



GEORGIA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Summer-Fall 2017

Save the Date

GATWS Annual Meeting
Sept. 6-7, 2018
Tifton, GA

Contact Us

<http://wildlife.org/georgia-chapter/>

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President's Message

As I sit here writing this message we are in the middle of the Fall, however, only the last several weeks have really had the feeling of Fall. I love this season of the year. Leaves are changing, soon to fall to the earth and be reused in their natural cycle. Animals are on the move and for many of us hunting seasons are open or soon to open. Cooler weather makes getting outside more enjoyable and the only downside to me is the shortening days. I suppose, however, this makes for relaxing with a good book more enjoyable. But most of all Fall to me is a time of reflection. What have I accomplished this year? What can I do better next year? How have I grown in both my professional and personal life? I believe these are questions we should all ask of ourselves. Your Executive Committee for the GA Chapter of TWS is constantly asking these questions concerning the Chapter and our meetings. Only through this type of reflection, will we grow and become a better chapter. Chick-fil-A for lunch anyone? Yes even the little things matter!

This was a great year for the GA TWS, our first newsletter (and now second) came out and we had a successful meeting at a new venue for the first time in several years. Thank you to everyone that attended the meeting as it could not have been a success without your participation. The Georgia Wildlife Federation headquarters was a wonderful venue with easy driving access, yet secluded enough that it gave one the feeling of being away from everything. Special thanks goes out to Mike Worley and his staff for the use of the facility and hospitality and Theron Menken for cooking the barbeque pork butts (Awesome!). While this was the first meeting at the Georgia Wildlife Federation facility, we can assure you it will not be the last.

After a great Fall meeting, we have started planning for the 2018 meeting in Tifton. As we have grown, former meeting venues are now too small to adequately host the number of attendees. While this makes planning more difficult, it is awesome to see increased participation from both professionals and students. This year we offered credits for TWS re-certification as well as credits for Society of American Foresters (SAF). I believe both are a benefit to our members and we plan to continue to do this for future meetings.

Elections will occur this year for Executive Committee officers. Be on the lookout in the coming months for opportunities to get involved in the chapter and provide feedback on how we can best serve you, our members.

Daymond Hughes
President, GA Chapter of TWS

2018 Georgia Chapter of TWS Annual Meeting

Tentative dates: September 6–7, 2018, Tifton

Next year's GA TWS annual meeting will be held in Tifton, Georgia. The Executive Committee is in the process of securing a suitable venue given our growth in attendees and presentations the last few years. We plan to have our usual catered social Thursday evening. Look for further information in advance of the meeting. We hope to see you in 2018!

2017 Annual Meeting Roundup

Over 100 wildlife professionals and students from across Georgia attended the GA TWS annual meeting in Covington on September 7–8. The meeting was successfully held at a new venue, the Georgia Wildlife Federation's Alcovy Conservation Center. Twenty-two oral presentations and 11 posters were given covering a variety of topics related to game, nongame, endangered species, policy, habitat management, and more. Attendees enjoyed a delicious BBQ dinner catered by GA TWS member Theron Menken. Erin Cork received the Student Travel Award. Student presentation winners included Camille Herteux (1st place), Michael Biggerstaff (2nd place), John Yeiser (3rd place), Ashely Lohr and Calvin Wakefield (best graduate poster), and Mattea Lewis (best undergraduate poster).



Scenes from the Georgia Chapter of TWS 2017 Annual Meeting at the Alcovy Conservation Center.



Student presentation winners Camille Herteux and Mattea Lewis (left) and student travel award winner Erin Cork (right).

Executive Committee Update

The GA TWS Executive Committee recently held a meeting on September 29 at the GADNR Rum Creek Nongame Office near Forsyth. The board discussed details for next year's annual meeting, developing a chapter standard operating procedures manual, upcoming awards, and a logo contest. Contact the chapter secretary, Andrew Edelman, if you want a copy of the meeting minutes. The board is always interested in hearing from members regarding the direction and management of the chapter.

