



# Natural Selections

## Legacy Program Update

### Now Accepting National Public Lands Day (NPLD)

**Applications!** Applications for NPLD Legacy funds are available for base-level projects on any Department of Defense site that supports the goals of National Public Lands Day (NPLD) and emphasizes natural and cultural resource management. DoD applicants can apply for up to \$6,500 to cover supplies, materials and equipment. Applications are available at from National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) at their website [www.publiclandsday.org](http://www.publiclandsday.org). Under the Sponsors and Partners Tab, scroll down and click on "Legacy".

**Applications should be submitted to NEEF by June 1st.**

For more information contact Claudia Kessel, at [claudia@neef.org](mailto:claudia@neef.org), Robb Hampton, [rhampton@neef.org](mailto:rhampton@neef.org) or contact Jane Mallory, with the Legacy Program at [Jane.Mallory.ctr@osd.mil](mailto:Jane.Mallory.ctr@osd.mil).

## Legacy Project Highlight of the Month

### Legacy Project 06-105: Building Partnerships for Regional Grassland Bird Conservation in the Southeastern US

Grassland birds have been declining at greater rates over the past 35 years than any other avian group across North America. Several of the key priority species are declining to the point that listing for protection under the Endangered Species Act is a possibility if significant conservation efforts are not focused on this critical problem. Eastern military bases are in a unique situation because these bases support many of the priority species that are at risk and military bases also are vulnerable to major disruption if listing were to occur. Proactive management by the military may very well help solve this problem, thereby minimizing impacts on the primary military mission. Our research has been focused on helping the military develop conservation strategies for grassland birds to mitigate potential impacts in the future.

*See Legacy, page 5*



## In The News

### Current Bird-related Policy Issues

By Peter Boice

DoD Conservation Team Leader and Director, Legacy Program

*The following is adapted and updated from my "Policy Perch" column in the December 2008 issue of the DoD Partners in Flight (PIF) newsletter, Steppingstones, available at <http://www.dodpif.org>.*

I'd like to start with what may be our most important bird-related planning effort since the inception of DoD PIF more than 15 years ago. At Flagstaff this past August, work began on a third DoD PIF Strategic Plan. DoD PIF representatives will complete a draft of this new plan at their annual meeting later this month. This latest revision is important for several reasons:

- It will be our first and best opportunity to demonstrate the importance of bird conservation to DoD mission and stewardship needs to the new Administration. Accordingly, plans are for it to be signed out by the new top DoD *Bird Policy, page 6*

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## Effective Communications

Effective communications are a cornerstone of any successful program. It's no different if you're a natural resource manager at an installation or in a policy office. Whatever your responsibilities, you've got to be flexible and use the full suite of techniques available.

For the past six months, we've been using a three-pronged approach to improve our internal and external communications. First, we've expanded our outreach opportunities with partners old and new. Second, we've initiated regular meetings with key personnel in three U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) national offices. Third, we continue to develop and distribute a wide-range of new communications tools and outreach materials.

**Expanded outreach opportunities.** DoD representatives have participated in meetings with The Wildlife Society (TWS) for some years. Last November, we expanded that presence with an 11-paper symposium on Biodiversity Management in the DoD. Our presence will continue this year with a follow-up session at TWS' annual meeting with more installation-specific management examples. A second technical session will focus on conservation-reliant species and their importance to DoD. We also are expanding our outreach to TWS with a feature article in the fall issue of *The Wildlife Professional* that will describe the role of DoD's natural resource managers.

A half-day *DoD Pollinator Workshop* at the National Military Fish and Wildlife Association's annual training session in March brought together representatives from a diverse array of different organizations, including the Natural Resources Defense Council, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bee Lab, the U.S. Geological Service, the Wildlife Habitat Council the National Wildlife Federation, and the Pollinator Partnership. One immediate result of the workshop – Pollinators will be a focus area for DoD participation in National Public Lands Day this year.

We have partnered with NatureServe for almost a decade; however, last month was the first time we attended their annual meeting. In addition to identifying potential new projects, we presented overviews of DoD's challenges and its natural resources policies, as well as new and planned natural resource management tools.

Our expanded outreach also has included exhibiting or speaking at:

- ❖ The National Council for Science and the Environment's conference on *Biodiversity in a Rapidly Changing World*, and its annual university-federal dialogue on environmental and energy research and education.
- ❖ The National Wildlife Federation's *Adaptation 2009: Safeguarding Fish, Wildlife and Natural Systems in the Face of Climate Change*.
- ❖ A Wildlife Habitat Council-organized workshop on *Conservation Partnering: Invasive Species Management as a Successful Watershed Protection Partnership*.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Meetings.** We have been working and communicating with different USFWS national offices for years. Past successes notwithstanding, we have found that periodic discussions focusing on joint goals and objectives can provide real value added and renewed focus to our efforts.

