UW scientists learning more

By EVE NEWMAN
even@laramieboomerang.com

UW scientists are learning more about conservation efforts to protect the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, a species found in nine Western states and British Columbia. Today, the population of the species is at risk due to habitat destruction and loss.

In Wyoming, scientists know of 27 leks belonging to the bird, one of seven subspecies of sharp-tailed grouse. All the known leks are located in southeastern Carbon County near the Colorado border.

But two UW researchers, Beck and Ph.D. student Kurt Smith, are hoping to learn more about the elusive bird’s habits and population.

Smith said research on the sharp-tailed grouse is a side project to his Ph.D. work involving a larger project to study sharp-tailed grouse in Canada and northern Idaho, which he said involves a lot of study at all on these birds in the state.

Looking for Leks

UW scientists learning more about overlooked Wyoming bird

By EVE NEWMAN

Like the greater sage grouse, the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse was one of the dozen of birds and mammals described by Lewis and Clark on their journey through the West more than 200 years ago. Also like the sage grouse, the once-abundant Columbian sharp-tailed grouse is a species in decline, occupying only a fraction of its historic range, where habitat exists.

“Their range has declined by 90 percent,” said Jeff Beck, an assistant professor at the University of Wyoming Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

In Wyoming, scientists know of 27 leks belonging to the bird, one of seven subspecies of sharp-tailed grouse. All the known leks are located in southeastern Carbon County near the Colorado border.

But two UW researchers, Beck and Ph.D. student Kurt Smith, are hoping to learn more about the elusive bird’s habits and population.

Smith said research on the sharp-tailed grouse is a side project to his Ph.D. work involving a larger project to study sharp-tailed grouse in Canada and northern Idaho, which he said involves a lot of study at all on these birds in the state.

“I didn’t even know that we had any in Wyoming,” he said. “There hasn’t been a whole lot of study at all on those birds in the state.”

Smith secured funding from organizations including the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, UW Biodiversity Institute and management.

Portions of Vedauwoo Glen Road closed

The Columbian sharp-tailed grouse lives in several Western states including Wyoming and Idaho, where the photo was taken. (Photo courtesy of Corey Class)

Looking for Leks

UW scientists learning more about overlooked Wyoming bird

By EVE NEWMAN

Like the greater sage grouse, the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse was one of the dozen of birds and mammals described by Lewis and Clark on their journey through the West more than 200 years ago. Also like the sage grouse, the once-abundant Columbian sharp-tailed grouse is a species in decline, occupying only a fraction of its historic range, where habitat exists.

“Their range has declined by 90 percent,” said Jeff Beck, an assistant professor at the University of Wyoming Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

In Wyoming, scientists know of 27 leks belonging to the bird, one of seven subspecies of sharp-tailed grouse. All the known leks are located in southeastern Carbon County near the Colorado border.

But two UW researchers, Beck and Ph.D. student Kurt Smith, are hoping to learn more about the elusive bird’s habits and population.

Smith said research on the sharp-tailed grouse is a side project to his Ph.D. work involving a larger project to study sharp-tailed grouse in Canada and northern Idaho, which he said involves a lot of study at all on these birds in the state.

“I didn’t even know that we had any in Wyoming,” he said. “There hasn’t been a whole lot of study at all on those birds in the state.”

Smith secured funding from organizations including the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, UW Biodiversity Institute and management.

Portions of Vedauwoo Glen Road closed

The Columbian sharp-tailed grouse lives in several Western states including Wyoming and Idaho, where the photo was taken. (Photo courtesy of Corey Class)

Looking for Leks

UW scientists learning more about overlooked Wyoming bird

By EVE NEWMAN

Like the greater sage grouse, the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse was one of the dozen of birds and mammals described by Lewis and Clark on their journey through the West more than 200 years ago. Also like the sage grouse, the once-abundant Columbian sharp-tailed grouse is a species in decline, occupying only a fraction of its historic range, where habitat exists.

“Their range has declined by 90 percent,” said Jeff Beck, an assistant professor at the University of Wyoming Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

In Wyoming, scientists know of 27 leks belonging to the bird, one of seven subspecies of sharp-tailed grouse. All the known leks are located in southeastern Carbon County near the Colorado border.

But two UW researchers, Beck and Ph.D. student Kurt Smith, are hoping to learn more about the elusive bird’s habits and population.

Smith said research on the sharp-tailed grouse is a side project to his Ph.D. work involving a larger project to study sharp-tailed grouse in Canada and northern Idaho, which he said involves a lot of study at all on these birds in the state.

“I didn’t even know that we had any in Wyoming,” he said. “There hasn’t been a whole lot of study at all on those birds in the state.”

Smith secured funding from organizations including the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, UW Biodiversity Institute and management.

