



# The Wildlife Society Pennsylvania Chapter



Newsletter—Spring/Summer 2014

## President's Message

Dear Fellow PA TWS Members,

It is hard to believe that another summer field season is quickly coming to a close. Since this will be our last newsletter prior to the annual TWS Conference, I wanted to take the time to highlight the event and let you know how our chapter has been involved in the planning process.

As you are aware, PA TWS is hosting the conference in Pittsburgh from October 25-30 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. Since this is the first time the conference will be held in Pennsylvania, it offers a unique opportunity for our membership to reconnect with colleagues in PA while networking with students and resource professionals from across the nation.

The conference schedule boasts a wide variety of field trips, meetings, workshops, symposia, and contributed papers that truly offer something for everyone. Our chapter has played a critical role in ensuring that Pennsylvania's resources are highlighted throughout the conference by offering opportunities to visit local areas of significance and presenting research on PA wildlife management issues. The annual conference isn't just about education. It is an opportunity to relax and socialize too. You will definitely want to consider joining your colleagues at the Welcome Reception/Awards Dinner, the Leopold Reception, and the Closing Night celebration aboard the Gate-

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way Clipper! Check out the full schedule on the conference website to sign up for conference add-ons and plan your visit around the events that interest you the most.

Engaging students has always been a central focus of the annual conference. In keeping with this tradition, students will be able to take advantage of numerous opportunities including a student reception, Quiz Bowl, student poster session, resume development sessions, and various other events designed with their best interests in mind. I would like to highlight this year's Student Professional Mixer as it promises to be quite memorable for all involved! It will be held at the Omni William Penn Hotel on Monday, October 27 and will feature food and drink, networking, and the best-of-the-best from the student poster session will be on display. To facilitate networking, the committee has developed a "game" where students will be collecting threatened and endangered species cards from each of the professionals they speak with. I don't want to give away too many of the details, but prizes will be involved! Please plan to

*President's Message cont...*

come out for the event whether you are a student or a professional. We need your support in order to ensure the mixer is a success!

Volunteers are critical for the day-to-day operations of the conference. Please be sure to check out our "Call for Volunteers" section in this newsletter and consider donating your time and talents.

The conference website has a wealth of information and is a great tool for planning your personal conference schedule. Visit <http://wildlifesociety.org/> to check out everything I have highlighted plus a whole lot more!

Just a reminder that early registration (a \$50 savings) ends August 31 and there are also discounted blocks of rooms available at select hotels. The conference will be here before you know it so sign up today!

See you all soon,

Christina Voorhees  
PA TWS President

**We are on Facebook—LIKE US!**

The Pennsylvania Chapter of The Wildlife Society now has a Facebook page. Connect with us. Share with us. To find us on Facebook search:  
"PA Chapter -The Wildlife Society"



This Newsletter is produced on a roughly quarterly basis for members of the Pennsylvania Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

**Editor: W. David Walter**

Send items of interest, comments, announcements, questions, or corrections to David at: [wdwalter@psu.edu](mailto:wdwalter@psu.edu).

Subject— "newsletter"

## 2014 National Conference In Pittsburgh

### CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

**Deadline: September 5, 2014**

The Conference Arrangements Committee is looking for eager volunteers willing to devote their time and talents to assist in hosting the [21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society](#) at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, PA. It is an excellent opportunity to meet and interact with professionals and prospective, future employers in the natural resources field. The conference requires a small army of volunteers to make it happen. And like the army, volunteering requires commitment. Join our volunteer ranks and help make a difference!

#### What you're signing up for

If you join this dedicated and enthusiastic army, your assignments must take priority over any and all other commitments at the time of the Conference. Other stipulations include:

**\*\*Volunteers must register to attend the attend the conference.**

**\*\*Assignments are in 4-hour blocks (some exceptions may apply).**

In return, you'll get a heartfelt thank you, the undying admiration of the Volunteer Coordinator, and a FREE conference volunteer t-shirt.

