

News Release



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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Awards 1.8 Million Dollars in Grants for Work on Deadly Bat Disease

Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced \$1.8 million in grants for the research and management of white-nose syndrome (WNS), a fungal infection that has killed millions of hibernating bats in eastern North America since it was first documented in New York in the winter of 2006-2007.

Funding was granted to eight projects at universities in New York, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin. Projects include studies to better understand bat immune responses to WNS, investigations into methods to control the disease, and ways to examine the molecular infrastructure of the fungus that causes WNS (*Pseudogymnoascus destructans*), and other cave-dwelling fungi.

“Bats are fascinating animals that are vital for a healthy environment. We are hopeful that these investments into research will get us closer to getting the upper hand on this devastating disease,” said Wendi Weber, co-chair of the White-Nose Syndrome Executive Committee and Service Northeast Regional Director.

Since 2008, the Service has granted more than \$17.5 million to institutions and federal and state agencies for WNS research and response. This year’s grants are the second round of WNS research funding awarded by the Service. \$1.4 million was awarded to federal agencies that provided matching funds for research and response to the disease. Another \$1.5 million is currently available for state wildlife agencies on www.grants.gov.

“Scientists from around the world are working together to understand this disease, and to develop the tools to manage WNS and conserve our native bats,” said Dr. Jeremy Coleman, the Service’s national WNS coordinator. “Findings from past research have led to improved methods for detecting *P. destructans*; development of potential tools to slow disease spread and treat infected bats, and the development of a national bat population monitoring program.”

Funding for the grants was provided through the Service’s Endangered Species Recovery and Science Applications programs.

Additional information about WNS is available at www.whitenosesyndrome.org/. Connect with our white-nose syndrome Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfwswns, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfws_wns and download photos from our Flickr page at www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq/collections/72157626455036388/. (more)

2014 White-Nose Syndrome Grant Recipients, Round 2

Investigators	Title	Funding amount
Marianne S. Moore, Department of Ecology and Evolution, Stony Brook (NY) University; Lilliana Davalos, Stony Brook U.; Amy Russell, Grand Valley University (MI)	Uncovering skin immune proteins as predictors of resistance against WNS	\$318,455
Hazel A. Barton, Department of Biology, University of Akron (OH)	Factors of the innate immune response that protect Virginia big-eared bats (<i>Corynorhinus townsendii virginianus</i>) from infection by <i>Pseudogymnoascus destructans</i> , the agent of white-nose syndrome	\$94,407
Tony L. Goldberg, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin – Madison; David Blehert, U.S. Geological Survey Wildlife Health Center (WI)	Characterization of bat skin microbiomes during progression of white-nose syndrome to inform biologic interventions	\$60,938
Jason Slot, Department of Plant Pathology, The Ohio State University; Hannah Reynolds, OSU; Hazel Barton, U. of Akron; DeeAnn Reeder, Bucknell U.; Tea Meulia, OSU	The potential of mycoviruses for biocontrol of white-nose syndrome of bats	\$223,009
Maarten J. Vonhof, Department of Biological Sciences and Environmental Studies Program, Western Michigan University; Timothy Carter, Ball State University (IN); Robert Eversole, WMU; Kevin Keel, University of California, Davis	Additional testing of the efficacy of chitosan to limit the growth of <i>Pseudogymnoascus destructans</i> on experimentally-infected bats	\$223,602
DeeAnn Reeder, Department of Biology, Bucknell University (PA); Ken Field (Bucknell U.)	Physiological changes in remnant bat populations in WNS-affected areas	\$349,230
Nancy P. Keller, Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology, University of Wisconsin – Madison	Identification and characterization of <i>Pseudogymnoascus destructans</i> immunomodulatory secondary metabolites	\$302,398
Jeffrey Foster, University of New Hampshire; Kevin Drees, UNH; Daniel Lindner, USDA Northern Research Station (WI); Jon Palmer, USDA NRS	Genomic differences between <i>Pseudogymnoascus destructans</i> and closely-related fungi from bat hibernacula: insights into fungal pathogenicity, physiology, and ecology	\$260,746
	Total	\$1,832,785

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information, visit www.fws.gov, or connect with us through any of these social media channels:

