

Inside Region 3

An information product from the Accomplishment Reporting System

Volume 3, No. 13

External Affairs Office

October 1, 2001

Midwest States Receive \$1.2 Million for Endangered Species Conservation

The Service will provide more than \$1.2 million to state wildlife agencies in Michigan, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin to help recover the endangered Karner blue butterfly and the prairie bush-clover, a threatened plant.

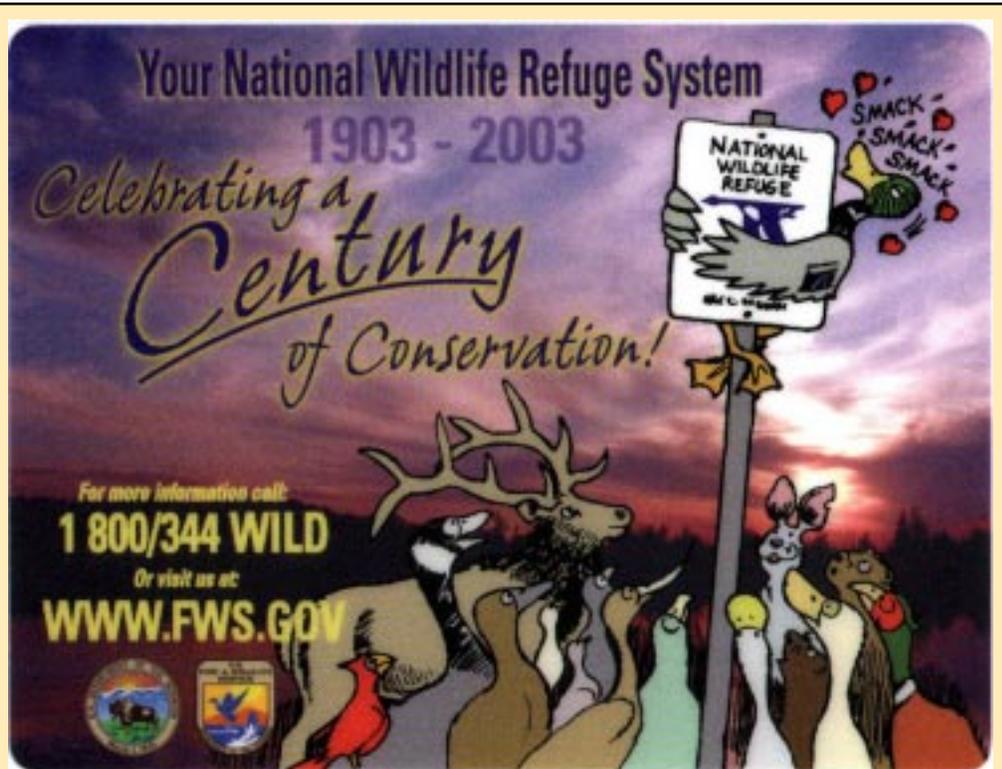
Four states – Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin – will share \$517,500 to help the prairie bush-clover, a plant listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The funding comes from the Act's Recovery Land Acquisition grants which provide funding to states to acquire lands to support approved endangered species recovery plans.

Efforts will focus on protecting remaining populations of the prairie bush-clover, a species found in native tallgrass prairie, which itself is disappearing from the landscape.

Michigan will receive \$712,866 to support development of a statewide Habitat Conservation Plan for the endangered Karner blue butterfly. Such plans allow participating landowners to use and develop their property while ensuring conservation measures are in place for endangered and threatened species.

Karner blue butterflies depend on wild lupine plant leaves, which are the only food source for Karner blue caterpillars. Wisconsin and Michigan support the largest populations of Karner blue butterflies.

Information on the Karner blue butterfly and prairie bush-clover can be found at the Service's Great Lake-Big Rivers website at <http://midwest.fws.gov/endangered>. *Georgia Parham, External Affairs*



Centennial Mousepads on the Way

Region 3's National Wildlife Refuge System is inviting everyone to help celebrate its upcoming centennial in 2003. All employees in Region 3 will soon be receiving their very own workstation mouse pad. The colorful mouse pads comple-

ment other centennial items designed to help "Celebrate a Century of Conservation." The mousepads should be distributed in conjunction with National Wildlife Refuge Week, October 14-19, 2001.

