

The Voice of Outdoor Kansas

July-
August 2013

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Wichita, KS 67277-1282

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Go to our Web site,
www.kswildlife.org,
for additional KWF information

Boaters rewarded for wearing life jackets this summer

As summer heats up, the KDWPT 'Wear It Kansas' boat will be hitting the water to educate boaters about life jacket safety

This summer, if you see a boat clad with the "Wear It Kansas" logo, you might want to motor over and say hello – it could get you some free stuff. In an effort to promote life jacket use on Kansas waters, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism (KDWPT) boating education coordinator, Erika Brooks, will be hitting the water to give away free t-shirts and tank tops to boaters wearing a life jacket. Brooks will also educate boaters about proper life jacket practices, as well as ways to improve their overall safety while on board.

"It's much easier to show people how life jackets are supposed to fit correctly and what 'readily accessible' means when you are working with their personal equipment," said Brooks. "Proper use of safety equipment can play a large part in reducing accidents and fatalities. In fact, out of the 43 boating-related fatalities we have seen in the past nine years, 86% of the parties involved did not have a life jacket on."

One of the biggest concerns that Brooks has encountered in past efforts is that boaters will forego wearing a life jacket because they harbor the dated notion that life jackets are still big and bulky. "We have to educate boaters that it's not realistic to think they can put their life jacket on in time if they are involved in an accident," Brooks said. "Think about trying to put a seat belt on in the middle of a car crash. It's called an accident for a reason— if we could see it coming, we would avoid it."

Current "Wear It Kansas" boating dates include:

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Protecting the Land... Passing on Our Traditions



KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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President's Message

By Troy Schroeder

As usual, summer is going by quickly once again. As I said in my last newsletter comment, we are trying to offer some outdoors events for our members and friends. One such event is the Kaw float trip, scheduled for Friday July 19 starting about 3 p.m. at Manhattan and ending at Wamego about 8 p.m. We are joining one of our partner groups, The Friends of the Kaw (FOK), for this event. They will be providing the boats, guide service and a light lunch on a sandbar stop. It should be a good time as well as educational. FOK charges \$30 per boat which holds two people. FOK has done great things for the river, promoting its value, improving it environmentally and installing several access points to allow these trips and other public use. If interested in joining us, please let us know by email info@kswildlife.org or phone 785-650-3182 by July 15 and we will provide trip details. If you

can't make this one, go to the FOK website at kansasriver.org to find out about other similar trips.

We are also very proud of completing our 25th week-long Outdoor Adventure Camp for 10-12 year olds at Rock Springs 4-H Camp, and of conducting our first outdoor day camp at TimberRidge in Olathe this past June.

The next meeting of the KWF Board of Directors is scheduled for 10 a.m. July 20th in Manhattan at the Chamber of Commerce Board Room, located at 501 Poyntz. As usual, any KWF members are invited to attend.

In a continuing effort to provide information to our members, we have been sending out informational emails the past couple months. Unfortunately, we only have email addresses for about half of our membership. I know a few folks do not have email, but for those that do, please send us your address so we may share the email updates with you. We will not share your address with anyone else.

America's Grasslands: The future of grasslands in a changing landscape

America's Grasslands: The Future of Grasslands in a Changing Landscape will bring together researchers, natural resources professionals, farmers and ranchers, policy experts and conservationists to discuss the conservation of North America's grasslands and the opportunities and outlook for these vital ecosystems in a changing landscape. With over 60 speakers and 20 posters, you won't want to miss out on this exciting conference.

This year's conference will have a particular focus on working collaboratively with ranchers to conserve grasslands. The event will be preceded by a day of optional field trips to local grasslands on August 12th.

This year's conference will be August 12-14 and held at the Hilton Garden Inn, Manhattan. Register by July 15th for the early bird registration rate of \$150.*

Register online now at: <http://www.nwf.org/What-We-Do/Protect-Habitat/Healthy-Forests-and-Farms/Americas-Grasslands-Conference/Registration.aspx>

*Thanks to a special grant from Kansas State University, graduate students may be eligible to be reimbursed for registration cost.

Recreation boating worth \$121 billion

New findings project 88 million Americans
will take to U.S. waterways this summer

From Sport Fishing Magazine

The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) announced that recreational boating in the U.S. has an annual economic value of \$121 billion. The industry's rising tide supports 964,000 American jobs and 34,833 businesses, generates \$40 billion in annual labor income and drives \$83 billion in annual spending.

The NMMA, on behalf of the U.S. boating industry, released these findings recently as part of its annual U.S. Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract, a collection of data and analysis on the state of the U.S. recreational boating industry. Additional data highlights include:

New Boat Sales

- New powerboat sales increased 10 percent to 157,300 in 2012.

Trends

- Small fiberglass and aluminum outboard boats 26 feet or less in size, continued their upward climb with an 11.3 percent increase in the number of new boats sold. Outboard boats are the most popular type of new powerboat sold, making up approximately 82 percent of the market.

What's Ahead?

- Sales of new powerboats have

remained steady during the first half of 2013 and continued growth is expected with the summer boating season. NMMA anticipates sales of new powerboats to grow five percent in 2013.

"Summer is a peak selling season for recreational boats, accessories and services throughout the U.S. as people look for ways to disconnect from the daily grind and enjoy fun times on the water," said Thom Dammrich, NMMA president. "New boat sales have historically been a barometer for the U.S. economy and the steady sales increases we're seeing is being reinforced by the slow uptick in consumer confidence, housing and spending. As economic growth continues, we anticipate sustained steady growth through the remainder of 2013."

Boating Participation

Of the estimated 232.3 million adults in the U.S. in 2012, 37.8 percent, or 88 million, participated in recreational boating at least once during the year. This is a six percent increase from 2011 and the largest number of U.S. adults participating in boating since NMMA began collecting the data in 1990. Recreational boating participation has steadily increased since 2006.

EPA says more than half of rivers, streams in poor condition

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released the results of the first comprehensive survey looking at the health of thousands of stream and river miles across the country, finding that more than half - 55 percent - are in poor condition for aquatic life.

"The health of our Nation's rivers, lakes, bays and coastal waters

depends on the vast network of streams where they begin, and this new science shows that America's streams and rivers are under significant pressure," said Office of Water Acting Assistant Administrator Nancy Stoner. "We must continue

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**Kansas Wildlife Officers
Association**
Iola, KS

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Officers and Board of Directors

The Kansas Wildlife Federation promotes hunting and fishing opportunities and associated recreation for the benefit of all hunters, anglers and conservationists.

KWF supports the sustainable use and management of fish and wildlife and their habitats through education, partnerships, outreach and policy oversight.

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Calendar of events

- July 19** KWF Kansas River Float Trip, Manhattan to St. George
- July 20** Kansas Wildlife Federation BOD meeting, Manhattan
- August 1** Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission mtg, Yates Center
- Aug 6-8** KGLC Mid-/Shortgrass Range School, Camp Lakeside at Lake Scott
- Aug 9-11** Midwest Huntfest, Wichita
- Aug 12-14** America's Grasslands Conference, Manhattan
- Aug 20-22** KGLC Tallgrass Range School, Camp Wood YMCA at Elmdale
- Sept 6-7** Bluestem Farm & Ranch Wildlife Appreciation Days, Emporia
- Sept 7** Whitetail Weekend, El Dorado
- Oct 17** Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission mtg, Hutchinson
- Oct 19** Kansas Wildlife Federation BOD meeting, Great Bend

Affiliate News

Geary County Fish and Game Association

The Geary County Fish and Game Association is conducting their Annual Fund Raiser. The prize is a Buffalo Hunt or \$500 cash. Tickets are one for \$20 or six for \$100. Enter for your chance to win a hunt for a 2-3 year-old Bull, estimated to weigh 1,000 pounds. Winner can use rifle, bow or black powder (if large enough caliber).

Hunt will be on a ranch in Dickinson County. You shoot, we help load on your trailer or truck. Winner pays for meat processing. Drawing will be held at the Geary County Fish and Game headquarters at Milford Reservoir at its meeting on November 11, 2013. Need not be present to win.

If you have any questions, call Tom Goudey, GCFGA Vice President, at 785-238-7845 or 785-761-7525. You may also call Ken Schortmann, GCFGA Director, at 785-210-9072.

JACKET

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July 20-21, El Dorado Reservoir
Aug. 3-4, Pomona Reservoir
Aug. 31-Sept. 1, Milford Reservoir

To get the most up-to-date information on upcoming appearances and contests, visit the Wear It Kansas Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WearItKansas – you just might be the next person who wins for “wearing it.”



Chris Franklin

New trap shooters are mentored by members of local 4-H Shotgun Shooting Sports members and the watchful eyes of Abner Redeker (far left), Lyon County 4-H Shotgun Shooting Sports coach.

Successful youth shotgun trap shoot

Forty area youth took part in the National Wild Turkey Federation Flint Hills Gobblers Chapter's free youth trap shoot at the Madison Gun Club on Saturday, June 29th. With over an estimated 60 parents, grandparents, guardians, and friends attending to cheer on the youth, aged 17 and younger, the Madison Gun Club was a very busy place from 9 am. to 1 pm. All supplies for the trap shoot were provided free of charge including clay targets, shells, hearing protection, and eye protection. The youth could bring their own gun or use one provided. Youth shooters also received a 1 year NWTF JAKES membership which includes a 1 year subscription to JAKES Country magazine, JAKES membership card, JAKES decal, and

a chance to win a hunt of a lifetime.

4-H Shotgun Shooting Sports members from Greenwood and Lyon counties were present and demonstrated their shooting skills and also assisted new shooters one-on-one. Lyon County 4-H Shotgun Shooting Sports coach Abner Redeker also instructed shooters and gave shooting tips as well as encouragement to all youth shooters. Madison Gun Club representative Kane Haas was very pleased with the turnout and is looking forward to the next scheduled free youth trap shoot at the Madison Gun Club.

