

Migratory Bird Management

Tracking the evolution of partnership-based conservation

By Tara Zimmerman

The hunter in Canada reporting a leg band from a mallard, a volunteer at a raptor migration station in Nevada, and a biologist banding wintering warblers in Chiapas, Mexico are all players in one of the most enduring examples of partnership-based conservation known today. An evolution in management and outreach to a wide array of collaborators have made partnerships the cornerstone of migratory bird conservation. The North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) is the most recent embodiment of this long-standing tradition of teamwork.

Management Plan was spun into action through outreach to landowners, conservationists, and states, who partnered in regional “joint ventures” dedicated to on-the-ground wetland conservation.

BIRD CONSERVATION EVOLVES

In the early 1990s, declines among neotropical migratory bird populations signaled yet another phase of outreach. With traditional partners in hand, the Service’s migratory bird program reached out to a largely untapped wealth of

See **MIGRATORY BIRD...** Page 11



Burrowing owl peeks out from burrow.

©Paul Boyle

INCLUSIVE APPROACH

Waterfowl biologists in the 1950s first provided the vision of federal, state, and public partnerships, aligned with four North American migratory bird flyways, as the geographic and political template for waterfowl management. In the mid-1980s, partnerships and outreach again helped address a critical conservation issue as wetland losses mounted and waterfowl numbers declined. The resulting North American Waterfowl

Fast Facts about Migratory Birds

- Nearly 600 bird species regularly breed, winter, or migrate in Region 1. Of these, 74 are on the National List of Birds of Conservation Concern 2002, with 58 occurring in the mainland, 15 in the Hawaiian Islands, and 16 in the U.S. Pacific Islands.
- Currently, two Region 1 employees annually process about 8,000 Migratory Bird Treaty Act permits, one of the highest permit workloads in the nation. This includes permit actions for Eagle Indian Religious Purposes (about 1,500) and falconry (about 1,200), along with permits for salvage, depredation, waterfowl sale and disposal, and rehabilitation.
- 20 percent of North American waterfowl winter in California’s Central Valley.
- Region 1 supports the most diverse group of seabirds in the United States, second only to Alaska in total number of breeding seabirds.
- Region 1’s four joint ventures (Pacific Coast, Central Valley, San Francisco Bay, and Intermountain West), originally formed to address waterfowl conservation, have evolved into partnerships that now take an integrated approach to “all-bird” conservation, including activities for landbirds, shorebirds, and waterbirds.

OUT & About



The Pacific Region
Outreach Newsletter

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Migratory Birds

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Upcoming Themes

Winter — Endangered Species
Spring — Managing to
Minimize Wildlife Disturbance
Summer — Land Protection
Fall — Comprehensive
Conservation Planning



OUT & About

Out & About is published quarterly for Region 1 Fish and Wildlife Service employees.

STAFF

Editor
Jeanne Clark, Stone Lakes NWR
Design
Kathie Nute, Western Type

SUBMISSIONS

We welcome your submissions to **Out & About**. Regular sections in the newsletter are:

Feature Articles
Case Studies
Outreach Accomplishments
Trainings & Workshops
Announcements
Q & A
Letters to the Editor
Outreach Resources

Articles should be submitted by E-mail or 3-1/2 inch floppy and run 150 to 500 words. Gear writing to newsletter style; avoid technical jargon. Photos welcome. Publication is not guaranteed, though every effort will be made to use submissions.

Submit articles to Jeanne Clark:
Stone Lakes NWR
1624 Hood Franklin Road
Elk Grove, CA 95758
Phone: 916/775-4421
Fax: 916/775-4407
E-mail: jeanne_clark@fws.gov

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Spring	April 1
Summer	May 15
Fall	August 15
Winter	November 15

Out & About has received U.S. Department of the Interior and Fish and Wildlife Service DI-550 approval.

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FIELD NOTABLE

Meet Field Notable Barbara Simon

Busy Southern California refuges enriched by her talent and vision

By Jeanne Clark

Recently, while watching the pre-feature show at a Sacramento, California movie theater, a slide flashed on the screen promoting the National Wildlife Refuge System. I smiled, thinking "I know how this came to be." It's just one of many good ideas transformed into reality by Barbara Simon, information and education specialist at San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

Before coming to work at the San Diego Complex in 1996, Simon had a fifteen year career as a film and television producer. She left a high-paying job to apply her talents to the natural world, a move she has never regretted. Acting on an idea from a former refuge manager, she combined her knowledge of the industry with tenaciousness, and after one year of turn downs, found a theater chain willing to run the slides at no charge. Not one to take credit, she explained "It really wasn't that hard. It just took some persistence."

Life covering the information and education needs of six refuges is fast-paced. The day we spoke, she started her morning with the complex fire management officer and a web site designer to develop a new fire information page for the complex's web site. She then met with a new volunteer full of good ideas, but needful of guidance.

When I called, she was putting the finishing touches on a media advisory regarding the release of captive-bred light-footed clapper rails at Sweetwater Marsh NWR. After our visit she dashed to a meeting on a major Tijuana watershed project. Private and government partners in the United States and Mexico have joined forces to address issues facing the Tijuana River watershed. "We received grants of almost one quarter of a million dollars to develop a CD in English and Spanish and needed to finalize our distribution plan and target audiences," says Simon, who is a huge proponent of partnerships. "A major focus is conservation of the river and its wildlife at Tijuana Slough NWR, which is a major stop on the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds."

Her next meeting tied in with the Tijuana watershed project, this one to develop a



Barbara Simon (left) reviews safari backpacks with graphic designer Tina Matthias (center) and Chula Vista Nature Center programs director Barbara Moore (right).

supporting video with funding received from the Service's International Division. Her day ended with work on the new San Diego Zoo exhibit showcasing the Refuge System.

Many of Simon's efforts have focused on migratory birds. She introduced the San Diego Zoo's Education Department to the region's Songbird Blues and Shorebird boxes, leading to their adaptation as props in Dr. Zoolittle's "The Great Migration" skit, enabling families to learn about International Migratory Bird Day and birds.

Her innovative Sweetwater Safari teacher backpacks and Tijuana Estuary Explorer curriculum have strengthened community partnerships, while providing engaging information about refuges and wildlife, often with a focus on migratory birds.

