

The Wildlife Society

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION

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KATHERINE EDWARDS, EDITOR



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

As was the case last year, in North Carolina we have already dipped below 60 degrees at night, and dove and deer seasons are upon us. What a wonderful time of the year!! No matter what your passion, and it is the passion that matters, I hope you are enjoying this seasonal transition in the wild life associated outdoor activities that mean the most to you.

My tenure as your President ends at the end of this year. With that change comes the opportunity for an important change in leadership in **Dr. Eric Pelren**, your President-Elect. Eric takes over the reins of SE-TWS in January 2014. He is poised to do great things and take us forward in ways we have not yet seen. I look forward to continuing to work with Eric as Past-President. I challenge each of you to engage in SE-TWS, and contact Eric, and offer your experiences and expertise.

I want to thank everyone who has contributed to the form and function of SE-TWS over the last two years, especially your Executive Board: **Eric Pelren, Mike Conner, Steve Rockwood, and Darren Miller**. All of these gentlemen have gone far above and beyond the call to contribute to our operations and to create for you a positive TWS experience.

As I move out of this office, I know that there is still much to be achieved by SE-TWS. I think our role should be to facilitate state chapter operations and to serve as a regional facilitator for important resource conservation activities. We have had many discussions about the best ways to achieve this goal and I think some basic momentum is underway. If you have ideas in this regard, let us know. After all, this is your Section and so you should be involved in determining its role in our profession.

I recently stated that I hope to inspire people to do things to perpetuate nature; perpetuate wild life (note:

wild life, not wildlife). Nature comes in many forms, but there is often a distinct difference among wild life and 21st century nature. I hope that as time and our profession moves forward we are ever mindful of that difference and perpetuate and celebrate and directly enjoy wild life in all its forms wherever it is found.

David T. Cobb

Southeastern Section of TWS, President
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SOUTHEASTERN SECTION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Greetings wildlifers! I hope your summer went well and you are getting prepared to spend some time outside as the cooler weather of autumn begins to move in. I know that I am ready for some early fall squirrel hunting, probably my favorite hunting activity, the changing of leaves, and a crispness in the air.

Part of late summer was spent preparing for the Council meeting as part of the annual meeting. This year, we not only have 2 days of Council meetings, but are also spending 2 days to discuss the TWS strategic plan. It is very timely to review TWS's strategic plan given our financial situation (see below) and our new leadership (**Ken Williams**, TWS Executive Director/CEO). The current TWS strategic plan can be viewed here: <http://wildlife.org/who-we-are/strategic-plan>.

I wanted to take some time cover some recent issues. The first two are mostly relevant to our Society (our financial situation and a recent article in *The Wildlife Professional* (TWP) that caused members concern) and the last to our profession (captive deer breeding).

Recently, a past TWS President sent an email to many TWS subunit leaders relative to TWS's financial management. The bottom line is that TWS has been operating in the red for the past 5 years. This was absolutely not the intent of Council and the history of how we got to this situation is very complex. If any members want a detailed explanation of how we arrived at this point, please contact me. Council first became aware of the extent of this problem in early 2012 and since that time, we have taken steps to correct this untenable situation. This includes (1) substantially reducing expenditures in 2013 and 2014 (planned); (2) using a financial consultant to improve accounting practices and reporting procedures; (3) changing the fiscal year to July-June to better reflect cash flow and timing relative to Council review; and (4) instituting new accounting procedures. TWS maintains a reserve fund and other sources of

revenue to help with cash flow issues and this fund, in addition to budget changes, places TWS on a firm financial footing and we are in the process of moving into a much improved budget management process and operational solvency. However, we have also made, and will continue to make, very difficult decisions to ensure that we operate within our annual budget. I will keep members posted on these changes as they become available.

The second issue involved an article in TWP this summer. An excellent article on how a non-hunter became a hunter was in this issue, but there was a sidebar expressing the author's personal opinion about gun control and the NRA explicitly. Numerous Section members contacted me as they were dismayed that a personal position on such a "hot button" political issue, that is not relevant to the TWS mission, was included in the member magazine and that the author expressed mistruths about the NRA. I very much shared their concern, brought this issue to the attention of Council and TWS staff, and a vigorous dialog ensued. In the end, **President Kessler** decided to publish letters to the editor about this issue in the next issue of TWP (and provide additional letters online if there is not enough room to include them all), include a link to the TWS position statement on firearms (<http://wildlife.org/policy/position-statements>), publish a letter of personal regret for the publication of this information by TWS President Kessler, and print a statement about TWP editorial policies.

Some of our members felt so strongly about this issue that they expressed doubts about their continued membership in TWS. While I respect those opinions and also thank those members that took the time to share their concerns, I want to say that with any large, diverse organization there will be times when we become disgruntled as members. This is especially true when the members are passionate about the issues and we certainly have a passionate membership. We all



have our personal biases, issues that are important to us, and views of what our organization should be doing or not doing. This stress is actually beneficial as it helps an organization grow if there is constructive engagement on areas of friction. In the case of this issue, I think we ultimately had a very useful dialog that will help the organization. And, I think, and I am sure you all will agree, that we must not lose focus on the overall goal of any organization, including TWS. We can all agree that we support the very basic mission of TWS as an organization striving to positively impact wildlife conservation through the application of science. That is the TWS core mission and activities of TWS radiate out from that mission. And, as we reach out from that core, we realize conflict and have to set priorities, strategies, etc. that we feel are in the best interest of the resource and the Society. This process is not perfect and will never be “good” for everyone. Thus, we continue to learn and grow. And, there will be bumps in the road. But, at the end of the day, I still firmly believe that TWS is the best game in town with tremendous opportunities ahead for the organization and its members.

The final issue I want to address is the issue of captive cervid (primarily deer) breeding. There has been a tremendous increase in activity as members of the industry attempt to pass state-level legislation to enable various aspects of captive deer breeding. This issue has been brought to the forefront within TWS by Past-President **Jim Miller** who penned an excellent column on this issue in the winter 2012 issue of TWP; I strongly recommend you read this article if you have not done so. This is a complex issue but at its root, it is a very real threat to the Public Trust Doctrine, has led to transmission of disease, primarily CWD, into wild deer herds, compromises the concept of fair chase and public perception

of hunting (many of these facilities have “canned shoots” of “trophy” deer), and a devaluation of deer as wild animals. TWS is very concerned about this issue and, as such, appointed an ad hoc committee which I agreed to Chair. The committee has gathered a lot of background information on this issue and will be presenting a suggested TWS strategy to address this growing threat to our wildlife this growing threat to our wildlife heritage. Effectively addressing this issue will require active engagement of the TWS subunits as this issue generally plays out in state legislative bodies. Please keep abreast of this issue in your state and be looking for ways to engage in this critical issue. If you want information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Finally, I want to sincerely thank the current TWS Executive Committee – **President Wini Kessler, Past-President Paul Krausman, President-Elect Jon Haufler, and Vice President Rick Baydack, and ED/CEO Ken Williams.** The past 10 months has seen the emergence of several critical issues including the hiring of a new ED, the financial situation, and other issues that have taken a tremendous amount of time and effort to properly address. Our TWS leaders have done an excellent job of addressing these issues and working hard to ensure the Society is functionally and financially sound. We all owe these fine professionals a debt of gratitude for their efforts. Please join me in thanking them!!

As always, I need to hear from you, the membership of the SE Section TWS to serve your needs. I hope to hear from you!

Submitted by **Darren Miller**, Southeastern Section Representative to TWS Council



COMMITTEE REPORTS

DEER COMMITTEE

Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting Successful in South Carolina

The 2013 Southeast Deer Study Group was hosted by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources in Greenville. Special thanks go to Charles Ruth for his leadership. The meeting was attended by 291 biologists and interested persons. There were 33 oral presentations, with a record-tying 23 student presentations, and 5 posters. Michael Cherry from the University of Georgia won the outstanding student oral presentation award. Jacob Haus from the University of Delaware won the outstanding student poster presentation award. The Career Achievement Award was not given this year. The 2014 conference will be hosted by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Submitted by: **Steve Demarais**
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WETLANDS WILDLIFE COMMITTEE

The Wetlands Wildlife Committee Meeting will be held on Sunday, October 13th from 1:00 – 3:00 pm during the 67th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Dates/times are subject to change. Please visit <http://seafwa.org/conferences/2013/index.html> for more information.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Human Resources Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 15th from 1:00 – 4:00 pm during the 67th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Dates/times are subject to change. Please visit <http://seafwa.org/conferences/2013/index.html> for more information.

