

The Wildlife Society

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION



MAY 2016 VOLUME 58, NUMBER 2
KATHERINE EDWARDS, EDITOR

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Greetings from south Alabama!

Spring is well under way and so too is our summer practicum for our wildlife students. I write this address from Auburn's Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center near Andalusia, AL, surrounded by thousands of acres of beautiful mature open-understory longleaf pine forests on the Center and neighboring Conecuh National Forest. This is ground zero for both wildlife and forestry summer practicums, and with gopher tortoises, red-cockaded woodpeckers, Bachman's sparrows, and some recently re-introduced indigo snakes just a stone's throw away, it's not a bad place to spend some time in the field. This 6-week course is exhausting for both students and faculty as we're up early to watch the world awaken and collect some bird point count data or check small mammal traps while spending the balance of the day learning new field techniques and analysis methods. But working with, teaching, and mentoring these future professionals is the most rewarding aspect of my job. It's a busy time of year so I'll keep this brief with just a few items.

A big thanks goes out to the Eastern Kentucky University Student Chapter and their Advisor Dr. **David Brown** for hosting such a fabulous conclave event this past March. The 1st Place honors went to the University of Georgia followed by Murray State University in 2nd Place while the University of Tennessee-Knoxville captured 3rd Place. With approximately 400 students from 23 schools competing in this year's conclave, the Southeastern Wildlife Conclave continues to be the largest TWS conclave and the envy of other Sections. Every year I attend conclave and see all of these energetic and brilliant students I feel confident the future of our natural resources will be in good hands. Mississippi State University will be the host for next year's conclave!

As our SETWS Conservation Affairs Network (CAN) is beginning to take shape and moving forward, Dr. **William Moore** has recently stepped down as Chair of the Ad Hoc Conservation Affairs Planning Committee, which was developed to oversee the formation of the CAN in the Southeastern Section. We owe William a great deal of gratitude for his outstanding leadership in helping us to get things off the ground. As such we are looking for a Chair of our SETWS Conservation Affairs Committee. If you are interested in, please contact me.

As you read this newsletter, please be aware of the opportunities to nominate deserving individuals for awards this year. In particular, the Southeastern Wildlife Management Excellence Award and the C. W. Watson Lifetime Achievement Award are two of the Southeastern's most prestigious honors. There are A LOT of outstanding professionals out there who need to be recognized for the great work they do or the great accomplishments and contributions they have made to the wildlife resources. Please consider taking the time to nominate these outstanding professionals. Nominations are being accepted now, and the awards will be given at the 2016 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference, October 16-19 in Baton Rouge, LA. Also, registration is now open for The Wildlife

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Society Annual Conference. I've spoken with several North Carolina Chapter members and they're working (and have been for quite some time) to make this a great conference. Let's make this the biggest TWS annual conference to date!

Have a safe, productive, and relaxing summer. And remember, get outdoors, it's a great place to be!

Mark Smith

President, Southeastern Section TWS

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Greetings Fellow Wildlifers!

I hope this spring is providing an opportunity for you to spend some time outdoors enjoying the natural resources that attracted us into our profession. In southern Georgia, spring is short-lived and green-up seems to occur virtually overnight. If you take a brief trip, you may return to find yourself experiencing summer heat and humidity.

During the last few months, I have had the pleasure of attending the Tennessee and Florida TWS Chapter meetings. Both meetings were well organized and well attended. Student attendance was particularly encouraging. If my memory is correct, it seems there were students from 7 different universities at both meeting. To both chapters, I thank you for your hospitality and for allowing me time provide updates from the parent Society.

In March, TWS Council met in Pittsburgh prior to the 81st North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. During the Council meeting, it was emphasized that much progress has been made regarding our financial footing. Income continues to exceed expenses and TWS expenses are paid entirely from the operating fund. As a result we have a growing 'rainy day fund'. All this to say that your Society is doing well financially.

New guidelines have been implemented with regard to the *Journal of Wildlife Management* and the *Wildlife Society Bulletin*. Editors **Paul Krausman** (JWM) and **David Houkos** (WSB) recently developed unified author guidelines to help facilitate manuscript preparation (see <http://wildlife.org/publications/> for more information). Because potential authors have expressed some confusion regarding which TWS journal is the more appropriate outlet for their work, the Editors have explained the distinction between the

two journals in recent issues of JWM and WSB. An overview of the differences can be found on the TWS website <http://wildlife.org/tws-premier-journals-plan-new-initiatives/>.

Several new member benefits also are in the works. The Wildlife Society is currently in negotiations with Wiley to provide enhanced member benefits associated with our publications. Another member benefit should be rolled out shortly; TWS staff have been developing a searchable membership database. Once this database becomes available, members will be able to search for TWS members based on a number of criteria (e.g., state of residency, expertise, certification, etc.). Also, Council approved official status for the Hunting, Trapping, and Conservation Working Group. If you are interested in how hunting and trapping promote conservation of wildlife resources, I encourage you to consider joining.

As a reminder, this year's TWS annual meeting will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina, October 15 – 19. It is not often that this meeting is held in the Southeast, so I hope you will be able to attend. There should be much of interest to all wildlife professionals.

By the time you read this, many award nomination deadlines will have passed. I am hopeful that many deserving individuals from the Southeastern Section were nominated. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the various TWS awards and to consider nominating colleagues in the future.

Finally, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding The Wildlife Society. My email is mconner@jonesctr.org.

Mike Conner
Southeastern Section Representative

COMMITTEE REPORTS

DEER COMMITTEE

Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting Hosted by North Carolina

The 2016 Southeast Deer Study Group was hosted by the North Carolina Division of Wildlife Management. Special thanks go to **Jonathan Shaw**, Deer Program Coordinator, for his leadership for the meeting, which had 302 registrants. **J. Scott Osborn**, North Carolina Division of Wildlife, retired, received the Career Achievement Award. **Becky Shuman**, a graduate student from University of Georgia won the outstanding student oral presentation award, while **Lindsey Phillips** from Texas A&M University – Kingsville, won the outstanding student poster presentation award. The 2017 conference will be hosted by Missouri Department of Conservation February 27 – March 1, 2017 at the Hilton Frontenac in St. Louis.

Steve Demarais, steve.demarais@msstate.edu

STUDENT AWARDS COMMITTEE

TWS Student awards will be presented at the upcoming SEAFWA Conference, to be held in Baton Rouge, LA. Eligibility for poster and presentation awards includes students who have graduated within one year prior to the meeting and are presenting on their research conducted as a student. If you have or know of student presenters in the wildlife sessions please encourage them to participate. In addition to being recognized for their presentation at SEAFWA, the winning student will also be presented an award (a plaque and \$100 for best poster and \$200 for best presentation). The Southeastern Section of TWS also provides a plaque and a \$1,000.00 cash award to the student chapter of the year based on the chapter's involvement in

activities that advance their members professional development and the goals of TWS. Guidelines for the chapter award can be obtained from the S.E. Section President and must be turned in by June 30, 2016.

Andy Madison, amadison@uu.edu

C.W. WATSON AWARD COMMITTEE

Nominations are being sought for the 2016 Clarence W. Watson Award. This annual award will be presented at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference in Baton Rouge, LA, October 16-19, 2016. The Clarence W. Watson Award is the most prestigious award given at the conference 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. Consideration includes research, administration, law enforcement, information and education, wildlife management, fish management, teachers, and students. Preference is given to nominees in the Southeast. The award is a mounted bronze plaque presented jointly by the Southeastern Section of the Wildlife Society, the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

Additional information and nomination format can be found on page 25 of this newsletter. Selection will be based on specific accomplishment(s) and other information included in the letter of nomination. Nominations should be sent to: Craig A. Harper, University of Tennessee, Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries, 2431 Joe Johnson Drive, Knoxville, TN 37996; charper@utk.edu; 865-974-7992 as soon as possible but no later than August 15, 2016.