#### Are you a student?

While most volunteers will have to be satisfied knowing they are the backbone of the conference, student volunteers are eligible to receive reimbursement. The reimbursement rate is \$7 per hour. Payment is intended to offset expenses (i.e. registration, lodging, meals, parking) for volunteers not receiving full support from their educational institution

for attending the conference.

As a volunteer, you may decline payment. Volunteers with the means to pay for their own expenses are encouraged to decline payment. Checks for payment will be distributed during the conference or shortly thereafter. Payments to volunteers will be limited to a first come, first served basis until all required volunteer time slots are filled and/or the available budget is exhausted.

#### Enlisting in the Volunteer Army

Still interested? Then we want you! Complete the [Volunteer Application](#). The Volunteer Application can be filled out, saved, and submitted via email to the address below. Volunteers will be notified of their assignments via e-mail or phone.

Submit your volunteer application today and help keep the Volunteer Coordinator from having a nervous breakdown! Still have questions? Contact Jeannine Fleegle at (724) 238-1826 or [jefleegle@pa.gov](mailto:jefleegle@pa.gov).



## PA TWS Member Profile: Emily Boyd

*Editor's note: This article is part of an ongoing series featuring members of the Pennsylvania Chapter of The Wildlife Society. If you would like to share your perspective and put a face to our State's diverse workforce of wildlife professionals, please contact the Newsletter Editor.*

### **What made you decide to get into the wildlife profession?**

I've always known that I wanted to work with animals and spent a lot of time outside growing up. I started college with a major in biology, but when Juniata College created their Wildlife Conservation track my sophomore year, it was almost like a light switch turned on for me. I knew exactly what career path I wanted to follow.

### **What is your educational background?**

I graduated with a focus in wildlife conservation from Juniata College in 2010. I finished my M.S. in Wildlife Ecology and Management from the University of Arkansas at Monticello in 2013 where I completed a thesis titled "Spatial Ecology of Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep".

### **Do you have any mentors or anyone that really influenced your career?**

I was most definitely influenced by my dad, who, from a young age, engrained an outdoor interest in me. During hikes growing up, he would identify plants and birds as we went. I wish that I would have started actually listening and taking in all that he was saying when I was younger, especially his persistence in getting me to give hunting a try. I didn't know it at the time, but my dad would "pshtt" at the family to bring us together when we were in public. Imagine my surprise when I started to hone my birding skills and learned how bird-

ers use those same noises to call in birds. Since getting into the wildlife field though, there have been many influences which have given direction to my career. I've worked with a lot of great people all over the country, but the most influential of those was my advisor in grad school, Dr. Robert Kissell. His work ethic, knowledge, and humanity gave me an example of the kind of wildlife professional that I wanted to be.

### **What is your current position and specialization?**

I currently work for the Game Commission as the small game mammal biologist. I focus a lot on snowshoe hares and Appalachian cottontails, but also work with eastern cottontails, squirrels, and porcupines.

### **What is the most interesting aspect of your job?**

The part of my job that I enjoy the most is that even though I work with game species, I am heavily concentrated on conservation. Not a lot is known about Pennsylvania's snowshoe hare and Appalachian cottontail populations. They're both believed to be species in decline and are on Pennsylvania's wildlife action plan, but both are currently being harvested by Pennsylvania hunters. One of my primary goals is to get a better idea of relative abundance and distribution of these species in Pennsylvania so that we can make sound management decisions.

### **Do you have any special moments on the job that are unforgettable, or moments that reaffirm your career choice?**

It's hard for me to talk about any wildlife job I've had without a notable enthusiasm. I think

*Member Profile cont...*

what we do in the wildlife profession is invaluable and find it to be personally rewarding. We even get to escape the desk sometimes to do fieldwork which definitely reaffirms my career choice.

