



# GRASSROOTS

KYLE SCHELL, EDITOR • SDSU • BOX 2170 • BROOKINGS, SD 57007 • kyle.schell@sdstate.edu • (605) 688-6623

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 5

JUNE 2008

## **Board of Directors**

Lavern Koch, Chair

16746 227<sup>th</sup> Street  
New Underwood, SD 57761  
(605) 754-6718

James Faulstich, Vice Chair

33795 186<sup>th</sup> Street  
Highmore, SD 57345  
(605) 852-2622

Ellen Reddick, Secretary/Treasurer

1611 Reddick Lane  
Saint Onge, SD 57779  
(605) 642-3272

Lyle Perman

30872 143<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Lowry, SD 57472  
(605) 649-7629

Dan Rasmussen

26151 Cedar Butte Rd.  
Belvidere, SD 57521  
(605) 344-2250

Larry Wagner

26314 350<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Chamberlain, SD 57325  
(605) 894-4448

Darwin Peckham

41557 147<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bristol, SD 57219  
(605) 380-4465

## **SDGC Part of New *Range & Pasture Journal* Publication**

The South Dakota Grassland Coalition is teaming up with *The Cattle Business Weekly* newspaper to bring grazing management information to cattle producers. A special insert called *Range & Pasture Journal* will debut mid-August and be mailed to the newspaper's more than 10,000 readers.

SDGC is sponsoring the editorial content of this special publication which will be coordinated by writers Codi Vallery and Kindra Gordon. Content will be devoted to range and grazing management topics, as well as include highlights of SDGC activities, and offer a comprehensive calendar of grazing-related events being held throughout the region.

SDGC dues-paying members will receive a complimentary mailing of *The Cattle Business Weekly* during the four weeks of August. So, watch your mailbox for this newspaper and the *Range & Pasture Journal* slated to be mailed Aug. 13. After August, SDGC members will receive a letter offering them a special yearlong subscription rate to *The Cattle Business Weekly*. Additional *Range & Pasture Journal* publications with SDGC sponsorship are planned for December and spring 2009.

*If you'd like to submit article ideas, or are interested in advertising in the inaugural August issue of *Range & Pasture Journal*, contact Kindra Gordon at [office@gordonresources.com](mailto:office@gordonresources.com) or call 605-722-7699.*

## **In this Issue...**

**SDGC PART OF NEW RANGE & PASTURE JOURNAL PUBLICATION**

**BIRD TOUR RECAP**

**PASTURE WALKS**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

For more information or other events the **SOUTH DAKOTA GRASSLAND COALITION** is involved with, please contact Kyle Schell or visit the website: <http://www.sdgrass.org>

## Bird Tour Recap

The South Dakota Grassland Coalition held its annual bird tour on June 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> near Bristol. Darwin Peckham, a board member of the SDGC, hosted the event on his ranch. This is only the second year the SDGC has sponsored a bird tour, it was still a great success. There were 50 people in attendance with many of them being children. We saw a large variety of birds on this tour with the list totaling 61 different species. Observers had the opportunity to see birds such as the upland sand-piper, Baltimore oriole, Eastern kingbird, and even a Lazuli Bunting, which is rare to see in Eastern South Dakota. People really enjoyed seeing the variety of birds and they took home a lot of valuable information from the featured speakers.

Kristel Bakker, from Dakota State University, was the lead speaker with her presentation on how livestock influence birds. She emphasized the importance of proper grazing management and how that helps the bird habitat. Doug Backland, with the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, presented a slide show on how to photograph birds. He also presented numerous amazing pictures he has taken in the past. On Saturday he presented a slide show about other critters on the prairie like beetles. He talked about the importance of having these different species of insects on your soil and how they fit into the prairie ecosystem.

### *Attendees of the 2008 SDGC Bird Tour*



Kristel Bakker talking about how cattle and birds interact

A new feature for the bird tour this was a bird banding station. Laura Hubers, with the Fish and Wildlife Service, set up some nets and gave participants the opportunity to see how banding is done and why it is important. Every one enjoyed this part of tour because it gave them the opportunity to see the birds up close, as well the chance to handle the birds. Laura was able to catch 20 different birds and eleven different species including grackles, yellow warblers, golden finches, a robin, and a brown thrasher.