*Endangered Species Program.* We established a DoD-USFWS Threatened and Endangered Species roundtable a decade ago, and later added both an Information and Education Working Group, which develops fact sheets, articles, posters and many other T&E-related materials, and a T&E Science Forum, which identifies and coordinates T&E research needs among DoD, the USFWS, and other participating agencies. As a result of discussions with assistant director Bryan Arroyo and his deputy Gloria Bell, we have refocused the Roundtable agenda. Bryan also spoke at my invitation at NMFWA's most recent DoD Policy Session.

*Habitat and Resource Conservation.* The Sikes Core Group has guided tripartite (DoD, USFWS, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies) oversight and implementation of the Sikes Act since 2001. We identified and have

begun to implement a series of new action items after meeting with branch chief David Stout and his deputy, Robin Nims Elliott. These items should continue to improve Sikes Act implementation and expand its effectiveness. I also am identifying opportunities for the Habitat and Resource Conservation office to participate in national DoD meetings.

*Migratory Birds.* The Migratory Bird office has offered special training for DoD natural resource managers for about five years. Many other regulatory and stewardship opportunities concerning migratory birds have required our close interaction. We will be meeting with assistant director Paul Schmidt in mid-May to identify new ways to enhance our communications and identify additional goals and objectives of mutual interest. One area of immediate concern is to increase links between our respective Web sites and products.

**New Tools and Outreach Materials.** We continue to offer a wide range of materials to enhance communications throughout DoD and beyond.

Our set of biodiversity materials, released in June 2008, demonstrate that several different techniques can be used effectively on a single subject. The Guidebook provides a useful desk reference for many topics. The two-CD Biodiversity Outreach Toolkit not only offers these same materials in electronic format but also provides three narrated and modifiable PowerPoint presentations and hundreds of copyright-free images. The Commander's Guide offers a handy summary of why biodiversity is important to DoD.

The Threatened, Endangered and At-Risk Species (TER-S) Repository currently provides on-line access to gray literature for DoD's 18 highest priority listed species. Enhancements will expand the reach of this resource, and improve the submittal process for new documents.

As follow-up to the DoD Pollinator Workshop, we are making all presentations and other materials available on-line. This Web site ([www.dodpollinatorworkshop.com](http://www.dodpollinatorworkshop.com)) will be going live soon. Current plans call to expand this site and link it to a dedicated site for DoD natural resource conservation tools.

We conducted a Beta test of a new Invasive Species Outreach toolkit at NMFWA. Included in these materials are sample PSAs and a set of posters and brochures, as well as templates of both that can be used to include additional species. These standardized materials will help "brand" invasive species concerns throughout DoD. We will debut these materials at the Sustaining Military Readiness (SMR) 2009 conference in August.

We continue to develop new courses and improve existing ones. Current efforts include:

- ❖ The current 2 ½-day Sikes course is being updated and focused into a new two-day version. We hope to tape and export the next offering, scheduled for early September at the National Conservation Training Center.
- ❖ A new one-day Sikes course will debut at the Army's Sustainable Ranges conference in July, and also offered at SMR 2009.
- ❖ A new regional offering of a DoD-specific plant conservation workshop first held in Hawaii last year is planned for early 2010 in the Southeast.
- ❖ Regional invasive species courses are planned at the Bureau of Land Management training center in late October and Fort Bragg in early December.
- ❖ And, to highlight the importance of effective communications, we will provide two half-day workshops on *Communicating with the Media* at SMR 2009. I highly recommend this for anyone interested in improving one's use of standard techniques as well as expanding into the exciting new (for me!) world of Web 2.0. I jumped into the social networking world shortly after taking this workshop in December, and am looking for opportunities to link our program and some of its outreach materials to appropriate outlets. We're also exploring podcasts and other techniques, intending to borrow heavily from the experiences of others.

An essential component of effective communications is feedback. I'd like yours. What works for you? What tools need improving, or a greater DoD focus? What gaps still exist? Please contact me at [Peter.Boice@osd.mil](mailto:Peter.Boice@osd.mil) with your thoughts and comments.





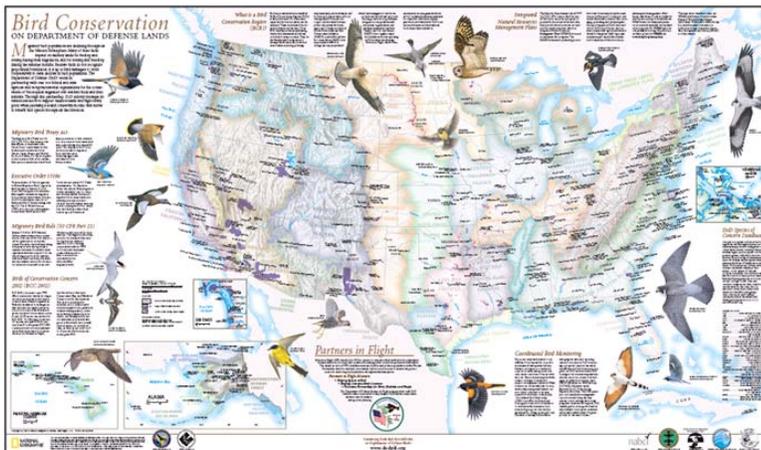
Dear Legacy,

How do I find out what DoD installations are in my region? Is there a map? I may have a good idea for a project that I think could benefit DoD but am not sure of all the bases that maybe in my area. Can you help me?

