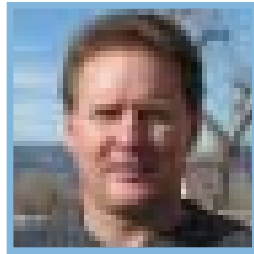


## Message from the Chair and President

Since before memory, the earth has been renewing itself every spring. We see it. We feel it. We live it. We need only step into the backyard or anywhere off the beaten path to witness the red of a cardinal flitting among the leaves, the white of a butterfly landing on



**Bryan Pritchett**

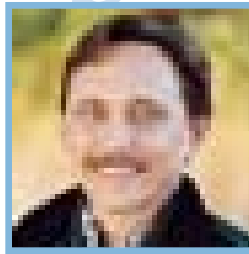
a flower petal perch, the big brown oak pushing out buds.

This is the stuff habitat is made of, and it is all around us. It is a daily reminder of how important a thriving natural world is to the survival of wild creatures. There is no more important principle: healthy habitat means healthy wildlife. It's as simple as that. From the creeks that meander across the countryside, to the remaining great forests that dot the landscape, to the gardens that beautify our backyards and communities, habitat is home—home to the wildlife that is our precious natural heritage.

At NWF, we build this principle into our conservation work every single day. That is why NWF is working harder than ever before on habitat-based projects and campaigns all over the U.S. and—because habitat knows no boundaries—in other countries as well.

We played a leading role in a nationwide campaign that rallied grassroots America to stop oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, home to countless spectacular species. A great victory for all of us who prize wildlife and wild places! On rivers around the country, including the lower Mississippi Delta, we led local coalitions to stop destructive dams and dredging projects. In the Midwest, we expanded our Clean the Rain campaign to reduce mercury in rainfall, which pollutes water habitats. And we kicked off a new initiative in Mexico to help citizens protect the habitat that supports that country's extraordinary wildlife.

This has indeed been a remarkable year in our on-the-ground efforts to protect and restore significant wildlife habitats.



**Mark Van Putten**

But let us not forget another compelling principle that has guided NWF for 67 years: knowledge inspires action. As Rachel Carson eloquently stated, "The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the

universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction." Today, as forces steadily undercut an environmental legacy that has brought us cleaner air and water as well as stronger species protection, the value of education in transforming budding conservationists into dedicated wildlife advocates has never been higher.

So we proudly announce that in 2002 participation from families, schoolchildren, community leaders and citizens in NWF environmental education programs hit an all-time high. Our Backyard Wildlife Habitat® program grew by almost 3,500 backyards and community spaces, the most in one year in the program's 29-year history. One hundred more college campuses joined our Campus Ecology program, becoming sites where students learn how to live sustainably. And our new website, eNature.com, has become a powerful tool in educating the public about species and habitats.

In the pages ahead, you will read about many of our activities, challenges and triumphs in both the conservation and education arenas. And we could not have done any of it without you. To our affiliates, funders, supporters, members and partners, thank you for helping us make these successes possible. Because of you, we speak with one powerful voice for protecting wildlife and wild places. With your continued help, we will strive to generate lasting achievements through education and action that keep the wild alive.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bryan Pritchett".

**Bryan Pritchett**  
*Chair, Board of Directors*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Van Putten".

**Mark Van Putten**  
*President and CEO*