MINORITIES IN NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The MINRC Student Welcome Orientation will be held on Saturday, October 12th from 4:00 – 7:00 pm during the 67th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Dates/times are subject to change. Please visit <http://seafwa.org/conferences/2013/index.html> for more information.

C.W. WATSON AWARD COMMITTEE

The Clarence W. Watson Award is the most prestigious award given in the Southeast and is presented to the career individual who, in the opinion of the Award Committee, has made the greatest contribution to wildlife or fish conservation during the previous year or years. This annual award will be presented at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, October 13-16, 2013.

Submitted by: **Mark Smith**
mds0007@auburn.edu

STUDENT AWARDS COMMITTEE

NO NEWS REPORTED

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

NO NEWS REPORTED

NONGAME AND ENDANGERED SPECIES COMMITTEE

NO NEWS REPORTED

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ALABAMA



Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries (WFF)

In May of 2013, WFF Biologist **Keith Gauldin** completed the 2nd residency in Flagstaff, Arizona, and graduated from the National Conservation Leadership Institute. The 1st residency was completed in the fall of 2012 at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The NCLI program was developed to expand and hone the leadership skills of potential future leaders in natural resource conservation. Initiated in 2005, the intensive, nine-month leadership development program is offered annually to a select group of thirty-six individuals from natural resources management organizations within private industry, NGO's, tribes and state and federal government agencies. For more information on NCLI, see www.conservationleadership.org.

WFF Biologist **Casey Norris** graduated from the 147th Session of the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center in Selma on August 1, 2013. Casey is the Area Biologist at the Perdido River WMA in Baldwin County located in southwest Alabama.

The Alabama Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation Board of Directors met on August 9-10, 2013 to review wild turkey grant proposals. WFF staff who serves on the NWTFF Technical Committee compiled project proposals submitted for review from across the state. Many of the grant proposals are related to habitat enhancement that will improve early successional habitats for wild turkeys and other wildlife species. The Board approved 17 projects totaling \$54,743.90. The Board also approved earmarking \$30,000 for land acquisition which brings the total available for public land acquisition assistance to \$72,053.94. The Alabama Chapter has assisted AWWFF with several significant land acquisitions.

Beginning in September 2013, Alabama residents are now able to obtain their hunter education class in an all online format. Alabama is the 6th state to offer this option. Bowhunter Education certification will be offered online as well. Traditional, in person classes will continue to be held as well.

Alabama's ninth community archery park held its grand opening on March 19 in Tuscaloosa, Ala. The facility includes an 11-target adult range from 15 to 80 yards, an eight-target youth range of five to 20 yards, a four-target range of 10 to 40 yards with a 12-foot platform and a 10-target walking course. The archery park joins eight others currently in operation including Athens, Cullman, Dothan, Demopolis, Decatur, Heflin, Lincoln and Ozark. These facilities are one component of the WFF effort to increase awareness and participation in the life skill of archery.

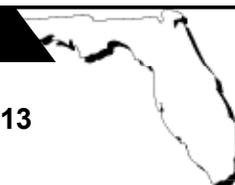
Submitted by: **Jim Schrenkel**
Certified Wildlife Biologist®
WFF
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ARKANSAS



NO NEWS REPORTED

FLORIDA



Florida Chapter of TWS 2013 Fall Meeting

The Florida Chapter of TWS (FTWS) will be holding its fall meeting in Gainesville, Florida on October 24-25, 2013. There will be a business meeting, FLTWS Student Chapter hosted field trip, and a "Communication Skills for Conservation Professionals" workshop. The workshop features Dr. **Susan Jacobson**, Distinguished Teaching Scholar and Professor with the UF Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, who will be discussing such important topics as: communicating with stakeholder groups, communicating with the public and understanding your audience. This will be a great opportunity to learn basic skills on how to work with city councils or county officials about locally important wildlife issues such as feral cats.

Florida Chapter of TWS 2013 Executive Board 2013-2015

Since the announcement at the 2013 FTWS Spring Conference, our treasurer **Marsha Ward** stepped down from her duties on the Executive Board. She has since been replaced by **Kristee Booth**, long-time member and former Executive Board member.

Letter from Jay Exum, Past President (FTWS) and current Florida Wildlife Federation (FWF) Board Member

The Florida Chapter of the Wildlife Society has been an affiliate member of the Florida Wildlife Federation (FWF) since 2008. I did not have a good perspective of what FWF did when we first became an affiliate, even though I was a member of the FWF at the time. FWF is associated with the National Wildlife Federation, but it focuses solely on issues that relate to Florida's wildlife and natural resources. Its president, **Manley Fuller**, has been at the helm of FWF for more than 20 years and he is assisted by several professional staff members in Tallahassee and in regional offices across the state.

FWF's in-house attorney, **Preston Robertson**, was an attorney with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for a number of years before joining FWF. Working from Tallahassee, he is engaged in many issues facing Florida's environment and wildlife today. He and two other attorneys have been deeply involved with rulemaking affecting wildlife during every legislative session for years. FWF funds legal counsel to advise on policy issues, pending legislation, and to litigate when necessary.

Frequently, FWF joins a consortium of other environmental organizations to oppose, comment on, or provide policy direction on natural resource issues under review by the Florida Legislature. For example, FWF has put substantial staff time and energy into the Florida Legacy Campaign in support of the Water and Land Conservation. This Constitutional Amendment is slated to be on the ballot for voter approval in November 2014. It would provide money to Florida's Land Acquisition Trust Fund to acquire, restore, improve, and manage conservation lands by dedicating 33 percent of net revenues from the existing excise tax on documents for 20 years.

I joined the FWF board a little over a year ago and participate in quarterly meetings that occur across the state. My involvement has allowed me to see the breadth of the work of FWF, and the dedication and depth of understanding of natural resource issues exhibited by **Manley Fuller** and his staff. I keep the FWF informed of issues that may be of most importance to FLTWS, and seek opportunities for collaboration between our professional society and FWF, the advocacy organization.

During my short tenure on the board, FWF has been involved with numerous significant issues in Florida. They have provided commentary on: importation of white-tailed deer and its relevance to chronic wasting disease; specific issues related to the implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan; and local actions related to surplus land by Water Management Districts. FWF sends out numerous e-mails every day that keep the Board and FWF members informed about, and provide an opportunity to comment on, issues affecting Florida's biological diversity, natural lands conservation, wildlife and habitat.

FWF is an effective ally for the Florida Chapter of TWS. They provide us with a legislative connection and a lobbying extension on wildlife issues. From my perspective, more of our members should join FWF, and volunteer to provide technical support so that FWF can effectively lobby for Florida's wildlife using a science-based approach to advocacy.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

FWC recovered 19 year-old female black bear, former study animal, killed by vehicle in Florida – Brian Scheick and David Alden

On December 9, 2012, personnel with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) responded to a call from a citizen reporting a carcass of a female Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) on the side of a road within the boundary of Eglin Air Force Base (EAFB), Florida. They found an old female bear with a metal Monel ear tag stamped with the number 20 that weighed 68 kg (150 lbs). Her front teeth were worn nearly to the gum line, but despite her poor teeth she was in

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good overall body condition. Also, she may have been accompanied by a cub; one was reportedly seen with her although not confirmed by FWC personnel who recovered the carcass. Because black bear cubs older than 6 months are typically capable of being independent, FWC did not attempt to locate the reported cub.

Because FWC no longer uses metal ear tags, one of our biologists searched in an FWC database of bear records for a bear with this tattoo or tag number. They found that Bear #20 had been part of a joint study by the University of Florida and the University of Tennessee, funded by the United States Department of Defense for EAFB. She provided data for several theses and publications. Bear #20 had been captured and radio collared in June 1995 at 43.1 kg (95 lbs) and then recaptured in July 1998 at 59.0 kg (130 lbs). The 1995-1998 EAFB bear study collected 209 locations for Bear #20 over 26 months (June 1995 – August 1997) and created a 95% minimum convex polygon home range of 3,460 ha (8,550 acres). When the location of the recent vehicle collision was mapped, we found that she was on the very edge of her mid-1990s home range (Figure 1), apparently struck attempting to cross the road into or out of a small section of bear habitat. This anecdotal evidence indicates adult female black bear home ranges can remain very stable and over longer periods than was previously known.

Bear #20 is also one of the oldest bears documented in Florida. She was a young bear when captured (estimated age 2.5 years via cementum annuli analysis) and likely would have been born in late January of 1993 (Garrison 2007), therefore she was a few months shy of turning 20 years old when she was struck and killed by a vehicle. Of 809 independent female bears (aged 2 or more) aged in Florida (FWC unpublished data of captures and carcasses) over several decades, only 1 is older than 19 years (2 = 19 years, 1 = 20 years). Bears aged at 17 or greater represent the 99th percentile of these 809 samples. Reports in 1996 of a bear with cubs fit her radiolocations, but researchers could not confirm the cubs. She was lactating in 1998 and may have had at least one cub this year. We will have a tooth analyzed to reconstruct reproductive history, but this is rarely successful in Florida (8% success from 65 teeth in 2011; FWC unpublished data).

