

July 2011

—VOL. 6 NO. 7—



Wash Out?



Story and photo by John Brunjes

Interior least terns are listed as an Endangered subspecies under the Endangered Species Act and are currently the only endangered bird species to nest in Kentucky.

Populations nest along many interior rivers of the United States, but the core of the population occurs along the Mississippi River from Kentucky and Missouri southward to the Gulf Coast. Interior least terns nest on sandbars separated from the mainland which are largely vegetation free. In Kentucky, on a good year, as many as 17 nesting islands may be exposed on the

Mississippi and Ohio rivers with 10% to 15% of the population nesting in Kentucky.

For the last four years, flooding has severely reduced the number of islands available for least terns to nest and overall nesting success. Last season, only two islands were exposed long enough to allow the least terns to successfully fledge young.

This season has seen more of the same. Early this spring, heavy rains caused severe flooding of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Many all-time record flood records were broken. In Kentucky, least terns must initiate nesting by approximately the 4th of July to have a chance of

being successful.

After months of high river levels, on June 13, after a long slow decline, the Mississippi River finally dropped enough to allow one of our largest islands in Kentucky Bend to become exposed. When the river drops and islands become exposed, the least tern's response is immediate.

After giving them a week to initiate, we checked this colony to see if birds were nesting and how much flooding might have impacted it. The island had shifted south about ¼ mile but was exposed and least terns were present and nesting. A quick search across the approximately 50 acre island (it will exceed 1,000 acres at normal summer river levels) revealed 200 new nests. Most were single eggs, but there were a few with complete clutches.

Unfortunately, the day after this check was done and these photos were taken, the Mississippi River again jumped up and flooded this island and all the nests on it. It appears 2011 will be a total loss for nesting least terns in Kentucky.

It also appears that this nesting season will be almost a total loss range wide. These recent poor reproductive years emphasize the importance of protecting these birds during good years. We can't stop the flooding, but we can allow them to be successful in those good seasons.

That's why we will continue to work so hard on behalf of Kentucky's least terns.

INSIDE:



2 Close call



3 Officers promoted



7 Goose banding

CEPL Lewis credits camp staff after life-threatening wasp stings

Severe allergic reactions to wasp stings are rare, but that's exactly what happened to Conservation Education Program Leader (CEPL) **Betty Lewis**, while working at Camp Wallace on Tuesday, May 31.

"By the time I got to the camp office, I didn't feel well," said Lewis, who joined the Department in 2005. "I was stung twice, but had never had a severe reaction to a wasp sting before."

Camp Director **John Coffey** instantly recognized the life-threatening nature of the situation. He concluded that CPR might likely be necessary and called Wayne County EMS instead of transporting her to the hospital. He called for key camp staff.

And none too soon. In a matter of minutes Lewis became violently ill. Lewis was sick to her stomach, and unable to respond to staff questions. Her pulse went from rapid and shallow to undetectable. Her breathing became labored. She began having convulsions and went into shock.

Coffey, and CEPLs **Joyce Fitzgerald**, **Scott Couch**, **John Gutzeit** and camp nurse **Laura Dunnington** responded instantly.



They kept her airway open, treated her for shock, and provided emergency medical assistance until the ambulance arrived.

A spokesman for the Wayne County EMS, who transported Lewis to the Wayne County Hospital where she received emergency treatment, said she was moments away from death. Lewis was discharged from the hospital the following day, and spent the rest of the week recuperating at home.

Fitzgerald and Gutzeit are trained wilderness first aid first responders. Couch had driven in from Perry County to teach camp lifeguards and counselors CPR. Dunnington had just completed her college nursing curriculum.

"The quick response and clear thinking of our camp staff saved Betty's life," said Information and Education Division Director Tim Slone. "They are extremely knowledgeable and well-trained, and they were in the right place at the right time."

"I want to thank the camp staff because I believe their quick response and clear thinking saved my life," said Lewis.

WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

This letter came from Livingston County Judge Executive Chris Lasher. He wrote, "On behalf of Livingston County I wanted to sincerely thank the Department of Fish and Wildlife for your assistance during the recent floods. Your personnel were instrumental in extractions of our citizens from behind flood waters, patrolling our evacuated areas and assisting our Emergency Management during this historic event.

