

Arkansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society

Newsletter

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Chapter 40th Anniversary Reception

During the SEAFWA meeting in Hot Springs on October 8, 2012 the Chapter hosted a reception in honor of the 40th Anniversary of the chapter, which held its first meeting at the Cooperative Extension office in Little Rock on May 6, 1972 and received its charter from the Wildlife



James Miller (left) presenting Brad Carner with a plaque for his service as Chapter President in 2011-12.

Society later that month on May 22, 1972. Of the 36 charter members only John Sunderland is still active in Chapter affairs, though Jim Miller is still actively working with TWS outside the state.

Jacob Bokker Named Commission Wildlife Biologist of the Year

Jacob Bokker, Field Biologist in AGFC's Region 2, was recently named as the Commission's Wildlife Biologist of the Year for 2012. Jacob has been with the Commission for



14 years and has served in several different capacities; Extra Laborer on Mike Freeze Wattensaw WMA (6yrs), Natural Resources Program

Technician on St. Francis Sunken Lands and Steve N. Wilson Raft Creek Bottoms WMAs (5yrs) and Wildlife Biologist (3yrs).

In 2012 Jacob worked to complete WMA Annual Work Plans/budgets, two very aggressive WMA Open Land Management Plans, and one large Moist Soil Management Plan in order to effectively reach his habitat and maintenance goals for FY 14. Additionally, due to a staff vacancy Jacob was charged with overseeing all habitat management contracts in Region 2.

Ray Holden Named Commission Wildlife Technician of the Year

Ray Holden, the Natural Resource Program Technician for the Scott Henderson Gulf Mountain WMA received the Commission's Technician of the Year Award in April.



Ray has served as the on-the-ground lead in the implementation of the PERC grant on Scott

Henderson Gulf Mountain WMA which has included the daily oversight of three extra-labor personnel. Over the course of this past year, Ray served as the agency's "eyes on the ground" during the monumental construction of a natural gas pipeline across SHGM WMA which led to the initiation of gas production on this WMA in August 2012. During the construction phase of the pipeline (which spanned over 6 months), construction crews often worked 24 hours a day, 7 days per week) Ray personally devoted countless hours, including weekends, to inspect the work to ensure there were no environmental concerns. The end result is that the pipeline was completed successfully resulting in an added wildlife benefit (increased open area, utilized heavily by deer, turkeys, etc.) to the WMA.

Federal Employees Free to Serve in Professional Societies

Beginning April 5, 2013, federal employees will once again have the opportunity to serve as officers, directors, or trustees of nonprofit organizations without fear of violating a federal criminal statute. A new amendment to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) marks the end of a 15-year effort by The Wildlife Society and other professional societies to reverse a roadblock to professional development and collaboration.

"Federal agencies are an important source of highly-qualified volunteers to serve in leadership positions, and agency assistance with travel costs certainly helps with budgetary bottom lines," said Wini Kessler, TWS President. "Government employee participation is vitally important for The Wildlife Society and other non-profit societies."

The CFR amendment (5 CFR 2640) changes the interpretation of statute 18 U.S.C. 208(a), which prohibits federal employees from serving in leadership positions with organizations where that service may result in a conflict of interest with their federal employer. In 1996, the Department of Justice interpreted the statute to mean that federal employees couldn't participate in any official capacity for nonprofit organizations, even when a conflict of interest did not exist. Under the statute, waivers for participation could and were issued, but the

waiver process was not standardized across agencies. Some agencies, including the National Institutes of Health, issued waivers freely. Others, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, denied waivers in most cases, and some failed to alert their employees at all that serving on nonprofit boards could result in criminal prosecution.

TWS and dozens of scientific societies have battled for the amendment since 1998, meeting with the Office of Government Ethics (OGE), the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and the Office of Personnel Management. The latter two agencies recognized that the statute's restrictions made it difficult for the federal government to retain talented scientists by denying those scientists opportunities for career development through leadership roles in professional societies. In turn, societies faced a shortage of representation from the federal sector.

The battle was won on March 6, when the OGE issued a final rule that amends how the statute is interpreted. Under this amendment, federal employees may serve nonprofit organizations because OGE determined that the possibility of a conflict of interest between the employee's loyalty to the government and any fiduciary duties to the organization is remote. The amendment eliminates waivers because regulations are already in place that allow federal employers to approve an employee's participation in nonprofit organizations ahead of time and to require employees to document, limit, or end their service to nonprofit organizations if conflicts of interest do arise.

TWS Executive Director Ken Williams said that this is one step in the right direction toward reversing a disturbing trend — a growing separation between the wildlife research and management communities. "The entire conservation community is strengthened by a vital and diverse professional society," said Williams. "This rule change was badly needed."

Chris Colclasure Named New Director of ANHC

Martha Miller, Director of the Department of Arkansas Heritage announced February 12, that Chris Colclasure had been selected as the new director of the ANHC.