Signed,  
Mapless in Seattle,

Dear Mapless,

You are in luck! There actually is a great map available from DoD Partners in Flight that will tell you what you need to know. The Bird Conservation on Department of Defense Land map depicts the continental US, Hawaii and Alaska (and even Cuba!) and shows almost all of the DoD installations (I say "almost all" because not every single National Guard facility is depicted... there are zillions). In addition, there is valuable information that pertains to bird conservation and some very pretty birds flying around the margins.



[Contact DoD PIF](#)

To see the map and download it, go to the DoD Partners in Flight website ([www.DoDPIF.org](http://www.DoDPIF.org)) and click on the "Publications" tab on the left hand menu bar.

Chris Eberly, the DoD Partners in Flight Program Coordinator, also has oodles of printed copies of the map available. Chris enthusiastically hands fistfuls out wherever he goes (I believe the little Eberly children even found some crammed in their Christmas stockings last year).

Chris will be happy to send you one. Click on the "Contact DoD PIF" under the map to request your copy.  
Signed-L



Dear Legacy,



I am having problems with my copy of the 2 DVD Biodiversity Outreach Toolkit. When I try to open up one of the PowerPoints, it takes a long time. What gives?

Signed,  
Aggravated.

Dear Aggie,

Did you look at the Product Information page located on disc 2? You know, that "Read Me" file that almost every computer-based product has but almost everyone ignores? Now, Legacy is not judging you. We have done it too...open up programs and dive right in clicking away on whatever looks interesting. But in the case of the Biodiversity Outreach Toolkit (affectionately known as "The BOT") it is a good idea to read this helpful one-pager first.

From what you describe it sounds like you need to give the presentation more time. The presentations in PowerPoint (on disc 2) are really big files! It might take a while to open up, depending on your computer. If the PowerPoints do not play smoothly (such as audio files lagging behind the animations) allow a few moments for the presentation to completely load before viewing. If the problem persists, it is likely that your DVD drive is not transferring data quickly enough. Copying the folder(s) to your hard drive and playing the PowerPoint file(s) from there will solve this issue.

On disc 1 the presentations have been converted into a flash file (look for the icon of the disc with the yellow stars swarming around it, labeled 1st AutoRun Express Launcher). This should open up more quickly. Now, a few DoD people have noticed a pop-up appear with some silly warning about active content. Just click "Yes". On these old Legacy computers that pop-up comes up about 9 times! We just keep clicking until we beat the computer into submission and it opens the flash up. You got to show these old Dells who's boss!

The image library is on the Disc 2, in the form of a really big PowerPoint file. It's 156 slides so it will take a while to open. Each page has several images with the source information for the images. To get the image, just right click on the image and click "Save Picture As" or "Copy". What could be easier?!

If you are experiencing any problems that the Product Information page doesn't address, contact David Harrelson of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ([David\\_Harrelson@fws.gov](mailto:David_Harrelson@fws.gov)) or the Legacy Staff and we will do our best to help.

Signed-L



Dear Legacy,

My buddy and me have a bet on what Federally-listed endangered species is the coolest. I say it's the Red Cockaded Woodpecker, he thinks it's the Golden Cheeked Warbler. Please settle this for us. There is a beer in it for the winner.



Signed,  
Tell Me I'm Right

Dear Tell,



Birds? Nice try, boys, but you are both wrong. The coolest Federally-listed endangered species hands down is the Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly. No contest! It is totally awesome. Legacy will take a Corona (sans lime wedge, s'il vous plait).

Signed-L

Photo shown not actual size (but you already knew that).



*Legacy, continued from page 1*

The overall purpose of this project was to develop a partnership among Fort Campbell, KY and other conservation organizations, and use that partnership as the vehicle to promote grassland bird conservation on public and private lands surrounding Fort Campbell. We also provided an inventory of breeding and wintering grassland bird populations and habitat within and adjacent to Fort Campbell as a means of identifying potential cooperating land owners and we used Fort Campbell as a case study to identify specific management recommendations to meet military training needs and winter habitat requirements for declining grassland bird species.



Fort Campbell provides significant habitat for nesting Henslow's Sparrows, a rare and declining grassland bird. Photo by Jim Giocomo

We built upon the information already collected at Fort Campbell by expanding the area and time we monitor grassland bird populations. One of our goals was to see if and how the populations within the base are different from the populations in the grasslands outside the base. We inventoried the presence, abundance, return rates, and productivity of grassland birds in fields within and outside the base during the breeding and winter seasons. We presented this information at regional and national meetings to promote cooperation between the military and other conservation partners.

This project provides a proactive strategy for integrating grassland bird conservation into the military mission by demonstrating generally how it can work at Fort Campbell. This project helps land managers understand the relative role of military lands compared to the surrounding private lands in the productivity and survival of grassland birds for breeding and wintering. Finally, this project is bringing together local and regional resources to help ensure the region surrounding Fort Campbell is managed to increase the quality and quantity of grassland habitats thus helping to reduce the relative management burden on DoD lands.