"My greatest lessons in outreach have come from talking to people outside of the Service and from partnering," reflects Simon. "I know we are all proud of our agency and its mission, but we need to guard against becoming insular. Working with people outside of the Service enriches us tremendously, expands our ideas, stretches our creativity, and allows us to go places we wouldn't go otherwise." It's a two-way street, for anyone who works with Simon is likewise enriched by her talent, energy, and strong advocacy of the Fish and Wildlife Service. 

Jeanne Clark is editor of Out & About.

Conservation Planning for Seabirds

Outreach will help advance the Pacific Region Seabird Plan

By Maura Naughton and Tara Zimmerman

After feeding off the coast of Washington, a black-footed albatross soars by a longline fisherman in the remote Pacific as she returns from a long distance journey to feed her chick on Midway Island. In Oregon, vacationers kayak near an island to watch nesting double-crested cormorants. To the south, a biologist explores a California offshore cave used by Xantus's murrelets, finding only evidence of nest predation by introduced rats. Fishermen, recreationists, and scientists are but a few of the user groups that encounter or directly interface with seabirds on a daily basis.


Losses of seabirds due to human disturbance, commercial fisheries, and nonnative predators are among many threats to seabirds that result in population declines and habitat loss. These accelerating threats present a compelling natural resource and outreach challenge. To respond to this need, Migratory Birds and Habitat Programs (MBHP) is spearheading the development of a comprehensive Regional Seabird Conservation Plan in collaboration with other Service divisions, federal and state agencies, and seabird experts throughout the Pacific Region. The plan will provide information and management guidelines to help ensure the long-term conservation of these unique birds. Specific outreach recommendations are included to carry important messages to schools, industry, and the public.

The vast coastal and oceanic areas of Region 1 provide seemingly abundant and pristine island habitat for seabirds from the West Coast to Hawaii and south to American Samoa. Though the area is large, approximately 14 million seabirds, representing 60 species, rely upon tiny specks of land spread from temperate climates to the tropics.

This incredible seabird resource and the many threats to their conservation were the impetus for developing the plan. In addition to other FWS divisions, MBHP reached out to a broad array of partners to help complete the first draft of the plan, including the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, USGS, and

university scientists. An even broader group will peer review the plan.

The plan examines seabird ecology and habitats, discusses threats and management issues, and identifies Service priorities for management, monitoring, and outreach. Short, informative profiles for each of the 60 species that breed in the Pacific Region are also included and will serve as effective tools for educating the public about these little known birds.

Other outreach strategies identified in the plan include the development of a K-12 curriculum about seabirds with separate chapters tailored to the mainland West Coast and the tropical/subtropical island systems. We envision developing these cooperatively with Service staff and school teachers. We also hope to provide outreach and technical assistance to the fishing industry to develop seabird-friendly fishing gear, fishing techniques, and mitigation measures. The development of a web site for seabirds in the Pacific will help jumpstart a more interactive and accessible means of sharing information on seabird ecology, the results of population monitoring efforts, and links to ongoing research. Together, the web site, curriculum, and other outreach will provide a host of educational opportunities for teachers, students, and the public. 

Maura Naughton is the regional seabird biologist and Tara Zimmerman is the branch chief of Bird Conservation with the Migratory Birds and Habitat Program.



Biologist Chan Robbins and Migratory Bird Program Chief Brad Bortner read bands on some of the same albatross Robbins banded in 1958.

"The plan ... identifies Service priorities for management, monitoring, and outreach."

What You Think about *Out & About*

First email survey yields an impressive response

By Susan Saul

“...93 percent of those responding apply the information they learn from this quarterly outreach newsletter...”

If *Out & About* was traded on Wall Street, you might consider investing in its stock. Results from the recent *Out & About* reader survey show 93 percent of those responding apply the information they learn from this quarterly outreach newsletter and 77 percent prefer to receive the printed version. More than 95 percent said the length of *Out & About* is “just right.” Nearly 55 percent said they “usually” or “always” read the newsletter.

On a scale of one to five, the content scored 3.71, *Out & About's* value was rated 3.37, its ease of understanding earned 4.25, and the use of themes garnered 3.78.

The most evident survey conclusion is that *Out & About* readers have a high level of satisfaction with the publication. Based on 373 responses, which is 18 percent of the regional workforce, the survey results will help External Affairs fine tune the publication's employee appeal. For example, 78 percent of respondents wanted access to electronic archives with a searchable database of past articles of the newsletter. We already have begun work on developing this reader service.

Links to additional outreach resources were requested by 78 percent of respondents. We have made it a priority to provide web links to supplemental information and resources in future articles, in both the print and on-line versions.

Survey analysis shows that 18 percent of respondents took the time to suggest ideas for future themes and article topics. You will see some of those ideas implemented in future issues as we broaden and enrich our content in response to the survey results.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to the reader survey, and congratulations to the five winners of *America's Wildlife Refuges: Lands of Promise*: Andy Anderson, Refuge Operations, Regional Office; Pauline Lochner, Hanford Reach National Monument/Saddle Mountain NWR; Sandy Spakoff, San Francisco Bay NWR; Laura Todd, Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office; and Jacintha Williams, Support Services, Regional Office. **Q**

Susan Saul is an outreach specialist in External Affairs in the Regional Office.

TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS

NAAEE Conference

The North American Association for Environmental Education is hosting its 32nd annual conference “Thinking Globally While Acting Culturally.” The conference is organized into five tracks, or strands, that involve cultural issues, ranging from sustainability, partnering, and research to diversity and urban/rural interfaces.

When: October 7-11, 2003

Where: Anchorage, AK

Contact: www.naaee.org

Watchable Wildlife Conference

Chief of Refuges Bill Hartwig will be a keynote speaker at a dynamic conference that offers opportunities to hear about new developments in site design, trail construction and maintenance, and interpretive programming. Authors and educators share new publications and research, while communities and tourism related businesses learn how to promote viewing opportunities.

When: November 11-14, 2003

Where: McAllen, TX

Contact: www.watchablewildlife.org

Education Evaluation Program

Learn new skills for designing high quality evaluation programs. Compare quantitative and qualitative methods and learn various evaluation tools, including surveys, focus groups, interviews, and observation. Hear about case studies involving evaluation plans and the results.

