

Ruffed Grouse Society

Northeast Region



Forest Action Network (F.A.N.)

Newsletter

Spring 2011

The Ruffed Grouse Society is an international non-profit conservation organization dedicated to promoting conditions suitable for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and related wildlife to sustain our hunting tradition and outdoor heritage.

Ruffed Grouse Society Members, Supporters and Friends:

Spring is here, and there is much to report on. Grouse are drumming, woodcock are singing, and the first nests of woodcock are hatching. New growth from recent timber harvests will soon be erupting.

Below is a regional & state listing of newsworthy items. Again as in the past, we at the Ruffed Grouse Society THANK YOU for your help and support that make our work possible! Keep a watch, as before long you'll be seeing grouse and woodcock chicks! – *Andy*

Home Coverts Calling

Do you own forestland, or perhaps you serve on your town's conservation board, and are interested in improving the woodlands as habitat for grouse, woodcock, and other wildlife? If you said yes, and are the type of person who would like to share what you learn with other landowners, Coverts may be just the thing for you.

In 1983 RGS received a grant to look at ways of reaching the millions of private forest landowners with wildlife management information. One of the 10 projects that resulted was the Coverts idea developed jointly by the Extension Services in Connecticut and Vermont. This program has expanded to 15 states in the East and Midwest. The states include: ME, NH, VT, MA, CT, NY, PA, MD, W. VA, VA, OH, IN, MI, WI, and RI. It has been so well received where it has been implemented that in 1997 it was nominated for, and won, a National Natural Resources & Environmental Management award as a National NREM Flagship for the Cooperative Extension Service. It, along with 3 or 4 others, was judged better than 200 other nominations. Vermont cooperators liked the idea so well they incorporated as Vermont Coverts, Inc. to help run their state's program. A 1998 survey of all participating states determined that 1,770 cooperators had been trained since 1984. These individuals own or manage 1,900,000 acres. They have passed along management information to 110,000 other landowners who own or manage 1,600,000 acres. If you are a forest landowner in any of the currently involved states, or a neighboring state, you may contact the appropriate coordinator below to request an application to be considered for one of the 20-40 openings available each year per state.

Your regional RGS biologist will be instructing/assisting at Coverts workshops in CT, NH, NY, RI, and VT this year. If you can't attend a Coverts workshop (or even if you can) but want to improve your woodlot for grouse, woodcock, and other wildlife, call or email me.

For more information Coverts programs, contact the Coverts Coordinator in your state:

Connecticut Coverts <http://www.canr.uconn.edu/ces/forest/coverts.htm>

Landowner workshops planned 2011:

September 15-18, Falls Village, CT

Coordinator: Thomas Worthley
Email: thomas.worthley@uconn.edu
Phone: 860-345-5232

Massachusetts Keystone Project (formerly Coverts)

<http://masskeystone.net/about/index.html>

Landowner workshops planned 2011:

Was April 14 – 17, Harvard Forest, Petersham, MA

Coordinator: Paul Catanzaro

Email: cat@umext.umass.edu

Phone: 413.545.4839

New Hampshire Coverts <http://extension.unh.edu/FWT/Coverts.htm>

Landowner workshops planned 2011:

September 21-24, Barbara C. Harris Conference Center, Greenfield, NH

Coverts Gathering: June 4, 2011, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., *Forest Openings & Early Successional Habitat* Town of Sullivan, NH

Coordinator: Malin Clyde

Email: malin.clyde@unh.edu

Phone: 603-862-2166

New York Master Forest Owners/COVERTS

<http://www2.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/mfo/>

Landowner workshops planned 2011:

September 15-18, Arnot Teaching and Research Forest, Newfield, NY

Coordinator: Gary Goff

Email: grg3@cornell.edu

Phone: (607) 255-2824

Rhode Island Coverts <http://www.rircd.org/covertsprojectintroduction.htm>

Landowner workshops planned 2011:

Was: April 15-17, URI W. Alton Jones Campus, West Greenwich, RI

Coordinator: Paul Boisvert

Email: paulboisvert@verizon.net

Phone: 401-397-9421, 410-822-8877

Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife <http://www.vtcoverts.org/>

Landowner workshops planned 2011:

June 3-5, Derby, VT

September 9-11, Hydesville, VT

Coordinator Lisa Sausville

Email: info@vtcoverts.org

Phone: 802-388-3880

Maine Coverts – program not currently active

Turkey Hunters Needed for New York State DEC Ruffed Grouse Drumming Survey <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/48169.html>

Turkey hunters in pursuit of that wary gobbler in the spring are ideally suited for monitoring ruffed grouse during the breeding season. The characteristic sound of a drumming male grouse is as much a part of the spring woods as yelping hens and gobbling toms.