Inventoried grassland birds during the breeding and wintering seasons and associated habitats at Fort Campbell and surrounding region, including documentation of one of the largest eastern Henslow's Sparrow populations.

- ❖ Documented that DoD is sustaining grassland bird populations through their land management practices at Fort Campbell.
- ❖ Documented the compatibility of military training practices with grassland bird conservation practices.
- ❖ Develop web-based informational materials for grassland bird conservation on eastern military installations.
- ❖ Promoted grassland bird conservation through working with the Southeastern Partners In Flight working group.



**Bird Policy, continued from page 1**

Environmental official. And it will be introduced at the 2009 Sustainable Military Readiness conference in Phoenix next August.

- Future discretionary investments in bird projects will be informed by the Plan's priorities.
- Progress on plan objectives will be easier to track and the contributions of each DoD PIF representative to overall Plan success will be more obvious.
- Development of the new Plan, its goals and objectives, and its reporting procedures will be used as a model for an even larger endeavor that we will embark on soon -- A Strategic Plan for All DoD's Natural Resources.

Other new or ongoing initiatives include a possible incidental take permitting system and the completion of DoD guidance elaborating on the Migratory Bird Rule.

For more than seven years, it has been the stated intent of the FWS to develop a mechanism to issue permits for incidental takes related to routine federal agency land management actions. An essential first step required by FWS -- the signing and implementation of MOUs as required by Executive order 13186 -- has been a long time coming. As of September 2008, only two agencies -- Defense and Energy -- had completed MOUs. The FWS has redoubled its efforts to complete all remaining MOUs and to start developing BCR-based regional permits. Preliminary plans call for conducting NEPA-based analyses of those land management actions most significant to agencies within each region.

The issuance of internal Migratory Bird Rule guidance has proven more challenging than expected. We have decided to take a more focused approach, and limit the guidance to how to create a defensible record demonstrating our entitlement to the exemption at the installation level.

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## Birds and Bombs at Fort Riley: A Case Study Summary

By Kyra Wiens and Alison Dalsimer  
Booz Allen Hamilton

Fort Riley, a 100,656-acre Army installation, lies in the Flint Hills Region of northeastern Kansas. This region has retained more tallgrass prairie than all other prairie states and provinces combined. The tallgrass prairie, now at less than four percent of its original cover in North America, provides habitat to unique native bird species, including the Henslow's Sparrow, populations of which have declined 68% over the last 30 years due primarily to habitat loss and degradation.

Early in the 1990s, Fort Riley initiated regular bird surveys and implemented management prescriptions specifically to enhance Henslow's Sparrow habitat. As a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) identified Fort Riley as a major breeding site for Henslow's Sparrows in 1996. Fort Riley continued its stewardship for Henslow's Sparrows when it developed its Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP). To meet conservation objectives while fulfilling the installation's mission, land managers met with military training staff early in the INRMP process to discuss future land management needs from the mission perspective. The result of these efforts proved that ongoing collaboration facilitates cost effective management and conservation measures that benefit both the mission and the resource.

Because Henslow's Sparrows will not nest near trees or in areas with over-abundant brush, the INRMP incorporates plans to remove trees and remove or thin over-abundant brush in prairie habitats, thus creating more nesting habitat. Henslow's Sparrows prefer fields larger than 60 acres, so removing lines of trees can reduce field fragmentation. Prescribed burning and hay-cutting keep woody encroachment in check, and reduce the fuel supply for wildfires. In addition to these general measures, the INRMP delineates that areas of particularly high quality habitat be rotated as "no-burn" areas, and dictates that hay cannot be cut until after July 15th when the chicks have fully fledged. The INRMP also includes provisions to monitor the effectiveness of various management efforts.



Live fire training helps sustain the prairie at Fort Riley.

Photo: Courtesy of Fort Riley

Owing to early INRMP collaboration between the installation natural resource managers and the training and range support staff, Henslow's Sparrow conservation measures not only benefited the bird and its habitat, but also advanced the installation's mission. This is because force-on-force maneuver training requires open space, and weapons firing lines must be kept clear of trees. Clear vistas also allow field commanders to safely and readily observe troop maneuvers. Further, INRMP measures to limit catastrophic wildfires also protect soldiers and equipment. Since 2001, the Army at Fort Riley has shifted to employing smaller units, using smaller parcels of land per training event, and training more frequently. Consequently, a land management plan that operates on a finer scale will be more effective while juxtaposed hayed, burned, and unburned areas will furnish commanders with more options when conducting training. In the past, land management decisions were made on a training area basis (500-1,500 acres), which was the smallest area that would be burned at one time. Now, a training area will be the largest unit for a prescribed burn with some burns as small as 10 acres. This change will increase the duration of the burning season by six months and, coupled with a change in hay cutting whereby farmers will cut many fields only every other year rather than annually, will result in a greater juxtaposition of varying year-round habitats.

