

# The Wildlife Society

## SOUTHEASTERN SECTION

SEPTEMBER 2014  
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KATHERINE EDWARDS, EDITOR



### PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Greetings from West Tennessee! This third and final SE-TWS newsletter of 2014 marks the end of summer; I'd like to review here a few things to be thinking about in the coming weeks.

The SEAFWA Annual Meeting is just around the corner (October 19-22) in Destin, Florida (<http://www.seafwa.org/conferences/2014/index.html>). Please make plans to attend the SE-TWS business meeting Tuesday afternoon if you are there, and if you have a topic that you would like addressed, please let me know. The Wildlife Technical sessions should be outstanding; approximately 35 manuscripts were submitted this year, which is a tremendous improvement from last year's 14! If you have the opportunity, be sure to thank Associate Editor **Doug Osborne** and Assistant Editor **James Martin** for their hard work in overseeing the review process.

Student Chapters and Advisors, as you recruit new members this semester, please encourage them to join SE-TWS as well, along with your state Chapter and the parent Society. Engaged students make more effective future professionals! The beginning of the academic year is also the time to begin thinking about what your chapter may do to earn the Student Chapter of the Year Award. As you plan, remember Conclave in the spring, which will be hosted by Virginia Tech. SE-TWS just purchased a new quiz bowl buzzer system to replace the older system, believed by many to have been purchased during the Eisenhower administration.

SE-TWS has been discussing Strategic Planning efforts for several years. This fall, each state chapter Section Representative (or President) will receive a rough draft of a Strategic Plan for our Section. You will be asked to take this to your boards and your membership for review and feedback within the year.

The rough draft also is posted on the SE-TWS website (<http://wildlife.org/se/home>) and included in this newsletter; all section members are encouraged to review the draft and provide individual feedback. The plan of our Executive Board is to review and incorporate all responses into a final document next year. It is our hope that this plan will maximize the effectiveness of our future leadership; thanks for taking a little bit of time to help guide the direction of SE-TWS!

Finally, I'd like to thank our section officers and all of the committee chairs and members who have been working hard to make our section great during the past few months. I would especially like to thank our award committee chairs **Kelly Douglass**, **Chris DePerno**, and **Craig Harper**, and Conservation Affairs Planning Committee chair **William Moore** (expect to be hearing more about the Conservation Affairs Network soon). And last, please help me congratulate **Katie Edwards** on her recent move from her position as TWS Professional Development Coordinator to a Wildlife Management Specialist position in Virginia. Thankfully, she has agreed to remain our newsletter editor!

*Eric Pelren*  
**President, Southeastern Section TWS**

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## SOUTHEASTERN SECTION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Fellow wildlifers. I had intended to use my space in this newsletter in the usual way – update you on current happenings within TWS, ways you can help, and other news of relevance. However, due to a very recent event, I am going to take a different route this time. If you have any questions about TWS, etc., please contact me.

On August 11, 2014, the wildlife profession lost Dr. **Sam K. Riffell**, an Associate Professor of Wildlife Ecology within the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture at Mississippi State University. Sam was 44 years old. I am sure that many of you are aware of this news, but I felt obligated to share a little bit about Sam and then some brief thoughts.

I had the distinct pleasure of working closely with Sam for the past 6 years. He and I were mentoring 4 graduate students as part of an expansive project investigating switchgrass intercropping within intensively managed pine stands and had collaborated on several other research efforts over the past few years. Sam was a delight to work with – a true professional that not only met obligations (on time!), but always provided invaluable insights that advanced our work. Like many of us, Sam displayed a deep passion for the outdoors and conservation, with a special place in his heart for birds. During the Memorial Service, one of Sam's closest friends commented how Sam was "always in motion." This was true not only physically, but mentally – often he was hard to keep up with in both ways!

As researchers, managers, and conservationists, when we lose a member of our profession, our thoughts generally gravitate toward their professional accomplishments – number of publications, teaching record, conservation efforts, management practices that make a difference, etc. In Sam's case, he contributed to all of these and was an excellent teacher, reveling in the success of

undergraduate and graduate students alike. However, all of these people also have lives outside of work. They are friends, parents, children, siblings, church/civic group members, etc. In Sam's case, not only was he a great conservationist, his pride and joy was his family – 2 beautiful daughters (Hannah and Abby) and his loving wife Angie. Sam glowed when he spoke about his family and their accomplishments. He was a devoted father and husband. Sam also helped coach the local home school soccer team and was very active in his church. So, although the conservation community lost a great man in Dr. Riffell, the University, Starkville Community, Starkville Community Church, the soccer "mafia", and the home school group lost a great man in Sam Riffell.

I attended both the visitation and the memorial service for Sam. Even under the circumstances, I enjoyed meeting his brother and parents. His Mom recognized my name because she reads all of Sam's publications (I promised to send her new ones!). As I visited with Sam's family and heard reflections from close friends and family, I realized that I did not really know Sam. Yet, I considered him a friend. I reflected on all the hours we spent together in the field, at conferences, in committee meetings, etc. – all the things we do as part of our professional lives. But how often did I really stop and talk to Sam – to ask about his family, his interests, what led him to his career, etc. Sure. I knew he had a great family, and had met them. I knew he was a huge college football and basketball fan as we often talked about both when we were together. But, as I saw familiar faces at the services for Sam that I had no idea even knew the Riffells, I realized that the truth was that I didn't really talk to Sam very often to really seek to know him, and I will always regret that aspect of our relationship.



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So, my message is that we need to keep in mind that human relationships are as important, if not more important, than our professional ones. Seeking to understand others is the first step in advancing relationships for mutual personal and professional benefits. Please, take some time to talk to your colleagues and don't take them, or what is going on in their lives, for granted. You never know when a kind word, voicing recognition of someone's efforts, or just being there for someone can make a real difference in the life of a colleague, and friend.

