



AZGFD
Game Management & Nongame
Wildlife Conservation Programs

WILDLIFE TRACKS & TRAILS

Condor Reintroduction

In 1996, the first California Condors were reintroduced into northern Arizona from the top of the Vermillion Cliffs. Later this year will mark 20 years of condor public releases into the wilds of this state.

The road to downlist the condor has been a long journey. The recovery program has faced many challenges to bring the population to where we are today. But progress continues and there are currently about 75 condors flying free in Arizona and Utah today.

Lead poisoning continues to be an extremely significant problem for the condors. Research has demonstrated a strong link between the lead poisoning events and the hunting seasons where lead ammunition is used. In 2005, the department instituted a voluntary lead reduction program where hunters are provided with non-lead

ammunition and outreach to explain the link between their hunting activities and the condor population.

Every year since 2007, between 80% and 90% of Arizona's hunters have voluntarily taken lead reduction efforts, whether it is using non-lead ammunition or removing the entirety of lead shot animals from the field.

This monumental rate of participation demonstrates the hunter's willingness to participate in conservation. This is a classic example of the North American model of wildlife conservation in action.

Even today, Arizona's volunteer lead reduction program has shown equal success in avoiding condor mortality to areas where lead bans are in place. With Utah's recently implemented voluntary lead reduction program and our continued efforts to reach out to hunters not yet participating in the program, we anticipate even further successes in condor recovery.

Please make the trek later this year to House Rock Valley and join us on September 24, 2016 at the Vermillion Cliff's site to witness this historic release of condors into Arizona.

*Photo credits:
George Andrejko*

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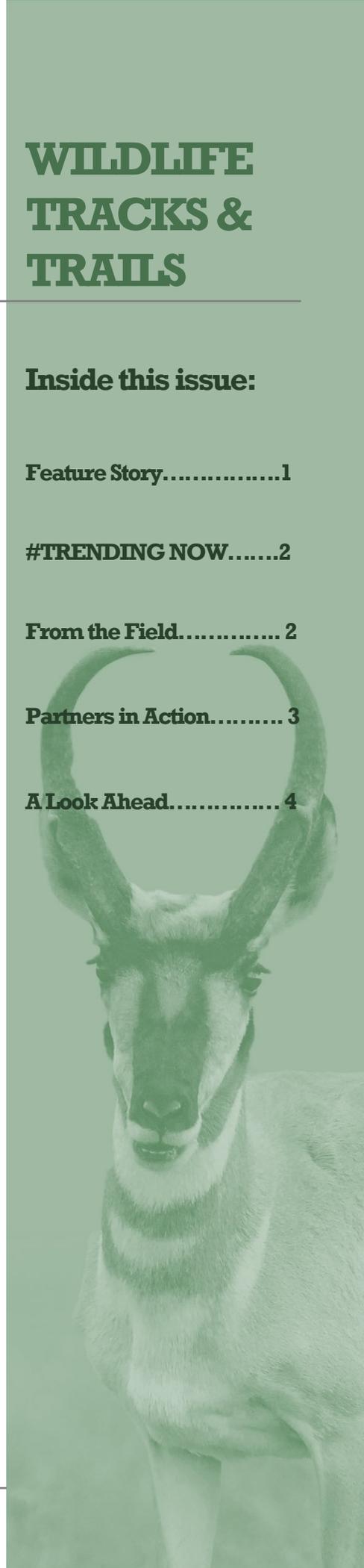
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#TRENDINGNOW

Scottsdale Welcomes Watchable Wildlife

During the spring of 2016, biologists in the Raptor Management Program at the Arizona Game & Fish Department were surprised when a pair of bald eagles built a nest and raised two young in a eucalyptus tree on a Scottsdale golf course. The location the eagle pair chose to use is something that had never happened before in Arizona. The appearance of nesting eagles also astonished the local community. Many people enjoyed the unique opportunity to be able to see eagles just a short walk from their homes. Fortunately, the eagles were extraordinarily tolerant to the commotion of urban life. As the nestlings grew and began to exercise their newly-feathered wings, there was great anticipation from the community for a successful first flight.

Over the course of one week in May, both of the youngsters made it out of the nest to the ground, but were not strong enough to lift off again. Ground-

ed eaglets are vulnerable to predators like coyotes. The fledged birds were recovered by Liberty Wildlife Rehabilitation Foundation. No injuries were found to the 10-week old eagles, so the Department banded the birds and placed them back in the nest tree. Days later, both fledglings were seen perched in trees and on roofs in the neighborhood.