**How would you describe your experience with PA TWS?**

Despite having very recently returned to Pennsylvania, I was elected to be the NE representative of PA TWS. I've enjoyed the role so far and think that the link between Pennsylvania's chapter and the regional chapter is very important.

**Is PA TWS heading in the direction you would like to see, or what changes could be done to make it better?**

I think that PA TWS is going in the right direction. We, as a society, took action against HB 1576 and I hope that if 1576 resurges we'll see similar effort and response. We also

have a unique opportunity coming up this fall to show off our state and its wildlife at the national conference in Pittsburgh which is very exciting.

**What advice can you give to new members who are just beginning their wildlife career?**

My advice to people who are just beginning their wildlife careers is to have an open mind. Don't be afraid of branching out and seeking out new professional experiences in different places. You'll meet a lot of fun people along the way, and build a diverse resume which will make you a stronger wildlife professional. I've used techniques that I learned working with butterflies on bighorn sheep and I've used techniques that I learned working with bighorn sheep on snowshoe hares. Thinking outside the box and pulling from past experiences will help with many of life's challenges on both professional and personal levels.

## Save the Date

**Applied Spatial Ecology in R  
2 day workshop**

29-30 September 2014  
Penn State University  
Contact: David Walter for details; [wdwalter@psu.edu](mailto:wdwalter@psu.edu)



**The Wildlife Society  
21st Annual Conference**

October 25-30, 2014  
David Lawrence Convention Center  
Pittsburgh, PA  
Conference website:  
<http://wildlifesociety.org/>

## From the Field

Recently, past president of PA TWS, Merlin Benner, was busy launching an Unmanned (or Remotely Piloted) Aerial System (UAS/ RPAS) in central Pennsylvania. The UAS have been used for a variety of purposes recently such as for population counts of wildlife, tracking species movements, and fine-scale habitat mapping and vegetation sampling.

Unmanned (or Remotely Piloted) Aerial Systems, often called drones, have reached the point that they are now a very useful technology for various roles in the wildlife and natural resource management fields. They can be used to collect high resolution, current aerial imagery, either as still or video imagery for habitat surveys or counting of some species. Camera payloads vary, with

high resolution digital still cameras, stabilized video, or thermal infrared sensors being the most commonly available. Air vehicles typically used include multi-rotor copters and fixed-wing airplanes, depending on the project requirements. The rotorcraft have vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) capabilities, plus increased maneuverability for close-up observations. Fixed-wing aircraft have longer endurance times, greater coverage areas, and greater capabilities in windy situations.

*If you want to learn more about UAS/RPAS used in research, be sure to catch the special symposium on 27 October 2014 at the National Wildlife Society Conference in Pittsburgh!*

<http://wildlifesociety.org/symposia/>



Past president of PA TWS, Merlin Benner, launching an unmanned aerial system (UAS or drone) for habitat mapping in central Pennsylvania.

PA TWS shirts have been to.....

## *CONEY ISLAND IN NY AND TRIESTE, ITALY*

Jennifer D. Martin (right), PA TWS Web-site Manager, visited Coney Island over the summer to enjoy Luna Park and other attractions the city has to offer.

David Walter (below), PA TWS Newsletter Editor, attended The Prion Conference in Trieste, Italy in May. Trieste is in the northernmost region of Italy only a few miles from the border with Slovenia. Along with a train ride to Venice, Italy, David was able to take in the culture and scenery that makes Italy a great travel destination.



Show us where you've taken your PA TWS clothing. Send photos to David Walter, Newsletter Editor, at [wdwalter@psu.edu](mailto:wdwalter@psu.edu)

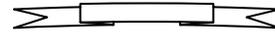
To view our clothing online visit <http://wildlife.org/pa/> and click on "Merchandise." Contact Virginia Tilden, Treasurer, at [cvtilden@state.pa.us](mailto:cvtilden@state.pa.us) to order.