Treasurer's Report:

As of late September, we have about \$5,000 in our chapter account. We plan to donate \$750 to the ABAC student chapter and \$750 to the UGA student chapter for wildlife conclave support. The GA TWS currently has 132 members. Dues can be paid via check or PayPal (<http://wildlife.org/georgia-chapter/annual-meeting/>).

CALLING ALL ARTISTS

GA TWS IS HOSTING A CONTEST

DESIGN OUR NEW T-SHIRT!

Include front pocket and full back design

WIN:

- Bragging rights
- Free t-shirt
- Free meeting registration

SUBMIT YOUR T-SHIRT DESIGNS TO SHARON SWAGGER:
SHARON.SWAGGER@GA.USDA.GOV
BY March 15, 2018

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Student Chapter

ABAC Student Chapter of TWS, under the leadership of its officers Chris Terrazas, Miranda Wilkinson, and Jacob Wilson, has been very active this Fall semester. Volunteerism is very important to this student chapter as you can tell from the list of all the activities they've tackled just recently:

- They sent several students to the State Chapter TWS meeting in September where they enjoyed the numerous talks by professionals in the field they are working to join.

- More recently, they funded 17 students to attend the SEAFWA conference in Louisville, Kentucky. They took full advantage of the networking opportunities and some of them may have even found their summer job as a direct result!
- Participated in the Southeastern Section of TWS's business meeting at SEAFWA.
- The club agreed to build ~20 new American kestrel nest boxes for GADNR Nongame Division this semester to be placed across the area near ABAC.
- The club agreed to build 50 wood duck nest boxes for Greg Balkcom's efforts at increasing waterfowl reproduction in the state.
- They supplied over 40 volunteers to help run a Jake's Day event at Paradise Public Fishing Area!
- They sponsored an educational booth at the Jake's Day event to help our students learn how to interact with the public while providing experiential learning for the youth in the area. The students themselves developed the content of the booth that included general species awareness for multiple common species (mammals to birds), turtle traits comparing turtles and tortoises, and a look at carnivorous plant diversity of the Southeast.
- 9 members are set to get Project wild certified this November.
- 12 members signed up to get S130/S190 red card certified for fire training through The Orianne Society in December.
- They also helped supply volunteers for quail covey call counts at Silverlake WMA where they needed numerous people to cover all the different stations all at the same time.



ABAC students served as volunteers at a Jake's Day event at Paradise Public Fishing Area (left) and for quail covey call counts at Silverlake WMA (right).

University of Georgia Student Chapter

Founded in 1967, UGA TWS is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Members are very excited to be celebrating their chapter's history. Starting with the first wildlife conclave in 1972, UGA has attended the southeast student conclave annually. Historically, UGA has done well at student conclaves and national conferences. Student members look forward to representing The Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources and The University of Georgia each year. UGA has hosted the Southeast Student conclave in 1980, 1990, and 2007.

Student members also enjoy networking with wildlife professionals and engaging with the local community. In September 2017, a few of our members traveled to Covington, Georgia for the annual Georgia Chapter of The Wildlife Society Meeting. Additionally, five members of the UGA student chapter traveled to Albuquerque, New Mexico to attend the 24th annual Wildlife Society conference. There, the UGA quiz bowl team won the National Quiz bowl competition for the second consecutive year. On October

21, UGA TWS participated in Sandy Creek Nature Center’s annual “Scary Spooky Slimy” event. TWS provided animal specimens, and student members were able to inspire local kids to take an interest in nature.



