Pheasant ecology part 2 of 6: July and August

By Travis Ruina, re-printed with permission from the South Dakota GPF Digest

In part 1 of this 6 part series, we learned what pheasants were up to during May and June. We discovered how pheasants can overcome low annual survival by exhibiting high reproductive potential through large clutch sizes and multiple re-nesting attempts if previous nests are destroyed. May is the peak egg laying month while June is the peak of hatch for pheasant nests. Hens have invested vast amounts of energy into egg production and brood rearing responsibilities by the end of June. Their body weight and condition plummet during this time because food intake can not keep up with the energy demanding responsibilities of motherhood. Newly hatched chicks are targeting insects for most of their diet during June because a protein rich diet is needed to grow feathers and tissue. Roosters spent most of May and June displaying to attract hens, but this activity peaked in April and is nearing complete by early July.

Now the dog days of summer are here. Nearly all hens are done nesting and those who had successful nests continue to lead their broods to areas with succulent forbs where chicks can forage on insects. The roosters’ breeding responsibilities are nearly complete until next spring. One may think July and August should be a cake walk for pheasants with the most energy demanding time of the year behind them. This is true for roosters, but hens have their most challenging days ahead in July and August.

Chicks are not out of the woods either. Many will be killed by predators or farm machinery and the remaining chicks need to gorg on insects and seeds to gain weight before fall. As we all know, winter can come awfully early in South Dakota. So why can roosters lazily coast through July and August without a care in the world, while hens struggle to survive? Summer responsibilities for roosters are quite simple. Finish the molt that was started in late June and start preparing for winter by gaining weight. Roosters have been losing weight for 5 months and may weigh 15% less than they did during mid-winter. Since courtship and breeding responsibilities dwindle by July, roosters can take advantage of abundant food resources and replace all their feathers and gain modest weight in July. Rate of weight gain increases in August as energy is no longer needed to grow replacement feathers. July and August are quite relaxing for roosters, but hens have their most challenging days ahead in July and August.

As roosters are taking advantage of rich food resources to molt and gain weight, most hens are attending to broods and beginning their molt in July. Hens molt after egg laying and incubation because completing all three at the same time would be too energy demanding. While roosters can focus all efforts on molting and gaining weight, hens have energy demanding brood rearing duties. Hens must lead broods to habitats rich with insects and keep them out of harms way by keeping an eye out for predators. She has already lost 20% of her body weight since April and brood rearing and molting activities in July could cost her another 10% of her body weight. She can not take in enough energy to cover these highly energy demanding tasks.

Hen pheasants are in their poorest physical condition in August during most years and could weigh 30% less than before egg laying began. Only during years of extreme winter weather would a hen pheasant be lighter in March than in August. They must reverse the trend of losing weight as death occurs when 40% of her body weight is lost. August is a critical time for hens as their stressed bodies are more vulnerable to disease and parasites. Hen survival during August can be lower than during winter.

There are several factors that affect just how stressed (loss of body weight and body fat) hens become in August. But not all factors are obvious. This is important since survival is highly dependant on how stressed hens become during late summer. First, when the hen was hatched the previous year influences her condition going into winter and ultimately the next spring and summer. If a hen was raised from a late hatching nest due to weather or predation of early nests, she will be lighter going into winter than early hatched hens. This hen will be lighter and in poorer condition than early hatched hens during the following August.

How many eggs a hen lays during spring can influence her body weight by late summer. Cold and wet weather can delay nesting, but egg production is based on length of day. Hens begin producing eggs whether the weather is ideal for nesting or not. Eggs produced during inclement weather are “dumped” in nests of other birds (other pheasants, grouse, ducks, and etc.) or even on the ground. Hens forced to re-nest due to prestated nests also produce more eggs. Obviously, hens that produce fewer eggs during spring will be in better condition by late summer.

Additionally, the previous winter can influence hen condition during spring and summer. As more body fat is used to keep warm during winter, less is in reserve for egg production during spring. Areas with better winter cover yield heavier hens in spring which can influence egg production and hen survival during summer. Who thought winter habitat was so important to pheasants during spring and summer! Besides these factors, pheasants are also stressed by extreme summer heat. As long as temperatures stay under 102°F, pheasants can stay cool by limiting activities to morning and evening and by utilizing shade during mid day. As temperatures rise above this critical value, pheasants must pant similar to a dog to stay cool. This behavior, called gular fluttering requires additional energy (which produces heat) but the process removes more heat than it produces. As you can see, these heat stress days can require energy at a time when pheasants do not have a lot to spare. July and August is also a critical time for chicks. They are tasked with foraging on insects and seeds to grow tissue and feathers while avoiding predation. Half of pheasant chicks will not survive until fall due to predation or farm machinery. While adults molt once during summer, chicks actually molt twice. By early July, chicks have replaced their down with hen-like flight feathers. In early August, chicks begin a post juvenile molt to replace their juvenile feathers with their adult plumage. By 17 or 18 weeks of age, pheasant “chicks” resemble adults in plumage.
President's Column
by Rich Widman

As I write this, I'm thinking of my 4th of July vacation to Pierre. It's pretty close to an annual event because it always involves a few weeks of her family's friends, love to take advantage of Grandma's unlimited supply of junk food and Grandpa's willingness to pull them about the Missouri River or Lake Oahe in the scenic falls for the past few years. I've only heard a couple of reasons why grandparents always rank way above Mom and Dad! 

