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BGSU biologist works to save endangered Florida wildlife

A BGSU researcher is helping “close the gap” in conservation of Florida’s rare and endangered wildlife.

Using sophisticated computer modeling, biologist Karen Root is assessing the risks to about 50 of the state’s imperiled mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians—everything from the Florida panther to the Florida scrub jay. The results will help the state prioritize where to direct its private-land acquisition program.

Root has received close to \$40,000 from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to carry out one of three components of a project to preserve habitat for the disappearing species. The project is titled “Closing the Gaps in Florida’s Wildlife Habitat Conservation Systems.”

The need is urgent, she said. There are only 85 Florida panthers remaining, for example, and biologists have determined that at least 120 are necessary to ensure their survival over the long term.

Meanwhile, the human population is burgeoning and development and agriculture in the state are consuming large amounts of land while the Everglades are drying up. “We’re running out of habitat,” Root said.

Florida has a greater number of imperiled species than any other state except California and Hawaii. Some, like the Audubon’s crested caracara, a carrion bird, are indigenous to the state while others, such as migratory birds, pass through it. Some species are on the threatened list in Florida, some are on the federal list and others are on both.

Florida is keenly aware of the need to balance development with wildlife preservation, according to Root. “Ecotourism is an important industry in the state,” she said. It has spent \$300 million a year for the last 15 years in acquisition of private land for habitat, but much more is needed if species like the Florida black bear and the gopher tortoise are not to go the way of the passenger pigeon.

“We can’t protect all the habitat in Florida, but if we can locate and preserve the most strategic places, we could keep them from going extinct,” said Randy Kautz, Root’s project colleague and habitat protection planning section leader at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. -That is where Root comes in, he said.

Using Landsat satellite images and geographic information systems (GIS) technology, Kautz’s team identified what types of vegetation ground cover are in the state’s green spaces, whether cypress swamp, pasture or hardwood forest, for example. Then they used actual records of what animals and birds are living in each habitat to map the state by these habitats. These records could include eagles’ nests or rookeries of wading birds, for example.

The habitat map and the wildlife population map were then overlaid and passed on to Root, whose job is to determine the viability of each species. She takes everything that is currently known about each species—including longevity, age of first mating, male to female ratio and preferred diet—enters it into the computer, and then experiments with variable elements to assess the potential impact on the species. Using the modeling software, she can calculate how long a species could survive under a certain set of conditions and the minimum number of a species needed for long-term survival.

Some actions that affect animal populations are deliberate and human, such as development or agricultural use, while others are unpredictable and uncontrollable, such as hurricanes, she said.

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The various factors can have unexpected results, she pointed out. A hurricane, for example, might actually open space and encourage plants and animals to enter where there was no opportunity before.

The picture is complex, according to Root. Factors that have a negative impact on one species may be beneficial to another. The shrinking of the Everglades due to siphoning of water for agricultural use and the proliferation of invasive plants that suck up moisture has been bad for wading birds, but creates additional living space for deer, the food source for the Florida panther, Root said.

Even fire control can have unintended consequences, she said. For a long time, the state has interrupted the natural cycle of lightning-caused fires by putting out nearly all blazes. Now, the many fire-dependent species are threatened.

So she must use a number of scales to measure the impact of all these factors and more.

The current project is the second round of a study that was first done in 1994, using data gathered in 1989. "It's a new generation of a product that's been very well received," Kautz said. The 1994 report has been used to guide acquisition of private land throughout Florida, to evaluate development proposals, and in the creation of regulations and land-management decisions. It has attracted national and international attention and has been used as a model in countries such as Japan, he said.

"Round two will be much more sophisticated, in part because of Karen's work to make population viability much more spatially explicit," he said. "She's bringing us to the next millennium."

Root has been at BGSU since 2002. She received her Ph.D. in conservation biology and population ecology in 1996 from the Florida Institute of Technology, where her dissertation focused on the Florida scrub jay. While in Florida, she collaborated on a project for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on preservation of Florida panther habitat in southwest Florida.