When: January 27-30, 2004

Where: Shepherdstown, WV

Contact: Sharon Howard
304/876-7494

Cispus Workshop: Training in Resource Management Communication Skills

Learn about proven, sensible communication and group process techniques for working in teams, managing meetings, and conducting outreach and public involvement. Details at www.reo.gov/cispus. \$425 for instruction, lodging and meals.

When: March 1-5, 2004

Where: Randle, WA

Contact: Susan Saul, 503/872-2728 or
Tony Faast, 503/231-6233

Can I Get a Permit for...?

Patience, good information, and diplomacy essential at Permits Office

By Tami Tate-Hall

Do you know where I can purchase tiger sharks, and do I need a permit to have them as a pet in Oregon?"

"I need some bear claws and fur for my dance regalia, where can I get them?"

"Do I need a CITES permit to take my ivory bagpipes to Scotland?"

Believe it or not, we receive about 30 phone calls a day in the Migratory Bird Permit Office and many are like these requests. If we are unable to answer the questions or issue the appropriate permit, we must diplomatically handle frustrated callers. One of our most important jobs is helping people understand why these regulations exist.

We evaluate each call on a case-by-case, species-by-species basis. We are the "Who's Who" in directing people to the correct agency, web site, individual, publication, or institution to get the answers they need. The job requires strong customer service skills, something each of us continues to cultivate through training, and by sharing experiences or finding appropriate resources. In some respects, our job is pure outreach, as we communicate daily with state, federal, and private parties. We even attend conferences hosted by our user groups, such as wildlife rehabilitation organizations. It gives us a unique opportunity to learn from them and educate people about migratory birds. This investment in relationship-building has paid off, as they readily responded when we recently sought their expertise when revising federal rehabilitation regulations.

Most information we relay is directly related to one of the many permits issued out of our office. We issue permits to care for birds, mount them for display, collect them for research and education, and breed them. Our diverse customer base usually receives permits for activities such as taxidermy, scientific collecting, falconry, eagle Indian religious purposes (use of eagle feathers by American Indians), waterfowl and raptor breeding, rehabilitation, possession for education, and depredation.

We rely on a variety of publications, such as *Caution: Feeding Waterfowl May Be Harmful!*



Deb Garrett

American Indians may use eagle feathers for ceremonial purposes through the eagle Indian religious purposes permit.

and *Cliff Swallows: How to Live With Them*, to help educate the public and prevent wildlife conflicts. They provide basic biological information about birds, as well as ways to discourage them from building nests where they are unwanted. Please contact our office for copies of these publications.

The legal bases for all permits we issue are the Migratory Bird Treaty and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection acts. To help our constituents sort through these complex regulations and the permit application process, we've placed a host of information and application forms on our web site at <http://migratorybirds.pacific.fws.gov/permits.htm>.

The number of calls can sometimes be stressful, but the day is never dull. Just when we think we've have heard it all, one of us answers the phone and is reminded that the odd and unusual are part of a day's work. And even if we can't issue a permit to sell puka shells as part of an import business, we can direct our customers to the office that does!

Tami Tate-Hall is a legal instruments examiner (permits) in the Migratory Bird Permit Office.

"The job requires strong customer service skills, something each of us continues to cultivate..."

Welcome to a New ARD

Chris McKay was recently named assistant regional director for Migratory Birds and State Programs. He currently serves as special assistant to the chief of Federal Aid in Washington, D.C. He has held previous positions in Federal Aid in both Regions 1 and 6, and was a project officer with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation. This Oregon native will join the Pacific Region in early October.



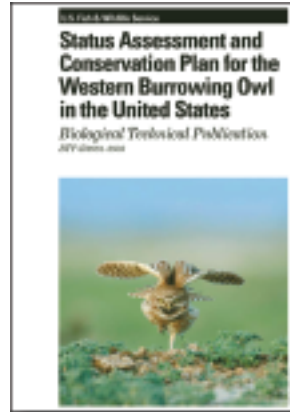
Migratory Bird Executive Order

Responsibilities of Federal Agencies To Protect Migratory Birds, Executive Order 13186, requires federal agencies to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Service to address activities that might negatively affect birds, describe how those impacts can be minimized, and suggest how they can improve the conservation of migratory birds.

Over 22 MOUs are in development; some are nearly finished and all await final clarification from our solicitors regarding the definition of "unintentional take." When finished, these documents should provide guidance to other agencies regarding impacts to birds, foster a new bird conservation ethic within agencies, and ultimately, improve conditions for birds across the landscape.

New Publications

The Status Assessment for the Western Burrowing Owl is now available at <http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/birds/>, or as a publication. Email michael_green@fws.gov, Region 1, or call 503/231-6164.



Birds of Conservation Concern 2002 (BCC 2002), available at: <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/reports>, replaces the 1995 *Birds of Management Concern*. The BCC 2002 represents the service's priorities for conservation, including birds of Hawaii, the island territories of the Pacific and Caribbean, and an analysis of bird priorities at three geographic scales. The Migratory Bird Office is focusing its conservation binoculars on the 118 species and subspecies on Region 1 lists.

For a brochure of the new *Cascades Birding Trail*, email michael_green@fws.gov. Birding Trails (BT) are driving routes linking prime birding spots. Region 1 boasts five BTs, with many more planned. For more information, visit www.oregonbirdingtrails.org or look under programs at www.americanbirding.org.

Tribal Grants

The Service recently announced two new grants for federally recognized Tribes targeting the sustainability of fish and wildlife populations, habitat conservation, partnerships, and capacity building. *The Tribal Landowner Incentive Program* will provide matching funds of up to 75 percent for projects that benefit at-risk species. Nationwide, \$4 million will be available under this program each year. *Tribal Wildlife Grants* will be awarded competitively to enhance wildlife and their habitats on Tribal lands. This nationwide program will put nearly \$10 million on the ground this year, and \$5 million annually thereafter. Pacific Region grant applications are now being evaluated. For future reference, see the *Federal Register* documents and grant application kits at <http://pacific.fws.gov/ea/tribal/default.htm>. Questions? Please call Scott Aikin at 503/231-6123

A Blueprint for the Future of Migratory Birds

This draft strategic plan to strengthen and guide the Service's migratory bird program over the next ten years can be viewed at <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/mbstratplan> until October 10. Take time to encourage stakeholders to participate and also, share your recommendations regarding the future of migratory birds.