NWTF Flint Hills Gobblers JAKES Coordinator Gib Rhodes was also pleased with the turnout. Rhodes said, "We put a lot of smiles on kid's

faces! For several youth, this was the first time they had shot trap or shot a shotgun at a fast moving target. With the assistance of a team of experienced trap shooting instructors and youth 4-H Shotgun Shooting Sports mentors, the kids were able to see improved trap shooting skills in a short period of time."

Local sponsors for the event included the Madison Telephone Company, the Schankie family, Wagner's Automotive General Service, and the NWTF Flint Hills Gobblers Chapter.

The next free youth trap shoot at the Madison Gun Club will be **Saturday, July 20th** from 9 am. to 1 pm. To participate and reserve a spot, contact event organizer Gib Rhodes at 620-437-2012.

Hunters needed for assisted deer hunt

With the 11th annual youth/handicap assisted deer hunt just around the corner, now is the time to sign up. The Riley County Fish and Game Association, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT), and the Corps of Engineers at Tuttle Creek Lake are seeking participants for the hunt which will be held September 7th and 8th.

Kansas youth 11 through 16 years of age and Kansas residents with a certified disability are eligible to participate in this hunt. Participants will need a Kansas hunting license, a deer permit, and, if required by Kansas law, will also need to take or have taken an approved hunter education course. Assistance meeting these requirements, including scholarship assistance to purchase a hunting license and deer permit, can be

provided by the sponsoring agencies and associations.

If participants do not have a rifle or ammo for the hunt, these items can be provided. During the hunt, each participant will be paired with an experienced hunter who will serve as guide. Arrangements have been made with area lockers where basic processing of harvested deer will be handled free of charge.

Other items provided for this hunt include accessible hunting blinds, hunting locations, hunter orange hats and vests, and transportation to the field.

Hunt participants will also be required to attend a firearm safety presentation and sight-in at the Fancy Creek Shooting Range at 4 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, August 18th.

Many thanks go to other groups and

organizations contributing to this hunt such as the Friends of Fancy Creek Range, Kansas City Chapter of Safari Club International, Kansas State Rifle Association and the Tuttle Creek Lake Association.

If you are interested in participating in this great opportunity to hunt Kansas whitetail deer, want more information or need an application, contact Steve Prockish at the Tuttle Creek Lake Corps of Engineers office at (785) 539-8511, ext. 3167, or at Stephen.E.Prockish@usace.army.mil. Applications can also be downloaded here: <http://www.nwk.usace.army.mil/Portals/29/docs/lakesites/tuttlecreek/Dear%20Prospective%20hunter%20ltr%20%20application.pdf>. Applications will be accepted thru July 31st.

EPA

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to invest in protecting and restoring our nation's streams and rivers as they are vital sources of our drinking water, provide many recreational opportunities, and play a critical role in the economy."

The 2008-2009 National Rivers and Stream Assessment reflects the most recent data available, and is part of EPA's expanded effort to monitor waterways in the U.S. and gather scientific data on the condition of the Nation's water resources.

EPA partners, including states and tribes, collected data from approximately 2,000 sites across the country. EPA, state and university scientists analyzed the data to determine the extent to which rivers and streams support aquatic life, how major stressors may be affecting them and how conditions are changing over time.

Findings of the assessment include:

- Nitrogen and phosphorus are at excessive levels. Twenty-seven percent of the nation's rivers and streams

have excessive levels of nitrogen, and 40 percent have high levels of phosphorus. Too much nitrogen and phosphorus in the water-known as nutrient pollution-causes significant increases in algae, which harms water quality, food resources and habitats, and decreases the oxygen that fish and other aquatic life need to survive. Nutrient pollution has impacted many streams, rivers, lakes, bays and coastal waters for the past several decades, resulting in serious environmental and human health issues, and impacting the economy.

- Streams and rivers are at an increased risk due to decreased vegetation cover and increased human disturbance. These conditions can cause streams and rivers to be more vulnerable to flooding, erosion, and pollution. Vegetation along rivers and streams slows the flow of rainwater so it does not erode stream banks, removes pollutants carried by rainwater and helps maintain water temperatures that support healthy streams for aquatic life. Approximately 24 percent of the rivers and streams monitored were rated poor due to the loss of healthy vegetative cover.

- Increased bacteria levels. High bacteria levels were found in nine

percent of stream and river miles making those waters potentially unsafe for swimming and other recreation.

- Increased mercury levels. More than 13,000 miles of rivers have fish with mercury levels that may be unsafe for human consumption. For most people, the health risk from mercury by eating fish and shellfish is not a health concern, but some fish and shellfish contain higher levels of mercury that may harm an unborn baby or young child's developing nervous system.

EPA plans to use this new data to inform decision making about addressing critical needs around the country for rivers, streams, and other waterbodies. This comprehensive survey will also help develop improvements to monitoring these rivers and streams across jurisdictional boundaries and enhance the ability of states and tribes to assess and manage water quality to help protect our water, aquatic life, and human health. Results are available for a dozen geographic and ecological regions of the country.

More information: <http://www.epa.gov/aquaticsurveys>.

Kansas State University wins FLW College Fishing Central Conference event on Alabama's Pickwick Lake

The Kansas State University team of Nathan Kozlowski and Lance Maldonado, both of Junction City, Kansas, won the FLW College Fishing Central Conference event on Pickwick Lake Saturday, May 4, with a five-bass limit weighing 17 pounds, 8 ounces. The victory earned the club \$2,000 and advanced the team to the FLW College Fishing Central Conference Invitational tournament.

"This feels great," said Maldonado, who is a junior majoring in Management and fishing in his second career FLW College Fishing event. "This is my first year fishing for the Kansas State team. I transferred here because I knew that Nathan was coming here and we wanted to fish together for the Wildcats.

"We've grown up together and been fishing with each other since we were five or six years old," Maldonado continued. "Not many people can say that they've been fishing with the same guy for that long. This was pretty special."

The Kansas State Wildcat team used their experience and the strong Tennessee River current to their advantage.

They targeted boulders and breaks in the current where the fish were waiting to ambush the bait.

"We were fishing community holes," Maldonado continued. "Downstream from the dam to Seven-Mile Island. We would locate the big boulders on the shore, and that told us that there were more close by. We fished slow and worked our baits differently, and I think that was the key for us."

Kozlowski, a junior majoring in Finance, estimated that they caught 30 to 40 fish throughout the day, but only 10 keepers. He said that they caught fish on multiple presentations, including a Zara Spook, a buzzbait, 5-inch swimbaits and black and blue-colored Jewel Baits jigs.

"It really turned on for us between 9 and 10 a.m.," Kozlowski said. "We were just popping our jigs off of the rocks and fishing them differently than everyone else."

The duo weighed in a mixed bag of bass of three smallmouth, one spotted bass and one largemouth. Maldonado gave a large amount of credit to his part-

ner Kozlowski, who was able to pre-fish Pickwick Lake last weekend.

"It was pretty cool weighing in a stringer with three different species," Maldonado said. "Nathan was able to come down here last weekend and get some practice time in, and he caught 17 or 18 pounds. We felt pretty good confident coming in, and it feels great to get the victory."

The top 15 teams that advanced to the Central Conference Invitational tournament are:

1st: Kansas State University – Nathan Kozlowski and Lance Maldonado, both of Junction City, Kan. (five bass, 17-8, \$2,000)

2nd: Murray State University

3rd: Georgetown College

4th: Eastern Kentucky University

5th: Georgetown College

6th: University of Iowa

7th: University of Evansville

8th: Western Kentucky University

9th: Indiana State University

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KDWPT biologist receives award from Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Small game coordinator Jim Pitman named 'Wildlife Biologist of the Year'

The Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA) recently recognized Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) small game coordinator Jim Pitman as the 2013 "Wildlife Biologist of the Year." Pitman was presented the award by KDWPT Assistant Secretary Keith Sexson at the June 27 Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission meeting.

Each year, MAFWA recognizes an individual who has shown an unparalleled initiative toward the better understanding of wildlife and their conservation, and Pitman couldn't have been a

better choice.

"It is a huge honor to be recognized by my peers," said Pitman. "A person's peers are usually the toughest critics, so winning an award from that group is the most meaningful recognition anyone could receive. I'm very appreciative of that recognition and humbled by it."

Pitman's most recent endeavor has been developing conservation strategies to address the potential listing of the lesser prairie chicken as a threatened or endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Pitman is the second KDWPT

biologist in recent years to receive this award from MAFWA. In 2011, KDWPT Big Game Program Coordinator Lloyd Fox was also named Wildlife Biologist of the Year.

Comprised of 13 state and 3 provincial Midwest fish and wildlife agencies, MAFWA is an organization that strives to provide a common forum for fish and wildlife agencies to share ideas, information, pool resources, and form action initiatives to better manage and conserve fish and wildlife resources.

For more information on MAFWA and Pitman's award, visit www.mafwa.org.

Kansas Wildlife Federation's Day Camp a success



Ted Beringer

Participants at the Kansas Wildlife Federation's Day Camp at TimberRidge in Olathe shoot at water-filled balloons as part of their KWF Day Camp experience.

The Kansas Wildlife Federation's Day Camp on June 12th at TimberRidge Adventure Center in Olathe, Kansas, was great fun for the 10-12 year old kids who attended. The kids enjoyed boating and fishing in the morning before it became hot. Everyone caught at least one sunfish, bass or catfish in the catch & release program on Catfish Lake. They also enjoyed the canoes & paddle boats.

After lunch in the Welcome Center,

there was target shooting on the archery range followed by the BB gun range, where water filled balloons were targets. Each of the kids received a one third gallon water jug donated by the Coleman Company and a canteen with carabiner clip donated by Bass Pro Shop. Bass Pro also donated two fishing poles that were given away in a drawing.

Quail & Upland Wildlife Federation also helped sponsor the Day Camp by providing liability insurance. Ted

Beringer and Cynthia Rhodes were Kansas Wildlife Federation board members that helped run the camp but the staff at TimberRidge deserve special thanks, especially Starla & Lysa for running each of the Day Camp events with the kids' safety in mind.

If you wish to be notified about next year's Day Camp, check the Kansas Wildlife Federation's website <<http://www.kswildlife.org>> in April 2014 for the announcement.