Cementum from Florida bear teeth may have the fewest reproductive indicators of any population (**Gary Matson**, Matson's Laboratory, LLC, personal communication 2012). The number of cubs Bear #20 produced over her lifetime may be left to speculation.

Vehicle-bear collisions are fairly common in Florida, and increasing. Collecting data on location, sex, age, body condition, and other factors helps make use of these unfortunate fatalities. Through long-term monitoring and reporting, sometimes we discover the unexpected and thereby learn something new.

We'd like to thank **Andrew Jerrigan** and **Kevin McDonald** for recovering Bear #20, **Barbara Schmelting Almario** for searching our database, and the members of the EAFB research project: **Dr. Mel Sunquist**, **Dr. Mike Pelton**, **David Alden**, **Clint Cagle**, **Adam Freedman**, and **Marty Stratman**.

Citations:

Garrison, E. P., J. W. McCown, and M. K. Oli. 2007. Reproductive Ecology and Cub Survival of Florida Black Bears. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 71:720-727.



Photo credit Waverly Traylor, USFWS.

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FWC soliciting observation of three upland snake species – Kevin Enge

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is asking for observations of 3 upland snake species: Florida pine, short-tailed, and southern hog-nose snake. This project is to determine the current distribution and status of these species, all of which have been petitioned for federal listing. FWC is primarily interested in observations from 2000 to present, but older observations will be accepted. Road surveys and drift-fence surveys will be conducted in areas without recent observations. You can report sightings online (<https://public.myfwc.com/fwri/raresnakes/>) or send the information to **Kevin Enge** (kevin.enge@myfwc.com; 352-334-4209), preferably with a photo, which will be vouchered in your name in the Florida Museum of Natural History. Please contact Kevin if you would like to post fliers (sample below) at a kiosk, trailhead, check station, or office.

Progress with Imperiled Species Management Planning – Claire Sunquist Blunden

The Imperiled Species Management Planning effort is well underway. Beginning in 2012 and continuing through 2015, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is introducing species action plans and integrated conservation strategies as part of the Imperiled Species Management Plan (ISMP) for 60 species on Florida's Threatened Species list. A State Wildlife Grant provides funding for additional staffing and other resources that are being utilized for this five year project, which includes planning for the development and implementation of the imperiled species management plan.

The Species Action Plans (SAP), which describe individual species threats and conservation needs, have been drafted and have undergone internal and external review. After final revisions and editing, the Draft Final Species Action Plans will be available on MyFWC.com in November 2013.



Example of flier to report snake sightings.

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Internal teams are working to develop Integrated Conservation Strategies (ICS) that address common threats and needs for multiple species in order to achieve efficiencies, as well as align current and future resources. These strategies will be described in five chapters as part of the final plan: Habitat Conservation and Management, Research and Monitoring, Incentives and Influencing, Law and Policy, and Education and Outreach. Each chapter will take into account climate adaptation considerations related to the described strategies.

A summary of the Species Action Plans and the Integrated Conservation Strategies will make up part of the final Imperiled Species Management Plan. The final plan will also include rule change references (actual rules separate) and permitting requirements, prioritization of strategies and actions, impacts assessments, funding sources, revision schedule and plans for implementation, progress monitoring and adaptive management. The final plan will be released as draft in Fall 2014 and will be brought to the Commission for final approval in Spring 2015.

Many FWC staff, as well as partner organizations and agencies, are already working on conservation actions identified in the Species Action Plans. Below are some of the actions already being implemented.

Over the past few years, the Wildlife Conservation Prioritization and Recovery program has been developing strategies for focal species on FWC wildlife management areas (WMAs). These strategies have resulted in projects such as monitoring surveys, scrub-management research, and several habitat restoration and enhancement actions benefitting ISMP species on our WMAs. These strategies also document land-management activities that benefit wildlife, including ISMP species.

Florida's Wildlife Legacy Initiative is funding four State Wildlife Grants to addressing data needs described in the draft Species Action Plans.

- The University of Florida will develop a monitoring protocol for the Florida bonneted bat and determine its habitat needs for roosting and foraging.
- FWRI's Reptile and Amphibian Subsection will study gene flow and genetic variability among gopher frog populations across the state.
- The University of Florida will gather updated information on population presence and an estimate of density for the bluenose shiner (as well as the black-banded sunfish and snail bullhead).
- FWRI's Avian Research Subsection will determine the taxonomic status and geographic range of the osprey population in south Florida.

We invite individuals and stakeholder groups to be part of the process. We know we cannot accomplish all of the actions in the plans without help! We would like you to share your ideas on our Integrated Conservation Strategies and draft Imperiled Species Management Plan over the next year.

The draft Integrated Conservation Strategies and the final Imperiled Species Management Plan will be released for public comment, revised to reflect FWC and public input on improving the draft plans, and then the Imperiled Species Management Plan will be submitted to the Commission for final approval in Spring 2015. Visit <http://www.myfwc.com/wildlife-habitats/imperiled/> and follow FWC on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube for more information. You can also visit our SharePoint to comment and see more of the plans.



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Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

2013 Wetlands Regulatory Conference

2013 Wetlands Regulatory Conference in Tampa, FL, October 6-9, 2013. Society of Wetland Scientists South Atlantic Chapter (SWSSAC), Florida Association of Environmental Soil Scientists (FAESS), and Southwest Chapter of the Florida Association of Environmental Professionals (SWFAEP) are hosting a joint scientific multiple-day event with three keynote speakers, concurrent sessions, networking dinner, organizational meetings, great field trips and a technical workshop. Go to www.sws.org/regional/SouthAtlantic/2013jointconference for more information and to register for the Conference.

Submitted by: **Patrick Delaney**
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Florida TWS Southeastern Representative

GEORGIA



NO NEWS REPORTED

KENTUCKY



Kentucky Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Resources (KDFWR)

Wayne Tamminga, Public Lands Biologist in western Kentucky, was the recipient of the Kentucky Chapter of Ducks Unlimited's Jim Moynahan Award. Tamminga received the award for his efforts promoting waterfowl management and waterfowl hunting in the Commonwealth. One of the biggest challenges encountered while establishing native shrubs for wildlife is damage caused by deer, rabbits, and rodents. Studies have shown that tree shelters (i.e., protective tubes) can increase survival and growth of planted native trees and shrubs. Using one of the states quail focus management areas as a study site, KDFWR's Wildlife Division's Research and Small Game Programs have teamed up to in an attempt to determine how many tree shelters are required to

successfully establish shrub blocks of American plum for wildlife. Twenty replicates, with each replicate consisting of 4 plots; each plot of 20 shrubs receiving a different level of protection [Plot 1= 100% of shrubs sheltered in protective tubes; Plot 2 = 50% of shrubs protected; Plot 3 = 25% of shrubs protected; Plot 4 = no shrubs protected]. Plots will be monitored annually for 3 to 5 years to determine shrub survival.

Murray State University (MSU)

Santiago Martin, a Master's student of **Dr. Terry Derting**, is analyzing statewide survey data to determine potential impacts of white-nose syndrome on bat species in Kentucky. He is also investigating creation of roost trees for Indiana bats based on tree species, size, and time of year at which trees were injected with a lethal dose of herbicide.

Eastern Kentucky University (EKU)

A recent publication out of the Biology Department's Molecular Ecology and Conservation of Amphibians research group by **Dr. Stephen Richter** and grad student **Rob Denton** addressed amphibian communities in natural and constructed ridge-top wetlands with implications for wetland construction. **Cory Stringfield** (advisor **Dr. Sherry Harrel**) recently completed his master's thesis project entitled "Population distribution and abundance of the blackfin sucker in the Upper Barren River system, Kentucky and Tennessee".

Submitted by: **Chuck Elliott**
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LOUISIANA



NO NEWS REPORTED

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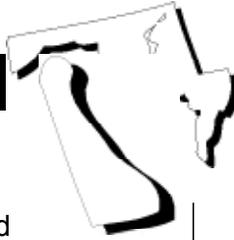
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MARYLAND/DELAWARE

Maryland-Delaware Chapter

The Maryland-Delaware chapter celebrated its 25th birthday this September at the chapter's semi-annual meeting held at the Robinson Nature Center in Columbia, MD. **Ken Williams**, TWS Executive Director/CEO was in attendance. In other news the chapter, in collaboration with the USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Service, is investigating the possibility of assisting in mine reclamation projects in western Maryland with the purpose of creating suitable habitat for the golden-winged warbler.

