

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

President's Message—Quentin Hays

Hello and Happy Spring!

I hope everyone is enjoying the transition to summer weather that has finally arrived in New Mexico. I know that winter seemed to hold on somewhat longer this year in a number of places around the state, but here in the south-central mountains we know not to complain about relatively late-season snowstorms on the mountain and the lower-elevation precipitation that accompanies these events.

It is with a heavy heart that I report on the passing of a New Mexico wildlife legend, Charlie Painter. Charlie was the first and only designated herpetologist for the State of New Mexico, and his death leaves a hole in our profession that will be hard to fill. The immediate outpouring of emotion that accompanied news of his death earlier this month is testimony to how many lives he touched in New Mexico, and a heartfelt obituary penned by another venerable NM wildlifer is included in this newsletter.

The planning process has begun for a one-day New Mexico wildlife gathering this fall. Right now the board is looking at possible dates, although something in October or late September will probably end up being what works best for everyone involved. The thought is also that a number of folks who might attend the Annual (National) Conference won't be able to this year since it's being held in Manitoba, so 2015 should be a good year for a small-scale local or regional event in the autumn. We would also like to solicit input on possible meeting themes; ideas being bandied around include tribal wildlife management and ecological restoration focuses. Feel free to email me personally with input on meeting themes, dates, etc.

Many of you have also been receiving emails announcing the formation of a Geospatial Advisory Committee through the Southwest Section of The Wildlife Society. The advisory committee is being spearheaded by two NM wildlife professionals, President-elect of the NM Chapter Ginny Seamster and Past-President of the Southwest Section (and NM Chapter) Leland Pierce. This committee hopes to be a clearinghouse for information related to the nexus of geospatial technology and wildlife science/management issues, and should fill an important niche in our profession. If you have interest in or experience with geospatial technologies as they relate to wildlife science, please try to participate in the activities organized by this committee. This goes for tried and true geospatial experts as well as neophytes; I know many of us could certainly stand to improve our GIS knowledge/skills, myself included. Many thanks are also due to both Lee and Ginny for taking this on.

Other tasks that the board is working on right now include the previously mentioned by-laws revisions, which will eventually make their way to the membership for approval, as well as ways to improve membership tracking and our online presence. Efforts are also underway to reach out to the often overlooked wildlife law enforcement professionals in our state, and the Conservation Affairs Committee has its hands full lately with requests from citizens (and professionals) for comment on a variety of wildlife-related issues.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to myself or to the board with questions, thoughts, ideas, or with concerns related to any of the issues I've mentioned here. Think about attending a one-day New Mexico wildlife gathering this fall, and don't hesitate to send any write-ups you might have on your work for inclusion in the next newsletter. Thanks for everything you do as wildlife professionals, and if you have fieldwork planned for the summer, good luck!

-Quentin

NM-TWS Website: <http://wildlife.org/NM/>

Follow us on Twitter: @NewMexicoTWS

NM TWS Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Wildlife-Society-New-Mexico-Chapter/122478411098284>



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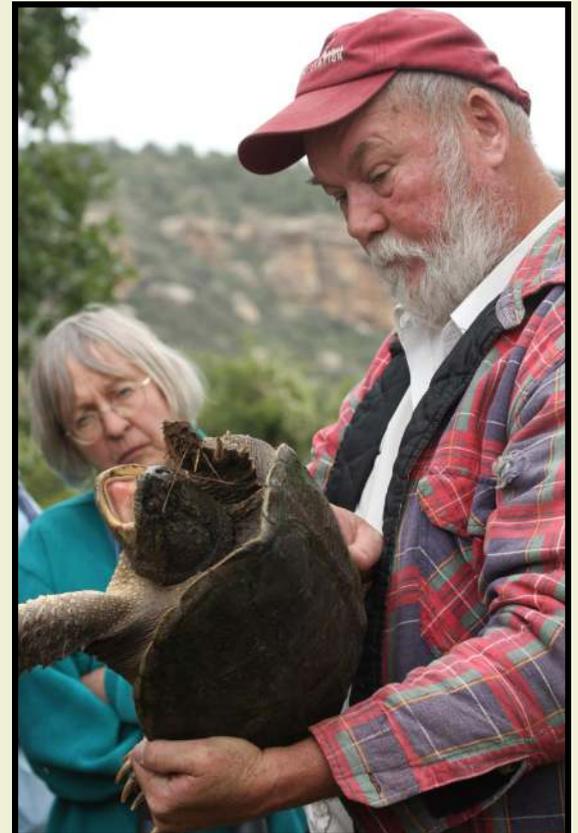
Charles W. Painter (1949-2015)

