

# KANSAS

*Wildlife & Parks*

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# On Point

by Mike Hayden



## Park Funding: Where We Are

**A**s we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the state park system, we are searching for a stable long-term funding source. For years we have needed a funding source not subject to the weather and other factors beyond our control.

During the recently ended state legislative session, KDWP introduced a bill that would have created such a source. Senate Bill 87, as introduced, proposed the creation of a \$5 outdoor recreation fee to be added to motor vehicle registration fees. In return, any Kansas resident with a current license plate would have free year-round access to any state park. This is a bargain considering that the current daily use fee at state parks is \$6.50. During the past decade, State General Fund (SGF) support has plummeted from comprising 60 percent of the parks operating budget, to about 16 percent. Kansas and Connecticut tie for the lowest percentage of SGF spending on state parks. The amount of taxes per person spent on state parks is about 40 cents annually. Most of the parks budget comes from user fees and federal grants.

The legislature did not complete action on Senate Bill 87. However, it remains on the Senate Calendar and the legislature will take it up again during the 2006 session. We anticipate that the legislature will assign an interim committee to study the park funding issue. We continue to gather support from constituent groups, and if you would like more information about the bill, park funding in general, or what you can do to lend your support, please contact the Secretary's office in Topeka at 785-296-2281.

Throughout their 50 years of existence, state parks have contributed to the quality of life in Kansas. They offer a wide variety of geographical, demographic, historical, archeological, biological, and recreational opportunities. Each park is unique. Camping, boating, swimming, fishing, and hiking are available, as well as naturalist programs and

special events, including everything from fishing tournaments and family reunions to outdoor concerts, bicycle races, competitive trail rides, and triathlons.

Permanent, full-time park staffing is very lean. Nationally, state parks average one permanent employee for every 18,000 visitors, while Kansas has only one permanent employee per 63,000 visitors. The Kansas state park system relies heavily on seasonal, part-time, and volunteer labor, as well as a federally funded AmeriCorps program that employs 54 people who do a variety of jobs.

Recently, a park manager told me that he couldn't keep his park going without the efforts of volunteers who do everything from mowing and lawnmower repair to maintaining trails and serving as campground hosts. Trail riding and mountain biking groups contribute countless hours to improving and maintaining the trails at Clinton, Eisenhower, Tuttle Creek, Perry, and Hillsdale parks among others. Volunteers are organized in both private organizations and through corporations. The Westar Energy Green Team has completed more than 700 projects since 1989, including preserving wetlands, restoring prairies, planting trees and creating nature trails. Volunteers contribute not only to the recreational value of the parks, but also the aesthetics, such as the volunteer group that created an iris garden around the Clinton State Park office.

I want to thank all of the volunteers who give of their time and talents to the benefit of our state parks. I also want to encourage you to visit a state park this summer, see what they have to offer, and support KDWP in its effort to secure a stable funding source for the park system. Check the KDWP website at [www.kdwp.state.ks.us](http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us) for a listing of special events and recreational opportunities at all of the state parks.

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Associate Editor J. Mark Shoup  
Photographer/Associate Editor Mike Blair  
Illustrator Dustin Teasley  
Staff Writer Marc Murrell  
Circulation Teri Simpson

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**Front Cover:** The secret to strong quail numbers is habitat. Mike Blair filmed this male bob with a 600mm lens, f/11 @ 1/125th sec. **Back cover:** Indian paintbrush is found in southeastern Kansas. Chickadee Checkoff helps monitor rare plants, as well as nongame wildlife. Mike Blair photograph, 24 mm lens, f/11 @ 1/125th sec.



**Editorial Creed:** To promote the conservation and wise use of our natural resources, to instill an understanding of our responsibilities to the land.  
**Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs described herein is available to all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or handicap. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to Office of the Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, 1020 S Kansas Ave., Topeka, KS 66612.**

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www.kdwp.state.ks.us  
magazine e-mail — mikegm@wp.state.ks.us



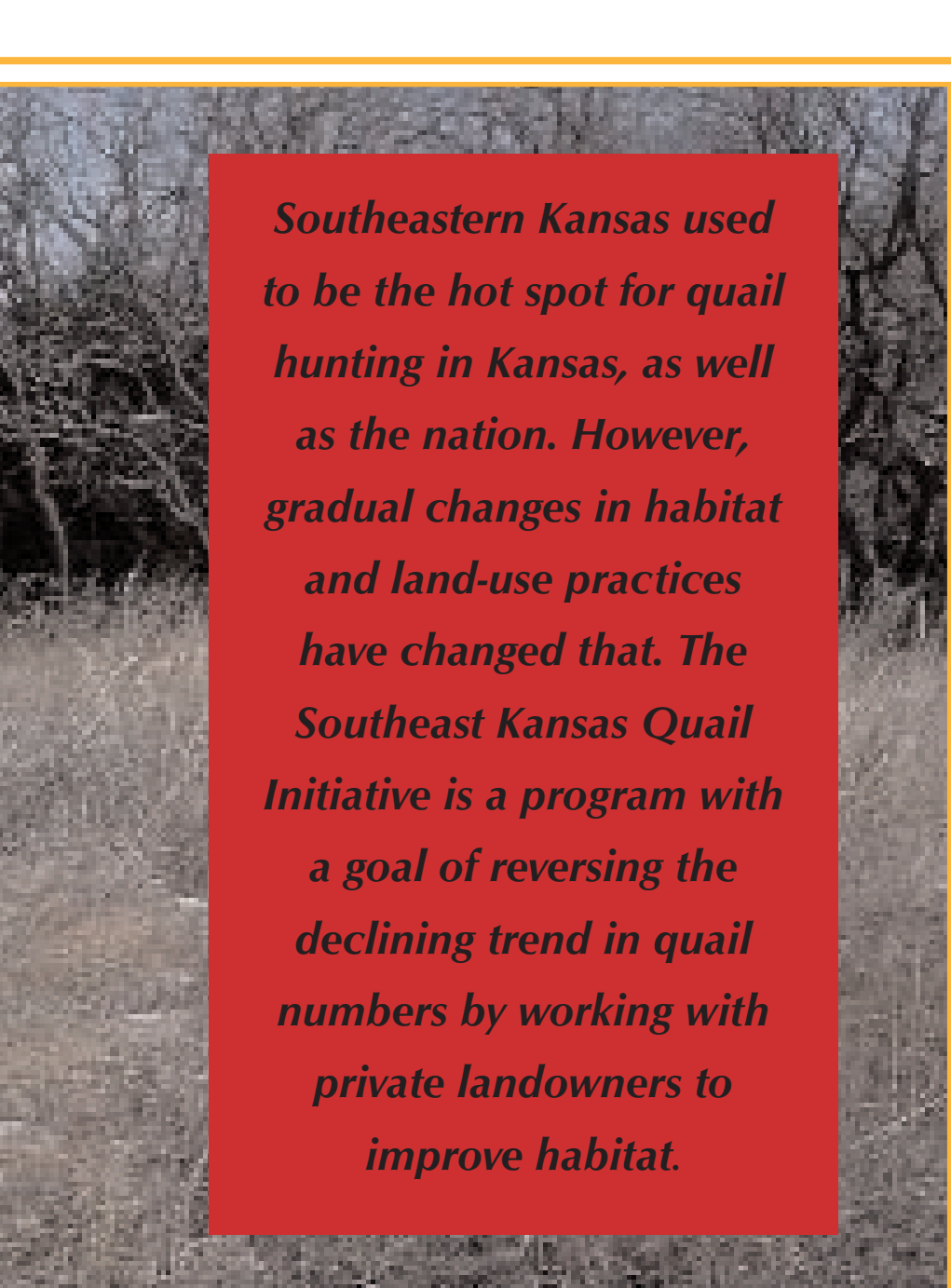


# **Southeast Kansas Quail**

**by Lance Hedges,**  
*district wildlife biologist, Mound City,*

**and Tom Glick,**  
*district wildlife biologist, Pittsburg*

**photos by Mike Blair**



***Southeastern Kansas used to be the hot spot for quail hunting in Kansas, as well as the nation. However, gradual changes in habitat and land-use practices have changed that. The Southeast Kansas Quail Initiative is a program with a goal of reversing the declining trend in quail numbers by working with private landowners to improve habitat.***

**T**he more difficult a goal is to obtain, the more rewarding success is. Why else would Chuck Yeager agree to test the sound barrier? Or why did Edmond Hillary and his Sherpa guide climb Mount Everest? But if you want a real challenge, try reversing the decline in quail populations in southeastern Kansas! While not nearly as exciting as flying in a jet or climbing Mt. Everest, improving

quail numbers is a daunting task. So what happened to quail? What are some of the solutions? And what is being done? Read on.

Everyone seems to have a theory about bobwhite decline. Typical coffee shop comments include, "Quail numbers are down because of the drought," or, "Quail are down because of the cold, wet spring." While weather does play a role in determining quail numbers, we have no con-

trol over this. The graph on Page 6 shows weather's role when comparing one year to the next, but biologists must base management decisions on the solid line. This is the "trend line" which takes out the weather variable by averaging points together. You can see that the quail population trend is headed in the wrong direction.

Why? Are turkeys eating young quail, as some suggest? Absolutely not. We have more deer now — are they somehow responsible? No. What about predators? Snakes, skunks, raccoons, coyotes, and bobcats all eat quail and destroy quail nests, but this still isn't the reason for the downward trend. The most important reason quail populations have gone down is the decline in suitable quail habitat.

Many changes in habitat have hurt quail. Fescue has replaced native grass, and fescue is detrimental to quail because it is very dense and forms sod. While fescue may offer some nesting opportunities, newly-hatched quail chicks cannot maneuver through it while looking for insects, their primary food source.

Another factor is field size. Modern farming has led to larger fields, which decreases the amount of available edge. Edge is where different habitats meet, and quail spend much of their time here. Further, new chemical techniques and cleaner farming have dramatically reduced weeds. Weeds provide quail cover, but more importantly, food. Quail will consume weed seeds, but insects that live in weeds are even more important, especially to developing quail chicks. Weeds are easy for chicks to maneuver

in, harbor abundant insects, and provide overhead cover from predators.

In southeastern Kansas, plant succession has long been a problem. Succession is where trees invade native pastures and odd areas. While woody cover is important to quail, shrubby areas soon become a forest. Quail do not thrive in forests.

All of these changes contribute to the quail decline. However, since the changes take place gradually, they are often overlooked or disbelieved as factors. Biologists often hear, "Nothing has changed on my farm, but I don't have the quail that I once had." In rare cases, this may be true. A landowner may have great-looking habitat, but the birds just aren't as plentiful as before. In these instances, fragmentation is to blame. Good habitat has become an island in a

sea of fescue, trees, or big farmland. Quail are forced to live in the island of habitat, and so are all of the predators.

Recognizing these problems is sometimes the hard part. However, once critical factors are identified, we can work on a solution. The solution to increasing quail numbers is to improve habitat. To begin this overwhelming task, the Southeast Kansas Quail Initiative (QI) was formed in 2001. It was the brainchild of district wildlife biologists Tom Swan and Tom Glick. These two formed a committee of interested partners which included Farm Bureau, the Kansas Livestock Association, Kansas State Research and Extension, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Farm Service Agency, and most importantly — LANDOWNERS. Then Swan and Glick applied for a grant to do

habitat work in what was historically one of the best quail areas in Kansas — Bourbon, Allen, Crawford, and Neosho counties. The grant was approved, and work began. Shortly after this, Swan transferred to a regional supervisor position in Wichita. Lance Hedges filled Swan's district wildlife biologist position and assumed his role in QI.

The goal of the QI is to change the habitat to the benefit of quail, and monitor these changes through research such as radio telemetry and whistle count surveys.

One early and important part of the QI was to create and provide improved nesting and brood-rearing cover. Fortunately, with proper management and manipulation, active aid programs like the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) can improve quail habitat. However,



One facet of the QI involves a demonstration area where wild quail are captured, fitted with radio transmitters, and tracked throughout the year. Researchers study which habitats are used most, which enhancement practices are most effective, and what factors impact quail mortality and nesting success.

at the time of the QI's inception, new applications for general CRP were not being taken, and even when new applications were accepted, they were restricted to Conservation Priority Areas (CPA). At the time, the QI area was not designated as a CPA.

In order to take advantage of the next CRP sign up and use this program to create nesting and brood rearing cover, the QI area needed to become a CPA. Because CRP is a U.S. Department of Agriculture-Farm Service Agency (FSA) program, there were substantial procedures necessary to get the area designated a CPA. As one would expect, the application for such a change included a stack of instructions a quarter-inch thick. Required were maps, cropland acreages, and a lengthy narrative stating the purpose of the CPA, complete with literature citations. KDWP biologists jumped into the bushel of red tape and received CPA approval prior to the October 2003 general CRP sign-up. The ordeal proved its worth, and in 2003, 22,000 acres of Kansas CRP were enrolled, amounting to a 170 percent increase within the four QI counties.

In addition to CRP, QI offers cost sharing for landowners who implement improvements beneficial to quail. The most popular project has been the conversion of fescue to native grass and forbs. Planting native grass is often cost-prohibitive to landowners. However, QI will assume costs for the chemical and seed required to plant native grasses.

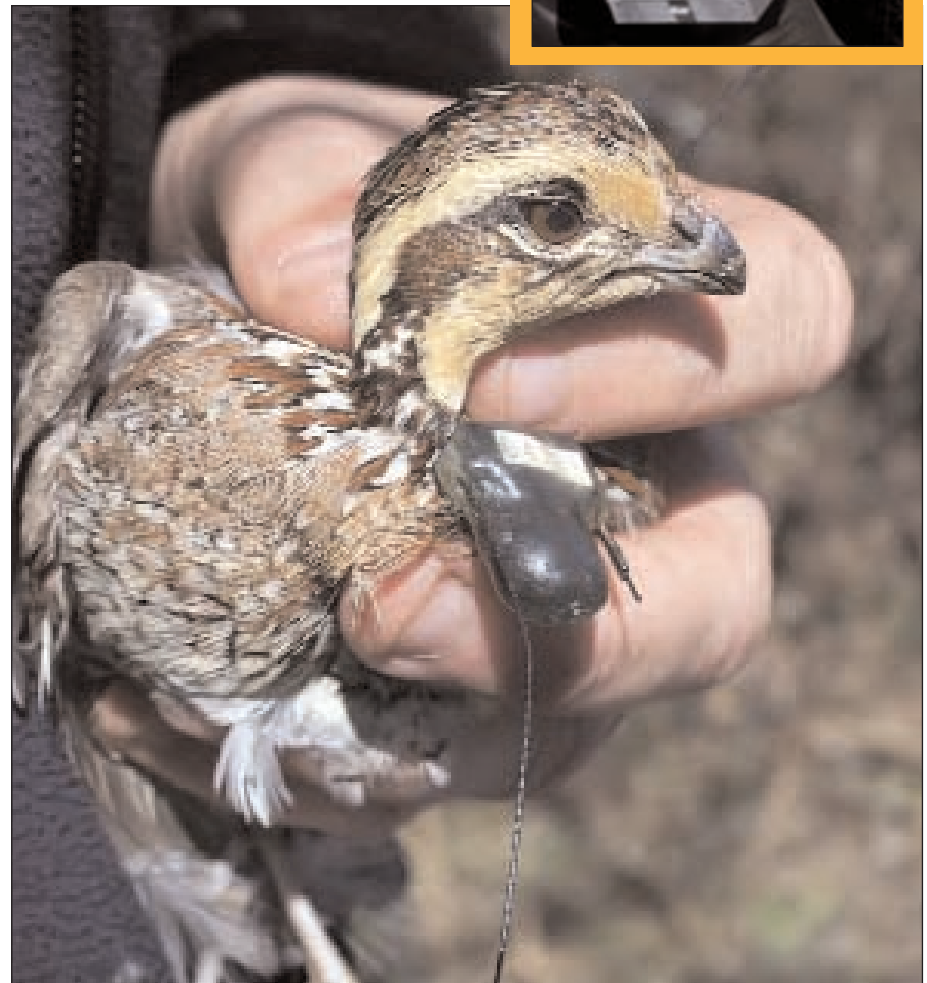
Landowners may also receive cost-sharing to establish and maintain other native plants that are beneficial to quail. These

include shrubs like American plum, fragrant sumac, and gray dogwood. Assistance may also be available to plant grain food plots.

Hedgerows have been sacred to quail hunters for years, but many aging hedgerows have outgrown their usefulness for quail. QI offers cost-sharing for hedgerow renovation. When hedge trees become so large that most biomass is located far above ground where the quail cannot utilize it, QI helps landowners with the cost of cutting hedge trees for resprouting. This quickly readjusts the habitat, putting

hedge tree benefits back near the ground where they are available to quail.

