

Woodcock Management in Michigan



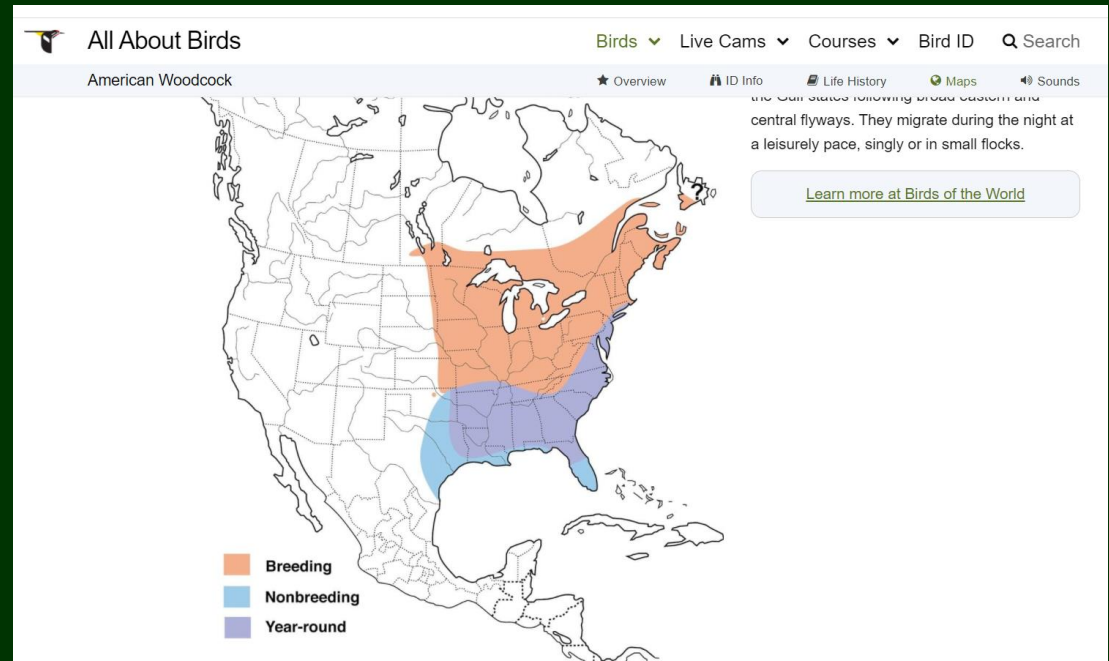
Jared Duquette, Ph.D.
MDNR, Wildlife Division Chief

Life of woodcock

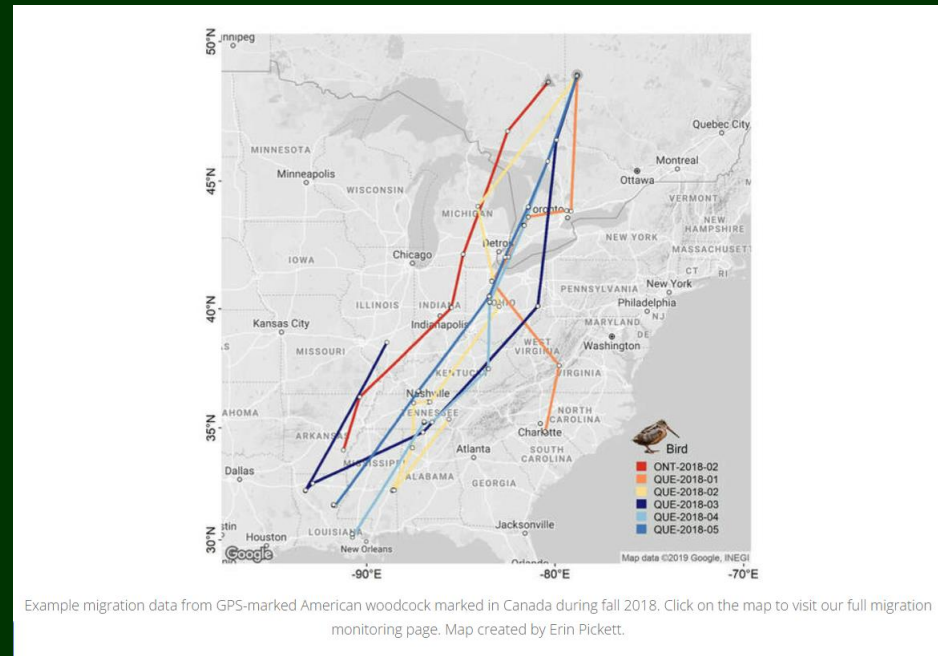
- Migratory game bird
- Habitat needs
 - Spring/Summer = thick early growth trees/shrubs, with openings
 - Fall/Winter = open bottom lands (southern states)
- Food
 - Earth worms, insects
- Often called “Timberdoodle”



