

# Eastern Great Lakes Region FAN UPDATE

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## **A Great 2014.**

I would like to start this Forest Action Network update with a thank you to everyone who welcomed me aboard this past May and helped me get up and running with the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) and the American Woodcock Society (AWS). I look forward to many more years of working with chapters, partners, and coworkers to improve and protect young forest habitat for the wildlife we all enjoy.

If you would like to get these newsletters directly or refer a friend please send me an email at [erice@ruffedgrousesociety.org](mailto:erice@ruffedgrousesociety.org).

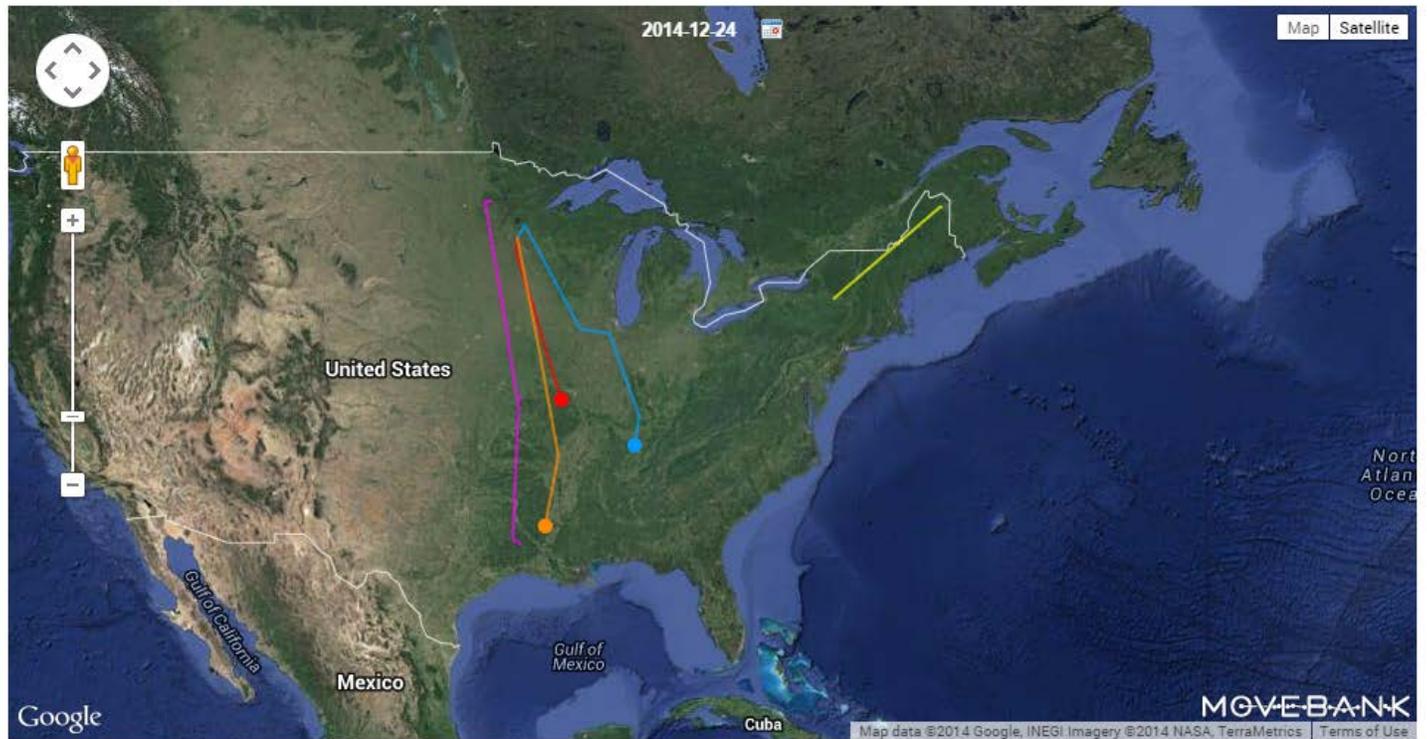
Have a Happy New Year! *Eric*

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## **Woodcock Telemetry Website Up and Running**

Just a few weeks ago the RGS and AWS website launched the satellite mapping associated with research being conducted by the USGS Arkansas Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit, USGS Minnesota Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit and the USFWS. RGS and AWS are two of the project partners providing assistance and funding for the study. *To date, RGS and AWS have provided roughly \$60,000 in financial support for this project along with assistance in implementation.* Below is a screenshot from the website:

## Fall 2014 Migration



You can access the site directly at this [LINK](#).

The solar powered satellite transmitters are affixed to female American woodcock and transfer their location every 2 days for 10 hours then shut off for 48 hours to conserve batteries. Occasionally the transmitter batteries cannot charge or transmit due to the dense cover that woodcock typically inhabit.

