

Virginia Chapter: The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting

February 5th –7th, 2018

<http://wildlife.org/virginia-chapter/>

Stonewall Jackson Hotel and Conference Center

24 South Market Street, Staunton, Virginia

540.885.4848 or 866.880.0024

<http://www.stonewalljacksonhotel.com/>

“Fired Up for Wildlife”

Join us for the Annual Meeting of the Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society, February 5th –7th, 2018, in Staunton Virginia. The traditional winter meeting brings together biologists, private and public land managers, consulting organizations, educational institutions, student chapters, and other colleagues from across the Commonwealth. This year’s Plenary Session theme, “Fired Up for Wildlife” seeks to present a balanced view of topics related to forestry and prescribed fire techniques used to create and sustain wildlife habitat in Virginia.

Day 1: Offering three professional development workshops (February 5, 9:00am -13:00 pm) for an additional fee (\$48) and includes lunch (see last page for descriptions). All workshops are eligible for Continuing Education credits; VA TWS Annual Business Meeting, research poster session, and student-professional mixer.

Day 2: The second day kicks-off with our Plenary Session “*Fired Up for Wildlife*,” which aims to address the complex interactions of forestry and prescribed fire on wildlife habitats and conservation practices. There is significant debate among professionals regarding effects of various techniques, which has implications for strained agency and NGO budgets. Speakers will explore to what extent prescribed (and prescribed natural) fire can complement, replace, or confound timber management from a wildlife habitat management perspective. Speakers will also present social aspects to consider when reintroducing fire on the landscape. Following the plenary session, attendees will work in break-out sessions to produce issue/goal statements that may be used by VA TWS to develop a policy position statement. A lunch is planned that also includes a student-professional interaction. The afternoon consists of professional and student research talks. The day ends with the Annual Awards Banquet.

Day 3: We put together a field trip to the Wildlife Center of Virginia in Waynesboro for the Wednesday, February 7th. The group will leave from the hotel ~9:00 and return after lunch. There is no extra charge for this incredible opportunity for a behind-the-scenes tour of a world class wildlife veterinary facility and research center, but space is limited, so don’t forget to select the field trip when you register.

As usual, it’s shaping up to be a great meeting and we hope to see you there. Questions? Contact or Michael St. Germain, President mstgerma@vt.edu or Faren R Wolter, President-Elect fwolter@vt.edu.

Registration: Registration has transitioned to an online format using Eventbrite.com and there are several event “packages” from which to choose. Go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/virginia-chapter-of-the-wildlife-society-annual-meeting-tickets-40144579518>. **Early registration deadline is January 22nd - after which cost increases (\$10) for each item.**

- Workshop on Monday, 5 Feb: \$48 (\$58) includes lunch
- Conference 5 – 6 Feb: Student \$45 (\$55 late); Professional \$85 (\$95 late); includes, social on Monday, breaks and snacks, and student-mentor lunch on Tuesday
- Awards Banquet 6 Feb: \$23 (\$33 late)
- Field trip on Wednesday, 7 Feb: no cost, but please pre-register for planning purposes.

Lodging: Stonewall Jackson Hotel and Conference Center, 24 South Market Street, Staunton, Virginia. Room rates are \$87 per night (plus taxes). **Reservations must be made by January 5th under the room block for “The Wildlife Society”** at 540-885-4848 or reservations@stonewalljacksonhotel.com

Officer Nominations:

We have four positions open for elections:

- President Elect (3-year term)
- Secretary (2-year term)
- Member at Large (2-year term)
- Student Representative (1-year term)

We are looking for at least 2 nominations per position. You are welcomed to nominate someone or yourself; we are not judging. **Please submit nominations to David Kocka, David.Kocka@dgif.virginia.gov by January 5.**

Important Timelines:

Item	Deadline 2018
Awards nominations	December 29, 2017
Hotel group rate	January 5
Officer nominations	January 5
Abstract for talks and posters deadline	January 5
Early registration	January 22
Workshop registration	January 5
Pre-conference workshops	February 5 times will vary
Conference start	February 5 at 14:00
Business meeting, Poster session & Social	
Plenary session & Presentations	February 6
Awards banquet	
Field trip	February 7

Tentative Schedule of Events

2018 Annual Winter Meeting – February 5 - 7th

Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Monday, February 5, 2018

0900 – 1700: conference registration open

0900 – 1300: Professional Development Workshops (additional cost ~\$48)

- Analysis: Intro to R (Corbin Hilling, VA Tech)
- Research: “Using Genetics to Enhance Fish and Wildlife Management” (Dr. Stephanie Coster, Randolph-Macon and Dr. Amy Welsh, WVU)
- Application: “Immobilization and Humane Dispatch of Wildlife (Dr. Megan Kirchgessner, VDGIF)

1400 – 1600: VA TWS business meeting

1630 – 1700: Research poster set-up (boards provided by hotel)

1630 – 1830: Dinner on your own.

1830 – 2000: Research poster session (including judging) and social/reception that includes a student-professional “speed-dating” mixer (cash bar and heavy hors d’oeuvres).