- Distribution

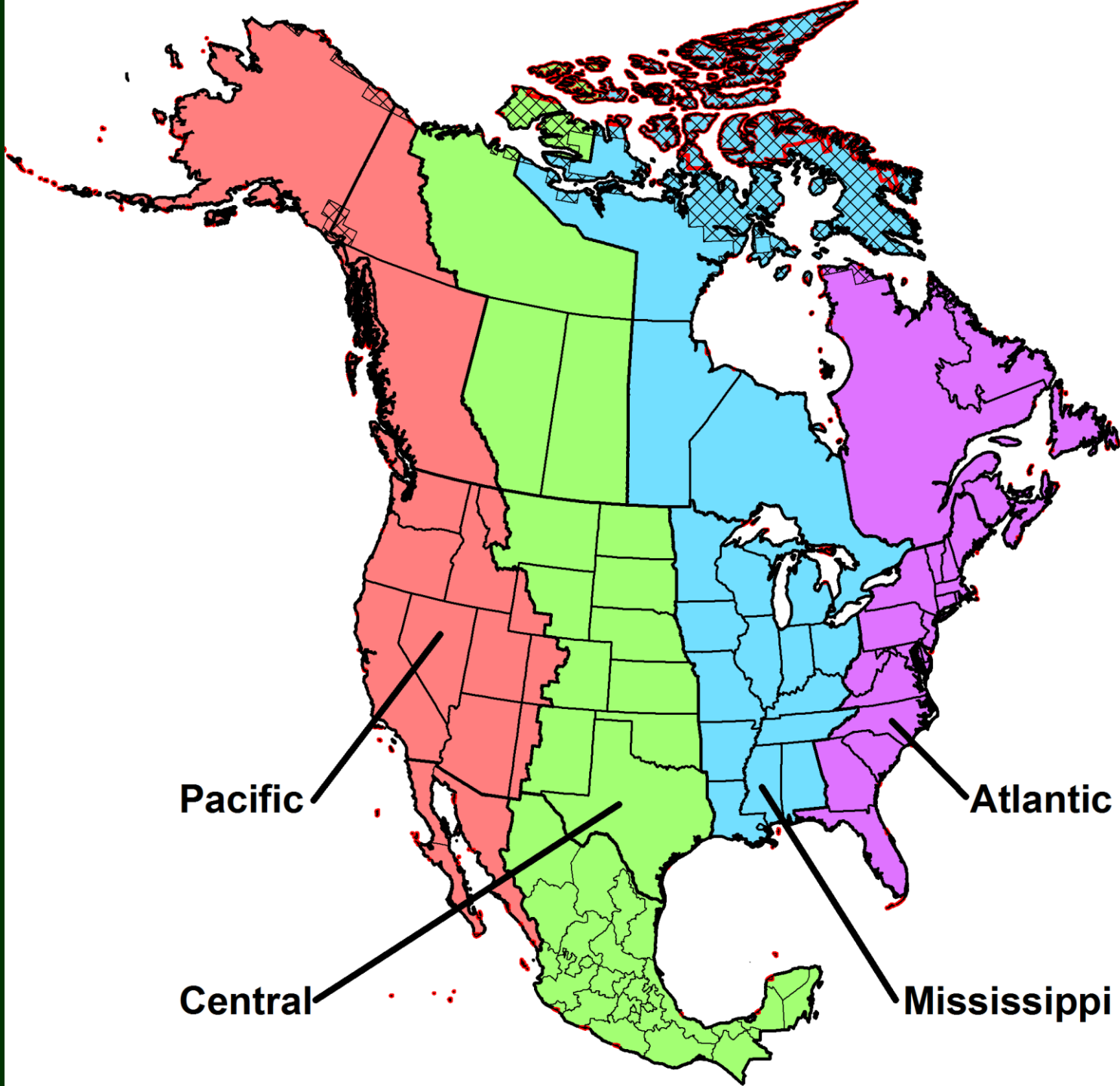


- Migration & “stopovers”



Example migration data from GPS-marked American woodcock marked in Canada during fall 2018. Click on the map to visit our full migration monitoring page. Map created by Erin Pickett.





