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Forward

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Foreword

In his concluding remarks in Quail IV, John Roseberry stated, “the ultimate challenge for quail conservation was to change how society managed its forests and fields if bobwhites are to remain a widely hunted game species”. He predicted that with on-going research we will have the knowledge to produce locally abundant quail populations, even record numbers, but recovering quail at a landscape scale is a daunting, perhaps impossible, dilemma for researchers, managers, and policy makers. At this meeting, Dick Potts lamented on the decline of Grey Partridge in Europe, from millions to tens of thousands, even though intensive management can demonstrate restoration to “Edwardian” numbers. The continents and species may differ, but the tune is the same. The challenge for the recovery of these flagship species, not to mention the hundreds of less prestigious Galliformes, is what biologists around the world face and rendered an excellent rationale for hosting a National Quail Symposium and Perdix Conference simultaneously, now 3 years ago.

I met John Carroll and his family on my first visit to the Game Conservancy Trust in 1997 just as he was leaving to head to the University of Georgia to start a game bird program. It was a trip that my boss, at the time Lenny Brennan, supported and encouraged. Since then we have collaborated on dozens of research projects. This is to say, that while game bird management is a small world, one purpose for combining these symposia was to make it a tad larger for all attending. In this volume there are presentations from 8 countries and 3 continents. From the EU, information on conservation headlands to biodiversity plans and from the US farm and forest management to NBCI are presented as shared visions for conservation. There is important information on the efficacy of management techniques, and interestingly re-introduction and translocation practices are tested, which is likely to become an important conservation practice for some species. As a game bird biologist, it is more than just a novelty to learn about how others approach management of their wildlife resources, it is another window into what drives game bird populations which makes us all better biologists. One of the highlights of the meeting itself was the panel presentations and discussion on the effects of radio-transmitters on quail as it is vital that our methodology remains as unbiased as possible.

The editors of this symposium deserve credit for their breadth of knowledge to review and edit manuscripts from species around the world. They have done an outstanding job elevating the quality of the science for a span of disciplines. Probably one of the greatest testaments to the resurgence in research on game birds is the number of bright and ambitious graduate students attending, and in this case, running the meeting as well. Certainly, they do the lion’s share of the work in developing game bird knowledge and in this case pulling together the symposium for publication. I toast their dedication and thank all the presenters that took the time to make Gamebird 2006 a success. With our collective efforts perhaps the challenges outlined by Roseberry and others before him can be met.

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