Now, there are a few things you need to know about the Missouri in Pierre. For one thing, the water “below” the Oahe Dam is freezing cold because it comes from the immense depths of the country's fourth-largest artificial reservoir below a 1,248-foot deep cliff one of the largest and dammed in the world. So if you jump in, you jump out quickly without any help from life preserver because it never... no matter how hard you try, you'll never be able to dive deep enough to retrieve them!

I can't imagine not being able to enjoy clean water, but did you know by some estimates more than 50% of America's rivers and streams are impaired by pollution? Some waters have got to their lowest point in history. Others have said that if we don't stop the EPA, they will regulate the water on our sidewalks! Really? Do people seriously believe that? The EPA had bipartisan support when formed back in the 1970s when our rivers were on fire and acid rain fell from the skies. Our lawmakers knew they had to do something or they had to do it. That doesn't mean there was no opposition. Some said it would cost too much and destroy our economy if we required the polluters to stop polluting, but water is much cheaper than air. Water will never cost us more than we pay for it. 

Unfortunately, for the last decade or so, the quality of our air and water has been declining again, in part because the EPA has been weakened. For some reason certain people think a threat is a threat when there is sometimes a concern, and we want to avoid that. However, the biggest problems occur when we put the almighty dollar and the convenience of a few ahead of the health of our air, land, water and wildlife.

So don't fall for the old “this is just an EPA power grab” scare tactic! Unfortunately, we all have those times that you don’t care how much they pollute as long as they can make a buck. Well, but those have who care about our families and our future generations, and to those folks, I say “Thank you!”

Our organization has honored Senator Thune in the past, and again this year when he said he will criticize this stand because he might get mad at us. Well, I know he and I won’t always agree (who agrees with their lawyer 100% of the time?), but I’ve applauded the Senator when he’s helped us, and I will also let him, Senator Tim Johnson and Representative Kristi Noem know when I believe they’ve hurt us. I expect I’ll get a phone call, too, if they feel wronged.

Although we occasionally have our differences, we all have one thing in common; our love of outdoor stories. Listen to each generation’s kids. They’ve had it tougher than their kids. The old “I had to walk to school in 10 foot snowdrifts, uphill both ways” story has made the rounds for years now. And certain things, like technology, do make life easier in some ways. For each new generation today could not even imagine life without indoor plumbing, electricity, and air conditioning, let alone our cell phones and heart computers. 

However, some people's expectations can be surprising. While stopped for gas in Vivian recently, I was asked by an older couple if Pierre had any "decent hotels." They were traveling from Arizona, and the wife was panicking because they had stopped in Kennebec and Prosho and just could not stay in those motels! I told them to just keep heading west because Kadoka was up the road, but they look out for Buffalo.

Okay, I didn't tell them that, but I chuckled a little because my brother and I stayed at the Kennebec motel one hunting trip. It was comfortable, and we could even keep our three dogs in the room with us. What more could you want from a motel? We also went to the nearby bar that night and each had a steak, salad, and several beers for 80 cents each. Try this in Arizona! If you’ve been hunting or fishing in South Dakota long enough, you’ve been there, done that! Too. I can hear it now from the old-timers: “Back in my day, we didn’t have motels. We slept on the dirt because that’s what feels like death. Sure, it’s refreshing, but there’s a fine line between refreshing and hypothermia.

Let’s keep telling these stories and make a million more by doing our part in preserving our outdoors! We can’t do it alone! Remember to “ask JUST ONE” buddy to join. We need everyone to help!

Our 2014 SDWF annual convention is August 22-24 in Aberdeen, hosted by the Brown County Sportsman. We’ll see them all there for their help in putting this together and ask all members to donate door prizes, auction items or few bucks to make it a huge success!
Bait Bucket Biology: State fisheries biologists struggle to manage for unintended species

It seems like a good idea. A bucket full of crappie could make a great addition to a pond all the locals take their kids to catch bluegills on. And one afternoon a well-intentioned angler dumps a bucket full of to-small-to-eat crappies in the pond, sure it’s illegal but they’ll just make the fishing better, right? Actually, no they probably won’t, according to Game, Fish and Parks fisheries biologists. A few years after introduction those crappie could grow to dominate the pond or in the absence of predators compete for food with the bluegill and end up stunting both species’ growth.

Then there’s everything that comes with the crappie, from larval invasive aquatic plants, such as Eurasian water milfoil, any of which could destroy a once popular fishing hole.

That scenario has played out all over the state in public waters managed by GF&P biologists. Well intended anglers, hoping to make things better more often than not end up doing far more harm than good, said Rapid City based Regional Fisheries Manager Gene Galinat.

"People think they’re doing good but they’re really not," he said.

Galinat, who oversees the lakes, ponds and streams of the Black Hills, which have been hit particularly hard by what some biologists call "bucket biology," said all but two Black Hills lakes have fallen victim to the misguided, though often well intentioned, practice.

Central South Dakota has seen its share of bait bucket species introductions as well. Regional Fisheries Manager Dan Jost, who manages the region’s smaller lakes and ponds, said it happens all the time.

One pond near Timber Lake, he manages was set aside as a seasonal trout fishery until someone put pan fish in it.

"Without any pressure, the population took off," Jost said.