North American biologists coming to BGSU

Biology faculty members from United States and Canadian colleges and universities will be students for a week in June at the University.

Faculty will comprise most of the more than 150 North American biologists who will be at BGSU June 8-12 for the 26th annual conference of the Association for Biology Laboratory Education (ABLE).

Coming to Ohio for the first time, the event includes 20 laboratory workshops where presenters teach a roomful of their peers as if they were students, said conference host Charlene Waggoner, Center for Environmental Programs.

ABLE members submit proposals for presentations, and those that are approved—and made—are later published as "Tested Studies for Laboratory Teaching," she explained.

Waggoner, previously a biology faculty member at the University, began inquiring several years ago about bringing the conference to campus. She is a member of ABLE, which has requirements for laboratory facilities and equipment "that Bowling Green was easily able to meet," she said.

As home of the drained Great Black Swamp, the Bowling Green area also offers "one of the most altered landscapes in the world," Waggoner added. "We have remnants of environmentally unique ecosystems all around," including Oak Openings Preserve, west of Toledo, and Lake Erie, she said.

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Biology laboratory coordinators and preparation staff, as well as faculty, from Nova Scotia to New Mexico will have a chance to see some of those ecosystems on optional field trips during the conference. Among the destinations will be the Schedel Arboretum and Gardens in Elmore and the Lake Erie islands, where participants may go aboard a research vessel.

Another trip will be a June 12 tour of area parks and preserves in search of threatened and endangered species, such as cricket frogs and the Karner blue butterfly. Led by Kim High, a naturalist and historical interpreter for Toledo Metroparks, the tour will leave Bowling Green at 8 a.m. that Saturday.

Waggoner said she hopes conference participants will take several positives from their time in northwest Ohio, where they can also see a Toledo Mud Hens baseball game, the Toledo Museum of Art, the Toledo Zoo and Cedar Point.

In addition to a fruitful learning experience in the workshops, "I'm hoping in part that they (conferees) get an appreciation for the Midwest O and I'm certainly hoping they walk away with a good impression of Bowling Green State University," she said.

While Waggoner is officially the host of the event, she said support has also come from the BGSU provost's office, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Environmental Programs, the Center of Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education: Opportunities for Success (COSMOS), the Canadian Studies Center and the biological sciences department.

Alumni Community Award presented to Toledo art teacher

Commitment to her community has earned a Toledo teacher an honor from the BGSU Alumni Association.

Diane Klein, an art teacher at Bowsher High School, received the BGSU Alumni Community Award Thursday (May 20) during an alumni event at the Toledo Zoo.

Klein graduated from the University in 1987 with a bachelor's degree in art education. Later that year, she began her teaching career at Bowsher, where she is co-organizer of the annual senior art show and a member of the humanities team.

The Toledo resident is also a facilitator for the Jefferson-Madison Leadership Camp, a program for high school students in Toledo Public Schools.

Her students annually compete and win awards in local and regional art exhibitions and contests. In 1996, both the Ohio Art Education Association (OAEA) Youth Art Month flag competition and the United Way Caring for Others poster contest were won by a Bowsher student. One of Klein's students won the flag competition again in 2002.

She is a member of OAEA, which named her Outstanding Art Teacher in northwest Ohio in 2001. A regional director for the association from 1999-2001, she remains regional chair for an OAEA exhibition of high school student work in Columbus.

Klein was inducted into Phi Delta Kappa, the professional association for educators, in 1994—the same year she earned a master's degree in art education from the University of Toledo. She is current chair of the Bowsher team in a humanities collaborative with UT, as well as a former member of the Toledo Museum of Art Education Advisory Board.

"Through her continued success, passion and determination, she has made a name and a face for herself throughout northwest Ohio and nationally in the arts community," said Mariann Reinke, director of alumni affairs and associate vice president for University Advancement at BGSU.