Submitted by: **Art Abrams**
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Other activities planned at the Museum of Natural Science included a poster session, the annual business meeting, and a Hospitality State-appropriate dinner and social(s).

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP)

Staff Changes

Danny "Hank" Stringer recently retired after over 35 years of service as the area manager of Marion County WMA. Hank's on the ground pyric ecosystem management skills and his rapport with the constituency of his area are unmatched. Gopher tortoise and butterfly habitat considerations weigh into the area's management planning right alongside those of deer and turkey. Hank made the hunters who loved his area aware of the importance of a functional ecosystem; just as he constantly reminded MDWFP staff and the general public how important the hunters are in supporting sound management. His efforts have made the area the best example the MDWFP has of longleaf management, and perhaps the best in the state.

Tamara Campbell joined the agency in the Private Lands Habitat Program to serve as a longleaf delivery specialist in the southern part of the state. **Nathan Blount** will be the new WMA Program biologist in the southeastern region. Two new area biologists were also recently hired. **Richard Ladner** will be primarily responsible for Pascagoula River WMA and **Bobby Kellum** will work at O'Keefe WMA. **Will Thomason** will be serving as area manager at Canemount WMA and **Tim Harden** will assume those duties at Howard Miller WMA.

Fire on the Forty Initiative

The MDWFP is continuing its partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Foundation for Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, and Wildlife Mississippi to provide cost-share for prescribed burning on private lands through the Fire on the Forty Initiative. Prescribed fire is a very important tool for forest and wildlife management, but many private landowners are reluctant to use it because of cost and liability concerns. Selected counties were chosen for focal areas based

MISSISSIPPI

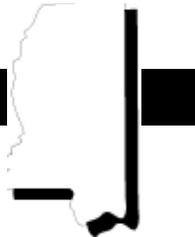
Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Annual Fall Meeting

The Mississippi Chapter TWS annual meeting was held September 26-27, 2013, at the Museum of Natural Science in Jackson. The Jackson Hilton was the host hotel. Highlights of this year's annual gathering of Mississippi Wildlifers included a keynote address by **Mike Ielmini**, National Invasive Species Program Manager, USDA Forest Service.

Two sessions of invited group talks afforded attendees the opportunity to learn about Mississippi's wildlife-related agencies, organizations, and companies. Two sessions of student and professional presentations caught them up on current research and management efforts in the state.

The 2013 meeting also offered three excellent workshops options. **Dr. Ahm Reza** led the workshop on Species Distribution Modeling for Researchers. Wildlife Immobilization and Disease were topics addressed by **Drs. Jessica Tegt** and **Sherman "Skip" Jack** of MSU. Finally an invasive species workshop was conducted by **Mike Ielmini** and MSU Extension Associate **Bill Hamrick**.



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on landowner interest in prescribed fire and wildlife habitat priorities. Focal counties include Monroe, Lowndes, Noxubee, and Prentiss in North Mississippi and Amite, Marion, Lamar, Pearl River, Pike, and Walthall in South Mississippi. Under the program, landowners that meet ranking criteria may be reimbursed for 50% of costs for implementing and conducting prescribed burns up to a maximum of \$12.50 per acre. Eligible applicants can utilize the cost-share to hire certified burn contractors or conduct burning themselves. In the first two years of the program, over 25,000 acres were approved for prescribed burning cost-share. Wet weather conditions during traditional burn seasons have hampered prescribed burning. Nonetheless, Fire on the Forty has provided cost-share funding for completed prescribed burns on more than 10,000 acres since its inception in 2011. Approved applicants still have until spring 2014 to complete burning on the second year of funding, and applicants can reapply if they are unable to complete burning from previous funding cycles. The program is now in its third year of accepting applications.



MS Longleaf Implementation Team Develops Working Groups

MDWFP biologists **Adam Butler**, **Tamara Campbell**, **John Gruchy**, and **Rick Hamrick** are working as part of the MS Longleaf Implementation Team. The purpose of the Team is to organize, plan, and deliver on-the-ground conservation actions, and to engage landowners with technical and financial resources

to meet the overall goals of the Longleaf Initiative. The Team recently formed Working Groups based on longleaf pine restoration priorities identified from a survey of the membership. Working Groups formed included Education, Outreach, and Media; Economics; Establishment and Management; Ecosystem Restoration; and Research and Monitoring. These working groups will support longleaf conservation efforts, and help advance the goals of the state-wide Longleaf Implementation Team and the Conservation Plan as identified by America's Longleaf. Moving forward, the Implementation Team seeks to collaborate with the MS Prescribed Fire Council to develop the important message of the relationship between longleaf restoration and prescribed fire. For more information about the MS Longleaf Implementation Team and upcoming longleaf pine related events, contact **Jim Hancock**, MS Forestry Commission, email jhancock@mfc.state.ms.us; phone 601-720-0238.

Mississippi State University (MSU)

6th North American Duck Symposium

MSU's College of Forest Resources and **Drs. Rick Kaminski** and **Brian Davis** (Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Aquaculture) organized and hosted the 6th North American Duck Symposium in Memphis, TN in late January 2013. Over 450 conferees from across North America and Europe attended. A proceedings from the symposium is being written by authors contributing to the symposium. The proceedings will be published as a special issue of *Wildfowl*, an international British journal devoted to waterfowl ecology and conservation. The proceedings should be available in 2014. It will be titled, "Ecology and Conservation of Northern Hemispheric Waterfowl."

Thesis Completion

Joe Marty successfully defended his MS Thesis titled "Seed and Waterbird Abundances in Ricelands in the Gulf Coastal Prairies of Louisiana and Texas". Congratulations to Joe, who will remain at MSU for doctoral study, extending his work in LA and TX rice fields.

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Critically Endangered Frogs Housed at MSU

The dusky gopher frog, also known as the Mississippi gopher frog, is one of the most imperiled wildlife species in North America and among the top 100 in the world. At one time the only known colony living and breeding in the wild was confined to a single Harrison County, Mississippi, pond. They are now known to be living near three other ponds in the DeSoto National Forest, bringing the total known wild population to an estimated 100-200 gopher frogs. More than 700 additional gopher frogs live in captivity, and one Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station lab has 34 of the adult frogs.

MSU obtained the gopher frogs from the Memphis Zoo, where researchers are trying, in coordination with 13 other zoos, to get captive colonies to breed naturally – so far unsuccessfully. Currently, all breeding is done by in vitro fertilization as MSU researchers are working to refine the hormone treatments used to get the females to lay eggs.



MSU scientists are trying to learn how to get the dusky gopher frog, one of North America's most imperiled species, to breed in captivity. Photo by MSU Ag Communications/Kat Lawrence.

They are also working to preserve the genetic diversity of the species by biobanking the frogs' cryopreserved sperm. With only 100-200 wild and 700 captive individuals in the population genetic bottlenecks is a concern. If researchers cannot succeed in making them breed naturally in captivity for now

they want to create a bank of genetic diversity so they can help the population out manually necessary. To learn more about the dusky gopher frog's ecology, habitat and population challenges, and restoration efforts visit MSU CARES for a full article at http://msucares.com/news/print/fwnews/fw13/20130718_gopher.html.

MSU Staff Changes and Recognition

Dr. Bruce D. Leopold, after 12 years of serving as head of the department, has stepped down. Bruce will continue to serve MSU as Sharp Distinguished Professor of Wildlife Ecology and Executive Director of the Center for Resolving Human-Wildlife Conflicts. **Dr. Eric Dibble** was named Interim Department Head and assumed his new duties July 1. A national search for a permanent department head is underway.

Another change was the retirement of **Dr. Louis D'Abramo** as Dean of the Graduate School and Giles Professor of Aquaculture. **Dr. Donald Jackson** has formally announced his retirement from MSU effective December 31, 2013.

Congratulations to **Dr. Kevin Hunt** who was promoted to Professor, Human Dimensions and to **Dr. Guiming Wang**, who was awarded tenure.

At the time of this writing, fall semester enrollment was 210 undergraduate and almost 80 graduate students. These numbers are about what we had last fall. With our enrollment management plan stating that 120 students is optimal, our resources are strained with 210. But the faculty remains committed to provide our students with strongly applied and rigorous training. Undergraduates continue with a 72% success rate in securing employment and 100% for our graduate students.

Dr. Robbie Kroger, our aquatic sciences professor, continues to expand his innovative program called REACH which stands for Research and Education to Advance Conservation and Habitat. Almost 100,000 acres of farmland have been enrolled to date.