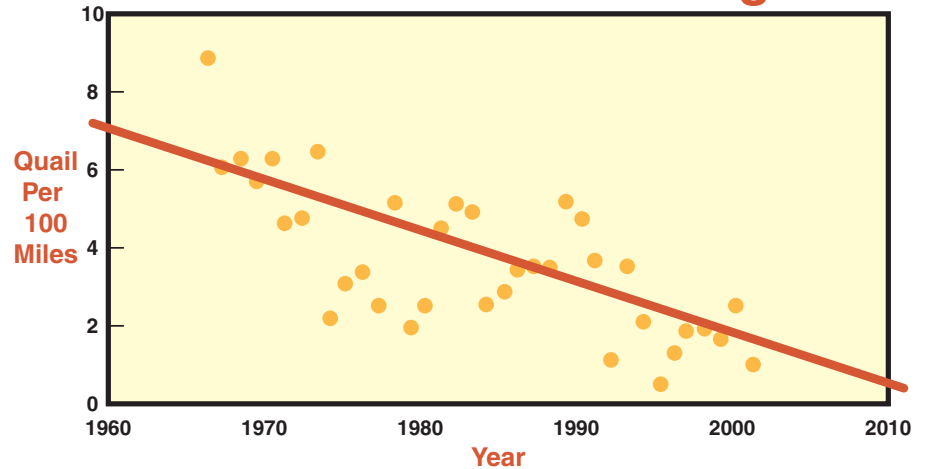
Finally, QI also cost-shares livestock exclusions, proper grazing



Captured birds are fitted with transmitters after vital information is taken, such as the bird's age, weight, and condition. Once released, this hen will provide key information to biologists concerning factors relating to her survival.

With more than 30 years of data, the rural mail carrier survey provides valuable data to biologists. The dots show fluctuations due to weather, while the line shows the dramatic downward trend.

## Rural Mail Carrier Survey Trends October – Southeast Region



plans, patch burning, strip discing in CRP, and native prairie management. All can help restore quail habitat and increase bobwhite populations.

Among the four counties involved in QI, a concentrated effort has taken place in southwestern Bourbon County. This is the demonstration area where most research is taking place.

QI research is a joint effort between KDWP and Kansas State University. Starting in 2002, wild quail were trapped, fitted with radio transmitters, and released. This allows bird locations to be monitored with listening devices on a daily basis.

Researchers located each bird daily, noting the type of habitat utilized. As nesting season began, quail nests were monitored for success, and if a nest was destroyed, the predator type was documented.

Telemetry research occurs in a small area, but whistle counts are conducted each June in a larger area of southwestern Bourbon County, and also in a control area in Allen County. The control area has similar land characteristics in regard to percent cropland, pasture, and forest, but no habitat improvements are being done there.

The research will be completed in 2005. Looking at the statistics, one may find it amazing that there are any quail at all. The average life expectancy of a bobwhite is nine months. Fifty per-

cent of quail nests are destroyed by predators or farming activity. Thank goodness, bobwhites lay between 12 and 15 eggs in each nest.

So far, it is difficult to draw conclusions from many of the demonstration projects, since it may take up to 5 years for a grass or shrub planting to reach its potential. But some improvements, such as hedgerow renovations and patch burning to control grass density, have shown dramatic effects.

The hedgerow renovations provided instant gratification. Coveys often moved into the new habitat within a week. Before, when little cover was present beneath the trees, the hedgerows served as travel lanes to predators.

Once renovated, however, quail received protection from predators, and grass and weeds began growing due to increased sunlight reaching the ground.

Patch burning also provided some interesting discoveries.



Researchers locate each marked bird daily, noting the type of habitat utilized. As nesting season begins, quail nests are monitored for success, and if a nest is destroyed, the predator type is documented.



During the first year of the research, a 30-acre patch of CRP was burned in the demonstration area. A marked covey using this habitat experienced high mortality when the grass was suddenly removed. Rather than leave the burned area, the quail stayed in the marginal habitat with poor success.

In the following year, this same 30-acre CRP field was strip-disked through its middle to create a fire-break, and only the north half was burned. This time, the quail covey survived nicely. Mortality did not increase when part of the CRP remained to afford protection.

One of the interesting things learned from QI so far is how a large-scale program progresses. Starting with the traditional brochure and news release aimed at landowners, the first year of QI was easy. It seemed everyone wanted to improve quail habitat. But that didn't last. Since then, we have learned that, like a shark, the program must keep moving, or it sinks.

KDWP and the QI have since moved into hosting landowner workshops, holding public meetings, and increasing awareness by giving away QI hats, QI videos, and advertising in other media. We have learned how to become better salesmen, and how to better market our product: habitat.

Much has been accomplished since the QI's beginnings, and the landowners in this area are to be commended. Nearly 200 habitat plans have been completed, creating or enhancing 14,000 acres of bobwhite habitat. Project costs have ranged from \$45 to \$9,000.

The good old days are here and now! Since the beginning of



Food plots are one of the cost-share programs landowners can enroll in. The grains provide valuable food sources for quail, especially during severe winter weather.



the QI, a nationwide movement has begun with a goal of returning quail population levels to those seen in the 1980s. The Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative has been instrumental in successfully lobbying congress and President Bush to increase conservation program funding in the Farm Bill.

KDWP district biologists are

taking advantage of this increased funding by serving as technical service providers for the federal Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). Through WHIP, biologists will assist landowners with habitat management issues and help them capture up to 75 percent cost-share for permanent improvements.


Continuous CRP, or buffer

strips, is another federal program that is great for quail. In October 2004, Kansas was allocated 20,000 acres for bobwhite buffers. This is a border of native grass, 30-120 feet wide, located along the edge of existing crop ground. These borders can serve as the connecting link between fragmented habitats.

With these programs in place, there is reason to be positive.

Never before has there been this much opportunity to improve quail habitat on private land with cost-share help. While the paperwork of numerous programs can be overwhelming, wading through this is the job of the KDWP biologist.

Through the cooperation of landowners and the funding of quail-friendly programs, restoring quail populations will not be

“attempting the impossible.” Help us bring back the bobwhite by informing your friends and neighbors of these programs, and together we will preserve quail and quail hunting for future generations. For more information on private land improvements, contact your local wildlife biologist. 

This photo shows the difference succession can have on habitat. In the bottom of the photo, trees have created a forest-like habitat on what once was prairie. In the adjoining pasture, controlled burning has prevented the trees from taking over.



## Wildlife Biologists

Matt Bain, Colby  
785-462-3367

Chris Berens, Colby  
785-462-3367

Marc Gray, Stockton  
785-425-6775

Ronald Ruthstrom, Glen Elder  
785-545-3345

Matt Smith, Sylvan Grove  
785-658-2465

Aaron Deters, Beloit  
785-738-5172

Shane Hesting, Sylvan Grove  
785-658-2465

Corey Alderson, Manhattan  
785-539-7941

Jared McJunkin, Blue Rapids  
785-363-7316

Michael McFadden, Lawrence  
785-267-5721 ext 112

Clint Thornton, Topeka  
785-271-7338 ext 11

Tom Bowman, Wakefield  
785-461-5487

Andy Friesen, Lenexa  
913-894-9154 ext 16

Jill Sporrang, Lenexa  
913-894-9154

Randy Whiteaker, Denison  
785-935-2552

Daryl Fisher, Garden City  
620-276-8886

Kraig Schultz, Elkhart  
620-697-4008

Craig Curtis, Dodge City  
620-227-8609

Tim Urban, Dodge City  
620-227-8609

Michael Peterson, Dodge City  
620-227-8609

Charlie Swank, Great Bend  
620-793-3066

Steve Adams, Hutchinson  
620-663-3501

Jeff Rue, Hutchinson  
620-728-1362

Brad Odle, El Dorado  
316-322-7513

Clint Bowman, Wellington  
620-326-2714

Charlie Cope, Wichita  
316-683-8069

Bob Culbertson, New Strawn  
620-364-8039

Aaron Baugh, Toronto  
620-637-2748

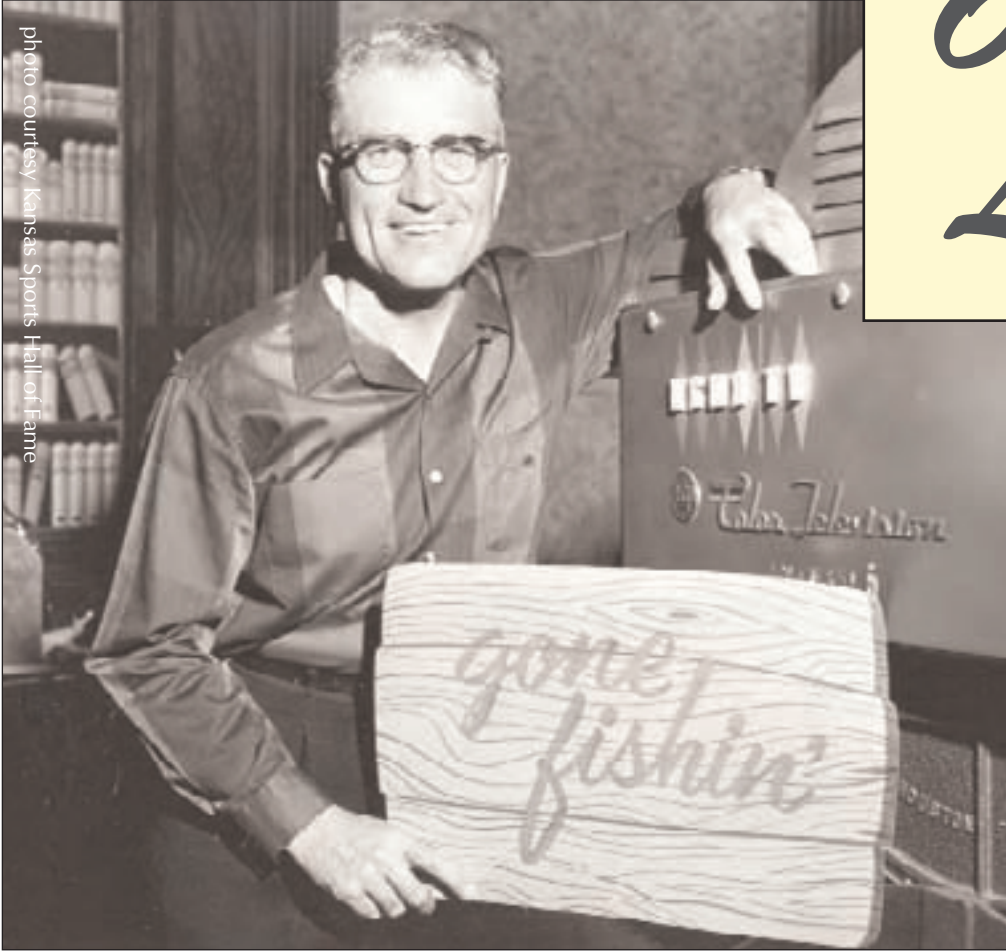
Lance Hedges, Mound City  
913-795-2218

Brent Sodergren, Mound City  
913-795-2218

Richard Tush, Eureka  
620-583-7568

Tom Glick, Pittsburg  
620-231-3173

Ryan Good, Pittsburg  
620-231-3173



# Outdoor Legend

by Bob Mathews  
Information and Education  
Section chief, Pratt

*Harold Ensley was a pioneer in outdoor television, hosting a live show that ran 52 weeks a year for 21 years, beginning in 1953. Still a household name for those over 40, Ensley's "Gone Fishin'" sign is as recognizable as his face.*

**H**ow does a western Kansas native, reared on the water-scarce High Plains, become one of the most famous fishermen in the world?

Harold Ensley can tell you. The globe-trotting Kansan parlayed a natural affinity for fishing into a life that any outdoorsman can envy. He has fished in all but a handful of states, many foreign countries, and every ocean but the Antarctic. He virtually invented outdoor television programming. Now 92 years old and a resident of Overland Park, Ensley still gets outdoors in pursuit of two lifelong passions – fishing and gardening.

He recently was inducted into the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame, the latest in a wealth of honors acknowledging Ensley's status. He was the first World Champion of Freshwater Sport Fishing. Other accolades include induction into the National Fishing Hall of Fame, the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame, the Kansas Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame, and the Legends of the Outdoors Hall of Fame.

The memorabilia in his home leave no doubt as to his life and his lifelong passions. Trophies, plaques, and certificates acknowledge his achievements. Well-worn cameras and film editing equipment from decades of television



Ensley holds a 16mm film camera that he used for many years in production of "The Sportsman's Friend." A one-man television production crew, Ensley pioneered outdoor television programming, and served as cameraman, producer, editor, and host of the program from 1953 through 2001.

fishing program in Kansas City. In 1953, he became one of the first to produce a hunting and fishing show for television when "The Sportsman's Friend" premiered on KCMO-TV.

"We were kind of treading uncharted waters," Ensley recalls. "No one had even tried an outdoor show. But I guess time proved there was a market for it."

Indeed. For the next 21 years, the weekly half-hour program was seen live, with no reruns, for 52 weeks a year in eight Midwestern states. In 1975, Ensley slowed down to a mere 13-week series each year when the show was nationally syndicated. He produced and hosted the series through 2001.

"I always just loved the outdoors," he said. "I still do. I always found the outdoors absolutely beautiful, and that's what I always tried to do – show the excitement and beauty of the great outdoors. People don't remember me as anything but a fisherman, but I was a cameraman, producer, editor, and performer as much as anything." He was his own one-man production crew and typically would film his fishing guest, then have the guest film him.

production accentuate one room. Paintings of ducks and bobwhites adorn the walls. Casting rods lean in a corner of the living room. Full-length windows frame a large backyard garden that he and a caregiver tend every day. Ensley's passion for gardening has existed nearly as long as his passion for fishing. He has developed a namesake tomato variety – Ensley Sweets – that he shares with friends.

His notoriety as a fisherman connected him to many famous people over the years. He taught

Jimmy Stewart how to cast, showed Henry Fonda how to catch trout, fished with baseball greats Ted Williams and Mickey Mantle, and was Jed Clampett's fishing guide on "The Beverly Hillbillies." He even appeared on the "Gunsmoke" television series, as well as the cover of "Sports Illustrated" magazine. He also has authored two books – "Winds of Chance" and "Wings of Chance."

Ensley's start in outdoor broadcasting began in 1951, when he began producing a daily

Bob Mathews photo



Ensley and fellow inductee Bill Russell, a Pittsburg native and long-time professional baseball player and coach for the Los Angeles Dodgers, trade stories prior to their recent induction into the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame.

Today, there is a plethora of outdoor shows, even outdoor channels, available to television viewers. But Ensley doesn't watch them. "It's mostly advertising," he says.

What's missing from today's shows is warmth with the audience, he contends. His most profound rewards, Ensley said, have been the relationships he has built with people of all ages and backgrounds, including the guests on

his programs as well as his numerous fans.

As for the best way to introduce people to fishing, Ensley offers this advice:

"Take them crappie fishing. You can teach a person on crappie with jigs, and they'll learn to develop touch and feel and have great fun at the same time."

He has fished in a variety of exotic locations in his life, but is reluctant to name a favorite.

"Whatever I'm fishing for now. . . and wherever I'm fishing. . . that's my favorite."

When asked to explain his longevity and success, Ensley is honest and direct.

"I don't have any answers. It just happened," he said. "Fishing is not for everyone. Some people have a knack for catching fish and some don't. I think it's just natural ability. Everybody can't play the violin or be a piano player. Maybe it's just luck, but I've always been able to catch fish."

"I don't know why it (his television program) was so successful. But people loved it. People from every walk of life. I had as many women watching the show as men."

Maybe it was Ensley's relaxed, friendly approach to the simple pleasures of fishing. His introduction to those simple pleasures happened nearly 90 years ago when, as a five-year-old, he fashioned fishing poles from willow branches and hooks from the copper staples he found on livestock feed sacks. His first fishing hole was Salt Creek, a modest and unimposing stream that ran through the family's ranch north of Healy. His first fish were bullheads and an occasional carp.

Those simple beginnings, along with a healthy dose of self-reliance and his own imagination, shaped an unusually rewarding career. And, to hear Ensley tell it, the most rewarding part of it all was introducing thousands of us to one of the simple pleasures that gives life its flavor. ♡



# A Quarter-Century With Chickadee Checkoff



by Ken Brunson  
*wildlife diversity coordinator, Pratt*

photos by Mike Blair

*Since 1980, the Chickadee Checkoff Program has provided funding for programs that specifically benefit nongame wildlife. While secure, long-term funding is still being sought, the Checkoff has done amazing things.*

The true worth of the Chickadee Checkoff Program hit me in the mid-1990s, while I was listening to a testimonial from a Wichita elementary school teacher. She talked of one of her more disadvantaged students, Kenny, sharing his delight at the butterflies in the flower garden of the school's outdoor laboratory. The

child, rarely involved in anything, wrote a poem about his experience. He was obviously turned on to life at that point, tuned in to nature. The experience literally opened Kenny's mind to the natural world and much more.

