



Western Great Lakes Region FAN UPDATE

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It's Brood Rearing Time!!

The weather, so important to grouse broods, has had its ups and downs this spring, but so far conditions appear favorable for a good hatch. Rain during late May and early June has been minimal and though we've had some cool mornings temperatures have climbed during the day to allow for pretty good insect movement, an important factor in raising young grouse. Numbers of drummers were surprisingly up according to the WI Drumming Grouse Surveys (see below), hit in full force this year and our favorite birds were forced to adapt differently most each and every day. We continue to highlight the scenes found on Gary Kraszewski's deer cam photo monitoring a grouse drumming log (see above). Caught in action was a woodcock trying to imitate his friend who has been using the drumming log more infrequently than in April and May. *Gary*

Wisconsin 2011 Drumming Count Results

By Brian Dhuey, WI DNR

Statewide ruffed grouse population indices increased 38% between 2010 and 2011, based on the number of drumming grouse heard during roadside surveys. Changes in indices to breeding grouse populations varied by region, and the statewide mean number of drums/stop was suggestive of an increase ($P= 0.06$) from 2010 to 2011. Drummer densities on the Sandhill Wildlife Area in Wood County decreased 17%. The Stone Lake Experimental Area in Oneida County decreased 10% from 2010 levels.

Statewide, ruffed grouse population indices increased between 2010 and 2011 (Table 1). This is the fifth increase in the ruffed grouse index in the last six years. Survey indices show an increase in drumming grouse in three of the four regions of the state (Fig. 1-6). Statewide, overall results were suggestive of an increase ($P= 0.06$) between 2010 and 2011. Transects completed in both 2010 and 2011 were compared to detect population changes. Transects were considered to have changed from last year if the change was greater than two drums per transect. The number of transects with increased drumming outnumbered by 37 to 18 those that showed decreases, with 60 transects unchanged.

Brood production in the summer of 2010 was 3% lower than in 2009 and did not hint at the increase in breeding grouse in 2011. Wisconsin's primary grouse range, the Central and Northern Forest regions, showed increases in breeding grouse. Past grouse cycle highs in Wisconsin have usually occurred in a year ending in a 9 or 0, but it would appear that 2011 will be the exception to this trend. Good brood rearing conditions in the summer of 2011 could set the stage for good grouse numbers in the fall.

Survey conditions for 2011 were slightly better than those in 2010. Surveyors rated the overall survey conditions as "excellent" on 62% of transects run, while 58% rated the overall conditions as "excellent" in 2010. Surveyors rated the conditions as "Fair", the lowest available weather condition rating, 7% of the time in 2011 compared to 8% in 2010. Survey conditions do influence drumming activity and may cause grouse numbers to be over or under estimated.

Region	Drums/Stop 2010 (routes run)	Drums/ Stop 2011 (routes run)	% Change	# of Decreasing Routes	# of Increasing Routes	# of Routes with No Change
Central	1.01 (27)	1.32 (26)	31%	5	10	11
Northern	1.65 (43)	2.36 (42)	43%	11	22	9
Southeast	0.08 (30)	0.003 (30)	-96%	2	0	28
Southwest	0.22 (17)	0.48 (17)	118%	0	5	12
Statewide	0.89 (117)	1.23(115)	38%	18	37	60

RGS Members Asked to Report Wisconsin Game Bird Brood Observations in 2011

The Wisconsin DNR is asking for your help in measuring the brood production of some of the state's upland game bird species. They are looking for observations of broods of pheasant, wild turkey, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, prairie chicken, gray partridge, and bobwhite quail. Wisconsinites spend many days outdoors during the summer months, and see a variety of our state's abundant wildlife. This makes you a good source of information on the reproductive status of some of our wildlife species. No special effort is required! Just go about your normal summertime activities, and when you see a brood of young pheasants, turkey, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, prairie chicken, gray partridge, or bobwhite quail, please report your sightings. Instructions on how to perform the survey and a tally sheet for your use can be [found here](#). Also report any sightings of turkey and pheasant hens that do not have broods.

During the summer of 2010, Wisconsinites reported 950 observations of game broods of wild turkey, ring-necked pheasant, ruffed grouse, prairie chicken, sharp-tailed grouse, gray partridge and bobwhite quail. The most frequently observed game bird species were wild turkey (765 observations) and ruffed grouse (117 observations).

Results from your observations will be used to monitor the reproductive status of these birds and to help make fall hunting forecasts. If you have any questions about the survey, or if you have any issues accessing the survey website please contact [Brian Dhuey](#).