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Dr. Daryl Jones, Associate Extension Professor, has been notified that he is the recipient of The Wildlife Society's Special Recognition Service Award, which will be presented at the Society's 20th Annual Conference this October in Milwaukee. Congratulations are also due to **Dr. Jessica Tegt** and **Leslie Burger**, who were awarded 3rd place in the Gulf of Mexico Program, Gulf Guardian Award, Environmental Justice/Cultural Diversity category because of their innovative work on integrating conservation education in K-12.

Mississippi Bat Working Group (MBWG)

Annual Mist Net Event

The Mississippi Bat Working Group (MBWG) held their tenth annual mist net event August 6 – 8, 2013 at the Choctaw Indian Reservation in Choctaw, Mississippi. The event kicked off with a potluck supper at the MSU Extension building where participants enjoyed a variety of delicious foods. Participants toured the Choctaw museum and were treated to a cooking demonstration by **Pearlie Thomas** detailing preparation of hominy and fry bread. Following that, hostess and co-coordinator **Mitzi Reed** explained the basics of stickball, a traditional Choctaw sport, and rabbit sticks (a traditional hunting method). Participants had a chance to try out the stickball sticks and rabbit sticks and it was determined that all needed a lot of practice before attempting stickball and that all would starve to death if they had to use rabbit sticks to hunt. Luckily the group was able to partake of the hominy and fry bread prepared during the demonstration so no one went hungry! After a safety briefing, the group divided into three teams for the first night of netting. The second evening the group divided into two teams for a second night of netting.

In all, the group caught a total of 31 bats and a southern leopard frog (go Chester!). The distinction of most bats caught was held by the team led by **Kathy Shelton**, who accounted for 21 of the 31 bats captured. Species captured included *Lasiurus seminolus* (1), *L. borealis* (15), *Nycticeius humeralis* (12), and *Myotis austroriparius* (3). Fifteen juvenile bats and 16 adult bats were captured. Nearly half (14) of the bats were captured in a triple high net stretched across a dry gravel road surrounded by bottomland forest. The group followed the national protocol

for handling bats to avoid spreading white-nose syndrome, wearing nitrile gloves, cleaning equipment between uses, and boiling nets between uses. No equipment was used that had previously been used in a white-nose positive state. Additionally, the wings of captured bats were examined for damage, using the "Wing-Damage Index" developed by **Jonathan Reichard**. No significant damage was observed.

MBWG would like to thank the following individuals: sponsor **Chester Martin**; **Mitzi Reed** and **Kathy Shelton** who helped with site selection; Chester Martin, **Alison McCartney**, and Kathy Shelton who served as group leaders. Additional thanks go out to **Mitzi Reed** and **Pearlie Thomas** for the demonstrations and to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians for providing access to their lands for this event.

Submitted by **Randy Spencer**
randys@mdwfp.state.ms.us



Photo credit Chris Harshaw.

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NORTH CAROLINA



North Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society (NCTWS)

The NCTWS is busy planning the 2014 meeting which will focus on adaptive management (“Adaptive Management: Food Plots to Ecological Restoration”). The two-day meeting will be held jointly with North Carolina Partners-in-Flight (NCPIF) and will feature a plenary speaker. Dates are February 25-26, 2014, at Haw River State Park in Brown Summit, North Carolina. Visit www.nctws.org and www.ncpartnersinflight.org for upcoming details.



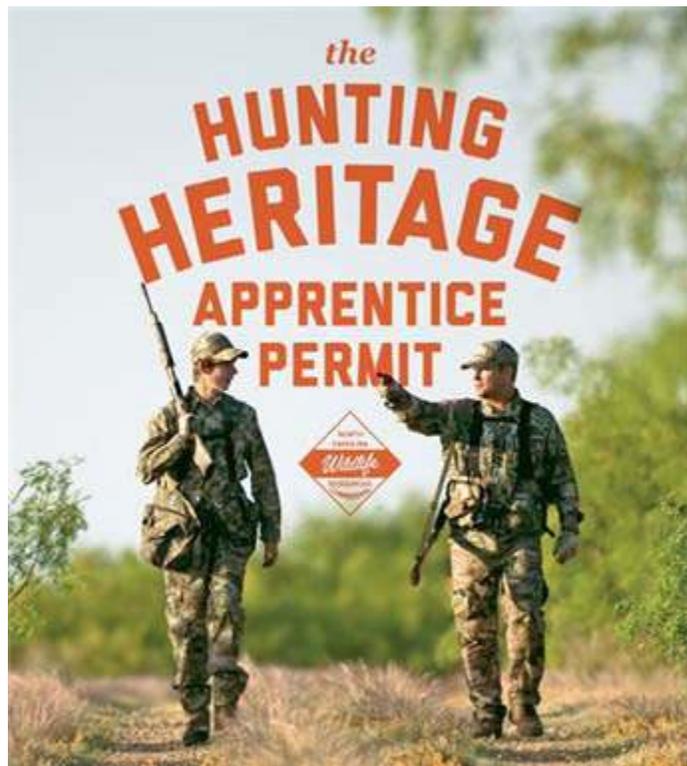
Managed fields and food plots, Sandy Mush Game Land, Madison Co., North Carolina. Photo by Lori Williams, NCWRC.

In 2016, North Carolina will host the annual TWS Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. A steering committee and state-level subcommittees will be formed in the coming months to begin planning for this event.

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC)

On July 1, 2013, the NCWRC introduced a Hunting Heritage Apprentice Permit that allows new hunters to purchase a license and then hunt under the direct guidance of an adult, licensed mentor prior to completing the required hunter education course.

All hunters must follow all other applicable licensing requirements and hunting regulations. This new permit will enhance hunter recruitment and retention and provide more opportunities for individuals, families, and other groups to hunt together. Visit www.ncwildlife.org for more information.



Hunting mentor and apprentice afield (NCWRC Hunting Heritage Apprentice Permit). Photo by Russell Graves.

The NCWRC is developing management plans for all Commission-managed game lands across the state with the help of public input. A series of public meetings were held in all regions in late summer, with more public outreach and input opportunities upcoming for specific game lands. Input is welcome from all user groups, including hunters, anglers, equestrians, wildlife watchers, and other recreationists. Updates will be released via Facebook, Twitter, and through the NCWRC website (www.ncwildlife.org).

The NCWRC welcomes a new, full-time wildlife veterinarian to its staff, **Dr. Maria Palamar**. Among other duties, Dr. Palamar will be working on current and emerging wildlife disease issues for a variety of species across the state, such as white-tailed deer

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and Chronic Wasting Disease and Hemorrhagic Disease.

The North Carolina Birding Trail has an updated website and a new, interactive map for birding trail site information, species lists, and recent eBird sightings. See www.ncbirdingtrail.org for more information.

US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)

The Raleigh Ecological Field Services office of the USFWS recently held several public meetings to solicit input regarding a proposal to designate critical nesting habitat in NC for endangered loggerhead sea turtles. The detailed proposal and draft economic analysis were published last March. The two recent meetings held in the coastal region of NC were well-attended; however, numerous individuals spoke up in opposition to the designation and regulations it might entail. The public comment period was extended until September 16, 2013, with a final decision expected in June 2014.



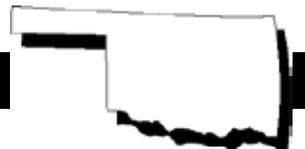
Female loggerhead sea turtle nesting on a North Carolina beach. Photo courtesy of Matthew Godfrey, NCWRC.



Hatchling loggerhead sea turtle on a North Carolina beach on its way to the Atlantic Ocean. Photo courtesy of Matthew Godfrey, NCWRC.

Submitted by: **Lori Williams**
lori.williams@ncwildlife.org

OKLAHOMA



The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation invites you to the 67th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies at the Renaissance Hotel, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma held October 13 – 16, 2013. Please visit <http://seafwa.org/conferences/2013/index.html> for more information.



SOUTH CAROLINA



South Carolina Chapter

The South Carolina Chapter of the Wildlife Society held its annual meeting on September 24 at the South Carolina Forestry Commission Education Center at Harbison State Forest in Columbia.

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR)

Billy Dukes was promoted to Assistant Chief of Wildlife.

SCDNR plans to erect an observation tower on Sassafras Mountain, the highest point in SC. The site is owned by the agency as part of its Jocassee Gorges property. The tower will provide a 360 degree view of the Southern Blue Ridge Mountains of the Carolinas. The estimated cost for the project including trails, restrooms, picnic areas and tower is \$1.5 million. Fundraising is underway and anyone interested can find out more at: <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/sassafrasmountain.html>.