Now it’s tougher to catch the trout he stocks each spring. But the biggest worry he has is the introduction of rough fish and invasive species such as Eurasian water milfoil, curly leaf pond weed or the European rudd—a small invasive fish.

"Whenever you’re transporting water, you’re transporting everything that’s in it," Jost said.

Invasive plants such as milfoil and pondweed can take over the entire surface of a pond, choke out native plants and make it nearly impossible for anglers to actually fish.

For Missouri River fisheries managers, invasive species are the greatest concern as well.

"The risk of Aquatic Invasive Species in bucket biology is huge," said Regional Fisheries Manager Mark Fincel, who is based in Fort Pierre.

On the river, Fincel said, the problem is less about anglers stocking fish on their own and more about dumping unused baitfish in the water. This is especially true if the baitfish come from out of state. Anything could be in the water from invasive plants to microscopic zebra mussel larvae called veligers.

"The veligers are microscopic, so you wouldn’t be able to see them," Fincel said.

Zebra Mussels have wreaked havoc in the Great Lakes, clogging water intake pipes and filtering out the plankton that larval fish need to survive.

But the most easily recognized threat is Asian carp, said Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator Mike Smith.

"Our river system is the perfect ecosystem for Asian Carp," Smith said. "The reservoirs have plenty of water and tributaries for the carp to spawn in."

Asian carp can’t spread any further north in the Missouri River system without help. They’re stopped by Gavin’s Point Dam near Yankton but if a juvenile carp gets into a bait bucket that is then dumped above the dam the carp will be there to stay, Smith said.

So far, nuisance species such as Asian carp and zebra mussels have been kept out of Missouri River reservoirs. So, some of the biggest headaches from bait bucket biology still come from the intentional stocking of game fish into waters they aren’t supposed to be in.

"The main issue with moving game fish around is, it makes things more difficult to manage," Smith said.

Deerfield Lake and Horsethief Lake in the Black Hills are both prime examples of what happens when someone takes it upon themselves to stock a lake.

Deerfield Lake, which like most lakes in the Black Hills, is managed to be a trout fishery, now has millions of rock bass, so many, in fact, that they’ve become stunted. Most aren’t much more than a few inches long.

They’re aggressive little buggers and will strip a trout angler’s hook of bait within seconds. They also have a penchant for aquatic insects which trout rely on for their food.

"What we see is when we have perch or rock bass in a lake, our trout begin to suffer," Galinat said.

Horsethief Lake, which also was supposed to be managed exclusively for trout, now has bluegills, crappie, rock bass and perch, most of which are stunted by over competition.

Biologists try to prevent those situations by keeping the number of different species in a given lake or pond as small as possible. That allows the species that are in the lake to grow larger as well as making the lake easier to manage.

The best way to manage water is to keep it as simple as possible," Galinat said.

For Jost, the biggest problems often arise when someone decides to introduce large predator fish, such as northern pike, into a lake or pond.

"If you’re managing for a species like Large Mouth Bass and someone introduces pike that can be a big problem," Jost said.

Both pike and bass are fairly large, aggressive predators. That means they often will compete directly for food. So both species could end up being smaller than they otherwise would be.

Northern pike are perhaps one of the most notorious fish species anglers take it on themselves to introduce to a lake. They’re tough and fairly easy to transport. They’re also extremely aggressive and quickly grow large enough to eat just about anything.

Those traits make them extremely popular as game fish in some places but they’ve become a real problem on trout lakes like Pactola Reservoir in the Black Hills. It doesn’t take long for a pike to grow big enough to eat the nine to 15 inch rainbow trout GF&P stocks in the lake for anglers.

"So here we are providing a good quality fishery and then people build up a population of non-producers," Galinat said. "It becomes a very selfish situation in my eyes."
August 22 – 24, 2014 Schedule of Events
Hosted by the Sportsman’s Club of Brown County @ the SCBC Rifle Range, located 5.5 miles South of the Hwy 281 & Hwy 12 Intersection, and at the Best Western, Aberdeen, located at 1440 8th Ave NW.

Friday – August 22nd
CASINO NIGHT – Try your luck and earn some bucks for the SDWF at the SCBC rifle range. The fun begins at 5 PM for those who wish to shoot their rifles or handguns. (No range available. We will have rides to and from the motel if you wish to partake in adult beverages. No range fees, but bring your own guns and ammo.) There might even be some competitions involved. At 6:00 P.M., help yourself to beverages and camaraderie, and a variety of games will be available. We will have rides to and from the motel if you wish to partake in adult beverages. (For rides, call Arnie at 380-2114, Bill at 380-8586, or the motel at 229-4040.)
Come hungry: We’ll also have a great meal for $10.
All profits from the Casino Games and food will be donated to the SDWF!

Prices and Fees
Delegate Registration Fee - $15.00
(No delegate registration fee to the general public.)

Friday: SDWF Convention Fun Night: Join us at the rifle range for beverages and casino games. Come hungry, too: BBQ chicken and Fixings are available for $10. All proceeds from the games and food go to the SDWF.

Saturday lunch - Burgers and Brats - $10.00

Saturday night Banquet Dinner - $30.00
• Garden Salad and Choice of Three Dressings
• Gourmet Pasta Salad
• Garlic Mashed Potatoes
• Glazed Carrots

Entree Choices:
• Roasted Pork Loin with Marsala Sauce
• Country Pot Roast with Savory Gravy
• And ice cream for dessert!