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At the same time, Klein has continued to support her alma mater as a member of the Falcon Club and the BGSU Alumni Chapter of Greater Toledo. She is a former president of the Falcon Club Advisory Board and a volunteer recruiter of high school students for the alumni chapter.

The former Martha Holden Jennings Scholar is also a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Toledo, where, in the 1990s, she was active in two city council campaigns and the campaign to adopt a strong-mayor form of government.

Indonesian 'world jazz' band to perform at BGSU

Krakatau, a creative Indonesian "world jazz" band making its first North American tour, will stop at BGSU for a 7 p.m. concert June 6 in 101 Olscamp Hall. Admission is free.

The University will be the second stop on the band's tour, which also includes concerts in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Toronto, Colorado Springs, Vancouver, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York City, at the Lincoln Center Outdoor Festival.

Krakatau wanted to come to Bowling Green because "BGSU is one of the only universities in North America with two Indonesian music specialists on its faculty," said one of those specialists, Jeremy Wallach, popular culture. The other is David Harnish, musical arts and director of the Kusuma Sari Gamelan.

Krakatau is the product of a collaboration of Indonesian pop idols, veteran jazzmen and virtuosos of traditional West Javanese music. Over the last decade, the group, based in Bandung, West Java, has forged a unique sound combining Indonesian traditional music, electric jazz, hard rock and funk.

Krakatau has toured extensively, playing in major cities and at international jazz festivals throughout Europe, China and Southeast Asia. Combining dance, spectacle and displays of individual and ensemble musicianship, the band's performances have been praised by music critics and fans. Its music celebrates our common humanity, demonstrating how it can transcend differences of religion, culture and nationality.

The Bowling Green concert is sponsored by a number of campus organizations, including the BGSU gamelan program, the College of Musical Arts, the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music, the Asian Studies program, Asian Communities United and the Department of Popular Culture.

For more information about the band, see www.krakatau.net, and for more about its appearance at BGSU, contact Wallach at 2-8204 or jeremyw@bgnnet.bgsu.edu.

IN BRIEF

It's not too late to make your gift count

Even though the spring semester has ended, Family Campaign 2004 continues through June 30—the end of the University's fiscal year. If you have not yet made a gift or pledge, you can still help to increase BGSU's level of participation, says Amy Davis, director of annual giving. The goal is 53 percent participation by June 30, and we are now at 50 percent, according to Davis.

Employee gifts or pledges to any area of BGSU count toward the Family Campaign. This includes gifts to WBGU-TV, the Falcon Club, and numerous department and scholarship funds. You can make your gift online at <http://foundation.bgsu.edu>, contact your department's Family Campaign representative, or call the Development Office at 2-2424 for more information.

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"The support of BGSU's faculty and staff is doubly important to the University. Not only do your contributions help to build the University's quality and prestige, they also send an important message. Your contributions tell alumni and friends that those closest to the University believe so strongly in BGSU that you're willing to support the University through charitable gifts as well as on the job. That's a powerful endorsement," said Davis.

BG@100 project improves computer systems

BG@100 has been selected as the name for the Enterprise Resource Project to replace the current AMS administrative systems with PeopleSoft. The project name represents the objective of moving to new administrative systems as we move toward the centennial of BGSU, as well as the desire to achieve 100 percent satisfaction with the services provided through the use of the administrative systems.

An opportunity to learn more about the project and ask project-related questions is provided via the open forum scheduled for 2 p.m. Wednesday (May 26) in 314 Bowen-Thompson Student Union. Open forums will again be offered in July to continue to provide updates on the BG@100 project. Information is also available at the project home page: <http://www.bgsu.edu/BGat100>.

BGSU Alumni Men's Chorus comes home for reunion concert

The BGSU Alumni Men's Chorus will return "home" to campus for its third annual alumni celebration concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday (May 29) in Kobacker Hall of the Moore Musical Arts Center.

Comprising alumni from the BGSU Men's Chorus, the group is under the direction of Richard D. Mathey, professor emeritus of music performance studies. Mathey founded the chorus and directed it for 31 years.

