

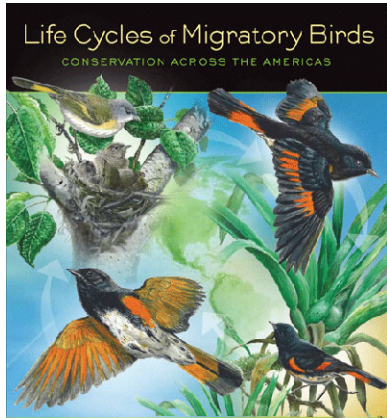
View From the Eyrie

Natural Selections Newsletter, Summer 2013

By Chris Eberly, DoD PIF Coordinator

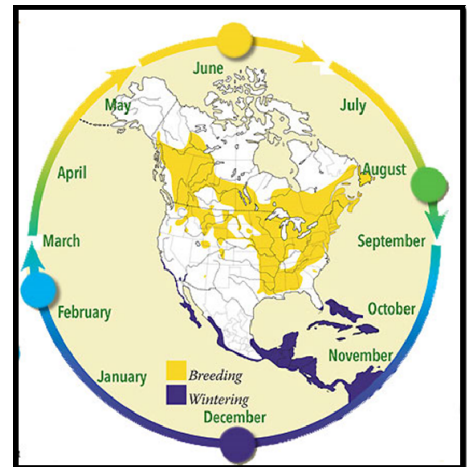


Celebrating Birds: IMBD and Beyond



As far as special days go in the bird conservation world, there is nothing bigger than International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD). The Department of Defense has supported IMBD nearly since its inception. Please see the article by Sue Bonfield, executive director of Environment for the Americas, for background on IMBD. DoD Partners in Flight (PIF) has also been an active supporter and participant in IMBD activities. Each year, the IMBD theme reflects a current topic of interest to birds, conservation, and the birding public. According to Sue Bonfield, "Each year, a team of International Migratory Bird Day coordinators and sponsors work together to select a theme that meets diverse criteria to reach the varied audiences that celebrate IMBD. The theme must be conservation-based, current, positive, tangible, educational, and engaging. Once chosen, the theme

becomes the focus of education materials and the art that is featured on educational and promotional materials." Past themes have included *Connecting People to Bird Conservation*, *Go Wild, Go Birding!*, *Power of Partnerships* (coinciding with the 20th anniversary of PIF), *Celebrate Birds in Culture*, *Tundra to Tropics*, and *Birds in a Changing Climate*. This year, *Life Cycles of Migratory Birds* details all aspects of a migratory birds' life, from nesting and migration to breeding and raising young. Most importantly, it addresses the need for conservation throughout the life cycle. Along every leg of the journey and at non-breeding and breeding sites, birds also face threats from free-roaming cats, tall buildings and towers, chemicals, wind turbines, and more. DoD PIF has been collaborating with the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and others on identifying where bird species go once they leave their DoD breeding grounds. As the American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) annual cycle diagram shows, most neotropical migrant breeding birds only spend 3-4 months on DoD lands. Influences during the other 8-9 months often have more significant implications for nesting success than habitat conditions on the breeding grounds. In order to reverse declining trends in priority bird species, we must first know where these birds go, and then identify potential limiting factors occurring in these locations. I encourage you to visit www.birdday.org to peruse the educational materials, including a very informative PowerPoint slide show. Browse the events database for an event near you, or better yet, add your own event to the database so others can learn about it.



There is one more special day I want to highlight. After 38 years of civil service to the Navy, Tom Egeland is retiring. A reception for Mr. Egeland was held on April 26 in the Pentagon. I had the honor of presenting a carving of a Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) on behalf of DoD Partners in Flight for Mr. Egeland's contributions to bird conservation (see picture). As Director of the Navy's Environmental Planning and Conservation Policy, as well as DoD lead for migratory bird policy issues, Mr. Egeland worked tirelessly to ensure that policies and regulations supported conservation priorities while not diminishing the ability of DoD to access and train on its lands. He walked that fine line between compliance and conservation, and seemed to excel at producing win-win situations. Tom, thanks for your dedication to natural resources. As was mentioned at the reception, your fingerprints are everywhere (mostly good!) and your shoes quite large.



Chris Eberly (L) presenting Tom Egeland (R) with Green Heron carving.