Portions of Vedauwoo Glen Road closed

The Columbian sharp-tailed grouse lives in several Western states including Wyoming and Idaho, where the photo was taken. (Photo courtesy of Corey Class)

Looking for Leks

UW scientists learning more about overlooked Wyoming bird

By EVE NEWMAN

Like the greater sage grouse, the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse was one of the dozen of birds and mammals described by Lewis and Clark on their journey through the West more than 200 years ago. Also like the sage grouse, the once-abundant Columbian sharp-tailed grouse is a species in decline, occupying only a fraction of its historic range, where habitat exists.

“Their range has declined by 90 percent,” said Jeff Beck, an assistant professor at the University of Wyoming Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

In Wyoming, scientists know of 27 leks belonging to the bird, one of seven subspecies of sharp-tailed grouse. All the known leks are located in southeastern Carbon County near the Colorado border.

But two UW researchers, Beck and Ph.D. student Kurt Smith, are hoping to learn more about the elusive bird’s habits and population.

Smith said research on the sharp-tailed grouse is a side project to his Ph.D. work involving a larger project to study sharp-tailed grouse in Canada and northern Idaho, which he said involves a lot of study at all on these birds in the state.

“I didn’t even know that we had any in Wyoming,” he said. “There hasn’t been a whole lot of study at all on those birds in the state.”

Smith secured funding from organizations including the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, UW Biodiversity Institute and management.

Portions of Vedauwoo Glen Road closed

The Columbian sharp-tailed grouse lives in several Western states including Wyoming and Idaho, where the photo was taken. (Photo courtesy of Corey Class)

Looking for Leks

UW scientists learning more about overlooked Wyoming bird

By EVE NEWMAN

Like the greater sage grouse, the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse was one of the dozen of birds and mammals described by Lewis and Clark on their journey through the West more than 200 years ago. Also like the sage grouse, the once-abundant Columbian sharp-tailed grouse is a species in decline, occupying only a fraction of its historic range, where habitat exists.

“Their range has declined by 90 percent,” said Jeff Beck, an assistant professor at the University of Wyoming Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

In Wyoming, scientists know of 27 leks belonging to the bird, one of seven subspecies of sharp-tailed grouse. All the known leks are located in southeastern Carbon County near the Colorado border.

But two UW researchers, Beck and Ph.D. student Kurt Smith, are hoping to learn more about the elusive bird’s habits and population.

Smith said research on the sharp-tailed grouse is a side project to his Ph.D. work involving a larger project to study sharp-tailed grouse in Canada and northern Idaho, which he said involves a lot of study at all on these birds in the state.

“I didn’t even know that we had any in Wyoming,” he said. “There hasn’t been a whole lot of study at all on those birds in the state.”

Smith secured funding from organizations including the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, UW Biodiversity Institute and management.

Portions of Vedauwoo Glen Road closed

The Columbian sharp-tailed grouse lives in several Western states including Wyoming and Idaho, where the photo was taken. (Photo courtesy of Corey Class)
The bird has twice been petitioned for listing as an endangered species. "It's on the Game and Fish’s list of species known to be in the Conservation Need. The list includes species that are known to have a warden management attention and which are or may be in need of conservation because or not enough is known about them."

"Given the small size of their range and the few places they're definitely a species that deserves attention," Smith said.

"We believe the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse is an important species for the area," said Copper.

The wildlife, its habitat preferences and the development and spread of the nematodes and pine wilt, which could put Laramie into a less successful location for pine wilt disease, water conductivity in the tree. Along with other negative effects, several caused by the nematodes, the pine tree needles rapidly wilt and show symptoms of attack and most do not die from the nematode attack. The Scots and Austrian pines attacked and killed by pine sawyer beetles, Monochamus spp. The non-native Scots, Austrian and less commonly mugo pine, are primary trees attacked by the nematode are mostly in South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas. To-date pine wilt disease has not been found in Laramie or in Wyoming. Some show symptoms of attack and most do not die from the nematode attack. The Scots and Austrian pines attacked and killed by pine sawyer beetles, Monochamus spp. The non-native Scots, Austrian and less commonly mugo pine, are primary trees attacked and killed by the nematode are mostly in South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas. To-date pine wilt disease has not been found in Laramie or in Wyoming. Some show symptoms of attack and most do not die from the nematode attack.

Continued from A9

"The sage grouse has high habitat preferences and the development and spread of the nematodes and pine wilt, which could put Laramie into a less successful location for pine wilt disease, water conductivity in the tree. Along with other negative effects, several caused by the nematodes, the pine tree needles rapidly wilt and show symptoms of attack and most do not die from the nematode attack. The Scots and Austrian pines attacked and killed by pine sawyer beetles, Monochamus spp. The non-native Scots, Austrian and less commonly mugo pine, are primary trees attacked and killed by the nematode are mostly in South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas. To-date pine wilt disease has not been found in Laramie or in Wyoming.