We are saddened to report that Charles W. Painter, recently-retired herpetologist for the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), passed away in Albuquerque on May 12, 2015 after a long struggle with cancer. He was 66 years old.

Charlie grew up in the bayou country of southern Louisiana and the Ozarks of Arkansas where, with the encouragement of his mother, he developed a fascination with wildlife and particularly with amphibians and reptiles. After completing his master's degree at Northeast Louisiana University in 1976, with a thesis on the herpetofauna of Colima, Mexico, he moved to New Mexico where he worked on various field projects in the Southwest involving fishes, small mammals, and of course herps. He also did a two-year study on Chinook salmon in Oregon before returning to New Mexico, the place he truly loved.

In 1985 he was hired as the first (and, to date, only) herpetologist for NMDGF, a position he often described as his "dream job." During his 28-year-long career with the agency, he was involved in field studies and conservation efforts for numerous species listed or being considered for listing under the New Mexico Wildlife Conservation Act or the U.S. Endangered Species Act including Jemez Mountains Salamander, Dunes Sagebrush Lizard, Chiricahua Leopard Frog, New Mexico Ridge-nosed Rattlesnake, and Narrow-headed Garter Snake. He was instrumental in developing regulations for the commercial trade in herpetofauna in the state and conducted extensive research on rattlesnake roundups, a practice he strongly opposed. His work took him all over New Mexico, but he always had a strong preference for the southwestern part of the state, especially the Gila River basin and the Animas Mountains, which he came to know intimately.

Charlie authored or coauthored dozens of journal articles, research notes, and book chapters, but is perhaps best known for the monumental book "Amphibians and Reptiles of New Mexico" which he co-authored with William G. Degenhardt and Andrew H. Price in 1996. Almost 20 years later, this book – which was well-illustrated with Charlie's excellent photos – still stands as one of the most comprehensive volumes on the herpetofauna of any state. Additional publications of his are still pending, including a chapter on New Mexico for a book on the herpetofauna of the U.S.-Mexico border states. Charlie won the NM Wildlife Professional award twice in his career, first in 1990 and again in 2008, a remarkable accomplishment that speaks to his longevity. Additionally, Charlie won the Alison Haskell award for Excellence in Herpetofaunal Conservation from Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation in 2013. — Continued on next page



Charles W. Painter (1949-2015), continued

Charlie's easy-going personality was a key factor in his interactions with other biologists, landowners, resource managers, and the general public, and over his career he acquired an amazing network of friends and collaborators. He was a mentor to many young herpetologists, many of whom worked for him, and served on graduate committees for a number of students who went on to careers in biology. One of his hobbies was blacksmithing and he had planned to pursue a number of metal-work projects in his retirement, when not writing articles on his herpetological research. And, as anyone who ever did fieldwork with him knows, he was an excellent camp chef – a skill he said was crucial if he was to keep his many field assistants happy!

Charlie is survived by his wife Lori, daughter Ashley, brother Robert, and countless friends and associates who will sorely miss him.



There will a Celebration of Charlie's life Saturday August 8, 3–8 pm at Old Town Farm

(949 Montoya St. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104, www.oldtownfarm.com).

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Rule Changes

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is currently gathering information and comments about a variety of upcoming rule changes. See below or <http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/commission/proposals-under-consideration/> for more information.