I do ask you to please pray for Sam's friends and family as they struggle through this difficult time. If you feel so compelled, there is a college fund set up for Sam's girls (Starkville Community Church; c/o Aaron Smyser; Riffell College Fund; 1010 Lynn Lane; Starkville, MS 39759; please note on the check Riffell College Fund). Thank you.

Submitted by Darren Miller, Southeastern Section Representative to TWS Council

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### DEER COMMITTEE

#### **Southeast Deer Study Group Career Achievement Award**

The Southeast Deer Study Group Deer Management Career Achievement Award recognizes outstanding contributions to the understanding of white-tailed deer ecology and management in the southeastern United States. The award may recognize a single achievement or contributions over an extended period of time and is presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southeast Deer Study Group. The award is to be given for activities conducted within the member states of the SE Section of The Wildlife Society and the states of Missouri, Texas, Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia. Nomination is to be made by a member of the SE Section, but the nominee need not be a member. Both individuals and groups are eligible for nomination. Nominations including supporting documentation and letters of recommendation should be emailed by December 30, 2014 to Steve Demarais, Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Mississippi State University at [sdemarais@cfr.msstate.edu](mailto:sdemarais@cfr.msstate.edu).

#### **Deer Biologist and Manager Retirement Recognition**

The Southeast Deer Study Group and Southeast Deer Committee will recognize retiring deer biologists and managers at the 2015 banquet. Award-ees need not attend the meeting, retirement can be pending or past, and self-nomination is allowed. No specific time frame for work with deer is required. Nominees not attending the meeting or banquet will receive their certificate by mail. The nomination letter must list the nominee's name, address, employer(s), dates of employment, and type of work (management and/or research) and must be emailed before December 30, 2014 to Steve Demarais, Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Mississippi State University at [sdemarais@cfr.msstate.edu](mailto:sdemarais@cfr.msstate.edu).

Submitted by Steve Demarais,  
[sdemarais@cfr.msstate.edu](mailto:sdemarais@cfr.msstate.edu)



# COMMITTEE REPORTS

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## STUDENT AWARDS COMMITTEE

### Request for Volunteer Judges

We are looking for volunteers to judge student presentations and posters for the Southeastern Section of TWS at the upcoming SEAFWA Conference on October 19-22, 2014 in Destin, FL.

We ask that judges review at least 3-4 presentations or posters in the wildlife technical sessions, symposia, and/or poster sessions, although if you only have time for 1-2 we could still use your help! No qualifications required. If you are an advisor for a presenting student, you can still help out – We will assign you to judge other student presentations/posters.

The student poster session is Monday, October 20th from 3:30-5:30 PM. Student presentations are scheduled for Sunday, October 19th from 8:00AM-5:00PM (shorebird and mottled duck symposia), Monday, October 20th from 1:00-5:00 PM, Tuesday, October 21st from 1:00-5:00 PM, and Wednesday, October 22nd from 8:00AM-12:00PM.

Please contact Kelly Douglass, Student Awards Committee Chair, as soon as possible at [kelly.douglass@ncwildlife.org](mailto:kelly.douglass@ncwildlife.org) if you are interested in volunteering.

Submitted by Kelly Douglass,  
[kelly.douglass@ncwildlife.org](mailto:kelly.douglass@ncwildlife.org)

### 68th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Sunday, October 19 - Wednesday, October 22, 2014

Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa - Destin, Florida

Hosted by:



The SE Section of TWS Executive Board Meeting will be held on Sunday, October 19th from 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm.

The SE Section of TWS Annual Business Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 21st from 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm.



USFWS, Kevin Holcomb

# STATE REPORTS

## ALABAMA



### Alabama A&M

**Eric Margenau**, a Masters Student at Alabama A&M University, just completed his second field season researching how breeding songbirds respond to varying canopy retentions in an upland hardwood forest. The different treatments that we look at include: mature forest (undisturbed), a thirteen year old clearcut, and 4 different shelterwood harvest treatments. Breeding bird diversity was highest in the 4 shelterwood treatments and lowest in the mature and thirteen year old clearcut treatments. He also is looking at home-ranges and habitat characteristics of yellow-breasted chats (*Icteria virens*) using radio transmitters. Juveniles show a strong overlap with their adult male in respect to habitat use.



*Transmitters were attached to juveniles just before they fledged the nest to determine dispersal.*

### Auburn University

**Gary Hepp**, Professor of Wildlife Science in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University and longtime member of The Wildlife Society and the Alabama Chapter of The Wildlife Society, retired on July 31, 2014 after 26 years of service. Before coming to Auburn, he spent 3 years as Assistant Research Ecologist at the Savannah River Ecology Lab in Aiken, SC and 2 years as Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, MD. He is now Professor Emeritus and maintains an office at the Forestry and Wildlife Sciences Building on campus where he plans to finish some writing projects before really riding off into the sunset. He can be reached at [heppgar@auburn.edu](mailto:heppgar@auburn.edu).

**Dr. Chris Lepczyk** was hired by the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University beginning fall semester 2014 as an Associate Professor. Dr. Lepczyk is a broadly-trained wildlife biologist with expertise in landscape-scale questions pertaining to wildlife management. His landscape-scale research has focused primarily on avian species, but he has also examined questions relating to invasive species and other areas of wildlife ecology and management. Prior to his hire at Auburn, Dr. Lepczyk was an Associate Professor at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, and had worked there since 2007. He has degrees in Biology and Wildlife Ecology from (Hope College, B.S.; University of Wisconsin-Madison, M.S., and Michigan State University, Ph.D.).