The Department and partners rescue many young bald eagles, with the hope they will someday join Arizona’s small breeding population. Recently, the population has increased from 50 to 65 pairs since 2009. As rapid growth occurs and vacant territories are filled, it appears some eagles have chosen to nest in non-traditional areas, like golf courses. Be sure to check out the video about the return of one of the nestlings rescued this year:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D35mGQ5g7ZA>. By Kyle McCarty



FROM THE FIELD

New Springsnail Populations Recently Discovered

Over the past month, Department biologists and conservation partners (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fort Huachuca, Phoenix Zoo, and Pima County) have discovered two new populations of native springsnails in Arizona. This was no small feat given that springsnails are very tiny (2-3 mm in size) and blend in with their aquatic habitat.

The first population, the Verde Rim springsnails (*Pyrgulopsis glandulosa*), was found during a survey in the Bradshaw Mountains along Grapevine Creek.

Previously, this species was known to occur at only three sites in central Arizona.

The second new population—believed to be Huachuca springsnail (*Pyrgulopsis thompsoni*)—was found during a conservation partners’ workshop in Scotia Canyon along the southwestern flank of the Huachuca Mountains. The new Scotia Canyon population will be added to other populations managed under a new Candidate Conservation Agreement for the Huachuca Springsnail.

By Jeff Sorensen



Photo above: Huachuca springsnails; Photo right: Scotia Canyon survey.

PARTNERS IN ACTION

Success of Hard Work by Many Hands



Landowner Relations Program facilitated a fence removal/modification project to enhance an important pronghorn migration route in the White Mountains. Thirty-six volunteers from the Arizona Antelope Foundation participated.



In support of the Adopt-a-Ranch Program, Arizona Public Services donated 100 used solar panels to the Mule Deer Foundation for use on cooperative wildlife projects with ranchers around the state.

Gambel's Quail Translocation



For the first time in over 50 years, Arizona conducted an interstate Gambel's Quail transplant into Utah. In late June, Region 5 Wildlife Managers and several Terrestrial Branch interns began baiting for quail. During the last week in July, 89 Gambel's Quail were trapped and

This quail transplant was brokered several years ago when Arizona hatcheries took delivery of triploid rainbow trout eggs from Utah. In the 1940's and 1950's, Gambel's Quail were translocated to many different states. The only two populations still surviving from that era are in Salmon Valley, Idaho, and the island of Lanai in Hawaii. Gambel's Quail naturally exist in southwestern Utah, and our hope is with the recent habitat restorations that this translocation will be a much needed boost to dwindling populations in this area. **By Johnathan O'Dell**

transported to the Phoenix Headquarters office. Both the Wildlife Health and Small Game Programs processed the birds by collecting cloacal swabs, along with blood and fecal samples. The samples were sent overnight delivery to the Utah Veterinary Diagnostic Lab for testing. The quails were then loaded up and driven to Fredonia to wait for results. By 1:00 P.M. the next day, all of the birds received a clean bill of health. The quails were driven to three different locations in southwestern Utah where they were released into areas of recently completed habitat restorations.





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A LOOK AHEAD...

Upcoming

Kanab Ambersnail Survey

9/19/16-9/21/16 – South Canyon, Vaseys Paradise in Grand Canyon N.P.
Contact: Jeff Sorensen, jsorensen@azgfd.gov

Sands Ranch Black-tailed Prairie Dog Release

9/19/16-9/20/16 – Sands Ranch
Contacts: James Driscoll, jdriscoll@azgfd.gov or
Kurt Licence, klicence@azgfd.gov

Desert Tortoise Survey

9/16/2016 – Sugarloaf Mountain, Tonto National Forest
Contact: Cristina Jones, cajones@azgfd.gov

Black-tailed Prairie Dog Trapping

9/23/16-9/25/16 – Las Cienegas National Conservation Area
Contact: James Driscoll, jdriscoll@azgfd.gov or
Kurt Licence, x7529, klicence@azgfd.gov

Condor Release

9/26/16 at 11 a.m. - the Vermillion Cliffs National Monument
<http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/info/newsroom/2015/september/condors.html>

Huachuca Springsnail Surveys

9/26/16-9/28/16 – Huachuca Mountains (on the Fort and Forest)
Contact: Jeff Sorensen, jsorensen@azgfd.gov



For more information about any of these articles, visit www.azgfd.gov

Arizona Game and Fish Department Mission: *to conserve Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and manage for safe, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities for current and future generations.*

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