FISHING

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10th: University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

11th: Western Kentucky University

12th: Murray State University

13th: University of Nebraska-Omaha

14th: Eastern Kentucky University

15th: Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

FLW College Fishing teams compete in four qualifying events in one of five conferences – Central, Northern, Southern, Southeastern and Western. The top fifteen teams from each regular-season tournament will qualify for one of five conference invitational tournaments. The top ten teams from each conference invitational tournament will advance to

the 2014 FLW College Fishing National Championship.

College Fishing is free to enter and FLW Outdoors provides boats and drivers for each competing team along with travel allowances. All participants must be registered, full-time undergraduate students at a four-year college or university and members of a fishing club recognized by their college or university.

Beginner's bowfishing

By Phil Taunton

Bowfishing..... Goodness, with bow hunting enthusiast friends like Bob Griffin, Lebo, Rick Hammond, Olpe, who just started a new blog, Grand River Outdoors.com and Johnny Drake, Emporia, I don't know why I never got involved with bowhunting sooner. Finding out that newly crowned Miss Kansas, Theresa Vail chooses to bow hunt whenever she can, was just the impetus to put me over the edge. If you are thinking of starting a new hobby, I am sure Bob, Rick or Johnny would be happy to give you some sage advice. Oh, I was involved with bow fishing several years ago and even had the law called on me for "poaching carp" as the following story will attest. Please enjoy, and wishing you a safe and enjoyable summer.

My Bow Fishing Adventure..... The young brave waited patiently at the water's edge trying to emulate his brother, the Great-Blue Heron. Both stood motionless in the shallows of the lake waiting for fish to swim close enough to provide an opportunity for harvest. The women at the nearby camp were busy tending the smoking fires, anticipating his successful hunt. They knew the young man's father and the elders of the tribe had prepared him for the crossover ---from being a child, to the responsibilities of manhood. He had been taught to respect wildlife and was able to match wits with the cunning animals of the forest and the intelligent fish in the streams. Father and son had spent many moons together crafting his bow and testing the flight of each arrow. Skills passed down from generation to generation were mastered in order for this young man to become an efficient hunter and provider. He had learned what was needed to sustain life and was able to rejoice in living. He also learned about death. Yes, he was ready to provide for his people until the warriors returned from battle and then the world as he knew it would be back to normal.

The young hunter noticed a small

ripple in the water out of the corner of his left eye and instinctively drew the nocked arrow, though he was still totally absorbed in the peace and serenity of the great outdoor world around him. Fish were now prowling the weedline, stirring the waters, swimming closer and closer. Predators in their own right, they were searching for any unsuspecting prey to provide nourishment and sustain their own life. Just as the young brave was about to release his arrow, the crows began frantically calling a warning from their perch in the trees high atop the hill. Their rancorous caw, caw, caw, turned into I've called the law, I've called the law, I've called the law!!

WHAT? With these words stinging my ears, I was brought back into the 20th century, back to realities of today and my Walter Mitty moment with all its sustenance and tranquility vanished into the air. The spell was broken. Women attending the fire should have been enough to awaken me. The women in my Camp, well the ladies in the Cabin I should say, were busy all right--- shuffling cards for the next game! I would be lucky to get a cold piece of the Colonel's leftover Kentucky Fried Chicken or a bologna sandwich for dinner. What had made these people call the law? I just had to know. Bow hunting is legal in Kansas.

I laid my bow down and climbed the steep hill to investigate their sanity or lack of reason. We had quite a discussion once I was able to coax them out of their cabin and convince them I wasn't the boogie man. They thought I was infringing upon their rights and they had made a call to the local police concerning what to them was apparently a carp-poaching incident. Carp poaching! The boys in The Pauline, Council Grove's local watering hole, told me later on "they liked to have a cow" when the report came across the police scanner to investigate a carp shooting at the City Lake. Officer needed now! I am just glad a real criminal wasn't paying a visit to the local bank!

The cabin owners had contributed

to a fund at the Lake for the purchase of the White Amur or grass carp and didn't appreciate me shooting their investment. I was able to convince this couple my quarry was indeed a carp, but the fish I was shooting was quite different from the ones they paid good money for. The common carp was introduced into the United States in 1876 and has found its way into just about every fishery in the nation. It is cussed by most fishermen and has become a detriment to most lakes. The White Amur or grass carp, an import from Asia, was brought into our country as a miracle cure to help lake and pond managers control excess moss and other forms of aquatic vegetation. As with most miracle cures, its effectiveness and value is now being questioned.

I let my feelings be known and expressed to these people that when the common carp is spawning and literally swimming onto dry land in their frenzy to procreate, I would like to see this section of the Lake closed off and people with bows, nets, gigs and pitchforks be able to harvest them any legal way possible. The cabin owners told me they didn't know there were different kinds of carp and that if the people harvesting the common carp were allowed to use dynamite, maybe some of those bait robbing turtles would also be gotten out of the Lake. Go figure!

Bowfishing..... All waters in Kansas are open to bowfishing, unless posted otherwise. Some bowfishing is permitted at city, county, township, or private lakes, but regulations vary, so bowfishermen should consult local rules. Fish which can be legally taken by bowfishing are nonsport fish-- carp, drum, white amur, threadfin and gizzard shad, goldfish, gar, suckers (including carpsuckers and buffalo), eel, sturgeon, goldeye, and bowfin. Bowfishermen must have in their possession a valid Kansas fishing license, unless exempt by law. Arrows must have barbed heads, and each arrow must be attached by a line to the bow

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Another bird guide for kids

By Paul J. Baicich
Birding Community E-bulletins

Sometimes when it rains, it pours. This time, it's a shower of bird books for youngsters.

The latest entry is the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS BIRD GUIDE of NORTH AMERICA by Jonathan Alderfer (National Geographic, 2013). This is an introduction to 100 fascinating birds of North America, organized by region - e.g., eastern, western, southern - and by habitat - e.g., back-yard, city, farm, beach, swamp, river, desert.

Given the limited length of the book -

176 pages - the organization is well done. And the individual species profiles not only have the requisite categories of description, voice, food, habitat, and range (with maps), but also clever factoids on everything from diet, to history, to nesting, display, and preservation.

If the organization is well done, the presentation is less so. The pages are loud, busy, and ultra-bright, with background colors - e.g. yellow, orange, and red - that almost scream. How can the subtleties of some bird colors compete when the background is so bold? Photos of Bushtit, California Towhee, and American Dipper almost get lost.

This is not the author's fault, however. This design is the pattern for just about all the National Geographic Kids books, be they little volumes on "Weird but True," "National Parks," "That's Gross," "Big Cats," or "Myths Busted."

If you - and your favorite kids - can get beyond the design/colors, you may still get to appreciate other fine parts of the book, including sections on building a bird-feeder or bird-bath, how to draw a bird, and six things you can do to help birds.

To read past Birding Community E-bulletins, go to the archives at <http://refugeassociation.org/news/birding-bulletin/>

Bullfrog season brings new meaning to sack lunch

Bullfrog hunting can be a great way to spend a summer night as well as fill up on good eats

Kansas bullfrog season is almost here and for some, this is a special summer treat. From July 1-October 31, hunters of these four-legged amphibians can enjoy both an evening's entertainment as well as a meal that is anything but ho-hum. All that's needed is a flashlight, a sack, a pond, and some stealth.

Considered by some as a delicacy, frog legs have a taste and texture that resembles a cross between shrimp and fish. A popular way to cook them is to

dip the legs in egg and then into a mixture of flour and corn meal, seasoning salt, and pepper. The legs are then fried to a golden brown and served up hot.

While bullfrogs may be taken by hook and line, dip net, gig, bow and arrow, or crossbow (firearms not allowed), many froggers prefer to take them by hand. The best method is to walk quietly through the water at night and shine a bright light along the bank until a pair of glowing eyes appear.

Temporarily blinded by the light, frogs can be grabbed or netted.

The daily creel limit is eight, with a possession limit of 24. A valid fishing license is required for any person to take, catch, or kill bullfrogs, except persons exempt by law from having such license.

For more information on bullfrog season, visit www.ksoutdoors.com and click "Fishing/Fishing Regulations/Bullfrogs."

BOWFISHING

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and must be shot from the bow. Water areas within 50 yards of an occupied boat dock or ramp, occupied swimming area, occupied picnic site or camping area, and other public-use areas are closed to bowfishing. Nonsport fish may also be gilled unless the waters are otherwise posted.

Fit for the Table..... Carp is excellent tableware when prepared right. Yes people, there are better methods to prepare rough fish than cooking them

on a board, throwing the fish away and eating the board! One way is to use a meat grinder to grind up the fish and then make carp cakes, patties or fish sticks. Another is to pressure cook the fish in pint jars for 100 minutes. Add one tablespoon French style Catalina salad dressing and a teaspoon of salt to each pint of fish. Enjoy!

I like to smoke carp. The secret is to refrigerate the fish in your favorite marinade for up to twenty-four hours in a non-metal container and then smoke it slowly at a temperature between 100 and 150 degrees using a portable gas smoker (keeps a constant

temperature) and hardwood chips.

The marinade that works best for me is a simple mixture of brown sugar, hickory smoked salt, table salt and Lawry's lemon pepper and garlic pepper. Add just enough water to cover the fish. Brown sugar makes for sweet tasting smoked meat, and I don't worry much about the strength of the brine. More salt can always be added later. You may also want to experiment with soy sauce, Tabasco, liquid garlic or onion, ground ginger and dill. The smoked fish can also be mixed with mayo and makes an excellent sandwich spread.

FWS grants Huelskamp's request that it again delay final listing determination for the Lesser Prairie Chicken so that it can solicit more scientific data

Congressman Tim Huelskamp (R-Kansas) celebrated the news he received June 27th from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Director Daniel Ashe per the listing of the Lesser Prairie Chicken (LPC)

Director Ashe wrote: "Thank you for your letter of June 21, 2013 ... requesting that the [Service] consider a six-month extension under the Endangered Species Act (Act) on the final listing determination for the lesser prairie-chicken.... The Service will soon publish a notice in the Federal Register announcing a six-month extension of the final listing determination for the lesser prairie-chicken through March 30, 2014. Public comments received by the Service since the publication of the proposed rule have highlighted substantial scientific disagreement regarding the sufficiency or accuracy of

the available data relevant to the listing proposal for the lesser prairie-chicken. Therefore, as the law allows, the Service is extending the final listing determination for six months in order to solicit additional data and information that will help to clarify these issues."