The Chickadee Checkoff had provided seed money for the outdoor laboratory, or Outdoor

Wildlife Learning Site (OWLS), that enabled this encounter. The value of a simple, natural experience for a kid who, up to that time, had been in a shell, invigorated my enthusiasm for the Chickadee Checkoff Program. Although small by most funding standards, the program had initiated the OWLS program and this was an end product — a

learning experience that went beyond the basic, mundane expectations of conservation education. I realized then that even relatively meager programs such as the Chickadee Checkoff could have major impacts on people.

Chickadee Checkoff, adopted in February of 1980, was the culmination of efforts by a number of people and organizations interested in developing a funding mechanism for supporting nongame wildlife programs. Contributions would eventually support programs such as the previously mentioned OWLS, the Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas, the Kansas Amphibian Monitoring Program, the Kansas Winter Bird Feeder Survey, the Kansas Backyard Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program, numerous publications on species diversity, and research projects for the conservation of sensitive species. This year, we proudly celebrate the 25th anniversary of Chickadee Checkoff while also recognizing the 100th anniversary of KDWP.

It had been five years since the 1975 Kansas Nongame and Endangered Species Act passed and created a list of endangered species. The Act also obligated the department to manage nearly 24,000 additional species but provided no new money. The hunt was on for funding ideas. Wildlife advocates have always been innovative, and the

idea of using a tax checkoff to generate revenue is a good example. Kansas followed the lead of five other states in applying this novel approach to nongame program funding. Colorado had enjoyed a checkoff for three years, and it had shown promise. In the fall of 1979, under the leadership of department Director Jerry Conley, wildlife experts and organizations held a statewide meeting. Its purpose was to identify issues of all Kansas wildlife, but particularly those not addressed by current sport fish and game programs. (It's interesting and coincidental that this year, over a quarter-century later, a Comprehensive State Wildlife Conservation Plan Summit was held in Manhattan to do the

same thing.)

In the initial meeting, Dr. Robert Clarke and Dr. Dwight Spencer of Emporia State University accepted leadership roles in coordinating a legislative effort for the checkoff proposal. Dr. Clarke also served as chair of a group forming the first Kansas Nongame Wildlife Advisory Council (KNWAC). Eulalia Lewis of the Topeka Audubon Society first requested the introduction of this act by Rep. Loren Hohman. The bill passed the House and Senate with expert help from Dr. Clarke and Marvin Schwilling, a wildlife biologist serving as the nongame specialist for the department at the time. Steve Burr of the Kansas Audubon Council was the first Chair of



Hunters have paid for the bulk of wildlife management through license and permit purchases and excise taxes on sporting equipment. And while most game animal management efforts benefit many more nongame species, specific funding for nongame wildlife is still needed.



Everyone who enjoys wildlife benefits from Chickadee Checkoff programs. *The Kansas Guide To Watchable Wildlife* and the *Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas* are two notable publications made possible by the Checkoff.

KNWAC, originally composed of representatives from nine conservation organizations. KNWAC, now represented by 14 organizations, has supplied policy guidance for the department throughout its 25-year history.

KNWAC has assisted the department in developing many important conservation projects through the years. With mean contributions of about \$150,000 per year, Chickadee Checkoff has generated nearly \$4 million. Support and promotion by the Kansas Society of Certified Public Accountants has been critical in maintaining donation levels. Assistance from tax-preparers, as well as radio advertising, have been the primary modes for maintaining annual contributions. In addition, the annual Chickadee Checkoff poster and print are important

promotional efforts. Hundreds of research, habitat, and education projects have been supported from Chickadee Checkoff contributions.

The Chickadee Checkoff's first major project was developing bird feeding stations at nursing homes. To date, this popular project has supplied bird feeders and initial seed to more than 250 Kansas facilities.

Other projects have persisted through the years, including Chickadee Checkoff's ongoing support of the "Songbird Bundle," a package of wildlife-friendly shrubs and small trees offered to homeowners through the Kansas Forest Service. The Kansas Urban Wildlife Program was developed by Joe Schaefer, the department's urban wildlife biologist through the early 1980s. Schaefer fashioned a program that reached out to urban con-

stituencies. The Kansas Backyard Wildlife Habitat Certification Program was started to give recognition and support to homeowners interested in developing their yards for wildlife. The catchy slogan "Do Something Wild in Your Backyard" helped gain attention for the fledgling effort. Charlie Nilon, who replaced Joe Schaefer, initiated the Kansas Winter Bird Feeder Survey (still operational through the KanCRN educational network,) and he also initiated important research into critical habitats of northeastern Kansas. Nilon left the agency in 1989, when I became the nongame coordinator. Marvin Schwilling, threatened and endangered species specialist, retired soon after, leaving an incredible conservation legacy. Jerry Horak, a long-time KDWP who had worked



with the Canada goose restoration program and greater prairie chicken took over and continued to champion sensitive species and increase our understanding of their recovery needs. Ed Miller joined the agency in 1989 as the first and only regional nongame specialist. When Horak retired in 1999, Miller took over as the statewide endangered species specialist.

Probably the most notable Checkoff effort of the 1990s was the OWLS program. Currently administered through the Wildlife Education Section, OWLS now boasts 206 active sites. This popular educational program was the outgrowth of priorities for general education, along with the recognized need to address urban wildlife interests. The goal of 100 OWLS in five years was met under expert guidance from George Potts, Friends University professor, who has worked with the department since the beginning



Chickadee Checkoff has increased awareness of and appreciation for nongame wildlife.

of OWLS and is still contracted to assist. The number of OWLS sites doubled under the leadership of Wildlife Education Section coordinator Roland Stein. 1992 represented the zenith of nongame efforts with the official start of the OWLS program, the initiation of the *Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas* project, and the development of the *Watching Kansas Wildlife* viewing guide.

The guide highlights 101 special places in Kansas noted for wildlife viewing opportunities. Wichita City Naturalist Bob Gress and Potts wrote this excellent guide. It has been the foundation for the Kansas Watchable Wildlife Program. The current NaturalKansas.org website is outlined from *Watching Kansas Wildlife*. As so often happens with wildlife conservation work, one group of people initiates great efforts which are carried on to new thinkers and doers, leading into new arenas of wildlife needs.

Several important survey efforts have been started through Chickadee Checkoff. *The Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas* involved 180 volunteer birders and took six years to complete. The Kansas Ornithological Society joined with Chickadee Checkoff in this monumental task. Led by Bill Busby and John Zimmerman, the atlas documents 203 breeding species of



Birds are often high profile species, but Chickadee Checkoff has benefitted many other animals such as reptiles and amphibians. Research and monitoring projects track population and distribution trends and affect many management decisions.

birds in Kansas and contributed greatly to the library of Kansas bird conservation. Information about the Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas may be found at the web address:

[www.ksbirds.org/kos/kos\\_kbbat.html](http://www.ksbirds.org/kos/kos_kbbat.html)

Another valuable program was the Kansas Amphibian Monitoring Project, coordinated by Joe Collins. Beginning in 1998, at least 79 amateur and professional herpetologists conducted nighttime surveys, listening to chorusing frogs across the state on 82 routes. In 2002, Chickadee Checkoff was able to complete this inventory on amphibian species through the volunteer assistance of the Kansas Herpetological Society and numerous other "herpers."

These two statewide surveys have added greatly to baseline population and distribution data

for these wildlife groups. Such data guide more efficient decisions regarding conflicts in land use changes and conservation needs. Add in the ongoing aquatic stream assessment led by Kristen Hase of the Environmental Services Section, and there is a growing mountain of useful information available to help conserve and protect sensitive species. There are plans to initiate similar assessments for mammals.

Related to the ongoing question of funding, nongame wildlife needs were identified in the 1970s. The 1980s saw state wildlife agencies devise new initiatives, and much was made of the need to broaden the agency's funding base to sustain agency programs and services. Additionally, in 1987, the Kansas Fish and Game Commission was

merged with the Kansas Park Authority, creating the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and broadening the interests of the agency. Yet we went through that time period without any new dedicated and long-term source of funding for all wildlife.

Again, hunters and anglers shouldered the funding burden. Teaming With Wildlife was initiated in the 1990s to develop federal support for a long-term funding source for all wildlife. At the end of the decade, we were literally at the table of funding support through a program called the Conservation and Restoration Act (CARA.) That tempting tray was presented and then taken away. With that, another decade passed without monetary support.



Establishing bird feeding stations at nursing homes was one Chickadee Checkoff's first major projects. To date, this popular program has supplied feeders and initial seed to more than 250 facilities.

However, there were some bright spots. The Wildlife Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 2000 morphed into the State Wildlife Grants program of 2001. This program brought Kansas nearly \$1 million of new money annually for a myriad of new wildlife projects. It has been critical in expanding the utility of the Chickadee Checkoff. The new money has allowed Chickadee Checkoff funds to be used as leverage for much larger programs. This federal money can supply from 50-75 percent of project money, depending on the nature of the project.

State Wildlife Grants by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service dictate the development of Comprehensive State Wildlife Conservation Plans. Kansas is now in the process of finalizing its plan. Due October 1 this year, this plan is the blueprint for future wildlife conservation in Kansas. Legislation required Congress to allocate funds for 6 years and then consider long-term funding efforts. But, at a rate of \$150,000 per year contributed to the Chickadee Checkoff, there is an obvious shortfall of money that can be used to match the federal money and/or front the projects while awaiting reimbursements from the Fish and Wildlife Service. So a major challenge exists to obtain budget authority to take advantage of future State Wildlife Grant money. At the same time, the challenge presents an incredible incentive. Action is always stimulated when millions of dollars are available.

So, while Chickadee

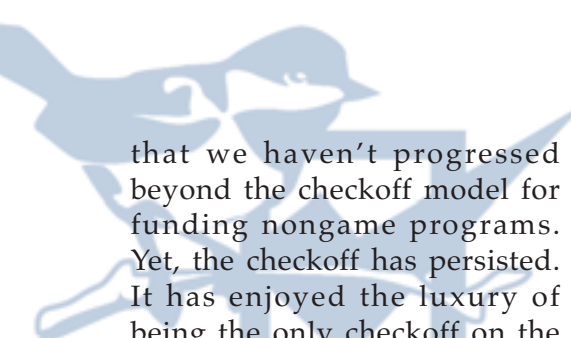


In 1990, Chickadee Checkoff began establishing outdoor laboratories, or Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites (OWLS), at Kansas schools. Today there are 206 active OWLS.

Checkoff has done some amazing things with relatively small amounts of money, greater opportunities await. The state funding source for all wildlife programs needs to be bolstered to take advantage of a potential \$6 million per year of new money through State Wildlife Grants. Hunters and anglers may be very sensitive to additional hikes in license fees, since they have always shouldered the bulk of funding for wildlife programs. Birders and other wildlife watchers want to contribute more directly to wildlife conservation. As Kansans, we support endangered species protection and harbor great interests in

nature. How much must a hunting license cost before we recognize that the general public, who support and appreciate wildlife, have a responsibility to its funding as well? That's a serious hurdle to be overcome if we expect wildlife conservation programs to survive this decade.

The Chickadee Checkoff is a vehicle intended to help solve conservation challenges. Hopeful optimism led us to think that major wildlife conservation programs could be built on the premise of squeezing more money from people while they are paying taxes. The visionaries of the late 1970s must be disappointed




that we haven't progressed beyond the checkoff model for funding nongame programs. Yet, the checkoff has persisted. It has enjoyed the luxury of being the only checkoff on the tax form through most of its existence. The Chickadee Checkoff was originally crafted as a novel and potentially strong funding possibility for wildlife programs. Soon, it was realized that other or additional long-term funding sources would also be needed.

As the ranks of hunters and anglers continue to decline (along with their ability to maintain funding support,) we are pressed to consider the future in realistic terms. Faced with continual threats to species survival, major federal match-funding possibilities, and pressing demands for continued programs and services, Kansans need to seriously consider the next step – a state funding formula for all wildlife. Surveys show that Kansans will support an agenda to keep species from being on any endangered lists. This is what State Wildlife Grants are intended to do. It is also a primary goal of Chickadee Checkoff.

Ultimately, we have accepted that the Chickadee Checkoff is a transition to something more substantial, something that would guarantee adequate, long-term funding for all wildlife programs. Twenty-five years later, we still wait. In the meantime, thanks to the Chickadee Checkoff for being there! Few programs have been able to do so much with so little. ♡

## Chickadee Checkoff Timeline

- 
- 1981 - Chickadee Checkoff initiates Nursing Home Bird Feeder Program and supports the "Songbird Bundle" available through the Kansas Forest Service.
  - 1982 - Chickadee Checkoff helps sponsor several endangered species projects, surveys, and publications. The Kansas Urban Wildlife Program is initiated.
  - 1985 - Backyard Wildlife Habitat Certification Program is initiated.
  - 1988 - Chickadee Checkoff initiates Kansas Winter Bird Feeder Survey.
  - 1990 - Chickadee Checkoff replaces "Nongame Notes" with an upgraded newsletter, "The Field Glass." Chickadee Checkoff focuses research in SE Kansas concerning endangered species and ecosystems. Two pilot Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites (OWLS) are started.
  - 1991 - Chickadee Checkoff conducts survey to help fight attack on state's endangered species protection efforts. Survey shows strong public support for endangered species. Six additional pilot OWLS are started.
  - 1992 - The Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas is initiated. Work is started on a wildlife viewing guide.
  - 1993 - The viewing guide, *Watching Kansas Wildlife*, is published.
  - 1996 - OWLS surpasses its goal of 100 funded sites. Chickadee Checkoff continues to support and defend threatened and endangered species programs including monitoring bald eagle nests and the first known peregrine falcon nest (Topeka) in recent Kansas history.
  - 1998 - The Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas is completed and the Kansas Amphibian Monitoring Program begun.
  - 2000 - Chickadee Checkoff supported the Kansas Nature-based Tourism Alliance and activities and initiated recovery plan preparations for state sensitive species.
  - 2001 - Initiated Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program projects. Helped support "Wings N' Wetlands Weekend," a major wildlife viewing and tourism event at Great Bend.
  - 2002 - Sponsored the NaturalKansas.org nature tourism site. Kansas Amphibian Monitoring Program is completed. Initiated State Wildlife Grants projects.
  - 2003 - State Wildlife Grants fund statewide assessments of reptiles, amphibians, and stream biota along with an assessment of natural areas in northeastern Kansas as featured projects.
  - 2004 - Initiated major future planning effort through the Kansas State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan.



# Just The Facts About Blue-Green Algae

text and photos  
by Marc Murrell

manager,  
Great Plains Nature Center,  
Wichita

*Plague or natural occurrence, how you feel about blue-green algae may depend on your outdoor recreation preferences.*

*For those who like to swim, boat, and ski in our reservoirs, blue-green algae can be a concern. Here are the facts.*

While turquoise-colored water is typically associated with beautiful tropical destinations and white sand beaches, the same isn't true when it occurs in Kansas. The color change is a result of algae blooms which typically occur each summer throughout many ponds, lakes, and reservoirs.

Cyanobacteria, also known as blue-green algae, are single-celled, free-floating aquatic organisms found in virtually every aquatic ecosystem. Algal communities may contain three forms of bloom-producing blue-green algae which include *Anabaena*, *Aphanizomenon* and *Microcystis*. Blooms, rapid population growths, occur typically from May to August when waters are warm. They are more common in standing or static water and in nutrient-rich conditions such as areas with high run-off in urban settings or in large agricultural watersheds. The nutrient most responsible for blooms is phosphorus, and to a lesser degree, nitrogen.

Blue-green algae appear as surface scum, free-floating clumps resembling green curds or an overall green color in the water (the algae attached to rocks and other substrates is not blue-green algae.) In areas of large concentrations, they are

The first sign that something isn't right is the bright green color. It can be especially striking when wind pushes algae into coves and along shorelines. As the algae dies, it turns a turquoise color and there may also be a strong septic odor. Fish can be affected, since dead algae use up dissolved oxygen in decomposition. A potentially dangerous toxin may also be produced.



accompanied by a distinct septic, fishy, or petroleum-like foul odor. Concentrations are often dictated by the wind and waves as they accumulate on wind-blown shorelines and coves. When these organisms die they may have a turquoise color. In addition to using up oxygen during the decomposition process, some blue-green algae produce a potentially dangerous, even fatal, toxin.

"We do an on-going series of water samples," said Neal Whitaker, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Tulsa District Park Ranger at Marion Reservoir. "They're doing toxin samples every two weeks from March through October.

"When it becomes a problem, we'll have warn-

ings posted at the boat ramp and swim beaches telling people to avoid surface scum in the water, and if it gets bad enough, we'll close the beaches," he added. "We also have an informative hand-out below those signs that people can take and read about blue-

green algae."