Migratory Bird Rule

The proposed amendments include adjusting the season dates and bag limits to fit USFWS frameworks, increase bag limits for Estancia Valley sandhill cranes, decrease bag limit and season length for band-tailed pigeon, adjust season dates for the Central flyway based on public comment, and altering the hunt structure at Bernardo Waterfowl Management Area.

Email Kristin Madden any comments or suggestions: kristin.madden@state.nm.us

Bear/Cougar Rule

The proposed amendments for bear include adjusting harvest limits across the state to reflect updated density information from multi-year research and an updated habitat model, adjust Game Management Units (GMU) from one zone to another to better fit bear use on the landscape, and add a few closed GMU's to an existing zone.

The proposed amendments for cougar include allowing traps and snares as legal method of take on private lands, allowing for deer/elk hunters to harvest cougars on Wildlife Management Areas during their hunt, and increasing individual bag limits in harvest zones that are not reaching their harvest limits.

Email comments or suggestions to dgf-bear-cougar-rules@state.nm.us

Update from the new BISON-M/Share with Wildlife Coordinator at New Mexico Department of Game and Fish—Ginny Seamster

As of April 27th, Ginny Seamster (president-elect for NM TWS) is the new BISON-M/Share with Wildlife Coordinator for New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. She will continue to be a collaborator on the South Central Climate Science Center project that was described in previous newsletters and will be completed by the Center for Applied Spatial Ecology at New Mexico State University.

For those of you not familiar with BISON-M or Share with Wildlife, BISON-M is short for Biota Information System of New Mexico and is a web-enabled database that allows the user to search for biological and ecological information on several thousand species found in New Mexico. It also allows for acquisition of species lists at the county level and searches that enable the user to select multiple criteria related to species legal status, taxonomy, life history, ecology, and geographic distribution. This database can be accessed here: <http://www.bison-m.org/>.

Share with Wildlife is a program that funds biological studies, habitat improvement, conservation education, and wildlife rehabilitation projects in New Mexico. The emphasis is on projects that will fill information and management gaps regarding, or otherwise benefit, species and ecosystems that are not supported through other funding sources. Topics of special interest to the Department, as identified by Department biologists, are identified in each year's call for project information. Contracts for FY 2015 projects are being finalized. More information regarding the funded projects will be provided in the next newsletter, after contracts are in place.

The call for project information for FY 2016 will be going out as soon as possible pending an internal review and revision process. It will be available on the Department website (<http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/conservation/share-with-wildlife/>). Ginny is settling into the new position and more than happy to answer any questions regarding either BISON-M or the Share with Wildlife program (virginia.seamster@state.nm.us).



Cochiti Middle School students sorting macro-invertebrate samples (River Source)

Geospatial Advisory Committee—Ginny Seamster and Leland Pierce

In an effort to attract more members to the Southwest Section (SWS), a new committee is being tested out, the Geospatial Advisory Committee. Chaired by SWS past-president Leland Pierce (NM) and the president-elect of the New Mexico Chapter, Ginny Seamster, the Geospatial Advisory Committee will provide resources for Section members to learn more about how geospatial technology is being employed and applied to wildlife research and management issues across the section (and beyond!), and about current issues related to this technology that might impact wildlife professionals. It will also be a forum for those less well versed in geospatial technology to learn more about resources, employment trends, and training. Such technologies would include but not be limited to Geographic Information Systems (GIS), remote sensing, Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR), web mapping, Unmanned Aerial Systems, and spatial modeling. The intent is not to provide a forum for how to use the technology but to focus on the wildlife professionals who use the technology.