DEC currently monitors grouse populations in the fall through the [Cooperator Ruffed Grouse Hunting Log](#) where hunters record the number of birds flushed per hour of hunting effort. The Ruffed Grouse Drumming Survey provides a harvest-independent index of grouse distribution and abundance during the critical breeding season in the spring.

If you would like to participate, you can print or download the [2011 Ruffed Grouse Drumming Survey form](#) (PDF) (30 kB). You can use this form to record the number of drumming male grouse you hear while turkey hunting this spring. Please record every turkey hunting trip whether you observe grouse drumming or not. When you do hear a grouse, be sure to record each drumming male only once. More detailed instructions can be found at the bottom of the data sheet.

You can also view, print, or download a [map of Wildlife Management Units \(PDF\)](#) (452 kB) to assist you in completing your survey.

Please return your completed survey to:

NYSDEC

Grouse Drumming Survey

625 Broadway

Albany, NY 12233-4754

Thanks for your help!

More about the NY Ruffed Grouse Drumming Survey:

- [2010 Drumming Survey Results](#) - A summary of results for the grouse drumming survey for 2010.
- [2009 Drumming Survey Results](#) - A summary of results for the grouse drumming survey for 2009.



RGS' Senior Regional Biologist for the Southern Appalachians, Mark Banker, accepts position with American Chestnut Foundation

Our loss is the Chestnut Foundation's gain. We thank Mark for his tireless contributions to grouse and woodcock conservation and wish him well with this exciting career opportunity. I'm sure there will be Banker sightings at State College RGS chapter activities (Mark's home covert). Good hunting, Mark!

Mark's Last Day was:

Tuesday, February 15, 2011

"Today is my last day working for RGS. I am not big on long goodbyes. I prefer to slip out of the party unnoticed. I was lucky to have traveled and seen the most interesting and beautiful places in the southern and central Appalachians (and some in the Midwest) as a biologist for RGS. It's been a great 12 years. I greatly appreciate the incredible support that RGS enjoys from many volunteers and donors. I've been blown away by your generosity and dedication.

Thanks so much. Now I become a dedicated volunteer and continue my life-long fascination with grouse and woodcock, hopefully passing that along to my son and daughter."

Mark Banker

Ruffed Grouse Society, Senior Biologist
State College, PA

Dr. Linda Ordiway Added to RGS Team of Regional Biologists

Bradford, PA Resident Assigned to Mid-Atlantic Region/Appalachian Region

The Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) is proud to announce the hiring of Dr. Linda Ordiway of Bradford, Pennsylvania as its Mid-Atlantic Regional Biologist. Before joining RGS, Linda worked for the Northeastern Forestry Sciences Laboratory (NEFSL) of the US Forest Service on the Allegheny National Forest in PA as both a full time and seasonal wildlife biologist since 1994. She also taught at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford in the environmental and biological sciences



departments since 2009. While at the NEFSL the studies she focused on the usage of early successional habitats resulting from managed forests by non-game birds from the time they left the nest until they migrated that fall, habitat selection of the Cerulean warbler in managed and unmanaged oak-hickory stands, and the monitoring of avian and amphibian community structure following herbicide treatment for interfering vegetation in Allegheny hardwood stands. Linda was part of a ground-breaking study that demonstrated the need for early successional habitat, or forest-openings resulting from timber cutting, by interior bird species like some of the thrushes and the scarlet tanager. Prior to this study, it was felt by some that cutting in a mature forest stand was detrimental to those species. Now we know that the young of those species rely upon the clearings created by those cuts by using them as feeding areas for insects, fruits and seeds from the time they fledge or leave the nest until they migrate in the fall. According to Dr. Mike Zagata, President and DEO of RGS, “we are very fortunate to have Linda join our team of biologists. She brings with her a wealth of experience with all of the species, both hunted and non-hunted, which rely upon the young forest habitats created by ecologically sound forest management practices”.

Linda received her BS in Biology and Chemistry from Lock Haven University, and continued her education at Marshall University in a field oriented program for a MS in Biology. She received her PhD from SUNY ESF in Syracuse, NY in Forest and Natural Resource Management. She enjoys and hunts the early successional habitat in and around the Allegheny National Forest with her 1 yr. old Weimaraner (or as her nieces say ‘wind-a-rounder’) RIPR...”he could use a little more work!”