Congressman Huelskamp made the following statement:

"We welcome Director Ashe's decision to grant our request to extend for six months the comment period for the potential LPC listing under the Endangered Species Act. This is a positive development in our demonstration of the effectiveness of voluntary efforts by landowners, businesses, and state and local governments to handle any LPC issue. I remain confident that the regional voluntary plan, if fairly reviewed, will be sufficient to avoid

the unnecessary listing of the LPC and protect the rights of individual landowners and the states. An LPC listing would pose a grave threat to many businesses across the Big First Congressional district, especially our farmers, ranchers, and energy companies."

Rep. Huelskamp and his staff have repeatedly met with FWS director Ashe and other FWS officials over the last six months, emphasizing the role that state and local officials and private landowners are playing in protecting the species. He continues to work with Representatives who have LPC habitat in their districts to ensure that both the bird and the rights of landowners are protected. He looks forward to the FWS recognizing the adequacy of these efforts that will preclude the necessity of a federal listing of the species.

Are your taxpayer dollars helping to destroy wetlands?

**By Jan Goldman-Carter
National Wildlife Federation**

The Senate passed a 2013 Farm Bill that would stop this unbridled wetland drainage, but the House just refused to follow suit. Call your representatives and insist on wetland conservation compliance in the final 2013 Farm Bill.

The Prairie Pothole Region of the Dakotas and Western Minnesota and Iowa is known as the "duck factory" of North America because its millions of small, shallow pothole wetlands provide essential breeding habitat for over 50% of North America's waterfowl.

This breeding habitat supports a \$2.3 billion per year duck hunting industry.

These wetlands also store flood waters — and their drainage increases flood flows and pollution downstream.

Trading Prairie Potholes for Agri-

culture Harms the Environment

Expanding crop production in the northern prairies is increasing wetland drainage, flood flows, sediment and nutrient pollution, and fish and wildlife habitat loss in the Mississippi River Basin.

A study released in late May shows that ***over the last decade, wetland losses to cropland in the Eastern Dakotas have increased to more than 15,300 acres per year.***

These wetland losses to cropland in the Prairie Pothole Region reduce prime waterfowl breeding habitat and directly impact waterfowl populations throughout the Mississippi Flyway and beyond.

The combination of extensive drainage networks and fertilizer use also increases flood flows, soil erosion, and nitrogen and phosphorus pollution in the Upper Mississippi River Basin and,

ultimately, the Gulf of Mexico.

And we are encouraging these costly drainage practices through taxpayer-subsidized farm payments!

Crop insurance is the largest federal benefit farmers receive (taxpayers currently subsidize 62% of premiums on average), but is currently ***one of the only benefits that is not linked to soil and wetlands conservation requirements.***

In the Dakotas, U.S. taxpayers are paying most of the crop insurance costs for farmers, including paying them when their crop fails. ***This subsidy encourages farmers to expand their cropland by draining wetlands and plowing up grasslands, even where these lands are marginally productive and vulnerable to soil erosion, severe weather, and crop failure.***

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Federal judge dismisses lawsuit to ban traditional ammunition

In 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) denied a petition filed by a number of groups to ban the use of lead ammunition. The 2010 denial was based on the simple fact that the EPA does not have the legal authority under the Toxic Substance Control Act to ban or regulate ammunition.

As reported in 2010, this is not an accident. When TSCA was passed in 1976, pro-gun legislators led by the late Sen. James McClure (R-Idaho) added language to the bill specifically exempting ammunition from EPA control. They knew, even then, that radical anti-hunting groups could try to use the law to end hunting and recreational shooting by making ammo too expensive. Their foresight has now provided an invaluable protection against the effort to ban traditional lead ammunition.

But you can never count on radicals to stop just because they have been beaten. The EPA has also previously denied their petition to ban the use of lead fishing

sinkers, and when they sued to force the EPA to impose an ammunition ban, a federal court ruled that the suit had been filed too late.

Last year, CBD filed a new petition that was just slightly different than the original, only changing the language to specifically target ammunition used in hunting or recreational shooting so that it would not apply to law enforcement or the military.

On May 23, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia dismissed that lawsuit. The suit sought to force the Environmental Protection Agency to ban the manufacture, processing, and distribution of lead-based ammunition and was brought in an attempt to overturn the EPA's previous denials.

The NRA, Safari Club International, and the National Shooting Sports Foundation each intervened in the case to defend the rights and interests of hunters, competitive shooters, and others with firearms-related interests.

Federal Judge Emmet G. Sullivan dismissed CBD's lawsuit, finding that CBD's current petition was nothing more than an attempt to seek reconsideration of their previous petition, which the EPA had denied. Judge Sullivan also indicated that he would defer to EPA's determination that the agency was not congressionally authorized to regulate lead-based ammunition.

By ruling on procedural grounds, Judge Sullivan was not required to address CBD's flawed legal argument in his ruling. CBD claimed that the Toxic Substances Control Act provides EPA with the authority to ban lead-based ammunition, notwithstanding that the law has an exclusion that puts "shells and cartridges" outside its regulatory scope. CBD contended, strangely, that bullets and shot are not within the exception for "shells and cartridges," notwithstanding the very obvious fact that shells and cartridges are where bullets and shot are found.

CRP predictions

Paul J. Baichich Birding Community E-bulletins

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) of the Farm Bill has a long history of financial incentives to encourage farmers to idle their croplands and plant vegetative cover. This is something which in turn benefits the environment and also provides commodity price-support by reducing surplus production.

But corn policy makes that curbing of production ineffective. The economic incentive to grow corn, even on marginal lands, far exceeds the average amount of \$57 paid per acre through CRP. Quite frankly, CRP simply can't compete.

Farmers are once again planting fencerow-to-fencerow fields to cash in on high commodity prices. Nationwide, about 27 million acres are enrolled in CRP, a reduction of 9.7 million acres in about five years. At the same time, CRP support in Congress is fading.

That's the situation as the first gen-

eral CRP sign-up in a year began on 20 May (to close on 14 June).

The loss of CRP acreage underscores shrinking wildlife habitat, habitat especially crucial for grassland birds that are under severe duress. "The long-term trends are very, very sobering," said Dave Nomsen, vice president of governmental affairs for Pheasant Forever. To cite one particularly disturbing example, he said, "We're turning the eastern Dakotas into northern Iowa every day. I've never seen anything like it in my lifetime."

One unanswered question is whether CRP will pay enough to entice landowners to enroll in the program at all. One recent report suggested that this year's corn harvest could be 30 percent above last year's, a situation which might drive corn prices down sharply, prompting some landowners to enroll in CRP.

In any case, there has been little discussion over the impacts on the loss

of so much land, water protection, and bird-and-wildlife habitat.

So far, the current Farm Bill versions in the Senate and House call for a capping of CRP at 24 million to 25 million acres. This is a far cry from the almost 38 million acres enrolled five or six years ago.

One positive sign is that last month a Senate committee approved a new five-year Farm Bill which would include a requirement that farmers who buy crop insurance also comply with conservation measures to protect highly erodible lands and sensitive wetlands. But this isn't new; the policy was in place before 1996, highlighting the difficulties in promoting land, water, and bird conservation these days.

We will keep you informed as these CRP bird-conservation issues unfold.

To read past Birding Community E-bulletins, go to the archives at <http://refugeassociation.org/news/birding-bulletin/>

New Project ChildSafe website offers tools to encourage firearm safety in the home

Our friends at the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) have launched a new Project ChildSafe website as part of its “S.A.F.E. Summer” campaign. The new site, and the campaign, are designed to focus attention on the importance of safe and responsible firearm storage, to reinforce that anyone who is going to own a firearm should respect it and secure it, and to provide educational resources that can help prevent firearm accidents and misuse.

The enhanced site at www.projectchildsafe.org features several new interactive tools to help educate visitors on how to properly store firearms when not in use. Visitors can also make a commitment to be a responsible gun owner. Examples of these new tools include:

- An interactive quiz to help owners determine how safely their firearms are stored
- An online pledge to practice and encourage responsible firearm ownership

ship, shareable on social media

- A new infographic designed to help firearm owners choose a safe storage option based on their lifestyle and needs
- Links to information on where to get a Firearm Safety Kit in their area
- Tools for law enforcement agencies looking to partner with Project ChildSafe in distributing firearms safety kits and encouraging firearm safety

Learn more about Project ChildSafe and the “S.A.F.E. Summer” campaign at <http://nssf.org/newsroom>.

More teal in early-season bag, higher possession limit encourage hunters

This fall, early-teal-season hunters may have an opportunity to bag more teal. Additionally, if the Department of Interior finalizes the waterfowl harvest regulations as initially proposed, the possession limit would increase. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed a six-teal bag limit for early teal season and a possession limit for all seasons equivalent to three daily bag limits. Current limits are a four-teal daily bag during the special season and a possession limit of two daily bag limits.

“Ducks Unlimited is always pleased

to see increased opportunities for waterfowl hunting,” said DU Chief Scientist Dale Humburg. “Harvest regulations are biologically based, and teal population trends have certainly been favorable in recent years.”

Habitat conditions in the prairie pothole region have generally been wet and favorable for the last several years, laying the foundation for excellent nesting success for prairie nesters. Habitat conservation efforts by DU and others across North America have also served to bolster waterfowl populations.

“To date, Ducks Unlimited has helped conserve more than 13 million acres of important waterfowl habitat across the continent, but we cannot rest on that success,” Humburg said. “Despite record numbers in the breeding waterfowl survey over the last few years, if left unchecked, all prairie-breeding ducks will be negatively impacted by the continuing trend of wetland and grassland losses.”