### Alabama Bat Working Group

Redstone Arsenal hosted a Bat Blitz August 12-14, 2014. A 28 mile acoustic route was established and was run both nights. Mist netting at 5 sites yielded 64 individuals from 6 species. In addition to trapping in forested and wetland habitats, the group explored bats' use of buildings, culvert, and abandoned buildings. Day trips included visits to some of Redstone's sensitive species; the Tuscumbia Darter

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(*Etheostoma tuscumbia*) and the Green Salamander (*Aneides aeneus*). Conservation Services of Alabama, LLC donated funding to the Working Group for supplies, The US Army – Redstone Arsenal Environmental Management Division provided white-nose syndrome decontamination supplies, and US Army – Redstone Arsenal Directorate of Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation provided housing for participants. Both state and federal agencies as well as Alabama A&M University provided equipment and personnel for the event.

## Gulf Coast Plains & Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Last year the Gulf Coast Plains & Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GCPO) Adaptation Science Management Team released a draft of the Integrated Science Agenda (ISA), which uses a Strategic Habitat Conservation (SHC) approach to outline and prioritize science needs within the broad GCPO partnership. The end game is to work with the LCC partnership using the priorities identified in the ISA to develop a comprehensive conservation design for the GCPO geography. However, you don't know what you need until you know what you've got! We're not quite there yet, but we are pleased to report that we are well on our way to developing a first "State of the GCPO" assessment.

Submitted by Shannon Allen,  
shannon.l.allen.civ@mail.mil



[www.alabamaherps.com](http://www.alabamaherps.com)

## ARKANSAS



### Arkansas Chapter TWS

The Chapter held their fall meeting September 11 at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro with 49 in attendance. President **Tom Nupp** explained a proposal developed by the ARTWS Executive Board to change the bylaws of ARTWS to eliminate the requirement to hold the annual meeting in September in order to provide greater flexibility in meeting scheduling. Members present submitted written ballots and absentee ballots were sent out to other current members with results to be calculated at the end of September. Members attending the meeting also elected **Keith Weaver** to fill the Member-at-Large position on the Executive Board. **Allison Fowler**, the current President elect has agreed to serve as the Chapter representative on the Southeastern Section Conservation Affairs Committee.

The business meeting ended with a few comments from President **Dr. Tom Nupp** regarding the timing of our meetings. He mentioned that the fall meeting is often problematic for university members due to the semester getting started and that the Executive Board will be looking for input as to when the best time for a meeting is for each member. There may be a survey distributed to members in the future regarding the timing and ideas for a multi-day meeting. As this meeting represented the conclusion of Dr. Tom Nupp's term as President, he was presented with a commemorative plaque and thanked for his service to the Chapter.

### University of Arkansas at Monticello Student Chapter

The UAM chapter is in a rebuilding year since many students have graduated, but had 30 in attendance at their first meeting. The Annual Hamburger Cook-out was held in the spring and raised \$400. The chapter's future events include an archery with youth program, creating undergraduate research opportunities, organizing more group activities, and participating in conclave.

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## Arkansas State University Student Chapter

As of spring semester, the chapter had 78 members. The ASU chapter participated in conclave and finished 18th overall and placed 2nd in wildlife photography and 3rd in radiotelemetry. They are continuing to maintain their 1-mile stretch of road for trash clean-up.

## Arkansas Tech University Student Chapter

The first fall meeting had 82 attendees. The chapter participated in an archery for youth program, "Bow Jam". Upcoming events for the chapter include their annual volunteerism at Bearcat Hollow and a field day geared toward introducing freshman fish and wildlife students to field techniques.

## Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

The AGFC recently created a new Assistant Regional Supervisor position in the Wildlife Division. The following people were promoted to these positions: **Mark Barbee**, **Jason Carbaugh**, **Stacy Clark**, **Kevin Lynch**, **Matt Mourot**, **Gary Thorton**, and **Johnny Waldrup**.

**Matthew Warriner** was promoted to Assistant Chief of the Wildlife Management Division and **Zac Yancey**, of the Jonesboro office, was promoted to biologist. **Ray Wiggs**, Regional Supervisor for Region 7, **Mark Baron**, Field Biologist in Region 7, and **David Goad**, Field Biologist, retired this summer. This spring **Randy Brents** began serving as the Wildlife Division's Fire Management Officer, **Levi Horrell** was hired as a wildlife biologist at the Beaver Lake office and **Brian Maddox** started as biologist at the Calico Rock office.

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

## FLORIDA

NO NEWS REPORTED



## GEORGIA

### Georgia DNR, Wildlife Resources Division



### Georgia Deer Management Plan

Georgia's white-tailed deer population is a great natural resource that provides aesthetic, consumptive, and economic value. In addition to hunting, a number of key issues and opportunities are linked directly to this resource, such as wildlife viewing, ecological functions, agricultural damage, and deer-car collisions.

WRD's successful management efforts are informed through biological data, public input and management objectives identified in the agency's state-wide deer management plan, developed through an intensive public participation process. The first 10-year Georgia Deer Management Plan was completed and put into practice in 2005 and is set to end this year.

To prepare for the next 10 years, WRD's state deer biologist, **Charlie Killmaster** initiated a review and update for 2015-2024. He oversaw the construction of a committee of informed members to address all key issues. He then took all findings and recommendations of committee meetings and developed the current draft plan (link to draft found here: [www.gohuntgeorgia.com/Hunting/Meetings](http://www.gohuntgeorgia.com/Hunting/Meetings)).

The draft plan currently is undergoing a public review, including presentations at multiple public meetings in August, and accepting online and written comments. The final plan will be presented to the DNR Board later this year and will be ready for implementation in 2015.