Marion Reservoir isn't alone in its battle with blue-green algae blooms. Other Kansas reservoirs have experienced similar problems in recent years, including Cheney and Fall River.

Small children and pets are most at risk for problems associated with blue-green algae. Swimming or water contact in areas with high concentrations of blue-green algae may result in a skin rash or itching. Ingestion of water containing blue-green algae may result in mouth ulcers, ulcers inside of the nose, eye and/or ear irritations, blistering lips, sore throat, headaches, nausea, muscular pains, painful diarrhea, vomiting, and abdominal pain. Large



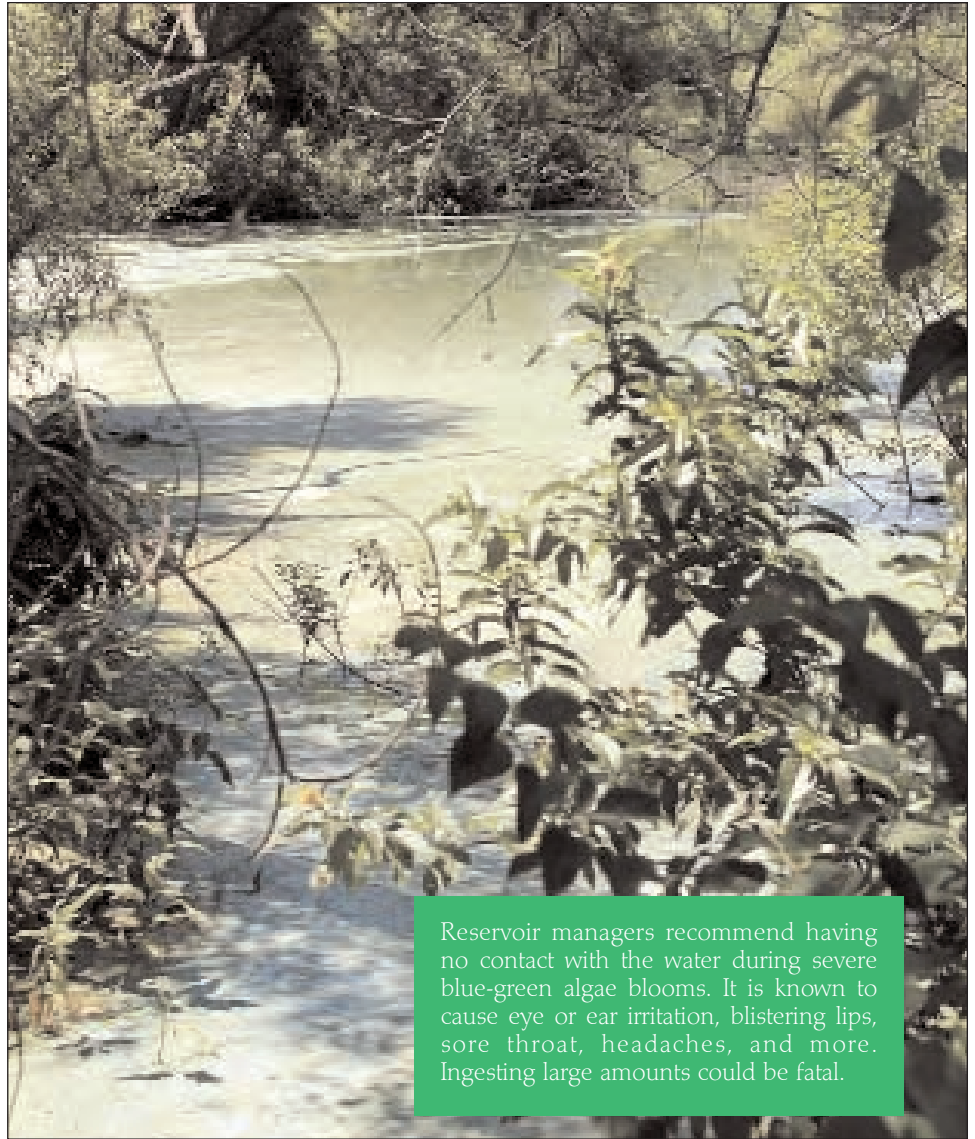
amounts of ingested blue-green algae toxin may, in extreme cases, result in death due to seizures, liver failure, or respiratory arrest. Blue-green algae have been shown to accumulate in the internal organs of fish; however, it doesn't appear to be present in fish flesh.

The prevention of blue-green algae blooms may be possible through control of nonpoint source pollution. Treatment of algae blooms is simply not economically feasible or practical on large lakes or reservoirs. In addition, if the algal community was killed all at once including non blue-green algae, the decomposition process would remove oxygen from the water, likely resulting in massive fish kills.

"There's nothing that can be done," Whitaker said. "We've explored a half-dozen treatment options and none of them are feasible for a lake the size of Marion."

Algae blooms are common occurrences across the Midwest and occur every year. Nebraska had a particularly bad outbreak last year in many waters. According to Whitaker, Nebraska tested 110 lakes and put out 29 advisories and closed 5 lakes to water contact recreation for a period of time.

The presence of blue-green algae should not deter recreational water users. Common sense warns to avoid anything that looks and smells that bad. Increased awareness of potential dangers, particularly on large blooms, is critical to a safe and enjoyable outdoor outing. ♡



Reservoir managers recommend having no contact with the water during severe blue-green algae blooms. It is known to cause eye or ear irritation, blistering lips, sore throat, headaches, and more. Ingesting large amounts could be fatal.

## Minimize health hazards by following these procedures :

- Be aware of areas with severe blue-green algae blooms.
- Heed all warning or closure signs that may be posted at swimming beaches or boat ramps.
- Don't wade, swim, ski, tube, or jet-ski in waters containing severe visible blue-green algae blooms.
- Shower with clean water after contact with water containing large concentrations of blue-green algae.
- Avoid ingesting water containing blue-green algae, as the digestive process releases the toxins present within the algae.

# A Man For All Seasons



by J. Mark Shoup  
*associate editor, Pratt*

photos courtesy of the Kansas University Museum of Natural History

*Many have helped shape the department we know today, but few have had the impact of L. L. Dyche when he led the agency from 1910 through 1915.*



**I**magine that you are 16 years old and have never been to school. You've known nothing but country life — raising a few cows, hunting, trapping, working in a feed mill — anything you could do to make a living. You are completely illiterate, but you have a desire to become educated and do great things, perhaps even become one of the most prominent scientists in the nation.

Impossible, you say? Well such is the larger-than-life story of the Kansas Fish and Game Department's (now KDWP) first truly qualified director. It is a remarkable story of tenacity, adventure, often cruel politics, and accomplishment.

The oldest of 12 children, Lewis Lindsay Dyche was born in 1857 in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, but when he was only a few months old, his father packed up his family and headed west, where he homesteaded near the Wakarusa River south of Topeka. Dyche's mother fell ill during the trip, so the child was cared for by Sauk and Fox Indian women for a time. As the boy grew, he maintained a relationship with local Indians in this still relatively wild country, often eating and playing with them.

When he became of school age, Dyche didn't attend. He spent his time working on his father's farm, and as he grew older, an entrepreneurial spirit infected him. He trapped, worked in a local feed mill, and saved his money. Eventually, he bought a cow. Each year, he added another cow until at age 16, he had his own small herd. It was at this time that something

urged Dyche to become educated. He sold his herd for \$600 — quite a sum in 1874 — and enrolled in the Kansas State Normal School in Emporia.

Dyche must have taken to education like he did to working outdoors because he graduated from Emporia in 1877 and promptly enrolled at Kansas University's "Preparatory College," intent on an education in classic literature. In those days, that meant mastering not only literature but the languages it was written in: Greek, Latin, French, German. Dyche's plans would be changed, however, while taking the basic sciences.

His biology instructor, Prof. Francis Huntington Snow, soon recognized Dyche's innate understanding of nature. Snow's teaching philosophy was hands-on, and he paid his students \$1 for every new species of insect they brought him. Dyche pounced on this "easy" money to such an extent that Snow was impressed enough to take the young man under his wing. Dyche had not only found his first true mentor, he was on his way to a career that would take him to the wildest parts of North America, and eventually, to Pratt.

For Snow, the study of biology meant collection first and foremost. He reasoned that to properly study biology, one had to have specimens in

hand. To this end, he organized a number of collecting expeditions in the West. Not only had Dyche become the professor's favorite pupil, the student's hunting prowess was soon legend at the university. This would be a valuable skill on collecting expeditions, and Dyche found himself braving storms, heat, and Apaches while collecting everything from butterflies to grizzly bears. He was now "hunting for science."

After preparatory school, Dyche was readily admitted to "the Kansas State University" (now known as Kansas University). By his junior year, he had been appointed an instructor in the Natural History Department, where he began his mastery of taxidermy, now considered an essential tool for studying animals. In 1884, he received both bachelor of arts and bachelor of science degrees.

Over the ensuing years, Dyche continued his expeditions



DYCHE WAS A SKILLED HUNTER AND OUTDOORSMAN AND HIS LOVE FOR THE OUTDOORS LED HIM ON SOME AMAZING EXPEDITIONS IN THE NAME OF SCIENCE.

and helped amass an enormous collection of mammals and birds for the university. He traveled to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History where he studied taxidermy under the tutelage of the renowned William T. Hornaday. Hornaday's instruction helped Dyche with the lifelike mounts of two buffalo he had killed.

In 1888, Dyche earned a master of science degree and full professorship at the university. In 1889, he was given the titles of Professor of Anatomy and Physiology, Taxidermist, and Curator of Mammals and Birds. Among his many notable accomplishments in these positions was to acquire and mount the only U.S. Cavalry survivor of the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the horse Comanche.

In 1893, Dyche achieved national attention with his diorama of animal mounts, which was a favorite at the Chicago

World's Fair. Two years later, on a collecting expedition in Greenland, Dyche's group rescued Lt. Robert Peary, who had become stranded on a failed attempt to reach the North Pole.

This trip gained Dyche more national notoriety, which led to an 1895-96 highly-popular lecture tour in which Dyche described his exploits in the West, Northwest, Greenland, and Alaska, illustrated by a "stereopticon" projecting photos taken during his trips.

By 1901, Dyche's reputation in Kansas was well-established. Over the next few years, he used this considerable influence to obtain funds from the Kansas Legislature for the Kansas University Museum of Natural History. With this accomplishment under his belt, he was set to become a national hero of near mythic proportions when Arctic explorer Dr. Frederick Cook invited Dyche on an expe-

dition to climb Mt. McKinley and retrieve a time capsule Cook claimed to have left on the summit earlier.

It was not to be. The year was 1910, and the Kansas Fish and Game Department, just five years old, needed a new "fish and game warden." Newly-elected Gov. Walter R. Stubbs wanted Dyche. Dyche didn't want the job.

In their biography of Dyche, *The Dashing Kansan*, Bill Sharp and Peggy Sullivan quote Dyche's reluctance: "In former years, when the state of Kansas was new, it might have been considered a game state," Dyche observed. "The prairie lands were covered with herds of buffalos and antelope, and the wooded valleys and hills furnished shelter for many deer and elk. Wild turkeys were quite common . . . and prairie chickens were found in great numbers. At present, conditions are changed. Large game animals have completely disappeared. Wild turkeys have likewise become extinct, and prairie chickens are confined to a few counties in the western part of the state and are threatened with extinction. About the only game animal that has held its own is the rabbit, and about the only game bird is the quail. Ducks and geese in former years were very common during migration. Of late years, but a very few pass through. Kansas can not any longer be counted as a game state."

However, the position would be under the employee of KU, and at the urging of Chancellor Frank Strong, Dyche agreed. Stubbs wanted a qualified scientist who would stand above any accusation that his appointment



DYCHE STUDIED TAXIDERMY AT THE SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY. HE PRESERVED COMANCHE, THE ONLY U.S. CAVALRY SURVIVOR OF THE BATTLE OF THE LITTLE BIGHORN.

was a political plum. Dyche was, in fact, apolitical, having no party affiliation. He was the perfect appointee.

Despite the lack of facilities and funding for the Pratt Fish Hatchery, and the fact that he knew virtually nothing about fish or fish culture, Dyche would work wonders. It would not be easy, however, or without controversy. Enforcement of the few existing fish and wildlife laws was dismal, largely because they were enforced by deputy wardens whose only qualification was that they present a petition signed by 10 taxpayers in their county. In his first three weeks on the job, there were no arrests, but Dyche received 75 complaints against deputy wardens. He immediately clamped down. Relying on recommendations from the Anti-Horse Thief Association for deputy warden recommendations, he fired and replaced corrupt wardens wholesale.

He quickly developed plans for running the agency in other ways. He promoted the concept of "a fish pond on every farm" and poured himself into his job with vigor. He learned everything he could about fish and fish culture, dissecting thousands of fish to determine feeding habits. He took trips to the east to view and study hatcheries.

One unfortunate and much misunderstood position, however, would dog him throughout his tenure: defense of carp as a sport fish. Dyche knew that carp were commonly cultivated in Europe and Asia and saw no reason why they shouldn't be in Kansas. Although Dyche never translated this opinion into



DYCHE ATTRACTED NATIONAL ATTENTION WITH THIS DIORAMA HE CRAFTED FOR THE 1893 CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR.

policy, his detractors would distort this fact and use it as ammunition against him. One would be Del Travis, the first warden, a bitter former political appointee who owned land adjacent to the hatchery. Travis would publicly, and falsely, accuse Dyche of stocking carp throughout the state.

Before the political storms hit full force, however, Dyche developed detailed plans to stock ponds, build dams and lakes, and conserve soil. His vision extended to the Kansas Legislature in 1911, when a bill he authored was introduced. Among other things, the bill proposed to expand closed hunting seasons; continue to require a hunting license; limit open seasons on game birds; prohibit shooting birds on the ground or water; prohibit shooting birds after sundown; prohibit the use of live decoys; prohibit killing "song or insect-eating" birds; prohibit killing eagles; protect partridges and pheasants for six years; protect quail for five

years; protect beavers, otters, deer, and antelope for 10 years; and require a minimum \$25 fine for the first violation of any of these laws.

Although ridiculed by hunting organizations and political opponents of the governor, a bill passed, but protection of upland birds was cut, and the open seasons on most game were lengthened. Still, with these new laws, Kansas was on the way toward protecting and restoring many important natural resources.

The law was difficult to enforce, but Dyche was undeterred. When one local judge refused to fine two men for hunting without a license and jailed the deputy warden who arrested them, Dyche went to the attorney general and had the judge removed. He continued to push for protection of game that had been decimated in the state and eventually pushed through a law that protected quail and prairie chickens.

All the time, Dyche was plan-



THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN ABOUT THE TIME DYCHE WOULD HAVE BEEN THE HEAD OF THE KANSAS FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT, A POSITION HE HELD FROM 1910-1915.

ning, designing, and lobbying for more projects and money for the agency. He planned classes on pond management and fish culture for secondary and college students. He designed the museum (and then, laboratory) that still stands on the Pratt Operations Office grounds. This, he explained, would “be primarily for the students of the University of Kansas, but students from other universities and colleges will be welcomed to carry on certain investigations which should be carried on to clear up a considerable number of problems with fish culture.”

He conducted an open house, or “Fish Day,” on Oct. 29, 1912, to showcase progress at the hatchery and promote further expansion.

When the dust settled, Dyche had expanded the hatchery from

70 acres to 160 and added 83 ponds to the paltry nine that previously existed. He built housing for the warden and hatchery staff, a power house, and a barn. The new hatchery was like none other in the country and gained Dyche nationwide praise for his ingenuity and vision.

Then politics hit the fan. A reporter from a Topeka newspaper ran an article headlined, “It Has Cost \$2 For Each Fish.” The calculations were for a single year. What the reporter failed to note was that the money spent during that year was for fish that came from the only seven usable ponds at the hatchery at that time, and he didn’t take

into account the money that was spent expanding that network to 90 ponds, much less the ambitious building and renovation at the hatchery.

A lie told loud enough, however, tends to stick, and Dyche’s enemies came out of the woodwork. Those who resented the conservation laws he had pushed through saw blood, and they attacked in newspapers throughout the state. Politics had pounded on the apolitical man’s door.

Dyche was a fighter, however, and he defended himself vigorously and logically in the public forum. He also received an outpouring of support from the national scientific community. But accusations continued to pour in, and C.T. Rankin of Hutchinson filed formal charges with the governor’s office,

demanding that Dyche be removed. Plans were made for an open forum against Dyche at the hatchery on Oct. 9, 1913.