University of Georgia TWS Quiz Bowl Team

Professional Spotlight: Lynn Lewis, National Wild Turkey Federation

The outdoors have always called me since I was little. Just ask my Mama, she’ll be happy to embarrass me with a litany of stories including the time when I was 6 years old and crossed a very busy road (after being told not to), so I could go to the “woods” in our neighborhood. I came back and promptly told her about the cool rabbit I saw which was quickly followed by some discipline (to this day Mommy Dearest swears there was no wire hanger involved...) and so began my reputation as a strong-willed child, horrible actress, and less than stellar liar. Fast forward to my teenage years growing up on a 170-acre farm on the Ware-Bacon County line where I really learned how Mother Nature functioned. I worked as the Chief Farmhand clearing land with a chainsaw, spent hours upon hours on the back of a tractor mowing/planting, tending to the chickens/cows, and with drip torch in hand set fire to the woods. I won’t ever forget being awakened early one Saturday morning to the sound of BOOOOM, as my father and his friend dynamited a beaver dam (yes I’m sure totally illegal). Never would I have imagined I would be doing that very same thing in Animal Damage Class at UGA years later. It was on the farm I also learned to shoot and hunt guided by my father and uncle. I spent many hours alone or with my dogs, .22 rifle in hand, hunting and camping on the back-forty. I watched the constant life and death dance that I too was a part of, not just when I shot my first squirrel, but when we rehabilitated an injured red-tailed hawk and eventually watched it fly away.

For me going into the wildlife management field was not a choice it was a given. ABAC was an obvious decision for me since it wasn’t too far from home, their wildlife program was solid, and I could then transfer to UGA. I’ll never forget being in the deer pens trying to draw blood from a deer and Mr. Payne looking at me intently asking if I was ok doing this. He could tell I was struggling a little. This of course was the first lesson in wildlife management: it’s about the population not the individual animal. Next came Warnell where I made life-long friends. Many of those friendships were formed at Flinchum’s and the cabins at Whitehall and later became trusted partners and colleagues in both the forestry and wildlife realms. I loved it all and everything interested me so there was a wide mix of experiences that helped me expand my knowledge base and make those all-important professional connections. Travels With The Pig and pickle-juice drinking Dr. Laerm trapping small mammals and herps from the mountains to the coast. Mist netting songbirds and radio-telemetry from a prop plane spinning in circles only hundreds of feet off the ground that made most folks puke. Late nights shooting deer and hogs at airports and high-dollar neighborhoods with Wildlife Services and trying to match Doug Hoffman’s speed at gutting deer (I’d do about one to his five). And having the honor of being a graduate student to the first female full professor, Sara Schweitzer, which only now do I realize was a pretty big deal.

Of course I was an introvert (I still am at times) and went into this field because I loved the outdoors and the science behind it. Either nobody told me or I totally disregarded the fact that wildlife management in this day and age is 99.9% people management. It used to be wildlife agencies and professionals had the sole authority to make management decisions as they saw fit. Today the decision making frequently is done by politicians, appointees, and the general public, all of whom have very rudimentary knowledge about wildlife management, don't know about or consider the science, and respond with emotions or to further personal agendas. I distinctly remember this being an issue when I was in graduate school as one of my professor's, and later my supervisor and mentor Dr. Randy Davidson, expressed much angst and frustration as state/federal agencies were slowly being stripped of their authority to manage wildlife and the decision making process had to involve more and more "people". So today we see much of the management being done using a stakeholder-based, participatory decision making process. This is a long drawn-out deal that requires much finesse in the people management department, which most wildlife biologists are not trained for. Like everything else, there are pros and cons, but certainly a dramatic shift away from the old ways of wildlife management and one that most of us in the field are not totally comfortable with. However, it's also a process that more often than not leads to longer lasting results that meet multiple objectives for the greater good of both people and our natural resources.

