

## GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Jordan Thompson

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Jordan arrived at UWSP in late August and started his studies in September 2019. His research is focused on emperor goose nest site selection and survival on the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska.

### Alaska Emperor Goose Project

Project overview:

Geese are long-lived birds that often exhibit delayed reproduction. Because of their life history, population growth rates of geese are often more sensitive to changes in adult survival than reproduction. However, in species with limited ranges and little control over harvest, the tools available to increase adult survival may be limited. Because of this, it may be essential to manage for increased reproductive success or recruitment as well to increase population growth rates. After significant population declines and subsequent closure of harvest, the population growth rate for emperor geese has been slow and variable. No studies on nest survival of emperor geese have been published since 1992, and little work has been done to evaluate potential factors limiting nest survival of emperor geese. Further work to evaluate influences of nest site selection and carry-over effects on nest survival of emperor geese can help to identify management actions that can increase population growth rates. Jordan is working on the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska to examine how emperor geese select nest sites and, after nest initiation, what variables affect nest survival. He is also examining how nest survival affects future nest site fidelity. Specifically, Jordan's objectives are:

1. Determine patterns of nest site selection of emperor geese on Kigigak Island,
2. Determine how nest sites and ecological and environmental factors on the staging and nesting grounds influence nest survival of emperor geese, and
3. Examine patterns of nest site fidelity in emperor geese and how they relate to nest survival.