In addition, Fort Riley has begun developing conservation agreements with adjoining landowners, often assisting these landowners with prairie restoration efforts (primarily through clearing trees) if the landowners agree to implement management practices that benefit native prairie bird species. Partnering with landowners will not only create more habitat and help bolster bird populations, but also will establish a rapport and trust that may later be needed.

While not every natural resource management effort needs to support the installation's mission, no action should compromise it. The partnerships formed early on between the natural resource staff and the range support staff provided a strong and mutually beneficial basis for Fort Riley's INRMP. Collaboration with the state, FWS, and local landowners has resulted in an INRMP that provides a comprehensive strategy for protecting and monitoring Henslow's Sparrow populations and sustaining the viability of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem, while simultaneously facilitating Fort Riley's capability to support the DoD mission and maintain its positive relationships with external stakeholders.

*Editor's note: This article was summarized from one that appeared in the Spring 2006 Federal Facilities Environmental Journal, written by Chris Eberly (DoD PIF) and Jeff Keating (U.S. Army, Fort Riley). The summary was written by Kyra Wiens and Alison Dalsimer (Booz Allen Hamilton) and originally published in the December 2008 Partners In Flight Newsletter, Steppingstones. The original article is available at [www.dodpif.org](http://www.dodpif.org).*

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## Legacy Sponsored Pollinator Workshop a Huge Success!

By Alison Dalsimer  
Booz Allen Hamilton

*"[T]he pollinator workshop was probably one of the best workshops I have been to. The speakers were great and very enthusiastic about their topics, I liked the displays and the fact that there were people to talk to about the different facets of pollinators and of course, the quiz and crossword were a lot of fun...and I think helped people learn more about pollinators."*

That was just one of the many positive comments participants provided about their experience at the March Workshop: *Pollinator Habitat Restoration for DoD Land Managers*.

The workshop, sponsored by the DoD Legacy Resource Management Program, was intended as an informative and interactive workshop on pollinators... their status, their plight, and what DoD's land managers can do to make a difference on the ground. Although only 47 people pre-registered, 80 attended, and each and every one stayed the entire time!

As a result of the excellent participant response from the Pollinator workshop, we will soon launch a Pollinator website, [www.dodpollinatorworkshop.com](http://www.dodpollinatorworkshop.com). We will be posting all presentations, both fact sheets we developed as handout references, an excellent PowerPoint template that can be used at your installation, links to a wide variety of resources, and more.

If you'd like to be added to our DoD Pollinator list serve, please email Alison Dalsimer at [Dalsimer\\_Alison@bah.com](mailto:Dalsimer_Alison@bah.com).

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# Training, Announcements & Events of Interest

Workshops, Interagency Training Announcements and Future Events of Interest to the Conservation Community



**SPONSORED! Strategic Management of Invasive Species in the Southwestern United States:** October 26-30, 2009 in Phoenix, AZ. This five-day invasive species workshop for installation personnel in the southwestern United States (AZ, CA, CO, NM, NV,) is sponsored by the Legacy Program. The workshop will provide participants with knowledge and resources that will enable them to improve land stewardship by building partnerships and effectively addressing invasive species problems. Invasive terrestrial plants of southwestern desert ecosystems will be emphasized but nonnative aquatic nuisance species and insects will also be covered. Science and management experts will address pressing ecological issues and explain key components of an invasive species management strategy. Participants also will learn about local, state, and federal invasive species initiatives and regional partnership opportunities. There is no charge for the workshop. Registration is not open yet; however, please contact Melissa Brown at [weedcenter@montana.edu](mailto:weedcenter@montana.edu) to be placed on a list to receive notices about this workshop.

**SPONSORED! Strategic Management of Invasive Species in the Southeastern United States:** December 7th-11th, 2009 at the Carolina Inn in Chapel Hill, NC. This five-day invasive species course for installation personnel and their strategic partners in the southeastern United States is sponsored by the Legacy Program. The workshop will provide participants with knowledge and resources that will enable them to improve land stewardship by building partnerships and effectively addressing invasive species problems with an emphasis on terrestrial plants of the southeast. Science and management experts will address pressing ecological issues and explain key components of an invasive species management strategy. Participants also will learn about local, state, and federal invasive species initiatives and regional partnership opportunities. Registration will be available online beginning May 20th, 2009. Please contact Steven Manning at [steve@ipc-inc.org](mailto:steve@ipc-inc.org) to be placed on a list to receive notices about this workshop.

