



FAN UPDATE

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Early Spring 2008 Report

Spring is arriving reluctantly throughout ruffed grouse country and optimism prevails for this fall's ruffed grouse populations. While drumming counts across the region have yet to begin, there are indications that grouse populations should continue on their upward trend this year. Overall, the 2007/2008 winter appeared to be good across the range of grouse with soft, fluffy snow across all of the Upper Midwest for much of the winter. While there were several cold spells, there appeared to be ample roosting snow for the birds when they arrived. Field observers, including myself, have been observing budding grouse and birds on the move throughout the winter. Grouse predators on the other hand did not have as nice of a time this winter having to struggle through the fluffy snow or unable to spot snow-roosted grouse. As always though, the hatching and brood-rearing conditions of late spring will play a big role in our fall hunting opportunities.

Last Chance to Enter the RGS National Raffles

Winners Selected on April 9th (Tahoe) and April 10th (Parker)

Make sure you don't miss out to participate in the two exciting raffles underway that will help support RGS efforts and provide two winners with either a **Parker AAHE 28 gauge shotgun** (retail value \$49,000, **it's the last one available**) or a loaded **2008 Chevy Tahoe** (retail value \$44,600). Both raffles are limited to 1,000 tickets at \$100 each. Winners will be determined by the 7PM evening drawing for the PA three-digit lottery on **April 9, 2008** for the Tahoe and **April 10, 2008** for the Parker. To order your tickets for these drawings, contact Gary Zimmer at 715-674-7505 or by email at rkszimm@newnorth.net or call Rudy Mamula at the RGS National Office at 412-262-4044. Good luck and thanks for your support.

RGS Grouse Trail Mix Available Again

Back by popular demand is the specially formulated Grouse Trail Mix. This mix has proven great for seeding logging roads, decks, trails, rights of ways and small openings to benefit wildlife especially ruffed grouse. The Grouse Trail Mix, which is one of AMPAC Seed Company's "Wildlife Perfect" products, features 4 types of clover as well as birdsfoot trefoil, all of which are highly palatable and nutritious for grouse and attracting the insects that are crucial for grouse chicks and many other birds. The mix also includes a small amount of chicory, a leafy plant that serves as a cover crop and is favored by deer.

The Appalachian Cooperative Grouse Research Project, a recent 6-year study of more than 3,000 grouse, showed that roads and trails featuring green vegetation in early spring and summer lead to more successful rearing of young grouse, which feed exclusively on insects for the first month or so of life. The ruffed grouse population seems to be limited in the eastern mountains by the very low survival of their chicks.

AMPAC will produce a 6 pound bag of seed designed specifically for the grouse trail mix. The 6 pound bag will easily seed ½ to 1 acre of ground. Planting instructions are printed right on the bag. The mix will sell for \$5.00 per pound, or \$30 per bag plus shipping from RGS headquarters. The per-pound price of the Grouse Trail Mix is well below the wildlife seed mixes currently available in stores. To place an order, visit the RGS website at www.ruffedgrousesociety.org or call (412) 262-4044.

RGS Featured on Outdoor Wisconsin TV Show

Several upcoming episodes of the popular TV show, Outdoor Wisconsin with co-hosts Judy Nugent and Dan Small will highlight the Ruffed Grouse Society. RGS Biologist Gary Zimmer and the staff of the Douglas County Forest escorted Judy Nugent on a

tour highlighting aspen management efforts on that Forest in an episode to air on March 20th. RGS Board Member Denis Karnosky and Chicago Chapter Chairman Tom Dew escorted Dan Small on a grouse and woodcock hunting trip on the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest that will air as a two part episode on March 27th and April 3rd. Check local listings for a time in your area but in the Milwaukee area it can be seen at 8 PM on Channel 10 and in other areas at 7:30 PM on most of the state network.

RGS receives \$1 Million Donation from Anonymous Supporter

The Ruffed Grouse Society recently announced that two of its most ardent supporters have anonymously donated \$1 million to further the cause of conservation. The contribution will be used to endow the existing Western Great Lakes Regional Wildlife Biologist position, honoring former RGS board of director's member, and director emeriti, Sally B. Searle.

In making the announcement, RGS Executive Director and CEO Michael D. Zagata said, "The Ruffed Grouse Society is extremely pleased that these two families, both longtime RGS supporters, have once again come forward to assist RGS in fulfilling its mission."

"There is no doubt in my mind that, when it comes to conservation and the protection and restoration of habitat, RGS has the most committed supporters and volunteers in the country. This generous contribution not only substantiates that commitment, it demonstrates the devotedness dedicated sportsmen and women have for proper forest management. That management is needed to create the young forest habitat needed by ruffed grouse, woodcock and other wildlife, both hunted and non-hunted alike. I take my hat off to these donors, and others who are committed to the RGS mission," Zagata said.

