

George
Miksch
Sutton

AVIAN RESEARCH CENTER



The

SUTTON

NEWSLETTER

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

Volume 49, Winter 2017

***Masked Bobwhite Quail
arrive at Sutton!***

The first group of Masked Bobwhite
eggs hatches! Photo by: Dan Reinking.



The Sutton Newsletter

*Winter 2017
edition*

- 2 Letter from Executive Director
White-tailed Ptarmigan Update
- 3 Masked Bobwhite Project
- 4 Night Moves
- 5 Hamerstrom Award Transport Boxes
- 6 Winter Bird Atlas Sage Grouse Book
- 7 Henslow's Sparrow
- 8 Immediate Needs Sutton Award 2018
- 9 Wild Brew 2017
- 10 Presentations Natural Landscaping Day of Caring
- 11 Thank you to Sutton Supporters Publications

Below: Bensar, a former Sutton Center eagle is projected on the Empire State Building.



Photo by Joel Sartore

2 The Sutton Newsletter

Dear Sutton Center friends,

Thank you for ensuring that we are keeping very busy as 2017 is wrapping up. We couldn't do this conservation work if it were not for your support.

I am happy to say that the quail barn is now as good as new after a thorough renovation. Also, it's occupied by masked bobwhites! Eggs from Arizona hatched here at the Sutton Center in late September and early October. These chicks are growing fast and will become breeders for producing birds to release next year.

Meanwhile, preparations for prairie-chicken releases have been extensive, and a special thank you goes to the volunteers who helped build transport boxes (page 5). Your volunteering is integral to our successes, and we appreciate your help immensely. The prairie-chicken breeding facility's two interns, Rebecca and Leah, can share an earful of new experiences after just a month.

We are very thankful for their enthusiasm and assistance together with the other staff. Everybody pitches in and things get done! There have been multiple journeys to Nebraska to set up acclimation pens and returning greater prairie-chickens to where we collected their parents as eggs. We will share more in the next issue since this is going on right now.

We are so excited to announce the publication of the first Winter Bird Atlas by our own Dan Reinking. Dan has been pouring his heart into this work, and Oklahoma now needs a repeat of the Breeding Bird Atlas. It has been twenty years since the breeding bird surveys started and a lot can happen with the state's bird populations over such a long time. It is a big undertaking for which we are trying to secure funding.

Also, don't miss our board member Noppadol Paothong's beautiful book on sage-grouse – his photos are astounding! Your donations helped with the publishing. Both Dan and Nop are presenting their work as part of a lecture series at Grogg's Green Barn in Tulsa. The first lecturer was Dr. David Hancock who shared many stories and photos of his life-long commitment to eagle conservation which made for a splendid evening complemented with delicious food. Keep an eye on our website and FaceBook for more events.

As a non-profit, we cannot rest on our laurels. We are determined to continue finding solutions for conservation of birds and the natural world, and we are working on rebuilding the education program that was lost due to state budget cuts. We therefore hope that you include us in your charitable giving this season!

Executive Director



Photo by Mark Blumer

Executive Director Dr. Lena Larsson holding a young greater prairie-chicken

WHITE-TAILED PTARMIGAN UPDATE

by Don H. Wolfe

This summer, we made four trips to the splendid Sangre de Cristo Mountains in New Mexico to conduct further White-tailed Ptarmigan (WTPT) surveys and to collect vegetation data. Over 700 new vegetation ground-truth points were recorded that will be used along with high-resolution aerial and satellite imagery to map alpine vegetation within ptarmigan range in New Mexico. We assisted a New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) biologist capture and radio tag three male and two female WTPT in August, 2016. One of the radioed males was killed by a predator in March, and the remaining two males and two females ended up together to form two pairs, which may indicate that there are very few remaining birds in the New Mexico population. This grim news is further supported by the paucity of birds seen during the summer survey trips, and by additional surveys conducted by NMDGF personnel. What seems to be happening now is that the remaining birds have been retracting to the best habitat available (high elevation with rifts and/or boulder fields, and with willows nearby), but even the best may not be good enough to ward off the threats of warming conditions in the alpine. Field assistants in 2017 included Brandon Gibson, Emily Curci, Brian Turner, and John Sholtis.

