

# Arkansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society

## Newsletter

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### **2017 Officers**

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#### **Arkansas Chapter Web Site**

<http://www.wildlife.org/arkansas>

### **2017 Annual Meeting**

The Arkansas Chapter held the 2017 Annual Meeting March 2-3 at the CA Vines 4-H Center in Ferndale. After presentations in the morning a field tour was held at The Nature Conservancy's Stone Prairie Preserve east of



Mayflower before re-convening later in the day for additional presentations focused on the impact of Chronic Wasting Disease in Arkansas. In the evening the Arkansas State University Student chapter won the Quiz Bowl Competition which was followed by a social.

The meeting resumed Friday morning with presentations in the morning and then the Chapter business meeting after lunch. During the business meeting Steven Fowler, AGFC Assistant Chief of Wildlife Management, was elected to serve as President-elect in 2018 and President in 2019-2020. Dr. Virginie Rolland, ASU, was elected to serve as Secretary-Treasurer in 2019-2020. The chapter discussed the Recovering Americas Wildlife Act and approved a motion to support it.



Steven Fowler

Dr. Virginie Rolland

The ASU Student Chapter visited the endangered wolf center. The wolf center then came down to ASU to bring support and awareness to Red Wolves. ASUTWS started Red Wolves for Red Wolves club. They are selling t-shirts at conclave to raise funds for Red Wolves efforts.



Sarah Tomke receiving the Best Student Presentation Award from Keith Weaver for her talk on survival and genetic diversity of prairie lizards.

Phillip Stevenson of the University of Arkansas Fayetteville Student Chapter reported that they assisted with a deer check station at McIlroy Madison County WMA taking biological data and CWD samples.

They conducted a Birds and Breakfasts to engage the public and teach common bird life histories at Hobbs SP. The chapter hosted guest speakers from state parks and other organizations and conducted a fundraiser using a skybox at a Razorback football game. They have noticed student drop off in the spring. They have student chapter t-shirts for sale.

Brayden Fisher, of the University of Arkansas Monticello Student Chapter reported that they helped an elementary school build bluebird boxes and gave lessons about this species, worked check station on the White River NWR, and that undergraduate research on campus is focusing on bluebird boxes and turtles using campus ponds.

Christina Blanco, of the Arkansas Tech University Student Chapter, reported that they have conducted trash pickups, conducted field days to teach research techniques, have held education and outreach events, and had a Beast Feast fundraiser.

The Chapter presented awards for student presentations at the meeting. Sarah Tomke received the 1<sup>st</sup> place award for “Survival and genetic diversity of Prairie Lizards, *Sceloporus consobrinus*, in two thermally distinct habitats of central Arkansas.” Hannah Quackenbush received the 2<sup>nd</sup> place award for “Testing the efficacy of an acoustic lure on bat mist netting success in North American central hardwood forests.” Callie Moore received the 3<sup>rd</sup> place award for “Spatiotemporal changes in wintering harvest distribution of Midcontinent White-fronted Geese.”

## ATWS Opposes “Kaput” Feral Hog Bait

On October 16<sup>th</sup> the Chapter Executive Committee voted to oppose approval of the “Kaput” Feral Hog Bait in Arkansas due to the lack of research of potential impacts on non-target species and bioaccumulation in the food chain. This follows similar statements by the parent chapter at the national level.

## Awards



Jacob Bokker (middle left) and Kevin Ledford (middle right) receiving the 2017 George H. Dunklin Jr. Arkansas Waterfowl and Wetland Management Award from George Dunklin (right) and Brad Carner (left) at the November 17, 2017 Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Meeting. This was in recognition of their work on the Steve N. Wilson Raft Creek WMA.