To generate interest in participation on the committee-and to encourage folks to become members of the SWS!-a “kick-off” webinar was held on 12 May 2015. The webinar covered current issues, state activities, education and training opportunities, and committee business. For the current issues, 2 talks were given on the use of geospatial technology to delineate areas of conservation interest. Dr. Bill Sutton of Tennessee State University presented on *Vulnerability of Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Areas in the Northeast U.S. to Climate Change*, while Rayo McCollough of Natural Heritage New Mexico Program spoke about *New Mexico Department of Game and Fish State Wildlife Action Plan Revision: Conservation Opportunity Areas*. For state activities, Ryan Nosek, Dean Pokrajac, and Richard Lawrence, all from the Arizona Department of Game and Fish, presented on *Field Data Collection Using the ArcGIS Platform*, and Dr. Ken Boykin of New Mexico State University spoke about an application allowing students to gather on-site land cover data in the form of photographs. These photographs can then be used to validate satellite imagery. Ken also spoke on New Mexico View, part of a nationwide, university-based and state-implemented consortium promoting the widespread use of remote-sensing data and technology through education and outreach, workforce development, applied research, and technology transfer to the public and private sectors.

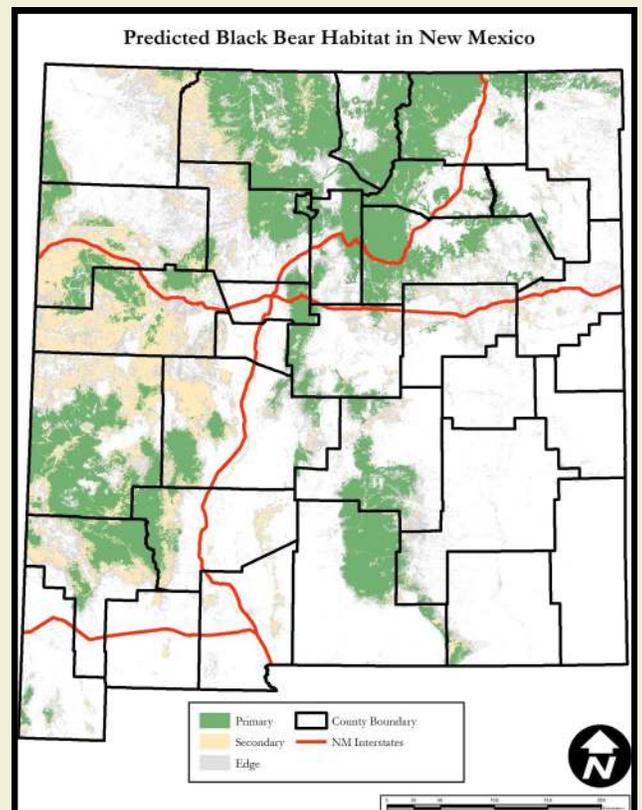
To listen to a recording of the call dial:

PHONE: 605-562-0029

PASSCODE: 634-775-555

RECORDING ID: 2

The chairs of the SWS Geospatial Advisory Committee have been in communication with the chair of the parent society’s Spatial Ecology and Telemetry Working Group and both sides are excited about collaborating in the future. A committee call will be held in June to work on logistics, like a charter for the committee, and the next webinar will be held in July. The webinar will most likely feature a presentation about using geospatial technology to create a common list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) from adjoining states’ State Wildlife Action Plans. The currently planned speaker is from the northeastern US, where a multi-state SGCN list has been developed. For more information on the SWS Geospatial Advisory Committee, contact Leland (leland.pierce@state.nm.us) and/or Ginny (virginia.seamster@state.nm.us).



Example of geospatial modeling used to predict black bear habitat for species management in New Mexico.

Be on the lookout for the next webinar, coming your way in July!

National Update—Carol Chambers

Happy summer—a lot of us are in the field these days and I hope your work goes smoothly and produces interesting results. Here's what's happening these days in the Southwest.