Craig Harper, charper@utk.edu



STATE REPORTS

ALABAMA



Alabama Chapter

The 2016 ACTWS annual meeting was held April 14-15 at The Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center near Andalusia, AL. The focus of the meeting was Prescribed Fire and its effects on ecological communities and wildlife. The Professional Development Program on the 14th included becoming a Certified Prescribed Burn Manager in AL and on the ground examples of different burn regimes and their effects. The Technical Presentations on the 15th included wildlife responses to prescribed fire as well as current research in Alabama. There were a record number of posters, 17! The event included a late night herp walk and an early morning bird walk.

Student Presentation winner: **Rebecca John**, School of Forestry & Wildlife Sciences, AU; Movement of Green Salamanders (*Aneides aeneus*) in Northern Alabama

Student Poster Winner: **Dustin Duffie**, School of Forestry & Wildlife Sciences, AU; The Search for Meadow Jumping Mice in East-Central Alabama

Amy Silvano with AU instated as Chapter President and **Wes Stone** with Alabama A&M University instated as Past President. Newly elected officers are: President Elect- **Barry Grand** with USGS, SE Representative- **Brittany Peterson**, and Member At Large – **Rebecca Bearden** with Geological Survey of Alabama

Shannon Allen, shannon.allen.1@us.af.mil.



ACTWS 2016 annual meeting members learn about the effects of different prescribed fire regimes on ecosystems at the Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center (photo by **Mary Bennett**).

STATE REPORTS



ACTWS attendees were fortunate that the Pine Barrens Tree Frogs were calling early this year...we caught three (photo by **Eric Spadgenske**)!

Alabama Wildlife Federation

The Alabama Wildlife Federation (AWF) hired Mr. **Drew Arnold** in January 2016 as their new resource stewardship biologist. Drew is responsible for implementing AWF's Gulf Coast Conservation Program and providing wildlife habitat management technical assistance to landowners in south Alabama. He received a B.S. degree in Biological Sciences from The University of Southern Mississippi and has completed coursework for a M.S. degree in Wildlife, Aquatic, and Wildlands Science and Management from Texas Tech University. Drew will defend his thesis (The Immunocompetence and Immunomodulation of Northern Bobwhites on the Rolling Plains of Texas) in May 2016.

Claude Jenkins, cjenkins@alabamawildlife.org.



Drew Arnold: AWF's Gulf Coast Conservation Program (photo by **Claude Jenkins**).

ARKANSAS



Arkansas Chapter

The Chapter held our annual meeting on March 3-4, 2016 at the C.A. Vines 4-H Center in Little Rock. **Craig Davis**, of the AGFC was elected to serve as Board Member-at-Large and the Chapter approved a resolution in regards to feral cats that mirrored the national chapter's position paper. Student presentation award winners were 1st place – **Alix Matthews** (ASU), 2nd place – **Lee Bryant** (ASU), and 3rd place – **Sam Schratz** (ASU).

STATE REPORTS

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

With the discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease in Arkansas this past winter, the entire Wildlife Management Division focused on response efforts including targeted sampling of deer and elk in the area near where CWD-positive animals were found as well as a statewide effort to sample roadkills. A packet of proposed regulation changes is currently before our Commissioner's for a vote in June.

Retirements included **Sonny Thompson** (36 years) and **Lou Hausman** (33 years). **George "Sonny" Howell**, retired wildlife technician, passed away on March 13th. New hires were **Richard Bowen** (Benton office), **Andrew Green** (Monticello office), **Rachel Norton** (Beaver Lake office), and **Kevin Wood** (Camden office). **J.J. Abernathy**, **Craig Davis**, **Rick Darter**, **Mike Harris**, and **Andy Vanhorn** were promoted to Senior Technician. **Bubba Groves** was promoted to Assistant Supervisor of the Private Lands Section.

Blake Sasse, Blake.Sasse@agfc.ar.gov

FLORIDA



Florida Chapter

Congrats to our very own FLTWS member and past president, **Erin Myers** for receiving the prestigious 2015 USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program Regional Director's Award. Erin was recognized for her novel and complex habitat conservation work as part of the Cooperative Recovery Initiative. Erin's efforts, in partnership with landowners like Lefty Durando, are putting acres on the ground for the endangered Florida grasshopper sparrow throughout the Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge & Conservation Area.



Erin Myers received the 2015 USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program Regional Director's Award for her habitat conservation work as part of the Cooperative Recovery Initiative.

STATE REPORTS

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

FWC Biologist Receives Prestigious Wildlife Conservation Award Recognizing Young Professional

Claire Sunquist Blunden, a Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) employee since 2010, has received the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies' 2015 Mark J. Reef Memorial Award that recognizes a young professional for outstanding service in the conservation of fish and wildlife resources.

"This award is a huge honor," said Commission Chairman **Brian S. Yablonski**. "Claire has done an excellent job working on the Imperiled Species Management Plan, a first-of-its-kind conservation tool. We are very proud of Claire."

Blunden's work was commended by the association for being far-reaching and significant to conservation in Florida, particularly for state and federally listed species.

She was recognized by AFWA for her work in facilitating engagement with stakeholders to obtain valuable feed-back on development of the Imperiled Species Management Plan, a strategic comprehensive plan to conserve 57 imperiled species. AFWA noted that relationships she has fostered with partners and stakeholders will be critical when it comes to implementing the plan, scheduled to be finalized and considered for possible FWC approval in 2016.

Initially in her FWC career, Blunden served as a regional volunteer coordinator. She established major volunteer programs where citizen scientists contribute to the research and management of Florida wildlife, including monitoring nest boxes of the southeastern American kestrel and helping organize the



Claire Sunquist Blunden received AFWA's 2015 Mark J. Reef Memorial Award.

STATE REPORTS

Jay Watch partnership to survey populations of the Florida scrub-jay. Currently Blunden is the Protected Species Administrator for imperiled species management planning in the agency's Division of Habitat and Species Conservation.

"Claire Sunquist Blunden is a leader in developing successful approaches to conserving Florida's fish and wildlife," said Dr. **Thomas Eason**, FWC's director of the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation. "Claire's skills and enthusiasm as a young wildlife conservation professional are outstanding. I hope her achievements will inspire other young people to help us conserve the beauty and diversity of Florida wildlife for future generations."

The Reeff award is given annually to a wildlife professional age 35 or younger who overcomes challenges through creativity and personal initiative, while inspiring others to do the same. It honors **Mark Reeff**, an AFWA staff member who lost his life at 40 due to a long-term illness. He had been able to take a good idea and run with it despite being younger and less experienced than many others in the conservation field.

"It's a privilege to work with so many talented partners, stakeholders and staff who are motivated to contribute to wildlife conservation in Florida," said Blunden. "This award represents the hard work and collaboration of the Imperiled Species Management Plan team."

Claire Sunquist Blunden,
Claire.Sunquist@myFWC.com

GEORGIA

Georgia DNR, Wildlife
Resources Division



Bobby Bond Recognized as Wildlife Manager of the Year by National Wild Turkey Federation

Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division biologist **Bobby Bond** was recognized on both the state level

(Georgia Chapter of NWTF) AND the national level by NWTF as Wildlife Manager of the Year. The national award recognizes an honoree for their efforts at managing for wild turkey, raising public awareness of conservation and wildlife management issues, improving wildlife habitat, and increasing hunting opportunities.