The State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP)-formerly the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan-is currently undergoing a revision, pursuant to a requirement by the Federal Government for continued funding under the State Wildlife Grants program. This iteration of the Plan (2010-2015) will have a total of approximately 471 species from the animal kingdom and ~454 plants for a grand total of ~925 priority species of concern. Changes to the list of species included additions, deletions, new common names added, name corrections, and priority ranking (HIGHEST, HIGH, or MODERATE) upgrades/downgrades. Species listed within the Plan were chosen based on methodology created by each individual taxa committee and reflect those species that (1) are currently under threat/in decline, (2) are stable but need monitoring, or (3) we do not have enough information about them to preclude from the list. In other words, to err on the side of caution, some species are listed due to a lack of data on population size and distribution. The main SWAP document will have ~7 chapters and several appendices and will include a new section highlighting SWG-funded projects that have been implemented to date. The

Supplemental Volume will contain the species/guild accounts. New to the habitat chapter is GAP (2001) analysis data which more appropriately defines the covertypes in each ecoregion of the State. Several items that were not implemented from the 2005-2010 edition of the Plan are in the works such as creating a centralized database and focus maps. The completion date for the SWAP is scheduled for Winter 2013-14. This year, SCDNR requested funding for 11 projects under the State Wildlife Grants program. These projects will cover a wide variety of taxa groups and associated species. Priority birds, reptiles, fish, crayfish, marine organisms, and their associated priority habitats are included in these various proposals.

South Carolina Army National Guard (SCARNG)

University of South Carolina graduate student **Jake Rougeaux** has teamed up with the South Carolina Army National Guard Conservation Division to design and implement a bat monitoring protocol at McCrady Training Center (MTC) in Eastover, SC. The project was launched in 2012 in response to the impending threat of white-nose syndrome (WNS). Caused by the fungus *Geomyces destructans*, WNS is a fatal disease that has killed upwards of 6 million bats since its discovery outside of Albany, NY in 2006. WNS earned its name from the white patches it creates on the bat's muzzle. Monitoring includes utilizing Anabat™ ultrasonic sound detectors to gauge bat activity and species diversity throughout the 15,000 acres of McCrady Training Center. Other efforts include taking hourly recordings of temperature and relative humidity within the five abandoned military range tunnels where Rafinesque's big-eared (*Corynorhinus rafinesquii*) and big brown (*Eptesicus fuscus*) bats now roost. This data will be used to determine if the tunnel conditions are within the preferred habitat range of *G. destructans* which thrives in cooler temperatures. Initial collection efforts are showing a climate suitable for WNS. In addition to the monitoring protocol, a habitat improvement project involving the creation of artificial roosts is currently being completed. The construction of the roosts is being performed in partnership with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. These new roosts could prove particularly vital to Rafinesque's big-eared bats which are listed as state-endangered.

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After Jake's Graduation from the USC Masters of Earth and Environmental Resource Management program, the monitoring protocol will be implemented by Army National Guard Conservation Division staff.

The POC for this action is **A. Mark Mohr**, Deputy Conservation Manager, SCARNG.



Bat Tower creation on McCrady Training Center. Photo courtesy of Mark Mohr.



Entrance to range tunnel that serves as bat roosting habitat on McCrady Training Center. Photo courtesy of Mark Mohr.

Clemson University/South Carolina Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit - Patrick Jodice

Three recent publications of interest for SCCTWS are available for download at the following web-site: <http://people.clemson.edu/~pjodice/publications.html>

Giles, M.M., P.G.R. Jodice, R.F. Baldwin, J. Stanton, M. Epstein. 2013. Spring migratory pathways and migration chronology of Canada Geese wintering at the Santee NWR. *Canadian Field Naturalist* 127: 17-25.

Brooks, G.L., F.J. Sanders, P.D. Gerard, P.G.R. Jodice. 2013. Daily survival rate for nests and chicks of Least Terns (*Sternula antillarum*). *Waterbirds* 36:1-10. BOEM 2013-01157.

Jodice, P.G.R., J. Tavano, W. Mackin. 2013. Chapter 8: Marine and coastal birds and bats. In: Michel, J. (ed.). *South Atlantic information resources: data search and literature synthesis*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, New Orleans, LA. OCS Study BOEM 2013-01157.



Photo credit Steve Hillebrand, USFWS.

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General Regional Interest

The annual SC-Exotic Pest Plant Council conference was held Thursday, September 12, 2013 in the Ann Springs Close Greenway near Rock Hill, SC. This year's theme was the important aspect of "Restoration after Removal". Agenda and registration are available on the SC-EPPC website <http://www.se-eppc.org/southcarolina/>.

Submitted by: **Nicole Chadwick Hawkins**,
SC Chapter TWS, Nicole.chadwick@us.army.mil

TENNESSEE

University of Tennessee - Knoxville

International Conference on Wildlife Disease Held in the Southeast

From 27 July – 2 August, the University of Tennessee Center for Wildlife Health and College of Veterinary Medicine hosted a joint meeting of the 62nd International Conference of the Wildlife Disease Association (WDA), the Second International Symposium on Ranaviruses, and the 2013 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians in Knoxville, TN (<http://fwf.ag.utk.edu/WDA2013/default.html>). There were >300 attendees from 21 countries and all 50 states. The Ranavirus Symposium was co-chaired by **Matt Gray** and **Deb Miller** of UT and **Amanda Duffus** of Gordon College (Georgia). The WDA conference was co-chaired by **Ed Ramsay** of UT and Deb Miller. Other members from UT on the WDA host committee included **Rick Gerhold** (program director), **Marcy Souza** (social activities director), **Lisa Muller** (workshops director), **Shige Eda** (student activities director), and **Sarah Willard-Eroh**, **Jill Wilson Bull** and **Lauren Maestas** (student representatives). The WDA conference and ranavirus symposium included a combination of professional presentations (oral and poster sessions), break-out discussions, workshops, wet labs, and field trips. This venue provided an excellent opportunity for natural resource and veterinary

practitioners, scientists, and students to interact and discuss emerging issues with wildlife and zoonotic diseases. The 2014 International Conference of WDA will be held in Albuquerque, NM.

Submitted by: **Debra Miller** and **Matthew Gray**,
Center for Wildlife Health, University of Tennessee,
Knoxville



Field trip to Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
Photo credit Matt Gray.



Captured Blue Ridge Two-Lined Salamander.
Photo credit Yume Une.

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University of Tennessee - Martin

The University of Tennessee-Martin student chapter of The Wildlife Society is ready to buckle down and get another school year under way. We have a new set of board members and committee chairs that have been put in place in order to try and better the organization, help the community, the school, and to help their fellow members get the chance to build resumes for their future career endeavors. The first day of the school year was on August 26th and The Wildlife Society displayed a booth at the Martin City Fair in order to recruit incoming freshman and transfer students who might not know about the organization.

We began the semester early with a cookout on August 29th so that new students would have a chance to meet the upperclassmen and existing members could catch up with friends about their summers. The organization will have bi-weekly meetings that will give members needed information, the chance for helpful workshops, and interesting speakers from within the wildlife profession. In October, several students will be attending SEAFWA in Oklahoma City, OK and they will also have the chance to attend the national TWS meeting in Milwaukee, WI. At the end of October, the education committee will be holding a Merit Badge Workshop for one of the local Boy Scout troops. During the workshop the boys will have the opportunity to receive or work towards two different badges, the Environmental Science badge and the Fish and Wildlife Management badge. In the month of November, members will get hands on experience working with Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency (TWRA) measuring and aging deer that are brought to check stations on opening day of muzzleloader season and two weeks later on opening day of rifle season.

The student chapter will end the fall semester on December 5th with a chili send-off that is much like the cookout in August. The members will bring their own types of chili along with sides and desserts. Everyone will be able to enjoy good food and conversation with the friends they made throughout the semester in a fun laid back setting. We are looking forward to a very exciting year full of helpful opportunities and the chance to make lifelong friendships and acquaintances in the wildlife profession.

Submitted by: **Kayce Workman**

Aspiring wildlife professionals from the University of Tennessee Campuses were hard a work developing their career again this summer. Here is a snapshot of where they have been working.