Despite the fact that Del Travis built a fence across the road between the hatchery and the railway line used to transport fish, Dyche had the hatchery in top condition, and the executive committee assigned to look into the matter found no complaint. Dyche’s accuser, C.T. Rankin, failed to show up, and Dyche was cleared. The only reaction to this fiasco was that the new governor, George Hodges, hoping to placate hunters mad about the possibility that hunting license dollars had been spent on a hatchery, proposed a fishing license. This did not pass the legislature, however.

Having survived numerous attempts to oust him, Dyche managed to distribute record numbers of fish from the new ponds in the spring of 1914. He also wrote one of the first comprehensive fish management books, *Ponds, Pond Fish, and Pond Fish Culture*. The book was sought nationally and used as a textbook in many university biology programs.

His proclivity for survival and success seemed unshakable, as noted in *The Dashing Kansan*: “In five years since he had stepped down from the lecture stage and accepted the wardenship, Dyche had, with his characteristic intensity, molded himself into a leading expert on freshwater fishes and had built the largest freshwater fish hatchery in the world — in the unlikely location of Pratt, Kansas.”

Here, the catfish industry as we know it to today was born,

but its creator was about to meet his final challenge. In late 1914, Dyche was diagnosed with severe heart disease, which he kept secret from his family and the public. In January of 1915, another new governor, Arthur Capper, took office, and Dyche prepared anew to defend his position.

In an odd twist of fate, on Jan. 6, 1915, Dyche was bitten by a Gila monster in the museum. On Jan. 14, he became too ill to work and was confined to bed. Finally, he was able to tell his family about his heart condition. With them gathered around his bed on Jan. 20, Dyche tenderly whispered to his wife, "And this was your birthday," and died. The great man had climbed his last mountain. It was his heart that killed Dyche, not the Gila monster bite, but the press would later perpetuate a myth that the renowned Prof. Dyche had died of a Gila monster bite.

The Kansas Board of

Administration passed a resolution honoring Dyche: "In the death of Professor L. L. Dyche, the University of Kansas has lost one of the oldest and most devoted members of its faculty, and the state has lost one its most distinguished citizens. Born in poverty, he reached international fame through the exercise of indomitable will power . . . This masterful man, the story of whose life would read like a romance, was the personification of simplicity in his private life. His life should be an inspiration to every young man in the land."

A year earlier, Dyche had written a friend, "I seem to have been born with a love for wild things and new and untrodden places. But such things are passing away, and I will soon pass with them. I was born to think that most things were as they should be and my fellow beings were honest — at least as honest as the wild men I first

knew. How I have been disappointed . . . The day for men . . . as myself seems to have passed."

Actually, the day for men such as Dyche was just dawning. Most of the large mammals that Dyche mounted for the 1893 World's Fair still stand at the KU Museum of Natural History. A conservation movement that would sweep the nation in the 1930s eventually restored the game Dyche lamented passing, and his legacy of game and fish management serves today's Kansas outdoorsmen and women in ways he could not have imagined.

Ironically, this visionary man longed for the past while laying a foundation for the future of Kansas fish and game management. ♡

*Note: For more information on the remarkable life of L. L. Dyche, read *The Dashing Kansan*, by Bill Sharp and Peggy Sullivan, published by Harrow Books.*



IN JUST TWO YEARS AFTER ACCEPTING THE POSITION OF "KANSAS FISH AND GAME WARDEN," DYCHE HELD A PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE AT THE PRATT FISH HATCHERY. ALTHOUGH DYCHE'S NAME IS SPELLED WRONG, THE CUTLINE BILLS THE HATCHERY AS THE LARGEST OF ITS KIND IN THE WORLD.

# WIHA

# HISTORY

by Brent Konen,  
*area manager, Council Grove*  
and

Brad Simpson,  
*private lands coordinator, Pratt*

photos by Mike Blair

*Growing from just 10,000 acres in its first year, 1995, the Walk-In Hunting Area program has evolved into a 1 million-acre program and one of KDWP's most popular and notable efforts.*

In 1995, the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) embarked on what would become one of the most successful programs in its 100-year history. The Walk-In Hunting Area Program (WIHA) was unveiled to an eager public in the fall of that year. Immediately, the program gained interest among rural landowners and Kansas sportsmen. From humble beginnings 10 years ago, the program has grown to immense status. It is now recognized as one of the best of its kind in the country.

The WIHA program was designed to enhance public hunting opportunities and strengthen Kansas' hunting heritage by leasing private land for public hunting. Although the program has evolved over time, its foundation remains unchanged and its future looks bright.

Much of WIHA's success can be attributed to KDWP's philosophy that it is creating more than a lease agreement with a cooperator – it is developing a partnership with rural Kansas. The WIHA program was designed to create simple partnerships which benefit all involved. It does more than provide additional hunting opportunities and financial benefits to rural landowners; it strengthens ties between members of rural and urban communities. It does this by increasing appreciation and respect for rural Kansas among residents and visitors to our state, encouraging them to spend more time outdoors. It increases the rural community's appreciation for outdoor recreationists and resulting economic benefits, and perhaps most importantly, the WIHA program has elevated respect and appreciation for our state's wildlife resources.

The WIHA program was brought to Kansas by the hard work and foresight of then Regional Fisheries and Wildlife Supervisor, Steve Sorensen (now retired.) Sorensen had witnessed firsthand a decline in hunting participation. He sought to develop a program that would enhance and strengthen Kansas' hunting tradition while providing landowners with numerous benefits including modest financial payments. He developed and modeled the Kansas WIHA program after a successful program already in place in South Dakota. After significant work to lay the necessary framework, and considerable debate about whether the program would be successful in Kansas, Sorensen

unveiled his plans for implementation in the fall of 1995.

Initial discussions among staff focused on keeping the program simple, yet effective. This approach proved valuable when developing goals and components of the program, and selling it to rural landowners and the agricultural community. Since inception, it was understood that lease payments would be modest, and that in order to be successful, the program would have to provide cooperators with additional benefits. It was believed that the program should also reassure concerns of potential cooperators. It was stressed to them that KDWP would be responsible for posting signs, patrolling properties, and advertising property locations.

As such, direct contact with hunters would be reduced, therefore reducing work interruptions caused by hunters. Liability concerns were addressed by affording the protection of Kansas law. Cooperators were also encouraged to learn that all hunting use of their property was to be by foot traffic

only.

Once primary program components and goals were established, a pilot project was initiated in Rice, Reno, Kingman, and Stafford Counties. An advertising and awareness campaign utilized newspaper, radio, and television, as well as informational meetings with several government agricultural agencies. Enrollment interest exceeded expectations. Additional lands were offered and enrolled in the nearby counties of McPherson, Harper, and Pratt. In its first year, 46 cooperators enrolled 59 tracts totaling more than 10,000 acres in these seven counties! Nearly 30



## 2004 WIHA Acreages By County

CHEYENNE 39 21,105	RAWLINS 38 19,495	DECATUR 28 10,140	NORTON 49 23,951	PHILLIPS 26 8,717	SMITH 84 30,801	JEWELL 70 21,769	REPUBLIC 22 4,840	WASHINGTON 70 18,640	MARSHALL 55 20,362	NEMAH 44 13,993	BROWN 20 5,158	DOHRMAN 5 4,352
SHERMAN 36 20,739	THOMAS 32 12,545	SHERIDAN 24 7,583	GRAHAM 93 41,054	ROOKS 48 18,880	OSBORNE 60 29,742	MITCHELL 64 19,468	CLOUD 27 5,621	CLAY 41 10,055	RILEY 5 715	POTTAWATOMIE 10 1,395	JACKSON 18 3,717	ATCHISON 20 5,365
WALLACE 65 34,335	LOGAN 25 11,107	GOVE 48 21,409	TREGG 87 28,521	ELLIS 34 6,048	RUSSELL 61 19,253	LINCOLN 21 7,400	OTTAWA 23 3,024	DICKINSON 3,024	GEARY 5 1,765	SHAWNEE 4 1,752	JEFFERSON 10 1,506	WYANDOTTE 1 80
GREELEY 63 24,265	WICHITA 41 14,357	SCOTT 15 3,476	LANE 42 15,800	NESS 48 15,382	RUSH 68 17,593	BARTON 22 4,556	ELLSWORTH 13 4,777	SALINE 3,990	MORRIS 1,765	WABASH 3,634	OSAGE 12 2,984	JOHNSON 3 950
HAMILTON 78 57,313	KEARNEY 36 10,650	FINNEY 37 15,826	HODGEMAN 92 35,120	PAWNEE 56 20,443	STAFFORD 20 3,228	EDWARDS 31 10,085	RICE 3 1,659	MCPHERSON 3 451	MARION 10 1,756	LYON 2 200	COFFEY 20 5,596	MIAMI 4 802
STANTON 33 15,549	GRANT 12 5,851	HASKELL 3 1,352	MEADE 27 9,875	FORD 30 10,522	KIOWA 46 15,978	PRATT 19 3,523	BARBER 7 1,843	RENO 36 8,428	HARVEY 1 606	BUTLER 1 240	GREENWOOD 4 1,259	WOODSON 4 810
MORTON 59 26,389	STEVENS 24 5,668	SEWARD 34 9,905	CLARK 38 13,441	COMANCHE 12 11,184	HARPER 19 3,794	SUMNER 1 307	COWLEY 1 400	ELK 19 12,874	CHAUTAUQUA 6 4,215	WALSH 1 235	NEOSHO 7 4,687	CRAWFORD 13 3,476
												CHEROKEE 4 926

Full-color atlases are produced annually so that hunters can locate WIHA properties. In recent years, the atlases have also included all state and federal public hunting areas.

percent of these cooperators had faith enough in the fledgling program to enroll their property for more than one year.

Enrolled properties were primarily lands enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), but in an effort to provide hunting opportunities for nearly any type of game species, other lands were enrolled as well. Many tracts contained woody draws or woodlots, cropland acres, pasture areas, ponds, and creeks. Pheasant and quail hunting opportunities were most abundant, but additional opportunities to hunt waterfowl, deer, doves, squirrels, rabbits, and furbearers were also available.

Implementation staff believed that the most daunting task – enrollment – had been accomplished. Now, it was time to determine how well the program would be received and respected by sportsmen. Without sportsmen support and stewardship, the program would be doomed to fail. The future of the program now lay in their hands.

Sportsmen interest that first fall was strong. Nearly 3,500



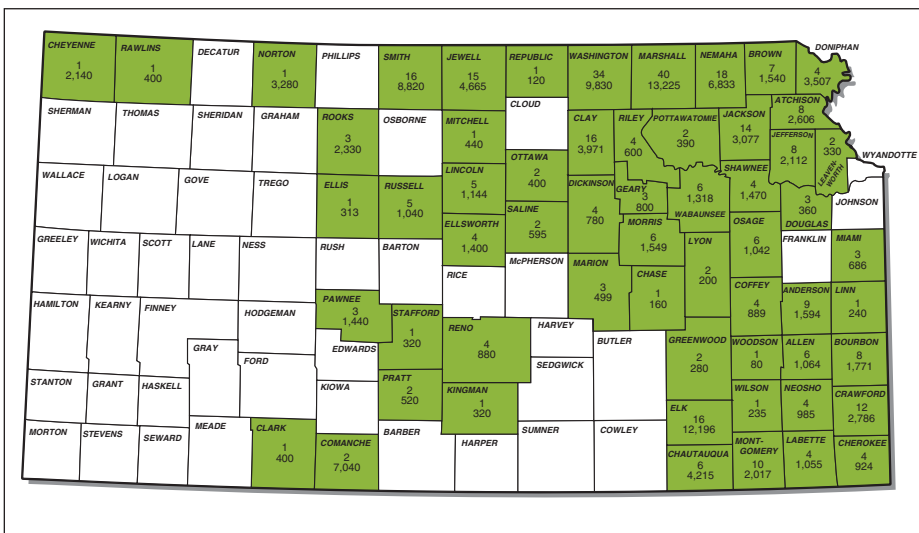
Growing turkey populations have provided increased opportunities and interest in spring turkey hunting, so biologists began soliciting turkey WIHA cooperators in 2001.

atlases depicting locations of enrolled sites were distributed, despite only regional advertising. Post season surveys indicated that 96 percent of WIHA hunters recommended continuing the program, while 93 percent of survey respondents who didn't hunt a WIHA property wanted to see the program continued. In addition, survey results indicated that 86 percent of respondents were satisfied with their hunting experience, and 95 percent rated the leased habitat as fair to excellent. Clearly, demand and support for

such a program existed among the hunting public. But how well had sportsmen respected these privately owned properties and their owners, and how would this affect program expansion?

Those answers came soon enough and are evident 10 years later with a WIHA program expanded statewide to include more than one million acres during the 2004/2005 hunting season. WIHA now includes spring turkey hunting opportunities, encourages habitat enhancement on enrolled lands, and fostered a sister program designed to provide fishing access. Many of the program's initial cooperators and their properties are still enrolled in the program today. This is a testament to the strength of the WIHA program and all those who worked diligently to bring it to the sportsmen of Kansas and the nation.

I know some hunters who have rekindled their hunting passion because of increased opportunities created by the WIHA program. I have witnessed eager youths canvas CRP



The spring turkey WIHA atlas included more than 125,000 acres in the counties shaded above. Turkey WIHA lands are open April 1-May 31 for turkey hunting.



grass habitats on WIHA lands in search of cackling pheasants and exploding coveys of quail. Undoubtedly, the WIHA program has enhanced opportunities for avid hunters. But perhaps more importantly, it has reintroduced an aging generation, while also introducing a youthful generation, to the thrills, wonders, and environments of this cherished pastime.

After 10 years of the WIHA program, one thing remains certain; without the support and stewardship of hunters and cooperating landowners, this miraculous program would not have reached such lofty goals and provided countless hours of outdoor recreation in our beloved sunflower state.

As the conclusion of the first decade of WIHA came to an end, it was difficult to overestimate the program's enormous impact on the future of our Kansas hunting heritage. It may be years before we fully realize these implications, but one thing is cer-

tain: the WIHA program has been not only a huge success for KDWP, but also for sportsmen, landowners, businesses, rural communities, and for Kansas.

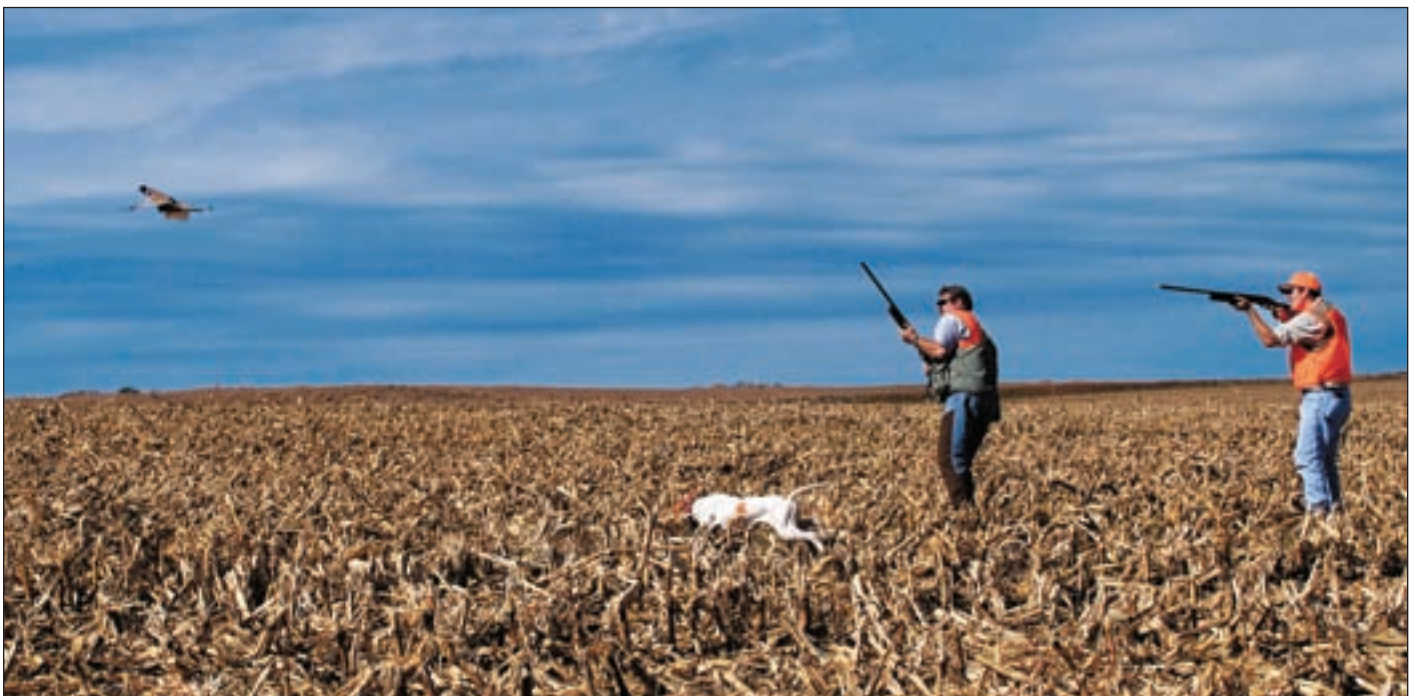
The WIHA program evolved at a time when many hunters had yet to encounter a difficult time finding a place to hunt in Kansas. However, Sorensen and others had the foresight to recognize that changes (i.e. lease hunting) occurring across the nation would quickly come to Kansas, and that hunting access would grow increasingly scarce where nearly all land was held in private ownership. To protect our hunting heritage and ensure adequate hunting opportunities, KDWP initiated the bold new concept of a WIHA program.