200 PM: SDWF Board of Directors Post-Convention Meeting (To include new officers.)
• Call to Order
• Consideration of Approval of Absence from meeting for any absent Officer or Director
• Review and approve any Executive Committee action taken between meetings
• Appointment of the Secretary-Treasurer and Approval by the Governing Board
• Approval of the Bond for the Secretary-Treasurer
• Approval of employment contracts for Executive Directors and Secretary-Treasurer
• President: appoint or reappoint Directors-at-Large with Approval of the Governing Board
• Act on any Application of a Past President within the last 10 years if received.

Committee Appointments:
• Resolution Committee - consists of 8 members
• Articles and By-Laws Committee - consists of 5 members
• Endowment Fund Committee - consists of 5 members
• Nominating Committee - consists of 5 members
• National Affairs Committee - consists of 5 members
• Budget and Finance Committee - consists of 5 members
• Credentials Committee - consists of 5 members
• Appointment of the Legislative Lobbyists
• Appointment of delegate and alternate delegate to the NWF annual convention
• Set the fall meeting date, place and time.
• Any further discussion on budget, PR and development
• Any further business.
• Executive Session
• Adjourn

3:00 PM - Short Meeting of the Camo Coalition Board of Directors.
3:30 PM - Short meeting of the new SDWF Executive Board

3:30 PM ~ Short meeting of the new SDWF Executive Board
• Report on Camo Coalition
• Grasslands update
• Short Break
• Approval of last year's financial statement
• Further discussion on and adoption of the budget
• Nominations: Open positions for Sunday’s vote.
• Any further business
• Elections for open positions
• Oath of Office induction for newly elected directors and officers
• Any further resolutions: Bob Jacobson
• 12:00 Noon lunch break if needed, lunch on your own.
• 2:00 PM: Adjourn

Saturday – August 23rd
• 7:30 AM - Registration at the Terry O’Keefe Youth Hunter Education Center at the Rifle Range.
• 8:00 AM - SDWF Board of Directors Pre-Convention Meeting
  ➢ Call to Order
  ➢ Consideration of Approval of Absence from meeting for any absent Officer or Director
  ➢ Approval of the Minutes of the Spring Governing Board Meeting
  ➢ Approval of the Treasurer's Financial Report (see also below)
  ➢ Review and approve any Executive Committee action taken between meetings
  ➢ Review of any delinquent dues from affiliate clubs not received by July 1st
  ➢ and approval of seating of delegates from delinquent affiliates
  ➢ Any further business
  ➢ Adjourn

• 8:30 AM: First Session of the 69th Annual Convention Board of Directors, Affiliate Delegates and the public
  ➢ Call to Order
  ➢ Invocation and Prayer
  ➢ Pledge of Allegiance
  ➢ Seating of the delegates
  ➢ Report from the Executive Director
  ➢ Approval of the Treasurer’s Financial Report
  ➢ Committee Reports:
    ➢ By-laws
    ➢ Resolutions
    ➢ Budget and Finance
    ➢ PR and Development
  ➢ Nominations: Open positions for Sunday's vote.
    ➢ Short Break
  ➢ 10:30 AM - Tony Leif, SD Dept. of Game, Fish and Parks
    ➢ Quick preview of afternoon programs and other options.
  ➢ Noon - Catered lunch at the range.
  ➢ 1:00 PM - Presentation on grass and wetland easements by personal from the Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge.
  ➢ 2:30 PM - Presentation by Collin O'Mara, new President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation, his scheduling and availability allows.
  ➢ Other speakers as scheduling, availability and time allows.
  ➢ 5:30 PM - Social, Dinner, Conservation Awards & Auction at the Best Western, Aberdeen. Open to the public: bring a friend!

Sunday – August 24th
The Sunday Morning Session of the 69th Annual Convention will be held at the Best Western in Aberdeen, room to be announced.

• 8:30 AM Registration for newcomers
• 9:00 AM: CALL TO ORDER
  ➢ Invocation and Prayer
  ➢ Pledge of Allegiance and Conservation Pledge
  ➢ Seating of the delegates
  ➢ Affiliate reports and updates
  ➢ Committee Reports:
    ➢ Youth Conservation Camp (including Endowment Fund update)
    ➢ Any other updates
  ➢ David Pinfolt, NWF Regional Representative and Outreach Coordinator
  ➢ Report from Dave Nauman and Chris Hasla on lobbying efforts/current issues
51st Youth Conservation Camp

For the 51st consecutive year, young campers from across South Dakota and a few from Minnesota traveled to the Black Hills to attend camp. This year’s camp was full with 117 campers in attendance. Campers, along with counselors and staff, gathered at Camp Bob Marshall to spend the week of June 1 – 7 learning about wildlife and conservation. The 51st annual SDWF Youth Conservation Camp provided these young people an opportunity to make new friends, hear the message of conservation, and have a fun-filled, exciting time. The attendance (for the most part) and outstanding programs provided both the campers and staff an exceptional camp week.

