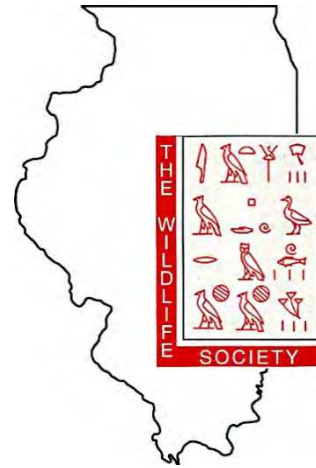


# Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society



*Excellence in Wildlife Conservation through Science and Education*

*Edited by Heath Hagy, President-Elect*

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## **President's Corner**

This past October I had the great opportunity to travel to Manitoba. First to Winnipeg for the TWS Annual Conference and then Churchill to learn about polar bears and witness research and management of these majestic creatures first hand.

To be honest, some of the plenary speakers that kicked-off the Annual Conference started on a depressing, but truthful note, speaking on the history of how native cultures were treated in Canada and the ongoing pressures of the boreal region for oil and gas development. The speakers did not hold back the message that a lot of work must be accomplished to educate, move forward and make decisions that protect the environment and native cultures. Their tone quickly turned optimistic speaking to the many good people we have in our field and professional organization that can accomplish the task of sound environmental stewardship. The take home message of the plenaries from my view was to take inspiration, develop many ideas, be passionate, and don't be afraid of what others may think.

In total, the Annual Conference was attended by over 1,500 people and it was great to see a strong Illinois presence. Illinois Chapter members Craig Miller of the Illinois Natural History Survey and Mary Beth Manjerovic of Lincoln Park Zoo presented their findings from a dove hunter survey regarding lead shot and an investigation of fungal pathogens impacting amphibians, respectively. Former chapter President Eric Hellgren was named a TWS Fellow, and most importantly, Gary



*Gary Potts (left) accepts the President's Gavel from outgoing president Rick Baydack (right).*

Potts assumed the Presidency of our national organization. As with any meeting of this size, opportunities to network abounded and I left Winnipeg inspired and enthusiastic.



*Mary Beth Manjerovic presents her research on Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis (Bd).*

Before heading back to reality, I continued my Canadian voyage to Churchill, Manitoba, with 35 other TWS members on a post-conference field trip. Churchill—dubbed the polar bear capital of the world by some—offers an intimate perspective with polar bears, especially in October and November. Our group stayed at the [Churchill Northern Studies Centre](#), a non-profit with the mission, in part, to promote and facilitate research and education of the northern environment. Without boring you on the details, you must consider a visit! While you might not have the opportunity to geek-out with 35 other TWS members, the Centre offers a variety of year-round experiences from learning vacations for the public to university credit courses for students.

The entire trip through Canada was awesome. The Society as a whole has amazing opportunities to learn, explore, and advance career and personal goals. I am excited to continue my involvement with the Society and encourage all chapter members to engage themselves, locally, nationally or internationally.



*Thirty-six TWS members visited the Churchill Northern Studies Centre after the annual conference in Winnipeg.*

Scott Meister  
ICTWS President

## **Success through Leadership: We Need You!**

To paraphrase Gary Potts, “every member of The Wildlife Society is important and plays a role, from student members to national Council members.” The success of our organization depends on everyone. We contribute in many different ways from simply engaging with others we meet and increasing communication to taking a more active role in the Society by presenting at chapter meetings, judging student presentations, participating in working groups, serving as an officer, and many other ways. Individuality is a strength that helps our group excel. One opportunity to contribute to the success of the organization is by serving as an officer.

This coming spring, the Chapter will hold elections for two positions: **President-elect** and **Councilperson-at-Large**. A summary of some of the responsibilities of all chapter officers can be found later in the newsletter. If you are interested in running for office and furthering the success of our Chapter in this capacity, please contact President Scott Meister at [smeister@dupageforest.org](mailto:smeister@dupageforest.org). The intent is to publish candidate bios in the spring newsletter to be voted upon prior to our annual meeting in April.



***WE NEED YOU!***

## **New Chapter Website**

TWS transferred the national website to a new platform in October 2014. All section, chapter, and working group websites are also being transitioned from the old platform ([drupal.wildlife.org](http://drupal.wildlife.org)) to a new site, which is hosted through WordPress. As of now, the [new Illinois Chapter page](http://wildlife.org/illinois-chapter/) is live (<http://wildlife.org/illinois-chapter/>).