Piping Plover Success Story Great Lakes Pairs Produce 70 Fledglings This Year

The 2001 breeding season of the Great Lakes population of the piping plover was a successful one. Thirty two breeding pairs were recorded. This included two breeding pairs that nested in Wisconsin, the first time in over a decade that more than one pair nested there.

Although the total number of breeding piping plovers remains critically low, this year's breeding success represents a positive trend in the population. Nesting plovers in the Great

Lakes produced over 70 fledglings in 2001, which greatly exceeds all previous records since monitoring began. Researchers and managers are still the process of assessing possible factors that may have led to this year's great breeding success.

Contributions by conservation partners including Michigan DNR, National Park Service, Forest Service, Whitefish Point Bird Observatory and the University of Minnesota added

Continued next page



Piping plover

--Park Service Photo

Continued from page 1

Great Lakes' Plovers Experience Great Breeding Year

greatly to this year's efforts. As has been the case in the past, volunteers also turned out in good numbers to provide help in monitoring nesting piping plovers. Volunteers also helped to provide educational materials to visitors of plover nesting areas found within state and national parks.

The Detroit, Milwaukee and Toledo Zoo's also provided staff to assist in the salvage captive rearing program run by the University of Minnesota at the University of Michigan Biological Station in Pelston. Their help was exceptional, and greatly added to the captive rearing effort, which produced three chicks for release into the wild. The field season ended with the annual end-of-season meeting and picnic hosted by the East Lansing Field Office and the Hiawatha National Forest.

Also, 2001 was the year of the third International Piping Plover Census. This effort, led by researchers from USGS, counts piping plovers in all three current breeding ranges, as well as the wintering range. The East Lansing Field Office coordinated the effort in the Great Lakes. State, federal and nonprofit organizations aided in census efforts that covered over 60 sites in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and New York. Census results will be tallied and published in early 2002. *Jack Dingleline, East Lansing Field Office*



--USFWS Photo

Holding tanks containing thousands of brook trout fingerlings travel to Siskiwit Bay at Isle Royale aboard a World War II era landing craft belonging to the Red Cliff Fish Hatchery.

Service Fisheries Staffs Stock Coaster Brook Trout at Isle Royale National Park

The return of 'Coaster' brook trout to the Great Lakes took a big step forward Sept. 14, when approximately 58,000 3-inch, and 1,600 6.5-inch coaster brook trout fingerlings were stocked into Siskiwit Bay on Isle Royale. These coasters were raised at the Genoa and Iron River NFH from gametes collected at Isle Royale. Crews loaded the fingerlings into stocking tanks early Sept. 14 and drove the fingerlings to Houghton, Mich., where the tanks were loaded aboard the U.S. Park Service's boat, MV Ranger III for a five-hour boat ride to Mott Island, Isle Royale National Park headquarters.

At Mott Island, the tanks were transferred to a WWII-era personnel landing craft for another two hour ride to Siskiwit Bay. While underway, the water temperature in the tanks was tempered using a portable water pump and hoses to raise the temperature to approximately that of Siskiwit Bay. The finger-

lings were stocked at six different locations throughout the Siskiwit Bay area. Fingerlings were marked with a left ventral-adipose fin clip for future identification.

This stocking is working towards meeting the goals of rehabilitating the Siskiwit Bay population of coaster brook trout as outlined in the Brook Trout Rehabilitation Plan for Lake Superior (*Newman et al. 1999*). The primary goal is to rehabilitate the Siskiwit Bay coaster brook trout to ensure its long term sustainability through the presence of six or more age groups (0-5) and a spawning population exhibiting sufficient densities, ensuring a viable gene pool. Crews from the Ashland FRO have been conducting annual electrofishing surveys on Siskiwit Bay and the surrounding tributaries entering the Siskiwit Bay area. The fourth and final year of stocking will occur in 2002. *Glenn Miller, Ashland Fishery Resources Office*



Joe Bush, White Earth spiritual leader, uses a pipe to bless the young sturgeon.



Lake sturgeon fingerlings congregate after being released into Round Lake.

Fisheries Teamwork Helps Stock 6,000 Lake Sturgeon on White Earth Reservation

It has been many years since lake sturgeon have been seen on Minnesota's White Earth Reservation. That should change after a recent stocking at Round Lake in Becker County. Approximately 6,000 fingerling lake sturgeon were stocked into Round Lake September 11 by the White Earth Natural Resources Department and the Service's LaCrosse Fishery Resources Office.