University of Tennessee at Martin

Brittany Hoback, Minnesota DNR

Brant Luker, TWRA Intern, Montgomery County, TN

Kayce Workman, Intern, The Nature Conservancy/USFWS Volunteer, Russell Springs, KS

Mckinsey Rose, Intern, Army Corps of Engineers, Lewisville, TX

David Ferrell, USFWS Biological Science Technician, Benton, KY

Ciera Rhodes, Technician, Mississippi State University, Scooba, MS

Tanner Romsdal, Wear it Tennessee Crew, TWRA, Nashville, TN

Lacy Lane, Wear it Tennessee Crew, TWRA, Nashville, TN

Cody Johnston, UT Martin Fisheries Technician, Martin, TN

John Glenn, SCA Conservation Corps Intern, Oxford, MS

Mark Skelton, TWRA Intern, Montgomery County, TN

University of Tennessee at Knoxville

Xavier Cathey- Pathways Student, USFWS, Loxahatchee NWR

Andrew Isenhower- Research Technician, UTK and USFS, Cherokee NF

Carson Lillard- Environmental Intern, Nevada Conservation Corps, Great Basin Institute, Nevada

William Lakatos- Vegetation Monitoring Technician, National Park Service, GSMNP

Brenden Marlow- Wildlife Technician, TWRA, Region 4

Wade GeFellers- Wildlife Technician, TWRA, Region 4

Ravin Thomasson- Wildlife Technician, USFWS, Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

Shane Kinsey- Research Intern, Wildlife Health, UTK

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Wade GeFellers- Wildlife Technician, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Region 4.

Submitted by: Patrick Lemons
Patrick.Lemons@tn.gov

VIRGINIA



NO NEWS REPORTED

DUCKS UNLIMITED

DU and NFWF Staff Meet to Discuss Gulf Coast Restoration

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation staff travelled to Port Arthur, Texas, in late July to meet with Ducks Unlimited staff and discuss DU's Gulf Coast Initiative. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department graciously hosted our meeting, assisted with a field tour, and provided an overview of wetland restoration opportunities related to the J.D. Murphree Wildlife Management Area and southeast Texas. During the field tour, NFWF staff visited a variety of private and public land coastal restoration sites, including Texas Prairie Wetland Project restoration areas, J.D. Murphree WMA coastal marsh restoration sites, and a marsh shoreline protection project along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

The group had a productive discussion on the following day at the J.D. Murphree WMA meeting facilities regarding DU's ongoing work in coastal Texas and opportunities for NFWF to cooperate with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and DU through the NFWF Gulf Environmental Fund to advance partner-driven coastal wetland conservation in Texas. Attending for NFWF were **Tom Kelsch**, Vice-President, Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, **Dr. Bruce Beehler**, Director of Bird Conservation, **Tanner Johnson**, Director of Gulf Environmental Fund, Louisiana and Texas, and **John Porthouse**, Coastal Wetland Science Advisor. Attending for DU were **Paul Schmidt**, **Curtis Hopkins**, **Jerry Holden**, **Tom Moorman**, **Craig LeSchack**, **Kirby Brown**, **Todd Merendino**, **Matt Kaminski** and **Greg Green**. Special thanks to **Jim Sutherlin** and staff of the J.D. Murphree WMA for hosting the meeting and assisting with the field tour logistics.



Staff toured Texas Prairie Wetland Project sites, shoreline protection project along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, beneficial use site, beach ridge restoration site and Mud Lake Terraces.

Southeast Conservation Unit – AR, MS, AL, TN, FL, GA, NC, SC, VA

Alabama

No news reported.

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Georgia

Savannah NWR

Savannah National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) consists of over 29,000 acres of freshwater marshes, tidal rivers and creeks, and bottomland hardwoods and supports over 18,000 wintering waterfowl each year. The refuge is located in the heart of the Lowcountry, a band of low land, extending from Georgetown, South Carolina to St. Mary's, Georgia and bordered on the west by sandhill ridges and on the east by the Atlantic Ocean.

Savannah NWR includes 2,800 acres of impounded freshwater wetlands in 10 units that are primarily managed for moist soil and some semi-permanent water. These impoundments provide a critical source of freshwater in close proximity to the coast. However, dike overtopping, leaking dikes and the unmanaged growth of woody vegetation has prevented proper water control and management of these units, thereby decreasing their habitat value for waterfowl. Working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service partners, DU will install a cross dike and stoplog structure in pools 4 and 5. This project will divide this large impoundment to improve management for moist soil habitat beneficial to waterfowl. In unit 10, DU will replace a failing water control structure with a working structure in a better location. Addition of a similar structure in Pool 11 will enhance management capabilities there as well.

Mississippi

Mississippi Hunters Have New Opportunity

The first of three phases of restoration work on the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks' newest wildlife management area has been completed. DU designed and installed infrastructure on more than 100 acres of wetland impoundments on Indianola WMA in Sunflower County. The completed work will allow the West Unit to be managed for waterfowl this fall, and MDWFP plans to open the area to providing new hunting opportunities in the Mississippi Delta.

Restoration work on the more than 400-acre South Unit will begin soon, and should be completed in time for the 2014-15 waterfowl season. The third and

final phase of habitat restoration work on the North Unit was included in a recently submitted North American Wetlands Conservation Act proposal. If funded, DU plans to deliver this work and complete restoration activities on Mississippi's newest waterfowl hunting area by 2016.

Arkansas

No news reported.

South Carolina

NAWCA Grants Improving Public Lands in the Carolinas

Three North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants approved in March will improve habitat in the South Atlantic. DU was awarded a fourth NAWCA grant for South Carolina Lowcountry wetlands improvements to more than 1,800 acres. This grant included seven partners and enhancement to two state-owned lands, one federal refuge, and one county park. DU also partnered on two other grants submitted by The Nature Conservancy and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service which will collectively add 4,100 acres to wildlife refuges in North and South Carolina.

Washo Reserve Enhancement

The Washo Reserve is located within Santee Coastal Reserve, 12 miles southeast of Georgetown. Washo Reserve features a 200-year-old freshwater cypress lake and cypress-gum swamp, which harbors the oldest wading bird rookery in continuous use in North America. During the 1930s, more than 500 nesting pairs of common egrets were estimated on Washo Reserve. Wood storks, now endangered in South Carolina, were first observed on Washo Reserve in 1994.

The Nature Conservancy and DU have been working collaboratively to help maintain Washo Reserve as a viable wading bird rookery. Dying cypress trees and an overabundance of aquatic weeds threatened the interior rookery used by more than 150 nesting pairs of wood storks. A new water control structure was installed to help manipulate the water levels

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to better manage new cypress growth. This structure, along with three other additions, have aided in the enhancement of 648 acres. In January 2013, 275 new cypress trees were planted, many within dead cypress stumps in the interior of the 200-acre wetland. In the summer and fall of 2013, the aquatic weeds will be chemically treated with an aquatic-approved herbicide to promote open water around the wood stork nests. As part of TNC's research, Facebook users can follow nine wood storks – the "Washo Wood Storks" – which were tagged with satellite transmitters in May 2012.



A new water control structure will help managers to manipulate water levels for better management of cypress growth and ensure this long-standing rookery remains viable.

North Carolina

Butner-Falls of Neuse Game Land Enhanced

DU staff recently submitted a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Five Star grant proposal for \$50,000 to be used on the Butner-Falls of Neuse Game Land. Along with the NFWF grant, DU submitted a 2012 North Carolina Environmental Enhancement Grant to finalize the funding needed for this project. If awarded, these funds will be combined with dollars from a 2011 NC EEG grant and contributions from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), Carolina CAT, The CAT Foundation and DU to enhance the property.

The Neuse River Basin project will restore 593 acres of managed wetlands. The project goals are to provide critical wetland habitat for numerous waterfowl, shorebirds and wading birds, as well as a host of other wetland-dependent species that utilize this important area along the Atlantic Coast; improve water quality by restoring management capability to the wetlands; and enhance public recreational opportunities by attracting more wildlife to the managed wetlands.

DU will be providing engineering survey, design and construction management. Our ability to provide turn-key services to the NCWRC to restore habitat on their game land is critical to maintaining their management infrastructure and allowing personnel to spend more time managing the resources rather than diverting their efforts to deliver a project.

Tennessee

John Tully WMA Enhancement Planned

DU is working with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency on a project to improve waterfowl habitat on John Tully Wildlife Management Area in western Tennessee. DU has completed the survey on the 800-acre project area. Once project design is complete, we will work with TWRA to secure a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant to round out project funding. The WMA is in the southern part of Lauderdale County, near the confluence of the Hatchie and Mississippi rivers. The area is open to public hunting and has plenty of development potential.

Virginia

Chesapeake Bay Partnership Meeting

DU participated in a Chesapeake Bay partnership meeting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and The Chesapeake Bay Foundation to discuss funding opportunities through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The partners are developing a strategy to identify and deliver conservation enhancement toward the 165,000-acre conservation goal as mandated in the President's Executive Order for the Chesapeake Bay. TNC has assembled and submitted a NFWF grant proposal that will allow partners to take preliminary steps

toward a broader vision of analyzing the technical, economic and other restoration obstacles; developing strategic and technical approaches to addressing obstacles; developing fine-scale priorities within selected watersheds; and implementing restoration projects.