The main difference with the new website is that all changes and edits will be handled by staff at the national level. In addition, only documents from January 2013 and onward were transitioned. Thank you again to Michelle Horath, who maintained our chapter website for so many years! Great work!

To provide access to older chapter documents, we have established a Google Drive account. In addition, past Position Statements will soon be accessible through an online Policy Library maintained by national TWS. See “Conservation Affairs Network” below for more details.

Newsletter Archive

<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B8jC-TccWuOkOWVzVW1mOTFneVk&usp=sharing>

Position Statements

<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B8jC-TccWuOkVIZ6NFh5LWhBUzg&usp=sharing>

Bylaws and other Documents

<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B8jC-TccWuOkTzFubFI0Si11OWM&usp=sharing>

## **PayPal**

Ask and you shall receive! Chapter membership is now payable through PayPal on the new website. PayPal charges a 2.9% + \$0.30 per transaction fee to use their service, so payment through the [national website](#) or by [check](#) will still be accepted. The Executive Board has decided that the chapter will absorb all PayPal fees for until further notice. We will evaluate the popularity of the PayPal feature and the financial impact after a year.

Payment for the annual meeting in April and payment for membership dues will also be accepted by credit card during the meeting. PayPal has provided a card reader for the Chapter to use with any smart phone. A 2.7% transaction fee will be charged to the Chapter. Again, the Executive Board has decided the Chapter will absorb the costs and evaluate this policy in the future.

Thanks to Secretary/Treasurer John Griesbaum for leading the charge on setting up our PayPal account!

## **Conservation Affairs Network**

We are happy to report that Paul Brewer, a recently-retired chapter member, has agreed to serve as the Illinois Chapter liaison to the Conservation Affairs Network. By maintaining communication with a North Central Section Committee Chair, the liaison is able to relay policy issues from Illinois to North Central Section and national leaders and also relay national and regional issues back to the Chapter.

One tool to share policy information and currently under development is the online Policy Library. The Policy Library is intended to provide easy access to Position Statements, Fact Sheets, Policy Briefs, etc., that have been approved at either the national or local level. The Policy Library will be available to all TWS members through the member portal on the national website. The first step is to incorporate all documents related to the national society by the end of June 2016. Afterwards, policy documents from sub-units will be incorporated.

More information on the Conservation Affairs Network can be found [here](#).

## **Save the Date**

The 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Illinois Chapter will be held at the Touch of Nature Environmental Center in Makanda, IL from Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup> through Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Details, including registration forms, will be forthcoming and included in the spring newsletter.



# Featured Article

## River Otter Recovery in Cook County, Illinois

*By Hannah O'Malley, USDA Wildlife Services, Wildlife Specialist*

North American river otter recovery in the Chicagoland area took a surprising leap forward this fall with the capture and release of an otter in southwest Cook County. A few decades ago, Illinois' river otters were almost extirpated and listed as "state endangered". State reintroduction efforts in the 1990s significantly improved their numbers, but evidence of otters thriving in the urban interface of Cook County was slim-to-none.



*Chicago Zoological Society veterinary staff surgically implant a transmitter in a North American river otter so that wildlife biologists from the Forest Preserves of Cook County can better study the animal and its habits, habitats, and travel routes. This project is just one of many ways that the Society, which operates Brookfield Zoo, collaborates with the Forest Preserves to act locally for the conservation of wildlife and nature. Image credit: Chicago Zoological Society.*

Chris Anchor, senior biologist with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County ([FPDCC](#)), enlisted USDA Wildlife Services (WS) to monitor for otter presence in the county. After years of surveying waterways for tracks and scat, promising signs were spotted this May in an isolated spot. WS trail cameras confirmed an animal's presence, and trapping efforts began. Finally, after many thwarted attempts, WS staff captured the elusive otter using a modified foothold trap.

At FPDCC's affiliate Brookfield Zoo, veterinary staff surgically implanted a radio-transmitter in the otter. The small device will allow biologists to track the otter to determine its movements throughout the area, den locations, foraging habits, and possibly interactions with other otters. Technicians from WS, FPDCC, and the Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation are collaborating to track the otter.

“We’re trying to understand what their challenges are, and to see if there is anything we can do to promote their population within Cook County,” explained Anchor.

Otter population recovery is almost impossible without the proper habitat – clean waterways with healthy and diverse fish populations. Considerable efforts have gone into the preservation and restoration of native landscapes within the county. This otter presents an undeniable sign that the Forest Preserve District of Cook County has made great strides in protecting and improving its diverse ecosystems and enabling the presence of sensitive species that rely on wild and clean habitats on the 69,000 acres it manages.

