

State Wildlife Grants WSFR Success Stories in the Southwest Region - R2

Arizona Game and Fish Department: Black-Footed Ferret Reintroduction and Recovery

Listed as Endangered in 1974, the black-footed ferret was on the brink of extinction prior to efforts to save the species through captive propagation. The Arizona Game and Fish Department has been an active participant in the recovery of this species. Through captive propagation and release, the State agency is using State Wildlife Grant funding to establish an independent population of ferrets and has begun reintroduction efforts in a second experimental population. The Arizona Game and Fish Department has also used State Wildlife Grants funding consistently over many years in attempts to reduce plague in nearby colonies of prairie dogs, the primary prey of the ferret.



The black-footed ferret is considered to be the rarest mammal in North America. Credit: FWS NCTC Image Library

Through this comprehensive reintroduction program, the Federal SWG program has supported the State agency's efforts to recover this charismatic grassland predator.

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish: Narrow-Headed Gartersnake Surveys



Narrow-headed gartersnake resting on a rock. Credit courtesy of © Tom Brennan

In 2014, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish implemented a project to monitor narrow-headed gartersnake populations at four locations within the Gila/San Francisco River drainage using a State Wildlife Grant and matching funds.

The surveys were planned in areas affected by the Whitewater-Baldy Complex Fire and post-fire ash flows.

A species of greatest conservation need in New Mexico, the narrow-headed gartersnake was listed as Threatened under the ESA during the course of this project. The surveys will allow researchers to

describe the status of post-fire gartersnake populations and determine the effectiveness of translocations as a method of conserving this species.

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation: Linda's Roadside Skipper



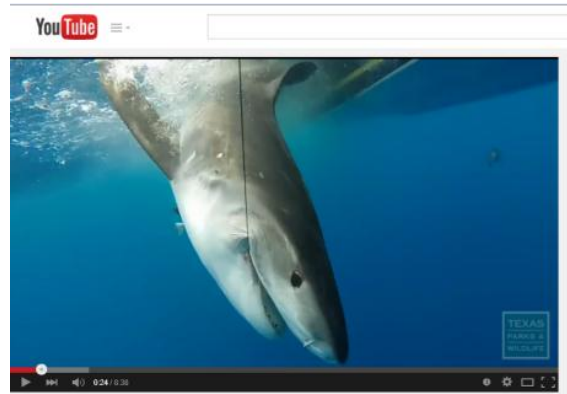
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Linda's roadside-skipper is found in six states in small numbers at every occurrence. Use of image courtesy of Nick Grishan ©

Listed as vulnerable on the Xerces Society's Red List of Pollinator Insects, the Linda's Roadside Skipper is a butterfly found in small numbers in Oklahoma and five other states. Currently little is known of population trends or habitat needs for this species. With the use of State Wildlife Grants and matching funds, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation will initiate a four-year project (beginning in 2015) to determine the current distribution of the species in Oklahoma and estimate dispersal. This baseline study will be important to establish habitat needs and management approaches for this pollinator in future conservation efforts.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department: Shark Nursery Habitat

Along the Texas Coast, sharks experience significant fishing pressure, but shark habitat needs and movements are poorly understood. Despite the importance to the survival of young live-bearing sharks, little is known about nursery habitats along the Texas coast. The Texas Parks and Wildlife is using State Wildlife Grants and matching funds to focus efforts on learning more about this important habitat. Planned to begin in spring of 2015, a three-year project will identify the species present and characterize the nursery habitats of each species. The project is expected to provide insight into shark movements, survivorship, and habitat use for the benefit of future shark conservation efforts. To learn more, watch the *Save Our Sharks* video produced by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department at: www.tpwd.texas.gov/tv



Many more stories taking place in the Southwest Region are yet to be told! Look for a future story on the North American Bat Monitoring Program.

Brief overview: Last year, a competitive State Wildlife Grant (\$499,839) was awarded to fund the pilot expansion of the North American Bat Monitoring Program in western states. The lead agency, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), partnered with seven other state agencies to implement this project. The project will be implemented in all seven states with active participation from AGFD in Arizona and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in Texas. These two agencies in the Southwest Region will receive over \$145,000 to implement their portion of the proposal.