The fingerlings traveled a long way to finally reach Round Lake. The effort began in May at the Rainy River First Nations Hatchery in Canada. Randy Zortman, John Annette and Tom McCully from White Earth Natural Resources Department along with Service fishery biologists Scott Yess, Todd Turner and Dan Kumlin assisted Joe Hunter and his staff at the First Nations Hatchery with spawning over 50 adult lake sturgeon. Fin clips and ovarian fluid were also sent to Terry

Ott at the LaCrosse Fish Health Center for disease inspections. The eggs were then flown by Bob Foster to Neosho NFH in late May.

The staff at Neosho did a fantastic job raising over 18,000 lake sturgeon to fingerling size (six inches) of which the first 6,000 were stocked into Round Lake. The remaining 12,000 lake sturgeon will be stocked into White Earth Lake in late September. Prior to stocking, Tribal Spiritual Leader Joe Bush blessed the lake sturgeon. The stocking is in coordination with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource's efforts to reestablish lake sturgeon within the Red River Drainage and is the beginning of a major effort to reestablish lake sturgeon populations onto the White Earth Reservation. Lake Sturgeon are spiritually significant to the Native American community and have also served as a major food source. Scott Yess, LaCrosse Fishery Resources Office



Jeff Messens of Neosho NFH, directs the sturgeon into Round Lake.

--Photos by Scott Yess

Environmental Assessments Result in Mitigation, Wetlands, Upland Restored

Two Environmental Assessments (EA) dealing with highway construction projects in Minnesota have resulted in the state's restoration of nearly 14 acres of wetlands and nearly eight acres of upland.

An EA approved by the Regional Director January 16, allowed the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) to reconstruct state Highway 27 in Douglas County. The project impacted .69 acres of wetland on one waterfowl production area, and two easement areas. MNDOT agreed to restore a 1.54 acre wetland. The restored wetland is now part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

A second EA was prepared and sent to the Regional Office in September 2001. The EA pertained to a CSAH 24 project that Otter Tail County Highway Department plans to complete in 2002. The proposed project will impact .61 acres of wetland and .29 acres of upland. The County has agreed to restore a 11.29 acre drained wetland and a 7.84 acre upland. The restored site will serve as a Service mitigation bank for CSAH 24, as well as future projects in the Fergus Falls Wetland Management District. *Kevin Brennan, Fergus Falls WMD/PWLC*

Six-Week Inventory of Wetlands Completed

Frank Stone of the Ashland Fishery Resources Office recently completed a six-week project to inventory fishery wetlands on behalf of the Regional Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (R-EMAP). R-EMAP was initiated to answer resource questions about ecological conditions of flooded wetlands on both regional and local scales. A total of 37 wetland inventories were performed. Each survey collected fishery and morphology data that will be used to establish a framework by states to meet monitoring requirements under the Clean Water Act. *Frank Stone, Ashland Fishery Resources Office*



--Photo courtesy DeSoto NWR

Visitors observed a prairie in bloom during the refuge's prairie appreciation programs.

Over 1,800 Visitors Participate in DeSoto Refuge's Prairie Appreciation Programs

Approximately 1,837 people participated in a series of programs highlighting the prairie at DeSoto Refuge Sept. 8-16, 2001. The refuge prairie programs were presented in conjunction with Iowa's Prairie Heritage Week and Nebraska's Prairie Appreciation Month. Both celebrations are held in September. DeSoto joined a number of conservation groups and natural areas with interests in preserving and restoring the Midwest's dwindling prairies.

Prairie Appreciation Week has diverse programs to appeal to different audiences. Students walked in the grassland, which was at its peak blooming, and were exposed to the history and value of the Midwest's prairie heritage. They also learned about the many wildlife species living in prairies, above and below ground.

On Sept. 8, Naturalist Mark Dietz of the Girl Scout Council showed his musical slide show saluting the Midwest's grasslands. On September

15, Naturalist Betty Allen of Audubon Society gave a slide presentation on "How Early Americans used Native plants." The Visitor Center bookstore sold many publications about the Midwest's prairies. Also, the center displayed samples of prairie grasses and had exhibits about the biology and cultural history of prairies.