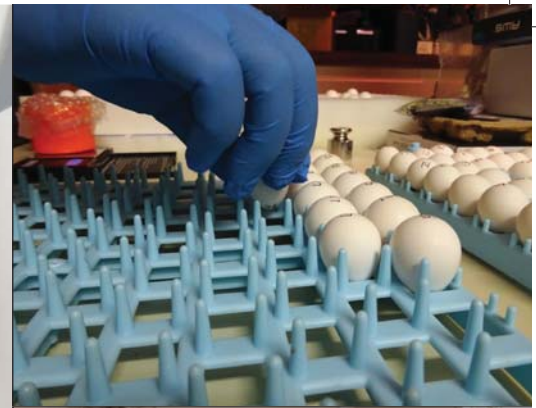
Masked Bobwhite Project

by Don H. Wolfe

Photography by Dan Reinking and Lena Larsson

As previously reported, the Sutton Center recently received funding from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to renovate our existing quail building, previously used to breed *Coturnix* quail as food during our Bald Eagle reintroduction program, and for feeding our education birds. While old walls were being removed, new walls were constructed, thorough sanitation was performed, new paint was applied, lights were replaced, a new back-up generator was installed, and two shipments of Masked Bobwhite eggs were transported from the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. As these eggs were produced at the very end of the breeding season in Arizona, fertility was ~ 65%, but the hatchability of the fertile eggs was over 85%. Thus, we now have 175 young Masked Bobwhite chicks that will become the core breeding stock for future release efforts in Arizona and Sonora. Emily Curci has been hired as an aviculturist to help raise these rare birds. Emily previously worked at the Buenos Aires NWR, including assisting with their breeding program, and she also conducted Lesser Prairie-Chicken surveys for the Sutton Center in 2016. Her expertise, and passionate care for the birds has contributed considerably to our success thus far.

Meanwhile, in Arizona, the first release of Masked Bobwhite in a decade is on-going. In early October, 132 young Masked Bobwhite were released with 10 wild-caught male Texas Bobwhite surrogates that had been vasectomized, with the idea that they would care for the Masked Bobwhites and teach them to locate food and avoid predators. At the time of this writing, four of the Texas Bobwhites are being radio-tracked with an unknown number of young Masked Bobwhites. An additional four Texas males were killed by predators, one lost his radio transmitter, and one has completely disappeared. While the fate of the young Masked Bobwhites released with those latter adult males is likely not favorable, we are pleased that others have survived the first few weeks. Truthfully, a very low survivorship of pen-reared quail is expected, but we are hopeful that 5-10% survive the first year. With the addition of Masked Bobwhite produced at the Sutton Center, upwards of 1000 may be released in Arizona in 2018, which could result in 50-100 surviving to breeding age. The wild population should then gradually build over the next several years to the point (again, hopefully) that the breeding output of wild birds equals or surpasses the number released. Those readers who are quail hunters or versed in quail biology are likely familiar with the compensatory/additive mortality continuum, which is based on the assumption (supported by numerous field studies) that only 20-30% of a given year's production survive to breed the following year. For that reason, in areas where quail are hunted, birds that are harvested in early fall are close to the compensatory side of the continuum, while those that are harvested late (closer to breeding season) are closer to the additive side. The main point is that survivorship through the first year of a quail's life is low even for wild birds, and is even lower for captive-reared quail. But by releasing several hundred or more per year, and by monitoring and continually tweaking the release methods, as well as continual improvements and expansion of suitable habitat, the outlook for this rarest of birds is looking better!



Grouse News...

"Night Moves"

by John E. Toepfer

Photography by
Dan Lipp
and
Steve Sherrod

Dr. John Toepfer with night lighting gear about to capture a prairie-chicken, October 2017.

Nebraska night lighting crew left to right Dan Lipp, John Toepfer, Brandon Gibson, October 2017.

In over 45 years of studying radio-marked greater prairie-chickens, the question I am asked most often is "how do you catch them to put the radios on"? There are a number of methods. We capture them with walk-in funnel traps on booming grounds during the spring, drop nets over corn bait piles during winter, and by night lighting during summer. The most interesting and exciting of these is night lighting. Night lighting is not a method unique for prairie-chicken capture. Night lighting is called "torching" in Europe.