A native Illinois species, river otter were common until unregulated harvest and habitat loss led to declining populations in the late 1800s. In 1929, the otter trapping season was eliminated, with limited effect, and otters were listed first as threatened (1977) and then as state endangered in 1989. With laws and conservation efforts to improve water quality, an Illinois [Department of Natural Resources otter](#) recovery effort began in 1994 with great success. Otter were delisted in 2004 and a trapping season was reinstated in 2012-13.



*A North American river otter is released back into the southwest region of the Forest Preserves of Cook County. This released river otter will be tracked to gain a better understanding of the animal’s habits, habitats, and travel routes, which will help determine what the otter’s challenges face in an urban setting and what can be done to promote their population within Cook County. By understanding river otters’ habits, researchers will be able to better identify where to restore various open land to benefit the health of otters and the biodiversity of all wildlife and humans. Image credit: Jeff Nelson.*

See more from Brookfield Zoo at [Dr. Mike’s Video Blog: River Otter Study](#).

## **North Central Section Notes**

The Executive Board of the North Central Section asked to have their fall newsletter shared with all state-chapter members. You can find their fall newsletter, and past newsletters, on the Section's website, currently at <http://wildlife.org/illinois-chapter/news/>.

The North Central Section is co-sponsoring a leadership workshop at the Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference this January in Grand Rapids, MI. Students and professionals can enhance their leadership skills, expand leadership contacts, explore areas for professional growth, and earn TWS certification credits. For more information and an agenda, see the two-page flyer at the end of this newsletter.

## **ICTWS Member Publications**

Nielsen, C., Thompson, D., Kelly, M. and C. A. Lopez-Gonzalez. 2015. *Puma concolor*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015: e.T18868A50663436.

Anderson, C. W., C. K. Nielsen, and E. M. Schaubert. 2015. Survival and dispersal of white-tailed deer in an agricultural landscape. *Wildlife Biology in Practice* 11:26-41.

Adam L. Brandt, Amy C. Kelly, Michelle L. Green, Paul Shelton, JanNovakofski & Nohra E. Mateus-Pinilla (2015): Prion protein gene sequence and chronicwasting disease susceptibility in white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), *Prion*, DOI:10.1080/19336896.2015.1115179

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## **Upcoming Meetings**

### **Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference**

January 24 – 27, 2016, Grand Rapids, Michigan

[h http://www.midwestfw.org/](http://www.midwestfw.org/)

### **7<sup>TH</sup> NORTH AMERICAN DUCK SYMPOSIUM**

1-5 February 2016, Westin Annapolis Hotel, Annapolis, Maryland

<http://northamericanducksymposium.org/>

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## **ICTWS Newsletters**

Don't wait for solicitation to provide any contributions to the next ICTWS Newsletter! We accept news, awards notices, recent publications, upcoming conferences, or any item that could be valuable to members throughout the entire year. Please email Heath Hagy at [hhagy@illinois.edu](mailto:hhagy@illinois.edu) any contributions.

## **Student Chapter Corner**

### *Contacts*

#### Eastern Illinois University

Advisors: Jill Deppe, [jldeppe@eiu.edu](mailto:jldeppe@eiu.edu)

President: Clinton Morgeson

#### Southern Illinois University

Advisor: Eric Schaubert, [schauber@siu.edu](mailto:schauber@siu.edu)

President: Julie Driebergen

Webpage: <http://wildlifezoology.rso.siu.edu/>

#### University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Advisors: Steve Buck, [sbuck@illinois.edu](mailto:sbuck@illinois.edu)

Bob Schooley, [schooley@illinois.edu](mailto:schooley@illinois.edu)

President: Isha Robertson

#### Western Illinois University - Inactive

Advisors: Chris Jacques, [CN-Jacques@wiu.edu](mailto:CN-Jacques@wiu.edu)

### *Resources*

The Wildlife Society staff and Council actively encourage the success of student chapters and provide ongoing assistance to them. For more information on resources available to student chapters including annual conclaves, the TWS Leadership Institute, Career Development and Job Board visit: <http://wildlife.org/next-generation/>

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## **ICTWS Executive Board**

Scott Meister, President  
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Mobile (309) 798-7951