In the announcement Miller stated that, "We are confident that Chris is well



prepared to assume these new responsibilities seamlessly and provide strong leadership to the agency going forward."

Colclasure has been with the ANHC for 11 years and has served as deputy director of the agency for six years. Most recently, he has served as interim director, as he continues to focus on collaborative efforts to conserve the state's natural heritage.

Daniel and Lunsford Earn NWTF Awards

As a NWTF volunteer and as a staff member at the USDA Forest Service and the NWTF, Dennis Daniel has contributed to the restoration and conservation of the wild turkey in many different ways and places.

In recognition of his various achievements, Daniel received the NWTF Wayne Bailey Lifetime Achievement Award Feb. 16 at the NWTF Convention and Sport Show.

As a wildlife biologist for the USDA Forest Service, the Clarksville, Ark., native worked on the restoration of the wild turkey at posts in Arkansas, Mississippi, Kentucky and Georgia while supervising conservation efforts in a few other Southern states.

Still with the Forest Service, he played a pivotal role in making the NWTF a pioneer participant

in the Forest Service's Land Stewardship Program, which has allowed the NWTF to cut timber in national forests, clearing habitat for wildlife with revenue from the timber sales invested in other habitat improvements in the same forests.

Later, Daniel served as a Forest Service liaison at NWTF headquarters, strengthening the relationship between the partners. Upon retirement from the Forest Service, he joined the NWTF for four years as a regional biologist in Arkansas.

Early in his career, Daniel conceived and supervised the creation of large "walk-in" turkey areas in Arkansas' Ozark National Forest that are still popular today. Later, he was successful in establishing wild turkey restoration on public lands in Eastern Kentucky.

Since his recent retirement from the NWTF, Daniel has entered into a few Forest Service land stewardship agreements. On one of his current projects, he spreads lime on several dozen wildlife openings.

Chad Lunsford, Biological Sciences Technician, from Ozark National Forest, Pleasant Hill Ranger District, in Arkansas earned the National Wild Turkey Federation Individual Habitat Program Award in February for implementation of wildlife habitat improvement program. His accomplishments included completing more than 3,900 acres of terrestrial wildlife habitat improvement and more than 5,900 acres of trust fund wildlife habitat improvement. His work improved habitat for wild turkey, white tailed deer, bats, neotropical migratory birds, bobwhite quail and fire dependent rare plant species.

ATWS Spring Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2013
Potlatch Conservation Education Center,
Casscoe
Allison Fowler, Secretary

Attendance (Field Trip): 18
Attendance (Meeting): 30

The meeting began with a field trip to White River National Wildlife Refuge. The field trip was led by Jeff Denman, Supervisory Forester, and Jay Hitchcock, Wildlife Biologist for the White River NWR. Participants were shown areas that are being managed with the use of timber treatments to achieve desired forest conditions.



Following lunch, the group convened at the AGFC Potlatch Conservation Education Center at Cook's Lake for the afternoon session. Tom Nupp, President, opened the session by welcoming everyone. A detailed agenda for the afternoon session is included.

Keith Weaver, Project Leader for Central Arkansas National Wildlife Refuge Complex, opened the meeting with a presentation describing the National Blueway System and White River National Blueway. Mr. Weaver provided the group with an overview of the National Blueways System, a part of the American Great Outdoors Initiative. He described how the system was devised and its



vision. In addition, he shared the system's accomplishments in the White River watershed.

Jeff

Denman, Chief Forester, White River National Wildlife Refuge, gave a presentation on Forest Management Using Desired Forest Conditions (DFC's) at White River NWR. He described how a multilayered forest is related to increased wildlife diversity.

Ron Hollis and Jay Hitchcock of the White River National Wildlife Refuge presented information on the Infrastructure and Water Management of White River National Wildlife

Refuge. They highlighted the various methods used for water management of green-tree reservoirs, moist soil habitat, and shrub scrub habitat for waterfowl use.

Martin Blaney, Habitat Coordinator for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, presented on Bottomland Hardwood Desired Forest Conditions: Private Landowner's Interest Up and Down the Mississippi River: A coalition. He discussed the partnerships between the joint ventures and various other agencies and the effort to train private landowners to manage for DFCs.

The business meeting was led by President Tom Nupp. Allison Fowler, secretary-treasurer, presented the fall meeting minutes and a motion was made to approve them. The minutes were approved. Updated copies of the chapter financial report and membership report were distributed to everyone in attendance. After review, both reports were approved.

Student chapter updates were requested from the group. Molly Karnes, vice president of the UAM chapter, provided an update for the UAM chapter. The chapter currently has 15 members. The students have participated in various research projects including herp coverboard surveys and collecting biodata at deer check stations. 13 students attended conclave in North Carolina. They have also participated in a wildlife deer expo, bow shoot, and held a field day at Monticello schools.

Tom Nupp provided an update for the ATU student chapter. They have been helping with the Bearcat Hollow project and continue to maintain their 1 mile stretch of highway under the Adopt-a-Highway program. 15 students attended spring conclave in North Carolina, where they placed in 3 out of 5 calling competitions. They also held a beast feast to raise money for the chapter.