The use of a spotlight and a long-handled, large net has been used for decades to capture waterfowl, pheasants, cranes, and pigeons, to mention a few. We use night lighting to recapture radioed individuals during the wing molt (August – mid-October). We usually do this to replace their transmitters as most batteries die after about 18 to 24 months. We also try to capture night roosting (sleeping) birds near the radioed individuals, so-called "freebies."

Night lighting works since the prairie-chickens are more reluctant to fly while molting flight feathers. When they do fly, it's usually less than a couple hundred yards, making them relatively easy to recapture at night. If you miss, try again!

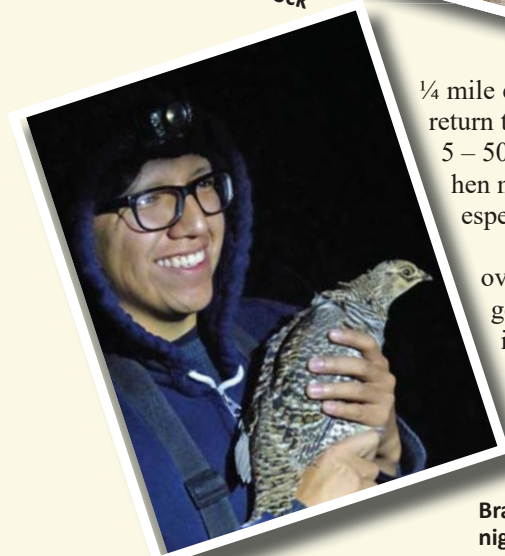
Prairie-chicken "chicks" typically night roost within 10-30 feet of their mother until they are 12 weeks old, so this method is also used to capture young chicks. We have captured and radioed all chicks of a brood from a single hen many times; sometimes up to 12 chicks. Chicks are easier to capture than adults and hold so tight that if you are very careful, you can walk through a brood without flushing them or their mother. We call this "parting the Red Sea."

We have followed one hen captured as a chick for 7½ years, a handful for 4-5 years and countless individuals for 2-3 years. Data show that hens have fidelity to their previous years' nesting areas, and they will nest within ¼ mile even if they winter 25 – 75 miles away. However, young of the year hens do not return to their natal areas (where they hatched and were raised) and will disperse to nest 5 – 50 miles away. Young prairie-chicken cocks remain near their natal areas, so young hen movements are what prevent inbreeding. This is in contrast to many other species, especially mammals, where the young males usually disperse.

I have captured and radioed over 850 chicks/young of the year and recaptured over 1,500 birds in Wisconsin and Minnesota for previous studies. This year I am getting help from Brandon Gibson and Daniel Lipp to night light prairie-chickens in the Nebraska Sandhills. We are putting transmitters on them so we can compare their survival and movements with the greater prairie-chickens that have been raised at the Sutton Center and released back to this area where their parents were collected as eggs in 2015. As of 15 October, we had captured 24 prairie-chickens of which 15 are young of the year - all "freebies"!

Brandon Gibson, Sutton Wildlife Technician with night lighted greater prairie-chicken in Nebraska, October 2017.

Greater prairie-chicken cock in night roost.



Grouse News...

Prairie Grouse Technical Council: Hamerstrom Award 2017

by John E. Toepfer

It is my great pleasure to announce that Donald H. Wolfe, Senior Biologist at Sutton Avian Research Center, was the recipient of the 2017 Prairie Grouse Technical Council's Hamerstrom Award. Dr. K. C. Jensen received the award for 2016. The award is given annually based on letters of recommendation and support based on an individual's contribution to prairie grouse conservation.

Don has worked at Sutton as a researcher for 33 years on a variety of wildlife projects: eagles, grassland birds, lesser prairie-chickens in Oklahoma and New Mexico, and greater prairie-chickens in Oklahoma. He is a classic wildlife biologist, field oriented, passionate and a professional that gets good things done. I have known Don for over 25 years and have collaborated with him on prairie-chicken research. He is an active member of The Wildlife Society and has a wide range of field research and management experiences, including over 80 scientific publications. Don is a member of the Masked Bobwhite Recovery Team and is, together with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in the process of establishing a masked bobwhite breeding program at the Sutton Center.