## Pennsylvania TWS Objectives

1. To develop and promote sound stewardship of wildlife resources and of the environments upon which wildlife and humans depend.
2. To undertake an active role in preventing human-induced environmental degradation.
3. To increase awareness and appreciation of wildlife values.
4. To seek the highest standards in all activities of the wildlife profession.
5. To serve the specialized needs of Pennsylvania in wildlife resource management.

## —Who's Who on the Board—

2014 Executive Board Members  
Pennsylvania Chapter of The Wildlife Society

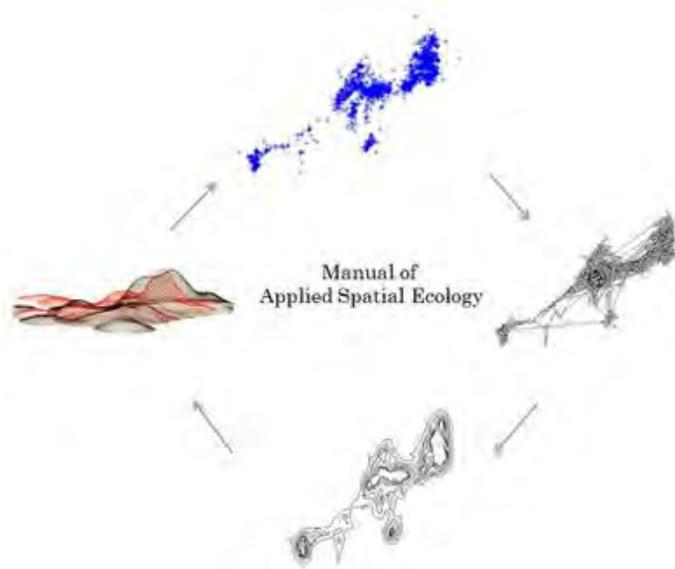


*President*.....Christina Voorhees  
*Vice-President*.....Emily Thomas  
*Past President*.....Merlin Benner  
*Secretary*.....Samara Trusso  
*Treasurer*.....Virginia Tilden  
*Northeast Section Representative*.....Emily Boyd  
*Website Manager*.....Jennifer D. Martin  
*Newsletter Editor*.....David Walter  
*Membership Coordinator*.....Wendy Vreeland  
*At-Large Members*.... Mario Giazzon  
Emily Just  
Andrea Evans  
Samantha Pedder



## **APPLIED SPATIAL ECOLOGY IN R**

**An Online Manual and 2-day Workshop at Penn State  
University  
29-30 September 2014**



*Workshop Objectives:* Advances in technology have resulted in large spatial datasets for aquatic and terrestrial populations that require data compilation and analysis for making sound resource management and conservation decisions. From GIS and GPS dataset manipulation to traditional estimators of home range, this course will provide hands-on learning to handle a variety of datasets all within the free software R (R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria). You will develop skills in understanding and processing complex datasets without ever needing ArcMap or related costly programs.

*Online Manual:* <http://ecosystems.psu.edu/research/labs/walter-lab/manual>

*Fee:* Professionals \$249, students \$100 to include: refreshments, lunch for both days.

*Contact:* W. David Walter, Pennsylvania Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit  
403 Forest Resources Building, Pennsylvania State University  
Phone: 814-867-4763; Email: [wdwalter@psu.edu](mailto:wdwalter@psu.edu)



# THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

## 2014 Membership Application

### Pennsylvania Chapter

- Check One:  Renewal  New Member  Student Member  Lifetime Member  Dues Paid through National Headquarters
- Annual Dues: \$10.00  
 Student Dues: \$6.00  
 Life Membership: \$200.00

The following information is  new, updated, or corrected  
 unchanged

Name:  Dr.  Mrs.  Miss  
 Mr.  Ms. \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Home: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
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 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: **PA-TWS**  
 (Pennsylvania Chapter of The Wildlife Society)

Mail to: Virginia Tilden, Treasurer  
 7755 Wertzville Road  
 Carlisle, PA 17013

2014-04-28