The week’s activities really brought out the enthusiasm of the young people. On Monday campers were divided into groups. In the morning both groups were bussed to Rapid City. One group spent the morning getting an in-depth tour of the Cleghorn Fish Hatchery. The second group spent the morning at the new South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks Outdoor Campus West in Rapid City. What an amazing facility. The campers toured the facility and participated in activities such as archery, gun shooting, canoeing, and kayaking. In the afternoon the two groups switched venues. On Tuesday morning the staff of Custer State Park provided programs for the campers. The young people had the opportunity to select from the following hikes: Prairie Trail, the Lover’s Leap Trail, Little Devil’s Tower, and because of our numbers, Sylvan Lakeshore Trail. In the afternoon they got to choose among Bison Herd Management, Fire & Wildlife Ecology, Forestry in Custer State Park, Vegetation Management in Custer State Park, and Elk Tracking. On Wednesday and Thursday, campers selected sessions ranging from rifle, handgun, shotgun, and muzzle loading shooting, archery, lake survey, fly-tying & fishing, radio tracking, lake fishing, waterfowl hunting, boating safety, can you canoe, wilderness survival class, solve the case, birding in the Black Hills, dutch and outdoor cooking, trapping in South Dakota, nature photography, deer hunting and turkey hunting. Because campers selected which programs they wanted to attend, the response was overwhelmingly positive. Wednesday afternoon campers got to see Cleghorn Fish Hatchery bring a truck load of catchable trout for stocking in Bismarck Lake. On Friday, campers traveled to the grassland wilderness area east of the Black Hills. Campers divided into five groups and attended three sessions in the morning and two in the afternoon. The five sessions included: “What is a Wilderness Area,” presented by Sean Kittrell and Terry Mayes; “The History and Origin of the Grasslands,” presented by David Miller; “The Geology of the Grasslands,” presented by Chuck Mickels; “The Prairie Ecosystem,” presented by Robert Novotny; and “Don’t Get Lost in the Wilderness” (the use of GPS), which I presented.

The evenings were also filled with interesting presentations. Monday evening, Dan Streifel, an avid wildlife photographer from Aberdeen, showed an awesome PowerPoint on birds that he has photographed in South Dakota. Dan has photos of over 300 species of South Dakota birds. Tuesday evening, Bill Schultze presented a program on Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Wednesday evening, all campers traveled to Mt. Rushmore for the spectacular lighting ceremony. Thursday evening, Maggie Engler and John Halverson of South Dakota Black Hills Raptor Society brought several birds of prey including a red tailed hawk, a great horned owl, and several smaller birds of prey and described each bird in detail. On Friday night, our campers showcased their talent with a series of skits and fun activities followed by a warmly received PowerPoint presentation of the week’s activities.

Every year the camp is proud to present awards to outstanding individuals and campers. The Roehr Conservation Award, presented to the outstanding girl camper, went to Julia Stueven of Pierre. Julia will be invited back to camp next year as a Counselor-in-Training (CIT). The Erdman Conservation award, presented to the outstanding boy camper, went to Zachary Dempsey of Rapid City. Zachary will also be invited back to camp next year as a CIT. Congratulations to these outstanding young people.

Each year, awards are presented to individuals who have made a significant contribution to camp. The Larson Conservation Award, presented to an individual who is not part of the camp staff, went to Harvey Malon and Maurice Olsen from Rapid City. Harvey and Morie have shown that you’re never too old to make a difference (they are both over 90 years old). The boys, as I like to call them, went out and raised the money to send over 30 campers from the Rapid City area to camp. The McClellan Conservation Award is presented to a staff member who has made a contribution to camp. This year the award was presented to Sammie Doll from Huron. Sammie has been a camper, a CIT and now a counselor. She also has the distinction of having met her husband here at camp. A special award was presented to Margaret and Dennis Skoog. The Skoogs have been coming to camp for the past 18 years. Margaret as a counselor and camp nurse and Dennis as a counselor and head

Out Of Doors 5 August 2014

51st Conservation Camp Sponsors
South Dakota Chapter of NWTF
Minnehaha County Chapter of Pheasants Forever
Black Hills Chapter of Pheasants Forever
Greg Goddicker
Valley Exchange Bank - Lennox
SD Walleyes Unlimited West River Chapter
Big Sioux Chapter of RMEF
Quality Deer Management Association
East Dakota Chapter of NWTF
Midwest Tri state NIHDA
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Ron Weber
Barstow Precision
High Plains Wildlife Association
Minneopa Sportsman’s Club
Hamar County Conservation District
Jones County Conservation District
Pheasants Forever, Inc. West River Chapter
Whitetails Unlimited
The Sportsman’s Club of Brown County
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Marshall County Conservation District
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Wells Fargo Bank
Black Hills Chapter of RMEF
First Premier Bank
Delta Waterfowl - Sioux Falls Chapter
Glen Area Conservation Club
Beadle County Sportsman’s Club
Swan Lake Sportsman’s Club
Pioneer Bank
Brookings Wildlife Federation
Black Hills Sportsman
Fay Wookey Memorial
Jones County Sportsman’s Club
Black Hills Federal Credit Union
Northeastern SD Walleye Club
Hyde County Conservation District
Pheasants Forever, Inc. Northern SD
Hecla Community Sportsman’s Club
Sportsman’s Club of Brown County
Jerauld County Conservation District
South Dakota Youth Hunting – Jim Scull
Greater Dakota Safari Club International
Bob Paulson
Aberdeen Chapter of RMEF
Rose Funeral
Dakota Sportsman, Inc
Grand Rapids Centennial Rotary
Grand Rapids Kiwanis
Dennis & Margaret Skoog
A special thank you to Scheels All Sports for sponsoring the camp T-shirts.
A special thank you to Great Plains Outdoorsmen for the generous grant in support of camp.