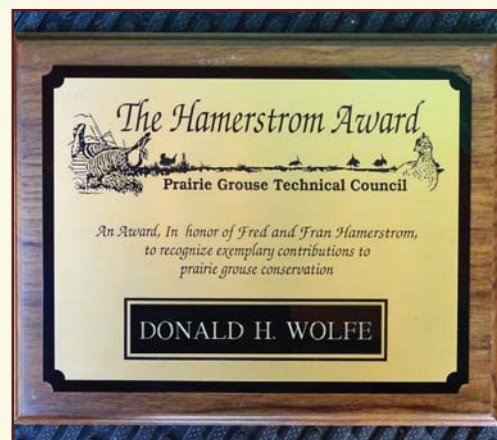
Don is involved in studying how climate change influences the small white-tailed ptarmigan population in New Mexico, and he also has been a leader and champion of fence marking to reduce bird collisions. Hundreds of miles of fence have been removed and/or marked in the lesser prairie-chicken range under his direction. Finally, one of his many current projects is an educational program informing hunters and the public about alternatives to lead bullets since residual lead is a poison to birds and mammals that scavenge the remains of game killed by hunters.

Also, one of Don's major and lasting contributions to grouse and the prairie grouse world is the development and regular updating of the Sutton Grouse Bibliography which contains thousands of references. It is an extensive, ever-changing online bibliography on the Sutton Center website that I have used too many times to count, and is used regularly by grouse experts throughout the world.

I know of few that have contributed more to the well-being of prairie grouse and wildlife than Don Wolfe, and he deserves being recognized for his contributions by the PGTC as the 2017 recipient of the PGTC Hamerstrom Award. Congratulations Don Wolfe and well done!!



Left to Right: Don Wolfe and K.C. Jensen, recipients of the Hamerstrom Award for 2017 and 2016 respectively.

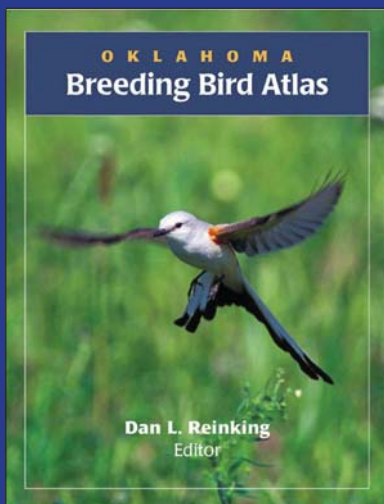


Dwight Boesiger (left) and Brian Albert show off some of their transport boxes.

To Move A Chicken Across the Road

Story and Photography by Steve K. Sherrod

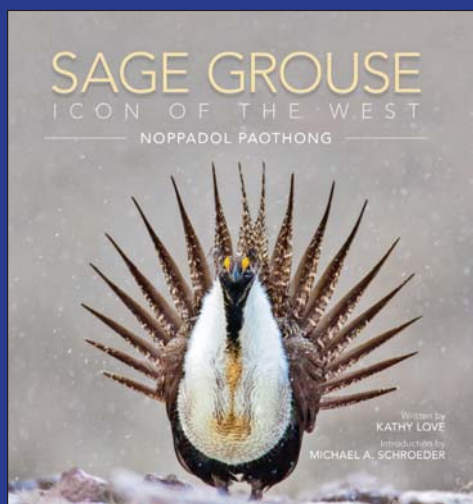
After a very demanding season of constructing buildings and breeding prairie-chickens including incubating, hatching, and raising young birds, one might not give much thought to releasing the offspring. However, to move prairie-chickens from our facility to the release site some 10 hours away is an extreme challenge. Because these birds are so powerfully explosive, that is, adapted to blast off into the air instinctively at the least sign of disturbance in order to escape a potential predator, they cannot be placed in wire cages or they can literally kill themselves by thrashing into the sides. Rather, specially sized boxes with sliding doors, foam head boards, and passive ventilation systems are needed. Thanks to many hours of precision work by Dwight Boesiger in his impressive shop along with woodworking volunteers Brian Albert and Dwayne Mittag, thirty of these boxes were put together and sanded on very short notice. Brandon Hough of Hough Homes followed up by spray painting the units with polyurethane, and Rebecca Krasa, Leah Zebovitz, and Bonnie Gibson constructed the special foam headboards. We are extremely grateful for help from all!!!



Oklahoma's first breeding bird atlas was completed by the Sutton Center and published in 2004.



Oklahoma leads the way with the fall 2017 publication of the first statewide winter bird atlas in the U.S.