Following the lead of Jen Howze in the last newsletter, I wanted to leave the students, young professionals, and those that have been in the trenches a while with some things I try to keep in mind:

- Relationships, relationships, relationships. Wildlife management is not about the wildlife, it's about the people. Find those that you gel with and make great stuff happen.
- Never pass up a chance to network with seasoned professionals (they've forgotten more than I'll ever know) and new students (they might be my boss one day and have new and exciting ideas that always amaze me). The Wildlife Society from the state, section, and national levels is a great place to do just that!
- You are a resource manager. That includes non-game, game, recreation, endangered species, forests, agriculture, economics, community, AND PEOPLE. Remember everyone has a different perspective, but we all have a whole lot in common that ties us together. Use that common thread to evoke change.
- Always take advantage of training opportunities. If they aren't offered, ask for them. Never stop learning.
- Don't be afraid of change. It's inevitable. Embrace it and grow with it.
- Push yourself. Do things that make you uncomfortable. You'll be amazed of what you're capable of and the new things you'll learn.
- If you're going to be critical and complain, come to the table with some solutions. That's how we make things better.
- This is a marathon not a sprint. Some projects, relationships, small and large scale change can sometimes take a career. Be persistent and tenacious and sometimes that means waiting for the timing to be right.



Lynn is a Certified Wildlife Biologist® with 20 years of experience in wildlife and forest management. She is the National Wild Turkey Federation's Conservation Field Manager for GA, FL, The Carolinas, and TN. She works closely with state and federal wildlife and forestry agencies and other non-governmental organizations to conserve and enhance our natural resources and promote hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3). Lynn is a Double Dawg with a BS and MS from the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources and is an active member in both the GA and SC TWS Chapters. Lynn currently lives in Aiken, SC with her two children, Ethan and Maddie. She also has gun and will travel!

Student Spotlight: Erin Cork, University of Georgia

I'm a wetland and wildlife researcher currently studying rare pond-breeding amphibians in South Georgia. I got my start in wildlife first at UGA's Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources and later at the Savannah River Ecology Lab where I was introduced to the joys and heartbreaks of working with geographically isolated seasonal pond-breeding amphibians. For my master's research, I'm investigating the habitat use of a suite of amphibian species that are associated with longleaf pine communities and are found in increasingly smaller numbers throughout their range.



(Left to right) An oak toad (*Anaxyrus quercicus*), an automated recording device (or “froglogger”), and a striped newt (*Notophthalmus perstriatus*) at the Alapaha River WMA in Irwin County, GA.

My primary study species is the gopher frog, *Lithobates capito*. In the terrestrial environment, gopher frog survival depends on the availability of underground refuges in stump holes or gopher tortoise or small mammal burrows. Ongoing habitat management to acquire and restore gopher tortoise habitat will positively impact gopher frogs, but, unlike the tortoise, the gopher frog requires access to nearby wetlands to breed. Wetland characteristics such as hydroperiod and isolation from streams can largely determine amphibian assemblages at individual wetlands. My objective is to identify and incorporate some of these wetland variables, along with terrestrial habitat variables (canopy cover, landcover, etc.), into a model that can help identify suitable habitat for gopher frogs in Georgia. This past summer I wrapped up amphibian sampling and wetland surveys at my field site, the Alapaha River Wildlife Management Area. I am using GIS techniques to identify site- and landscape-level characteristics of wetlands and their terrestrial buffers at Alapaha and also at established gopher frog breeding wetlands throughout the coastal plain.

This fall I was awarded a travel grant by the Georgia Chapter of TWS and presented a poster on my research at the 2017 meeting in Covington, GA. The success of my project inevitably depends on the contributions of so many other wildlife researchers in the Southeast, including their willingness to retrieve and share data with me to inform my model! As a member of TWS, I'm appreciative of the opportunities to meet with these researchers, to learn about related projects and fields of study, and to get valuable feedback and insight into my own work so I too can contribute to the conservation of wildlife in the Southeast.



Erin Cork is a second-year master's student in the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Georgia where she is advised by Drs. John Maerz and Jeff Hepinstall-Cymerman. She has worked with the Gopher Frog Headstart Program and the Athens chapter of FrogWatch for several years and is a technical editor at the National Park Service's Inventory and Monitoring Program.