The higher possession limit will be

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TAXPAYER

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Taxpayers pay more crop insurance subsidies to farmers in North Dakota and South Dakota than in almost any other state: **From 1995-2012, the crop insurance program in North Dakota cost federal taxpayers more than \$5 billion; the price tag for South Dakota was almost \$4 billion.**

Crop Insurance Protects Farmers

Farmers and ranchers need a safety net against severe weather and natural disasters, and many of them do work hard to meet basic soil and wetland conservation requirements in return for

that support. But it is not fair to these farmers and ranchers – or to the rest of us taxpayers — to reward “bad actors” for draining wetlands and plowing erosion-prone soils to expand their crop production. ***Crop insurance must not provide an incentive to destroy wetlands and grasslands that protect drinking water, mitigate the impacts of floods and provide habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife.*** In this time of tightening fiscal constraints, it is wasteful and downright unfair for taxpayers to subsidize practices that burden and endanger downstream communities.

Reconnecting wetland and soil conservation compliance to crop insurance premium subsidies will restore the

simple and fair agreement that ensures that farmers benefiting from a taxpayer-funded safety net continue to do their part to conserve soil and water resources on their farms.

Conservation compliance saves money and is critical for reducing soil erosion, protecting wetlands, reducing downstream flooding risk, and decreasing nutrient pollution into rivers, lakes and streams.

Let's stop allowing our tax dollars to send our wetlands down the drain. Please urge your congressional representative to insist on re-linking conservation compliance to crop insurance subsidies in the final passage of the 2013 Farm Bill.

New study quantifies U.S. investment in conservation

A new study provides a revealing look at America's economic stake in conservation, totaling the total public and private investments in fish, wildlife and natural resources conservation at \$38.8 billion per year - monies that, once spent, circulate through the economy and stimulate an impressive \$93.2 billion in economic activity.

"The Conservation Economy in America," commissioned by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and conducted by Southwick Associates, reports the economic impacts of direct investments into conservation: the jobs, tax revenues and other dividends produced by state, federal and private conservation funding.

The study's implications regarding the role of natural resource conservation in the broader U.S. economy are considerable. For example, Outdoor Industry Association, the trade association for companies in the outdoor recreation business, has commissioned a number of groundbreaking studies that examine consumer spending in the pursuit of outdoor recreation activities. When these new conservation-focused figures are combined with OIA data, as well as with similar data for historic preservation, the relationship is clear: Our \$38.8 billion investment in conservation forms the underpinnings of an economic boon for the US through subsequent spending related to outdoor recreation and historic preservation, which are largely dependent on sound natural resources stewardship.

The study has commanded the attention of America's Voice for Conservation, Recreation and Preservation, a coalition of more than 1,200 organizations representing tens of millions of citizens with diverse political backgrounds who have united in support of conservation, recreation and historic preservation programs as a way to create jobs and improve the economy. The AVCRP coalition drew data from the new study and combined existing information to showcase some noteworthy findings:

- \$1.7 trillion = total economic

impact attributed to natural resource conservation, outdoor recreation and historic preservation in the United States, \$1.6 trillion of which is derived from consumer dollars spent on outdoor recreation activities as it circulates through the economy as quantified by OIA. These rounds of spending also create additional impacts:

- \$211 billion = federal, state and local tax revenue generated annually from this sustainable economy;
- 12.8 million = number of jobs supported by these three sectors;
- \$877 billion = combined contribution to the United State Gross Domestic Product from these three sectors; and,
- \$33.3 billion = total annual federal spending on natural resource conservation, outdoor recreation and historic preservation that helps generate this \$1.7 trillion economy.

"Conservation-focused investments impact our nation's economy in ways that cannot be ignored," said Whit Fosburgh, president and CEO of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership. "If the government wishes to prioritize spending on areas that provide substantial return on investment, conservation, outdoor recreation and historic preservation should be at the top of their lists."

"Conservation has always been a strong economic driver, and this new data reinforces that fact," said Ducks Unlimited CEO Dale Hall. "When Americans pursue their favorite outdoor pastimes each year, they support wildlife conservation but also are strengthening our economy to a much greater degree than they may realize. Investing in conservation is a great deal for the American taxpayer."

"The benefits of wild places in America are clear from both the economic and environmental perspective," said The Wilderness Society Counselor and AVCRP co-chair Bill Meadows. "Federal investments made in conservation are returned to all Americans, supporting millions of jobs, improving our infrastructure, encouraging eco-

nomic investment in local communities, and keeping our air breathable, our water clean and our wildlife and outdoor spaces protected - all of which make our nation unique and prosperous."

"Investments in nature produce a great return, and the bottom line is clear - America's natural resources are a critical part of our national economy," said Mark R. Tercek, president and CEO of The Nature Conservancy. "Our environmental health is directly related to our economic well-being, among other benefits. As a result, even in this time of budget austerity, the federal government can and should address the federal deficit while still investing in critical conservation programs."

TEAL

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especially helpful for the thousands of waterfowl hunters who travel for hunting trips each year and want to take their harvest home with them. If approved, they will be able to possess up to three daily bag limits at a time, rather than two. For hunters that take week-long trips across the country to harvest waterfowl, this change will make a difference. Because state regulations may vary within the federal framework, DU reminds hunters to check state-specific regulations before heading to the marsh.

"If you support waterfowl conservation efforts in North America, you can look upon these regulation changes as the fruits of your labor," said DU CEO Dale Hall. "If you do not currently support waterfowl conservation, please consider helping ensure that future generations have the same chance to experience the majesty of waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife that you have."

NOAA study finds anglers top U.S. lightning victims

NOAA's National Weather Service has discovered that 64 percent of lightning deaths since 2006 occurred while people were participating in leisure activities, with fishing topping the list at 26 deaths. John Jensenius, a lightning safety specialist with the National Weather Service, conducted the study by examining demographic information for 238 deaths attributed to lightning over the last seven years. NOAA released these findings on the first day of National Lightning Safety Awareness Week to call attention to the danger of outdoor activities during a thunderstorm.

Of the 152 deaths associated with leisure activities, fishing is followed by camping (15 deaths), boating (14 deaths), soccer (12 deaths) and golf (8 deaths). The remaining 77 people were struck by lightning while participating in a number of other leisure activities like enjoying the beach, swimming,

walking and running, riding recreational vehicles, and picnicking or relaxing in their yard. Between 2006 and 2012, 82 percent of people killed by lightning were male.

"When people think of lightning deaths, they usually think of golf," Jensenius said. "While every outdoor activity is dangerous when a thunderstorm is in the area, outdoor activities other than golf lead to more lightning deaths. NOAA has made a concerted effort to raise lightning awareness in the golf community since we began the campaign in 2001, and we believe our outreach has made a huge difference since lightning-related deaths on golf courses have decreased by 75 percent."

Jensenius said the large number of fishing, camping and boating lightning deaths may occur because these activities require extra time to get to a safe place. "People often wait far too long to head to safety when a storm is

approaching, and that puts them in a dangerous and potentially deadly situation," he said.

Prior to the lightning safety campaign, lightning killed an average of 73 people each year in the United States. Since the National Weather Service launched the campaign, the average has dropped to 37. Seven people have died from lightning strikes so far this year.

The best way for people to protect themselves against lightning injury or death is to monitor the weather and postpone or cancel outdoor activities when thunderstorms are in the forecast. Lightning can strike from 10 miles away, so if people can hear thunder, they are in danger of being struck by lightning. The only safe places to be during a thunderstorm are in a building with four walls and a roof or in a car. A hut, cabana, tent, or other rain shelter will not protect a person from being struck by lightning.

Products associated with bee deaths lethal to birds, other wildlife

By Jason Plautz
E&E reporter

A widely used class of pesticides linked to widespread bee deaths also poses a health threat to birds, aquatic creatures and other wildlife, according to a report out March 19.

Public health advocates and environmentalists have long targeted neonicotinoids, saying they are at least partially responsible for the deaths of roughly one-third of the country's bees each year since 2006. But the new report, commissioned by the American Bird Conservancy (ABC), says the insecticides are also lethal to birds and could affect entire ecosystems, including aquatic systems.

In light of the findings, the ABC is calling on U.S. EPA to ban the use of neonicotinoids in seed treatments and suspend their application until an in-

dependent review can be completed.

"It is clear that these chemicals have the potential to affect entire food chains," said report co-author Cynthia Palmer, pesticides program manager for ABC. "The environmental persistence of the neonicotinoids, their propensity for runoff and for groundwater infiltration, and their cumulative and largely irreversible mode of action in invertebrates raise significant environmental concerns."

A previous request to ban clothianidin, a neonicotinoid pesticide, was rejected by EPA in July (Greenwire, July 25, 2012). And earlier this month, a vote to ban the pesticides by the European Union failed.

The report, written by environmental toxicologist Pierre Mineau, reviewed more than 200 existing studies, including industry research. The evidence, Mineau said, showed

that neonicotinoids can prove more toxic to birds in lower doses than the pesticides they were designed to replace.

A single corn kernel coated with one of the pesticides would be enough to kill a songbird, the report warned, and smaller doses were associated with reproductive and neurological problems.

EPA, said Mineau, has underestimated the toxicity of the chemicals in birds by a factor of anywhere from 1.5 to 10 times depending on the specific insecticide and bird species. The agency also ought to do more to pressure registrants to help diagnose affected populations, he said.

"It is astonishing that EPA would allow a pesticide to be used in hundreds of products without ever re-

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Row crop field buffers show dramatic increase in bobwhite potential in most regions

A conservation practice introduced in agricultural row crop settings in 2004 by USDA at the behest of the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI) has resulted in bobwhite populations up to three times greater than those found in traditionally managed crop fields, according to a just-released study of the program's impacts.

Led by Mississippi State University, Forest and Wildlife Research Center, the study concluded that Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds, referred to as Conservation Practice 33 (CP33), added an average of 1.52 bobwhites to the fall population for every acre of native grassland (grasses, forbs and legumes) in buffers. At the current enrollment of 238,046 acres, the study estimates the practice has added about 30,000 coveys to the landscape, each year. If program participation rose to the current cap of 500,000 acres there would be an estimated 63,000 coveys added. At an average of 12 quail per covey, that's about three-quarters of a million more quail in the fall.