We just sent our 9th newsletter for the Section to Section members. This latest SW Section newsletter features a Director's Corner—this showcases the thoughts of one of the states in our Section and this time, Director of Arizona Game and Fish Department Larry Voyles eloquently describes what got us into the wildlife profession—a connection with nature and a desire to work with wildlife. An exciting opportunity for the Section was to support a publication of Amphibians and Reptiles of the United States-Mexico Border States/*Anfibios y reptiles de los estados de la frontera México-Estados Unidos*. This is a binational effort and the book is written in English and Spanish. You may recognize some of the many authors' names: Randall Babb, Thomas Brennan, James R. Dixon, William L. Farr, Lee Grismer, Bradford D. Hollingsworth, Julio A. Lemos-Espinal, Robert Lovich, Clark R. Mahrtdt, Charles W. Painter, James C. Rorabaugh, Geoffrey R. Smith, Hobart M. Smith, James N. Stuart, and Guillermo A. Woolrich-Piña. This will be an important reference for wildlife biologists and is available fall 2015 from Texas A&M Press (<http://www.tamupress.com/product/Amphibians-and-Reptiles-of-the-USMexico-Border-St,8370.aspx>).

At TWS headquarters in Washington, DC, there are some changes. Laura Bies, long time Government Affairs Director, is leaving her position but will continue to manage the Leadership Institute. She will also provide consulting to TWS, as needed. This year's Leadership Institute includes 2 from the Southwest Section. They are Sarah Fritts, Texas Tech University, and Andrew Tri, Texas A & M University-Kingsville.

Finances continue to get a lot of attention as TWS manages our funds and investments. We should end the year well ahead of the budgeted surplus of \$122,000. TWS membership is still declining, although at a slower rate. We have just under 9,000 TWS members; remember when we almost hit 11,000? In the SW Section, we've seen membership grow over the past 5 years from 239 members in 2011 to 286 in 2014, but the Section is also seeing a decline with our current 254 members. Encourage your colleagues to renew or join, or buy a membership for friend. There are about 150 Chapters, Sections, and Working Groups—a great network of wildlifers. The Wildlife Professional is a very popular source of news. For information about benefits, see <http://wildlife.org/membership-benefits/>.

Check out conference information for the 2015 annual conference is in Wininpeg, Manitoba, Canada (17–21 October) at <http://wildlife.org/2015conference/>. The 2016 conference will be in Raleigh, NC, and **the 2017 conference will be in Albuquerque, 23–27 September** (did I mention that already a few times?!).

More about Women of Wildlife (WOW)—In the summer edition of The Wildlife Professional, Southwest Section members contributed to a special section on professional development. New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Director Alexandra Sandoval wrote about her career and recruiting diversity in “Bringing Diversity to the Workforce”. Misty Sumner and I wrote an article titled “Mentoring the Next Generation” that asks established wildlife women professionals to mentor new professional women. The Southwest Section WOW are also sponsoring a panel discussion on “Women of Wildlife at Work” at the upcoming Winnipeg conference. We hope to fundraise for a reception/mixer following the panel.

The Wildlife Society Southwest Section Chapter's Hub continues to steadily climb in 'likes'. We increased from 349 to 392 since March. Please visit the site at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Wildlife-Society-Southwest-Section-Chapters-Hub/205755042835210>. People seem to really like the job postings we place here. The TWS Women of Wildlife (WOW) Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/TWS-Women-of-Wildlife/234411723382592>) also continues to grow steadily. We hit 1,000 and are now at 1,089 likes, up from 981 in March. You can also see lots of great features at the TWS Facebook page with currently over 25,000 likes.

Contact me at Carol.Chambers@nau.edu or 928-523-0014 (office) with any comments or questions.

Southwest Partners in
Amphibian and
Reptile
Conservation



The Annual SWPARC meeting is coming up quickly and we wanted to take the opportunity and remind folks to please register and find out more on the Joint Meetings of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists website via the following JMIH Link:

<http://www.dce.k-state.edu/conf/jointmeeting/>

The **full day Symposia** is listed on the tab on the left titled Symposia - click on that and scroll all the way down.

The **working groups** will be in the late afternoon directly after the presentations / symposia so please plan to stick around and see what we are up to and what you can do to help with

regional herp conservation efforts!!

The **SWPARC workshop info** is listed on the schedule on Monday 20 July (again on the schedule tab on the left).