For more information on the Georgia Deer Management Plan or to view the key issues, visit [www.gohuntgeorgia.com/Hunting/Meetings](http://www.gohuntgeorgia.com/Hunting/Meetings) or call 706-557-3260.

# STATE REPORTS

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## Go Outdoors Georgia Licensing System

As of July 1st, 2014, when you purchase a hunting, fishing, outdoor recreation permit or boat registration from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources you will experience the new Go Outdoors Georgia Licensing system. This system is a result of Georgia DNR's partnership with a new license vendor, Brandt Information Services who has been partnering with government agencies as well as private entities to administer recreational licenses and permits to customers using a customized, web-based automated licensing application. This new system has streamlined our online purchasing process whereby improving customer service and increasing the ease of purchasing licenses online.

## Georgia DNR Youth Birding Competition Model for National Outreach

The Georgia Youth Birding Competition started by DNR wildlife biologist **Tim Keyes** in 2006 is being replicated by a national nonprofit focused on promoting birding among youth nationwide. Race 4 Birds ([www.race4birds.org](http://www.race4birds.org)), whose creators include international birding author **Richard Crossley** and Keyes, offers guidance and other resources that groups can use to organize youth birding competitions at local and larger levels. The organization was announced in July.

Keyes, who works with the DNR Wildlife Resources Division Nongame Conservation Section, said it would be "incredibly exciting" to see the Youth Birding Competition concept flourish in other states. Held each spring in Georgia, the event sponsored by partners such as The Environmental Resources Network (TERN), Georgia Ornithological Society and Atlanta Audubon Society is a 24-hour, statewide search for birds featuring teams from pre-schoolers to high school seniors. About 100 youth took part this year. Some long-time participants have even helped mentor beginners, advancing the competition's goal of spurring a wider interest in birds and conservation. A T-shirt art competition has also been added.

Learn more about the YBC at [www.georgiawildlife.com/youthbirdingcompetition](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/youthbirdingcompetition), or in the DNR "Georgia Wild" newsletter article at <http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/GADNR/bulletins/c9523f>.



*GADNR, 2014 Youth Birding Competition*

## Georgia DNR Fisheries Section Surveying Anglers Online

The Fisheries Management Section of GDNR's Wildlife Resources Division is using online surveys to gauge angler opinions about proposed regulation changes and other topics. License holders are emailed an invitation to take a survey, which is set up in SurveyMonkey, an online service. Depending on the topic, the invitation may target anglers in a certain geographic area.

The response has been robust, adding to the traditional public meetings approach, which sometimes draws little feedback. Separate surveys this year regarding largemouth bass fishing on the lower Ocmulgee River, shoal bass on the upper Flint River, the slot-length limit for largemouths in Lake Oconee and fishing on the Chattahoochee River near Atlanta have also provided key public input and other data for fisheries managers.

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## Georgia DNR Public Affairs Awarded on National Level

Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division Public Affairs won 2 National Awards from the Association for Conservation Information, Inc., an organization of natural resource conservation communicators comprised of 39 state members and national organizations such as the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation and The Nature Conservancy.

First place was awarded for graphic design for the 2014 Weekend for Wildlife logo designed by **Ryan Holt** and 2nd place was awarded for on-line community engagement (social media) to **David Allen**.

Submitted by Jenifer Hancock,  
Jenifer.Hancock@dnr.state.ga.us



*Pictured left to right: Jenifer Hancock, Marketing & Communications Manager; Ryan Holt, Communications Designer; David Allen, Social Media Specialist.*

## KENTUCKY



## Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR)

**Gregory Johnson** is the new commissioner of the KDFWR. Johnson takes on the commissioner's job after retiring with more than 30 years with the NRCS. **Steve Bonney**, Regional Coordinator for KDFWR's Northeast Region, retired after a 27 year career with the agency. A 2 year research project has begun which will assess reproduction and survival of white-tailed deer in south-eastern Kentucky. The heavily forested counties of this region have the lowest density of deer in the state. The project, being conducted by two graduate students at the University of Kentucky, is designed to investigate

what mortality factors are impacting adult does and fawns. As part of program to benefit barn owls in Kentucky, agency personnel have installed 134 nest boxes since 2006. A state wide search last year turned up 48 nesting pairs of barn owls; almost double the number found in 2010. KDFWR's fisheries division began a 5 year study to assess the foraging activities and diet of muskellunge stocked in the lower reaches of the Kentucky River. In an effort to fight the spread of Asian carp and other aquatic nuisance species, an online reporting system is being developed that will give the public the ability to report sightings of nuisance species to KDFWR. The Mississippi Flyway Council Law Enforcement Committee recognized KDFWR's **Sgt. Mick Craig** for his many years of dedicated service to the committee.

Submitted by Charles Elliott,  
Charles.Elliott@eku.edu

# STATE REPORTS

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## LOUISIANA



### Louisiana Chapter TWS

The state chapter met August 28-29 in Baton Rouge, 85 people attended. The session opened with student presentations. Eleven students presented their research and **Ashlee Minor** (Nicholls State University) received first place in the oral presentation contest for her presentation “Forested freshwater wetland responses to secondarily treated municipal effluent discharge”. **Nickolas Smith** (LSU) received first place in the poster contest for his poster “Morphometric sex determination of bald eagles from Louisiana”. The meeting concluded with a focus session on Louisiana’s Feral Hog Invasion. **Dr. Kim Marie Tolson, Stephen Hartley, Todd Baker, and Glen Gentry** presented information on feral hog biology, movement of wild hogs, response of wetland vegetation, aerial gunning of hogs, and sodium nitrite as a toxicant for feral swine. **John Pitre** then led a panel discussion of “Coordinating a response to Louisiana’s feral hog invasion” which generated much audience participation and discussion.