JUST ONE

continued on page 7...
SD Wildlife Federation Donors

At the 2003 Winter Board Meeting, the SDWF Board created the SDWF Wildlife Legacy Council. The Council was created to allow recognition of the people who support SDWF above and beyond their membership and raffle donations.

Thank you to the following donors for their contributions to the SDWF. Please consider becoming a member of the Wildlife Legacy Council. SDWF is a 501(c)3 non-profit, all donations are tax deductible. These tax-deductible contributions will speak volumes for the recognition of the people who support SDWF above and beyond their membership and raffle donations.

The Legacy Council consists of five different donation levels. These donation levels were revised October 2011 to: Level V Eagle $1,000 & above; Level IV Buffalo $501 - $999; Level III Elk $301 - $500; Level II Deer $201 - $300; and Level I Pheasant $100 - $200.

### April 2014
No legacy donations for this month.

### March 2014

**LEVEL V EAGLE**
- BEADLE CO. SPORTSMEN - SD
- BLACK HILLS SPORTSMEN - SD
- BROOKINGS WILDLIFE FED - SD
- SD CHAPTER OF NAT’L WILD TURKEY FOUNDATION

**LEVEL IV BUFFALO**
- DUCKS UNLIMITED - SD
- MARULLA, CHUCK - SD
- SPORTSMEN CLUB OF BROWN CO. - SD

**LEVEL III ELK**
- NORTH EASTERN SD WALL EyE CLUB - SD
- OLSON, JEFF - SD
- PEDERSON, TIM - SD

**LEVEL II DEER**
- BROWN, ALLAN B. - SD
- ELBEE, ROBERT - WI
- GEBHART, RONALD - AK

**LEVEL I PHEASANT**
- BEADLE CO. SPORTSMEN - SD
- BROWN, ALLEN B. - SD
- HANSON, HOWARD - MN

### February 2014
No legacy donations for this month.

### January 2014

**LEVEL III ELK**
- BOWAR, PAT - SD
- JOHNSON, ERRIC - MN
- LINDNER, RONALD - SD

**LEVEL II DEER**
- BRUCK, RICHARD - CA
- HOFFIEZER, GREG - SD
- PESEK, RON - SD

**LEVEL I PHEASANT**
- SIEGEL, MITCHELL - SD
- WILSON, JAMES - SD

### December 2013

**LEVEL III ELK**
- JOHNSON, VIRGIL - SD

**LEVEL II DEER**
- SIEGEL, MITCHELL - SD
- WILSON, JAMES - SD

**LEVEL I PHEASANT**
- MILLER, LARRY - SD

### November 2013

**LEVEL I PHEASANT**
- ATNER, JOHN - KS
- BURTON, DON - CO

**LEVEL II DEER**
- KASISCHKE, CARL - MI
- LINDNER, RONALD - SD

**LEVEL II ELK**
- LEIGHTON, ROBERT - SD

### October 2013

**LEVEL II DEER**
- HALLSTROM, KEN - SD

**LEVEL I PHEASANT**
- MILLER, LARRY - SD

### September 2013
No legacy donations for this month.

### August 2013

**LEVEL III ELK**
- LEIKINS, JIM - SD
- LEVISEN, ARLO - SD

**LEVEL II DEER**
- ECKERT, DENIS - SD
- HEFFRON, GEORGE - SD

**LEVEL I PHEASANT**
- HOFFMAN, CHARLES - SD
- KLUSSMANN, JAY - SD

### July 2013

**LEVEL IV BUFFALO**
- BROOKINGS WILDLIFE FED - SD
- MCHULLEY, PAT - SD

**LEVEL III ELK**
- TORELL, JR., ROBERT - SD

**LEVEL II DEER**
- BUCKNER II, WILLIAM - AR
- DENISON, LARRY - SD

**LEVEL I PHEASANT**
- EISEMANN, RICH - SD
- EVERSCHACHER, DAVID - SD

### June 2013

**LEVEL V EAGLE**
- CHAPMAN, JOHN W. - PA
- ROBERTS, STEven - WI

**LEVEL III ELK**
- BROOKINGS WILDLIFE FED - SD
- MCHULLEY, PAT - SD

**LEVEL II DEER**
- GEBHART, RONALD - WI
- KASIK, GARY - AZ

**LEVEL I PHEASANT**
- KASIK, GARY - AZ

**LEVEL II ELK**
- CAMPBELL, STUART - SD
- DAVISON, LARRY - SD

**LEVEL I PHEASANT**
- BEADLE CO. SPORTSMEN - SD
- FUNK, JOHN - SD

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**UPDATE ON FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORIES**

PIERRE, S.D. - Anglers fishing South Dakota waters should be aware of the 2014 fish consumption advisories.

New consumption advisories issued based on 2013 test results include: walleye longer than 21 inches in Swan Lake (Clark County), walleye longer than 17 inches in Long Lake (Codington County) and black crappie longer than 12 inches in Pudwell Dam (Corson County). Also, the West Twin Lakes advisory (Kingsbury County) for walleye longer than 18 inches and northern pike longer than 18 inches was expanded to include East Twin Lakes (Brookings County) and the waters jointly referred to as ‘Twin Lakes’ in the advisory listing.