A few tips:

- Each dot represents a recorded location for that bird. Click on the dot to bring up the date when that individual bird was at that site.
- Click on the calendar to see where all the woodcock on the map were located on any one day. Clicking through the dates will give you a sense of the timing and speed of migration for all the tagged birds.

Keep in mind that the current website only shows the six birds tagged approximately one year ago on wintering grounds in Texas and Louisiana and an additional three tagged in Minnesota this past fall. This coming winter, project partners will affix transmitters to an additional 45 female woodcock. Needless to say, watching the data for this project pile up will be very exciting! Aside from just being downright cool this study will provide incredible insight on a variety of topics including migration initiation, during of migration, migration routes, stop over sites, stop over duration, and variation in these patterns between years. One major impact of this project will be the ability to identify priority habitat and locations along migration routes. This is especially important in areas of my region that are not typically considered important to American Woodcock but likely serve a vital role to birds twice a year during migration.

RGS and AWS are actively raising funds to purchase additional satellite transmitters. Many RGS chapters and individual RGS and AWS members have donated funds to the project. Anyone wishing to make a similar donation may do so online at [www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org) or by contacting the RGS and AWS national office at (412) 262-4044.

If you have specific questions about this project you can contact Joe Moore, graduate assistant at the University of Arkansas at [jdm046@uark.edu](mailto:jdm046@uark.edu).

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## Michigan RGS and AWS State Workshop Scheduled

The annual RGS and AWS State Workshop will take place Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup> from 1:00pm until 5:30pm at the Ralph A. MacMullan Center near Higgins Lake, Michigan. This workshop is a great place to meet with other dedicated members and learn about what is going on in Michigan with regards to young forest management, Drummer Fund activities, and other upland habitat topics. Speakers will include myself, RGS and AWS Director of Development Bruce Wojcik, and Al Stewart, MDNR Upland Game Bird Specialist. There will be regional updates on RGS policies and procedures as well as a state-of-the-state report. John Paige will discuss the habitat machine program highlights and accomplishments. Finally, there will be a hands-on session with information on how to release a hunting dog from various types of traps you may encounter when in the woods in Michigan.

Attendance is limited, please RSVP to Bruce Wojcik at [brucew@ruffedgrousesociety.org](mailto:brucew@ruffedgrousesociety.org) or 412-874-8702.

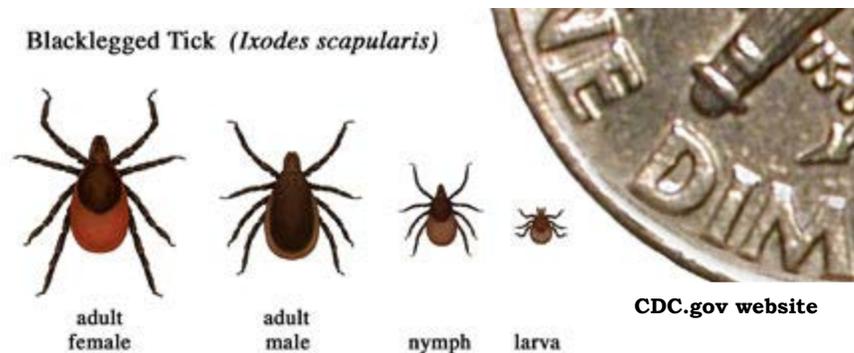
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## Lyme Disease Carrier on the Rise in the Region.

**All upland hunters should be aware of ticks on both themselves and their dogs. As shown in the following article, blacklegged tick numbers have risen significantly in Ohio in the last five years. A carrier of Lyme disease, this tick is rapidly expanding both its range and numbers in the Buckeye State. Below is an October 9<sup>th</sup> article retrieved**

**from the [Morrowcountysentinel.com](http://Morrowcountysentinel.com) website that outlines current research on blacklegged ticks in Ohio. While Lyme disease and other tick transmitted diseases are nothing to scoff at with a few simple precautions hunters can dramatically reduce their chances of infection and still enjoy their time pursuing The King. My personal tick prevention plan includes wearing a Rynoskin suit from neck to toe, spraying Permethrin on my hunting boots, and showering immediately after getting in from the woods. I also consult annually with my vet on the most up-to-date precautions for my setter and religiously comb her with a Furminator style brush after every foray into the woods.**

*Eric*



COLUMBUS, Ohio – They were almost absent from Ohio until 2009. But since then, the number of blacklegged ticks found in Ohio has grown significantly. The bad news: Blacklegged ticks carry Lyme disease.

A new study conducted by Ohio State University and the Ohio Department of Health has found that blacklegged ticks and Lyme disease are now an emerging public health concern in

Ohio, as tick populations carrying the disease have become established, particularly in the eastern half of the state.

“Ohio had a low incidence of human Lyme disease, which is largely attributed to the absence of the transmitting vector, the blacklegged deer tick, in the state,” said Glen Needham, professor emeritus of entomology in the university’s College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences and one of the study’s authors.