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission’s Wildlife Management Division presented their annual awards on June 8<sup>th</sup> at DeGray Lake State Park. Clayton Smith, who works on the Gene Rush WMA received the Technician of the Year Award. Alex Zachary, who works on the Ed Gordon Point Remove WMA and Wes Wright, the Commission’s Elk Program Coordinator, each received the Biologist of the Year Award. The Wildlife Management Division’s Region 8 won the “No Hog Left Behind” Award for their efforts in wild hog control. Special Service Recognition Awards were presented to Linda Garrett, Sandra Garrett, Sandee Schultz, Kristy Hutchinson, Garrick Dugger, Johnny Waldrup, and Blake Sasse.

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission’s Wildlife Management Division Chief Brad Carner and Communications Division Chief Keith Stephens received The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency’s Earnest Thompson Seton Award for leadership in scientific management. This year’s recipients were recognized for their extraordinary response to the discovery of chronic wasting disease in Arkansas deer and elk herds in early 2016.

Chronic wasting disease may be the biggest challenge the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission has faced, not only in this century, but the last several decades since the agency began restoring the state’s deer population from next to nothing to its strong numbers today.

Throughout the remainder of 2016, more than 250 Arkansas Game and Fish Commission staff would dedicate more than 37,000 man hours to public awareness and scientific wildlife management efforts. An extensive communication and public outreach campaign effort rapidly and productively educated stakeholders. While there was a high amount of public interest, Arkansas did not see an expected decline in hunting license sales and saw over 200,000 deer harvested for the fifth consecutive year; largely thanks to these combined efforts.

## **Bringing Back the Bobwhite Update**

Marcus Asher, Quail Program Coordinator  
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

Northern Bobwhite habitat restoration has been brought to the forefront of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's (AGFC) agenda. Beginning in January 2017, a Quail 101 training was held in Mayflower with several of the nation's foremost authorities on Northern Bobwhite management presenting relevant current information. Fifty-seven AGFC employees attended this workshop to refine their understanding of the species and learn methods to ensure it prospers. A second Quail 101 training was conducted for partner-agency personnel interested in implementing bobwhite habitat restoration on their respective lands. The training was well attended with 60 individuals from 15 different agencies present.

In order to better focus restoration efforts, AGFC has designated seven quail focal landscapes throughout the state. Agency money, manpower, and time along with partner and private land habitat projects will be directed toward these focal landscapes to build large, contiguous tracts of suitable bobwhite habitat. Within these focal landscapes, six wildlife management areas (WMA) have been designated as quail emphasis areas (Harold Alexander, Hope Upland, Jack Mountain, Little Bayou, Robert L. Hankins Mud Creek, and Stone Prairie WMAs). These areas will undergo substantial habitat management such as prescribed burning, timber thinning, invasive species control, disking, and mulching to achieve ideal bobwhite habitat characteristics. The end population goal for these areas is to have 1 bird per 2 acres of ideal habitat.

Baseline bird monitoring data taken this spring shows low numbers of quail and decent numbers of songbirds associated with early-successional habitat on these WMAs, however, these numbers should increase as habitat conditions improve. Since July 2017, 1,390 acres of prescribed burning, 656 acres of timber thinning, 210 acres of fescue eradication, 160 acres of mulching, 110 acres of sericea lespedeza eradication, and 37 acres of understory chemical treatment have occurred on the six emphasis areas.

AGFC is not the only agency excited about bobwhite restoration, as 11 of our partner agencies are serving on the Arkansas Quail Committee. This committee was organized to provide sound, collaborative direction to aid in



successful bobwhite population restoration over the entire state of Arkansas. Some fruit of these collaborative efforts has developed on the Pea Ridge National Military Park whereby Arkansas' first National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative's (NBCI) designated focal area was established in 2015. To date, 1,819 acres of prescribed burning, 474 acres of cedar mulching, and 138 acres of fescue eradication has been implemented on the park. Bird data collected on the park have shown increases in bobwhite numbers since management was implemented.