Blake Sasse gave a report on the chapter newsletter and also about access issues with the chapter website. Blake Sasse also mentioned that he will be judging and awarding the wildlife society award for the Arkansas state science fair.

President Tom Nupp discussed the availability of insurance for subunit officers through TWS.

Consensus was that this is not necessary. He also mentioned that training will be available for subunit officers at the national meeting in Portland, OR. Also, the results of a membership survey regarding the usefulness of meetings were discussed. The chapter may potentially decide to have one annual meeting instead of two meetings per year.

Emily Boyd, Graduate Student at the University of Arkansas-Monticello, presented on her research on the spatial ecology of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep in Montana. She is testing the optimal foraging theory and the effects of ruggedness and forage quantity on the spatial use of bighorn sheep using game cameras.

Darrell Bowman, Lake Ecology and Fisheries Manager for the Bella Vista Village Property Owners Association, gave a presentation on resident Canada Goose population control in Bella Vista, Arkansas. He has organized a coalition of volunteers to oil eggs and to remove 10% of the goose population. The culled geese were taken to processors and donated to hungry families.

Dani Techentin, Graduate Student at the University of Arkansas-Monticello, presented on estimating deer density at the Pine Bluff Arsenal. She utilized 2 methods, thermal imaging and pellet surveys, to provide estimates to the area manager to help set harvest goals.

Dr. Rob Kissell, associate professor at the University of Arkansas at Monticello presented on the effects of a 100 year flood on deer density on an Island in the Mississippi River. Using aerial thermal imaging, they detected a 40% decline in the deer population from 2011-2012.

Arkansas State Science Fair Awards

The Chapter presented two awards to students who presented posters at the 2013 Arkansas State Science Fair in Conway on March 29th. The first place award went to Madison Heflin of Ridgway Christian School for her project, "Quack Attack",

which focused on the relative efficiency of wooden and artificial duck calls.



The second place award went to Lance Blocker of white Hall High School for "Hunters Beware: Does weather affect duck season."

ATWS Fall Meeting Minutes

September 13, 2012
University of Arkansas at Fayetteville
Steven Fowler, Acting Secretary

Student Chapter Reports

ATU – Tim Brolovsky presented. 55 members, Governors Conservation Achievement Award Banquet, Bearcat Hollow project participation, Big Buck Contest, Field day for freshmen, trash pick-up, wild game dinner as a fundraiser.

UA – Tyler Pitman presented. Enlisting new officers, increase in students, new faculty, float trip on Buffalo, planned events include bird banding and Lake Fayetteville cleanup.

ASU – Tom Risch presented. 25-30 members, elected new officers, adopt a mile cleanup, White River NWR check station fundraiser.

Steven Fowler – gave financial report and informed group of opportunities for students to receive assistance in attending SEAFWA.

Brad Carner – SEAFWA, host 40th anniversary reception was discussed. National asked for state chapters to sign on letter to urge Congress to restore SWG funding to current levels – We agreed to sign on to letter.

Tom Nupp – Discussion of setting meeting time (lead time) and annual vs biannual meeting.

New Hires & Promotions

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

Region 1 – Joshua Massey is a new wildlife technician

Region 2 – David Covington transferred from the Private Lands section to be the Field Biologist for Hurricane Lake WMA (and many others). B. Lorne Green has come on as a field biologist.

Region 5 – Jeff Lawson promoted from technician to field biologist at the Camden office.

Region 7 – Mark Hutchings (Urban/Field Biologist)

Private Lands Section – Clint Johnson was promoted from technician to Private Lands Biologist and will work out of the Mayflower office.

Programs – JP Fairhead was promoted from Field Biologist to Biologist Program Specialist and assigned to work as the wild hog coordinator.

Arkansas Publications

Bolenbaugh, JR, T Cooper, RS Brady, KL Willard, DG Krementz. 2012. Population status and habitat associations of the King Rail in the midwestern United States. *Waterbirds* 35(4): 535-545.

Dekar, MP and DD Magoulick. 2013. Effects of predators on fish and crayfish survival in intermittent streams. *Southeastern Naturalist* 12(1): 197-208.

Olmstead, VG, EB Webb, RW Johnson. 2013. Moist-Soil seed biomass and species richness on wetland reserve program easements in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. *Wetlands* 33(2): 197-206.

Thompson III, FR, MB Robbins, JA Fitzgerald. 2012. Landscape-Level forest cover is a predictor of Cerulean Warbler abundance. *Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 124(4): 721-727.

Tumlison, R. 2012. Unusual foraging tactics by a Red-tailed hawk in an urban environment. *Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 124(4): 818-820.

The Wildlife Society <http://www.wildlife.org>

Arkansas Chap. :<http://joomla.wildlife.org/arkansas/>

Have you paid your dues for calendar year 2013? Dues are \$10 for regular members or \$200 for a Lifetime Membership.