**Bat Conservation and Management Workshops - 2009:** August 14-19, 2009, in Pennsylvania. Because bats are active mostly at night, they present unique challenges to wildlife biologists and naturalists trying to study their habitats and behavior. And reliable information about the resources and natural history of local bat species is essential for managing for their protection or continued survival. Recognizing this, BCI has developed a comprehensive curriculum for an introductory field workshop designed to train serious students of bat conservation in current bat research and management techniques. In this intensive 6-day, 5-night program, BCI biologists and professional colleagues conduct a combination of lectures and discussions, field trips to examine bat habitat, and hands-on training to capture and identify bats. Cost \$1395, rabies pre-exposure vaccinations are required. For details visit: <http://www.batcon.org/index.php/education/workshops/subcategory/82.html>

**Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards:** Mr. John Young, USD (AT&L) announced on 15 April 2009 the winners of the 2009 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards:

## **Natural Resources Conservation**

- Camp Ripley Maneuver and Training Center, Minnesota Army National Guard – Large Installation category

## **Cultural Resources Management**

- Vandenberg Air Force Base, California - Installation category
- Fort Drum Cultural Resources Management Team, Fort Drum, New York- Team/Individual category

Congratulations to the winners! The awards will be distributed in a ceremony at the Pentagon, June 3, 2009.

**CIPM Website and E-Newsletter, valuable resources for invasive plant management:** The Center for Invasive Plant Management's website, [www.weedcenter.org](http://www.weedcenter.org), is a valuable resource for those involved in invasive plant management. The website features news and events, funding opportunities, weed profiles, and resources for education, weed management areas, and invasive plant identification, biology, impacts and management, and more. In addition, the Center produces a bimonthly electronic newsletter that highlights new website resources as well as information about current events, issues, research, products, and projects related to invasive plant management and research. For details visit <https://app.e2ma.net/app/view:Join/signupId:39800> or visit [www.weedcenter.org](http://www.weedcenter.org) to subscribe.

**Steppingstones Newsletter Update:** The theme for the June 2009 issue of the DoD Partners in Flight newsletter, Steppingstones, will be on Conservation-Reliant Species and will feature an article by J. Michael Scott. The issue also will highlight research and management activities on DoD lands that include the Burrowing Owl, acoustic monitoring technology, migratory connectivity, a site profile of Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach (CA), and many other interesting features. So, if you missed the December 2008 issue or want to get on the mailing list for future issues, please contact Chris Eberly at [ceberly@dodpif.org](mailto:ceberly@dodpif.org) or visit the newly redesigned DoD PIF website at [www.dodpif.org/publications/steppingstones.php](http://www.dodpif.org/publications/steppingstones.php).

# Recent Natural Resources Documents On DENIX

Reports, Fact Sheets, Photos, Videos



Message from DENIX Administrator.

The DENIX system is currently experiencing technical difficulties. We are addressing the problem and hope to restore the system very soon. If you have content that needs to be posted immediately, please send an email to the DENIX Team (<mailto:acctmgr@www.denix.osd.mil>). We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

**Channel Island and Southwest California Coastal Ecosystem Protection Program:** (Legacy 02-172) The San Clemente loggerhead shrike (SCLS) is one of the rarest vertebrates in North America. Although the causes of the SCLS's decline are not fully understood, predation is certainly considered to be a major factor. Predator (Feral Cats) management efforts have been conducted on San Clemente Island (SCI) since 1985, with a regularly established Predator Management Program initiated in 1992. The goal of the current predator management program is to continue to provide both direct and indirect measures of protection to SCLS and their nests, and to monitor the impact of predator management on native predator populations. For a copy of the report please visit: <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/invasives>.

**Predator-proof Fencing for Invasive Species Control in Hawaii: A Comprehensive Prioritization and Implementation Plan to protect native species:** (Legacy 07-339) Prioritize sites within Hawaii DoD land holdings that would be candidates for predator proof fencing. The prioritization was done by having each branch of the military nominate their top natural resource sites (13 total) and provide an accompanying site description. A set of ranking criteria that incorporated both biological and feasibility criteria were developed as a group with military personnel, and each site was ranked using these criteria. For a copy of the report please visit: <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/invasives>.

**Natural Resource Assessment of Wake Island After Feral Cat Eradication and Super Typhoon Ioke:** (Legacy 07-371) Report on Natural Resource Assessment (mostly bird population impact) of Wake Island After Feral Cat Eradication and Super Typhoon Ioke. For a copy of the report and fact sheet please visit: <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/invasives>.

**Fact Sheet: Continued Development and Coordination of DoD Installation Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Programs in the Chesapeake Bay:** (Legacy 07-363) This study tested the survivorship of DoD SAV restoration plots established over the past ten years. Using this data, researchers will interpret restoration success/failure, and select new sites (or expand previous ones) for more comprehensive large-scale restoration. Please visit <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/EcosysMgmt>.

**Considerations for Making Effects Determinations” (CMED) for the Chiricahua leopard frog (Rana chiricahuensis) December 2008:** (Legacy 05-258) The general goals of this document are to focus the effects analysis of proposed Federal activities on critical elements, reduce uncertainty in determining effects, and improve and facilitate section 7 consultations that may be required under the Endangered Species Act. The CMED provides considerations in determining if the species may be in the action area of the proposed activity and, if so, possible ways in which Federal activities may affect various aspects of the species and its habitat. The CMED provides various examples of conservation measures that may be incorporated into proposed actions to reduce adverse effects and take, and in doing so facilitate section 7 consultations. These examples should be used as a guide when designing projects and evaluating their effects. To download the reports please visit <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/EndangeredSpecies>.