This program is now recognized nationally throughout the hunting community. Numerous articles and publications have proclaimed it in hunting magazines and newspapers, and it is likewise discussed on various hunting websites and discussion

boards. In addition, a number of other state wildlife agencies look at the Kansas WIHA program as a model. Many states hope to implement a program like ours.

Throughout the years, many hunting stories, memories, and friendships have undoubtedly been developed on WIHA property. Some hunters take their picture by a WIHA sign and have it made into Christmas cards; others are so thankful for WIHA that they send Christmas cards to cooperators thanking them for enrolling their property. Many hunters anxiously wait each year for their copy of the WIHA atlas to arrive in the mail, just to anticipate the new hunting opportunities it offers.

To maintain the success of the WIHA program, Kansas Wildlife and Parks will strive to keep the program dynamic and to evaluate and adjust the program accordingly to provide public hunting opportunity and promote the hunting heritage in Kansas. ♡



# A Slight Miscalculation

by **Marc Murrell**  
manager, Great Plains  
Nature Center

Staff writer and photographer Marc Murrell was fishing on a farm pond with his twin 6-year-old boys when he noticed the unusual sight in the photo to the right. Upon further investigation, it was clear that shortly before they arrived at the pond, this great blue heron bit off more than it could swallow. It was a fatal mistake for both parties.



Edited by Mark Shoup

## HERO'S WELCOME

Editor:

I just read Mark Shoup's article, "A Hero's Welcome," (*Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine, March/April, 2005, Page 39). Although it brought a tear to my eye, it didn't last for long. His father came from a generation of Americans that I hope some day we will see again. All good Americans aren't veterans but all good veterans are Americans. My father, like Mark's, was a WWII vet; my brother is a Vietnam vet; and I am a Persian Gulf vet.

I imagine Mr. Shoup's father is flying high and probably on the 149th rock.

*Gary Gulick  
Denver, Colorado*

## BIG SNAKE

Editor:

How long was that record setting prairie rattler that was killed last summer out by Garden City? Weight? Length?

*Tom Goodrich  
Topeka*

Dear Mr. Goodrich,

The snake in question was 57 1/8 inches long and weighed just over 3 pounds. The specimen exceeded the previous Kansas length record of 48 3/8 inches and the U.S. record of 57 even. Weight records aren't typically kept for snakes (and most other reptiles and amphibians, except turtles), due to their habit of consuming massive meals, which causes high variance in weight measurements. This variance means that those measurements aren't very useful for making comparisons among different individuals.

*—Travis Taggart, associate curator  
of herpetology/collections  
manager, Sternberg Museum of  
Natural History, Hays*

## KUDOS TO HATCHERIES

Editor:

I'd like to express a degree of thanks to KDWP's fish hatchery system and the amount of revenue it gives back to the state. I'm a big lake boat fisherman, and the species that are raised at the hatcheries and released into the reservoirs are extremely important. This is why, years ago, when I had a 20-year-old boat that finally gave out, I had to decide whether to buy an expensive new fishing boat.

At the time I had to make this decision, my success was excellent at three reservoirs in Kansas: Cheney, Wilson, and Marion. All species I was catching – stripers, wipers, walleye – were fish consistently being stocked, so I decided to buy a new boat.

I'm sure I would not have replaced my old boat if none of these fish were available. Today, the boating and fishing experiences my family and I have are unforgettable.

Thanks again to your fish hatcheries. They are truly worth it.

*Mark Howler  
Valley Center*

## BRUSH DESTRUCTION?

I am writing in concern for what our government officials are doing in southwest Kansas. They are killing off all the brush in the river bottom to help preserve the water. Water is not used for anything, and they are destroying the hunting in this area. This will force most of the remaining whitetail deer to move to Colorado or out of this area.

The brush they are killing is very important bedding ground. The quail will also be affected by this because they use the brush for mating and hatching eggs. This will also hurt retailers because hunters will quit using this area. Any help at all from the state will help us from losing the great hunting we have in southwest Kansas.

Probably about 15 or 20 years ago,

they decided to clear the sage brush from the grasslands and killed all the prairie chickens off, and I hate to see that happen again. I feel this is an unnecessary thing that needs to stop. Please help in any way you can.

*J.W. Finn  
Richfield*

Dear Mr. Finn:

Thanks for your concern. I have looked into this and have been informed that the work to which you refer is removal and control of salt cedar. Salt cedar is a highly invasive plant that threatens native stream-side habitat all over the west. It is not considered a valuable plant for wildlife, and because it crowds out habitat species that are good for wildlife, it is actually a detriment for most wildlife species.

I have been informed that the salt cedar removal is just the first step in a habitat restoration process. U.S. Forest Service staff at the Cimarron National Grasslands plan to replace the salt cedar with native cottonwoods and willows. This project, while primarily run by the Forest Service, has the backing of numerous organizations, including Quail Unlimited, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the National Wild Turkey Federation, and the Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams. Kansas Wildlife and Parks, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency also support salt cedar control. Control of salt cedar is going on all over the western United States on both private and public lands, using both private and public funds.

I appreciate that you are concerned and understand that the initial stages of this work may, on the surface, appear detrimental to wildlife. However, the long-term benefits are likely to be very positive for wildlife.

Regarding the spraying of sandsage that occurred on the Cimarron National Grasslands, actually about 25 years ago, I agree that this was

detrimental to wildlife. I did a study back then that showed the negative effects of that practice. I believe none of the current staff at the Cimarron National Grasslands were present at that time, and I'm sure the current staff believes that the spraying of sandsage in the late 1970s and early 1980s was a mistake.

—Randy Rodgers,  
wildlife biologist, Hays

## LATE DUCK THANK YOU

Editor:

My purpose in writing is to thank KDWP for setting a late duck season in January (the last week). My son from Tennessee and I went twice during the late season and had the best hunting of the year.

Each year while goose hunting late in January, I have seen many ducks and hoped that one day there would be a late season. I hope it will happen again.

Larry J. Haffey  
Olathe

## HABITAT PLATE

Editor:

Has there ever been any interest in promoting legislation that would create a special habitat license plate that would return a portion of the extra cost for this plate back to conservation projects? I know of various states that offer this option when renewing vehicle plates/tags, and this has been very successful. With a great number of hunters, anglers, and conservationists in Kansas, I believe that this would generate funding that could be put to good use.

David J. Paul  
Leavenworth

Dear Mr. Paul

A conservation license plate was discussed during our revenue task force meetings, but the idea was not a priority when the report was presented. While this idea may be proposed in the future, it's not currently being pursued. Problems include gaining legislative approval, a required non-refund-

able \$10,000 deposit, selling a minimum of 500 plates in the first two years, and competition from other specialty plates.

—Miller

## TROUT TALK

*Editor's note: The following exchange occurred last winter between fisheries biologist Lowell Aberson and a trout fisherman concerned about our stocking program. I believe it exemplifies how good communication between KDWP and our constituents results in mutual understanding and good will.*

—Shoup

Dear KDWP:

Why has the Finney Sandpit not been stocked? I see that other waters were stocked. There are a lot of us in Finney County who have purchased trout stamps and are waiting on a fresh batch of trout.

Larry Gennette  
Garden City

Mr. Gennette,

**My name is Lowell Aberson, and I am responsible for managing the fisheries program at the Finney Sandpit. Your email regarding trout stocking at the Finney Sandpit was sent to me this morning.**

**I met with the manager of the refuge shortly after the first of the year in response to concerns regarding the water level at the sandpit. At that time, the water was frozen and we could stand on the dock at the west end of the sandpit and see most of the trout in a small, shallow pool under the ice. Due to the ever decreasing amount of water, we decided that it would not be prudent to continue stocking fish. This will include both rainbow trout and the channel catfish that we have been stocking monthly for the last several years.**

Late last summer, we had a fish kill at the sandpit, resulting in the loss of many of the channel catfish due to a lack of dissolved oxygen. We decided then to monitor the situation, realizing

that at some point there would not be enough water to continue stocking.

I'm afraid that until we get some significant water flowing in the Arkansas River in Garden City, we will be forced to discontinue all stockings at the Finney Sandpit. I know that there are still a few folks fishing there, but I cannot justify stocking fish when there is a very real possibility that they will not be able to survive. Just last week, Hain State Fishing Lake, in Ford County, had a fish kill due to low water levels and freezing conditions.

Unfortunately, folks from Garden City will have to travel to the Cimarron National Grasslands, Scott Lake, or Dodge City Community College Pond, which are the three closest places still getting trout.

**I hope this answers your question. If you have any additional questions or comments please feel free to contact me at my office (620-227-8609), via email [lowella@wp.state.ks.us](mailto:lowella@wp.state.ks.us), or at my office at 1001 McArtor, Dodge City, Kansas 67801.**

—Lowell Aberson

Mr. Aberson:

Thank you for your response. I appreciate it. I have been a loyal trout fisherman at the Finney Sandpit for over a decade and am disappointed in the news, but I understand it. I used to work for the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Water Resources, and fully understand the interaction between the surface water in the Arkansas river, (or lack thereof) and the alluvial aquifer associated with it. There is only about 50,000 acre-feet of water in John Martin Reservoir at this point, and unless there is a significant amount of spring runoff or extensive rainfall, the surface water situation does not look good for the downstream water user in Western Kansas.

Thanks again for your timely response, and we will pray for a change in conditions, so travel is not needed to enjoy the pastime of fishing.

Larry Gennette

## DEER DECOY CIRCUS

The last day of the 2004 firearms deer season began as a circus and ended as a circus. While Chris Hammerschmidt, natural resource officer from Sedan, and I were setting up a deer decoy, a vehicle came from the east. I recognized the driver as a local farmer I knew. I waved at him, but he didn't wave and drove to where my truck was. I walked to my truck and said, "What's going on?"

He replied, "Catching trespassers!"

I said, "That's what we're going to be doing!"

However, he wasn't laughing. There was a mix-up in communications between the landowner and this farmer, who leased the property. But when I told him what we were doing, he said that he hoped we caught someone.

Once set up, Chris hid on site to operate the decoy and watch the set. I hid about a half-mile away in my truck. Then horseback riders from the farmer's house rode into the same area where the decoy was set. The farmer brought his truck and three German shepherds out in the field. A potential shooter showed up in a small pickup, stopped by the gate, saw all the activity, and left. Finally, the farmer and horseback riders left, but then the farmer started checking his electric fence insulators in front of the decoy.

I finally had all I could take and I went over and talked to him as cordially as possible. He agreed to leave, and we still had about an hour of light left, which we call the magic hour.

About two minutes before the end of the 2004 deer season, a van drove up. A rifle came out of the passenger side, and a rifle blast followed. Chris was quickly at the van. While Chris was getting them out of the vehicle, I came in behind.

During intensive questioning and arguing, each of the two men in the vehicle blamed the other for the shooting. Then the farmer drove up, and I told him that we had couple of people who had shot at the decoy.

The farmer asked, "They didn't shoot one of my cows, did they?" I said that they

## COSTLY NIGHT

The March/ April issue of *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* contained an article (Page 35) about a nighttime deer poacher entitled, "Nabbed At Night." That case has been resolved, at a high price for the poacher. He pled guilty to hunting without written permission and wanton waste of a big game animal and was sentenced to six months in jail, suspended. He paid a \$2,500 fine, was required to donate \$1,440 to the Pratt Teen Center, and paid court costs of \$60, for a total of \$4,000. He also lost his hunting privileges for one year, and is on one-year unsupervised probation.

—Shoup

just shot the decoy. He then said, "Well, just shoot them!" I said something to the effect that we really couldn't do that, and he finally left.

Then we found that the driver of the van had an active warrant for his arrest out of Montgomery County. The passenger hadn't had a driver's license since 1993. His eight-year-old son was crying in the back seat of the van. We tried to reassure him that everything would work out, but we had to arrest two people without knowing which one shot the decoy.

Because the shot came from the passenger side of the van, the rifle belonged to him, and he had the only deer permit and hunting license, we decided to charge the passenger as the shooter and the driver with aiding and abetting. We arrested the driver on the warrant out of Montgomery County and made a call to a Chautauqua County deputy to transport the passenger, and his son, home because he didn't have a

driver's license.

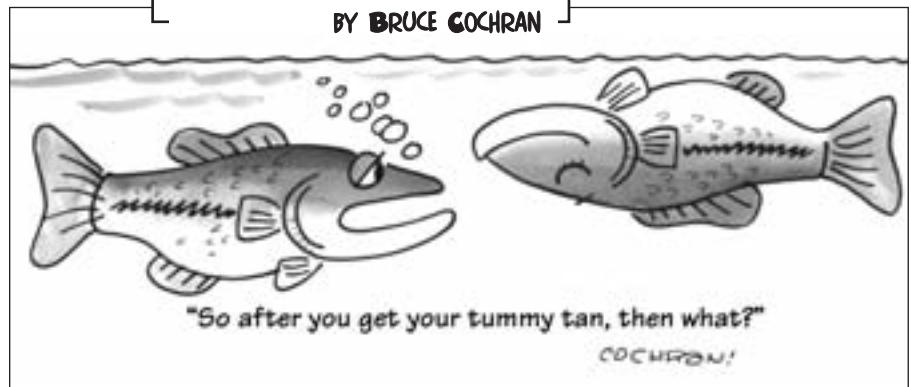
While I was finishing up paperwork, Chris went back with a flashlight to get the decoy when the farmer reappeared ranting and raving about someone shining a light down in his field and asking if someone had shot one of his cows. We calmed him down and explained again that we just weren't finished, and he left, still insisting that we shoot the guys in the van.

Meanwhile, I found out that there was a mistake about the warrant for the driver, and Montgomery County said not to arrest him after all. We left him with a handful of tickets and sent him home. When Chris went to pick up my portable radio and the controls for the decoy, he found that a rat had chewed the microphone cord in two and gnawed on the handles. What an afternoon!

— Dennis Knuth,  
natural resource officer, Independence

## WAY outside

BY BRUCE COCHRAN



## SAVING WATER

The minimum water-level agreement at Sebelius Reservoir between KDWP and the Almena Irrigation District (covered in the Sept./Oct 2004 issue of *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine, Page 36) has kept a historically declining water level mostly stable throughout the year. The water level was held 6 feet higher than it potentially would have been had irrigation releases been allowed.

The stable water level had positive impacts on Prairie Dog State Park, Norton Wildlife Area, and Sebelius Reservoir. The water helped the entire area sustain users, at considerable economic benefit locally. Water clarity was also maintained, to the benefit of anglers and boaters. Other area reservoirs that allowed irrigation didn't fare as well, experiencing 5- to 6-foot drops in water levels.

According to area biologists, fish populations at nearby Webster and Kirwin reservoirs dropped significantly in 2004 due to habitat loss and the increased concentration of fish as the levels dropped. Sebelius, however, maintained more woody structure in the water.

The impact of this stable water level on fish production is reflected in the department's *2005 Kansas Fishing Forecast* (found at [www.kdwp.state.ks.us](http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us)). The forecast lists Sebelius as having the highest density rating of largemouth bass among all large reservoirs in the state.

Sebelius also ranks number two for spotted bass, number one for wipers, number one for saugeye, and number two for channel catfish.

Park use, while decreasing, remained higher than it would have if the water had dropped, leaving shorelines bare and muddy. Access for boaters also would have been more difficult. The beach area remained stable, accommodating swimmers and sunbathers.

This past year, KDWP has continued to work with other state agencies to enhance the Sebelius water level in ways amenable to the Almena Irrigation District.

—Shoup

## 2005 LEGISLATIVE WRAPUP

The Kansas Legislature completed its 2005 session on May 1 with a number of laws affecting the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. The following is a brief summary.

**Senate Bill (SB) 59** - This bill was one of KDWP's initiatives and gives the department secretary the authority to join the Wildlife Violator Compact, to which 19 other states currently belong. The compact will prevent wildlife-related lawbreakers from hunting or fishing in Kansas if they have been convicted of hunting or fishing violations in another compact-member state. The bill passed both houses of the legislature and was signed by the governor on April 6. It will become law on July 1.