The South Dakota departments of Health (DOH), Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) annually coordinate testing of fish for metals, pesticides and PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyl). Fish in over 150 of South Dakota’s most popular fishing waters have been tested for contaminants since the program began and fish consumption advisories have been issued for 18 waters for mercury. The mercury concentration in fish flesh which must be exceeded for an advisory to be issued is 1.0 part per million.

Fish consumption advisories are issued to inform the public of species, sizes and sizes of fish where consumption should be limited to DOH guidelines. Fish consumption advisory information is provided to allow individuals to make informed decisions about the sizes and species of fish and the waters from which they keep and eat fish.

For a complete list of current consumption advisories and fish consumption guidelines, visit doh.sd.gov/food/fish-consumption-advisories.aspx. For a complete list of waters tested please visit http://denn.sd.gov/des/sw/fish.aspx.

Agency Contacts for More Information:

DOH: Bill Chalcraft at 605.773.3907

DENR: Pat Snyder at 605.773.3351

GFP: John Lott at 605.773.4508

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Out Of Doors 6 August 2014
51st Youth Conservation Camp continued from page 5....

a great help in running the camp. I would like to give a special thank you to all the preceding individuals. A big thank you to Maggie Lindsey, Education Services Coordinator for G,F&P. Maggie coordinates and lines up all the classes from Custer State Park and Game, Fish & Parks and does an outstanding job.

I also want to thank all the counselors, CIT’s, and the clubs and individuals who helped make the 2014 edition of Conservation Camp a success. Thanks to Chuck Rokusek, an avid supporter of our camp, who recruits kids in the Sioux Falls area and raises the money to send them to camp. Also thank you to SDWF Executive Director Chris Hesla for all his help and support. Thank you to Great Plains Outdoorsmen for the generous grant in support of the camp. Thanks to Scheels All Sports for providing T-shirts for the campers. We proudly wore them to Mt Rushmore.

Gary Holst has been managing the Bob Marshall Camp for two decades and said the facility, which has 12 cabins, is a great location for young people to get a real taste of the outdoors. Usually, he said, things go smoothly. But there are incidents — like the time one group came back from fishing with a student who had a hook stuck in an eye. “It’s very busy, but it’s pretty satisfying,” he said.

Deisch said she is grateful that the federation staff is privileged to have spent a week with a group of great young people from all across South Dakota, and we are

Wildlife camp still going strong after more than a half century

Re-printed with permission from the Rapid City Journal

Wildlife camp still going strong after more than a half century

Re-printed with permission from the Rapid City Journal

Attending a South Dakota Wildlife Federation Conservation Camp years ago was just the inspiration that Shelly Deisch needed. “It was right after high school, and in South Dakota there were very few examples of women going into wildlife science,” said Deisch, who attended the camp held near Custer State Park at the Camp Bob Marshall in the late 1970s.

The federation camp program celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, marking a half-century of hosting hundreds of young adults for a week of outdoor learning. At the camp, Deisch — who went on to become a wildlife biologist for the state Department of Game, Fish & Parks — listened to outdoor and wildlife experts explain their jobs and realized it was something she wanted to do in the future.

“Most of it was demonstrations and not hands-on, but I didn’t care. I was just so excited to know it was something I could do for a living,” she said. The camps have changed since the time Deisch attended, said Mike McKernan, who runs the camps today. “It’s much more hands-on now,” McKernan said. Students have the opportunity to try a number of outdoor activities, including shotgun, rifle and archery shooting, fishing, boating, fly tying, deer and elk tracking, and turkey hunting.

A record number of Rapid City students — 30 — are expected to attend the camp this year. Many of the youth who attend are sponsored by sportsmens clubs from their communities. “We partner with Game, Fish & Parks and they put on most of the programs,” McKernan said. “We are really interested in getting across the message of conservation.”

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Deisch said she is grateful that the federation camp program is still running after so many years. “I was such a little nerd,” she said. “I didn’t know anybody and I stuck around the speakers asking questions.”

It’s even more important for youth to have the opportunity today, she added. “In this day and age, kids don’t get outside,” she said. “That’s why Rapid City now has the Outdoor Campus. We have lost that connection.”

McKernan said one of the most exciting aspects of the camp is seeing the education come full circle — as is the case with people like Deisch.

“Now we have presenters that were once young people that were campers here,” he said. “One former camper just emailed and said they wanted to know if they could contribute.”

Deisch said she knows it had a positive influence on her life and she’s hoping the same for future federation campers.

“It’s shooting guns and pulling up fish, to get the hands-on experience, to get dirty, touch the critters. That’s what it’s all about,” she said.

FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

PIERRE, S.D.–South Dakota State Parks and Recreation Director Doug Hofer announced today that applications are being accepted for grants from the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

Outdoor recreation projects sponsored by city, county, township and tribal governments are eligible to receive the grant money.

“Outdoor recreation is important to a healthy community,” Hofer said. “The variety of recreational activities that local parks have to offer allows families to spend time together close to home.”

The Land & Water Conservation Fund provides up to 50 percent reimbursement for approved outdoor recreation projects.