Regulatory

- US Fish & Wildlife Service purview, in partnership with state agencies
- USFWS establishes season length and “bag limit” framework
- States work within framework
- Migratory bird population goals set by USFWS for Flyways, not individual states



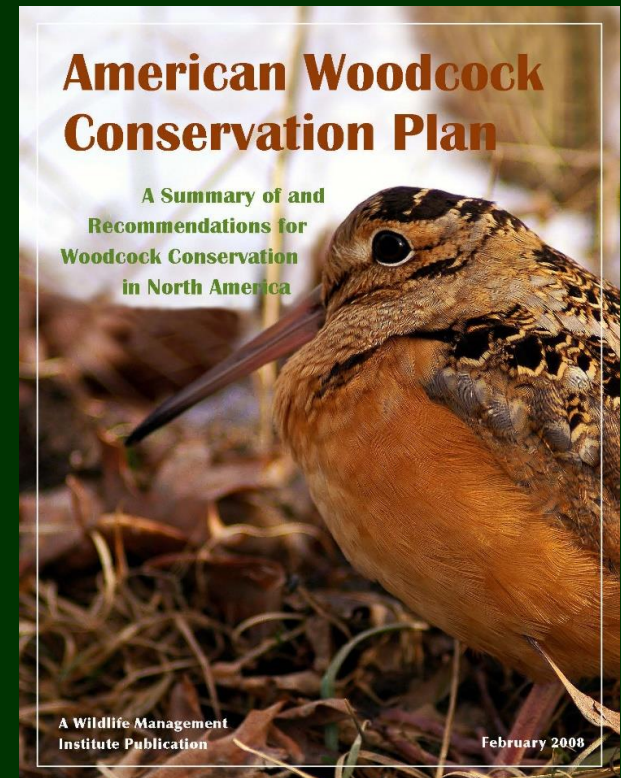
Partnerships

- Michigan partners with the USFWS and other woodcock states
 - Mississippi Flyway Council
 - Upper Mississippi/Great Lakes Joint Venture
 - Interagency Woodcock Harvest Strategy Working Group
- NGO and local partners
 - Ruffed Grouse Society, MUCC, Huron Pines
 - Conservation Districts



National Plan

- Recognized as important nationally
 - National Woodcock Management Plan
 - Provides recommendations on population and habitat management



Related plans

- State Forest Management Plan
- State Wildlife Action Plan
- State Public Lands Strategy
- National “Golden-winged Warbler Status Review and Conservation Plan”
(140 organizations)



Woodcock Management in Michigan

- Good Neighbor Authority
 - Partnership program with USFS, creates more habitat on National Forests
 - Funded through the US Farm Bill
 - Priority for MDNR, two division staff dedicated to these efforts



Woodcock Management in Michigan

- Successful habitat management
 - Aspen forest age is well distributed – essential for sustainable habitat management
 - In the last 10 years, state forest aspen harvest was 120% of the 30-year average



Population monitoring

- DNR conducts USFWS woodcock singing ground surveys
- Michigan has a robust woodcock banding program
- Hold a USFWS “Wingbee”
 - Michigan hunters provide wings, DNR staff attend
 - Aids in population assessments



Plethora of recent research

Google Scholar

Scolopax minor michigan

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Foraging location quality as a predictor of fidelity to a diurnal site for adult female American woodcock *Scolopax minor* [PDF] bioone.org Full View
[KE Doherty](#), [DE Andersen](#), J Meunier, E Oppelt... - Wildlife Biology, 2010 - BioOne
... We monitored movement and habitat use of 58 adult female American woodcock *Scolopax minor* at three study areas in Minnesota, Wisconsin and **Michigan**, USA, during autumn 2002 ...
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Assessing Habitat Quality of American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) and Validating a Handheld Meter Using Plasma Metabolites [PDF] umich.edu
CM Roelandt - 2020 - search.proquest.com
American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*; hereafter woodcock) is a small migratory upland bird found throughout eastern North America. The North American population has been ...
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Estimating annual harvest of American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) in the United States during 1964-2016: data, model code, and supplemental estimates [TXT] umn.edu
[TW Arnold](#), [MT Farr](#), AD Wright, [SP Saunders](#) - 2019 - conservancy.umn.edu
... 2016)-0.1, rev(lower5[2,]/1000), (1964:2016)-0.1, rev(upper5[2,]/1000),col="black")
legend(1982,420,legend=c("**Michigan**"),bty="n",cex=1.8) # underestimates relative to **MI** state ...
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[BOOK] Migration Ecology of American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) [PDF] uark.edu
JD Moore - 2016 - search.proquest.com
... PO Box 1346 Ann Arbor, **MI** 48106 - 1346 ... Improving the understanding of American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) migration ... Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, **Michigan** Department of ...
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Habitat availability for multiple avian species under modeled alternative [PDF] researchgate



Recreational Opportunity

- National leader in woodcock related recreation
 - Ranked 1st in number of woodcock hunters
 - Ranked 1st in woodcock harvest
 - Numerous bird watching events