**Restoration of Woodland, Grassland, and Rare Plants on Blue Grass Army Depot:** (Legacy 03-191) This project was designed to address some critical management needs in restoration of Bluegrass Woodlands, which is habitat for the endangered species, running buffalo clover (RBC, *Trifolium stoloniferum*); and in restoration of native grasslands on uplands of the Depot. This 15,000 acre facility provides a significant opportunity for nature conservation in the Central Ohio Valley. For a copy of the report please visit: <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/VegetationHabitat> .

**Building partnerships for regional grassland bird conservation in the southeastern US:** (Legacy 06-105) Grassland birds have been declining at greater rates over the past 35 years than any other avian group across North America. Several of the key priority species are declining to the point that listing for protection under the Endangered Species Act is a possibility if significant conservation efforts are not focused on this critical problem. This project demonstrates the value of military bases for supporting sustainable breeding populations of key high priority species (e.g., Henslow's Sparrow) demonstrates how the needs of grassland birds are compatible with troop training needs at Fort Campbell, and includes a grassland bird conservation strategy for eastern military bases in general. Visit: <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/Wildlife>.

**Species at Risk Report from the Southwest Strategy Endangered Species Act Team:** (Legacy 05-258). The purpose of this effort was to finalize a Species at Risk (SAR) list that has been under development by a group of federal and state agency biologists and threatened and endangered species Program Managers from Arizona and New Mexico over the last few years. The SAR report includes the SAR list and conservation and management recommendation papers for a number of the species found on the list. To download report and fact sheet please visit <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/EndangeredSpecies>.

**Fact Sheet: Assessing the value of Department of Defense lands in Alaska to a declining species, the Rusty Blackbird:** (Legacy 07-337). The goals of the project were to evaluate the value of military installations in Alaska to breeding Rusty Blackbirds by determining habitats with high breeding occurrence, nest abundance, and reproductive success. Also evaluated were the incidence of disease, parasites, and contaminants within the population. Visit <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/Wildlife>.

**Poster: Assessing BASH Risk of Breeding and Migrating Osprey:** (Legacy 06-292): this poster summarizes the purpose, methods and first year's result of this project which tracks osprey from Langley AFB, VA with the ultimate goal to reduce Bird Air Strike Hazard (BASH). This poster was presented at the 2007 SMR Conference in Orlando, Florida. Visit <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/Wildlife> for download.

**Quantifying impacts of ground water withdrawal on avian communities in desert riparian woodlands of the southwestern U.S:** (Legacy 07-290): Assess the value of riparian woodlands to the health and persistence of avian communities in the desert southwest. Quantify the extent to which both surface water and the health of riparian vegetation influence the abundance and diversity of riparian birds, and develop models to allow resource managers on military lands to better predict the effects of future ground water withdrawal and surface water depletion on riparian bird communities along the San Pedro River and elsewhere in the southwestern U.S. For the fact sheet and report visit <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/Wildlife>

**Migratory linkages of Burrowing Owls on DoD installations and adjacent lands, April 2006 Report:** (Legacy 05-243 & 06-243): this report details progress during 2005-2006 on project that seeks to locate Burrowing Owl nests on Department of Defense installations throughout the western U.S., determine the migratory linkages and connectivity of Burrowing Owl populations on DoD installations and adjacent lands, Determine where Burrowing Owls nesting on DoD installations and adjacent lands spend the winter, and estimate the extent to which individual owls move among populations, both among DoD installations and between DoD installations and lands managed by other entities. Visit <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/environment/NR/conservation/Wildlife>



# 2009 Sustaining Military Readiness Conference

An update on the SMRC



## **2009 Sustaining Military Readiness Conference Registration now open!**

The 2009 Sustaining Military Readiness Conference will be held from Sunday, August 9th through Friday, August 14th at the Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona. Online registration is now open through the conference website. Please visit <http://www.smrconference.com> and register. The conference registration is free but mandatory. DoD personnel and stakeholders in Natural and Cultural Resource Management, Readiness, Sustainability, and Compatible Land Use are invited to join the DoD Legacy Resource Management Program, the Basing Directorate, the Directorate of Readiness and Training, Policy, and Programs, the Test Resource Management Center, the Office of the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, and the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program to:

- ❖ Exchange lessons learned from the public and private sectors!
- ❖ Share results of sustainability programs and projects!
- ❖ Participate in a broad spectrum of informative training workshops!

The conference registration is free but mandatory.

## **2009 Sustaining Military Readiness Conference call for Posters**

The Sustaining Military Readiness Conference sponsors invite project managers to submit a poster for display in the exhibit hall. Posters should reflect success stories and lessons learned in projects which have helped sustain military readiness. The conference sponsors are particularly interested in projects related to energy, climate change, training and test ranges, partnerships, sustainability, management tools, emergent technologies and related influences on the US military today and in the future.

Posters will be displayed in two locations. Posters in the meeting room foyer will be viewed during breakfasts and breaks every day. Posters in the exhibit hall will be viewed during evening receptions and conference lunches every day.