"This study clearly demonstrates what NBCI has said all along: that is, that substantial, measurable wildlife benefits can be achieved through strategically implemented conservation practices on working agricultural lands where much of the potential quail habitat exists," said NBCI Director Don McKenzie. "Furthermore, it shows how a relatively small change in primary land use — 5 percent — at little or no cost to landowners

can have a disproportionately positive impact on bobwhite populations in some regions. CP33 is a win for everyone. It allows the retirement of less productive field margins, often with net financial gains through the incentives, while providing environmental benefits like clean water and habitat for pollinators, quail and other grassland birds. NBCI urges a more comprehensive application of this efficient practice as a commonsense approach for government, for farms and for wildlife."

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) implemented the Habitat for Upland Birds practice as part of their Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP) in 2004, initially allocating 250,000 acres in 35 states for 10 years of active management. Essentially, CP33 offers landowners incentives for establishing 30 to 120-foot-wide buffers of diverse native grasses and forbs along the edges of crop fields to provide habitat for bobwhites and other grassland birds. FSA also charged what is now the National Bobwhite Technical Committee with devising a monitoring protocol to measure the response of bobwhites and targeted songbird species. CP33 was the first USDA conservation reserve practice designed specifically to help meet recovery objectives of a large-scale conservation initiative, as well as the first and only USDA practice for which USDA requires monitoring to actually measure conservation impacts.

State fish and wildlife agencies, private conservation organizations and universities in 14 states collaborated with Dr. Wes Burger at Mississippi State University to monitor differences in bobwhite and upland songbird densities and buffer vegetation characteristics on nearly 600 buffered fields and an equal number of "non-buffered" fields from 2006-2011.

Among the report findings:

- Researchers observed 50-110% greater fall bobwhite covey densities on CP33 fields across all states
- CP 33 works especially well in some regions, most notably in the Southeastern Coastal Plain (Bird Conservation Region 27) where covey densities were three times greater, and in the Central Hardwoods (Bird Conservation Region 24) and the Mississippi Alluvial Valley (Bird Conservation Region 26), where covey densities were two times greater
- Priority songbirds that share habitat with bobwhites, such as dickcissels and field sparrows, also benefitted from CP33 buffers
- Required management activities designed to maintain habitat quality for bobwhites were implemented on less than half of the enrolled acres, presenting an opportunity for program improvement
- Kansas and Oklahoma state wildlife

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Public approval of hunting highest since 1995

By National Shooting Sports Foundation

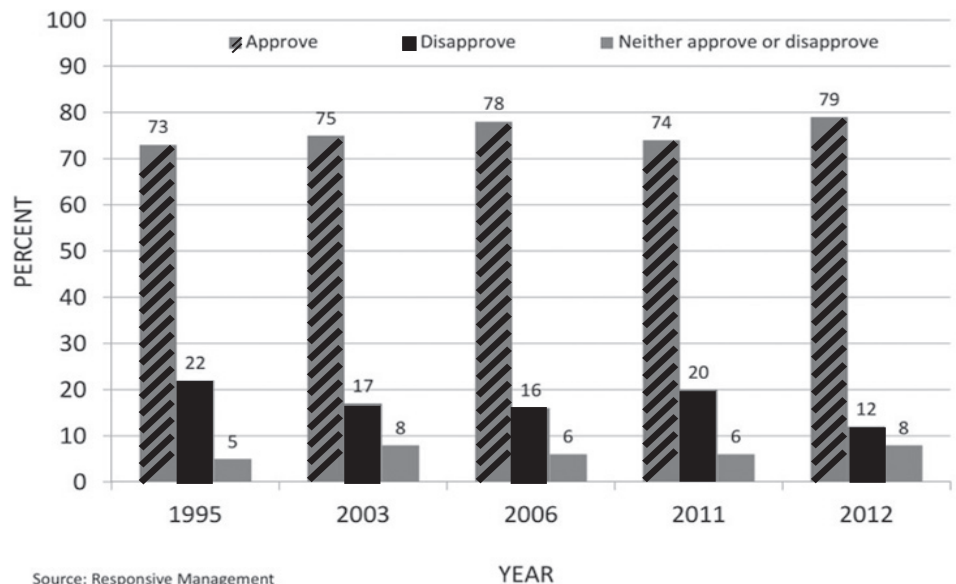
The National Shooting Sports Foundation reports that a new survey shows 79 percent of the American public approve of hunting. This marks the highest level of support for hunting since 1995, according to data compiled by Responsive Management, an independent research firm.

The nationwide scientific survey showed the public's approval of hunting rose five points in the past year, up from 74 percent in 2011. The survey, conducted in February 2013 using random digit dialing and supplemental cellular telephone sampling, was the fifth in a series of similar surveys by Responsive Management to track trends in public approval of hunting since 1995.

Support for hunting has remained generally consistent during this time—73 percent in 1995; 75 percent in 2003; 78 percent in 2006; 74 percent in 2011; and a peak of 79 percent in 2013.

Mark Damian Duda, executive director of Responsive Management, is still looking at survey results to better understand why approval has increased. Said Duda, "Approval of hunting among Americans is fairly stable and bounces between 73 and 79 percent. The reasons for this increase are still unclear, but it is probably related to the increase in hunting and shooting participation."

General Population's Attitude Towards Hunting



Added Duda, "Since 2006, hunting participation has increased by 9 percent while shooting participation has increased 18 percent since 2009. Other studies we have conducted on public opinion on hunting show that the strongest correlation for approval of hunting is knowing a hunter—over and above demographic variables or anything else. With the increased number of hunters in the field and sport shooters at the range, it is possible that this is being reflected in this uptick in support for hunting."

One thousand Americans 18 years old and older were surveyed to achieve a sampling error of plus or minus 3.00 percentage points. More than half (52%) of those surveyed strongly approved of hunting. At the other end of the spectrum, 12 percent of Americans disapprove of hunting. Another 8 percent neither approve nor disapprove (total does not equal 100% due to rounding).

Responsive Management specializes in public opinion research on natural resource and outdoor recreation issues.

BOBWHITE

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departments conducted separate, but related, evaluations of CP33 for bobwhites and ring-necked pheasants, and found both species were more abundant with grass buffered crop fields compared to field lacking buffers

To have maximum impact, the buffered fields need to be strategically concentrated in relation to one another rather than stranded in isolated pockets across the landscape

Project Manager Dr. Kristine Evans

identified another important outcome of the study. "CP33 monitoring exemplifies that large-scale coordinated monitoring across multiple agencies/organizations is entirely possible and can be very successful in measuring programmatic outcomes given appropriate funding mechanisms and monitoring infrastructure."

For more details about the technical aspects of the monitoring and the results, the full final report is available at http://bringbackbobwhites.org/strategy/nbci-2-0/doc_details/166-conservation-reserve-program-cp33-final-report-2006-2011.

Headquartered at the University of

Tennessee, NBCI is a project of the National Bobwhite Technical Committee (NBTC) to elevate bobwhite quail recovery from an individual state-by-state proposition to a range-wide, policy-level leadership endeavor. The committee is comprised of representatives of state fish and wildlife agencies, academic research institutions and non-governmental conservation organizations. NBCI is funded by the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, two dozen state wildlife management agencies, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Southern Company. For more information, please visit www.bringbackbobwhites.org.

Why do we bird?

**By Al Schirmacher
Muscotah, KS**

* Play - since we're not eight anymore, we can't ride our bikes at top speed down the road. But, in dignified fashion, we can raise binoculars and comment on the bird, while secretly just enjoying being OUTSIDE.

* Collecting - rare art & books are

too expensive, stamps/coins/baseball cards are perceived as juvenile, and Beanie Babies - tag included - never panned out financially. But birds on a list...!

* Beauty - we claim that we need Painted Buntings & Scarlet Tanagers for the next county list, but really we want to be ravished yet again by bright primary colors, like back in kindergarten.

* Spirituality - some have found peace, some meaning, some transcendence - but migrating warblers, followed by Chinese buffet for lunch, also touches our inner beings. Somewhere.

* Camaraderie - there's nothing better than sharing a good birding morning with friends - unless it's beating the pants off the reigning Big Day team - for charity, of course.

Spann back in court

William "Spook" Spann, television show host and pro staffer for some archery equipment manufacturers who earlier this year was sentenced on Lacey Act violations, was back in federal court in Kansas City June 27 and 28.

Based on a tip received from a former cameraman, federal prosecutors contend the host of Spook Nation on the Pursuit Channel illegally baited his Dickson, Tenn. property for turkey and participated in hunting activities in

violation of the terms of his parole.

Spann, 50, was formally sentenced in U.S. District Court in Kansas City Feb. 28 for a Kansas deer he shot illegally in 2007. His sentence included a total of \$20,000 in fines and restitution, forfeiture of the antlers in question and any mold or antler reproduction, and suspension of hunting privileges in the U.S. for six months.

In his June 28 testimony, Spann admitted he led guests - including Tennessee Titans quarterback Jake

Locker - around his property while they hunted in the spring, but he didn't think he was violating probation in doing so. He also testified that hidden camera footage does not show him spreading grain on his property, but instead shows him placing mineral licks for deer.

Federal prosecutors have asked U.S. Magistrate Judge James P. O'Hara to revoke Spann's probation and sentence him to 90 days in jail. A ruling in the case is expected later this month.

Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission rejects proposed coyote hunting change

Commission votes to keep coyote hunting regulations as they are

At the public hearing conducted June 27 in Garden City, the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission rejected a recommendation to prohibit coyote hunting with the use of vehicles and two-way radios during the regular firearm deer season. Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) law enforcement staff requested changes to the coyote hunting regulations because of incidents involving individuals using vehicles and radios to hunt deer under the guise of coyote hunting.

Current regulations allow coyotes to be hunted from vehicles and with the use of radios.

However, game animals, including deer, may not be hunted from vehicles or using radios and cell phones.

