It's All About Birds!" show.



Ryan VanZant

Feedback from students and teachers at Northwest Academy reported that they found the "It's All About Birds!" show highly informative and engaging.



Ryan VanZant

Jennifer Reeder explains the specialized anatomy involved in owl hearing to 150 students at Byrd Middle School in Tulsa this May. The asymmetrically placed ears of the owls allow them to pinpoint exactly from where a sound is coming.



SAVE THE DATE!

July 30, 2011

With summer just beginning, it is time to go to your calendars and mark Saturday, July 30, 2011, as the date for this year's Wild Brew! Wild Brew is the largest fundraising event for the Sutton Center, and it's great fun!

In this, it's 13th year, Wild Brew will be held again in the Central Park Hall at Expo Square from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. As in the past, there is a special Patron's Only Hour from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. during which time there will be a bird show and special tastings from some of the finest restaurants in Tulsa. Music will be provided by Mark Bruner and Shelby Eicher and by the Fabulous Mid Life Crisis Band.

To be a patron or to order general admission tickets you can go to the Wild Brew website at www.wildbrew.org or call the Wild Brew Hotline at 918-633-1308.

All tickets must be purchased prior to July 30, and you must be 21 years of age or older to enter.

The Greatest Party Ever Hatched!

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(918) 336-BIRD
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Paul B. Bell Jr., Ph.D.	M. David Riggs
David M. Delahay	Gary D. Schnell, Ph.D.
Rebecca L. Dixon	Steve K. Sherrod, Ph.D.
Donald E. Eller	Scott D. Thompson
Warren D. Harden	Caryn C. Vaughn, Ph.D.
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VOLUNTEERS

Mark, Rhonda, & Noah Cannady	Various
Bonnie Gall	Various
Suzy Harris	Various
Sally Jenkins	Various
Chuck Linn	Ptarmigan Study
Linda Maholland	Various
Margie Nolan	Various
Shelbi Reese	Education Program
Rebecca Renfro	Education Program
Madeline Wolfe	Ptarmigan Study

SUTTON CENTER STAFF

Steve K. Sherrod, Ph.D.	Executive Director
M. Alan Jenkins	Assistant Director
Michael A. Patten, Ph.D.	Director of Research
Dan L. Reinking	Senior Biologist
Don H. Wolfe	Senior Biologist
Karen A. Kilbourne	Managerial Associate
Hillary A. Parkhurst	Development Coordinator
Lena C. Larsson, Ph.D.	Post-Doctoral Researcher
Ryan A. VanZant	Education/Bird Trainer
Jennifer N. Charles	Environmental Educator
Lucas A. Foster	Quail Production

SEASONAL STAFF

Eric Beck	Prairie-Chicken Study
Kathy Dawson	Prairie-Chicken Study
Crystina Griffin	Prairie-Chicken Study
Randy Lewis	Prairie-Chicken Study
	Ptarmigan Study
Kim Potter	Ptarmigan Study
Fumiko Sakoda	Prairie-Chicken Study
Rick Thomas	Winter Bird Atlas
Ryan Christensen	Education Program