Several special Weekend Wildlife films on the prairie were shown. "Blossoms on the Prairie" was shown Sept. 1-3. The film for Sept. 8-9 was "The Prairie," and the film for Sept. 15-16 was "Prairie Dancers," a film about prairie chicken restoration. Weekend Wildlife Films are shown at DeSoto Visitor Center Saturdays and Sundays at 11:00 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and 2:45 p.m.

Since 1965, 1,500 acres of DeSoto's refuge fields have been reverted from croplands to grasslands. Portions of Wood Duck Nature Trail and Prairie Lane traverse prairie meadows. *Cindy Myer, DeSoto NWR*

Service Stresses Partnerships and New Opportunities to Members of Great Lakes Native American Fish and Wildlife Society

Regional Director Bill Hartwig delivered the keynote address at the Annual Conference of the Great Lakes Region of the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society (GLNAFWS) Sept. 11 in Brimley, Mich. An estimated 100 attendees represented the 34 tribes and four tribal organizations in the Region as well as other federal agencies and states. The meeting was hosted by the Bay Mills Indian Community.

The conference theme focused on partnerships. Major topics included: political opportunities with the new administration, status of eagle parts and feathers availability and guidelines, availability of bison from units of the National Wildlife Refuge System and update of cooperative Tribal/Service projects benefiting fish and wildlife resources.

Service guests included Pat Durham, Native American Liaison, Washington, D.C., and Jim Brown, Region 4's Native American Liaison in Atlanta. The Service recognized Faith McGruther, Regional Director (GLNAFWS) for her leadership and organizational efforts in support of the resource conference for the past eight years with a framed Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge print signed by famed photographer



--Photo by John Leonard

Regional Director Bill Hartwig presents a framed Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge print to Faith McGruther, regional director of the Great Lakes Region of the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society. Bob Foster, regional pilot, (left) and Faber Bland, hatchery manager, Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery assist in the presentation.

and artist Jim Brandenburg.

There were 14 technical session presentations. Service personnel presenting included Richard King of Necedah NWR "Whooping Crane Eastern Reintroduction" Anjanette Hintz of Alpena Fishery Resources Office (FRO),

"Aquatic Nuisance Species" and "Tribal Lake Sturgeon Restoration Projects" by Tracey Hill, Green Bay FRO. Discussion during informal "hallway" meetings involved tribal CITIES tags and tribal participation in crane recovery efforts. *John Leonard, External Affairs*

Service Joins Fond du Lac Nation For Lake Sturgeon Surveys on the St. Louis River

After hearing from local anglers that juvenile sturgeon have been caught on the St. Louis River near Cloquet, Minn., fisheries staff from the Fond du Lac Indian Reservation and the Service's Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) joined in an effort to assess the relative numbers of this species.

Using set lines, trap nets and electrofishing, assessments began in May and concluded in August. After four months of surveillance efforts, no sturgeon were collected. Although some fish may have recruited into this large river system, the size of the population is assumed to be very small at this time.

The Fond du Lac Nation's Natural Re-

sources Program is currently restoring lake sturgeon populations on the Upper St. Louis River near Cloquet, Minn. Sturgeon eggs have been stocked in the Upper St. Louis River over the past three years (90,000 eyed eggs).

The Lake Sturgeon Subcommittee of the Great Lakes Basis Ecosystem Team has stressed the importance of monitoring lake sturgeon rehabilitation efforts. The restoration of lake sturgeon to historic areas is a high priority to Native Americans, and the value of this research will help guide future lake sturgeon restoration projects in the Great Lakes Basin. *Frank Stone, Ashland Fishery Resources Office*

Auto Tour Brings 1,351 Weekend Visitors to Shiawassee NWR

A total of 1351 people viewed wildlife and habitats while driving the auto tour route at Shiawassee NWR during the Michigan refuge's open house weekend September 8-9, 2001. During the weekend, people could hike, bicycle and scout for deer anywhere on the refuge.

Heavy rain late Saturday and Sunday required the tour route be detoured because of muddy roads. The Friends of Shiawassee NWR assisted with the tour on Saturday and conducted the tour on Sunday. In addition, they had snacks, T-shirts, books and other items for sale. *Becky Goche, Shiawassee NWR*

New Brochure Communicates Value of Ephemeral Wetlands

The Chicago Illinois Field Office (CIFO) contributed technical input and funds for a new brochure, 'Midwestern Ephemeral Wetlands: A Vanishing Habitat.' The recently published brochure introduces definitions of ephemeral wetlands and related terms and issues to members of the public that may not be familiar with ephemeral wetlands. Examples include descriptions of their temporal cycles, reasons for their importance, lists of threats, and suggestions for how the public can get involved in ephemeral wetland conservation.

