



Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

The Patuxent Wildlife Research Center has held a leading international position in wildlife research and management since its founding in 1936 as America's first wildlife experiment station and research refuge. Its scientists have been responsible for some of the most significant advances in wildlife conservation and management, especially in such areas as waterfowl harvest management, wildlife habitat improvement, effects of environmental contaminants, endangered species conservation, migratory bird management, and wildlife population analysis. Throughout this history, the Patuxent tradition has been to work in partnership with scientists and resource managers around the nation and the world to provide the information needed to manage biological resources through impartial and objective science.

While being true to its history as America's first wildlife experimental station and research refuge, Patuxent intends to remain on the cutting edge of improving responses to the management of wildlife in the twenty-first century.

The scientific activities of the Center, initiated, developed and implemented by the Center's scientists, emerge from one or more overarching scientific themes that together reflect the Center's capabilities, specializations, goals, and priorities.

The Center's work is grouped hierarchically into four scientific themes and further into programs and projects. A fifth theme incorporates operations that support scientific activities. The four scientific themes identify the Center's strategic directions and scientific specializations. Center programs focus the themes on a more disciplinary basis. And finally, the work is carried out through a series of projects led by individuals and teams of scientists and technical assistants.

Biologists at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center began what is now the largest **Whooping crane captive breeding program** from 12 eggs collected from the wild in 1967. The Patuxent flock has 44 adults, including nine experienced pairs, who lay about 50 eggs per year. Patuxent biologists raised about 26 chicks last year, most of which were released in Florida. This year our biologists raised the 10 chicks that are currently undergoing flight training at the Necedah Wildlife Refuge. This fall the young Whooping cranes will follow ultralight aircraft from Wisconsin to Florida, establishing the first migratory flock of Whooping cranes in Eastern North America after a 100-year absence.



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