Bobby Bond, a wildlife biologist, is assigned to six wildlife management areas in central west Georgia. He is committed to improving these areas for wildlife, hunters and other users. His work on these public lands as well as his extensive research will benefit the state for years to come.



Bobby Bond recognized as NWTF Wildlife Manager of the Year at state and national level.

STATE REPORTS

Gov. Deals Honors Three Companies as 2015 Forestry for Wildlife Partners

Gov. **Nathan Deal** recently recognized three corporate forest landowners for their stewardship and land management practices benefiting Georgia's wildlife. Plum Creek, Georgia Power and Catch-Mark Timber Trust were honored by Gov. Deal as 2015 partners in the Forestry for Wildlife Partnership, a program administered by the Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division.

Forestry for Wildlife Partnership is a voluntary program that promotes sustainable forest and wildlife conservation in corporate forestry practices. Partners select and tailor guidelines to improve management for reforestation, harvesting techniques, recreation, sensitive sites and outreach.

Call (706) 557-3263 or go to www.georgiawildlife.com for more information about Forestry for Wildlife Partnership or other Wildlife Resources Division Private Lands initiatives. Also see the Nongame Conservation Section's annual report (www.georgiawildlife.com/conservation/AnnualReport) for program details.

New Coordinator Focused on Increasing Hunting and Shooting Sports Participation in Georgia

The Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division has partnered with four conservation organizations (NWTF, Georgia Wildlife Federation, Quality Deer Management Association and Safari Club International) to fund a position dedicated to recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) of hunters and shooters.

"People ask why it is important to put so much emphasis on recruitment, retention and reactivation," said **Dan Forster**, Director of the Wildlife Resources Division who also serves on the Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports. "It is because these agencies have a vested interest in increased participation in hunting and shooting sports. A majority of conservation funding in this country is provided

through purchases of hunting licenses and excise tax on firearms, ammunition and shooting sports equipment."

The role of this new R3 coordinator is to develop and implement a plan that engages state agencies, conservation organizations and other stakeholders to increase the effectiveness of outdoor education and mentored hunt opportunities for people of all ages, genders and abilities. **Charles Evans** has been hired to serve as Georgia's R3 coordinator.

Evans is a Georgia native with deep outdoor roots. From a young age, he has been an avid sportsman and conservationist. He earned his wildlife biology bachelor and master's degrees from University of Georgia's Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources.



Charles Evans has been hired to serve as Georgia's R3 coordinator.

STATE REPORTS

Annual Weekend for Wildlife Event Raises More Than One Million for Nongame Wildlife Conservation

Weekend for Wildlife, the nongame wildlife fundraiser held Jan. 29-30 at Sea Island, raised more than \$1 million, a record for the 28-year-old event. Top auction items benefiting nongame friends group TERN included commission paintings by **Peggy Everett** and a women's island outing that went, all told, for \$49,000.

David Tannehill with Wildlife Resources Division Recognized by Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

David Tannehill, a fisheries technician with the Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division, recently was recognized by the Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society as "Fishery Worker of the Year." This award is presented to individuals in recognition of efforts that have made a significant impact on fisheries research or management in Georgia during the past year.

David Tannehill began his career at the Wildlife Resources Division with the Stream Team Unit. After a stint out of state, he returned and became a Fisheries Technician III working out of the Fort Valley office. One of his main projects over the past four years involved spearheading a habitat improvement grant project on Lake Sinclair, which included building holding pools to raise aquatic plants, which were routinely and strategically planted at Sinclair during the growing season, building and installing fish attractors, and maintaining GPS coordinates and accurate records. He is a team player willing to help out on any duty from grounds maintenance, to prescribed fire burnings, to working at kids fishing events and helping other Regions with mitigation monitoring.

For more information on the "Fishery Worker of the Year" award, visit the Georgia Chapter American Fisheries Society website at www.gaafs.org.

Andrew Edelman, aedelman@westga.edu

KENTUCKY



NO NEWS REPORTED

LOUISIANA



Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

Louisiana black bear were removed from the list of species protected by the ESA. Service Director **Dan Ashe**, Louisiana Gov. **John Bel Edwards**, Secretary of the Interior **Sally Jewell** and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Secretary **Charles Melancon** said the determination came because of a combination of partnerships with private landowners, conservation groups, universities and other federal agencies for about 24 years that led to more bears and more subpopulations of bears meeting recovery requirements. The Service also released a post-delisting monitoring plan for the next seven years to help ensure the bear's future remains secure. The delisting follows a comprehensive scientific review by the Service of the bear's status.

A major milestone was reached on April 11, 2016 in the reintroduction of the whooping crane in Louisiana when the first hatching of a chick in the state in more than 75 years occurred in Jefferson Davis Parish. The hatching, the first seen in Louisiana's wild since 1939, represents another step forward in the program established in February of 2011 when the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries reintroduced whooping cranes back into the state at the White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area in Vermilion Parish. A second chick was hatched from the same pair two days later.

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Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) Recognizes Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' "Becoming an Outdoors-Woman" Program (BOW) as Conservation Educator of the Year for their commitment to providing women with opportunities to learn about hunting, fishing, and outdoor skills, which encourages them to take part in outdoor activities with confidence by offering more than 20 specialty courses at their annual workshop.

Charlie Melancon was recently appointed by Governor **John Bel Edwards** as Secretary for LDWF and **Randy Myers** was appointed as Assistant Secretary Office of Wildlife.

LDWF will be hosting the 70th Annual SEAFWA Conference in downtown Baton Rouge, October 16-19, 2016. Go to seafwa.org for more information

Jeff Duguay, jduguay@wlf.la.gov

MARYLAND/DELAWARE

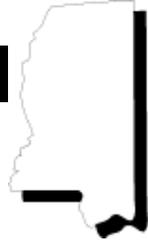
NO NEWS REPORTED



Dana Norsworthy (center) and **Charlie Melancon** (right) accept the BOW award from **Barney Callahan** (left) of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation.

STATE REPORTS

MISSISSIPPI



Mississippi Chapter

Annual Meeting

Please plan to join us September 15-16 at Bost Extension Center on the campus of Mississippi State University for the 2016 Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting. In this time of widespread budget and staffing challenges, we particularly look forward to this year's meeting because the theme addresses the topic of the great importance of Conservation Partnerships to all wildlife professionals.

Because wildlife are held in public trust, we are all equally responsible for their care. That care takes the form of habitat management on public and private lands across the continent. No one organization, individual, or agency can manage and conserve sufficient habitat for wildlife. As such, we must come together with funding, advocacy, and conservation delivery to meet the needs of North America's wildlife. Partnerships are the only way to achieve conservation at the scale necessary to ensure long-term success. This year's meeting will examine the diversity of those partnerships and their accomplishments.

The traditional membership of the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society has consisted of active biologists from many different organizations including academia, state and federal agencies, and NGOs. At our meeting last year, we discussed not only the need for expanding our inclusion of scientists and specialists in other organizations of biology, conservation, and management, but also recognized the need for getting the input of non-wildlifery. This may include folks like engineers, school teachers, politicians, or others whose interests and motivations are greatly different from our own.

With these ideas in mind we propose focusing our 2016 chapter meeting on partnerships that will help to improve and expand our wildlife conservation and management efforts in Mississippi and the region. What successes have you had? Where do you see the need for improvement and how do you propose we get there? Who is being left out of the conversation that needs to be included?

Please consider developing joint presentations with non-wildlifery to bring in new perspectives to our conversation. We look forward to your ideas and creativity in order to make this an energizing and informative meeting.