The proposal covers selected watersheds in four states; Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and Virginia. In Virginia, the selected watershed is the Lower Eastern Shore. Partners were cognizant of the group's limited capacity to complete on-the-ground restoration projects due to the scale of the desired projects and the funding limitations. Therefore, the preliminary work in Virginia will initially focus more on analyzing the obstacles to restoration and developing approaches to address those obstacles, and less on direct restoration delivery.

Southwest Conservation Unit – LA, OK, TX, NM

Louisiana

North Louisiana GTR improvements coming soon DU and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries are partnering on a project at Russell Sage Wildlife Management Area, near Monroe, to improve a 1,900-acre green tree reservoir (GTR). Scheduled for completion this fall, grant and match funds from DU will be used to complement our previous work on the WMA by installing a pump and associated underground piping to supply and control water on the GTR throughout the year. This enhanced management capability will improve habitat for migratory birds and protect the timber in the unit. Russell Sage WMA provides excellent waterfowl hunting opportunities in north-central Louisiana, including prime hunting conditions in Wham Brake and two GTRs.

Planting Coastal Marsh

April 17 was a wet and muddy day for DU Biologist **Jacob Grey** and Engineer **Joe Fifer** out of the Lafayette office. In partnership with the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana (CRCL), DU staff and 20 volunteers spent the day in the marshes of Jefferson Parish, in an area known as the South Shore of the Pen, near Lafitte. This project was implemented through the ongoing partnership between DU and the ConocoPhillips Company.

With logistical support from CRCL, DU staff and these dedicated volunteers planted 7,200 smooth cordgrass plugs to cover an area of approximately 10 acres in less than four hours. The planted area, known as the "spillover," was created by an accidental breach of the containment dike of a recently completed Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act Marsh Creation Project. Dredged material slowly escaped through the narrow breach, eventually settling to create the additional acres of emergent marsh. The grass will help keep this marsh area intact, prevent future erosion and provide great habitat for ducks. In addition to CRCL, partners included ConocoPhillips, Jefferson Parish, Entergy and RES Inc.



DU staff and CRCL volunteers planted 7,200 smooth cordgrass plugs to prevent coastal marsh erosion and improve habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife.

DU Implements Long-awaited Coastal Project

Ducks Unlimited and partners recently received a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant for coastal marsh restoration efforts in Louisiana. The nearly \$1 million grant will be combined with partner contributions of more than \$2 million to improve more than 16,000 acres of coastal wetlands, including a long-awaited Master Plan project on Liner's Canal in Terrebonne Parish.

Terrebonne Parish has some of the most dramatic rates of wetland loss on the Louisiana coast. The Liner's Canal restoration has been on the parish's desired projects list for several years, but a lack of funding has kept it from being completed. It will benefit hundreds of acres of fresh and intermediate marsh by increasing

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freshwater flow into an area severely threatened by saltwater intrusion.

Specifically, Ducks Unlimited will build a multi-bay water control structure to increase the freshwater flow through Liner's Canal by about three times. The structure will also prevent salt water from accessing freshwater marshes upstream. While the structure and impacted marsh are privately owned by Apache Corporation, there are substantial public benefits of increased healthy marsh, including waterfowl, wildlife and fisheries habitat, storm protection and water quality improvement.

Additional grant projects include:

- Permanent protection of nearly 6,000 acres of fresh to intermediate marsh habitat
- Restoration of more than 3,700 acres of coastal wetlands in west-central Lafourche Parish
- Restoration of approximately 6,000 acres of private lands across the coastal zone through the Louisiana Waterfowl Project program, which provides technical and cost-share assistance to landowners wanting to improve their property for waterfowl and other wetland wildlife.

The projects included in this grant all address the changes in salt- and freshwater flows, which impact marsh vegetation and soil stability. By restoring freshwater inputs and installing water control structures to manage salinity and water levels within coastal marshes, land managers can increase the overall health and function of coastal marshes.

In addition to Ducks Unlimited, Apache Corporation and Terrebonne Parish, partners on the NAWCA grant include the Moore-Odom Wildlife Foundation, Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Rice Stewardship Program Making Progress for Ducks in Louisiana

Ducks Unlimited's Rice Stewardship Program (RSP) is designed to work with rice producers in southwest Louisiana to reduce input costs and thereby sustain rice production on this landscape so that waterfowl may depend on the resources

provided by these managed wetlands. Since January 2012, RSP has worked with more than 175 landowners to provide 22 pumping plant efficiency tests, farm bill program certification on 62,144 acres, conservation planning on more than 13,000 acres and outreach and education on more than 22,445 acres. DU staff has already secured funding commitments of \$1.25M from multiple partners, including the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and Chevron to support the program. DU has one full time biologist and two part-time technicians working on RSP, and we are budgeted to add additional capacity by February 2014.

With its already demonstrated success and proven need, the Rice Stewardship Program is a vital part of Ducks Unlimited's habitat conservation efforts on working wetlands, and we anticipate program expansion from southwest Louisiana to other rice-growing areas.



Ducks Unlimited and NRCS staff work together to provide a rice farmer with pump efficiency testing. Photo credit USDA NRCS.

Oklahoma

Waurika WMA Enhancements Underway

Construction on the three-part Waurika Wildlife Management Area project is approximately half-way complete. Though weather continues to hamper progress, DU staff is working diligently to get the moist-soil

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enhancement and stream restoration parts of the project wrapped up. The third part of the project, installation of a new pump to facilitate water management, has already been finished.

The stream restoration project is part of mitigation associated with State Highway 53 construction. Located within a 35-acre mitigation site on Waurika WMA, the project will restore the natural meandering stream corridor on a portion of Little Beaver Creek which had been channelized and straightened in the past. This work will help to retain local groundwater levels and enhance adjacent wetland areas.

The moist-soil project component will enhance approximately 100 acres of waterfowl habitat by installing water control structures and levees and excavating sloughs and ponds. Waurika WMA is managed by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to provide public hunting opportunity.

Submitted by: **Andi Cooper**
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NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION

11th National Wild Turkey Symposium January 2016, Tucson, AZ

The National Wild Turkey Symposium seeks original research and synthesis papers on the ecology and management of wild turkeys for presentation at the Symposium and publication in the Proceedings. The Symposium occurs every 5 years and brings together state, federal and private wild turkey researchers, land managers, and enthusiasts to exchange ideas relative to ensuring sustainability of the wild turkey resource.

For more Information: Please direct questions to the Symposium Editor: Dr. Darren A. Miller, Weyerhaeuser Company, P.O. Box 2288, Columbus, MS, 39704; (662) 245-5249; darren.miller@weyerhaeuser.com.

TWS Publishing and Communications Program

ATTENTION SOUTHEASTERN SECTION MEMBERS!

The Wildlife Society is soliciting input from Southeastern Section members for suggestions of news items and article ideas for the TWS Publishing and Communications Program. This is an opportunity for our members to contribute ideas about news and events affecting wildlife and wildlife professionals in our region that are important to us and of value to TWS members.

Suggestions may include:

- Items for Wildlife News Briefs - TWS's weekly online-only news roundup of wildlife news
- News briefs to feature in "State of Wildlife" in The Wildlife Professional magazine
- Recent journal articles for review in "Science in Short" in The Wildlife Professional
- Article ideas about research and trends from our region for future issues of The Wildlife Professional

Please send your suggestions to **Darren Miller**, Southeastern Section Representative, at darren.miller@weyerhaeuser.com.

BUSINESS

**67th Annual Conference of the
Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Sunday, October 13 - Wednesday, October 16, 2013
Renaissance Hotel Oklahoma City ~ Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

This annual conference is a forum for the exchange of ideas and critical information regarding the management and protection of fish and wildlife resources primarily in the southeast. The conference attracts over 500 representatives from state and federal agencies, citizen's organizations, universities, and private wildlife research groups, fisheries and wildlife scientists, agency enforcement personnel, and other natural resource related organizations.

The Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) is an organization whose members are the state agencies with primary responsibility for management and protection of the fish and wildlife resources in 15 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Member states are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society **Executive Board Meeting** will be held during the conference on Sunday, October 13 from 3:00 - 5:00 pm.

The Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society **Annual Business Meeting** will be held during the conference on Tuesday, October 15 from 3:00 - 5:00 pm.

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Photo credit John Stehn, USFWS.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society Membership Application

New Renewal Change of Address

_____ Number of years (multiple year membership)

(please print)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

E-MAIL _____

PHONE _____

For new memberships or renewals, please enclose a check for \$10.00 per year (students: \$6.00) payable to Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society with this application and send to:

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