

Jordan Creek Wildlife Refuge Management

Activity Summary

May - June 1997

1. Tree Planting

- a. planted 500 green ash seedlings in wet areas near creek
- b. planted 250 white and swamp white oak seedlings in upper field

2. Tree Shelters

- a. installed tree shelters around oak seedlings
- b. located white oak seedling sprouts from acorns planted in fall of 1996 - installed tree shelters

3. Built and installed wood duck and barn owl nest boxes. Placed wood duck boxes on trees near creek and barn owl boxes in barns on property.

4. Species Inventory

- a. a general species list was compiled. Most interesting found - marsh marigold and skunk cabbage along a small hillside seep. Problem plants - Canada thistle, multiflora rose, fescue and brome grasses. It was noted that multiflora rose was being held in check by rose rosette disease. Canada thistle is spreading in spite of post control efforts.

5. Nest Monitoring

Many nests were observed by the intern, but he was not sure of the species identification of some of the nests. Nests noted were:

- a. great blue heron (rookery)
- b. robin
- c. blue bird (in boxes)
- d. kildeer
- e. red-winged blackbird
- f. brown thrasher
- g. cardinal
- h. mourning dove

Cowbird parasitism was discovered in the robin nest (egg removed). A prairie king snake was found wrapped around a blue bird box (possibly devoured the eggs). Small ground nests of some type of sparrow were observed. Small pheasant and quail young were spotted (no nests). Also, a wild turkey was seen.

6. Mowing

Fields were mowed with a bush hog mover to halt secondary succession. All access lanes were mowed and paths to the bluebird boxes. This mowing was contracted with a nearby landowner.

Our intern mowed the patches of Canada thistle before the seed heads developed. Chemical treatment will follow.

7. Forest Management

This activity will be done outside of the contract time period, probably July or August. The 2 month time period did not allow for this work. A priority was placed on the tree planting and tree shelters for deer protection.

Conclusion

The Jordan Creek Wildlife Refuge is 540 acres in size with 186 acres of tillable land. That leaves over 350 acres to be managed for wildlife. Sometimes this work seems insurmountable with the resources at hand. Management of this area could be a full time position for a staff member of the Vermilion County Conservation District. Therefore, without the assistance of the non-game wildlife grant, this work would not be possible.