6 The Sutton Newsletter

Oklahoma's Pioneering New Winter Bird Atlas is Now Available!

by Dan L. Reinking

For decades now, breeding bird atlas projects have been documenting nesting bird distributions across the U.S. and around the world. The Sutton Center conducted Oklahoma's first breeding bird atlas project from 1997 to 2001, establishing a valuable baseline against which to compare changes in breeding bird distributions over time.

While Oklahoma was one of the last states to complete a breeding bird atlas, the Sutton Center has since led the way by completing and publishing the first statewide winter bird atlas in the United States. This newly published *Oklahoma Winter Bird Atlas* is similar to the *Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas* in that it compiles five years of data from carefully organized, statewide bird surveys conducted by volunteers and Sutton staff.

The main difference, as reflected in its title, is that these surveys were conducted from December through mid-February rather than during the summer. Fewer studies of birds and their distributions have taken place during the winter months, even though this time of year is critical for birds which must survive the winter in order to produce young during the following breeding season.

While many species that nest in Oklahoma, including our state bird the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, migrate south during our winter months, even more species move into the state for the winter. Numerous species of ducks, geese, gulls, hawks, sparrows and other birds migrate from areas such as the northern U.S. and Canada to spend the winter in Oklahoma, and this new book documents where in the state they are found.

Together, these companion volumes will serve as important references for monitoring future changes in Oklahoma's birds. Atlas projects are designed to be repeated, usually at 20 or 25-year intervals, so it is time for the Sutton Center to consider a second *Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas*, and to learn more about Oklahoma's birds and how their changes reflect changes to Oklahoma's environment.

Sage Grouse, Icon of the West

Story and Photography by Noppadol Paothong

Sage Grouse, Icon of the West is lavishly illustrated with photographs by award-winning nature photographer, and Sutton Board member, Noppadol Paothong. These breathtaking images—many showing aspects of sage-grouse life never before documented—are accompanied by the lively text of accomplished natural history writer Kathy Love. Together, they tell the story of this grouse, the habitat it needs, and the threats faced by both.

The High Desert of the West may seem empty, but it is home to diverse and abundant wildlife that rely on this unique ecosystem. The sage-grouse is the most famous species to make its home there and nowhere else.

This attractive volume fosters an appreciation of sage-grouse and an understanding of their conservation challenges. Readers emerge with a deeper sense of the many interests affecting the sagebrush ecosystem and the conservation efforts being implemented. To be successful, these efforts must juggle the interests of all—humans and wildlife. With wisdom and foresight, future generations will still be able to marvel at the beauty and grace of these iconic birds.

In Search of the Elusive Henslow's Sparrow...

Story and Photography by Dan L. Reinking

Right: A Henslow's Sparrow in Osage County, Oklahoma. Standing dead grasses from previous growing seasons are a key component of Henslow's Sparrow breeding habitat in Oklahoma tallgrass prairie. **Background photo:** The grassland area in the foreground with significant amounts of standing, dead grasses from previous growing seasons is suitable breeding habitat for Henslow's Sparrows, while the background pasture has been more recently burned and does not offer enough structure or residual cover to attract nesting Henslow's Sparrows.



In the summer of 1996, the Sutton Center conducted surveys in northeastern Oklahoma for Henslow's Sparrows. This uncommon grassland sparrow had been declining in much of its range within the eastern United States, but in an interesting example of a range shift, seemed to be becoming more common at the western edge of the tallgrass prairie region in eastern Kansas, western Missouri, and northeastern Oklahoma.

Henslow's Sparrows have specific habitat requirements that can make their distribution very patchy, depending on where suitable habitat is available in a given year. Our 1996 study also included an evaluation of the habitats preferred by Henslow's Sparrows in northeastern Oklahoma, and we found unusually clear results. Henslow's Sparrows inhabited areas with tall, dense grass, a thick litter layer of old vegetation, and large amounts of standing dead grasses from previous growing seasons. These conditions were typically found in areas that had not been burned for at least two years and were not being heavily grazed.

Finding a rare grassland bird within the extensive tallgrass prairies of northeastern Oklahoma may seem like finding a needle in haystack, but two things really helped with our search. Knowing what good habitat for Henslow's Sparrows looks like made it relatively easy to systematically drive the county road networks looking for potential habitat. The other aid in our search was the persistent singing performed by Henslow's Sparrows during the breeding season. They sing very frequently throughout the day, making an otherwise inconspicuous bird much easier to detect. Our field crew scoured the back roads of eight counties in search of their feeble but distinctive song, ultimately locating birds in six counties in 1996.