Ephemeral wetlands are depressional aquatic communities that are often isolated from floodplains and other wetlands. They normally hold water temporarily, and thus exclude fishes. The absence of predatory fishes makes them important breeding habitat for amphibians and aquatic invertebrates. These wetlands (and rich invertebrate communities) also provide nesting or foraging habitats for various migratory wading birds and ducks.

Throughout the brochure, color photographs and sketch art illustrate the biota of ephemeral wetlands in prairie, savanna, and hardwood forest ecosystems.



--Photo by Mike Redmer

Photos of wildlife, including this adult spotted salamander, are included in the brochure. The brochure can be viewed on the Internet at: <http://www.parcplace.org/publications/index.htm>

The brochure was launched by a partnership of concerned conservation organizations and agencies in the Midwest, including the Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wisconsin and Illinois Departments of Natural Resources, Illinois Natural History Survey, Milwaukee Public Museum, Brookfield Zoo, The Conservation Foundation, Partners for Amphibian and Reptile Conservation ("PARC"), and others.

The initial press run of 50,000 copies will ensure a wide distribution throughout the Midwest. Non-launching agencies and organizations throughout the Mid-

west are encouraged to purchase supplies of the brochure for local distribution. The brochure may be previewed online by following the link provided at the PARC Web Site: <http://www.parcplace.org/publications/index.htm>

A second phase of this initiative will be development of multi-format outreach media (35mm slides and presentations for digital projection) which will be available for loan to educators and interpreters. Finally, in February 2002, USEPA-Chicago and PARC will host a two-day conference on ephemeral wetlands. The target audience will include resource managers, policy makers, educators, and interested members of the general public.

For more information on the conference, please visit the PARC web site: <http://www.parcplace.org/CurrentMeetings/MWPARC/EphemeralWetlands.htm>

Service offices can obtain copies of the brochure by contacting Mike Redmer at 847/381-2253 Ext. 240. All others should contact The Conservation Foundation (630/428-4500). *Michael Redmer, Chicago Field Office*

Mattson Wetland Project Completed, 40 Acres of Habitat Improved For Wildlife

The Mattson Wetland Project, a 12 acre wetland restoration project in northwest Wisconsin involving numerous partners, was completed August 25. Restoration of the wetland, located in Bayfield County near Sanborn, Wis., involved the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron County Land Conservation District, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Service's Ashland Fishery Resources Office.

This Partners for Fish and Wildlife project consists of nine wetland construction/restoration sites totaling 12 wetland acres. The wetland areas enhance wildlife habitat on the surrounding uplands as well. Approxi-

mately 40 acres have been positively impacted for wildlife. The project occurred on approximately 40 acres of cropland that was entered into the Debt for Nature Program administered by the Farm Services Agency and the NRCS. This program will protect the project area for 50 years.

Restoration contract was awarded to Ritola Incorporated of Mason, Wis., who constructed nine earthen embankments with natural ground grassed spillways Aug. 21-25.

Erosion control measures were taken during construction and the site was seeded and mulched at the conclusion of the earth work. *Ted Koehler, Ashland Fishery Resources Office*

Region Hosts 3rd Annual Minnesota Preseason Waterfowl Primer

Twin Cities news media learned about the status of waterfowl in the Midwest during a Waterfowl Primer breakfast Sept. 5 at the Regional Office at Fort Snelling, Minn. Steve Wilds, regional Migratory Bird chief and Tim Bremicker, director, Minnesota DNR Division of Wildlife, reviewed the region's fall waterfowl forecast and the proposed 2001 waterfowl hunting framework in Minnesota.

Other topics covered included non-toxic shot options for hunters, this year's 20-day canvasback season, and "What waterfowlers in Minnesota can expect this year?"

Attending media recommended the breakfast event be expanded next year to include all regional media. *Anne Shea, External Affairs*

Interagency Agreement Will Streamline Wetland Restorations in Wisconsin

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have entered into an agreement with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to establish a streamlined wetland restoration permitting process that is economically efficient and will result in more wetlands being restored. The streamlined process will reduce the time required for permitting the NRCS Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) and Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife projects.