Othello Sandhill Crane Festival

A lesson in finding and building upon common ground

By Randy Hill

Six years and counting: Columbia National Wildlife Refuge and the Othello, Washington community have benefitted from the ongoing growth of the Sandhill Crane Festival. Visitors from across the Northwest come to enjoy a diverse program of speakers, field trips, and children’s activities, in addition to guided crane viewing tours. The festival’s success can be attributed to one central theme: *Finding common ground*.

Located within a community driven by irrigated agriculture, the festival began as a partnership between the refuge and the Othello Chamber of Commerce in 1997. Last year’s theme was the 50th anniversary of water deliveries to the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project (CBIP). The refuge was established as a CBIP feature; the project destroyed over 600,000 acres of shrub-steppe vegetation, but also created a desert oasis in an area receiving scant precipitation. Tourism is tied to farm commerce and hunting, fishing, and other recreation available on the refuge and surrounding lands. The festival provided an opportunity to increase refuge visibility and diversity of visitor uses.


Based on attendance, the first festival was a great success; but what about our budding partnerships? A “green” writer described the refuge as a gem in a sea of destruction (farmland) while a Farm Bureau worker called eco-tourism a joke. This was a far cry from *finding common ground*.

The next year, a new committee chair with irrigated farming and hiking interests instituted changes to turn things around. For example, agriculture guides accompanied wildlife guides on the crane viewing buses, explaining the cropland scenery and activities. It was amazing how community support grew when the common ground of agriculture and wildlife was linked.

Festival attendance has increased from 400-plus the first year to about 1,400 this year, yielding greater outreach opportunities. The Washington Potato Commission jumped on board in 2001, becoming an instant hit with many festival attendees because they passed out free potato chips. They also paid for an

advertisement on the digital reader board along Interstate 5 near Tacoma. Five years ago we had almost no support from the agriculture community and local businesses. Now, we have local merchants welcoming crane festival attendees, and farmers reporting sightings of large flocks of cranes.

Our programs and field trips are diverse, but heavily slanted toward birds and their habitats, most of which are native habitats rather than agriculture. My refuge field trip included a local landowner with more land adjacent to the refuge than anyone else. I avoided mentioning trespass cattle while making sure that he could see them for himself, and talked about removing Russian-olive and replacing it with a non-invasive native tree.

This type of outreach benefits migratory birds and other species because much of the needed habitat restoration work occurs on private land. The best chance of finding those essential non-federal matches for funds will be projects that have multiple partners. We will probably partner with the landowner on my tour bus when riparian restoration along Crab Creek becomes a reality. And now, he will probably listen to suggestions we have to offer. Our festival has proven that building relationships, rather than roadblocks, is an important step. Just *find common ground*. 

Randy Hill is a wildlife biologist at Columbia NWR.

“Now, we have local merchants welcoming festival attendees, and farmers reporting large flocks of cranes.”



USFWS

The Postal Service Refuge Centennial Stamp was unveiled at a Crane Festival ceremony.

Shorebird Sister School Program

Teachers and students flock up to learn about bird migration

By Sue Thomas

“The most popular feature of SSSP is the Shorebirds Educator’s Guide.”

Are you looking for new outreach programs for young refuge visitors or local school groups? The Shorebird Sister Schools Program (SSSP) can help!

SSSP is a successful outreach story. It began in 1995 at Alaska Maritime NWR with a focus on Arctic-nesting shorebirds. By 2001, it had grown into a widely recognized program with a national leader and seven regional coordinators. It now covers six shorebird flyways from Asia and Australia to the Atlantic. We reach our audience through three pathways: a web site, curriculum, and listserv.

The SSSP’s international web site at <http://sssp.fws.gov> has Spanish, Japanese, and English translations, with Portuguese coming soon. Under separate pages, educators can find classroom or nature center activities. Students can track shorebird migration with updates from scientists, students, and shorebird enthusiasts following shorebird movements across the globe. Photos and maps are also available and new activities are routinely added.

The most popular feature of SSSP is the Shorebirds Educator’s Guide. This curriculum offers background information for educators interested in teaching about shorebirds, and includes field and classroom activities that meet National Science Standards, such as Marvelous Mud Meals, and tips for field trips, such as how to make sampling equipment.


We are now revising the old curriculum to include the many habitats shorebirds use during their life cycle. This is no small feat; the guide is now 600 pages! It should be available on CD during spring 2004.

Ordering information will be posted on the SSSP web site. A complementary education kit is available on loan within the Pacific Region that includes reference materials and activities.

SSSP hosts an active listserv, which regularly reaches over 300 school groups, scientists, and managers. Folks from across the world contribute: Teachers in Oregon can share shorebird education activities while biologists in Alaska post field research data for school groups in Tepic, Mexico, who send messages about the birds they’ve seen on field trips.

A small table-top display about the program is available on loan. The easy-to-assemble display may be used as a backdrop for resources on a table and is also suitable for festivals and events.

This spring, several new resources will be available. Reprints of the *Shorebirds – Migratory Super Heroes* student activity guides will be available from birdday.org. The guide features a board game, crossword puzzles, coloring pages, word searches, and a few mazes. Also, SSSP will offer a *Shorebird Identification Web Cast* and life-size, color identification cards for shorebirds nationwide, with emphasis on shorebirds of the Pacific Region.

SSSP success stories abound. The Oregon Coastal Complex recently completed a program to teach children at a local elementary school about shorebird ecology. This issue of *Out & About* features two great successes, one involving SSSP and the San Diego Zoo (see “Field Notable,” page two) and another involving golden-plovers in “Kolea Watch” (see next page). If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at 503/231-6164. 

Sue Thomas is the regional shorebird biologist with Migratory Bird and Habitat Programs and the regional SSSP coordinator.

Oregon Coast NWR



Oregon children learn about shorebirds — and have fun identifying them on their instructor’s pants!