GA TWS Early Career Award in Honor of Dr. Bob Warren

Dr. Robert J. “Bob” Warren, a retired professor of wildlife ecology and management at the University Of Georgia Warnell School Of Forestry and Natural Resources, and a member of The Wildlife Society for 43 years, has dedicated his career to guiding students into successful wildlife professionals. In order to honor Dr. Warren and his commitment, the Georgia Chapter of The Wildlife Society established an award in 2017 in his name, to present to an Early Career Professional. GA TWS will accept nominations annually and award one Early Career Award at our annual fall meeting, as candidates arise.

To be eligible for the award, the Nominees must have:

1. Graduated with BS or MS within the past 10 years
2. Be 40 years old or younger
3. Demonstrated success while working as a wildlife professional in any agency, organization, or the private sector for at least 3 years
4. Be a member of both The Wildlife Society and Georgia Chapter of The Wildlife Society
5. Demonstrated commitment to and involvement in TWS at the state, regional, and/or national levels
6. Have their AWB or CWB certification
7. Demonstrated commitment to mentoring students/rising professionals

Nominations should be submitted by **April 1** and include:

1. A cover letter identifying the nominee and describing the work for which he/she is being nominated (1 page)
2. A short CV/biography (1 to 5 pages) of the nominee
3. Additional support letters, if applicable

Nominations will only be accepted from GA TWS members, and the award winner will be selected by the Executive Board, with nomination cut-off dates announced annually. For more information, contact Sharon Swagger at Sharon.swagger@ga.usda.gov

“So here’s my advice to the next generation of wildlife professionals. To take on the future challenges that you will face, the footprints that I and others in the wildlife profession have left will serve you well. You, too, will be better prepared to deal with emerging wildlife management and conservation issues if you take advantage of the benefits derived from mentorship, objectivity, professionalism and certification as we did during our careers.”

Robert J. Warren, PhD and CWB[®] The Wildlife Professional, September/October 2016, Volume 10 No. 5

GA TWS Jenkins-Crockford-Hayes Wildlife Conservation Award

This award is designed to be a later career award to honor the wildlife professionals who have made significant impact over their careers across a variety of avenues, to include but not limited to, innovations in research and/or management techniques and contributions to students and professionals, across our state, region, and nation. Dr. James Hobart Jenkins 1919-2006, Jack A. Crockford 1923-2011, and Dr. Frank A. Hayes, 1921-1997, were well known for their contributions to wildlife conservation but are most famous for the Chap-Gar Gun and methodology, and its career changing, innovative, still widely used method for live wildlife capture. All men were well-known, highly regarded, active in their respective societies, well-awarded, and made significant impacts on wildlife in the state, region, and nation.

To be eligible for the award, the Nominees must:

1. Be 50 years old or older
2. Have demonstrated success while working as a wildlife professional in any agency, organization, or the private sector for at least 15 years
3. Be a member of both The Wildlife Society and Georgia Chapter of The Wildlife Society
4. Made a significant impact on wildlife/wildlife management in Georgia. Regional and/or national reputation is a plus.

Nominations will only be accepted from GA TWS members, and the award winner will be selected by the Executive Board, with nomination cut-off dates announced annually.

Nominations should include:

1. A cover letter identifying the nominee and describing the work for which he/she is being nominated (1 page)
2. A short CV/biography (1 to 5 pages) of the nominee
3. 2 additional support letters

Submit nominations and questions to Sharon Swagger, Executive Board Member-At-Large, at at Sharon.swagger@ga.usda.gov.

Join or Renew Your Membership in Georgia TWS Today!

You can join or renew your membership in the Georgia Chapter of The Wildlife Society online or through the mail. You can renew using a credit card by logging into the national webpage at <https://wildlife.secure.force.com/> or our local webpage at <http://wildlife.org/georgia-chapter/annual-meeting/> (select the dues option). If you prefer to renew by mail, please send a check to (make check out to Georgia Chapter of TWS):

Brent Howze
GA TWS Treasurer
2024 Newton Rd.
Albany, GA 31701

Membership Dues

\$15 for professionals

\$10 for students