The presentations, poster session, panel discussion, and business meeting will be at the Bost Extension Center. The Thursday evening social will be at The Little Dooney in Starkville, featuring good food, drink, and possibly even a quiz bowl refresher. The always popular after-social social will be at our conference hotel, Comfort Suites Starkville (801 Russell Street, Starkville, MS, 39759, phone 662-324-9595) where a block of 25 rooms has been reserved at a group rate of \$89.00/night for Thursday, September 15, 2016. Reservations should be made by August 25, 2016, to insure room rate and availability. Request the "MS Chapter of The Wildlife Society" block. Guests may call the local number, above, or the Comfort Suites toll free number at 877-424-6423.

We hope you'll join us in Starkville for thought provoking discussions, educational presentations, networking opportunities, and a little fun, too.

Shelton Undergraduate Scholarship

The Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society is pleased to announce the availability of a new academic scholarship for undergraduates engaged in natural resource and biological science courses of study. Please help us get the word out to undergraduate students that might be interested in applying. Application deadline is July 1, 2016.

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This scholarship shall be available for undergraduates in Mississippi colleges and universities who are enrolled in natural resource management or biological studies programs. Recipients shall demonstrate academic promise and professional society engagement. The scholarship will be for \$1,000, and annual scholarship availability will be determined by funding availability.

Qualification Requirements:

1. Current membership at student and state levels of The Wildlife Society.
2. Current overall GPA of 3.0 or greater.
3. Active engagement in the student chapter of TWS is required. Active engagement at state, section, and national levels is preferred.

Application Instructions:

1. Provide a cover letter that includes your name, contact information, hometown, major, school, class level, and GPA.
2. Provide a copy of your current transcripts.
3. Please list your leadership positions, committee memberships, and/or other activities within your student chapter of The Wildlife Society and any other TWS chapters or sections.
4. Essay: How do you plan to contribute to the natural resource management profession, and how will you use this funding to advance your education and/or professional development? (limit: 500 words)
5. Submit a letter of support for your application from the student chapter's faculty advisor in which he/she also addresses your chapter involvement.
6. Electronic submission of the completed application should be submitted to the current MS TWS President by July 1.

Notification:

Applications will be reviewed by the MS TWS Board, and the successful applicant will be selected by August 1 and notified by August 15. Public announcement of the successful applicant will occur at the following MS TWS annual meeting. The successful applicant should be present for that announcement.

Reporting:

The successful applicant will be required to attend the next (the year after the announcement) annual meeting of the MS Chapter of TWS and give a 10-minute presentation about a professional experience, internship, research experience, and/or their career goals.

Submit to MS TWS President – **Randy Spencer** at rs57610@gmail.com.

National Annual Conference Travel Grants

Travel grants will be granted to undergraduate students of the MS Chapter to offset costs of attending the annual national TWS conference to network and attend conference workshops and presentations. Travel grants will be awarded to a limited number of students based on available funding; applicants may request up to \$500.00.

Guidelines:

To be eligible, each student must submit their transcripts, resume and an essay describing why the applicant wishes to attend the conference.

Eligibility:

- A member of one of the TWS University chapters within Mississippi
- A member of the Mississippi Chapter of TWS
- A current undergraduate student pursuing a degree in wildlife management or other natural resource field
- Not a recipient of a MS Chapter student travel scholarship in the previous year.

Application:

- Resume and transcripts
- Projected conference travel expenses
- Budget showing any other potential travel award funding
- Include a copy of submitted poster or oral presentation abstract (if applicable)
- Student essay (350 words)

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Criteria:

- Quality of student essay
- TWS involvement
- The student's academic and other achievements relative to his or her progress in undergraduate program
- Student need

Application Submittals:

Should be sent to current MS TWS President:

Randy Spencer (rs57610@gmail.com).

Applications must be received by July 1 to be considered. Successful applicants will be notified of funding amount no later than August 1.

Chris Ayers, chris.ayers@msstate.edu

NORTH CAROLINA



NO NEWS REPORTED

OKLAHOMA



NO NEWS REPORTED

SOUTH CAROLINA



South Carolina Chapter

The South Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society held their annual meeting at Horry Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) on March 9, 2016 with 110 in attendance. Representatives of the student chapters of HGTC and Clemson University were present. Presentation topics included research on MacGillivray's seaside sparrow, eastern diamond-back rattlesnake, golden eagles, waterfowl, and effects of the recent flood event in the state on our coastal impoundments. A social was held afterwards with a tasty Lowcountry boil served to an enthusiastic (and hungry) crowd of 83! The following day, 23 people took a comprehensive tour of the Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center in adjacent Georgetown County to see the amazing work being done there to benefit wildlife and their habitats.

South Carolina DNR

State Wildlife Grants (SWG) for 2016

South Carolina received their yearly allocation of SWG funds and were able to support 8 projects this funding cycle. Projects include research on striped bass; water, shore, and seabirds; coastal plain reptiles and amphibians (i.e. gopher tortoise, pine snake, southern hognose, eastern diamond-back, gopher frog, flatwoods salamander); horseshoe crab; intertidal microbenthic invertebrates; and ribbed mussel. South Carolina is participating in a Competitive SWG grant entitled, "Cooperative Conservation of the Green Salamander in the Southeast United States". Other states involved include GA, MS, NC, TN, and VA.



USDA

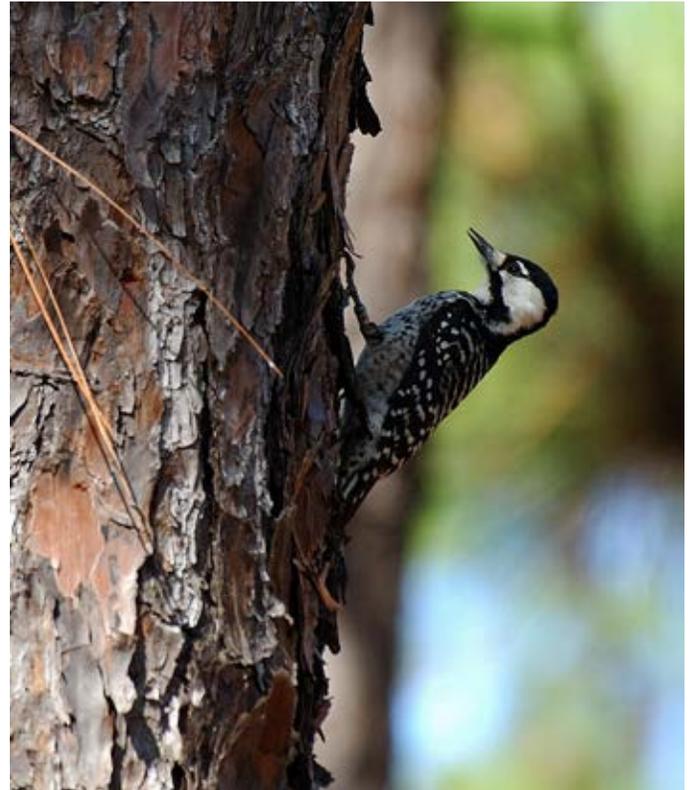
STATE REPORTS

Reintroduction of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers to Donnelley Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

The Red-cockaded Woodpecker is a key indicator species for the restoration and recovery of the imperiled longleaf pine ecosystem across the southeastern United States. Officially listed as endangered with the passage of the Endangered Species Act, their population decline is mostly attributed to loss of suitable habitat. Today, the range-wide population of red-cockaded woodpeckers is less than 3% of its historical range. Over the next 3 years, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) will continue efforts to restore populations by translocating red-cockaded woodpeckers to Donnelley WMA, which is located within the Ashepoo, Combahee, and Edisto River (ACE) Basin in Colleton County. At the end of the 3-year period, we hope to have 9 breeding pairs on site. The red-cockaded woodpeckers have been extirpated from the ACE Basin since the 1970s. The first translocation will begin this fall. Cavity inserts have already been installed into pines on the property. The translocated birds will be coming from Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge in Chesterfield County.