I appreciate your department's timely assistance and wanted to ask that you forward our appreciation to all who participated over the past month. Words can never express our thanks for the extraordinary effort put forth to protect the citizens of Livingston County by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

May God bless all those who assisted."

New Hires / Promotions

Please join us in congratulating **Eric Brooker** as he has been recently promoted to the position of Environmental Engineer Consultant in the Engineering Division!

Eric started with the department on October 20, 2009 as an Engineer II. He is a graduate of the University of Kentucky with a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering and is a licensed Professional Engineer. His work background includes city government, state government and carpentry.

Eric will focus on taking agency projects from the feasibility stage to final

construction along with administrative duties in the division. His office is located at our Pine Hill Plaza location.

Patrick Brannen was recently promoted to Sergeant. Patrick has been a Conservation Officer for 13 years and is assigned to the 5th district. In 1994, after serving a four year tour in the Marine Corps and enrolling at Eastern Kentucky University, he began working with the KDFWR as a Camp Counselor at Camp Webb in Grayson. He earned a degree in

See "Promotions," page 4

OFFICERS PROMOTED



Commissioner Jon Gassett and Acting Law Enforcement Director Paul Teague formally presented conservation officer with his gold Lieutenant's bars after announcing the promotion. Zalla will be lieutenant in the Fourth District.



Newly promoted conservation officer sergeants effective July first were Pat Brannen, Phillip Crane, Jason Slone, Scott McIntosh, Damon Foster and David Marques. Commissioner Jon Gassett, left, and Acting Law Enforcement Director Paul Teague made the promotions.

Phillips graduates DOCJT Academy of Police Supervision

Conservation Officer Sgt. **Charlie Phillips** joined law enforcement officers from 19 agencies across the Commonwealth in a graduation ceremony June 24 for completing the Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training's Academy of Police Supervision.

Phillips, assigned to Grant County in the Fifth District, was one of 20 officers graduating APS.

APS, also called the sergeant's academy, is a three-week, 120-hour training program targeted for newly promoted sergeants or officers who are on their agency's promotion list to become sergeants.

While in APS, students participate in classes focusing on the role of a supervisor, as well as leadership, resolving conflict, managing diversity, monitoring officer performance, professional image, legal issues for supervisors, ethics, interpersonal communication, effective written communication, making decisions, solving problems, managing critical incidents, public speaking, emotional survival, budgeting, media relations and others.

This graduating class is the 42nd to complete APS since the program began in 2003.

APS is a stepping stone to the Department of Criminal Justice Training's Kentucky Leadership Institute, which consists of a series of three progressive leadership courses aimed at developing and shaping future and current leaders in law enforcement agencies across the Commonwealth.

The Department of Criminal Justice Training is a state agency located on Eastern Kentucky University's campus. The agency is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies and was the first accredited public safety-training program in the nation.

“Promotions,” continued

Police Administration from EKU in 1996. Patrick currently serves as the 5th District Public Affairs Officer and is a proud member of the KDFWR Honor Guard. He has been married for 12 years to his wife Shanon, who is a Respiratory Therapist at Cincinnati's Children's Hospital. They have two girls, Kirkland, age 9 and Carlee, age 7. He enjoys spending time with his family and woodworking.

David Marques was recently promoted to the rank of Sergeant. He works out of Fayette County in the 6th District. David began his career with the law enforcement division in 2004, prior to which he earned a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management from EKU. Sergeant Marques also assists the training division as a defensive tactics and water survival instructor. David and his wife Kristy currently live in Lexington.

Damon Foster was recently promoted to the rank of Sergeant. He began his career in state government as a Court Designated Worker and as a Kentucky State Probation & Parole Officer. He was hired as a Conservation Officer in September 2004. Foster is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University with a Bachelors degree in Criminal Justice and a minor in Business. He is married to Amanda and they have two children, Emma, 5 and Tucker, 2.

Phillip Crane was recently promoted to the rank of Sergeant. He graduated from Anderson County High School and has worked for the Department of Fish and Wildlife for 5½ years. He began a career in law enforcement at age 21 with the Lawrenceburg Police Department where he served 10 years. Phillip left the PD for his dream job at KDFWR in 2006. Phillip and his wife

Shannon reside in Anderson County with their two children, Dalton, 9 and Haley, 6.