Wisconsin has a strong history of protecting its wetland resources. It was the first state to pass legislation in 2001 to address a recent Supreme Court ruling that reduced federal jurisdiction over isolated wetlands. Although designed to protect wetlands from drainage and filling by developers and others, Wisconsin's strong wetland protection laws were making it difficult to proceed in a timely manner with sound conservation programs that restore wetlands on private lands.

The interagency agreement establishes a timeframe for reviewing permits and allows for the federal agencies to self certify many aspects of their projects which in the past were processed by Wisconsin DNR staff. It will allow more efficient use of both federal and state funding and staff, and will result in more wetlands being restored in the state. *James Ruwaldt, Wisconsin Private Lands*

Tree Invasion Curtailed on Prairie at Neal Smith NWR

Unusual weather patterns in recent years have encouraged sapling growth in areas of Neil Smith NWR where trees had been eradicated. Other area nature preserves report similar problems. Farmers are finding corn fields peppered with cottonwoods. Over 300 acres of refuge have been mowed since July to curtail tree growth. Sites are monitored and follow up treatments will include additional mowing, burning and chemical treatments. *Christy Smith, Neal Smith NWR*

Christy Smith, Neal Smith NWR



--USFWS Photo

Frank Stone (left) of the Ashland Fishery Resources Office hands the keys to a former Service fish truck to Martin Robinson and Jon Finn of the Leech Lake Reservation fish hatchery.

Surplus Trucks Find New Home With Tribal Hatcheries in Wisconsin and Minnesota

Two tribal fish hatcheries in northern Wisconsin and Minnesota will soon be equipped with trucks to transport fish, thanks to efforts of the Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) and the Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery. Frank Stone of the Ashland FRO arranged to transfer the trucks to the Mole Lake and Leech Lake tribes for use by the tribes' fish hatchery programs.

This kind of cooperation between resource managers has several benefits. The Tribes will use these vehicles to help transport hatchery fish to various stocking sites, and, by making wise use of sur-

plus equipment, we can prolong their intended use and help tribal conservation agencies use funds for other important natural resource areas. Over the past 10 years, numerous Service field offices have teamed with the Ashland FRO to assist Tribal resource programs through donations of unused equipment. These contributions have put thousands of dollars worth of much needed fish distribution trucks, vehicles, fish hatchery equipment, generators and computers into the hands of Tribal resource managers.

Frank Stone, Ashland Fishery Resources Office

East Lansing Field Office Provides Public Opportunities to View Endangered Songbird

In partnership with the Michigan Audubon Society, the Service's East Lansing Field Office conducted tours to view the federally-endangered Kirtland's warbler from May 15 to July 4. Daily tours were offered twice daily at 7 a.m. and 11 a.m., from the Holiday Inn in Grayling, Mich. The U.S. Forest Service in Mio, Mich., also offered tours.

Kirtland's warblers nest only in the dense jack pine forests of Michigan making sightings of this rare songbird difficult to the untrained eye. To protect nesting sites and enhance viewing op-

portunities, Service biologists led participants to known breeding colonies normally closed to the public.

This year, 662 visitors from 36 states and five countries took advantage of the tours to view one of the nation's rarest songbirds. All but one of the 88 Service-led tours observed a Kirtland's warbler in its natural habitat.

Since 1976, more than 17,700 people have taken advantage of this rare opportunity to view an endangered songbird. *Christopher Mensing, East Lansing Field Office*

Students Collect Prairie Flower Seed, Plant Acorns at Rydell NWR

Students from Red Lake Fall Elementary School learned “a little” about Rydell NWR and helped station staff collect flower seeds from a portion of native prairie during a two-day visit Sept. 11-12.

Following a daily 90 minute tour of the refuge trail system and an early lunch, the students were divided into two groups to participate in “biologist” activities. Over two days, the 95 students planted more than 6,000 acorns, one at a time, in a 9-acre forest restoration field and collected more than 35 pounds of flower seed, including black-eyed Susan, purple prairie clover, and Maximilian sunflowers. These seeds will be used in our prairie restoration activities next spring when an additional 175 acres of retired crop land will be planted to prairie plants.