Scott Walter to Speak on Wisconsin Grouse Research in Green Bay

The NE Wisconsin Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society will conduct a seminar at the Rock Garden Supper Club in Green Bay on Thursday Night, March 27th, beginning at 7 PM. Principal speaker will be UW Richland Center Biology Professor Scott Walter. Walter recently completed a five year research project assessing grouse populations changes in southern Wisconsin. The seminar is free. For further information contact Dave Bartz at 906-743-6004.

RGS Sponsors Early Successional Workshop at April 4th Michigan Bird Meeting

As part of the 2nd Annual Michigan Ornithological Congress, the Ruffed Grouse Society is sponsoring an Early Successional Workshop on Friday, April 4th at North Central Michigan College in Petoskey. The session will go from 1 to 4 PM. This workshop includes a field trip to a nearby site where public and private landowners and managers are working to provide early successional forests for wildlife featuring alder and aspen management. A variety of speakers will address the value of early successional forests to birds, threats to this important ecosystem, and the methods used to manage for quality early successional habitat. Information on the workshop and the corresponding Ornithological Congress is available at <http://www.mibci.org/> .

Iowa Forest Stewardship Initiative Workshop April 5th

The Ruffed Grouse Society, along with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, is co-sponsoring a workshop for private landowners in Northeast Iowa on Saturday, April 5th at the Garnavillo Community Center. Speakers from both organizations along with National Audubon and Farm Service Agency representatives will highlight land management activities and the impacts on wildlife species. An afternoon field trip to public and private lands to observe ongoing management activities will be conducted. A few openings are still available at this workshop. Information can be received by contacting Connie Dettman at 563-245-1048 or by email at connie.dettman@dnr.state.ia.us .

Dogs Needed for Northern Wisconsin Research Project

Amber Roth, PHD candidate at Michigan Tech University, who is studying habitat needs of a variety of birds in aspen forests has requested help from RGS members to locate grouse and woodcock nests on her study area near Woodruff. A field day is being planned for Saturday, April 26th. After a brief training session at the Kemp Field Station nest searching will begin at assigned study areas. Dogs must be pointers that are controllable so nests are located but not disturbed. Housing of dogs and owners can be provided. For additional information or to sign up contact Amber by April 4th by email at amroth@mtu.edu or call her at 906-487-3417 (day) or 906-483-2190 (evenings) if you want to participate.

2008 Wisconsin COVERTS Application Deadline June 15th

Just a reminder that the 15th Wisconsin COVERTS Workshop is scheduled for August 14 – 17 at Kemp Natural Resources Station on beautiful Lake Tomahawk near Woodruff, Wisconsin. This 3-day session has had rave reviews from past attendees that have become Covert Cooperators through past workshops. It is estimated that these cooperators, through sharing with others what they have learned have influenced the management of over 577,000 acres of land. This workshop is sponsored by the Ruffed Grouse Society,, University of Wisconsin –

Extension, the Louisiana Pacific Corporation, UW Madison Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology and the Michigan Technological University. For additional information on the workshop contact Jamie Nack at 608-265-8264 or by email at jlneck@wisc.edu . Attendance is limited. **Deadline for applications is June 15th.**

Missouri Private Landowner Workshop on April 19th

The Mid-Missouri Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society and the Missouri Department of Conservation are sponsoring a Forest Management Workshop for Private Landowners on Saturday, April 19th on the Bill Haag property near Portland. Starting at 9 AM, the workshop will include forestry and wildlife specialists discussing tree identification, cost share opportunities, forest and wildlife management, and timber harvest methods. An optional dawn tour to listen for drumming grouse is also available. For information call Josh Stevens at 573-592-1400, ext. 4.

Upcoming RGS “Habitat” Events in the Region

March 27 - NE Wisconsin Chapter Wildlife Seminar, 7 PM at the Rock Garden Supper Club, Green Bay. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

April 4 - Michigan Early Successional Forest Workshop. Visit the Michigan Bird Conservation Initiative website at <http://www.mibci.org/> for more information.

April 5 - NE Iowa Private Landowner Workshop. Contact Connie Dettman at 563-245-1048 or email at connie.dettman@dnr.state.ia.us for details.

April 19 - Missouri Forest Management Workshop for Private Landowners near Portland, MO. Contact Josh Stevens at 573-592-1400, ext. 4 for more info.

April 19 - Habitat Work Day on the Oconto Co. Forest near Breed, WI. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

April 26 - Intro to the Outdoors Youth Education Day near Marshfield, WI. Contact Rich Chronquist at 715-387-1163 for more info.

May 17 – Habitat Work Day on the Cheq/Nicolet National Forest near Eagle River, WI. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

June 21 – Habitat Work Day on the Cheq/Nicolet National Forest near Laona, WI. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

August 14 to 17 - WI Coverts Workshop, Contact Jamie Nack at 608-265-8264 or email at jlneck@wisc.edu .

Reminder

To insure that you continue to receive timely FAN updates please notify me of changes in your email address.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions:

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

For information on the Ruffed Grouse Society, please call 888-564-6747 or check out the RGS website at www.ruffedgrousesociety.org .