Laura Hubers and Jacquie Ermer banding a bird

All in all, the 2008 Bird Tour was a huge success. Everyone was completely satisfied with the entire tour, from the classroom discussions to the food to the actual bird watching.

Special thanks to everyone who helped make the bird tour such a success. Some pictures from the bird tour will be posted on the SDGC website at [www.sdgrass.org](http://www.sdgrass.org). There is already discussion about next year's bird tour so please to make plans to attend.

### Pasture Walks

The South Dakota Grassland Coalition also sponsored two pasture walks in western South Dakota. The first one was held on the Lacreek Wildlife Refuge near Martin on June 13 where Tom Koerner is the manager. He gave us a tour of the refuge. Terry Gompert was the key speaker for the ten participants.



Terry Gompert was the main speaker at the Pasture walks

Gompert showed the class numerous things on this pasture walk including different ways to estimate forage production,

understanding regrowth, and estimating protein and energy levels in your grasses. There was also some great discussion among the attendees. Tom Koerner has a very interesting system on the Lacreek Wildlife Refuge. It is located on a spring that produces a large amount of water. In the thirties many dikes were built on this spring and the water was regulated on each on of the meadows. The class spent all of the time on these wet meadow pastures.



One of the wet meadows on the Lacreek Wildlife Refuge

The amount of forage production that he gets off these meadows is truly amazing and it fits well with his wildlife management plan. Also while we were at the Lacreek Refuge, we had the opportunity to see an eagle and two eaglets in their nest. The second pasture walk was held on Dan Hefner's Ranch between Whitewood and Sturgis.



Dan Hefner hosted the Pasture Walk in Sturgis

Terry Gompert was the main speaker on this walk as well. There where twenty people in attendance at Sturgis. Dan Hefner has a beautiful place located in the foothills of the Black Hills, with a spectacular view of Bear Butte to the east. There is an excellent rotational system set up as well, with over 25 paddocks that he grazes throughout the year. Gompert discussed similar topics and I received a lot of positive feed back from those who attended. People who attended these pasture walks took home a lot of valuable information.



Terry Gompert speaking on Pasture Walk



Kyle Schell  
 Box 2170, ASC 105, SDSU  
 Brookings, SD 57007

**Calendar of events:**

| <u>Event</u>                        | <u>Date</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Contact Person</u> | <u>Phone No.</u> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Annual SD Soils Day | June 24-25  | Wagner          | Charles Mix CD        | 605-487-7577     |
| SD Rangeland Days                   | June 24-25  | Wagner          | Charles Mix CD        | 605-487-7577     |
| Evening Pasture Walk                | June 26     | Webster         | Darrel DuVall         | 605-345-4661     |
| SDSU Oak Lake BioBlitz              | June 28     | White           | James Ladonski        | 605-367-8384     |
| Day County Grazing Tour             | July 31     | Webster         | Darrel DuVall         | 605-345-4661     |
| Sandborn County Tour                | Aug. 6      | Woonsocket      | Irene Graves          | 605-796-4380     |
| Bus Tour                            | Aug.12-13   | Bismarck, ND    | Kyle Schell           | 605-688-6623     |
| Evening Pasture Walk                | Aug. 14     | Waubay          | Darrel DuVall         | 605-345-4661     |
| Grazing School                      | Sep. 8-10   | Oacoma, SD      | Kyle Schell           | 605-688-6623     |
| SD & NE Joint SRM Meeting           | Oct 7-8     | Valentine, NE   | Kyle Schell           | 605-688-6623     |

Please remit any comments, suggestions, or topics deemed necessary for further review to: Kyle Schell, SDSU Box 2170, Brookings SD 57007, [kyle.schell@sdstate.edu](mailto:kyle.schell@sdstate.edu), (605) 688-6623

