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Foreword

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FOREWORD

National Quail Symposium Proceedings are a project of the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI), the National Bobwhite Technical Committee (NBTC), and the NBTC Science Subcommittee. At the conclusion of Quail 7 in 2012, in Tucson, Arizona, NBTC, NBCI and Dr. Patrick Keyser of the University of Tennessee (UT) announced their commitment to host Quail 8. In 2015, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) joined this effort to launch the 8th National Quail Symposium July 26–28, 2017, as a Joint Quail Conference with the 23rd Annual Meeting of NBTC, to be held in Knoxville, Tennessee, at the Holiday Inn World's Fair Park. NBTC subsequently recommended the Quail 8 Proceedings be published at the Joint Quail Conference, a daunting feat accomplished only once before for Quail V in Texas by current Quail 8 Associate Editor Dr. Stephen DeMaso.

We are pleased to announce that coincident with the publication of Quail 8, proceedings of the 1972 and 1982 National Bobwhite Quail Symposia, as well as Quail III–VII, are now published as the National Quail Symposium Proceedings in the Digital Commons Network™ (be-press™). This provides an exponential increase in dissemination of works published in the symposium series, including high quality, 100% searchable, digital copies of each paper.

The Joint Quail Conference will likely be the largest gathering, >200 participants, of biologists focused on quails, hereafter. With quail declining precipitously in abundance (e.g., near extinction of masked bobwhite as a species and northern bobwhite in Pennsylvania) and as a quarry for hunters, interest in their conservation has diminished markedly compared to 10–20 years ago when >300 participants attended national meetings. On the positive side, participants now include “non-game bird” biologists such as staff of the avian Joint Ventures and personnel of the National Park Service.

The Joint Quail Conference provides a unique opportunity for biologists to learn the latest in conservation of quails. The Quail 8 Proceedings is unprecedented among peer-reviewed quail symposia for the number of scholarly contributions—94 manuscripts and abstracts, by 72 authors, representing all species of quails in the United States, and masked bobwhite in Mexico. In addition there is a review paper on the state of the science in bobwhite translocation, and updates on the two major national quail plans, the NBCI and the Western Quail Management Plan.

The foundation and reason for the Quail 8 Symposium is the opportunity to meet colleagues. Despite the instantaneous communication of email and social media, we want to interact, just like quail enthusiasts at the First National Bobwhite Quail Symposium in 1972: the “Symposium provided an opportunity for many individuals who knew each other ‘only on paper’ to make face-to-face contacts and to exchange ideas on current theories and research findings.” (Howard Jarrell, Secretary)

Publication of the proceedings prior to the symposium as requested by NBTC was daunting, requiring tremendous effort by the authors, 12 Associate Editors, 97 reviewers, the Science Subcommittee of the NBTC, and staff of NBCI, UT, and TWRA – all under the guidance of Allen Press, Inc. All contributed to the excellence and timeliness of the proceedings. We are indebted to many individuals, listed in the Acknowledgements, Editorial Committee, Reviewers and Steering Committee sections.

In the midst of decades-long trouble for quail populations, Dr. Leonard Brennan's concluding remarks at Quail 7 challenged professional quail enthusiasts to publish examples of success. The Quail 8 Plenary features some successes, but also lessons learned, pointing the way for improved quail conservation in the future. Quail 8 ended with Dr. Frank Thompson's look far into the future, research on the predicted effects of climate change on bobwhites. Because quail enthusiasts have worked so hard for so long to understand the species, with Quail 8 being the latest example, we are better prepared to justify conservation of quails, compared to any other species.

Although many biologists will meet face-to-face for the first time at Quail 8, because of intense peer-review over the past year, authors, reviewers and editors know each other well. Peer-review is an intense human experience, emotional at its core, fostering more dynamic discussion and interaction at the conference.

We are pleased to have collaborated with the NBTC Science Subcommittee to honor Drs. Leonard A. Brennan and Loren Wesley Burger as recipients of the Quail 8 Recognition of Excellence Award, and the late Dr. Robert J. Robel for the Quail 8 In Memoriam recognition. For Lenny and Wes an unintended consequence of distributing the Quail 8 proceedings with the conference registration was the lack of surprise at the Awards Luncheon. On the other hand, their families joined in the luncheon celebration without having to arrange travel with the usual secrets that accompany surprise announcements.

We trust the Joint Quail Conference greatly enhanced your communication with fellow professional quail enthusiasts, and that the Quail 8 Proceedings is a valuable addition to your library. Despite the new widely-available digital version, we expect the Quail 8 original rendition of quails of the U.S.A. will ensure this proceedings is displayed prominently in your office.

With the completion of this symposium, we are hopeful for a continued future of management success, research, and dedication for sustaining the quail species of our continent. Most importantly, we look forward to Quail 9 in 2022.

—Tom Dailey and Roger Applegate, Editors