Kolea Watch

A migratory bird brings a community together

By Mary Roney

What do a myna bird, zebra dove, and Pacific golden-plover have in common? They are the easiest birds for Hawaii’s children to observe on their school campuses. Although the myna and zebra dove are introduced, most schools in Hawaii have at least one native migratory shorebird in residence — the Pacific golden-plover, or kolea. Unique among shorebirds, the kolea has adapted to humans with great aplomb, spending winter on grassy fields, such as the playing fields surrounding schools, even in urban environments. The kolea and the children are at school for about the same months (September-April), making kolea a great subject for student research projects.

Kolea Watch, a research and education program, was started in 2002 by Gus Bodner of the University of Hawaii as an offshoot of the FWS Shorebird Sister School Program. The project is managed by the Hawaii Nature Center and has garnered the participation of more than 500 students and community members. The Service’s Pacific Islands External Affairs Office has provided grants of \$15,000 for Kolea Watch, which covers most of the program’s expenses and much of the kolea research. We regularly collaborate with Service staff and are working with them to prepare a Teacher’s Guide to Hawaii’s Shorebirds.


An important aspect of Kolea Watch is an online database, housed by the University of Hawaii, where children in Hawaii enter observations of “their” kolea. All involved hope the data will reveal whether most southern kolea begin their spring migration before or after the birds at the northern end of the Hawaiian Island chain.

Researchers believe that kolea can make the migration from Hawaii to Alaska in about two days. To help document migration habits, schools and community members and organizations may sponsor a kolea. Selected birds are fitted with transmitters by a Montana State University researcher so they can be tracked in Hawaii and Alaska. Last year, a kolea set a new record when it was detected in Alaska only 72 hours after it was

last identified in Hawaii. This year, a bird sponsored by Lincoln Elementary School was found in Alaska after just four days, to the delight of the sponsoring students. The progress of all birds with radio transmitters is posted on the Kolea Watch web site.

In April, before the kolea began their northern migration, Hawaii Nature Center educators visited five elementary school campuses. Center naturalists brought slides of kolea nests and chicks on the Alaskan tundra — a part of the kolea lifecycle that Hawaii observers don’t get to experience. We demonstrated equipment for radio telemetry experiments and then headed outside with binoculars and data sheets so students could count kolea, determine the sex of the birds, and watch for interesting feeding and territorial behaviors.

This year, another interesting trend also emerged: There seem to be three times as many males as female birds on Oahu campuses. The 2004 Kolea Watch program will explore this and other interesting issues.

Next year, Hawaii Nature Center is hoping to attract more students, as well as bird watchers, golfers, tennis players, even bartenders — anyone else interested in entering their kolea data and tracking radio-tagged birds. Check out the Kolea Watch web site at www.hawaiinaturecenter.org. 

Mary Roney is a senior environmental educator at the Hawaii Nature Center.

“...a bird sponsored by Lincoln Elementary School was found in Alaska after just four days...”



Hawaiian students observe their kolea.

Hawaii Nature Center

Birds the Focus of New Web Site

Class goes high tech to create multilingual web site

By Jennifer Meisel and Sara McReynolds

“All of the students must be bilingual and bi-literate, able to communicate fluently in at least two languages.”


Equipped with audio and video recorders, digital cameras, 35 mm cameras, and binoculars, students from a multilingual media class at Washington’s Kennewick High School spent a sunny day in May observing birds at the Hanford Reach National Monument/Saddle Mountain National Wildlife Refuge.

For the past two years, fall and spring field trips led by monument staff have formed the basis of web sites created by Kennewick High students and hosted by the non-profit organization, Hands on the Land. The organization’s goal is to provide a national network of field classrooms to enhance learning of K-12 students. It links high school technology classes with federal agencies; students then interview representatives from the agencies and develop web sites for them.

After learning about wildlife and the shrub/steppe ecosystem at the monument, the students felt motivated to use technology to develop a professional product for a real client. During the process they received resources, guidance, and feedback from the monument staff, learning that revision is necessary to meet the needs of their client.

The multilingual media students have worked closely with monument staff to create two web sites. All of the students must be bilingual and bi-literate, able to communicate fluently in at least two languages. This year’s students speak English, as well as Spanish, Russian, Bosnian or German. Every media product they create must be in at least two languages. Last year’s monument project, “Mammals of the Hanford Reach,” was created in English and Spanish. This year’s theme, “Birds of the Hanford Reach,” is not only in English and Spanish, but Bosnian as well, with two animations in English and Russian. Both are linked to the monument’s homepage at <http://hanfordreach.fws.gov/>.

The web sites feature original drawings of wildlife, animations with voice-overs telling stories that the students have written, and bilingual poems. There is also useful information about habitat, range, diet, and reproduction for each species.

For more information, please call Jennifer Meisel at 509/371-1801. 

Jennifer Meisel is a biological science technician at Hanford Reach National Monument and Sara McReynolds is a teacher at Kennewick High School.

Displays, Exhibits, and Publications

RESOURCES

Shorebird Conservation Plan Resources

The U.S. and Canadian Shorebird Conservation Plan partners recently introduced a moderated listserv to discuss shorebird habitat management, provide technical advice on monitoring, share information and resources, and answer specific management questions. To subscribe, send an email to Brad_Andres@fws.gov. The U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan has a new web site at <http://shorebirdplan.fws.gov>.

The following resources are available on loan from Migratory Birds and Habitat Programs at 503/231-6164.

International Migratory Bird Day Organizer’s and Educator’s Packets

The Educator’s Packet is full of activities, color transparencies, coloring pages, and background information on migration. The Organizer’s Packet provides useful guidelines for determining your message, contacting the media, locating resources, and planning your event. It also offers activities and clip art. Check these out early; during May, they are as scarce as snow in San Diego!

Shorebird Education Kit and Seabird Curriculum

The kit holds a bountiful collection of resources to educate and engage kids about shorebirds. It contains the Arctic Nesting Shorebirds curriculum, a variety of reference materials, a puppet show, activity components, videos, posters, and student activity guides. The kit is designed to support activities found in the curriculum and is geared toward grades 2-12. Also available is a seabird curriculum that includes seabird guides and 14 activities for grades 4-6.

Songbird Blues Box

The Songbird Blues Box is the Cadillac of education kits. Through art, math, language arts, and science activities, this kit helps educators teach about all aspects of songbird ecology. It highlights the variety of habitats used by songbirds, from the Brooks Range to Tierra Del Fuego. Students can learn Spanish and geography from its many books, newspapers, articles, and maps that emphasize the scope of the birds’ migrations. It includes 50 lesson plans and is geared toward grades 2-12.