The above mentioned habitat gains on publicly-owned lands are encouraging, but the greatest potential for significant habitat restoration exists on private lands. In order to better capitalize on this potential, AGFC, Quail Forever (QF), and the Natural Resources Conservation Service recently solicited and have been approved to use matching funds to hire 7 QF Farm Bill Biologists. These biologists will be stationed out of Danville, Harrison, Hazen, Hot Springs, Monticello, North Little Rock, and Pocahontas. Once these biologists start in late November 2017, the private lands staff for the state of Arkansas will nearly double. This increase in staff will lead to more landowners receiving wildlife technical assistance and more usable space being created for northern bobwhites.

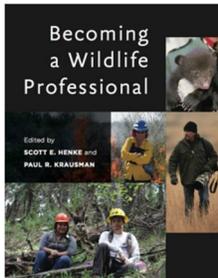
With financial assistance provided from the farm bill and Acres for Wildlife fund pools potentially totaling well over \$1 million dollars, quail restoration is looking bright in the natural state.

## New from TWS and Johns Hopkins University Press

**A must-have book for aspiring wildlifers: Order your copy today!**

**By Nancy Sasavage  
Director of TWS Publications and  
Communications**

“Becoming a Wildlife Professional” is the first comprehensive book to describe the entry-level jobs available for the next generation of wildlife biologists and conservationists. If you are a student preparing for a wildlife career or new professional looking for career advice, this new book published by The Wildlife Society in cooperation with Johns Hopkins University belongs in your library!



Editors Scott E. Henke and Paul R. Krausman include detailed chapters on how students should prepare for a vocation in the wildlife profession while offering pragmatic advice about applying for and obtaining a job. The book presents over 100 diverse career options

that are available to aspiring wildlife workers, including work in biological field research, forestry, rehabilitation, ranching, photography and refuge management. It also details each position’s educational and technical requirements, challenges, salaries and opportunities for advancement and offers advice from a range of seasoned experts who actually hold these jobs and have used these techniques to secure employment.

“Becoming a Wildlife Professional” also conveys important philosophical messages about the responsibilities and challenges of a career in wildlife conservation and management. With all this information in one place, the book is an essential text for wildlife science students interested in making themselves marketable for

employers across a wide spectrum of wildlife jobs.

TWS members receive a 30 percent discount on all titles published by the Society in cooperation with Johns Hopkins University Press. Be sure to enter the discount code HTWS at checkout.

[Order your copy today.](#) The TWS member price is **\$59.50**

## Arkansas Publications

(send citations to newsletter editor)

Bryant, L.C. and T.J. Boves. (In Press). Louisiana Waterthrush (*Parkesia motacilla*) successfully defends nest from juvenile black ratsnake (*Elaphe obsoleta*). *Wilson Journal of Ornithology*.

Cox, AB, NT Taylor, MA Rebein, M Song, MD Moran, and MR McClunb. 2017. Land Use Changes from Unconventional Gas Development in Public Lands of the Fayetteville Shale. *Natural Areas Journal* 37(2): 233-239.

Gantchoff, MG and JL Belant. 2017. Regional connectivity for recolonizing American black bears (*Ursus americanus*) in southcentral USA. *Biological Conservation* 214: 66-75.

Graves, GR. 2016. Geographic range of the western harvest mouse (*Reithrodontomys megalotis*) in Arkansas. *Journal of the Arkansas Academy of Science* 70: 268-270.

Hager, S.B., R.S. Cooper, T.J. Boves et al. Continent-wide analysis of how urbanization affects bird-window collision mortality in North America. *Biological Conservation* 212:209-215.

Keith, RD, B. Grooms, and RE Urbanek. 2016. Impacts of man-made structures on avian community metrics in 4 state parks in northwestern Arkansas. *Journal of the Arkansas Academy of Science* 70: 105-108.

Kristensen, T., E. Puckett, E. Landguth, J. Belant, J. Hast, C. Carpenter, J. Sajecki, J. Beringer, M. Means, J. Cox, L. Eggert, D. White, Jr., and K. Smith. (In Press). Spatial genetic structure in American black bears (*Ursus americanus*): female philopatry is variable and related population history. *Heredity*.