There is no charge to exhibit your poster if accepted, however, poster exhibitors must attend the conference. There is no conference registration fee. For more conference details go to <http://www.smrconference.com>.

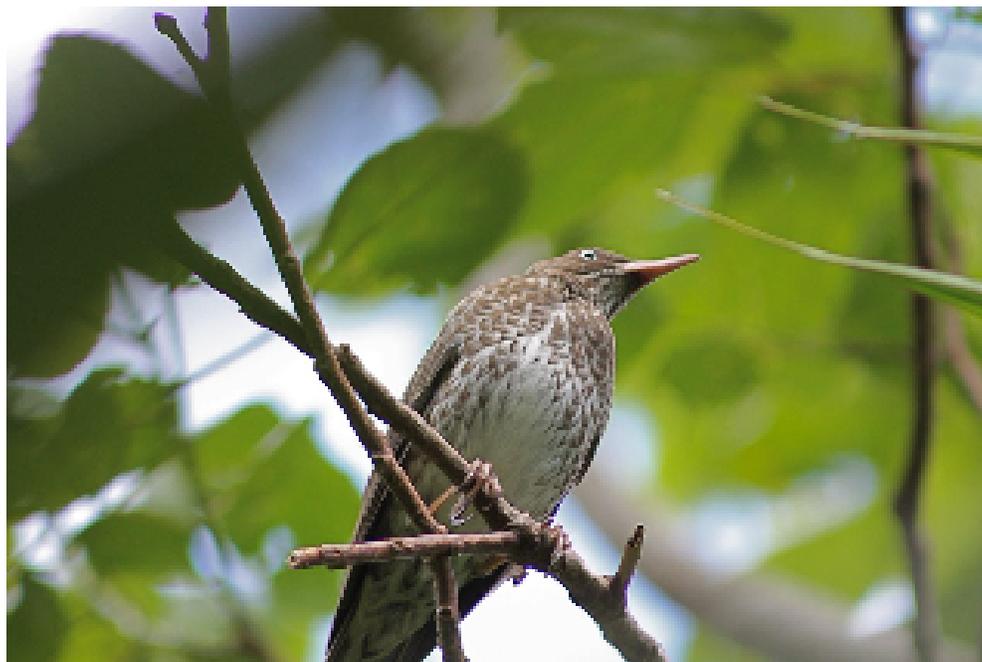
Poster Exhibitors Receive:

- ❖ Listing in the online and printed exhibitor directory received by all attendees, to include: Poster Location, Organization Name, Contact Name, Phone, Email and 400 character poster description.
- ❖ One (1) 4' x 8' poster face



## Photo of the Month

Capturing the beauty of our natural resources



May 2009 Photo of the Month Winner!  
Pearly-eyed Thrasher, El Yunque National Forest, PR  
Submitted by *Natural Selections* reader (and editor in chief): Peter Boice  
Rockville, MD

# Did You Know?

Little Did You Know Conservation Could Be So Much Fun!



**Birds are to be observed in the wild, not illegally traded**– Wildlife trade is big business. Alongside the illegal trade in arms and drugs, the smuggling of animals, plants and their parts, is one of the biggest challenges in terms of combating international crime. Some flagship species for conservation, such as the tiger and African elephant, have been notably affected. As for birds, nearly 4,000 species involving several million individuals annually are subject to domestic or international trade. Heavily affected groups include finches, weavers, parrots and raptors.

Trapping for the international bird trade has been identified as a contributory factor in the threat status of one in twenty (c.100) threatened and near-threatened bird species. Some are close to extinction as a result, such as the Yellow-crested Cockatoo *Cacatua sulphurea* of East Timor and Indonesia; others are already Extinct in the Wild such as the Spix's Macaw *Cyanopsitta spixii* of Brazil. Examples of species which continue to be threatened by legal and illegal exploitation for the bird trade include the Red Siskin *Carduelis cucullata* in northern South America, Java Sparrow *Padda oryzivora* of Indonesia and the African Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus*.

Since 1988, the international wild bird trade has been the primary driver in the worsening status (i.e. an uplisting to a more threatened category) of 15 species. Its impact on populations of 'Least Concern' species remains poorly known.

## CITES

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), adopted in 1973, came into force in 1975 and has 171 countries (June 2007) which are Parties to the Convention. The Convention aims to protect species from the detrimental effects of international trade by establishing an international legal framework for preventing or controlling trade. Species listed on Appendix I of the Convention are considered to be threatened with extinction and are not allowed to be traded commercially, while those on Appendix II are only allowed to enter international trade under specific controlled circumstances. Parties are obliged to develop national legislation effectively implementing the obligations of the Convention including setting sustainable quotas for Appendix II species. Currently 161 bird species are listed on Appendix I and more than 1,300 on Appendix II. For further details, see the CITES website.



CITES has been a major tool to address illegal trapping and keeping of birds. Photo courtesy of [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

For the original article visit: <http://www.birdlife.org/action/change/cites/index.html>

The CITES website is: <http://www.cites.org/>

# Contact Us

Who we are and where to find us!



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## Disclaimer

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