Migratory Bird...

Continued from Page 1



NABCI web site home page emphasizes its all bird approach.

67 Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in North America that are ecologically distinct regions with similar bird communities, habitats, and management issues. BCRs foster science-based communication and coordination among the initiatives, within a defined geographic area.

“Developing venues for outreach and networking have been the engines for advancing this important bird initiative...”

expertise, passion, and energy to establish conservation priorities for landbirds under the Partners In Flight program. Biologists, birders, professors, and others came to the table to participate. This collaborative approach was repeated to develop conservation initiatives for shorebirds and waterbirds. The underlying tenets of these efforts remained constant: outreach to the conservation community, a commitment to partnerships, and a focus on common biologically-based priorities.

NABCI IS FORMED

As conservation goals for all birds were developed and a habitat-based approach evolved, outreach, networking, and partnerships became the founding principles for NABCI. The goal of NABCI is to ensure healthy native bird populations by increasing the effectiveness of bird conservation initiatives, enhancing their coordination, and encouraging greater cooperation among the United States, Canada, and Mexico. NABCI is a forum to foster “all bird” or “integrated bird” management across the continent through regionally-based, biologically driven, landscape-oriented partnerships.

On an international scale, NABCI has organized working committees comprised of representatives from all of the bird initiatives and various geographic and political affiliations. This has created a way to connect conservation efforts from the northern breeding grounds to the most southern winter ranges. Locally, NABCI established

In this manner, an Oregon state biologist now shares the same bird conservation priorities as the local Audubon chapter and a Service field biologist.

NABCI serves as a framework for these partners to network with their counterparts from Mexico to Canada to address the needs of shared birds throughout their life-cycle. NABCI-inspired “all bird” working groups, web sites, and coordination committees offer opportunities for this essential outreach and communication.

Both international (www.nabci.org) and national (www.nabci.us.gov) web pages serve as resources offering important avenues for education and communication regarding integrated bird conservation. The All Bird Bulletin (available at the national web site), for example, is a news and information sharing publication about current events in the world of bird conservation.

This joining of new partners and the process of embracing a conservation vision spanning nations are exactly what the NABCI forum was developed to achieve. Developing venues for outreach and networking have been the engines for advancing this important bird initiative, and outreach methods will continue to be paramount in achieving its conservation program goals. **U**

Tara Zimmerman is the branch chief of Bird Conservation with the Migratory Birds and Habitat Program.

Preparing for West Nile Virus

Developing an outreach strategy to protect wetland restoration efforts

By Beth Huning

“...they worked together to prepare and implement an outreach strategy before the disease’s arrival.”

West Nile Virus, a disease transmitted by mosquitoes and thus closely associated with standing water, has been detected in 46 states and was recently confirmed in California for the first time. Since the mission of the San Francisco Bay and Central Valley Habitat joint ventures is to restore and enhance wetlands, both management boards recognized that the spread of West Nile Virus could cause panic and jeopardize wetland conservation efforts. Anticipating public relations issues, they worked together to prepare and implement an outreach strategy before the disease’s arrival.

For many years, the joint ventures have worked with mosquito control and abatement districts on wetland restoration projects. Several districts were invited to help develop a public outreach strategy. They also continued to help with wetland restoration design to reduce mosquito populations.

Each of the joint ventures and mosquito districts has fine-tuned the strategy for their communities and audiences. Major elements of the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture outreach strategy include:

- Collecting and distributing updated information about West Nile Virus to joint venture partners;
- Defining key messages;
- Identifying experts to serve as spokespersons on particular topics;
- Determining media opportunities, including proactive print, television, and radio messages;
- Developing information that partners can provide to the media;
- Collecting stories that highlight mosquito control and wetland restoration successes; and
- Developing a crisis management plan.

Some of the key messages that San Francisco Bay Joint Venture partners agreed to promote are:


- Wetland restoration staff are working in partnership with mosquito abatement districts to design projects to minimize mosquito populations or improve areas and reduce risk through restoration.

- Tidal wetland restoration reduces mosquitoes because tidal wetlands lack standing water that mosquitoes use to breed.
- Non-tidal wetland restoration projects can be designed to provide drainage or keep water moving so that it does not become a breeding ground for mosquitoes.
- Local mosquito abatement districts are monitoring mosquito populations in wetland areas and will treat them, as needed.

The partners are also letting people know about the safety and types of products used to control mosquitoes and how they can protect themselves.

Not long after the plan was completed, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture partners began initiating media contacts. Partners have focused their messages on ways that mosquito populations can be reduced through wetland restoration and how the mosquito abatement districts have assisted with wetland restoration design. Several stories had already appeared in local newspapers about the need for tidal restoration at Bair Island, a recent addition to the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, before the virus appeared in California this August.

Both joint ventures are launching several three-minute news stories, with some content developed before the virus was detected here, for radio stations throughout the West and the Internet via the Environmental News Network.

With a plan in place and joint venture partners spreading a common message, the partners are confident that wetland restoration efforts will not be harmed by misinformation, fear, or panic. In fact, West Nile Virus may very well provide another opportunity to tell the wetland restoration story. To learn more about West Nile Virus, go to www.cdc.gov, or feel free to contact me at 415/883-4854. 

Beth Huning is coordinator of the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture. Illustration by David Bozsik.

A Matter of Trusts

Advancing joint venture goals with help from local land trusts

By Carey Smith

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee expanded the plan's vision in 1998, encouraging joint ventures to broaden their partnerships. In response, the Pacific Coast Joint Venture brought 25 local land trusts in five states into the partnership. These new partners have helped move joint venture meetings from agency conference rooms to grange halls and local irrigation and diking district offices. Landowners are often more comfortable working with land trusts than government agencies, because land trusts are viewed as more in tune with community concerns and can deal with long-term family goals and estate planning.

Since expanding its involvement with land trusts, the joint venture's annual partner contributions have increased from \$25 million to over \$50 million and annual habitat protection has increased from 10,000 to over 50,000 acres. Most of this growth can be attributed to individuals and local governments, two categories previously under represented. Land trusts have identified grassroots projects that advance the joint venture's habitat goals, found new funding sources, and are vocal plan advocates, influencing their communities and legislators.