USFS

The USFS in South Carolina has been working on their Land Ownership Adjustment Strategy (LOAS) Update and Compensatory Mitigation Framework document this past year. Sumter National Forest (SNF) and Francis Marion National Forest (FMNF) conducted stakeholder meetings around the state to review maps and strategize. The intention is to develop a LOAS that identifies opportunities for land protection and restoration using compensatory mitigation as a tool. The LOAS is an all-lands analysis being developed in collaboration with district experts, private and public partners. The forests' vision is for the LOAS to be a living document used by all stakeholders to achieve landscape conservation and protection within and adjacent to FMNF and SNF. At



Red-cockaded Woodpecker
(Photo by **Steven Hewett**)

present, this strategy is only being done in SC with the support of the regional office, but the hope is it will be used as a template for the Southeast, and potentially nationwide.

Clemson University News

Congratulations to Dr. **David Jachowski** on receiving a 6-year grant from the National Research Foundation in South Africa to continue collaborative wildlife research with the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He has been a Research Fellow and worked with that University for several years, but this is a big step in building the international component of his research program.

Anna H. Smith, smithah@dnr.sc.gov

STATE REPORTS

TENNESSEE



Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

Late 2015 saw some changes in leadership in the Wildlife & Forestry Division. **Mark Gudlin**, previously Asst. Chief of Wildlife & Forestry/Habitat, was named Chief. **Chuck Yoest** and **Joe Benedict**, previously the Cervid/Wild Hog Coordinator and Migratory Game Bird Coordinator, respectively, were named to the two Wildlife Assistant Chief positions. Changes were also seen as Dr. **Gray Anderson**, previously the Asst. Chief of Wildlife/Population Management, is now Assistant Chief of Biodiversity. Additionally, Dr. **Brian Flock** (Data, TRACS, and GIS Coordinator) and **David Hanni** (Ornithologist) were also moved from the Wildlife & Forestry Division to help shore up the Biodiversity Division under Chief **Bill Reeves**.

Sam Bedwell, of the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, has been honored by the Shikar– Safari Club International as its 2015 Tennessee Wildlife Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. Sam serves as a wildlife officer in McNairy County. He was recognized at the February meeting of the Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission. The annual award from the conservation-based organization honors the officer whose efforts during the year display outstanding performance and achievement among TWRA law enforcement personnel.

Leith Konyndyk, a wildlife officer for the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, has received another prestigious honor with a national award from the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf). He was named NWTf Wildlife Officer of the Year during the 40th annual NWTf Convention. The NWTf award comes following last fall's honor when he was named the Wildlife Officer of the Year for the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA). Konyndyk serves as a wildlife officer in TWRA Region II's Lincoln County. Leith's latest honor comes for his dedication in creating the next generation of hunters and sportsmen, as well as his accomplishments in upholding the state's game laws.

The TWRA was honored by receiving the 2015 Organization of Fish and Wildlife Information Managers (OFWIM) Innovation award. The honor recognizes the work of Old Hickory WMA technician **Rodney Woodson** for his effort in developing the technology-based system to monitor hog traps via the internet. The OFWIM Innovation Award was established to recognize excellence in the advancement of fish and wildlife information management technologies or processes.

Tennessee Tech University Student Chapter

At Tennessee Tech we work each year to provide our members with as many volunteer opportunities as possible to interact with professionals and help the community. Our major volunteering event this year was our annual deer check-in stations with TWRA where members assisted TWRA personnel in collecting data on harvested deer. Members participated in volunteer work with Tennessee State Parks during a lake clean-up at Edgar Evins State Park, a park clean up, and manning a first aid station for the 2016 Cummins Falls Marathon at Cummins Falls State Park. Members have also volunteered to assist our TTU grad students with their research projects, gaining experience with research field work. Several members worked with the NWTf during their Wheelin' Sportsman Hunt, providing assistance to disabled hunters in harvesting and processing deer and helping to prepare meals for the hunters. Members also set up educational booths at annual events such as Earth Day in Nashville, TN, Jake's Day with the NWTf, and welcoming events on our campus for new students. This year we had several representatives attend the Tennessee TWS Meeting and the Southeastern Wildlife Conclave, where we took 5th place out of 25 schools competing. Recently, our chapter has annually planned winter and spring formal dinners to acknowledge graduating seniors while giving members opportunities to meet and greet with professionals. We have also planned several social events to keep members involved, such as canoe trips, haunted house trips, and bonfires. Our final event of the year will be our annual beast feast, which is our wild game dinner where we invite professionals and the public to come hang out in a laid back setting.

Steven Hayslette, shayslette@tntech.edu

STATE REPORTS

VIRGINIA



NO NEWS REPORTED

DUCKS UNLIMITED

Awards

The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana named DU Manager of Conservation Programs for Louisiana **Mike Carlross** as the Distinguished Service Coastal Stewardship Award (Sue Hawes Memorial Award). This is the 21st year for CRCL's Coastal Stewardship Awards, which honors individuals and organizations who demonstrate outstanding commitment to the coast and have made significant contributions to the restoration and conservation of Louisiana's coastal wetlands. Carlross was nominated by NRCS partners.

Ronal Roberson, Senior Vice President for Youth and Education on Ducks Unlimited's national advisory board, was selected as the Mississippi Wildlife Federation's 2016 Conservationist of the Year for his dedication to conservation on his own lands and his lifelong commitment to engaging youth in the outdoors.

Staff Changes

Kyle Soileau from Youngsville, Louisiana, is the new the Louisiana Rice Stewardship Program Coordinator. Kyle comes to DU following a nearly 15-year career in conservation and agriculture in southwest Louisiana. The last 11 years he's been with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry as an agricultural environmental specialist. He's earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from LSU and a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture from McNeese State. His knowledge of the rice culture in Louisiana is unmatched and he's clearly a great fit to manage our burgeoning rice program. Kyle started Jan. 11, in Lafayette.

Cassidy Lejeune from Abbeville, Louisiana joined the team in Lafayette as a regional biologist. Cassidy has had a distinguished 13-year career with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. In his most recent role as biologist program manager he had supervisory responsibilities in seven wildlife management areas (WMAs) and four refuges owned or managed by LDWF. These areas encompass approximately 500,000 acres of coastal wetlands. Cassidy earned a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental and sustainable resources from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and a Master of Science degree in environmental science, with a concentration in wetland science and management, from LSU. Cassidy joined the Lafayette staff in January.

Justin Aycock has joined Ducks Unlimited as the youth and education coordinator for North Carolina, DU's first such position. Justin comes to DU as an educator, varsity DU advisor, hunter safety shooting instructor and track team coach at Princeton High School in Princeton, North Carolina. He was instrumental in the growth of DU's youth and event fundraising programs and served in many volunteer positions. With his experience in education, passion for introducing youth to the outdoors and fundraising experience, Justin will be a valuable asset to NCDU. He started in February and resides in Princeton, N.C.

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

Alabama Swan Creek WMA

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) manages six wildlife management areas (WMAs) along the Tennessee River Valley to benefit waterfowl and duck hunters. Because of their size, Raccoon Creek, Mud Creek and Swan Creek WMAs often offer the best hunting opportunities, but some of these areas need restoration.