KDWPT law enforcement officers expressed frustration with enforcing those big game regulations.

During the Workshop Session on this regulation at the April meeting in Wichita, the Commission listened to coyote hunters who felt they were being punished for the actions of a few hunting deer illegally. Ultimately, commissioners agreed. However, the commission asked for documented incidents after the 2013 firearm deer season and promised to revisit this issue early next year.

In other public hearing items, the commission approved regulations pertaining to agritourism, which were brought into the KDWPT regulation system as a result of ERO 36, which moved agritourism duties under KD-

WPT.

Commissioners approved a variety of changes to furharvesting regulations including allowing the use of all foothold traps for water sets (only smooth-jawed traps may be used on land), and allowing incidentally trapped muskrats taken by beaver trappers after the muskrat season has closed to be possessed with a limit of 10 per season. Otter pelts must now be tagged similar to bobcat pelts, and the lower canine teeth must be submitted to KDWPT at the time of tagging. The season quota of 100 otters was removed, as well as the requirement to notify KDWPT within 24 hours of otter harvest. Licensed

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National survey explores the world of dove hunting

Dove hunters can provide vital information about the sport through a nation-wide survey

One of North America's most highly sought after migratory birds, the dove, will be the focus of a national survey conducted June 20 through the end of the year. A cooperative effort of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Flyway Councils, and state fish and wildlife agencies, the National Dove Hunter Survey will examine the experiences and opinions of dove hunters from across the nation.

"Nationally, there are more than one million dove hunters in the United States," said Dr. Ken Richkus, USFWS

Population and Habitat Assessment Branch. "This survey will encompass all regions of the country and will give us an excellent picture of hunter opinions and needs."

Surveys will be mailed to randomly selected hunters from across the nation who purchased a HIP stamp required to hunt doves. Specific topics being surveyed include hunter characteristics; time spent hunting, and perceived constraints to hunting. The survey will also examine hunters' thoughts about potential effects of spent lead on mourn-

ing doves and other wildlife.

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the states want to make sure we use the best science-based information for the management and conservation of our migratory bird resources and take hunter opinions and preferences into account whenever possible," said Richkus.

For more information, contact Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism migratory bird specialist Richard Schultheis at (620) 342-0658 or by email at richard.schultheis@ksoutdoors.com.

Ballot box biology bad for sportsmen

**By Neil Thagard
Theodore Roosevelt
Conservation Partnership**

At first glance, many of the issues facing hunters and anglers today seem overwhelmingly complex. On topics as diverse as ATV use to public land development, climate change to predator management, emotionally charged debates spring up at every sportsman's gathering. None of these issues seems to have a simple answer.

I often am confronted by individuals or organizations asking about the TRCP's position on the issue of the day. My answer is always the same: What does the best available science tell us?

The TRCP's mission is, and always has been, to guarantee all Americans a quality place to hunt and fish. To do this we need sustainable fish and wildlife populations and habitats to support them. Our professional wildlife managers intimately understand this and implement policies and procedures to ensure it.

Where the process falls off the rails is when we start trying to manage our fish and wildlife through what is sometimes referred to as

"ballot box biology" – a process by which fish, wildlife and habitat management decisions are made not by professionals using sound, supportable, peer-reviewed and published science but by public opinion. Unfortunately, public opinion can be deeply divided, fueled not by the facts but by emotional rhetoric and snappy catch phrases that fit neatly onto bumper stickers.

A good example of this can be seen in the ongoing controversy surrounding gray wolf management, an issue that has splintered the sportsman's community. Specifically, wolves have been single-handedly blamed for dramatically reducing big game numbers to the point where the absurd claim of "the wolves ate them all" is commonly heard in reference to elk, deer, moose and even bighorn sheep.

It's an easy bandwagon to jump on. The image of a snarling, larger-than-life predator with blood-drenched fangs can haunt even the most reasonable hunter's dreams when he's on a long and unsuccessful quest and not finding the animals he is used to seeing in his favorite hunting spots. But the scientific reality behind recent population declines is far more complex, and to

attribute it solely to any one factor, including predation, is an unjust over-simplification. In fact, a study sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (http://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/study-wyoming-wolves-getting-bad-rap-for-elk-decline/article_b09d3586-e35a-5971-8ce5-0183cab9d159.html) on the elk declines in the Yellowstone area has determined that wolves have had a minimal effect on elk populations.

Another recent study out of Minnesota, where a 69-percent decline in moose populations has put an end to moose hunting in that state, points toward climate change as the major factor. Milder winters are raising the survival rates of blood-sucking ticks that attack moose in the tens of thousands, when the animal already is stressed by a warmer than normal summer. Unfortunately, despite sound scientific support, "the ticks ate them all" just doesn't have the same ring to it – and likewise would be inaccurate.

Predators such as wolves or ticks don't exist in a vacuum. Undeniably, they have an impact; however, a host

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Outdoor cats: Single greatest source of human-caused mortality for birds and mammals, says new study

A new peer-reviewed study published late January and authored by scientists from two of the world's leading science and wildlife organizations – the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) – has found that bird and mammal mortality caused by outdoor cats is much higher than has been widely reported, with annual bird mortality now estimated to be 1.4 to 3.7 billion and mammal mortality likely 6.9-20.7 billion individuals.

The study, which offers the most comprehensive analysis of information on the issue of outdoor cat predation, was published in the online research journal *Nature Communications* and is based on a review of 90 previous studies. The study was authored by Dr. Peter Marra and Scott Loss, research scientists at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and by Tom Will from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Migratory Birds.

According to Dr. George Fenwick, President of American Bird Conservancy, one of the leading bird conservation organizations in the U.S. and a group that has called for action on this issue for many years, "This study, which employed scientifically rigorous standards for data inclusion, demonstrates that the issue of cat predation on birds and mammals is an even bigger environmental and ecological threat than we thought. No estimates of any other anthropogenic [human-caused] mortality source approach the bird mortality this study calculated for

cat predation."

"To maintain the integrity of our ecosystems, we have to conserve the animals that play integral roles in those ecosystems. Every time we lose another bird species or suppress their population numbers, we're altering the very ecosystems that we depend on as humans. This issue clearly needs immediate conservation attention," he said further.

"The very high credibility of this study should finally put to rest the misguided notions that outdoor cats represent some harmless, new component to the natural environment. The carnage that outdoor cats inflict is staggering and can no longer be ignored or dismissed. This is a wake-up call for cat owners and communities to get serious about this problem before even more ecological damage occurs," Fenwick said.

The study's estimate of bird mortality far exceeds any previously estimated U.S. figure for cats. In fact, this magnitude of mortality may exceed all other direct sources of anthropogenic bird and mammal mortality combined. Other bird mortality sources would include collisions with windows, buildings, communication towers, vehicles, and pesticide poisoning.

The study estimated that the median number of birds killed by cats annually is 2.4 billion and the median number of mammals killed is 12.3 billion. About 69 percent of the bird mortality from cat predation and 89 percent of the mammal mortality was from un-owned

cats. Un-owned cats are defined to include farm/barn cats, strays that are fed but not granted access to human habitations, cats in subsidized colonies, and cats that are completely feral.

Free-ranging cats on islands have caused or contributed to 33 (14 percent) of the modern bird, mammal, and reptile extinctions recorded by the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of threatened animals and plant species.

Native species make up the majority of the birds preyed upon by cats. On average, only 33 percent of bird prey items identified to species were non-native species in 10 studies. Studies of mammals in suburban and rural areas found that 75-100 percent of mammalian prey were native mice, shrews, voles, squirrels, and rabbits, all of which serve as food sources for birds of prey such as hawks, owls, and eagles.

The study charges that, "Despite these harmful effects, policies for management of free-ranging cat populations and regulation of pet ownership behaviors are dictated by animal welfare issues rather than ecological impacts. Projects to manage free-ranging cats, such as Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) colonies, are potentially harmful to wildlife populations, but are implemented across the United States without widespread public knowledge, consideration of scientific evidence, or the environmental review processes typically required for actions with harmful environmental consequences."

BALLOT BOX

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of other, much less glamorous causes exists, such as habitat degradation and fragmentation, fire suppression, irresponsible development, overgrazing, invasive species and disease.

As difficult as it may be, every sportsman is responsible – for the future of our own and our children's hunting and angling opportunities – to be factual and credible to ensure we identify and address the actual challenges our natural resources are facing.

We must make the effort to look for the facts of each situation and ask

ourselves, "What does the best available science and our professional wildlife managers tell us is best for fish, wildlife and their habitats?" Because ultimately, this also will be what is best for sportsmen.

The science behind sustainable fish and wildlife management is complex. But the decision to use it should be very simple.

Are our wild bird seed products pesticide-free?

American Bird Conservancy reported in May it has sent letters to two of the nation's largest producers of wild birdseeds, Scotts Miracle-Gro Company and Kaytee Products, seeking assurance that the company supply chains remain free of neonicotinoid insecticides, which can be fatally poisonous to birds.

"American Bird Conservancy (ABC) would like to direct your attention to the neonicotinoid coatings that are commonly applied to corn, canola, sunflower, millet, and other types of seeds," says the letter. "Our recently completed scientific assessment concluded that these insecticides routinely are incorporated into seeds and are lethal to birds. We want to ensure that these insecticidal treatments are never found on the bird seed that your companies sell to consumers for feeding pets and wild birds."

ABC recently released a 100-page scientific report on the effects of neonicotinoid insecticides on birds, *The Impact of the Nation's Most Widely Used Insecticides on Birds*. These chemicals are applied as seed treatments in agricultural and horticultural seed products. For some crops

such as corn, close to 100 percent of seed on the market is treated. ABC reviewed 200 studies on neonicotinoids, including industry research obtained through the U.S. Freedom of Information Act.

The ABC report found that a single corn kernel coated with a neonicotinoid can kill a songbird. Even a tiny grain of wheat or canola treated with the oldest neonicotinoid, imidacloprid, can fatally poison a bird. And as little as one-tenth of a neonicotinoid-coated corn seed per day during egg-laying season is all that is needed to affect reproduction. Low-level exposure to neonicotinoids is associated with a range of potentially debilitating effects such as egg-shell thinning and loss of muscle coordination.