**SB 194** - This bill allows the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission to authorize "commissioner permits" to take big game. These permits will be limited to a total of seven in a given year and will be available only to non-profit organizations that actively promote wildlife conservation and the hunting and fishing heritage. Organizations that oppose hunting and fishing will not be eligible for the award of a

commissioner permit. The organization awarded the permit could then auction the permit as a fundraiser. KDWP did not oppose the bill. It passed both houses and was signed into law by the governor on April 8.

**SB 195** - This bill concerns the disposition of firearms seized by the Kansas Department of Revenue in the course of criminal investigations. The bill allows the Department of Revenue to transfer appropriate firearms to KDWP for use in the Hunter Education Program. This bill was jointly sponsored by the Department of Revenue and KDWP. The bill was amended to include provisions that make laws regarding transportation of firearms in the state more uniform by limiting the ability of cities and counties to restrict the storage and transport of guns. Also, the bill calls for allowing retired law enforcement officers to carry firearms. The bill passed both houses and was signed into law by the governor on April 15.



**House Bill (HB) 2115** -- This bill would have repealed the law enacted by the legislature in the 2004 session mandating that KDWP create a minimum of nine archery deer hunting management units. The House passed the bill 107-15 on Feb. 25, but it remains in Senate Natural Resources committee and will be carried over to the 2006 legislative session.

**HB 2116** -- This bill was one of KDWP's initiatives and protects the federal portion of the wildlife conservation and wildlife fee funds from being diverted to purposes other than those given to KDWP in statute. Both houses passed the bill, and the governor signed it into law on May 9.

In other action, KDWP had requested financial support for state parks through the creation of a \$5 outdoor recreation fee to be paid by persons registering a vehicle in Kansas. The fee would have been refundable if requested. In return for the outdoor recreation fee, KDWP would not have requested any state general funds, and vehicles registered in Kansas would have been allowed free access to state parks. The governor concurred with the proposal, and Senate Bill No. 87 was introduced to create the fee. This bill did not pass but will be reconsidered next year.

To meet the shortfall in the Park Fee Fund for FY 2006, the legislature appropriated \$717,000 from the State General Fund and \$300,000 from the KDWP Access Road Fund to pay Park Division and Administrative Services Division employee salaries.

## Become an Outdoors-Woman

**O**n Sept. 23-25, women from across Kansas will learn outdoor skills at the 12th annual Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) workshop at Rock Springs 4-H Center, near Junction City. Whether it's hunting, fishing, or other outdoor activities, women will be introduced to pastimes they may have had an interest in but never had the opportunity to enjoy.

The event, sponsored by KDWP, is for women who have little or no experience baiting a hook, cleaning a quail, building a campfire, or a myriad of other outdoor activities. Skills learned in the workshop will not only help women enjoy these activities, they will equip them to enjoy the outdoors with family and friends.

This year's BOW workshop will use a format that is almost exclusively hands-on. Seminars will help participants become familiar with equipment and all techniques related to these activities – not just operation but safety, care, and ethical use, as well. Experts will be on hand to help participants, who will

choose from more than 40 different activities, including hunting, fishing, wild game cooking, float tubing, archery, stream ecology, canoeing, natural history, backpacking, and camping.

The workshop, designed for women 18 years or older, costs \$180 and will include six meals, two nights of lodging in a cabin (\$175 for tent lodging), supplies, and use of equipment. For Becoming an Outdoors Woman registration material and information, contact Jamie Vonderschmidt at 785-266-3771 or [KansasBOW@sbcglobal.net](mailto:KansasBOW@sbcglobal.net), or Ross Robins at 620-672-5911 or [RossR@wp.state.ks.us](mailto:RossR@wp.state.ks.us).

—Shoup



When adequate revenues are available in the Park Fee Fund, the \$300,000 will be returned to the Road Fund.

The legislature did not take any action related to State Park 24 in Topeka, which was authorized by the 2004 Legislature. Negotiations for the property are ongoing. Last spring, as part of the 14th annual Kansas Celebration of Community Service, dozens of volunteers worked on trails at the proposed park property.

The legislature appropriated \$266,000 from the State General Fund to continue the program that provides park permits and hunting

and fishing licenses to active members of the Kansas National Guard.

The legislature took action to prohibit KDWP from acquiring, operating, or maintaining the Circle K Ranch in Edwards County.

KDWP will be required to spend not less than \$6,000 to maintain a herd of bison in Crawford County from existing Wildlife Fee Fund appropriations.

The legislature appropriated \$31,250 to the State Conservation Commission for conservation easements to match federal funds received from the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Farm

and Ranch Lands Protection Program.

KDWP will be required to purchase or acquire seed, forage, or mulch that is certified by the Kansas Department of Agriculture and meets the standards set forth in the North American Weed Management Forage Program.

The KDWP website contains a summary of 2005 legislation affecting the agency. Go to [www.kdwp.state.ks.us](http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us), click "KDWP Info," "Commission," and "Legislative Update Report."

—LeAnn Schmitt,  
special assistant, Topeka

## NINE FOR 10 ON TURKEY

On April 8 and 9, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks biologists Steve Adams and Jeff Rue conducted the 6th annual Reno County youth turkey hunt. This turkey hunt is part of Pass It On, the department's hunter recruitment and retention program, which is designed to attract new hunters and keep them in the field. Youth ages 12 through 16 were eligible to apply for the limited number of slots.

Adams and Rue began preparation a month before the hunt, scouting and getting permission. Blinds were built at each hunting area to help conceal the guide, hunter, and parents.

On the Friday before the hunt, youth hunters got together to learn about turkey hunting tactics and safety issues. Each young hunter patterned their shotgun, and guides took them out to locate roosting birds. The next morning, guides, hunters and parents were in the blinds before sunrise. All hunters had to quit by 11 a.m.

This year, nine out of the 10 youth hunters bagged their first turkey. As each kid returned from the hunt, they told their story, and they didn't leave out a single detail. Even the "unsuccessful" hunter had a great time. For the guides, the best part of the hunt was hearing the youth hunters talk about their morning in the field. Many will become turkey hunters for life.

An unexpected result of this hunt was that many of the parents who had never turkey hunted discovered that they are now interested in hunting. The guides all said that they got just as much enjoyment out of guiding the youth as they do hunting themselves, satisfaction from creating memories for the kids that will last a lifetime.

—Steve Adams,  
wildlife biologist, Hutchinson

## SANDSAGE BISON RANGE

The KDWP wildlife area 5 miles south of Garden City has a new name. The area, formerly called Finney Game Refuge, is now known as Sandsage Bison Range and Wildlife Area.

Located in the sandsage shortgrass prairie, the 3,670-acre bison range is home to the oldest publicly-owned bison herd in Kansas. The new name better depicts the mission of the bison range, which is to conserve a sample of the sandsage prairie for education and recreation.

Once a part of the Kansas National Forest, the property was deeded by the federal government to the state Fish and Game Department in 1916 for use as a game preserve. Today, the area is managed for viewing bison and other wildlife, hunting, and other recreational activities. The area is a popular destination for vacationers, who may arrange tours to learn about the rich natural and cultural heritage of the Great Plains.

For more information about the Sandsage Bison Range, phone 620-276-8886 or visit the Friends of Sandsage Bison Range website, [www.fofgr.com](http://www.fofgr.com).

—Shoup

## ONLINE PERMITS, AUTOMATION

Beginning Aug. 1, Kansas hunters will be able to purchase over-the-counter big game permits online for the first time. Such permits include resident Whitetail Either Sex and Whitetail Antlerless Only Deer permits, Whitetail Antlerless Only Deer game tags, and resident Archery Antelope permits.

In addition, hunters will enjoy the convenience of a streamlined, automated licensing service wherever licenses are sold. With this point-of-sale electronic licensing system, no longer will hunters have to fill out hand-written forms, and the waiting time for purchase should be greatly reduced.

Of benefit to KDWP and all hunters who care about folks following the law is that rooms will no longer be stacked from ceiling to floor with duplicate paper licenses and permits. Everything will be on computer, and cross-checking to see who has a proper permit or license and who does not will be as easy as the stroke of a keyboard.

—Shoup



### TWO YOOTs

The kids in this picture are Drew Rogers and Matt Otterstedt. The birds were take in Coffee County. Scott Rogers of Stilwell took the picture.



# Attack of the Killer Butterflies

by Mark Shoup



One fall day a few years back, my wife and mother were strolling through the woods on our property when they discovered bobbing swatches of bright orange all about. On closer inspection, they found layer upon layer of them weighing down tree branches. They had experienced the miracle of monarch butterfly migration.

Spring monarch migration begins in the mountains of central Mexico. On the northward leg of the trip, individual monarchs fly as far as they can, perhaps a few hundred miles. Then they stop, lay eggs, and die. The eggs hatch, pupate, and emerge as new butterflies before continuing this leap-frog generational migration as far north as southern Canada, where one generation spends the summer. In fall, these butterflies migrate back to central Mexico, each individual making the entire trip without generational reproduction and death. Back in Mexico, this generation lives through the winter before resuming the northern cycle that leads to death, but survival of the species.

Some might call this process mysterious, even miraculous. I might call it, diabolical . . .

It was a typical fall football afternoon in 1962. Wind was calm and the mild air filled with musky aromas of drying vegetation and the sense of change one feels in late September. The pep band echoed a stirring march across the playing field as Larned and Pratt 8th-grade gladiators squared off.

It was a smash-mouth, grind-it-out affair reminiscent of the glory days of the NFL, primarily because neither team could pass, and we were both slow. All we could do was beat each

other up, which wasn't really effective either. Most of us were too small.

I played halfback and safety for Larned. Toward the end of the first half, we had finally ground the ball down to the Pratt 5-yard line, and I was about to score on a short reverse that fooled everyone except the defense. Just about to the goal line, I felt something slap through my faceguard and blind my right eye. Thinking one of those sneaky Frogs had zapped me with his tongue, I lowered my shoulder and drove forward at the same time someone hammered my now blind side. I hit the ground in the end zone and bounced about five times before crashing into the goal post.

Dizzied, I rolled to my knees and looked up through my good eye. The air was filled with orange stars. I thought I had had a concussion until I felt something crawling from my right eye across my nose. Instinctively, I thought *Spider!*, threw my helmet to the ground and began jumping around in the end zone, slapping my face like a schizophrenic chimpanzee. (Such behavior today would be taken as creative showboating and worthy of great praise in the NFL.)

By the time I came to my senses, I realized I could see out of both eyes again. The air was filled with butterflies. Orange and black butterflies. Our school colors, no less. Realizing that it was more important to regain my cool than be awestruck, I puffed up my chest, swaggered back to retrieve my helmet, and jogged to the huddle for the extra point. By this time, everyone was slapping at butterflies. We missed the point-after and lined up for the kick-off, leading 6-0.

We had a kicker nicknamed

"Tomaine" Schartz because, for those days, he had a wicked toe. (We had no idea "ptomaine" begins with a "p" and wouldn't have changed it had we known.) As we lined up, the butterflies were getting thicker.

"Let 'er fly, Tomaine!" I heard someone yell. Tomaine held up his arm, and at the ref's whistle, punched the pigskin like Rocky Marciano mashing some hapless opponent in the nose. And the ball flew. Or at least it started to. As the missile gained altitude, the orange and black insects bounced off it like X-wings off an Imperial Star Destroyer. Fair or not, as the bugs splattered the ball, its trajectory slowed. It never reached the receiver but began an untimely descent into the waiting arms of a big Pratt lineman. By this time, it was covered in butterfly guts.

I knew at that moment that this big oaf would drop the slippery ball and readied to seize the day.

"Ah...hmpf!" My victory cry was cut short in mid-yell as I sucked a monarch through the elliptical tube of my mouth guard. The ball sputtered out of the lineman's hands directly toward me. Tears ran down my cheeks as I tried to dive for the ball but couldn't take a breath to make the leap. Everything was moving in slow motion: the lineman slipping and reaching desperately my way, a crowd of orange and black and green converging, and the ball spinning across the ground, almost within reach.

The last thing I remember is passing out, if that can be remembered. When I awoke, coughing out bits of butterfly wings and other things fuzzy and unmentionable, my teammates were jumping around me, cheering, and lifting me into the air. Apparently, I had fallen directly on the ball, and the ref ruled it a recovery for Larned.

After that, no one had much stomach for the slippery slugfest, and we held on to win 6-0. It was my greatest moment of sports glory and one of the most horrific experiences of my life.

All of this, at least, is how I remember it, and I still shuddered at the thought of a butterfly landing on my shoulder. Even if it is a miracle.

## Fishin' For Wishes

The Kansas B.A.S.S. Chapter Federation is a statewide organization with more than 500 members in 35 B.A.S.S. clubs. In addition to fishing, members are involved with youth, conservation, and community service.

In 1997, the Kansas B.A.S.S. Chapter Federation adopted the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Kansas as its charity. Since that time, the Kansas Federation has donated more than \$70,000 to the foundation to help fulfill its mission of granting the favorite wish of a Kansas child between the ages of 2 1/2 and 18 suffering a life-threatening condition.

To raise the money, the group has conducted boat raffles, received donations from member clubs, and solicited business sponsors and sympathetic friends. Some member clubs have conducted special fundraising projects within their communities. In 2004, the Make-A-Wish Federation received \$1,465 from the Hi-Plains Bassmasters in Garden City.

In addition, Kansas B.A.S.S. hosts an annual big bass benefit buddy tournament called Fishin' for Wishes to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The event has become one of the largest of its kind in Kansas. Last fall, Fishin' for Wishes drew 83 boats and 186 contestants on Cedar Bluff Reservoir.

Also, Kansas B.A.S.S. has a "Wishing Well" that travels to various lakes with the tournament weigh-in trailer. Following the tournament, each participant is given the opportunity to make a donation in the Wishing Well for the Wish Children of Kansas. During 2004, the Wishing Well yielded nearly \$800.

Kansas B.A.S.S. raised and donated \$13,816 to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Kansas in 2004. In recognition, the National B.A.S.S. Federation presented the Kansas chapter with the annual Federation of the Year Award, presented to the state affiliate that excels in conservation, youth, community service/public relations, and special fundraising events and/or programs.

— *Kent Craft, vice president,  
Kansas B.A.S.S.*

## MASTER ANGLER AWARDS

If you catch a fish by any legal means that is at least as long as the lengths shown below, you are entitled to a Master Angler Award. Measurements are in inches. Fish are measured from the tip of the closed mouth to the tip of the tail with the lobes pinched together. A tape measure is easier to carry than a scale, so by measuring, rather than weighing, it is easier to catch a trophy fish and release it.

—*Shoup*

<b>Bass, largemouth</b>	<b>23"</b>	<b>Gar</b>	<b>48"</b>
<b>Bass, smallmouth</b>	<b>18"</b>	<b>Goldeye</b>	<b>15"</b>
<b>Bass, spotted (Kentucky)</b>	<b>18"</b>	<b>Paddlefish</b>	<b>41"</b>
<b>Bass, striped</b>	<b>35"</b>	<b>Perch, yellow (ring)</b>	<b>12"</b>
<b>Bass, warmouth</b>	<b>10"</b>	<b>Pike, northern</b>	<b>34"</b>
<b>Bass, white</b>	<b>16"</b>	<b>Sauger</b>	<b>20"</b>
<b>Bluegill</b>	<b>10"</b>	<b>Saugeye</b>	<b>24"</b>
<b>Buffalo, bigmouth</b>	<b>30"</b>	<b>Sturgeon, shovelnose</b>	<b>25"</b>
<b>Buffalo, smallmouth</b>	<b>30"</b>	<b>Sunfish, green</b>	<b>11"</b>
<b>Carp</b>	<b>30"</b>	<b>Sunfish, hybrid (green/bluegill)</b>	<b>12"</b>
<b>Catfish, blue</b>	<b>37"</b>	<b>Sunfish, redear</b>	<b>11"</b>
<b>Catfish, bullhead</b>	<b>15"</b>	<b>Trout</b>	<b>20"</b>
<b>Catfish, channel</b>	<b>33"</b>	<b>Walleye</b>	<b>27"</b>
<b>Catfish, flathead</b>	<b>41"</b>	<b>White amur (grass carp)</b>	<b>34"</b>
<b>Crappie</b>	<b>15"</b>	<b>White perch</b>	<b>12"</b>
<b>Drum</b>	<b>25"</b>	<b>Wiper</b>	<b>25"</b>
<b>Eel, American</b>	<b>30"</b>		

## Fishing Pier Facelift

The popular floating fishing pier at Cedar Bluff Reservoir has provided 10 years of worthy service to Cedar Bluff anglers. Since 1995, youngsters in particular have enjoyed the deeper water access provided by this covered pier. It seems that once spring arrives each year, not a day goes by when somebody isn't fishing "under the roof."

But years of punishment from waves and being bashed by chunks of late-winter ice and lashed by summer thunderstorms have taken their toll on the structure. Last summer, it was loosened from its moorings and transplanted to land.