In return, the joint venture has helped land trusts successfully compete for millions of dollars in grants and provided administrative funding for outreach, project planning, and land appraisals. To reach its many new and seasoned partners, the joint venture publishes state newsletters in Oregon and Washington, with a readership of more than 30,000.

The effects of this affiliation are demonstrated by the Columbia Land Trust of Vancouver, Washington. For many years, this all-volunteer organization was limited only to small acquisition projects within one county. After gaining credibility from successfully competing for several million-dollar grants, the Columbia Land Trust now has eight full-time employees and expanded its reach to 11 counties in Oregon and Washington.

Since 1981, 1,263 local and regional land trusts with nearly one million members nationwide have preserved more than 6.2 million acres across the country. A recent national land trust census indicated that wetlands are their highest habitat priority, making them a logical partner to help achieve plan goals.

Carey Smith is the coordinator of the Pacific Coast Joint Venture.

Upcoming Events

High Mountain California Condor Campout

When: October 4

Where: Pozo, CA

Contact: Hopper Mountain NWRC
Denise Stockton
805/644-5185

Refuge Road and Facilities Dedication

When: October 5

Where: Cheney, WA

Contact: Turnbull NWR
Ronnie Sanchez
509/235-4723

Refuge Week Open House

When: October 8

Where: Alturas, CA

Contact: Modoc NWR
Steve Clay
530/233-3572

National Wildlife Refuge Week

When: October 11

Where: Delano, CA

Contact: Kern NWR
Jihadda Govan
661/725-2767

Promoting An All Bird Initiative

Broader focus benefits all birds using same community

By Jim Cole

Like all joint ventures, our Intermountain West group was established to accomplish wetland conservation projects by facilitating partnerships, often by pulling together people who have not worked cooperatively before.

As the joint venture evolved, we saw the need to depart from the traditional wetland habitat conservation perspective because we found partners in all avian habitats needed help with partnering and funding. This wider focus enables us to look at bird conservation in a broader arena to help a variety of bird species relying on the same community.

For example, much of the nation's sagebrush habitat occurs within our joint venture states. It's not just sage-grouse that are at risk, but other sagebrush dependent species. Joint venture partners can affect the distribution and abundance of a number of species with an all bird habitat conservation mindset.

To sell this new approach, we've made presentations at conferences and meetings to Fish and Game commissioners, state wildlife agency directors, and others. Last March, in

See **PROMOTING ...** Page 15

Urban Birds Gather a Following

Local bird treaties may be the key to bird conservation

By Jennifer Thompson

“The treaties are contributing to bird conservation by reaching and engaging citizens.”

Every spring, young peregrine falcons are cheered on as they learn to fly from their nests built on downtown bridges in Portland, Oregon. In the fall, spectators fill a local schoolyard when the school’s chimney becomes the world’s largest known roost site for over 5,000 migrant Vaux’s swifts.

For Portland’s citizens, amazing wildlife encounters like these occur year-round. After all, over 220 bird species can be found in the rich system of parks, greenspaces and backyard habitats that have been set aside for wildlife throughout the Portland metropolitan region.


Even with these extraordinary conservation efforts, 23 species of Portland’s birds are on state or federal watch-lists because their numbers are dropping. Many birds face serious long-term survival challenges because their needs are very complex.

To more formally acknowledge these needs and focus Portland’s enthusiasm for the birds that surround us everyday, even in the city, Portland became the fifth city in the United States to sign an Urban

Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds. In May 2003, the City of Portland, the Service, and 21 other partners celebrated this unique partnership and commitment to migratory birds. The treaty highlights the important role of urban areas in more global bird conservation efforts, and establishes a commitment among the partners to take local actions that will benefit birds.

The treaties are contributing to bird conservation by reaching and engaging citizens. A bird-focused action plan will be carried out over the next three years with the support of a \$50,000 treaty grant from the Division of Migratory Bird Management, \$63,000 in Metropolitan Greenspaces Program funds, and an estimated \$1 million in partner contributions. This plan enables funds and resources to be optimized because partners jointly identify projects that are designed to leverage existing efforts.

The world of birds will be illuminated through a new web site, educational materials, birding trails, a bird park, and restoration and stewardship of important habitats. It is Portland’s vision that the birds will be well-served, and its citizens will have enjoyable experiences with birds in the city for years to come.

Please visit <http://birds.fws.gov/urbantreaty.html> to learn more about the Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds. 

Jennifer Thompson is a fish and wildlife biologist in the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office.



Portland’s greenspaces draw bird watchers year-round.

Commonly Asked Questions About Migratory Birds

What is the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)?

The MBTA is legislation that implements the migratory bird treaties that the United States has signed with Canada (1916), Mexico (1932), Japan (1972), and Russia (1976). The Act prohibits “take” of any migratory bird without authorization from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. All native birds found in the U.S are protected, except resident game birds, including turkey, quail, and grouse.

Why can’t I have an incidental take permit?

There is no provision in the MBTA regulations that authorizes incidental take permitting. Incidental take is the unintentional killing of a bird during an otherwise legal activity.

Is nesting habitat protected by the MBTA?

No. The MBTA stemmed from efforts to curtail market and plume hunting in the early 1900s. It was designed to halt the killing of birds, except as permitted by federal regulations. MBTA “take” does not include habitat loss, destruction, and degradation.

Is harassing, scaring, or frightening birds away from my home or project area illegal?

No. MBTA is violated only if and when your actions result in the death of a bird, chicks, or loss of eggs. For instance, you may destroy swallow nests on your porch if no adults are killed, and if no eggs have been laid.

Aspiring Artists Show Their Talent

Federal Junior Duck Stamp Program gathers a following

By Marilyn Gamette

Students nationwide, from kindergarteners through twelfth graders, have been entering their waterfowl art in one of the most unique conservation education programs the Fish and Wildlife Service has ever offered. Since its beginning in 1990, the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Program has attracted hundreds of thousands of students from all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the U. S. Territories. The annual contest provide students with a chance to design eligible and appropriate art to enter their state's competition.