Following their ‘hard work’ the Friends of Rydell Refuge Association provided the students with ice cream bars and cool aid. According to Refuge Manager Rick Julian “As a result of the Red Lake student’s efforts, our new prairie restorations will be assured of having a good inoculation of flower seeds that will eventually spread throughout the restoration



--Photo by Rick Julian

Students from Red Lake Elementary school pose with the fruits of their labor--a tub containing 35 pounds of prairie flower seed. The students also helped refuge reforestation efforts by planting 6,000 acorns.

sites.” In addition, “The insects that will utilize the flowers will provide a potential food source for the many song birds and waterfowl that will eventually nest in our new prairie habitats. We will also look forward to seeing the many new oak seedling that will result from the students forest

restoration efforts. The quality of the new habitats restored will definitely be positively impacted by the great work of the hard working students.”

Similar acorn plantings last fall resulted in hundreds of new oak seedlings in restoration fields this spring. *Rick Julian, Rydell NWR*

Radio Telemetry Helping Service Trap More Sea Lamprey

The sea lamprey population in the St. Marys River continues to represent one of the greatest challenges facing rehabilitation of the fishery of Lakes Huron and Michigan. The control strategy for the river relies heavily on the alternative control techniques of removal of spawning-phase sea lampreys from the system through trapping and the sterile male release technique.

In partnership with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Edison Sault Electric Company, Great Lakes Power Ltd., and Canadian Coast Guard, the Service used radio telemetry to improve trapping success through a better understanding of



--USFWS Photo

Parasitic sea lamprey in the Great Lakes attach themselves to fish, eventually killing fish like this lake trout.

the distribution and movement of spawning-run lampreys in the river. During May through July, the movements of 110 lampreys implanted with transmitters were tracked in

the river to provide critical information that will guide the decision process for enhancing trapping efforts in future years.

The international sea lamprey control program continued rehabilitation of the Great Lakes Fishery valued at more than \$4 billion annually. Under contract with the international Great Lakes Fishery Commission, the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and U.S. Geological Survey -Biological Resources Division jointly conduct an ongoing sea lamprey control and research program. For more information contact Katherine Mullett 906-226-6571. *John Heinrich, Marquette Biological Station*

Grassland Diversity Stressed on Prairie Reconstruction Tours

Grass and forb species diversity is the key to providing good grassland habitat for birds and other prairie wildlife. Species diversity was the central theme of programs presented by Larry Hanson, refuge operation specialist at Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District during three recent prairie grassland restoration tours.

On Aug. 11, members of the Lakes Area Garden Club combined learning about prairie flowers and grasses with a scenic hayride through the Marks Waterfowl Production Area (WPA). On Aug. 15, Hanson was a featured speaker and tour guide on a prairie reconstruction tour in Clay County that was sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Personnel from the DNR, TNC, Fish and Wildlife Service, Prairie Restorations, Inc., and the Morris and Crookston campuses of the University of Minnesota were introduced to the techniques, benefits, and successes of broadcast seeding on snow covered sites in late winter and early spring. Hanson also guided the group on a tour of WPAs where grassland areas had been re-



--Photo by Les Peterson

Refuge Operations Specialist Larry Hanson (left) discusses the importance of prairie plants with members of the Lakes Area Birding Club.

constructed through this seeding method. On Aug. 27, members of the Lakes Area Birding Club learned about prairie plant communities and the importance of broad-leafed plants in wildlife habitat for insects and

birds on a guided tour of native prairie and reconstructed native grasslands on the Anderson Waterfowl Production Area in Becker County. *Les Peterson, Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District*

Service Joins Canadians to Survey Ruffe in Thunder Bay Harbor

Staff from the Ashland Fishery Resources Office (FRO) in cooperation with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR), Lake Superior Management Unit recently completed annual monitoring of Eurasian ruffe in Thunder Bay Harbor, Ontario.

A total of 25 bottom trawl tows were completed on fixed transects for a total effort of two hours. A total of 13,121 fish were captured consisting of 17 species. Although total ruffe (17) accounted for less than 1 percent of the catch, a low ruffe catch was expected due to seasonal variation. As is the case with some other ruffe sites, most ruffe have been collected here in the fall.