STATE REPORTS

Recognizing our expertise in delivering wetland restoration, the ADCNR asked Ducks Unlimited to perform a detailed survey of more than 2,100 acres to determine options to improve management capabilities on Swan Creek and Mud Creek WMAs.

Regional Biologist **Nick Biasini** and Engineer **Billy Hill** met with staff to discuss enhancement opportunities on the large dewatering unit at Swan Creek WMA. Ducks Unlimited will survey the dewatering unit this spring to develop topographic information. Once the survey is completed, DU will work with ADCNR on potential enhancements. The enhancements will help improve water management capabilities in the dewatering unit, which provides important wintering habitat for waterfowl.

While our restoration projects are often open to the public for hunting and other uses, these efforts benefit wildlife and people beyond waterfowl and those who pursue them. More than 900 species of wildlife utilize the habitats conserved through the work of Ducks Unlimited and its partners and people reap the benefits of recreational opportunities, enhanced water quality, improved flood control and increased groundwater recharge.

Arkansas **Frog Bayou WMA - Arkansas**

Ducks Unlimited completed the wetland restoration work on Frog Bayou Wildlife Management Area in Crawford County. The restoration was done through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Wetland Restoration Program. Phase 1 restored 132 acres and Phase 2 included 127 acres of reforestation. This area is open to public hunting and managed by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

Walmart Foundation Supports Rice Work

We are thrilled to announce a \$1-million grant from the Walmart Foundation for our Rice Stewardship work in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley and along the Gulf Coast. In late 2014, DU and USA Rice secured

a \$10 million grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through its Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The majority of the RCPP grant is dedicated to cost-share incentives for producers to implement conservation practices on their lands through Farm Bill programs.

DU will provide professional advice to interested landowners. However, only 10 percent of the RCPP grant is dedicated to this role. There are no RCPP funds to promote conservation efforts to a broader, historically underserved population or to scale conservation practices beyond those currently funded by scarce federal dollars. These are the two areas where the Walmart Foundation's grant will have the most impact. Walmart Foundation funding will be used primarily for technical assistance to and training for farm owners, operators and workers. Conservation projects on ricelands will also improve rural economies by using locally sourced contractors and supplies.

Rice Stewardship funders include the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Walmart Foundation, the Mosaic Company Foundation, Chevron U.S.A., Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold Foundation, Irene W. and C.B. Pennington Foundation, RiceTec, BASF, American Rice, Inc. – Riviana Foods, Inc., Farmers Rice Milling Company, Turner's Creek & Bombay Hook Farms and MacDon Industries.

Florida **Florida-based Mosaic Supports Working Lands Conservation**

Like the multifaceted life cycle of waterfowl, The Mosaic Company and its Foundation's involvement with Ducks Unlimited spans the continent. Employees from Mosaic's Florida and Louisiana offices attend local DU events. Mosaic also qualifies as a Diamond Legacy Sponsor, giving more than \$2 million from The Mosaic Company and its Foundation, which has supported conservation on the breeding grounds in Canada, along the Mississippi Alluvial Valley migration corridor and into the wintering grounds of Louisiana.

STATE REPORTS

Why would one of the world's leading producers and marketers of concentrated phosphate and potash crop nutrients, and its Foundation, support wetlands conservation across the continent? Mosaic understands the need to improve nutrient management on the landscape and water quality downstream. Mosaic also appreciates the importance of best management practices on agricultural lands and the vital filtering effects of intact wetlands surrounding working lands.

Georgia Banks Lake NWR

Ducks Unlimited and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wrapped up a restoration project on the Banks Lake National Wildlife Refuge near Lakeland, Georgia, in March. Aging infrastructure was making proper habitat management impossible. DU engineers designed and installed a new structure for easier stop log removal and better seals.



Louisiana Wham Brake

Wham Brake Impoundment is a roughly 3,500-acre emergent wetland purchased by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) in 2013. Since then, it has been added to Russell Sage Wildlife Management Area, providing increased public hunting opportunities in central Louisiana. LDWF plans to improve waterfowl habitat in this wetland basin through moist-soil management and sought Ducks Unlimited's restoration and engineering expertise.

DU has completed Phase I of the project. We replaced three large, screw gate water-control structures with two larger structures and replaced a bridge that connected the entrance road to the boat ramp and levee. Providing site conditions allow, Phase II of this project will begin this summer. This phase includes the replacement of a large



Banks Lake NWR – The old water control structure and new structure.

STATE REPORTS

concrete weir water-control structure that controls the majority of the water level on the entire basin. The current structure does not function properly to enable LDWF to manage for moist soil habitat. Once replaced, LDWF will manage the Wham Brake Impoundment for highly productive moist soil habitat for waterfowl.

The enhancement work is part of a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant. Funding partners include LDWF, DU, the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation and major sponsors from north Louisiana that supported the America's River Initiative.

Mississippi Public Hunting Improvements

The Mississippi Alluvial Valley (MAV) Wetlands Enhancement NAWCA proposal DU staff submitted last July was approved for funding. This proposal will fund enhancement work at Hillside and Morgan Brake national wildlife refuges, Delta National Forest and Mahannah Wildlife Management Area in Mississippi.

Restoration work at Morgan Brake NWR includes enhancement of more than 40 acres in three different impoundments open to public hunting. The units are a mixture of emergent wetland and palustrine scrubshrub that need water-control structures replaced to allow proper management.

Mahannah WMA work will include installing new water-control structures, subdividing an existing impoundment and building a new impoundment. The enhancement work will total around 55 acres and will be open to hunting. Work at Morgan Brake and Mahannah will be completed this year, weather permitting.

Hillside NWR work planned for next winter will include reforestation of 135 acres of a fallow agriculture field to return the area to bottomland hardwood forest.

Delta National Forest work will include replacing the primary, large water-control structure for the 1,700-acre Long Bayou Green Tree Reservoir. DU engineers have also outlined the installation of two new water-control structures to reconnect Long Bayou, running along the outside of the GTR, to the GTR for a more reliable source of flooding. The GTR is open to hunting, and the project will begin this summer and be completed in time for the 2017 waterfowl season if all goes as planned.

Partners include Mississippi Land Trust, MDWFP, US Forest Service, Cypress Brake Tree Farm and DU. This is the first proposal we have worked on with Mississippi Land Trust, the sister organization to Wildlife Mississippi, and we look forward to many more.

Partners Working Together

DU's longtime partner, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) was awarded a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant for enhancement work being done at Mahannah Wildlife Management Area. DU will deliver the restoration work on around 900 acres of moist soil habitat. By subdividing existing impoundments and building new ones, we will provide enhanced public hunting opportunities on one of Mississippi's popular waterfowl hunting areas.

South Carolina Pig Pen Plantation

As part of the SC Wetland Landscape III NAWCA grant, Ducks Unlimited and Pig Pen Plantation will enhance 170 acres of tidal, emergent wetlands. The project began in March and will improve water circulation and capacity through the additions of water-control structures, bank enhancements and a pump station. Habitat will be managed for the benefit of waterfowl, wading birds and other wetland dependent species. The Plantation, on the edge of Georgetown, SC, was placed under perpetual protection with Wetlands America Trust in 2003.

STATE REPORTS

Broad River WMA

Broad River Wildlife Management Area is managed for waterfowl and waterfowl hunting. Though a relatively small 670 acres, the area presents prime public waterfowl hunting opportunity near Columbia. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources manages the area for waterfowl. Water management problems limit crop production and moist-soil management.