Teachers are especially impressed by the opportunities to conduct classroom activities related to migratory birds, wildlife conservation and management topics, wildlife art, and philately (stamp collecting). Within that broad range, the subjects of biology, writing, art, history and math can also play into their lessons.

There are 100 winners for each state, which include three winners each for first, second, and third places, and 16 honorable mentions for each of the four grade groups (K-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12). Each state's Best of Show design is then entered in the national competition, where the design for the Federal Junior Duck Stamp is selected.

California was one of the first states to participate in the program, submitting more than 19,000 entries since 1990. The response has been enthusiastic and consistent with almost 2,000 entries for the 2003-2004 contest.

Promoting...

Continued from Page 13


conjunction with the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and in partnership with Idaho Fish and Game Department, we cosponsored an all bird workshop for a six-state region attended by 200 people. We also hired a contractor to organize and facilitate planning meetings and write state-by-state all-bird plans. For three years we've provided cost share funding for projects that demonstrate how the program works on the ground, such as converting an irrigated meadow in Idaho back to a



James Althair's "Solitude," an acrylic of a male ruddy duck, was a winner.


For the students, the excitement of winning one of the state's 100 ribbons was recently summed up best by an excited winner, "This is the best thing that has ever happened to me in my whole life..."

For refuges, the contest provides education with a bonus: The beautiful winning art is also a perfect addition to a variety of outreach events and displays. Within the community, sponsors such as California Waterfowl Association, California Department of Water Resources, Ducks Unlimited, and many others support the program because it fosters and increases appreciation for wildlife in the students.

For information about contest rules and the entry form, go to <http://duckstamps.fws.gov/>. You'll find activity and drawing guides at www.calwaterfowl.org. Please feel free to call me at 530/934-2801. 

Marilyn Gamette is an interpretive specialist at Sacramento NWR Complex.

sagebrush community or restoring sagebrush habitat at Utah's Parker Mountain.

A quarterly newsletter sent to about 1,200 people and our web site share information about project funding successes and partnership news. We're also depending on outreach to expand our management board to include corporations and others in the private sector, so they can also share the benefits of the conservation experience. 

Jim Cole is the coordinator of the Intermountain Joint Venture.

National Wildlife Refuge Week

When: Oct. 12-18
Where: Nationwide
Contact: Susan Saul
 503/872-2728

Ridgefield NWR Bird Fest

When: October 10-12
Where: Ridgefield, WA
Contact: 360/887-9495
www.ridgefieldfriends.org

American River Salmon Festival

When: Oct.11-12
Where: Sacramento, CA
Contact:
 Bruce Forman
 Dept. of Fish & Game
 916/358-2353
www.salmonfestival.net

Return of the Salmon Festival

When: October 18
Where: Anderson, CA
Contact: Coleman NFH
 530/365-8622

Willapa Interpretive Art Trail Opening

When: October 25
Where: Cathlamet, WA
Contact: 360/484-3482

What's New?

"The Pacific Region web site now has a place to tell short, newsworthy outreach stories..."

New Public Affairs Chief Named: Jeffrey M. Fleming, a former communications director for the Izaak Walton League of America, has been named chief of the Office of Public Affairs at Service headquarters. He also spent more than a decade as press secretary and policy aide to Congressman John Tanner (Tennessee) and worked for newspapers in Memphis and Chattanooga.

Addition to Regional Web Site: The Pacific Region web site now has a place to tell short, newsworthy outreach stories to the public. Called *Field Happenings*, the web pages contain a paragraph and photo for each news item, which are archived in a searchable database. View them at <http://pacific.fws.gov/happenings/index.cfm>. Submit listings to your program's outreach specialist in External Affairs: Susan Saul for Refuges; Amy Gaskill for Fisheries; and Jenny Valdivia for Ecological Services, Law Enforcement, Migratory Birds, and Federal Aid. Other programs should submit to Scott Eckert.

People, Land & Water Special Issue on Centennial: The Department of the Interior's employee news magazine, *People, Land & Water*, will publish a special edition on the Refuge System centennial in October. The

tabloid will have 36 pages in full color. It will reprint some articles from the Winter 2003 issue of *Out & About* and include photos and text excerpts from the Centennial commemorative book, *America's Wildlife Refuges: Lands of Promise*, written by *Out & About* editor Jeanne Clark, with photography by Tom and Pat Leeson and Jason and Gene Stone.

Refuge System Employee Newsletter: The Washington Office plans to begin publishing and distributing a new Refuge System employee newsletter, *Refuge Update*. Martha Nudel will be the editor and it will include stories about employees and refuges (including our volunteers!). Send ideas to Susan Saul by email or at 503/872-2728.

Media Specialist for Spanish Audiences: The Department of the Interior recently hired Public Affairs Officer Isabel Benemelis to focus her efforts on the Hispanic media market. She will be an excellent resource when you need to reach a national or international Spanish-speaking audience. She is looking for Spanish-speaking resources to tap for interviews and existing Spanish-language materials. Contact her at 202/208-7075 or isabel_benemelis@ios.doi.gov.

Birds in Cyber Space

Locate important resources at the new migratory bird web site

Looking for new outreach materials? Need to know what the new Migratory Game Bird Hunting regulations are? Looking for your local Partners in Flight or Shorebird Conservation Plan? Our web site at <http://migratorybirds.pacific.fws.gov> has the answers and more. It is organized by five main categories – just pick an egg and click!

Conservation Plans provides links to national, regional, and local conservation plans for all species groups.

Resources for Birders helps you find out where local birds are, how to spot a bird, learn field marks, or link you to rare bird alerts, bird banding, and survey information.

Resources for Hunters covers migratory game bird management, educational resources for hunters, and links to state

wildlife agencies for information about hunting seasons.

Permits explains the 10 types of migratory bird permits available and the situations in which individuals should apply.

Reports serves as a cyber library of conservation and technical reports about migratory birds and their habitats.

At <http://migratorybirds.pacific.fws.gov/education.htm>, you can also find outreach materials, comprehensive curricula, satellite studies, and upcoming distance learning to name a few. Both the Birding and Hunting pages link to this list.

Sue Thomas is the regional shorebird biologist with Migratory Birds and Habitat Programs. She designed and maintains the web page. Illustration by David Bozsik.



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