The **SWPARC/HL Auction** is listed on the Social Events page - please consider brining an item to donate! All funds go toward SWPARC and our Herpetologist's League partner society.

PARC Haskell Award and Visionary Leader Award announcements and SWPARC Plenary talk will be given in the first day of the JMIH under the Daily Meeting/Schedules Tab and on Thursday 16 July 8–10 am in the section JMIH Opening and Plenary Session where all other societies will announce their awards and host their plenary presenters as well - these are generally back to back talks with a morning break in between.

You can either **register** for the whole conference via the JMIH website link and add to attend a workshop on one of the scroll down tabs within the registration form page - it's very easy and visible as you scroll down through registration - or you can register for single days for the days you want to attend and to register for the workshops you select to register for the single day on the day of the workshop July 20 and select the workshop you want.

Final location information for the venomous snake safety and myth busting workshop is still being determined so the info on the schedule has the workshop as occurring at the Casino in the afternoon - exact location information (actual workshop may be held offsite by very close by the hotel) will be provided either in person, via email or via the JMIH website.





Disease Alert



Reducing disease risks in captive amphibians and protecting our wild native amphibians from invasive disease



Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans (B.sal) is a newly-discovered species of chytrid fungus that can infect and kill a wide range of newts and salamanders. This fungus has become established in a few wild amphibian populations in parts of Europe where it is causing devastating population declines. It is thought to be spread internationally by the amphibian trade and unless all concerned (pet traders, scientists and amphibian keepers) take great care and apply some simple biosecurity measures, there is a risk that it could be introduced to captive and wild amphibian populations elsewhere in Europe. **B.sal has already been found in captive newts and salamanders in the UK.**



If you keep amphibians, it is important that you ensure disease does not pose a risk to captive or wild amphibians. In addition to B.sal, there are other amphibian diseases that are a cause for concern, including *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (Bd) and ranaviruses. There are also diseases that we do not yet know about. This leaflet provides information and guidance on what you can do to reduce disease risks to captive and wild amphibians in the UK.



Chytrid fungi - There are two species of chytrid fungi known to infect amphibians: *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (Bd for short) and *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* (B.sal for short). Bd can infect and kill frogs, toads, newts, salamanders and caecilians. B.sal is known to only infect newts and salamanders. Often animals can carry chytrid infection without signs of disease for weeks or months, during which time they are infectious to other animals.

Chytrid fungi can be spread by direct contact between animals or from contaminated materials, such as water, equipment, soil, gravel, aquatic plants, etc. The fungi can persist in the environment without amphibians for up to several weeks.

For both Bd and B.sal, non-invasive skin swabs can be used to diagnose infection. Treatments are available for sick animals and to eradicate infection from animals carrying chytrid fungi.

Ranaviruses - There are several strains of ranavirus and some have been linked to amphibian mass mortalities around the world. Some ranaviruses can infect and kill amphibians, reptiles and fish. The ranavirus currently known to be infecting amphibians in the UK is causing long-term declines of the common frog (*Rana temporaria*). Other ranaviruses are present in the international pet trade and these could be even more dangerous to British wildlife, including to newts and reptiles.

Ranaviruses are spread through direct contact between animals or from contaminated equipment, etc. These viruses can remain infectious for long periods of time (months or years) in water and pond sediment.

As internal tissues are required to make a diagnosis, there is currently no reliable diagnostic test for live animals. No treatment is available for ranavirus infection.

Neither chytrid fungi nor ranaviruses can infect or cause disease in people.

Signs of disease

Newts or salamanders with B.sal can develop skin ulcers and they may become listless and show incoordination, but might just be found dead.

Amphibians sick with Bd infection may have reddening or excessive shedding of their skin, ulceration of their toes, or unusual behaviours such as terrestrial animals sitting in water for longer periods than normal. In many cases, however, apparently healthy animals are simply found dead.

Amphibians sick with ranavirus may develop skin ulcers or reddening of the skin. In acute cases, affected animals might vomit bloody mucus or pass blood from the vent, or apparently healthy animals can be found dead.