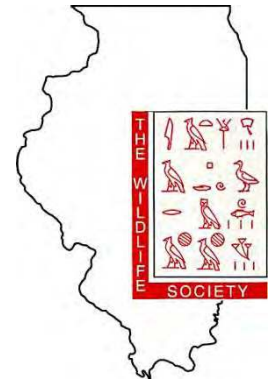
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**EXECUTIVE BOARD DUTIES**  
**Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society**



PRESIDENT-ELECT/PRESIDENT/PAST-PRESIDENT  
Three-year term

**President-Elect**

- Assume duties of President in President's absence
- Serve as Chapter Newsletter editor
- Liaison to Illinois Forestry Development Council (optional monthly meetings or conference calls)
- Special Projects: e.g. bylaw revisions, historical reviews
- Assist in planning and implementation of annual Chapter meeting
- Attend Executive Board and Business meetings at annual Chapter meeting

**President**

- General supervision of Chapter officers
- Draft President's Column for Newsletters
- Appoint members (with advice of the Executive Board) and serve on regular and special committees: e.g. Professional Award of Merit, Elections, Audit
- Represent the Chapter during North Central Section Executive meetings (monthly conference call)
- Organize (with others) annual chapter meeting
- Organize annual Executive Board and Business meetings and serve as Chairman

**Past-President**

- Assist and advise President
- Assist in planning and implementation of annual Chapter meeting
- Attend Executive Board and Business meetings at annual Chapter meeting
- Coordinate the development and administration of Continuing Education and Professional Development workshops and seminars as needed
- In absence of a volunteer liaison, serve as point-of-contact for Conservation Affairs Network (bi-monthly conference calls)

**SECRETARY-TREASURER**

Two-year term

- Attend Executive Board and Business meetings at annual Chapter meeting
- Record and maintain minutes of Executive Board and Business meetings; prepare summaries
- Maintain Chapter's active membership list
- Maintain Chapter dues, financial (and other) records and be responsible for Chapter funds
- Prepare and present financial reports for the Executive Board, Audit Committee and Business meeting
- Provide Chapter bylaws to each new Chapter member
- Staff registration table at annual Chapter meeting

## COUNCILPERSON-AT-LARGE

Two-year term

- Attend Executive Board and Business meetings at annual Chapter meeting
- Insure that statewide views and opinions are brought to the Executive Board
- Participate in Executive Board discussions
- Staff registration table at annual Chapter meeting

*All Chapter Officers must maintain TWS membership at the national level.*

*This unofficial list was compiled from information in the ICTWS Operations Manual and from past officer experiences. The list is intended to inform members considering candidacy on the responsibilities they may be undertaking.*

Updated 11/2015

# **Plan to Attend the 2016 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Leadership Series**

**Sponsored by the North Central Section Chapter of The Wildlife Society and the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies**

**Sunday January 24, 2016**

Grand Rapids, Michigan

The Leadership Series Workshop is aimed at providing training and continuing education for all natural resource professionals ranging from students to seasoned professionals. Workshop organizers recognize everyone is a leader within their respective agencies. The workshop will emphasize practical skills, tools, and experiences applicable to all attendees. Students and professionals will enhance their leadership skills, expand leadership contacts, and explore areas for professional growth. State natural resource agencies will benefit by increasing leadership their capacity, and NCS-TWS will engage new leaders and increase professional relevancy to its members. An additional benefit of this new initiative is the emerging cadre of conservation leadership speakers sharing their knowledge and experience.

Although several leadership opportunities exist for fish and wildlife professionals, they have limited enrollment compared to the extensive need. Expanded leadership training opportunities are important as agencies face retirements, vacancy management, and declines in institutional memory. NCS-TWS recognizes these needs and feel annual leadership training can provide tangible benefits to all professionals in the Midwestern states. This need can be met through a collaborative partnership between NCS-TWS, MAFWA, and other partners to establish an annual Leadership Series held in connection with the annual Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference. The long-term goal is to establish an annual tradition of holding the workshop the Sunday afternoon prior to the annual Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference with a different theme each year.

Workshop Details and Registration:

- Registration is through the official Midwest Fish & Wildlife Annual Conference web site:
  - <http://www.midwestfw.org/html/meetings.shtml>
- Workshop is limited to first 50 registrants; to ensure your spot register early!
- Cost is \$25 for NCS-TWS member, and \$40 for non-members; membership has its benefits!
- Workshop will be located in the same hotel at the conference; the Amway Grand Hotel, Grand Rapids, MI (exact room to be determined at a later date).

- This workshop will apply toward 3.5 contact hours in Category I of TWS's Certified Wildlife Biologist Renewal/Professional Development Certificate Program.