"Given that a single neonicotinoid-coated seed can fatally poison a bird, it is important that the seeds marketed for home bird feeders remain free of these chemical treatments," said Cynthia Palmer, Pesticides Program Manager for ABC. In response to past wild bird seed contamination incidents, ABC has implemented random testing of birdseed sold by major retailers. To date, ABC's independent birdseed testing efforts have

focused on older products such as the organophosphorous and carbamate pesticides. The ABC letter, however, asserts "Neonicotinoids are also now a candidate for future testing."

Since the use of neonicotinoid coatings is nearly ubiquitous in many seed crops grown in the United States, ABC wants to make sure that the seeds sold by birdseed manufacturers for use in backyard bird feeders remain free from neonicotinoid insecticides. "It would be wretched if bird watchers were unknowingly poisoning the very birds that they seek to nurture and enjoy with their families," said Palmer.

ABC is asking the Scotts Miracle-Gro and Kaytee companies to provide documentation showing that their birdseed supply chains are indeed pure and free of imidacloprid, clothianidin, thiamethoxam, and other neonicotinoid insecticides.

The 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (large document - 26 MB), conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, reports that the nation's nearly 47 million birdwatchers spend over \$4 billion annually on bird feed.

COYOTES

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fur dealers now have until May 1 to submit all record books to KDWPT, and the running season was extended 7 days to November 8.

The commission also approved a regulation requiring all hunters who hunt big game or wild turkeys with a crossbow to obtain a free Crossbow Survey Number from KDWPT before hunting. The number can be obtained online. And deer season dates specific

to the Fort Riley Military Reservation were approved, and can be viewed at www.ksoutdoors.com.

The commission approved several recommendations to the Public Lands reference document, which lists use restrictions on specific public lands, including requiring the use of non-toxic shot on designated dove fields. Other Public Lands recommendations approved include a change in the definition of blinds and stands allowed (removing the word "tree" before stand), as well as the definition of baiting so that certain food plot practices used to attract doves are

allowed.

The last public hearing item presented to the commission was the recommendation for the early teal season. Commissioners approved a 16-day season in the Low Plains Zone (east of Hwy 283, Sept. 7-22, 2013, and a 9-day season for the High Plains Zone (west of Hwy 283, Sept. 14-22, 2013. Because of much higher than average blue-winged teal numbers surveyed, the USFWS frameworks allowed for an increase in the daily bag limit for teal during the early season from 4 to 6, which was approved.

Conservation group continues to encourage Duck Stamp double-up

Ducks Unlimited, in its March/April magazine, is continuing an effort it began in 2011, by encouraging members and others to “Double-Up for the Ducks” and purchase two federal ducks stamps each year.

Since 1934, sales from the Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, commonly known as the Federal Duck Stamp, have helped to acquire more than 5.3 million acres of waterfowl habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Ninety-eight cents out of every dollar is spent to acquire land and protect waterfowl habitat. Stamp revenues benefit waterfowl and countless other wildlife species as well as people by expanding opportunities and access for wildlife dependent recreation.

“The Service certainly appreciates this effort being undertaken by Ducks Unlimited to further waterfowl and wetlands conservation across the country,” said Service Director Dan Ashe. “The Duck Stamp program has been one of the most successful conservation programs in history and buying not one but two duck stamps is one of the best ways around to protect wildlife and waterfowl habitat.”

Legislation in Congress that would have increased the cost of a duck stamp from \$15 to \$25 stalled last year, so Ducks Unlimited launched the “Double Up for the Ducks” campaign to encourage members to show their elected officials that they are willing to pay more for the stamp

and for waterfowl preservation and habitat expansion.

The cost of the Duck Stamp has remained the same since 1991. Based on the Consumer Price Index, the stamp would need to cost more than \$24 today to have the same buying power that \$15 had in 1991. In 1991, revenue from the Duck Stamp enabled the Service to acquire 89,000 acres of habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System at an average cost of \$306 an acre. In 2010, the Service was able to acquire only 32,000 acres because land values had tripled to an average of \$1,091 an acre.

Federal duck stamps may be purchased online at www.duckstamp.com.

BEES

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quiring the registrant to develop the tools needed to diagnose poisoned wildlife,” Mineau said.

The report also found contamination levels in surface- and ground-level water systems that were already above the threshold associated with death in aquatic invertebrates. Levels were high enough in areas like California and the Canadian prairies to suggest there could be an impact on the entire aquatic food chain, eventually reaching populations like birds and amphibians.

That, said Mineau, should add more backing to the push to take neonicotinoids out of use, at least until more research is done.

“We’re not saying these impacts are more important than bees, but this is an added piece of the puzzle,” Mineau said at a news conference today.

In a statement, CropLife America, an agribusiness group, said that while

“it is critical to protect bird population levels and support biodiversity,” the link between insecticides and any decline in bird populations is “unfounded.”

“CLA is disappointed that the report, which has not been published in a peer-reviewed journal, paints a flawed picture of the Environmental Protection Agency’s risk assessment of crop protection products, industry stewardship and agriculture as a whole,” said Mike Leggett, senior director of environmental policy for CropLife America.

“Our industry continues to conduct studies directed at ensuring that the crop protection products available to farmers can be used safely and will effectively help growers provide nutritious food for communities around the world,” Leggett said.

Neonicotinoids were developed in the 1990s to replace harmful organophosphate pesticides and are now widely used on crops including corn and soy and in some home-gardening products.

Public health advocates say there’s

now evidence that the pesticides were rushed to market without proper assessment and are calling for them to be restricted. The bee die-offs have captured headlines, since up to one-third of the U.S. diet depends on insect pollinators.

The Department of Agriculture has conducted several studies on the bee deaths and has said there is no single cause, including pesticides (Greenwire, April 24, 2012). EPA has said it will complete a review the safety of neonicotinoids for honeybees in 2018.

But Peter Jenkins of the Center for Food Safety said that was “clearly not enough” and called on Congress to “hold EPA’s feet to the fire” by threatening to suspend the use of the product or amend the farm bill to restrict its use. Jenkins also said that EPA should also be pressured to speed up its safety reviews and that its review process for chemicals should be reformed.

To read the report, go to: http://www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/toxins/Neonic_FINAL.pdf

Why do birds sing?

There's a reason birds belt out tunes in spring

By George Harrison Birds & Blooms

"In the spring, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love," the saying goes.

The same may be said of birds. That's because spring is when most birds turn to family obligations—they mate, build nests, lay eggs and raise young.

Singing is an important part of the breeding cycle, which begins when migratory male birds reach their nesting grounds. They usually arrive before the female birds, giving each male time to establish a nesting territory and defend it against other males of the same species.

Singing is a form of communication that reinforces this ownership—announcing through song that "this is my territory."

Female songbirds usually arrive on the nesting grounds a week or two after the males. As they pass through, they hear the males singing. If a song attracts them, a female will stop to look over the male, check his plumage to determine if he has desirable genes, and then explore his territory. It is the female that selects a mate.

Music to Their Ears

Birdsongs aren't always sweet music. Male ring-necked pheasants crow like chickens, mourning doves coo somberly, kingfishers rattle and owls hoot.

Woodpeckers peck on a sounding board, such as the siding of a house. This springtime hammering is not an effort to find food—it's a communication with other woodpeckers of their kind.

Male ruffed grouse attract mates

and defend territories by "drumming," a booming noise they make by beating the air with their primary wing feathers, usually while perched on a fallen tree or log. Other grouse, like prairie-chickens and sage-grouse, make a booming sound by filling the air sacs on the sides of their necks with air and exhaling.

Singing usually is a male trait, but some female songbirds croon, too. Female northern cardinals create a softer version of the male's song, sometimes in unison with their mates. This likely is a courtship ritual to strengthen the bond between a pair.

Surprisingly, a bird's mouth or bill sometimes plays little or no part in singing. In fact, birds like warblers and vireos can sing with their bills closed, or with their bills full of food. That's because birds create the sound deep in their throats by exhaling air from their lungs.

However, many birds do belt out tunes in a showy fashion, like the common yellowthroat or eastern meadowlark.

A Lot of Practice Makes Perfect

Although we're not entirely sure how birds learn to sing, we do know it's a combination of heredity and mimicking. Juvenile songbirds will begin to rehearse their songs during their first autumn and winter. They graduate to mature singing during their first spring. These younger birds will hear other males of their species and imitate them, often adding a slight touch of their own.

There is a big difference between a bird's song and its call. Singing usually is a more melodious sound, while calling often is sharper and more direct.

Calls are used either as a loud alarm note to communicate danger, or as quiet chatter to locate mates and other birds of their species. For example, a northern cardinal's loud "chip" call is very different from its musical "what-cheer, what-cheer, birdie, birdie, birdie" song.

Northern cardinals are one of the few songbirds that sing almost all year long. At my southeastern Wisconsin home, I hear them at least 10 months a year. It is a welcome sound when the woods is snow-covered.

The best time to hear birds sing is at dawn on a spring morning. Often called the "dawn chorus," birdsongs reach a fever pitch at daybreak in late May and early June, the peak of breeding season in most parts of the United States and Canada. It is well worth getting up early to hear nature's finest musical show. Sometimes it is so loud that the birds drown out each other's finest efforts.

Though most songbirds sing short songs, averaging only 2 to 6 seconds each, a few are known for continuously repeating their song.

Birders have made a sport of counting some amazingly high numbers of repetitive, nonstop songs. One was a male song sparrow in Ohio that performed 2,305 songs nonstop. In Virginia, I heard a whippoorwill repeat its nighttime chorus at least 800 times before I fell asleep. The world record could be a red-eyed vireo that sang 22,197 times in a single day.

The songs of birds are one of nature's great gifts. Not only are they a treat to the ear, but bird-watchers who recognize the sounds can easily identify the singer without seeing it.

Kansas Wildlife Federation
P.O. Box 771282
Wichita, KS 67277-1282

The Kansas Wildlife Federation is Working to Preserve a Way of Life for Kansas!

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