Scott McIntosh was recently promoted to the rank of Sergeant. His new supervisory duties will cover the Southern half of District 2. Scott's law enforcement career began in 1997 as a Deputy and K9 Officer for the Butler County Sheriff's Office. He is a very seasoned, well rounded and accomplished Law Enforcement Officer that possesses a wealth of knowledge.

Scott, along with wife, Amanda, and daughter, Emmie, reside in Muhlenberg County. He has been the recipient of numerous awards for his outstanding services (Shikar Safari, National Wild Turkey Federation, United Bow Hunters, Waterfowl Officer of the Year, etc.)

Jason Slone was recently promoted to the rank of Sergeant. He began his law enforcement career as a State park ranger for the Kentucky Department of Parks in 2000. After 2 ½ years he transferred to the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife as a conservation officer in Lawrence County.

He worked 2 years in Lawrence County before transferring to his home area of Knott County. Jason won 7th District “Officer of the Year” in 2004, 2005,

2006, 2007 and 2009, along with Elk Officer of the Year in 2008.

He also serves as the district intelligence liaison officer for Courtnet, RO-CIC, Justice Exchange, and other computer related issues. Jason has made numerous elk, deer and turkey cases throughout his career in addition to the many community service events that he participates in.

His most notable yearly event, the Wesley Slone Fundraiser, helps raise money for charitable organizations such as the American Heart Association, the Ronald McDonald House and the Shriner's Hospital, in his son's memory who passed away.

Jason graduated from Morehead State University with a Bachelor's of Science in Biology with a minor in Spanish. He continued his education by earning the Advanced Law Enforcement Officer certification from DOCJT. He also became the department's first employee to complete the CLPS program (Conservation Leadership Program of Study).

Jason has been married to his wife, Michelle for 11 years. They have two children, Alex, who is 5 years old, and baby Wesley in Heaven.

Brett Zalla was recently promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. Brett is a 16 year veteran of our Law Enforcement Division. He is a 1994 graduate of Eastern Kentucky University where he majored in Police Administration and Psychology.

Zalla graduated the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Academy as well as the Police Academy in 1995 before taking his post in Allen County. Zalla was promoted to Sergeant in the 2nd District in 2004 and represented KDFWR as the first Fish and Wildlife Officer to attend the Academy of Police Supervision in 2007.

Brett was a member of the Law Enforcement Division Strategic Planning Team and currently serves on the Mississippi Flyway Council Law Enforcement Committee and the KDFWR Training Team.

Congratulations to all!



RARE CHANCE

The goose banding roundup offered many the chance to get close to a wild Canada goose, even if for just a moment. *John Brunjes photo*



Figure 1: A canopy gap created by utilizing the Hack and Squirt method.
Ben Robinson photos

Paintsville Lake WMA forest stand improvement

The Habitat Improvement Team worked during the month of June to complete a 95-acre block of Forest Stand Improvement on Paintsville Lake WMA.

Forest Stand Improvement is the manipulation of species composition and stand structure by cutting or killing selected trees. The goal of this project is to encourage oak and hickory regeneration.

The project area is composed of a predominantly oak and hickory overstory with a few scattered maples, but the midstory is composed of predominantly maples with little to no oak and hickory regeneration.

To encourage oak regeneration, the Habitat Improvement Team utilized the Hack and Squirt method to eradicate the maples from the midstory.

The canopy gaps created (Fig. 1) by removing the maples will allow sunlight that the young oaks need to reach the forest floor (Fig. 2).

