

The Birds Without Borders – *Aves Sin Fronteras*[®] Project: Involving Private Landowners in Belize and Wisconsin in Bird Conservation

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Introduction

Birds Without Borders – *Aves Sin Fronteras*[®] (BWB-ASF) is a research, education and conservation project. Research on both migratory and resident birds was conducted on privately owned lands in Belize and Wisconsin. More than 114 species of migratory birds spend part of their lives in both locations.

We have applied our research results to bird conservation by providing free information on how land can be managed to conserve birds. The results of seven years of Belize research have been compiled into *The Birds Without Borders – Aves Sin Fronteras*[®] *Recommendations for Landowners: How to Manage Your Land to Help Birds (Belize and Mesoamerica edition)*. We also produced and distributed a brochure summarizing the manual's main points. We compiled five years of Wisconsin research and years of follow-up data analysis into *The BWB-ASF Recommendations for Landowners: How to Manage Your Land to Help Birds (Wisconsin, Midwest and eastern U.S. edition)*.

Materials and methods

Belize Landowner Recommendations Manual distribution: Information about the Belize manual and a free PDF were available on the Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM) Web site beginning January 2007 and we began distributing printed copies in March 2007. We publicized and distributed the manual through word-of-mouth, announcements on bird-related listservs, ZSM Web site and publications, mailings, and personal delivery with a brief presentation. To measure the manual's impact, both the printed and online versions contained surveys. (Belize Manual: www.zoosociety.org/bzlandowner)

Wisconsin Landowner Recommendations Manual distribution: We began distributing printed copies of the Wisconsin manual in September 2008. The manual is also available free on the ZSM Web site. We are distributing and publicizing the manual through press releases and announcements on bird-related listservs and in newsletters, ZSM Web site and publications, educational outreach programs, landowner gatherings, mailings, and educational signage at the Milwaukee County Zoo. To measure the manual's impact, recipients are asked to complete a survey found in the manual or online. (Wisconsin manual: www.zoosociety.org/wilandowner)

Results

Belize Landowner Recommendations Manual: A free online PDF of the manual received 43,521 page views through Aug. 1, 2008. We also distributed 378 manuals and 540 summary brochures to all six Belize districts, Mexico and four Central American countries, six South American countries, and to U.S. and Canada-based NGOs that work in Latin America.

Summary

Belize: This was the first publication of its kind to be produced in Belize. The manual is increasing awareness of bird conservation and the difference individuals can make. Many recipients are using it as a reference as well as a practical guide to managing their land. Educators are using the manual as a reference and a supplement to their teaching materials. We will continue to collect data from recipients to further determine the impact of the manual.

Wisconsin: We are distributing the manual through extensive outreach and publicity. We will measure the manual's impact through the number of manuals distributed, number of outreach programs presented and number of attendees, number of page views the online manual receives, and results of surveys completed by manual recipients.

We encourage others to develop a similar practical application for their research results. Research shared in this format with the general public can encourage individuals and groups to become important partners in bird conservation.