Last winter, fisheries staff replaced the pier's floats, mended welds on the walkways, and sandblasted the frame. The bottom portion of the pier that sits in the water received a special epoxy coating designed to resist rust and provide longer life to the frame.

The final stages of the renovation included a fresh coat of paint to the frame body, attachment of new float drums, and replacement of the floor deck. The pier was moved back to the lake and re-floated this spring in the north shore state park area where drive-up access and parking are close by. The structure is ADA accessible. Renovation of the floating pier was funded through KDWP's Wildtrust program.

—*Lynn Davignon,  
fisheries biologist, Hays*



# What-not Biologist

## Bill Hlavachick, Pratt

**Age:** 71

**Education:** B.A., biology, Adams State College, Alamosa, Colorado, 1961, followed by one year post-graduate study in wildlife biology, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins

**Years of Service:** 33 years, six months – July 15, 1962-Dec. 15, 1995

**Original Hometown:** Durango, Colorado

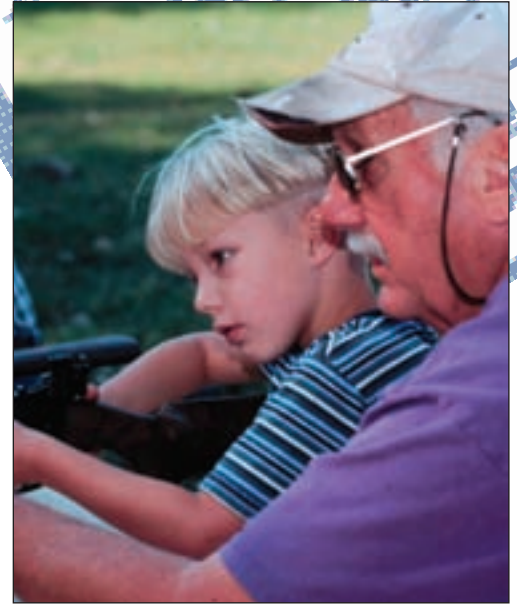
**Positions Held:** started out in the research section as antelope project leader in Hays; came to Pratt in 1973 in charge of buffalo herds, quail farm, and private land management; retired as chief of Wildlife Management Section

**Most Admired Employee:** "Oh, my. It's hard to pick out one. I learned a lot from Bob Wood. Jim Norman was influential in my early years. Oliver Gasswint was on the review board that hired me. Keith Sexson is doing a great job as the operations director. He can just do anything. And I really appreciate Joe Kramer."

**Toughest assignment:** "That one is easy. It was when Fish and Game merged with Parks in 1987. I spent a year in the Parks Division. I felt like a fish out of water. But several of us helped integrate parks into the rest of the agency."

**Most Important Issue Facing KDWP in the 21st Century:** "The hardest thing today is that there are so many more people using the resources but fewer people wanting to pay the bills. It seems like conservation and wildlife issues are the first to be cut when it comes to funding."

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** To celebrate the 100th anniversary of our agency, this and the following two issues of *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine's "Nature" page will be devoted to profiles of retired, long-time employees of the agency, folks who dedicated their lives to the nature this page usually features.



"What brought me to Kansas was a job," Hlavachick quips. "I was walking by the bulletin board in the wildlife office at Colorado State one day, and there was a note saying to call the chief of game in Kansas. I did, and I got the job."

It turned out to be more than just a job, however. In nearly 34 years with the agency, Hlavachick wore many hats. He helped trap and transplant the first modern-day turkeys into Kansas, which led to one of the most successful wildlife comebacks in the state's history. He also helped re-establish other species, such as deer and antelope. He oversaw buffalo projects and helped with upland bird research and re-establishment. At one time or another, he managed both public and private land projects, controlled shooting areas, the agency's research section, and the nongame and endangered species sections. And, he worked with parks.

"People called me the what-not biologist," he jokes. "I would do whatever

needed doing at the time."

Of all these activities, Hlavachick's fondest memories are of working with the department in his early days. "There was just a small number of us," he explains. "The sense of camaraderie and cohesiveness was tremendous. Deer management was a dream and turkeys were almost out of the picture, but we were optimistic about bringing these species back to Kansas. We stocked the original group of turkeys in 1965, got them out of Texas, and I helped stock them throughout the state."

Becoming a wildlife biologist wasn't so much a dream, however, as a calling. "It wasn't really my goal to go into this field," Hlavachick explains, "but I grew up with it. My dad worked for the Colorado Division of Wildlife for 25 years. But I majored in biology, and when I was a senior, someone told me I needed more wildlife management courses, so that's why I went to Colorado State."

What might have seemed an acci-

dent, however, evolved into a perfect design. "I couldn't have drawn out a plan for a career any better than what I enjoyed," Hlavachick says. "There were some ups and down, but I really enjoyed my career. Oliver [Gasswint] once said that we were working a year and one-half for every year we put in, but you didn't mind it. Heck, you just worked until you got the job done. There was no such thing as 40 hours. But I have fond, fond memories. I don't have a bit of animosity toward anyone. I'd just like to think I made a difference."

Considering the abundance of turkey and deer in the state today, not to mention stable upland bird populations, I think there is little question that Bill Hlavachick made a difference, one from which the hunters and wildlife watchers of Kansas will benefit for years. Let's hope they remember Bill the next time they hear a flock of turkeys go to roost or see an antelope bound across the plains.

—Shoup

## ON THIS DAY

## SQUIRREL SEASON

The 1940-41 Kansas hunting season will open officially August 1. Under the existing law, fox squirrels may be pursued from August 1 to December 31, both dates inclusive. —*Kansas Fish and Game*, July, 1940

## NEW HATCHERY

Ward T. Bower, Acting United States Commissioner of Fisheries, informs the editor that the construction of the Federal Fish Hatchery near Farlington will have progressed to the point where it can be placed in operation during the spring of 1941, using a small number of the proposed 39 ponds. Upon completion of the project, a permanent personnel of two or three fish culturists will be in charge of the property and the work. —*Kansas Fish and Game*, July, 1940

## THE JUDGE SUSTAINS US

After a lengthy review of the Kansas Park Program, F. Hiner Dale, judge of the First Judicial District of Oklahoma, has ordered Lee Larabee, as chairman, and other members of the Commission, to show cause why the Commission should not accept his congratulations on the near completion of such a program. He agrees to an argument by "Ole Dave" appearing in a recent issue of the department magazine that beaver should be given complete protection. —*Kansas Fish and Game*, July, 1940

## 400,000 VISIT STATE PARKS

We're not having enough fun. We're seeing faces these



days long enough to eat oats from the bottom of a churn just because we spend our idle moments worrying about the war, potential taxes, and tomorrow. The old neighborhood itself, ordinarily a very happy part of our lives, is covered with a mantle of gloom now that the wise-cracking lads are away at camp. Joe was over the other night telling of Tommy's enthusiasm about the wonders of camp life and how fine this young army of America is being treated. Joe, while I was at the door arguing with Tony's shifty-eyed delivery boy, was struck with one of his occasional inspirations. Joe is of the opinion that the entire neighborhood, for its own good, should get out of doors on a camping trip that Tommy says is so much fun.

Last year, nearly 400,000 visitors spent a day or more at the state parks camping. Arrangements have been made to entertain many more visitors this season. Most of the state parks have facilities designed especially to provide you with the relaxation you need. We would especially recommend Butler, Meade, Scott, Neosho, Decatur, Leavenworth, Woodson, and Ottawa County state parks.

—*Kansas Fish and Game*, July, 1941

## FIELDS STEPS DOWN

Flanked by Secretary Hayden and Wildlife and Parks Commission Chairman John Dykes, John Fields steps down after 6 1/2 years on the

Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission. "John was always working for his constituents in southeast Kansas, and he wanted to do what was right for our natural resources," said Mike Miller.



## KACEE AWARD TO KDWP

Secretary Mike Hayden accepts the 2004 Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE) Award for Excellence in Conservation and Environmental Education on behalf of KDWP. Pictured from left to right are

Wildlife and Parks commissioner Shari Wilson, Wilson State Park conservation worker Mike Rader, KDWP Assistant Secretary Keith Sexson, KACEE President Kate Grover, KDWP Parks Division Director Jerry Hover, Hayden, and Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.



# Fun Firefly Facts

by Kira Everhart  
K-State Media Relations

They flit and they fly. They flash and they fascinate. But the science behind the firefly can be as interesting as its luminescent beauty. Kansas State University's firefly expert, Larry Buschman, professor of entomology, shares some of his knowledge on the firefly:

- On average, a firefly's lifespan will be one or two years, but it spends only one or two weeks of that life in its adult stage as the flashing insect most are familiar with. The rest of its life is spent underground in the larval stage.

- Fireflies are natural predators. As larvae, they feed on soft-bodied creatures in the soil — most commonly, snails and earthworms.

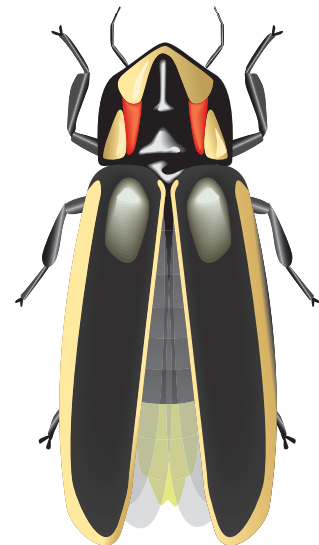
- Once in the adult stage, most fireflies do not feed. They may consume nectar or dew for moisture, but otherwise sustain themselves on nutrients they have built up from the larval stage. Their main goal as adults is to find a mate and lay eggs before dying.

- There are hundreds of different firefly species found around the world and 10 to 20 in Kansas.

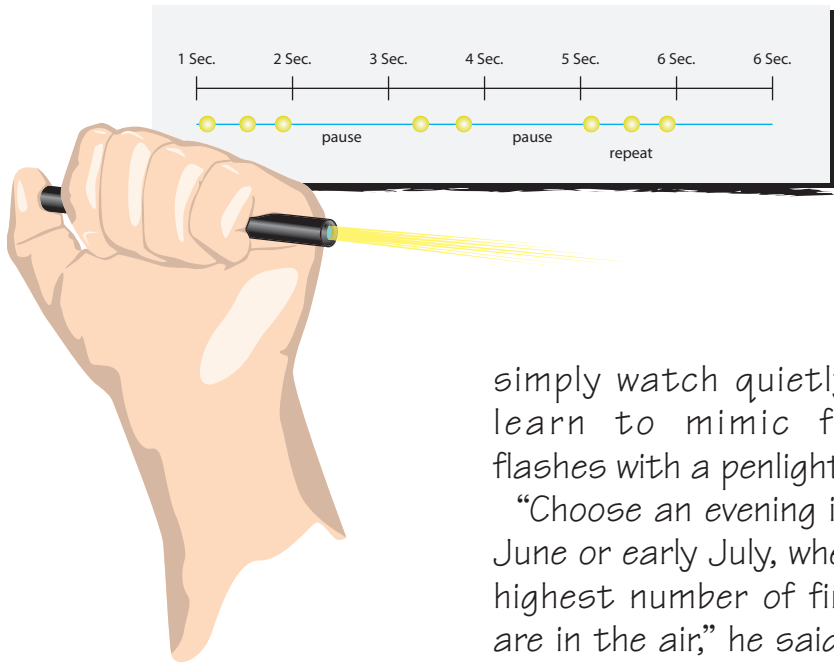
- The terms “firefly” and “lightning bug” are both technically incorrect when describing the insect. It is not a fly or a bug — it is a type of beetle in the family Lampyridae.



First Instar Larval Stage



Adult



- Each species of firefly has its own communication system. The species-specific signal can range from a single flash to a pattern of multiple quick flashes.

- Male fireflies fly broadcast species-specific signals. The female waits in the undergrowth or on the ground and answers the correct species signal. The male then follows the responses until it locates the female.

According to Buschman, you can learn to speak firefly if you

simply watch quietly and learn to mimic firefly flashes with a penlight.

“Choose an evening in late June or early July, when the highest number of fireflies are in the air,” he said. “The best time is following an afternoon rain, when the ground is moist.”

Take with you a small penlight that you can switch on and off quickly. Find a firefly and observe its flash pattern. How long does the flash last? How many are there in the pattern? Study the pattern and try to mimic it.

You can then pretend to be a male firefly looking for females to answer your

signal. When you find a female, observe how long she waits before responding with a flash and try to mimic the same pause.

Now you can pretend to be a female firefly responding to male flashes. The female response is often a single flash timed to start about one second after the male flash started. “If you succeed in mimicking the species’ pattern, the males will be attracted to your flashlight,” Buschman said. “They will land on your hand and begin searching for the female that is surely hiding somewhere on you.”

This summer, get outside one warm night and see if you can become a firefly.



**Insect collecting kits can be used to study fireflies and other insects and only cost a few dollars.**



# Backlash

by Mike Miller

## Where The Halogen Light Won't Shine

Years ago, before either of us had good sense, I occasionally talked Rocky into going night fishing. We'd never been successful, but we'd heard too many wild fish stories. With just a little encouragement, Rocky helped me plan a night fishing trip to Cheney Reservoir one hot July day.

My fantasy was an afternoon/night fishing trip. I dreamt of catching white bass as they chased shad on the surface during the day, then reeling in white bass one after another after dark under a submersible light. It was a fantasy never fulfilled, but I was a dreamer.

Rocky and I are both hopeless optimists, so by the time I called Lennie, we were in a frenzy. Lennie, though, was leery of anything that would get him away from the TV and air conditioner on a hot afternoon. I told him about the huge Cheney white bass and the fishing reports that said they were tearing up schools of shad on the surface.

"All we have to do this afternoon is follow the gulls," I said excitedly. "The report says guys casting jigs and slabs into the feeding frenzies are catching dozens of two-pound whites."

"I don't know," Lennie said cautiously. "That sounds good — too good. What'd it say about night fishing?"

"Uh, the report didn't mention night fishing," I said. "But I know they're catching whites under the lights at Glen Elder. It should work at Cheney, too."

"I dunno," Lennie grumbled.

"C'mon, put new line on your reels and go with us. The report also says they're catching some *heeuuuge* wipers along with the whites. Without new line, you'll break off a lot."

That did it. Lennie could almost hear his reel's drag buzzing against a big wiper.

"When are you leaving?"

"We'll pick you up in an hour."

No one answered when we knocked on Lennie's door, so we walked in. Lennie met us coming from the bathroom with a bloody paper towel wrapped around his thumb.

"Yeeoww!" I said recoiling. "What'd you do?"

"Go without me." Lennie said, tightly clutching his left thumb. "I can't get this little cut to stop bleeding."

While putting new line on his reel, Lennie discovered the tip of his favorite rod was broken. He was using a pocket knife to clean up the rod tip so he could glue on a new eye when it slipped. When he unwrapped about two feet of paper towel and showed me, I tried to convince him his "little" cut needed stitches.

"Nah, you guys go without me," he said with a sad puppy face. "I'll be alright."

Big ol' Lennie doesn't like needles.

"Let's go," I said, motioning for him to follow. "We'll take you to get 'er stitched up, and then we'll go fishing."

Lennie reluctantly got his stitches and, as I suspected, wasn't in any pain when we took off for the lake. It was too late to get any surface action by the time we launched the boat, so we cruised around watching the graph, looking for a place to set out the light.

"This drop-off might be good," I said, as I focused on the graph. "What do you guys think?"

Lennie was staring blankly into the water, so I elbowed him in the ribs.

"What?" he blurted. "I heard you. I was just wondering if the fish will be able to see the light in this muddy water."

"It's a halogen," I said, like I knew what that meant. "It puts out a lot of light."

I set the anchor as the western sky darkened. We all leaned over the port side of the boat as I dropped the submersible light into the water. As the light slid a foot below the surface, it went dark.

"Whoops!" I said, pulling the light up, thinking it went out. "Make sure that battery clip's on tight," I motioned to Rocky.

Rocky grinned. He knew the light didn't go out.

"Water's too muddy."

He was right. I dropped the light and pulled it up several times. There was a basketball-sized halo at six inches, but it simply went dull-brown at a foot deep. Lennie was still staring blankly at the water, trying not to say "I told you so," so I elbowed him again, just in case.

He looked at his watch and cut to the quick. "If it wasn't for your stupid night fishing fantasy, I'd be sitting on the couch under the air conditioner, watching TV, without stitches in my thumb, which, by the way, is starting to throb."

We were silent on the ride back to the ramp. But my mind wandered, and I began speaking before thinking.

"You know, I've heard they catch lots of big channel cats during the summer drifting dead shad along the flats. We could . . ."

"Hold on, hold on, hold on!" Lennie barked, even though Rocky was leaning in, wanting to hear more. "We're going home now, or I'll show you another place your fancy halogen light won't shine."