DU engineering and biological staffs designed a project to improve water management capabilities and enhance waterfowl habitat on Broad River WMA. Plans include installation of two stationary pump stations, replacement of one water-control structure, canal enhancements and selective vegetation clearing. We anticipate project completion this summer.

Tennessee Tully WMA Improved

Working with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA), DU secured a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant to make improvements to Tully Wildlife Management Area in western Tennessee. John Tully WMA is a 15,500-acre area in Lauderdale County in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. Work will begin this summer to enhance 410 acres of moist soil/agricultural wetlands. We will subdivide one existing impoundment into smaller, more manageable units, create new impoundments and improve water management capabilities by installing new levees and new water-control structures. This project will also enhance public hunting opportunities on the WMA for waterfowlers and other hunters.

Tucker Foundation

Ducks Unlimited donors come in all forms and one of our big supporters in Tennessee is the Tucker Foundation. The foundation has committed \$40,000 for the ducks and the first project that money will support is the Johnson Bottoms Unit Wetlands Restoration Project at the Chickamauga Wildlife Management Area near Chattanooga. This is a 27-acre wetland restoration project in the WMA's Johnson Bottoms waterfowl management unit, which helps meet the demand for public hunting opportunities in the region.

In the 1950s, the Tennessee Valley Authority built the levees and water control structures in the Johnson Bottoms unit, as well as the Rogers Creek and Candies Creek units. Unfortunately, there has been very little maintenance to these structures. DU and the TWRA will install a new water-control structure, remove invasive vegetation, and repair or replace the levees on the Johnson Bottoms unit. DU and TWRA hope to make this a first step in a larger conservation effort by also improving wildlife habitat at the WMA's Rogers Creek and Candies Creek waterfowl management units. The Johnson Bottoms unit enhancement will take about two years to complete once full funding is in place. The Tucker Foundation grant provides the required private matching dollars to secure additional project funding through federal grant proposals.



USFWS, Wyman Meintzer

STATE REPORTS

Virginia

VDGIF Biologist Recognized by DU

Virginia Ducks Unlimited recognized **Bob Ellis** at their state convention in Williamsburg in March. He was presented with a Lifetime Conservation Achievement Award, an award seldom given and well deserved.

Ellis started his career as an Extension Agent in Buchanan County, Virginia before moving to the Florida Everglades for the Florida Game and Fish Commission. Following 12 years in Florida, Bob returned to Virginia and Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) Wildlife Division. He retired this year after 35 years in the profession.

He has been an incredible champion for waterfowl conservation throughout his professional career and a great supporter of DU. He was instrumental

in bringing the VDGIF into the state contributions to Canada habitat conservation program, contributions which are leveraged several times by DU and NAW-CA. Ducks Unlimited thanks Bob Ellis for his tireless contributions to waterfowl conservation.

VDGIF recognized for contributions to Canada

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) was recently recognized for their cumulative \$100,000 contributions supporting wetlands restoration on Canadian breeding grounds important to Virginia's waterfowl. DU Director of Conservation Programs **Craig LeSchack** presented VDGIF with a plaque and updated them on the habitat conservation made possible through their support.

"It's important for all of us – states, federal agencies, non-profit organizations and others – to work collaboratively to ensure our natural resources are there for



Bob Ellis (center) was presented with his Lifetime Achievement award by the current and past VADU state chairmen.

STATE REPORTS

future generations,” said VDGIF Director **Bob Duncan**. “Following the science that tells us our waterfowl are predominantly born in eastern Canada, we wanted to make our investment in habitat conservation there.”

In 2012, VDGIF signed a memorandum of agreement with Ducks Unlimited to contribute \$25,000 a year for five years to fund habitat projects in eastern Canada through the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies’ (AFWA) state contributions to conservation in Canada program. The AFWA program, which funds North American Waterfowl Management Plan habitat projects in Canada, is one of the first international public/private partnerships to support migratory bird conservation and is funded primarily by hunting license sales. Through this program, states help fund long-term

partnerships that conserve and restore breeding habitat for waterfowl that migrate through, and winter in, their own states.

As with all states that contribute to the program through Ducks Unlimited, Virginia’s contribution will be matched by DU and leveraged through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, resulting in at least \$100,000 each year for conservation projects. Habitat conservation efforts began in the eastern portion of Canada and focus on habitats important to black ducks that stage and breed in this area and winter in Virginia.



VDGIF recognized (from left to right): DU DCP **Craig LeSchack**, Chairman **Mike Lamberth** (VA DU State Chairman), **Bob Duncan** (Exec. Dir., DGIF), **Charles Cunningham** (Chairman, Board of Game & Inland Fisheries), **Dan Ross** (VA DU State Chairman Elect), and **Chip Heaps** (Sr. Dir. of Dev.).

STATE REPORTS

Southwest Conservation Unit – South LA, OK, TX, NM

South Louisiana

Tom's Bayou

An \$830,000-project to restore more than 7,500 acres of coastal habitat in Vermilion Parish is underway. The Tom's Bayou project was developed and submitted as a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant proposal in 2013. Funding for the project was approved in 2014 and the permits have finally been secured. DU will install two rock riprap water-control structures to restore the hydrology of thousands of acres of intertidal wetlands. The structures will be constructed on State Wildlife Refuge, which is owned and managed by Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). Roughly 15 percent of the interior marsh enhanced as a result of the project are on public lands and provide recreational fishing, shrimping, crabbing and other outdoor opportunities for the public. The other 85 percent lies in Paul J. Rainey Wildlife Sanctuary, owned and managed by the National Audubon Society. Project partners include Ducks Unlimited, NAWCA, Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Wetlands America Trust, and LDWF.

Andi Cooper, acooper@ducks.org

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USFWS, Bill Buchanan

NOMINATIONS

C.W. Watson Award

Nominations are being sought for the 2016 Clarence W. Watson Award. This annual award will be presented at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference in Baton Rouge, LA, October 16-19, 2016. The Clarence W. Watson Award is the most prestigious award given at the conference 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. Consideration includes research, administration, law enforcement, information and education, wildlife management, fish management, teachers, and students. Preference is given to nominees in the Southeast. The award is a mounted bronze plaque presented jointly by the Southeastern Section of the Wildlife Society, the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. All Southeastern fish and wildlife conservationists and other interested persons are encouraged to nominate worthy candidates. Nominations should be submitted in the format shown below and should include complete information on the candidate's background; i.e., education, training, noteworthy accomplishments, and particularly, the achievement(s) to support the nomination. The nomination should include, but not be limited to, a description of the accomplishment(s), application in the state and region concerned, time involved, and the amount of aid received from associates. Furnish as much information as possible to aid the committee in making the selection. A previously unselected nominee may be resubmitted each year.

NOMINATION FORMAT

- I. Background Information
 - A. Name
 - B. Birthdate
 - C. Education
 - D. Employment History

- II. Accomplishment(s)* and application of accomplishment(s) upon which the Award should be made
 - A. Problem or opportunity with which nominee was involved.
 - B. Action nominee took to solve problem or capitalize on opportunity.
 - C. Results (accomplishments) of nominee's actions.

*The C.W. Watson Award may be given for accomplishing a single item or a series of different unrelated items. The award is given to the nominee who has contributed most to any of the appropriate areas of fish and wildlife conservation. Emphasis is on contribution, not tenure. Those making nominations are requested to insure that they explain clearly what was accomplished and how it contributed.