During the business meeting, **Eddie Lyons** was elected to the President-elect position, **Troy Mal-lach** was elected to the Secretary position for another term, **Larry Reynolds** was elected Treasurer for another term, **Jeff Duguay** was elected Newsletter Editor, and **Mark Parr** remains as the Website Manager.

### Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

**Robert “Goose” Gosnell** was selected to serve as the Assistant Administrator of the Wildlife Branch, replacing **Fred Kimmel** who is now serving as the Program Manager for the Education Section.

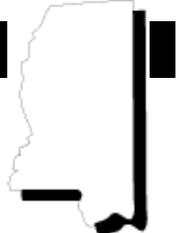
Submitted by Jeff Duguay,  
jduguay@wlf.la.gov

## MARYLAND/DELAWARE



NO NEWS REPORTED

## MISSISSIPPI



NO NEWS REPORTED

## NORTH CAROLINA



### North Carolina Chapter TWS

Meet the 2014 NCTWS Executive Board:

- President – **Katie Greenberg** (US Forest Service)
- President Elect – **Kelly Douglass** (NC Wildlife Resources Commission)
- Past President – **Kendrick Weeks** (NC Wildlife Resources Commission)
- Secretary – **Sue Cameron** (US Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Treasurer – **Coleen Olfenbuttel** (NC Wildlife Resources Commission)
- SE Section Representative – **Steve Grodsky** (NC State University)
- At-Large Board Member – **Gary Marshall** (Mecklenberg County Parks)
- At-Large Board Member – **Joe Tomcho** (NC Wildlife Resources Commission)

We held the 2014 NCTWS Annual Meeting February 25-26 at Haw River State Park in Brown’s Summit, North Carolina in conjunction with the North Carolina Partners in Flight, with nearly 100 people in attendance. Our theme was “Adaptive Management: Food Plots to Ecological Restoration”. **Dr. Craig Harper** from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville was our invited speaker and kicked off the conference with an engaging talk entitled “From food plot to ecosystem management: Can Bubba get there?!?”

# STATE REPORTS

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## 2014 NCTWS Awards

- Wildlife Conservation Award – **Jeff Marcus** (NC Wildlife Resources Commission)
- Chapter Award – **Lori Williams** (NC Wildlife Resources Commission)
- Ken Wilson Memorial Award – **Michael Biggerstaff** (NC State University); **Alexander Wilson** (Haywood Community College); **Michael McCloy** (Western Carolina University)
- Best Student Poster – **Daniel Morina** (NC State University); Comparison of acorn production of white oaks and sawtooth oaks

The Wildlife Society Annual Conference will be held in Raleigh, NC in 2016! The Executive Board recently met with **Ed Thompson**, TWS Chief of Operations, to discuss plans for the upcoming conference. **John Ann Shearer** of the US Fish and Wildlife Service has graciously stepped up as head of the Arrangements Committee.

## NC State University

**Dr. Christopher E. Moorman** was named the Natural Resources Scientist of the Year and a 2014 Governor's Conservation Achievement Award Winner at the North Carolina Wildlife Federation Annual Meeting. Several new faculty members have joined NC State in recent times:

- **Dr. Roland Kays** – Research Associate Professor (and Director of the Biodiversity and Earth Observation Lab, NC Museum of Natural Sciences); learn more about Dr. Kays at <http://cnr.ncsu.edu/fer/directory/kays.php>.
- **Dr. Lara Pacifici** – Assistant Teaching Professor of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology; learn more about Dr. Pacifici at <http://cnr.ncsu.edu/fer/directory/pacifici.php>
- **Dr. L. Scott Mills** – Professor, Chancellor's Faculty Excellence Program in Global Environmental Change; learn more about Dr. Mills at <http://cnr.ncsu.edu/fer/directory/mills.php>.

## OKLAHOMA



NO NEWS REPORTED

## SOUTH CAROLINA



### South Carolina Chapter TWS

#### Busy Summer and Fall Planning

The South Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society has had plenty to discuss this summer as it relates to wildlife management. The public comment period for the 2015 revision of the State Wildlife Action Plan recently closed, and the Department of Natural Resources is reviewing those comments now. The unrevised draft is available at <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/swap/index.html>. The State also changed regulations related to several game species, including expanding the wild turkey hunting season while reducing the bag limit from 5 to 3 gobblers. The mourning dove hunting season also was expanded from 70 days to 90 days and included a change in what constitutes baiting in wheat fields top-sown for erosion control and soil improvement. Clemson Extension has revised its recommendations accordingly. The State Chapter also responded to a proposal to construct a high voltage transmission line across the Santee Coastal Reserve and Francis Marion National Forest. The project has the potential to impact one of the states priority waterfowl management areas and long leaf pine forests that have been recovered through considerable conservation efforts, so the Chapter wrote a letter asking for the draft environmental impact statement be revised to consider alternative routes. Last, the Chapter also drafted a letter responding to the proposal of the Clemson Enterprise Act, which would allow decisions to be made regarding Clemson's properties without state house oversight. The Chapter requested that properties such as the Clemson Experimental Forest receive special protections to preserve the educational and research opportunities that they provide.

# STATE REPORTS

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Currently, the Chapter is vigorously planning its annual meeting, which will occur on November 12th and 13th at the Pee Dee Research and Education Center near Florence, South Carolina. The two-day program will be filled with exciting information and activities. In addition to hearing from a great collection of speakers, attendees will participate in demonstrations of swine reduction techniques, drones used for surveys and assessments, native plant identification and seed harvesting equipment and techniques. Also, participants can let off steam by taking part in kayaking on Dargan's Pond, birding, skeet shooting, and a bioblitz.

Last, the SC Chapter is now on Facebook. Like us at <https://www.facebook.com/SCCTWS>

Submitted by Ben Powell, [bpowel2@clemson.edu](mailto:bpowel2@clemson.edu)

## TENNESSEE



### Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

The TWRA is celebrating our 65th anniversary in 2014 with events held in Jackson, Nashville, and Knoxville. The celebrations were for current TWRA employees, retirees, current and former commissioners. The events were a time for fellowship with co-workers and friends. The new 65th anniversary information/education trailer was on hand at all three events and was filled with memorabilia and photos. Other activities were also available for the attendees to enjoy.

The Arbor Day Foundation presented TWRA staff members the 2014 Forest Lands Leadership Award. The award was presented in acknowledgement of its bottomland hardwood forest restoration program in West Tennessee. The award recognizes an individual or organization whose outstanding work provides leadership in advancing sustainable forestry efforts on public forest land.

Approximately three million trees have been planted on a total of 6,800 acres of former row crop land since 2000. Team members recognized were **Brant Miller**, **Damon Hollis**, **Jason Maxedon**, **Sam Turner**, and **Justin Hallett**.

On a sad note, **Bob Hatcher**, a man who has helped bring back the nation's living symbol, the bald eagle to Tennessee, has passed away. Mr. Hatcher lost his courageous battle with cancer on July 22. Mr. Hatcher served TWRA for 38 years, including serving as the Non-Game and Endangered Species Coordinator from 1987 until 2001. He initiated the state bald eagle recovery efforts in the early 1980s resulting in the release of 284 eagles over 22 years. He also was responsible for reintroducing osprey, river otters, endangered mussels and other species throughout Tennessee.

The Tennessee Wildlife Federation recognized several TWRA personnel and associates at the 2014 Conservation Achievement Awards luncheon hosted by the Tennessee Wildlife Federation.

**Freddy Couch** received the Ged Petit Memorial Award, Commissioner **Jim Bledsoe** received the Wildlife Conservation Award, **Doug Lowery** received the Dan and Cherie Hammond Sharing the Harvest Award and **John Torchick** is the Hunter Educator of the Year.

The TWRA recognized **Joe Campbell** as the 2013 Boating Officer of the Year and **Greg Barker** as the Part-Time Boating Officer of the Year.

Wildlife Area Manager **Bill Smith** received the Firebird Award from the National Bobwhite Technical Committee and Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative at their recent annual meeting. Firebird awards recognize individuals or organizations for contributions to bobwhite restoration. Bill manages Kyker Bottoms Wildlife Refuge primarily as a waterfowl refuge but was acknowledged for successfully managing the uplands for old fields which provide optimum habitat for bobwhites.

Submitted by Steven Hayslette, [shayslette@tntech.edu](mailto:shayslette@tntech.edu)

# STATE REPORTS

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## VIRGINIA

NO NEWS REPORTED



## DUCKS UNLIMITED

### Staff Changes

DU recently hired **Emily Purcell** as a Conservation Specialist to support our conservation efforts in the South Carolina Lowcountry as well as Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia and Florida. She will be located in the Charleston field office. Emily recently graduated from Clemson University and grew up in the Charleston area. Emily will be heavily engaged in our ongoing land conservation efforts as well as stewardship of our existing portfolio of easement properties.

**Marc Reid**, from Houston, Texas, is the new Director of Development for North Texas and Oklahoma. Marc comes to DU with a strong conservation background most recently as Director of Conservation, Projects and Partner Services with Houston Wilderness. He is a Texas A&M Aggie receiving his Master of Recreation and Resources Development in 2012, Master of Natural Resources Development in 2008, and BS in Recreation, Park & Tourism Sciences in 2005. As a lifelong outdoor enthusiast, Marc has a passion for duck and deer hunting, fishing and natural resource conservation. We look forward to much success given his natural resource background and major gift experience.

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

### Arkansas

#### WMA Improvements Offset Utility's Water Use

Preliminary plans for enhancement work at Ed Gordon WMA have been completed, and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) has begun the process of securing permits. DU staff members are finalizing amendments to the agreements with Southwestern Energy and AGFC. DU will provide engineering oversight for construction work which AGFC will contract and deliver. Half of the construction to be completed this summer, and the remainder will be done summer 2015. These renovations are designed to offset water usage by Southwestern Energy.

### Mississippi

#### Mahannah WMA Enhanced

DU is working with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) to determine the location of two new wells to be drilled on the site as part of the MS Wetland Enhancements NAWCA project. More than 400 reforested acres and 379 acres of moist-soil area will be improved by the addition of the wells. In addition to a NAWCA grant, partners include MDWFP, Audubon Mississippi, Cypress Brake Tree Farms, Wetlands America Trust, the Walker Foundation and a private landowner.

#### NAWCA Grant Awarded for Mississippi Wetlands

DU recently received a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant for enhancements on two refuges along the Mississippi River – St. Catherine's Creek National Wildlife Refuge near Natchez and Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge near Greenville. Construction



USFWS, Earl Cunningham

# STATE REPORTS

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is scheduled for 2015 and will include reforestation of bottomland hardwood areas and installation of water management infrastructure. In addition to the NAWCC, partners on the project include the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks, Audubon Mississippi, Cypress Brake Tree Farms, Wetlands America Trust, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a private landowner.

## South Carolina

### Lowcountry Private Land Funding

DU recently received \$180,000 from the USFWS SC Coastal Program. This funding will support the Lowcountry Program which has established an extensive conservation easement portfolio in the South Carolina Lowcountry through partnerships with private landowners. Top priorities for utilizing this funding will be stewardship of existing easements as well as new land conservation projects and wetland enhancement on private easement lands.