The concert will feature the 180-member chorus performing a variety of favorites, including "Sing Dem Herrn" by Michael Pratorius and arranged by Wallace De Pue, professor emeritus of music composition and history at BGSU; "Ave Maria" by Franz Biebl; "How Do I Love Thee" by James Mulholland, featuring soprano soloist and Bowling Green alumna Theresa Severin, and the barbershop favorite "Please Mr.†Columbus."

"The opportunity to have these men back on campus is always an important step to reconnecting them to the University, but we are taking it to the next level with them performing on a BGSU stage again," said Shaun Moorman, chairman of the Alumni Men's Chorus Board of Directors. "We will have men from the very first Men's Chorus in 1971 singing side by side with 2004 graduates."

The BGSU Men's Chorus Alumni Society exists to provide a full spectrum of assistance and support to the BGSU Men's Chorus, as well as fostering a spirit of fraternity and loyalty among the graduates and former Bowling Green students. Through responsive programs, diverse activities and services, the society hopes to enrich camaraderie for alumni and current students.

Tickets for the concert are \$8 and \$10, and can be purchased at the center's box office, open from noon-6 p.m. weekdays. The phone number is 2-8171.

CALENDAR

Wednesday, May 26

Open Forum introducing PeopleSoft administrative systems, 2 p.m., 314 Union.

Saturday, May 29

Annual University Alumni Men's Chorus Concert, featuring former director Richard Mathey conducting, 7:30 p.m., Kobacker Hall, Moore Musical Arts Center. Tickets

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are \$8 and \$10; call 2-8171 to reserve.

Monday, May 31

Memorial Day, classes canceled, offices closed.

Continuing Events

Through June 8

Planetarium Presentation, "Transit of Venus." Shows are at 8 p.m. Fridays, 7:30 p.m. June 6 and 7:30 a.m. June 8 (when Venus lines up with the sun for the first time since 1882).

Through June 11

Art Exhibit, High School Art Teachers' Exhibition, The Little Gallery, BGSU Firelands. Gallery hours are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Through June 14

Art Exhibit, "Cream of the Crop," award-winning pieces from the spring 2004 Undergraduate Student Exhibit, Union Art Galleries, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. weekdays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. weekends.

JOB POSTINGS

FACULTY

Finance. Instructor. Call Daniel Klein, 2-8963. Deadline: June 11.

History. Instructor. Call Gary Hess, 2-6806. Deadline: June 21.

Contact the Office of Human Resources at 419-372-8421 for information regarding classified and administrative positions. Position vacancy announcements may be viewed by visiting the HR Web site at www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr.

Employees wishing to apply for these positions must sign a "Request for Transfer" form and attach an updated resume or data sheet. This information must be turned in to Human Resources by the job deadline.

CLASSIFIED

There are no new listings this week.

ADMINISTRATIVE

View job descriptions at:
http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ohr/employment/adm_staff/

Assistant Director of Residence Life for Educational Initiatives (V-039)—Office of Residence Life. Administrative grade 14. Review of applications began May 14 and will continue until the position is filled.

Assistant Dean of Students (R-042)—Office of Campus Involvement. Administrative grade 17. Deadline: June 4.

Coordinator—Business and Operations (R-043)—Department of Chemistry. Administrative grade 14. Deadline: June 4.

Instructor/Supervisor Mass Spectrometry Facility (R-044)—Department of Chemistry. Administrative grade 13. Deadline: June 4.

Residence Hall Director (V-018)—Office of Residence Life (three positions). Administrative grade 13. Review of applications will continue until all positions are filled.

Staff Internal Auditor (R-077)—Internal Auditing and Advisory Services. Administrative grade 15. Review of applications began Dec. 15 and will continue until the position is filled.

OBITUARY

Peace Champion, 76, died May 10 in Bowling Green. She retired from the University in 1995 after 25 years as an administrator in the Graduate College.