Selection will be based on specific accomplishment(s) and other information included in the letter of nomination. Nominations should be sent to: **Craig A. Harper**, University of Tennessee, Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries, 2431 Joe Johnson Drive, Knoxville, TN 37996; charper@utk.edu; 865-974-7992 as soon as possible but no later than August 15, 2016.



NOMINATIONS

2016 Wildlife Management Excellence Award

Dear Fellow Wildlife/Resource Manager:

Below is the nomination form for the 2016 Wildlife Management Excellence Award (WMEA). Each year during our annual meeting, the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society (SETWS) presents the WMEA to recognize excellence in wildlife management activities carried out within the member states of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

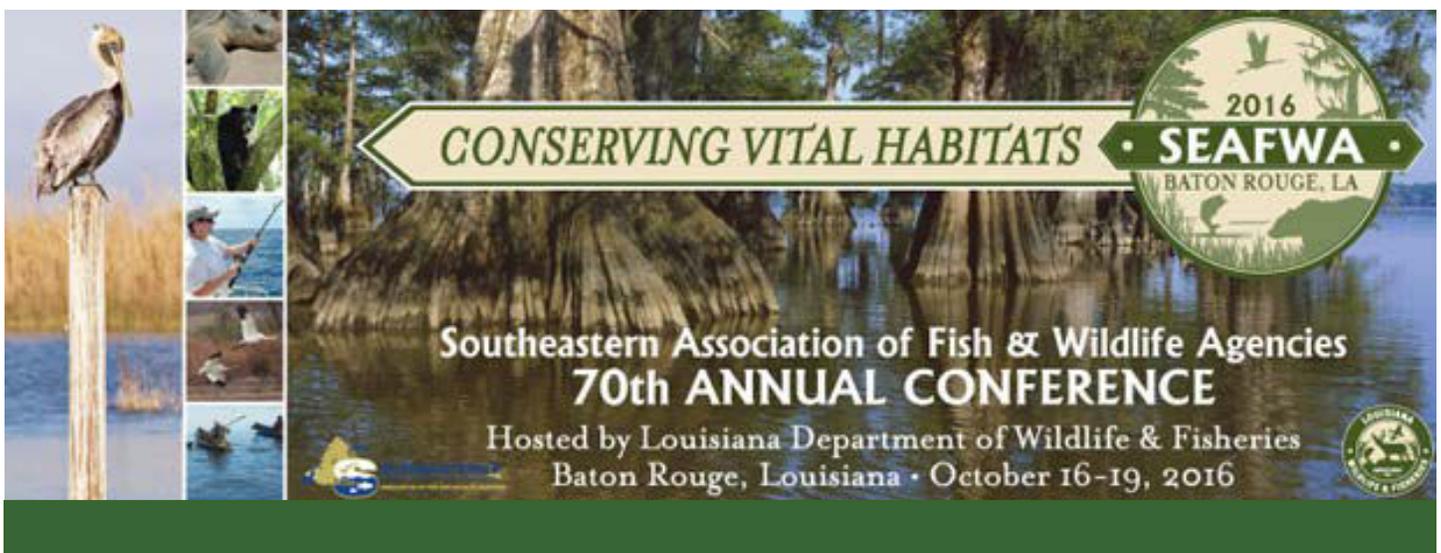
Persons making nominations must be current members of the SETWS; however, nominees need not be members. Nominations may include either an individual or group and evaluation of nominees will be based upon a single management achievement, not a "lifetime service" that has been accomplished in the field of wildlife management. Examples of management achievements worthy of the award include activities such as an exceptional break-through in bringing back an endangered species, the rapid (over a few years) development of a management area due to an individual or group effort, a major effort in stopping a particularly environmentally damaging project or an extension education effort that results in substantial and measurable change in private landowner acreage set aside for wildlife use.

Nominations should be submitted following the nomination format (on the next page) and will be reviewed by a five-member committee. The committee is seeking nominations of individuals other groups who have performed "above and beyond" in their nominated category with good quantitative data to support the nomination. The deadline for nominations is **August 1, 2016**. The recipient will be presented with the Wildlife Management Excellence Award at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society.

Your participation is vital to the awards programs of the SETWS and is greatly appreciated. We all are aware of the multitude of deserving individuals and groups within our essential profession. As such, please take the time to nominate these deserving folks. Thank you for your time and dedication to wildlife conservation.

Sincerely,

Dr. **Christopher S. DePerno**, Chair
Wildlife Management Excellence Award Committee



NOMINATIONS

Wildlife Management Excellence Award Nomination Form

I. Date:

II. Nominee contact information:

“Name”

“Title and Agency”

“Address”

“Phone”

“Email”



III. Nominating contact information:

“Name”

“Title and Agency”

“Address”

“Phone”

“Email”

IV. Descriptive title of achievement:

V. Quantitative information on the achievement:

Please provide a short description of the nominee’s achievement in the following categories where applicable. The information may be attached on additional pages or inserted where appropriate as an electronic file.

1) Conservation and management benefits

- a) Species influenced
- b) Area (acreage) influenced
- c) Regional impacts
- d) Other

2) Educational benefits

- a) Target audiences
- b) Estimated size of audience reached
- c) Other

3) Scientific contributions

- a) Dissemination of information through reports, manuals, publications or other media
- b) Influence on management policies
- c) Other

4) Brief description of economic benefits

VI. Quantitative Information on the Achievement

VII. Narrative Description of the Achievement (1-page)

VIII. Letters of support (2-3)

Please submit nominee(s) by mail or e-mail to **Christopher S. DePerno**, Chair; Wildlife Management Excellence Award; North Carolina State University, Turner House, Box 7646, Raleigh, NC 27695; Tel: (919)513-7559; Email: chris_deperno@ncsu.edu

NOMINATIONS

SETWS Student Chapter of the Year Award

Active and effective student chapters are needed to achieve The Wildlife Society's goals, many of which are best addressed at the state/provincial or local level. Student chapters also strengthen the Society's membership recruitment and retention efforts by providing opportunities for member involvement in Society activities. The Southeastern Section of TWS annually recognizes at SEAFWA a student chapter in its section. Student chapters are invited to nominate themselves for the award. The SETWS provides a plaque and a \$1,000.00 cash award to the student chapter of the year based on the chapter's involvement in activities that advance their members professional development and the goals of TWS. The SETWS uses the same application form as TWS, which is available at: <http://wildlife.org/chapter-and-student-chapter-of-the-year-awards/>. The application should be submitted via email (materials should be sent as a single PDF file) to **Andy Madison** (amadison@uu.edu) by June 30, 2016, with a subject line: SETWS Student Chapter Award.

MEETINGS OF INTEREST

JULY 2016

American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists Annual Meeting

July 6-10, 2016
New Orleans, LA
<http://www.asih.org/meetings>

OCTOBER 2016

70th SEAFWA Conference

October 16-19, 2016
Hilton Hotel
Baton Rouge, LA
<http://seafwa.org/conferences/2016/index.html>

AUGUST 2016

Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting

August 7-12, 2016
Fort Lauderdale, FL
<http://www.esa.org/esa/meetings/annual-meeting/>

23rd The Wildlife Society Annual Conference

October 15-19, 2016
Raleigh, NC
<http://wildlife.org/tws-23rd-annual-conference/>

SEPTEMBER 2016

2016 AFWA Annual Meeting

September 11-14, 2016
Marriott Philadelphia Downtown
Philadelphia, PA
<http://www.fishwildlife.org/index.php>



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:

Dr. Susan Rupp, Secretary-Treasurer
Owner/Lead Consultant
Enviroscapes Ecological Consulting, LLC
3937 Allison Ln. #103
Springdale, AR 72762
Phone (479) 340-7018