American Woodcock Population Status, 2011

By Thomas R. Cooper and Keri Parker., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Abstract: Singing-ground Survey data for 2011 indicate that indices for singing American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) males in the Eastern and Central Management Regions are not significantly different from 2010. There was no significant 10-year trend for woodcock heard in the Eastern or Western Management Regions during 2001-11. This marks the eighth consecutive year that the 10-year trend estimate was not significant in the Eastern Region, while the 10-year trend in the Central Management Region returns to non-significance after being negative last year. Both regions have a long-term (1968-11) declining trend of -1.0 % per year. The 2010 recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Eastern Region (1.5 immatures per adult female) was 1.2 % lower than the 2009 index and 10.2 % below the long-term regional index, while the recruitment index for the U.S. portion of the Central Region (1.6 immatures per adult female) was 30.2 % higher than the 2009 index and was 2.1 % lower than the long-term regional index. Estimates from the Harvest Information Program indicated that U.S. woodcock hunters in the Eastern Region spent 146,700 days afield and harvested 99,800 woodcock during the 2010-11 season, while in the Central Region, hunters spent 392,400 days afield and harvested 233,100 woodcock.

**Only 2 Weeks Left to Enter the
2010/2011 RGS 50th
Anniversary National Raffle**

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



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To Purchase National Raffle Tickets Contact: Gary Zimmer
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_____ Tickets @ \$100.00 Each = \$_____ Total Enclosed

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Baraga Forest Management Unit Open House and Compartment Review

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will host an open house June 29, 2011 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the DNR Baraga Operations Service Center at 427 US 41N, Baraga, Michigan. This open house will provide information and seek public comment on recently completed inventory and proposed forest management activities for the 2013 Year-of-Entry compartments on the Baraga Forest Management Unit. This includes projected activities in Baraga, Ontonagon and Houghton Counties.

A formal compartment review to finalize proposed management activities for these areas is scheduled for July 13, 2011 at 9:30 AM at the Best Western Baraga Lakeside Inn, 900 US 41, Baraga, Michigan. Maps and write-ups can be accessed on the DNR web site (www.michigan.gov/dnr) under Forests, Land & Water/State Forest Open Houses and Compartment Review.

Email Address Has Changed

My email address has changed to rgszimm@gmail.com so please update your address book.

West Central Chapter Golf Scramble to Raise Funds for Youth Event

The West Central of the Ruffed Grouse Society is holding its 5th Annual 18 hole Golf Scramble to raise funds to support its annual Youth Day Event. The Scramble will take place on Saturday, July 23rd at the River Edge Golf Course, 10191 Mill Creek Road. Cost of the event is \$55 per person and is limited to the first 23 four person teams that sign up. The cost includes green fees, cart, a great meal and refreshments. Send payments to Bull's Eye Sports, 1201 S. Central Ave., Marshfield, WI 54449 or call 715-384-6580.

Held the last Saturday in April at the Les and Melody Bergdahl Ranch near Lindsey, the Youth Day event is one of the largest of its kind in the Nation with attendance usually at around 500 individuals.

Tent Caterpillars on the Rise in Wisconsin

Populations of two leaf eating, native caterpillars appear to be on the rise in some parts of Wisconsin. Forest tent caterpillar populations rose last year after 10 years of low populations. Forest tent caterpillars can be identified by their blue sides and light colored "footprint" shapes down their back. Populations of eastern tent caterpillar (identified by their distinctive white stripe down their back) have been high in southern and central Wisconsin for several years. This caterpillar does make a tent, unlike the gypsy moth or forest tent caterpillars. In high numbers these caterpillars can strip the leaves off of infested trees. But if this defoliation occurs early in the growing season the trees have time to grow a new set of leaves and produce the energy they need. Production of a second set of leaves does stress the trees and cumulative stress from defoliation, injury, drought, and more can be fatal.

2011 is RGS' 50th Anniversary!!

In 2011, the Ruffed Grouse Society celebrates its 50th Anniversary as one of the longest running conservation organizations. Special items commemorating the anniversary will include a collector's knife, belt buckle, several unique shotguns, a unique lost-wax process cast of a ruffed grouse, carved woodcock and apparel with the 50th Anniversary RGS logo. These items will be at our 2011 banquets in limited quantities, and available through the **RGS-Mart** at <http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org/shoppingcart/magento/>, some of them currently.

RGS 50th Anniversary Publication Still Available

Celebrate 50 years of conservation by purchasing a copy of the unique, limited edition 50th anniversary publication of the RGS. This high quality, perfect bound publication will be a collector's item for years to come. Issue price is \$14.95 plus shipping. Order online at www.ruffedgrousesociety.org, or by phone at (888) 564-6747.

Upcoming RGS “Habitat” Events in the Region

June 17 and 18 – Stop by the RGS Booth at the UP Side by Side Classic at the Sagola Township Sportmen’s Club, Channing, Michigan.

June 18 – Habitat Work Day on the Cheq/Nicolet National Forest near Laona, WI. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

July 23 – West Central Wisconsin Chapter Golf Scramble, Call 715-384-6580 for more info.

August 11 to 14 – 2011 WI Coverts Workshop, Kemp Natural Resource Station, Woodruff, WI. Contact Jamie Nack at 608-265-8264 or email at jlneck@wisc.edu.

August 26 to 28 – WI Coverts Past Cooperators Reunion, 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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Ruffed Grouse Society

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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.