### Public Land Improvements Complete

DU and partners recently completed four projects to improve waterfowl habitat in South Carolina. DU worked with SCDNR to enhance management infrastructure on Palatchucola, Bonneau Ferry and Donnelley Wildlife Management Areas. DU worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge, which helps protect the largest undeveloped estuary along the Atlantic Coast, to improve moist-soil habitat management infrastructure.

## North Carolina

### Falls of Neuse Game Land Enhancement

Construction on a 593-acre project at Falls of Neuse Game Land has begun. The project will improve waterfowl habitat and public hunting near Raleigh, and is being funded by the NC Attorney General's Office, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and DU. The current project includes canal enhancements and installation of six new water control structures. DU

engineers are also working with the NCWRC on plans for the installation of a new pump station and further canal enhancements.

## Florida

### Curry Island

DU partnered with the Lake Okeechobee Habitat Alliance (LOHA) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to conserve 2,700 acres of important freshwater marsh in Glades County. DU received a \$100,000 gift from the Robin Weeks estate to ensure long-term management of the area. LOHA has a lease agreement and management plan in place to protect the habitat values of the area for the benefit of wildlife. DU will continue to assist as needed to promote this western Lake Okeechobee public hunting area.

## Virginia

### Building Funding for Virginia Conservation Projects

DU is working with the VDGIF to gather funding for improvements to two southeast Virginia wildlife management areas. Having already secured support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, the Mary Morton Parsons Foundation, Dominion Power, Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Stamp Grant Program, the Ohrstrom Foundation, DU Major Sponsors and the Wildlife Foundation of Virginia, DU is seeking additional funding for the \$1-million-project through a variety of private and public sources.

Once funding is secured, the projects will enhance waterfowl habitat on Hog Island Wildlife Management Area and Princess Anne WMA over the next several years. Enhancements will include improvements to water control infrastructure and management capabilities. These projects complement recent work DU and partners conducted on the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.

# STATE REPORTS

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

### Louisiana

#### Freshwater Enhancement Projects Underway

Two freshwater flow enhancement projects are under construction in coastal Louisiana to improve habitat for waterfowl. The St. Louis Canal and Liner's Canal projects will both increase freshwater inputs to areas of marsh that have been impacted by saltwater intrusion. The Liner's Canal project in Terrebonne Parish is a long-awaited master plan project and part of a \$1-million NAWCA grant. DU will build a multi-bay water control structure to increase the flow of freshwater through the canal and prevent further saltwater intrusion. Project partners include Apache Corporation, the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Moore-Odom Wildlife Foundation and ConocoPhillips.

The St. Louis Canal project will improve approximately 6,000 acres of marsh along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, including portions of the Pointe-aux-Chenes Wildlife Management Area open to public hunting. It was funded in part by a grant from the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority and other partners include Apache Corporation, ConocoPhillips, Richmond Trees and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

#### Rockefeller Refuge Improved

Construction is nearing completion on the LSU Structure on Rockefeller Refuge in Cameron Parish. The new water control structure has six 48-inch pipe culverts, flap gates and weir boxes and construction includes 1,100 linear feet of levee, security fencing and an expanded fishing pier. The new infrastructure will enable project partner Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to adequately manage habitat on approximately 8,600 acres of coastal marsh important to waterfowl, wading birds and other wetland dependent wildlife and fisheries.

#### Rice Program Meeting NRCS Resource Needs

Recently the Louisiana NRCS State Technical Committee ranked habitat loss (insufficient habitat) and inefficient use of irrigation water as the two top resource concerns for the Pelican State. This was very encouraging for DU because our Rice Stewardship Program (RSP) lies at the nexus of those resource needs. Through pump efficiency testing and conservation plans designed to maximize waterfowl benefits on rice farms, the RSP directly addresses these two problem areas. As of early June, RSP staff have completed resource inventories on 32,800 acres, outreach and education on more than 22,000 acres and more than 50 pump efficiency tests.

### Oklahoma

#### Agency Recognizes DU Staff

Since the inception of the Oklahoma Duck Stamp in 1980, Ducks Unlimited (DU) has been the most consistent and reliable partner in providing critical support for Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) wetland development projects. DU's Southern Region staff has provided financial and technical support of ODWC's Duck Stamp Program spanning a period of nearly 20 years. DU has



*The new fishing pier associated with the LSU Structure will enhance recreational opportunities on the Rockefeller Refuge.*

# STATE REPORTS

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helped to acquisition approximately 13,000 acres of historic wetland habitat for ODWC management, as well as restore or enhance over 8,000 wetland acres on ODWC lands. Assistance has included wetland planning, engineering, surveying, contract inspection, grant writing, generation of project partners and direct financial support.

Three of DU's staff members have been particularly critical in Oklahoma conservation efforts. **Bobby Massey, Scott Manley** and **Eric Held** were presented with plaques at ODWC headquarters in appreciation of their individual works and in recognition of the entire DU staff for their outstanding efforts.



(r-l) Eric Held, Bobby Massey and Scott Manley

Submitted by Andi Cooper, [acooper@ducks.org](mailto:acooper@ducks.org)

## 2013-14 Southeastern Section Officers

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# BUSINESS

## STRATEGIC PLAN - MEMBER INPUT REQUESTED!

The Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society is considering implementation of a Strategic Plan to motivate and orient future activities of the Section. A critical part of the Strategic Planning process is participation by member chapters and individuals; this plan is meant to be a dynamic, working document that serves all in the Section. To that end, we ask that members take time to review and comment on the draft plan (below). Comments will be taken through July 2015, and should be sent via email or postal mail to:

Eric Pelren, President SETWS  
Dept. of Ag., Geosciences & Natural Resources  
256 Brehm Hall, UT Martin  
Martin, TN 38238  
epelren@utm.edu

Southeastern Section of the Wildlife Society  
DRAFT Strategic Plan  
July 2014

This strategic plan is a dynamic document developed for consideration by the Southeastern Section membership of The Wildlife Society (SETWS) to guide the activities and future direction of the Section. Goals following adoption are subject to modification at 2-year intervals, when each new president takes office.