More information on the signs of amphibian disease can be found at: <http://www.gardenwildlifehealth.org/disease-factsheets/factsheets/>

If you find sick or dead amphibians

Please report any sick or dead amphibians observed in the wild to Garden Wildlife Health at: <http://www.gardenwildlifehealth.org/>

You or your veterinary surgeon should contact Matthew Perkins (matthew.perkins@ioz.ac.uk) if you wish any sick or dead captive amphibians to be tested for Bd, B.sal or ranavirus infection, or if you wish animals to be tested before adding them to your collection. (Please note, there is a charge for this service.)

What else can you do?

Following the advice below will help minimise the risk of inadvertently spreading amphibian diseases within or between captive collections and also to wild populations:

- Never release any (native or exotic) amphibians from captivity into the wild.
- Never transfer wild amphibians between sites. Do not stock ponds with spawn/tadpoles/adult amphibians – they will colonise new ponds naturally (and often surprisingly quickly).
- Do not assume that a healthy looking animal is free of infection; some animals can act as carriers without exhibiting signs of disease. Adopt the precautionary principle and manage all amphibians as if they are infected.
- Know the health status of your collection. Get your animals tested routinely and ensure any dead amphibians are submitted for post mortem examination.
- If dead animals are not submitted for testing, care should be taken when disposing of them. They should be incinerated or buried in such a way that scavenging animals cannot access them.
- Quarantine new arrivals and screen for chytrid infections on arrival. Any positive animals should be treated under veterinary supervision and test negative before being added to your collection.
- Avoid keeping amphibians in outdoor enclosures as they may come into contact with native wild amphibians and infect them with disease agents (even if the captive animals appear healthy).
- Do not clean tanks or vivaria outside where there is a possibility of contaminating areas used by wild animals.
- Disinfect all waste water from amphibian enclosures. Bleach, Virkon, F10, and Anigene are the names of some disinfectants that will kill the majority of amphibian pathogens provided the manufacturers' guidelines are followed. Once the water is disinfected it should only be discharged down a drain connected to a sewer.
- To avoid spreading disease within a collection, disinfect equipment between enclosures or have dedicated equipment for each enclosure. Equipment and furnishings should be regularly cleaned and disinfected, with waste water discharged into the sewer system.
- Substrates (soil, sand, gravel, etc.) can harbour infections and should be discarded carefully. Ideally these should be sent for incineration by a registered company that can dispose of clinical waste (e.g. those used by veterinary practices). If this is not possible, disinfect and dispose with the household refuse for collection by your local council.
- Register with a veterinary surgeon who has an interest in, and knowledge of, amphibians (see the special interest list on www.bvzs.org) and seek advice on keeping your collection healthy.

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

New Mexico Chapter -
The Wildlife Society
P.O. Box 35936
Albuquerque, NM 87176

NM-TWS is an active affiliate of The Wildlife Society that is dedicated to promoting sound management and conservation of New Mexico's wildlife resources.

Membership is open to all professionals, students, and laypersons interested in wildlife research, management, education, and administration.

Our chapter works to maintain communication among wildlife professionals; encourages communication between those professionals and the general public; supports continuing education through grants, workshops, and regional meetings; encourages student involvement in the wildlife profession; and actively participates in shaping management and conservation policy through letters, public statements, and resolutions.

We're on the Web!

Check out our new website that was created last year. <http://wildlife.org/nm>



Membership Form

<i>First name</i>				
<i>Last name</i>				
<i>Organization</i>				
<i>Address</i>				
<i>City</i>		<i>State</i>		<i>ZIP</i>
<i>Telephone (day)</i>		<i>Fax</i>		
<i>Email</i>				

Please join or update your membership today!

Thank You!

Please complete the membership form and mail it with your \$8 dues to:

**The Wildlife Society
New Mexico Chapter
P.O. Box 35936**

Albuquerque, NM 87176-3593

*For updates to your mailing or email address
please contact Dan Collins, dan_collins@fws.gov*