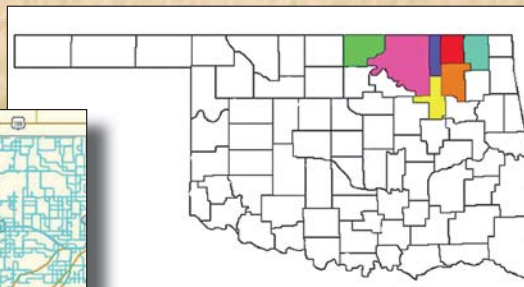
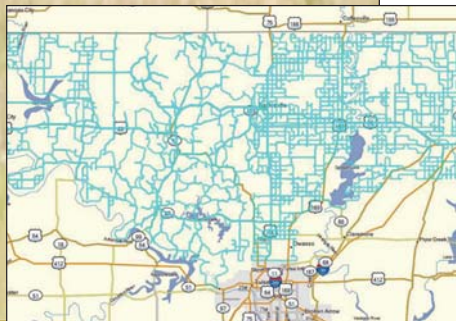
The Henslow's Sparrow is one of a number of Oklahoma bird species that are considered species of special conservation concern by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC). Fast forward to the summer of 2017, when the ODWC awarded the Sutton Center funding from the State Wildlife Grants program to repeat surveys of northeastern Oklahoma and compare the current Henslow's Sparrow distribution in the state with that of 21 years ago.

From May through July, field technician Brandon Gibson and I drove over 9,500 miles along the backroads of Oklahoma, covering all or parts of Craig, Kay, Nowata, Osage, Rogers, Tulsa, and Washington Counties. After several flat tires, many detours for roads flooded by heavy spring rains, an occasional lunch at great local restaurants from Ponca City to Vinita, and many more roadside lunches in the shade of a tree, we could only find Henslow's Sparrows in Osage County, which has long been their population stronghold in the state.

While it is possible that the range of Henslow's Sparrows has contracted in Oklahoma over the past 21 years, it is also possible that habitat conditions during 2017 simply were not favorable for Henslow's Sparrows in most places this year. It appeared that more prescribed burning than normal may have taken place in 2016 and 2017, removing the litter layer and standing dead vegetation sought by nesting Henslow's Sparrows.

Most of the Henslow's Sparrows we found in Osage County this year were on private ranches that have implemented patch burning, a management technique that involves burning only a portion of a pasture rather than the whole pasture. Cattle subsequently focus their grazing on the burned portion, where lush regrowth of nutritious grasses occurs, while the unburned portions of the pasture retain dead vegetation from prior seasons and provide habitat for wildlife including Henslow's Sparrows.

With the need for bird conservation and monitoring always outstripping the funds available, most species including the Henslow's Sparrow cannot be monitored as closely as it deserves, but our 1996 and 2017 surveys have contributed valuable information on its status in Oklahoma.



Left: Roads marked in light blue were surveyed during 2017. **Above:** Counties surveyed all or in part for Henslow's Sparrows in 2017.



Immediate needs Can you help?

Often, needs arise that are outside of our budget. If you can provide funding for any of the items listed below, it will help us seamlessly continue our work to share the message of conservation!

Updated database software- It's not flashy or fun, but software updates are crucial to an organization. Help us with efficiency and improved communication. **\$3500.00**

Educational materials, Wi-Fi and website upgrades- the Sutton Center has much work to do. Updating our website and educational materials help us to educate and inspire people to join us in protecting avian species and the natural world. **\$9650.00**

Gravel- To help protect the Center during fire season; for fire breaks on top of the hill and along the main road up the hill. **\$8600.00**

Electric Utility Vehicle- situated on 78 acres, our prairie-chicken facility

continues to grow and our staff needs to move quickly and distribute supplies between buildings every day. An electric vehicle is more expensive on the front end, but the lower environmental impact and quiet mobility is a good fit for the facility. **\$11,000.00**

Winter Bird Seed- The Sutton Center is the winter home for many species of migratory birds. Help us feed them this winter and follow us on Facebook to see how thankful they are! **\$500.00**

Large Sensor Digital Camera- for documenting and sharing our work. **\$1000.00**

Kitchen equipment upgrades- for hosting meetings and volunteer groups at our facility. **\$200.00**

DOUBLE YOUR DONATION! Many employers will double your contribution (even for retirees!) helping your money make an even greater impact! Check with your Human Resources department, or call us, and we will help.



