



CONSERVATION

HEROES OF CONSERVATION

Backing bobwhites, protecting wildlife food sources, and rehabbing grouse habitat **By Kristyn Brady**

1



SPEAKING UP FOR QUAIL

RON CRABTREE

MURFREESBORO, TENN.

"I think of my role as instigator, rather than as volunteer," says Crabtree, who has become recognized from Memphis to Johnson City as a major voice for Tennessee quail restoration, after 11 years of sounding off for the bird's habitat needs in nearly every Tennessee Wildlife Commission meeting. As the vice president of the Music City chapter of Quail Forever, which holds youth events year-round, he recently rallied multiple chapters to help fund two Farm Bill wildlife biologist positions. These individuals will enroll landowners in conservation programs that benefit quail. "If you tell people what they can expect to be different if funding goes into the ground, they will come to the table," says Crabtree.

2



GROWING GOBBLER GRUB

WARREN DUFRESNE

PINE CITY, MINN.

As a leader of the Pine County Thunderin' Toms chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation since 2008, Dufresne coordinated the efforts of 25 volunteers to ensure the survival of 8,000 oak seedlings that will provide browse and roost habitat for turkeys across 26 acres of Minnesota wildlife management areas. "The DNR had the money to plant these seedlings but not to protect them from overgrazing by deer," says Dufresne, who also secured the funding to purchase repellent sprayers and equipment to build caging around trees. The project is ongoing, and the cages can be reused as trees grow above the browse line. "Our club has a passion, and we can provide an army of labor to get it done."

3



PROTECTING GROUSE LEKS

KEN MIRACLE

BOISE, IDAHO

"I've been infatuated with sage grouse since I was 3 years old," says Miracle, "and I can't go into the field without checking out habitat conditions." He has volunteered with the Owyhee County Sage Grouse Local Working Group for 14 years and with the Nature Conservancy and Sage Grouse Initiative for eight, to restore wet meadows—important places for sage grouse chicks to feed on insects and forbs—by removing junipers encroaching on riparian areas, seeding eroded streambanks, spraying noxious weeds, and installing and flagging fences that are safer for the birds to fly over. He also conducts tours of grouse leks and donates his photography to raise awareness about this gamebird.

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THE BOBWHITE QUAIL

IMPROVE. RESTORE. CONSERVE HABITAT.



THE FACTS:

1. Bobwhite quail range in weight from 6-8 ounces.
2. Chicks follow their parents upon hatching and fledge in one week.
3. The major factor leading to the decreasing numbers of bobwhite quail is habitat loss.

If someone you know is conserving wildlife habitat, nominate them to be a 2014 Hero of Conservation. One Hero of the Year will be awarded a new Toyota Tundra.

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