The three most abundant species col-



--Photo Minnesota Sea Grant

The ruffe is small spiny perch threatening the Great Lakes fishery. Sharp spines on its dorsal fin and gill covers make them difficult for larger predator fish to eat. .

lected consisted of rainbow smelt (61 percent), ninespine stickleback (30 percent), and white sucker (4 percent). The majority of these species consisted of young-of-

the-year. Other exotics consisting of 10 threespine and 16 fourspine sticklebacks were also captured.

Earlier this spring, OMNR captured a ruffe in a trapnet in the northern part of the harbor. Previously, ruffe had only been captured in the southern part of the harbor. Anglers continue to report catching many ruffe in the Kaministiquia River that flows into Thunder Bay Harbor.

Surveillance in Thunder Bay Harbor began in 1991, when ruffe were first discovered by a crew from Ashland FRO.

The cooperative effort has been ongoing since 1997. *Gary Czypinski, Ashland Fishery Resources Office*

Muscatatuck's Centennial Ambassadors Help Spread The Word

Staff at Muscatatuck NWR is taking great pride in celebrating the upcoming refuge system centennial and is enlisting the help of others to help them spread the word about the celebration. Refuge staff are training a cadre of centennial ambassadors to "get the word" out.

The first group of five volunteer/interns (ambassadors) spent the summer on the refuge doing biological, public use, and maintenance activities. Under direction of Refuge Operations Specialist Susan Knowles, they developed and utilized a centennial presentation in Power point, overhead transparencies and slides to be used as a stand alone program or in-

corporated into other refuge presentations. They also used their new found outreach skills and knowledge to staff information booths at three county fairs, the Indiana state fair and the refuge bookstore information desk.

Centennial outreach materials (pencils, litter bags, brochures) were also distributed. This effort reached 122,150 people over the summer months. The ambassadors plan to continue their efforts after returning to college with the aim to tell as many people about the Centennial as possible.

In addition to volunteers, staff members at both Muscatatuck and Big Oaks

NWR were trained to be Centennial ambassadors. A special centennial section has been added to our newsletter, "Duck Tails" which is sent quarterly to 2,500 people.

An exhibit was made and used for outreach with a "Centennial Blue Goose Archway" designed by Refuge Manager Lee Herzberger. The display was used at local fairs and will be used during upcoming events including the national FFA convention, refuge visitor center, refuge office at Big Oaks NWR and public libraries. *Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR*

Chicago Partnership Improves Wildlife Habitat and Water Quality

The Habitat Restoration Program (HRP) for the Fox and Kishwaukee River watersheds in Illinois was officially launched with the recent funding of 13 projects that will restore approximately 100 acres of prairie, wetland, and riparian habitat. This program is a cooperative effort among the Chicago Ecological Services Office (CIFO), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) of McHenry, Cook, Lake, Kane, Dekalb, and Boone Counties.

The HRP provides both technical and financial assistance to landowners for on-the-ground water quality and wildlife habitat improvement projects. Non-state and non-federal landowners within the Illinois portion of the Fox and Kishwaukee watersheds (McHenry, Kane, DeKalb, Boone, and portions of Lake and Cook Counties) are eligible to

apply for funding. Restoration practices eligible for funding include native prairie grass establishment, drain tile breakage, non-native plant control, creation of shallow water areas for wildlife, and installation of water control structures.

The restoration practices supported by HRP, such as prairie or wetland restoration, are known to increase water retention and water infiltration, improve water quality, decrease soil erosion, and provide habitat for birds and other wildlife.

The Fox and Kishwaukee watersheds are two of the highest quality aquatic systems within Northeast Illinois and are under extreme pressure from urban development. Despite sprawl and fragmentation issues, the watersheds have a rich variety of natural communities and a remarkable level of biodiversity. Also, both watersheds have active Illinois Department of Natural Resources Conservation 2000 Ecosystem Partnerships (water-

shed based partnerships) and projects funded through HRP are aimed at meeting the water quality and habitat goals of these partnerships. *Christie Deloria, Chicago Field Office*

Due to Heavy Volume No ARS Report List This Issue

Due to an extremely large volume of accomplishment reports received over the past three weeks, the list of reports that normally appears in Inside Region 3 will not be published in this issue.

At press time, more than 170 reports had been received. Publishing this list would reduce the number of published reports to an unacceptable level. Employees can view reports using the Report Manager utility at the ARS website at: <http://ars.fws.gov>

Inside Region 3



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