“However, evidence presented in this study suggests that the blacklegged deer tick is becoming established in certain areas of Ohio.”

The open-access paper was published June 2014 in the journal *Frontiers in Cellular and Infection Microbiology*.

Ticks are small arachnids that hang out along woodland edges, in woods, tall grass, weeds and underbrush. Like mosquitoes, ticks feed on the blood of birds, reptiles and mammals, including humans and pets. In doing so, ticks can transmit a variety of diseases, such as Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Lyme disease.

Lyme disease causes flu-like symptoms such as fatigue, fever, headache, and muscle and joint aches. It often produces a distinctive large, circular red rash that looks like a bulls-eye. When caught early, the disease can be successfully treated with antibiotics. Though not known to be fatal, the disease can progress to chronic arthritis, neurological symptoms and cardiac problems if left untreated.

Lyme disease is caused by an agent known as *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which is found primarily in the white-footed mouse. Blacklegged ticks (*Ixodes scapularis*) pick up the disease-causing agent from the mice and serve as vectors, or carriers, of Lyme disease.

Most people who get Lyme disease, Needham said, will acquire it from the nymphal, or juvenile, stage of the tick, which is very small — the size of a poppy seed — and is active in spring and summer, particularly in wooded areas. Hunters and meat processors will especially be at risk from adult ticks this fall from September through December.

For the study, Needham and colleagues analyzed data from the state health department’s tick surveillance program; Ohio’s multi-agency surveillance of deer heads for chronic wasting disease; and the results of their 2010 studies of ticks and *B. burgdorferi* prevalence in rural Tiverton Township, Coshocton County, where established populations of blacklegged deer ticks carrying the Lyme disease agent have been identified.

The first blacklegged deer tick confirmed in Ohio was found in 1989. The number of these ticks found annually remained low from 1989 until 2008 and accounted for less than 1 percent of all ticks collected by the state health department’s tick surveillance program.

However, things began to change dramatically in 2009, when 15 blacklegged deer ticks were collected, followed by 40 in 2010, 184 in 2011 and 182 in 2012. By 2012, these ticks accounted for almost 25 percent of those received by the state health department. A higher number of ticks was also found on deer heads. For example, in 2011, 1,830 ticks were collected from 96 of 560 deer heads examined. The previous year yielded only 29 ticks from around 200 deer inspected.

Such an increase in the number of blacklegged deer ticks found throughout the state mirrored the confirmed and probable cases of Lyme disease reported to the health department: 43 cases in 2010, 50 in 2011, 67 in 2012 and 93 in 2013.

“Blacklegged deer ticks have now been found in 57 Ohio counties and are likely established in 26 of those counties, mostly east of I-71 where we have deciduous forest,” said Needham, who is now studying tick-borne diseases for the U.S. Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton.

In the United States, Lyme disease is endemic (meaning it has become highly prevalent) in two different regions: the Northeastern states and the Upper Midwestern states. Ohio lies between these two areas, which puts the state in the crosshairs of expansion of the disease.

“Given the proximity of Ohio counties with established blacklegged tick populations to highly endemic Pennsylvania, it is possible that the emergence of this tick vector simply reflects the continuing expansion of the Northeast Lyme disease-endemic region in the U.S.,” Needham said.

“Migrating birds, deer and human activity are likely spreading the tick and the disease agent. Moving tick-infested harvested deer to non-infested areas of the state may play a role too, so deer should be examined before moving them. If infested, then take care in processing the animal, and the hide needs to be buried or burned, or salted down if destined for tanning.”

Because of these factors, Needham said he expects that the number of blacklegged ticks and the percentage of them infected with *B. burgdorferi* will continue to increase in Ohio.

“It is important that the public and health professionals become aware of the increased risk for contracting Lyme disease in Ohio, and that preventive measures are taken to limit exposure to ticks when going outdoors,” he said.

Information about ticks and Lyme disease, including tips for prevention, is available at the CDC website ([www.cdc.gov/lyme/](http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/)) and the Ohio Dept. of Health website ([www.odh.ohio.gov/ticks](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/ticks)). Below are links to the various state webpages that cover information on ticks. A final source for additional information is [www.tickencounter.org](http://www.tickencounter.org). Michigan DNR site on ticks: [LINK](#)  
Indiana DNR site ticks: [LINK](#)  
Ohio DNR website on ticks: [LINK](#)

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## Twelve Days of Christmas National Raffle

Our annual National Raffle raises funds for RGS and AWS conservation programs. Thank you to everyone who participated and congratulations to the following winners:

- Dec. 11, 2014: GoPro HERO3+ Black Edition -- **Jon Anderson, Williamsburg, MI**
- Dec. 12, 2014: Stevens Gold Wing O/U 20-Ga. Shotgun -- **John Hamilton, Ligonier, PA**
- Dec. 13, 2014: Steiner Merlin Binoculars: 8 x 32 -- **Chad Houde, Ely, MN**
- Dec. 14, 2014: Tristar Hunter EX O/U 28-Ga. Shotgun -- **Larry Keller, Neillsville, WI**
- Dec. 15, 2014: YETI Tundra 65 All-Purpose Cooler -- **Michelle Jennings, Hermon, NY**
- Dec. 16, 2014: CZ Bobwhite Side-By-Side 20-Ga. Shotgun -- **Rob Bondy, Rockford, MI**
- Dec. 17, 2014: SportDOG TEK 1.0 GPS & E-Collar -- **Ray Samson, Sunderland, MA**
- Dec. 18, 2014: Webley & Scott 900 O/U 28-Ga. Shotgun- **DeWayne Royer, W. Decatur, PA**
- Dec. 19, 2014: Samsung 51” Wide Screen Television-- **Donald McDougall, Solomons, MD**
- Dec. 20, 2014: CZ Canvasback O/U 20-Ga. Shotgun -- **Joe Maher, Grand Rapids, MN**
- Dec. 21, 2014: LL Bean \$500.00 Gift Certificate -- **Adrian Ryan, Anchorage, AK**
- Dec. 22, 2014: Fausti DEA SxS 20-Ga. Shotgun -- **Richard Sturtevant, Free Union, VA**

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## **Last Chance at a Once in a Lifetime Charter Membership with the American Woodcock Society**

Have you ever met an RGS charter member? Me neither. But with the creation of the American Woodcock Society this past year you have an opportunity to become a charter member of the conservation organization at the forefront of American woodcock management and protection. Those who join the newly formed American Woodcock Society through **January 30, 2015** will become an AWS Charter Member. Charter members receive a commemorative decal, patch and certificate to proudly display. To join, contact the membership department toll free at 888-564-6747.

Also new or renewing members can join both RGS and AWS as a dual member for the discounted rate of \$60.

You can reach the RGS and AWS membership page using this [LINK](#).

### **RGS & AWS Get-A-Member Campaign Extended. Michigan vs. Wisconsin edition.**

If you haven't already, please consider participating in the RGS and AWS Member-Get-A-Member Campaign. Help us increase support for habitat and hunting – recruit a fellow grouse or woodcock hunter or birder to become a member and *both current and new members receive a \$20 Orvis gift card*. Please note, you do not need the current member's membership number, their name and address will suffice.

Michigan currently has the highest number of RGS and AWS members. A friendly rivalry developed after a recent tally showed Wisconsin in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, a mere 219 members behind. Let's keep it that way and extend our lead over the cheeseheads while helping support ruffed grouse and American woodcock conservation at the same time. To participate in the campaign, see the rules and regulations at the RGS website or follow this [LINK](#).

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### **Upcoming RGS Events in the Region**

For detailed information on these events go to the [RGS events page](#) on our website. Event fliers are periodically updated so check back if one is not available yet or contact Eric for more info.

1/31/2015	Roscommon	MI	MI RGS State Workshop. See above.
2/6/2014	Middlefield (45 miles east of Cleveland)	OH	Meet and Greet for the first AWS chapter in Ohio. (contact Eric for more details)
2/7/2015	Kalamazoo	MI	Southwestern MI Chapter 26th Annual Banquet
2/21/2015	Warren	MI	Lakeside Chapter 3rd Annual Banquet
2/28/2015	Marshall	MI	Lower Central Mitten Chapter 2nd Annual Banquet
3/6/2015	Saginaw	MI	Saginaw Valley Chapter 43rd Annual Banquet

3/7/2015	Marietta/Parkersburg	OH/WV	Ohio Valley Chapter 5th Annual Banquet
3/7/2015	Fayetteville (20 miles north of Cincinnati)	OH	Indian Creek Wildlife Area Habitat Workday Gilbert Symons Chapter, contact Eric for info.
3/13/2015	Flint	MI	Keith Davis Chapter 34th Annual Banquet
3/21/2015	Cincinnati	OH	Spirits for Wild Game - A Tasting Event
3/28/2015	Imlay City	MI	Robert J. Lytle Chapter 20 <sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet
4/10/2015	Lansing	MI	Andy Ammann Chapter 29 <sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet
5/8/2015	Muskegon	MI	West MI Shoreline Chapter 9 <sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet

**Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions and notify me of any email address changes. I also welcome any ideas for future FAN or RGS magazine articles:**

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The Ruffed Grouse Society is North America's foremost conservation organization dedicated to preserving our sporting traditions by creating healthy forest habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and other wildlife. For information on the Ruffed Grouse Society/American Woodcock Society, please call 888-564-6747 or check out the RGS website at [www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org).