Matthews, A.E., P.B. Klimov, H.C. Proctor, A.P.G Dowling, L. Diener, S.B. Hager, J.L. Larkin, D.W. Raybuck, C. Fiss, D.J. McNeil, and T.J. Boves. (In Revision). Cophylogenetic assessment of New World warblers (Parulidae) and their symbiotic feather mites (Proctophylloidea). *Journal of Avian Biology*.

Matthews, A.E., J.L. Larkin, D.W. Raybuck, M.C. Slevin, S.H. Stoleson, and T.J. Boves. (In Revision). A comparison of feather mite abundance and symbiotic nature of mite-host relationship in two ecologically dissimilar warbler species. *Ecology and Evolution*.

McAllister, CT, A. Surf, R. Tumilson, CR Bursey, and TJ Fayton. 2016. Gastrointestinal parasites of the northern river otter, *Lontra Canadensis* (Carnivora: mustelidae), from Arkansas. *Journal of the Arkansas Academy of Science* 70: 284-286.

Moore, R. M., Risch, T. S., Morris, D. K., and Rolland, V. 2017. Habitat use of female gray bats using aerial telemetry. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 81: 1242–1253.

Neupane, D., S. Kunwar, A. K. Bohara, R. L. Johnson, and T.S. Risch. 2017. Willingness to Pay for Mitigating Human Elephant Conflict by Residents of Nepal. *Journal for Nature Conservation*.

Neupane, D., R. L. Johnson, and T.S. Risch. (In Press). How do land-use practices affect human-elephant conflict in Nepal? *Wildlife Biology*.

Normand, CM and RE Urbanek. 2017. Exurban Feral Cat Seroprevalence of Feline Leukemia and Feline Immunodeficiency Viruses and Adult Survival. *Southeastern Naturalist* 16(1): 1-18.

Perry, R. W., P. N. Jordan, and V. L. McDaniel. 2017. Effects of repeated burning on snag abundance in shortleaf pine woodlands. *Forest Science* 63:342–347.

Perry, R. W. 2017. Early Successional Forest Ecosystems: What we've learned about birds and timber harvest practices. *The Wildlife Professional*. July-August 2017.

Pruitt, ML and KG Smith. 2016. History and fall migration of northern saw-whet owls

*Aegolius acadicus*) in Arkansas. *Journal of the Arkansas Academy of Science* 70: 190-198.

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Raybuck, D.W., J.L. Larkin, S.H. Stoleson, and T.J. Boves. (In Press). Response to Streby and Kramer: Additional considerations for explaining differences in return rates of geocator-tagged and control Cerulean Warblers. *Condor* 119.

Sasse, DB, CT McAllister, and LA Durden. 2016. A new host record for the bat bug, *Cimex adjunctus* (Insecta: Hemiptera) from eastern small-footed Myotis, *Myotis leibii* (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae). *Journal of the Arkansas Academy of Science* 70: 287-288.

Schratz, S., V. Rolland, J. Phillips, R. Crossett, D. Richardson, and T. Risch. (In Press). Bat Occupancy Estimates and Species Richness at Cache River National Wildlife Refuge. *Journal of the Arkansas Academy of Science*.

Smith, KG, JC Neal, and M. Mlodinow. 2016. Unusual concentration of summer tanagers (*Piranga rubra*) in northwestern Arkansas during winter 2015-2016. *Journal of the Arkansas Academy of Science* 70: 293-294.

Tumilson, R, CT McAllister, HW Robison, MB Connior, DB Sasse, DA Saugey, and S. Chordas III. 2016. Vertebrate natural history notes from Arkansas, 2016. *Journal of the Arkansas Academy of Science* 70: 248-254.

## Upcoming Meetings

Arkansas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting. March 1-2, 2018. C.A. Vines 4-H Center, in Ferndale near Little Rock. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Frank Rohwer, President of Delta Waterfowl.

Arkansas Academy of Science Meeting. April, 2018.