According to Linda, “I have had a lifelong passion for the outdoors and all its players. My pursuit of a degree in forestry rather than wildlife was to better understand the tools available to silviculturists in establishing and maintaining communities of trees and other vegetation viewed valuable to people, and

necessary in sustaining wildlife biodiversity in perpetuity. I look forward to working with the RGS personnel and its many chapter volunteers throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region in pursuit of reviving the balance of early successional habitat within the landscape and opportunities to promote the RGS mission.”

Bio Bases Covered

With Linda Ordiway working in the Mid-Atlantic/Southern Appalachian region as of March 1, RGS again has all of its biologist positions filled. Those biologists include, in order of tenure, Dan Dessecker, Gary Zimmer, Andy Weik, Ted Dick, Larry Visser, and Linda Ordiway.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Bill Programs – Opportunities for Forest Landowners to Improve Wildlife

Habitat \$5.9 million in federal funding was made available through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) to assist forest land owners with forest land planning and management under the New England-New York Forestry Initiative.

The forestry initiative will assist private landowners in conservation planning and management of their private forests to improve wildlife habitat, forest health and productivity, and water quality. Eligible conservation practices include forest stand improvement, integrated pest management, early successional habitat development and management, tree and shrub establishment, upland wildlife habitat management, stream crossings, riparian forest buffer, fish passage, stream habitat improvement and management, forest trails and landings, conservation cover, access roads, road/trail/landing closure and treatment, wetland restoration, tree and shrub site preparation, and wetland wildlife habitat management.

Conservation Practices Eligible for Financial Assistance (from Vermont NRCS fact sheet):

Forest Stand Improvement – May be used for mast tree release or for pre-commercial thinning of pole sized stands.

Forest Trails and Landings – On parcels under forest management to address soil erosion and water quality concerns on existing forest skid trails.

Invasive Plant Control – May be used to control invasive plants to improve wildlife habitat.

Upland Habitat Management – Focused upon apple tree release and often used in tandem with a tree pruning practice.

Early Successional Habitat Mgt. - Focused upon noncommercial stands and forest types (e.g. aspen-birch) and old fields.

Important: If you want to receive financial assistance under the WHIP Forestry Initiative for improving your woodland for ruffed grouse, woodcock, and other wildlife, the time is NOW to contact your local NRCS conservationist. The application process takes time, and deadlines for applications for next year's funding vary by state. For example, Vermont's **deadline** may be as early as the **first of September**. It is expected that the WHIP Forestry Initiative will be around for at least 2-3 years... but you never know, so it would be wise to get involved early.

The best way to learn more about WHIP is to call the District Conservationist for your area (find the phone number under the "Contact Us" tab on your state NRCS website):

Connecticut <http://www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Maine <http://www.me.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Massachusetts <http://www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov/>

New Hampshire <http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov/>

New York <http://www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Rhode Island <http://www.ri.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Vermont <http://www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov/>



Answer: a chance on a beautiful new shotgun!

**Only 6 Weeks Left to Enter the 2010/2011 RGS
50th Anniversary National Raffle**

Three Chances to Win, Only 1,000 Tickets to be Sold

1st Prize: Remington Model 1100 "F" Grade 28-Gauge Semi -Auto Shotgun

Hand Engraved by Remington's Master Engraver Don Talbot - One of a Kind



2nd Prize: Caesar Guerini Apex, 28-Gauge Over/Under Shotgun

Hand Engraved Grouse on Trigger Guard - One of a Kind



3rd Prize: Kimber Valier Grade II 20 Gauge Side/Side Shotgun



For tickets contact Andy Weik @ 607-793-4832 or rgsweik@gmail.com
 Three winners to be drawn on June 30, 2011.

Ruffed Grouse Society



2010 - 2011

NATIONAL RAFFLE

THREE CHANCES TO WIN



REMINGTON MODEL 1100 "F" GRADE

Semi-auto 28-gauge, exhibition-grade wood, skeet choke, hand-engraved by Remington's master engraver Don Talbot with two ruffed grouse on left side, two woodcock on right side, and RGS 50th Anniversary logo on top of receiver. Unique, only one made – Serial #RGS50 Retail Value: \$9,000



CAESAR GUERINI

RGS 50th Anniversary Commemorative APEX Over-and-under 28-gauge, 28" barrel length hand-engraved grouse on trigger guard, "RGS" above, "1961-2011" below – one of a kind Retail Value: \$7,850



Actual Gun Not Pictured

KIMBER VALIER GRADE II

Side-by-side 20-gauge, 28" barrel length. Last one available through RGS. Retail Value: \$5,000

Donation for each ticket is \$100. Up to 1,000 tickets to be sold. Drawing on June 30, 2011 at RGS HQ in Coraopolis, PA. First ticket wins Remington. Second ticket wins Guerini. Third ticket wins Kimber. Winners responsible for applicable taxes.