“Grants will be awarded for development or renovation of outdoor recreation facilities or the acquisition of park land,” Hofer said. “The minimum grant will be 1,000 for projects needing a minimum of $10,000 in federal funds. The maximum grant awarded will be $50,000 in federal funds.”

Examples of eligible projects include new playground equipment, ball diamonds and swimming pool renovation. The application deadline is September 5, 2014.

LWCF funds are federal dollars that are apportioned to states by Congress to fund public outdoor recreation projects. Application packets are available online at www.gfp.sd.gov.

For more information contact Grants Coordinator Randy Kittle at 605-773-5490 or email randy.kittle@state.sd.us.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

JUST ONE
It's that time of year when some people in western South Dakota are inevitably going to encounter South Dakota's only poisonous snake, the prairie rattler. The good news is, if you've watched many films about the western United States, you already have a pretty good idea of how to treat a rattlesnake bite.

The bad news, a Black Hills State University scientist said, is that it's all wrong.

"Get a knife, cut it and suck out the poison— that's how the movies do it," says associate professor Brian Smith, a biologist who specializes in the study of snakes and their venom. "That's a good way to bleed to death."

Smith said the real way to respond to a rattlesnake bite is less complicated.

"The basic first aid is simple: Get in your car and drive to a hospital, and if you've got a cell phone, call and see if an ambulance can meet you on the way."

"If you don't have to drive— say, an ambulance or a friend is on hand to assist you— there are additional points to keep in mind."

"Wherever you get bit, try to keep that part of your body at heart level, if possible, and try to move as little as possible," Smith said.

Powerful venom

Though it's rare for a human to die of a rattlesnake bite in South Dakota, that's not because the venom isn't deadly.

"The prairie rattlesnake, which is what you will run into in South Dakota, they do have very powerful venom, but they aren't big enough to drop a big load into you," Smith said. Nevertheless, he adds, wasting time getting to a hospital can be asking for more trouble than you would otherwise.

Smith said prairie rattlesnakes would just as soon leave people alone and said bites often occur either when someone stumbles onto a rattlesnake by accident. Some bites also occur when people find a rattlesnake and won't leave it alone.

More advice from a specialist? Be cognizant of where you put your feet and consider leaving the flip-flops at home if you're going to be hiking in rattlesnake country.

Smith said a rattlesnake's way of hunting is to set up in an ambush site from which it can strike at prey.

"If you're out hiking or hunting in western South Dakota and the habitat is natural, not cropland, you could run into them in a lot of places," Smith said.

Rattlesnakes can be active at all times of day, and for more of the year than people realize.

"I've actually seen them outside a den site in January on a warm day," Smith said. "Once you get past August, you're not exactly safe."

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Black Hills blend

Interestingly, Smith noted, the venom that prairie rattlesnakes have in the Black Hills is different than the venom rattlers have on the plains around the Black Hills. The snakes in the timbered regions in the Black Hills have two or three enzymes that snakes in the prairie regions outside the Black Hills lack.

Those additional enzymes could mean the Black Hills snakes pack a more powerful bite.

Smith explained that biologists "just so story" for now is that the shaded, cooler regions of the Black Hills provide less sunlight, so the snake simply has less energy to spare.

"They (rattlers in the Black Hills) probably do have limited opportunities to regulate their bodily temperature," Smith said. "To me it does make sense they would have venom components that would make it easier to kill a prey item."

Climate change

Smith noted that while biologists know that climate change is causing declines in some lizard species, the jury's still out on what climate change is doing to snake species.

"We are, with rattlesnakes, seeing some range expansions," Smith said. "They are able to go into higher elevations than they ever have before. They are an animal that tolerates dry areas pretty well."

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**The fake rattlesnake you don't want to mess with**

South Dakota's biggest snake, much bigger than the prairie rattler, is the bullsnake — and herpetologist Brian Smith at Black Hills State University says quite a few probably get killed because of a way bullsnakes have of imitating rattlesnakes.

Smith said even he, as a scientist who works with snakes, does a double-take when he sees a bullsnake imitating a rattler just to be sure he's not mistaken about the identity of the snake.

But even if you're sure it's not a rattler, Smith doesn't advise messing with a bullsnake.

"They tend to strike with less provocation than rattlers," Smith said. "Bullsnakes are extremely aggressive. You can get bit up by them, and it'll bleed and it'll hurt."

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**Conservation camp fund raiser**

The Camp committee would like to thank everybody involved in the special fund raising which took place from 2011-2013. If it wasn't for the generous offer made by wildlife artists John Green and Mark Anderson this project would have never made it out of the starting gate. In 2011 John Green produced the original piece of art, and in 2012 the mantel was passed to Mark Anderson and for 2013 they collaborated on a piece of original art which went to the 2013 winner, Jan Nicolay of Chester, South Dakota.

Because these two artists believe that the future of conservation and our outdoor heritage belongs to our youth they stepped up to the plate in order to help make this project a success. This project lasted three years and because the expense of this project was underwritten by members of the camp committee and the original art was 100% donated by the artists we were able to put $5000.00/year in the camp endowment for a total of $15,000.00.

The camp committee would also like to thank all of the members and non-members who helped to make this project a success by their willingness to purchase tickets on these three original pieces of art. This will help provide a long term funding source for this camp well into the future; however, we must not rest on our laurels but must come up with other ways to keep improving this camp endowment so we can keep the camp affordable long into the future.