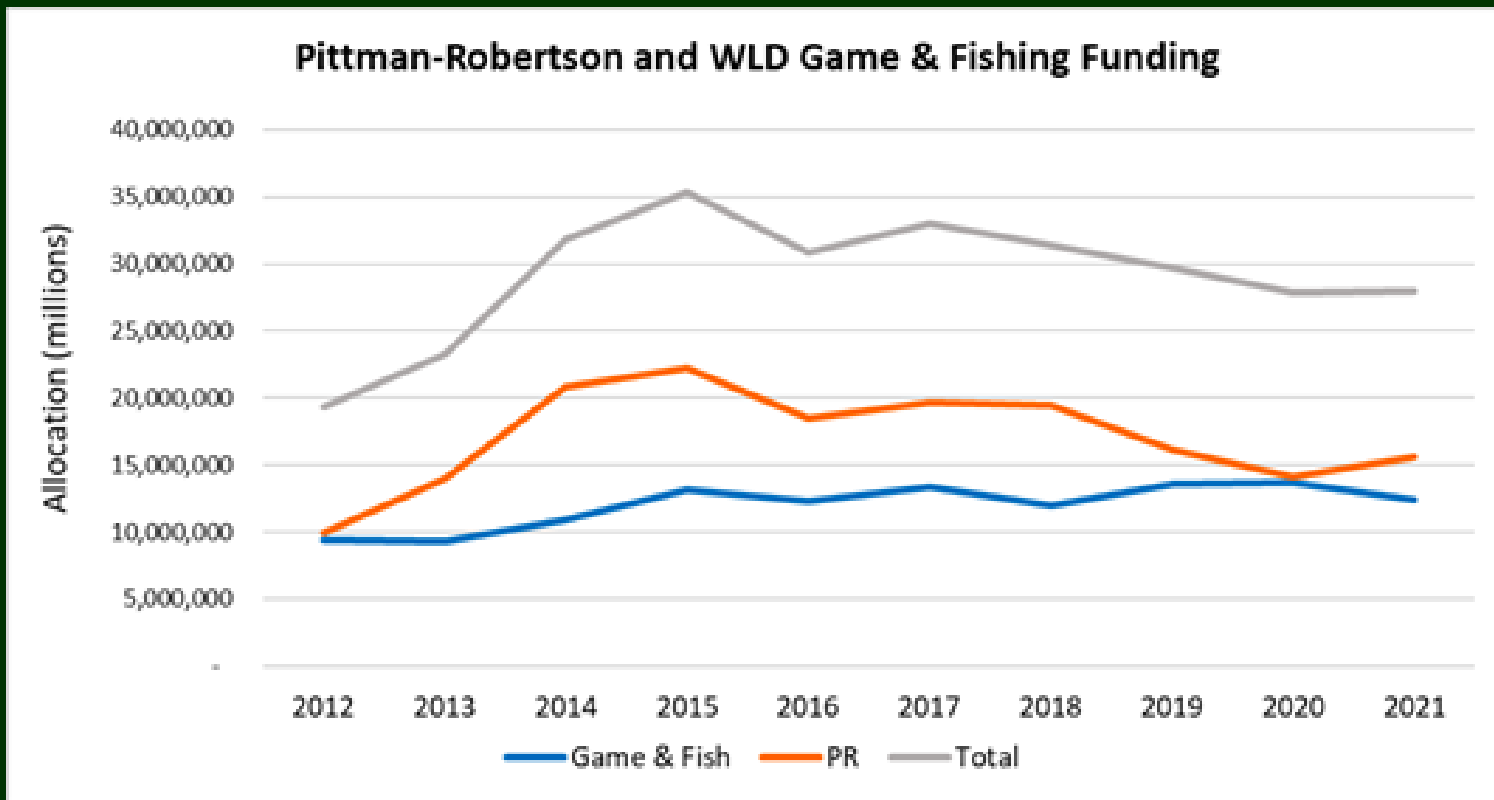
Considerations

- Climate change impacts across the Flyway
- Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA)
 - 309 SGCN in State Wildlife Action Plan



Considerations

Long-term decline of funding



Considerations

- Anticipate less Wildlife Division staff and overall capacity over time
- Assessing how to structure staff and duties to uphold conservation mission
- Align duties for upland bird/small game specialist



The Future

- Manage woodcock at the Flyway scale
- Woodcock continue as a “featured species”
- No need for “recovery plan”
- Elevating as featured species because of decline



The Future

- Fully integrate woodcock management in state forest planning
- Forward thinking approaches to species management and monitoring



Ecosystem management

In summary

- No other management or recovery plans in statute
- National plan with best management practices already established, flyway and continent-wide
- Difficulty setting state population goals for migratory birds that do not recognize state boundaries



In summary

- Adds unnecessary complexity when reconciling forest management plans, wildlife action plans and public land strategies
- Already engaging in Good Neighbor Authority, 2 positions
- Woodcock are prioritized as a DNR featured species



Thank you!