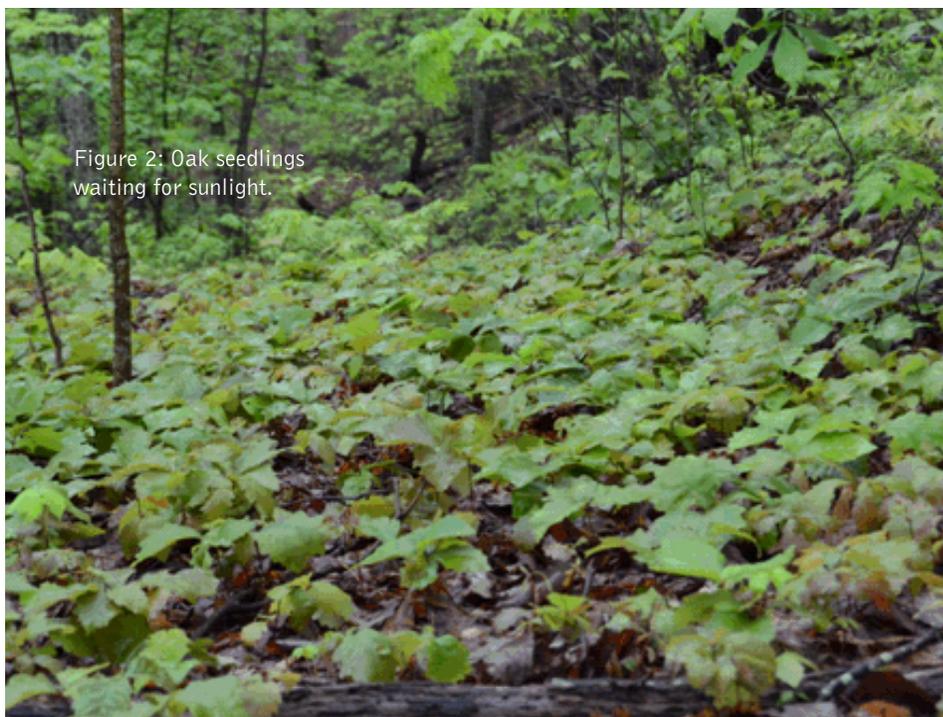


Figure 2: Oak seedlings waiting for sunlight.

Hatchery Creek restoration project: an update

Development has begun on the restoration of Hatchery Creek located in Russell County.

Hatchery Creek is located below the Wolf Creek Dam on Lake Cumberland and begins at the outlet of Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery.

Recently, KDFWR biologists with the Wetland and Stream Mitigation Program were approached by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Lake Cumberland Resource Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hatchery Manager, and the Catch a Rainbow Foundation to consider Hatchery Creek for restoration.

The downstream two-thirds of the Hatchery Creek channel has eroded in excess of 30 feet deep in several places. The result is long stretches of unstable eroding banks that deposit large amounts of sediment into the Cumberland River. This level of sediment can have significantly negative impacts to the river.

The project was approved in 2010 and mitigation funds were made available to begin the design phase. The design is at 30% completion and moving forward on schedule.

The proposed channel will bypass the impacted section of the creek and add approximately 7,000 feet of additional channel across the valley at which point will be tied back in with the Cumberland River.

The upper riprap section of Hatchery Creek from the

hatchery outlet downstream approximately 400 feet will remain untouched and still provide anglers with normal fishing opportunities.

The main goals of the restoration project include removal of large amounts of sediment, stabilization of banks, restoration of the streams natural function, and restoration of aquatic and riparian habitat.

"The Hatchery Creek rehabilitation and expansion project will serve many functions. A few of the most important will be to eliminate the excessive sedimentation flowing into the Cumberland River, create spawning habitat for trout, allow fish movement between the stream and the river, and provide a great fishing area for the public," says James Gray, Wolf

Creek National Fish Hatchery Manager.

Due to the presence of trout in the Cumberland River, special consideration will be placed on trout refuge and spawning habitat during the project.

An additional benefit of the project includes restoration of large tracts of wetlands as well. Agencies and groups cooperating in the project include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Catch a Rainbow Foundation, and various trout clubs throughout the state.

The anticipated date for angler access is tentatively set for the fall 2013. Channel completion is expected by the summer 2012.

For more information about the Hatchery Creek project, please feel free to contact Andy Mowrey at (502)564-5262.



Aerial photograph of the Hatchery Creek project area. The picture shows the current location of Hatchery Creek (red), in addition to the projected location of the rehabilitated creek upon completion of the project (blue).



GOOSE ROUNDUP AND BANDING

Explore Bowhunting coordinator Katie Koontz (left) clamped a new band on a Canada goose during this year's roundup. She got some help from (clockwise from top) employee daughters Alexa Ferrell (Scott Ferrell), Elle Rose Buser (Scott Buser) and Hannah Pritchert (Rocky Pritchert). *John Brunjes photos*