Sutton Award expands its reach for 2018

by Audra M. Fogle

Emails have been sent and 500 Oklahoma Teacher's Packets are in the mail heralding the art scholarship opportunities of the 2018 Sutton Award! If you are reading this article, THANK YOU, for being a Sutton supporter and helping to offer opportunities like the Sutton Award. In a day when young people are becoming further and further removed from our natural world, this award sparks conversation in the classrooms and encourages students to wrestle with issues of conservation in such a way that they learn THEIR story as they work to inspire others. We are already working closely with our partner NatureWorks to make this a memorable event for our students and their teachers through the show, reception, and opportunity to display alongside world-renowned artists. You are invited to support our students through viewing their work at the Hive. The gallery is open from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. January 18 through Feb 2. You can find the Hive at 115 South First Street in Jenks, Oklahoma.

When you visit, make sure and write a note of encouragement to the students in the visitor's book. It will be shared with students and their families at the reception on Feb 3. Know a student or a high school art teacher who wants to participate? Visit www.suttoncenter.org for all the details and to download flyers and forms. Need more information, interested in financially supporting the award or want to offer hospitality at the reception? Contact Audra Fogle at afogle@suttoncenter.org or 918-336-7778 for more information or to make a donation.

WILD BREW 2017

greatest party ever hatched!

Story by Audra M. Fogle, Photography by Dan Reinking

Huge thanks to co-chairs Coleman Miller and Ping Hackl for all their hard work in the success of Wild Brew 2017! Under their leadership, the dedicated Wild Brew committee and volunteers worked tirelessly to once again throw an amazing party! Cole Cunningham with Mythic Press made sure our party had great swag and a vibrant online presence — his leadership is responsible for taking our party to the masses with the largest general admission ticket sales ever!

We are especially thankful for all the breweries and restaurants that make a special effort to participate in our event every year. When Wild Brew first started, we were the first craft beer festival in town and are now one among many. We know the extra effort our breweries and restaurants make by faithfully supporting the Sutton Center's conservation mission through the Wild Brew event — THANK YOU!

Marshall's brewed the special Wild Brew Beer, which was a tasty grapefruity IPA. Thank You Marshall's for sharing your innovative brewing expertise for everybody's enjoyment! We are happy to count you among our friends.

Wild Brew's patron hour would not be complete without Shelby Eicher and Mark Bruner! We love your sound and look forward to your music every year! Thanks to the Paul Benjamin Band, we rocked the house during the event!

Wild Brew is a great party, but it's also the biggest fundraiser for the conservation work of the Sutton Center. Thank you to all of our patrons and sponsors not only for throwing a great party but for giving endangered species a fighting chance through the conservation work of the Sutton Center. We are pretty excited that our first masked bobwhite quail chicks have hatched (find those cute babies on Facebook) and our first release of captive-raised prairie-chickens is happening this fall. Sandy Thompson has been doing a fabulous job with the silent auction! Through her leadership efforts, the silent auction continues to grow – our proceeds were up this year from \$5785 to \$7502! Many items were highly coveted and the bidding grew heated! If you want to become a sponsor or have something you want to donate for the 20th anniversary of Wild Brew in 2018, please contact us. The earlier we know, the better. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to showcase your business! Items donated get good facetime and are requested throughout the year.

Follow us on Facebook for potential Wild Brew discounts and Christmas deals! **Nothing says FUN like tickets to the 20th Anniversary Wild Brew event scheduled for Saturday, August 25th in 2018!** 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 2018 event!



New Sponsor opportunity for WildBrew 2018!

Looking for a way to support the Sutton Center with your sponsorship dollars? Want to widen your impact throughout the year? Sponsor an education display for WildBrew that will travel to events throughout the year. Call Audra at the Sutton Center for details.



Above: Examples of different types of displays that can be used in bird conservation education.

Sutton Center's Recent Presentations

Sherrod SK, Larsson LC, Toepfer, JE, Christiansen RN, Gibson BL (2017) Update on Experimental Captive Breeding and Raising of Prairie-Chickens for Release into the Wild. *32nd Prairie Grouse Technical Council Meeting*, Dickinson, ND, 19 October.