Tuesday, February 6, 2018

0700 – 0800: Breakfast on your own

0730 – 0830: Conference registration open

0800 – 1000: Plenary Session “Fired Up for Wildlife”.

1000 - 1030: Snack break and coffee/tea.

1030 – 1200: Break-out work sessions on plenary topic “Fired Up for Wildlife” to produce membership guidance on developing a VATWS position statement.

1200 – 1300: Lunch **Student-professional assigned tables w/ topic areas – sign up after speed dating session**

1300 – 1700: Research presentations (both student and professional)

- 1 hour BREAK -

1800 – 2100: Annual Awards Banquet

- Post-banquet option: informal gathering downtown Staunton

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

0700 – 0800: Breakfast on your own

0900 – 1500: Field trip: Wildlife Center of VA (organized by Tamara Johnstone-Yellin, meals/drinks not provided)

CALL FOR PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

**2018 Annual Winter Meeting – February 5th - 7th
Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society**

“Fired Up for Wildlife”

To continue our chapter’s history of presentations on significant research that effects change in our state overall, this year we would like to highlight projects, both research and applied, related to wildlife habitat management and conservation. We are particularly looking for those addressing the complex interrelationship of people, forests, wildlife habitats, and prescribed fire.

This is our **call for oral and poster presentations**. Presentations on all aspects of wildlife biology and management are welcome. We want to especially encourage presentations along our theme(s) of forestry, prescribed fire, people/landowners, and wildlife conservation. We have many great professionals and students in this state and we want to hear about the lessons you are learning!

Oral presentations will be scheduled in **20-minute blocks**, which includes 3–5 minutes for questions. The poster session will take place on February 5th at 18:30. If an oral presentation cannot be accommodated due to time constraints, authors will be given the option of presenting a poster instead. Awards will be presented for best student presentations and posters.

Abstracts for both oral and poster presentations will follow the same format, as follows:

- Title
- All authors’ names, affiliations, and contact info (first author should be the presenter)
- Preference for oral or poster presentation
- Student or professional presenter
- Abstract

The abstract title should be descriptive but brief. Provide university or agency affiliation and e-mail addresses for all authors. The abstracts should be 250 words or less and should contain a statement of the issue, project objectives, a brief summary of the methods, major findings, and key conclusions.

The deadline for abstract submission is **January 5th, 2018**. Please submit your abstracts to Michael St. Germain (vatwsabstracts@vt.edu) with **TWS Abstract** in the subject line. Presenters will be notified no later than mid-January. We look forward to seeing you in February!

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT

Professional Development Workshops, VA TWS Chapter Meeting, Monday, February 5, 2018 (9:00am – 13:00)

Analysis: “Intro to R” (Corbin Hilling, VA Tech): The Intro to R workshop will focus on getting wildlife biologists started using the code-based statistical software package “R”. We will cover the basics of using “R” for database manipulation, constructing figures, and simple statistical analyses. Bring a laptop with you. Note: this workshop will run 8:30 – 11:30am.

Research: “Using Genetics to Enhance Fish and Wildlife Management” (Dr. Stephanie Coster, Randolph-Macon and Dr. Amy Welsh, WVU): The goal of this workshop is for participants to recognize when genetics can be useful in answering questions that may be difficult to address using field techniques and to be able to interpret genetic data in a management context. Basic concepts in population genetics will be reviewed, focusing on their direct application to fish and wildlife management. Several hands-on activities will be conducted, including case studies incorporating genetic data into management decisions. Through the workshop, participants will have an understanding of both the benefits and limitations of genetic data.

Application: “Immobilization and Humane Dispatch of Wildlife” (Dr. Megan Kirchgessner, VDGIF):
Description forthcoming

Cost: \$48 TWS member registered by January 5, 2018 (*early deadline for planning*), includes a box lunch
\$58 after January 22, 2018 open to non-TWS members

Space is limited: Sign up for the workshop on the TWS Eventbrite registration form. TWS Continuing Education Credits available.

Student Mentorship Program

For the last couple of Annual Meetings, a mentorship breakfast was organized to connect our students with professionals. It was not only a success, but we had requests to expand. This year we plan to take the program to the next step. We will once again be matching up students with professionals and this year there will be TWO opportunities: (1) a student-professional “speed-dating” mixer after the Research Poster Social on Monday night, and (2) a student-professional lunch pairing on Tuesday.

Professionals, consider participating in this as many of us had someone support our career growth. Please use this chance to help guide those that will be following in our footsteps. If interested in participating in the student-professional events, please indicate this on the registration form.

Students, don't miss out on this opportunity to get advice and insight from those who have successfully navigated this field. Keep an eye on your email for a link to complete an online survey that will facilitate the planning of both events.

Field Trip

This year we are offering a field trip to the Wildlife Center of Virginia (<https://www.wildlifecenter.org/>) a hospital for native wildlife located in Waynesboro, VA. On Wednesday February 7 from 9:30-11:00 you will get a behind-the-scenes look at how WCV operates. The tour includes a look at the state-of-the-art hospital and care facilities as well as outdoor facilities that house patients nearing release and education animals. You will hear about the veterinary process, the rehabilitation process, education programs and research on-going at the center. What better way to close out the meeting especially after a night of socializing with our membership.