To purchase raffle tickets, mail coupon to: Andy Weik, Regional Biologist
 Ruffed Grouse Society – 794 Adams Road – Dryden, NY 13053
 or call 607-844-9656 or e-mail: rgsweik@gmail.com

Name _____ Phone # _____

Mailing Address _____

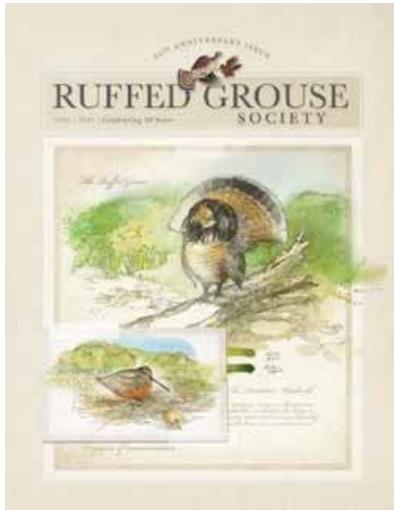
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tickets @ \$100.00 Each = \$ _____ Total Enclosed _____ Signature _____

Billing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

CHECK (Payable to RGS) CREDIT CARD # _____ Exp. Date _____

RGS 50th ANNIVERSARY PUBLICATION



RGS will celebrate its 50th anniversary October 24, 2011. This limited edition, 50th anniversary magazine is a celebration of RGS' existence and mission, and is available only as a special purchase (not included in the annual membership subscription). Immerse yourself in the world of ruffed grouse and American woodcock. Read about shotgunning, dogs, hunting and insights from expert field biologists about how to get more grouse and woodcock on the ground. Finally, learn about an organization that, just like you, is passionate about these birds. 140 pages with MANY full color photos and graphics.

Available on our website, or pick up one at your local RGS banquet or other event. And they make great gifts, too. \$14.95.

Upcoming Events

Nutmeg Chapter of Connecticut:

- Booth at the Northeast Waterfowl Festival being held at Cabela's, East Hartford, CT on September 10th and 11th
- Booth at the CT DEP Hunting and Fishing Appreciation Day at Sessions Woods, Burlington, CT on September 24th
- Inaugural banquet at the Hawthorne Inn in Berlin, CT on September 30th

Please contact Chapter President Bob Smith: (860) 304-1858, rcs76@comcast.net

Central New York Chapter:

- June 11 - Saturday - Sponsor / Banquet Feast
- Sunday, July 17 - 3rd annual CNY RGS Sporting Clays Shoot - KADAT, Georgetown NY

- Sunday, August 7 - Fall Outing - Baldwinsville Rod & Gun Club
- Saturday, September 10 – Project Appleseed habitat improvement work day, Morgan Hill State Forest
- Friday , 11 November - CNY RGS Banquet

Please contact Chapter President Norm Webber: (315) 697-3377, lutherwebb@earthlink.net

Western Massachusetts Chapter:

- June 25, Saturday – Forest Habitat Management Workshop, Turner’s Falls Water Department, 180 Turnpike Road in Montague, MA

Please contact Tom Brule: (413) 628-4777, tom.brule@gmail.com

June 5th, 2011 – Addieville East Farm Annual Shoot

Addieville East Farm
200 Pheasant Drive
Mapleville, Rhode Island 02839

Please Contact:
Sally Hayter
(401) 568-3185

And Don't Forget...

to check out the RGS website for all things grouse and woodcock at www.ruffedgrousesociety.org , and to check out www.timberdoodle.org for a great summary and description of many RGS and other woodcock projects in the Eastern U.S. The website keeps growing as the Wildlife Management Institute (via Chuck Fergus) continues to compile info about woodcock, grouse and songbird habitat.

Thanks for your generosity, enthusiasm, and support! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me – *Andy*

Andy Weik
RGS Regional Biologist
New York, New England, Eastern Canada
607-793-4832 or rgsweik@gmail.com