Toepfer JE (2017) Greater Prairie-Chicken Production and Dispersal in Nebraska and Minnesota, 2012-2016. *32nd Prairie Grouse Technical Council Meeting*, Dickinson, ND, 19 October.

Toepfer JE, Morrow ME, Wolfe DH, Oehlenschlaeger SM (2017) Why We Do Not Use Radio Transmitters with Long Whip Antennas on Prairie Grouse. *32nd Prairie Grouse Technical Council Meeting*, Dickinson, ND, 17 October.

Birds, Bees and the Importance of Native Plants

The Sutton Center is embarking on a new educational journey for young people, and we need your help.

by Audra M. Fogle



Currently there are three flowerbeds at the main facility graciously designed and maintained for years by the Cannady family. We know that more education is needed to help people understand the importance of planting native plants and creating habitats for birds, bees, and other pollinators. Carla Grogg of Grogg's Green Barn has enthusiastically agreed to partner with the Sutton Center. A group of young people have been identified who are willing to grow with this project so that they can lead others. This is an opportunity for all of us to help inspire young conservationists! Gardeners, beekeepers, bat enthusiasts and educators are needed to help sustain this project. Financial contributions can be made to help with phase 1 at the following levels: \$25 will provide everything needed for 2 plants (We need a total of 40 plants for phase 1). \$500 will provide tools, training and curriculum. \$2500 will provide plant markers and interactive signage. Total project cost for Phase 1 is \$3500. If you are willing to help, contact Audra Fogle for more information.

What happens when 25 ConocoPhillips employees show up at the Sutton Center? Work gets DONE!

Story and Photography by Audra M. Fogle

Volunteers from ConocoPhillips were out in force on Tuesday, October 3 for the annual United Way Day of Caring. In just 4 hours, the crew picked up and loaded 6,000 pounds of metal, added 100,000 limbs to our burn piles (we didn't ACTUALLY count, but the piles are HUGE) so that we can stay safer from fire danger, added over 400 lbs of compost to our flowerbeds, preparing our native plants for the winter, and, through sheer force and determination, relocated two Frank Lloyd Wright styled birdfeeders to the front of the building where they can be viewed by our visitors. And their company donated dollars for each hour worked resulting in a check for \$2000 to the Sutton Center. HOORAY for Volunteers!



Thank You to These Loyal Sutton Supporters!

October 16, 2016 through October 15, 2017

Up to \$99

Dan Adams, AmazonSmile Foundation, Beer is OK, Walter & Betty Bohn, Barbara Bottini, Mike Burris, Brenda Carroll, Ken Collins, Judith A. Cox-Steib, Frederick & Janet Drummond, James & Betty Enderson, Pascha Enzi, Marjorie Greer, Kenneth & Karen Hollinga, Ron Huebner, Nancy Irby, Stephen Jolly, Robert & Eleanor Miller, Melanie Norris, Andy O'Neal; Owasso Wine & Liquor, Chris Patswald, Bruce & Velma Peterson, Mark Peterson, Radomir & Helen Petrovich, Harry Poarch, JoAnn Rainwater; Hollow Tree, Jorge Ramirez, Frank Sawyer; Nuredo Media, Edward Shane, Mary Theodosea Silas, Angie Spencer, Patrick Sutherlin, Ted & Stephanie Theban, Sharon Tracy, Glen & Janice Yeager.

\$100 to \$499

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NatureWorks, New Mexico Department of Game & Fish, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, SilverTree Technology, Wolf Creek Charitable Foundation.

\$25,000 or more

Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, Harold & Sandy Price, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Wild Brew attendees 2017.

Memorials and Honoraria

In honor of Lee Holcombe's birthday: Frederick & Janet Drummond. In memory of her father Dr. Sam T. Moore: Carol Lindlow. In honor of their son Dan Reinking: Carl & Nan Reinking. In honor of Penny Williams: Margaret French.

Special Thanks

To all of the breweries and distributors at Wild Brew.

Sutton Center's Recent Publications

Reinking DL (2017) *Oklahoma Winter Bird Atlas*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK 552 pp.

Toepfer JE (2017) What the heck is a lek? *Grouse News* 53: 21

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