The strategic plan will be posted on the Section website (<http://wildlife.org/se/home>). At the annual meeting of the Section each year, the President will report on the status of actions on the Strategic Plan.

The mission of SETWS is consistent with the mission of TWS, which follows:

The Wildlife Society is committed to a world where humans and wildlife co-exist. We work to ensure that wildlife and habitats are conserved through management actions that take into careful consideration relevant scientific information. We create opportunities for this to occur by involving professional wildlife managers, disseminating wildlife science, advocating for effective wildlife policy and law, and building the active support of an informed citizenry.

**Our mission is to represent and serve the professional community of scientists, managers, educators, technicians, planners, and others who work actively to study, manage, and conserve wildlife and habitats worldwide.**

The members of The Wildlife Society manage, conserve, and study wildlife populations and habitats. They actively manage forests, conserve wetlands, restore endangered species, conserve wildlife on private and public lands, resolve wildlife damage and disease problems, and enhance biological diversity. TWS members are active across the United States, Canada, and Mexico, as well as internationally.

The products of The Wildlife Society include essential, practical, and objective information for wildlife professionals. We provide research, policy information, and practical tools in print and electronic forms, along with vibrant professional networks that allow solutions to wildlife conservation and management challenges to be anchored in science.

# BUSINESS

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The Objectives and Purposes of SETWS, as specified in the Bylaws, follow:

The principal objectives of the Southeastern Section are the establishment of professional solidarity and maintenance of the highest possible professional standards, including the development of all types of wildlife management along sound biological lines and protection of the interests of its members.

SETWS shall provide an opportunity for better liaison between individual members, their Section Representatives, and the Society, and shall serve members of the Society in Section II in any other appropriate manner.

SETWS shall encourage technical wildlife and fish management in member states of the Society and shall recognize and commend outstanding work in the profession.

SETWS shall arrange for annual meetings at which appropriate discussions may be held, with papers presented and distributed, thus advancing the science and practice of wildlife management.

SETWS shall serve to focus the attention of the Society upon professional wildlife needs, problems, and events in the Southeast.

The following goals are consistent with the mission, objectives and purposes of SETWS and represent a framework for the organization of this plan:

Goal 1. Provide opportunities for professional networking and continuing education of the membership.

- A. Identify opportunities to host or support workshops, symposia, and other educational opportunities for members at conferences of SEAFWA, TWS, and other relevant entities.
- B. Provide a newsletter as a forum for communication among members, member states, and agencies and organizations within the section.

Goal 2. Recognize and commend excellence in the membership.

- A. Annually bestow the Wildlife Management Excellence Award.
- B. Provide annual award for Best Wildlife Paper submitted to JSEAFWA.
- C. Nominate deserving SETWS members for regional and national awards, positions, activities and honors where appropriate.

Goal 3. Facilitate sound, science-based wildlife management.

- A. Facilitate science-based management of furbearers, wetland wildlife, nongame and endangered species, deer, and other wildlife through activities of standing committees.
- B. Ensure appropriate wildlife-related content for JSEAFWA via Wildlife Technical Session Editors.

Goal 4. Influence wildlife-related policy in accordance with sound, science-based principles.

- A. Propose and create Resolutions where needs are identified.
- B. Facilitate communication with state chapters, other sections, and parent society regarding policy issues via the Conservation Affairs Network.

# BUSINESS

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Goal 5. Facilitate recruitment of excellent students into the profession.

- A. Support Southeastern Wildlife Student Conclave.
- B. Provide awards for Best Student Presentation and Best Student Poster at annual SEAFWA Conference.
- C. Provide annual Student Chapter of the Year Award.
- D. Support recruitment efforts for minority students.
- E. Maintain standards for Accreditation of wildlife graduate programs.

Goal 6. Maximize the effectiveness, purpose, and legitimacy of SETWS.

- A. Periodically review committees, bylaws, and initiatives of SETWS and modify, add, or delete as appropriate to suit changing needs and directions of the section.
- B. Encourage membership in section among member states.
- C. Provide input to TWS (parent Society) regarding appropriate content for The Wildlife Professional, The Wildlifer, and other publications.
- D. Help fund efforts and initiatives which advance the mission of SETWS and its members.

## MEETINGS OF INTEREST

### OCTOBER

#### **68th Annual SEAFWA Conference**

October 19-22, 2014  
Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa  
Destin, Florida

<http://seafwa.org/conferences/2014/index.html>

#### **The Wildlife Society 21st Annual Conference**

October 25-30, 2014  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

[www.wildlifesociety.org](http://www.wildlifesociety.org)

### FEBRUARY

#### **39th Annual NWTF Convention and Sport Show**

February 12-15, 2015  
Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center  
Nashville, Tennessee

[http://www.nwtf.org/special\\_events/convention.html](http://www.nwtf.org/special_events/convention.html)

### MARCH

#### **20th Annual Meeting SBDN and the 25th Colloquium on Conservation of Mammals**

March 3-6, 2015  
Crowne Plaza Hotel  
St. Louis, Missouri

[www.sbdn.org](http://www.sbdn.org)

# 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. L. Mike Conner, Secretary-Treasurer  
Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society  
Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center  
3988 Jones Center Drive  
Newton, GA 39870  
mike.conner@jonesctr.org