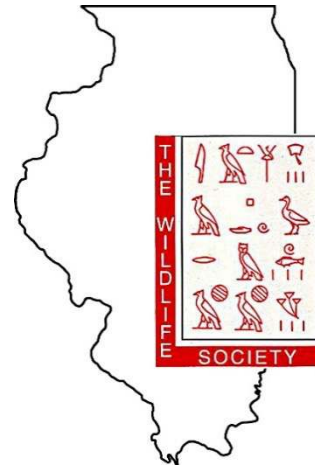


# Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society



*Excellence in Wildlife Conservation through Science and Education*

*Edited by Scott Beckerman, President-Elect*

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## President's Corner

As I sit in my home office writing this today, the ICTWS board with assistance from staff at the Illinois Natural History Survey is preparing for our annual spring meeting to be held at Hawthorn Suites in Champaign, Illinois. Look for more details to be coming out soon via our group email list! We are looking forward to a great meeting with presentations from students and others. A Call for Abstracts will also be coming out in the next few weeks as well.

Tomorrow I have the pleasure of meeting some long-time ICTWS members and some of my early mentors for lunch in Gibson City. All of these men have also been on our executive board and many are past-presidents. I am sure we will have many old stories to swap and those will no doubt include some about our Chapter.

For the past two years, I have had the honor of serving on the Aldo Leopold Memorial Award committee. This year Dr. Winifred Kessler was chosen for our Society's highest distinction, only the second woman in our profession to receive this award. Lucille Stickel, Senior Scientist

with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, received the award in 1974. Dr. Stickel was best known for her work on DDT and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides and their effects on wildlife. Read more about Dr. Kessler in Gary Potts' submission about the TWS meeting recently held in Albuquerque. Biographies of some of the past Leopold Memorial Award winners can be found [here](#).

Leaves are falling on the cool autumn day, and this is a season many in our profession enjoy the most. Migrations are underway, some of the most popular hunting seasons are opening, and the cool weather makes many outdoor activities more enjoyable. Everyone have a safe and enjoyable fall!!

*Paul Brewer ICTWS President*

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## **Conservation Affairs Committee Update**

The Conservation Affairs Network held its annual meeting in September during The Wildlife Society's Annual Conference in Albuquerque, NM. Of interest to the Illinois Chapter will be the upcoming effort to gain federal legislative support for the "Recovering America's Wildlife Act" which would annually appropriate \$1.3 billion to support actions aligned with state Wildlife Action Plans. Originally introduced in 2016 to begin dialogue and support, a new bill has yet to be introduced to the current Congress. When the bill is introduced, our parent society will be asking chapters and their members for written support. Read more about the 2016 introduction and the bill's background [here](#).

To learn about issues facing other chapters and sections that were discussed during the CAN annual meeting in September, please browse the [meeting minutes](#). For more TWS Conservation Affairs updates at the national level, please read the CAN [October 2017 newsletter](#).

At the end of August, Governor Rauner signed House Bill 641 into law providing financial support for trap-neuter-return programs for feral cats. The bill becomes effective January 1, 2018 and allows fees collected through pet registrations and microchipping to fund TNR programs if those program are recognized by the county or a municipality. Details about the full bill can be found [here](#).

*Scott Meister*  
*ICTWS Conservation Affairs Network Representative*

## Garver gobbles up chance to manage turkeys

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Luke Garver of Jacksonville is in charge of the state's turkey program. He said the birds are a significant part of the Illinois ecosystem.

As person in charge of the state's turkey program, the Jacksonville resident can talk about the history, the trends and the future of the birds.

Garver took over the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife's turkey program in October and said the history of turkeys in Illinois is a great comeback story. He said it shows how managing a single species of wildlife can impact many parts of the state's ecosystem.

West-central Illinois, with its river valleys and well-timbered land dotted with prairie-type landscapes, affords a lot of spots ideal for turkey habitat.

As the new program manager, Garver said he has a lot of catching up to do. Except for a short stint from 2010 to 2013, the position has been vacant since about 2002. Stepping into a job that has tasks but no one to do them for that long comes with a big backlog.

"The goal for now is trying to complete turkey harvest reports and data – both the recent data and back into history," Garver said.

A few trends are emerging as he combs through years of data. For example, Greene, Scott and Macoupin counties could be seeing a turkey population decline, but Garver said he needs to rely on more than just hunting numbers.

“I am analyzing the populations and finding where the trends are,” he said. “Are the harvest numbers lower because of fewer turkeys or less hunters? And if it’s less hunters, why?”

Garver acknowledges he had some reservations about such a massive undertaking, but it was still a perfect fit for him.

“I like to be outside in the field every day,” he said. “There is a still lot to do. I help with [conservation] work in northern Illinois in the fall, I just got done helping band geese in Canton for three days, and do a lot of prescribed burning.”

Hunting and spending time outdoors has been second nature to Garver since growing up in Jacksonville. Before he was old enough to hunt, he was out in the woods with his father and spent time entertaining himself in the great outdoors of Cass County.

“My number one mentor was my dad. He always made sure we hunted the right way. My dad was not familiar with Aldo Leopold, who wrote the ‘Sand County Almanac,’ but they were kindred spirits,” he said. “Leopold’s saying ‘A peculiar virtue in wildlife ethics is that the hunter ordinarily has no gallery to applaud or disapprove of his conduct. Whatever his acts, they are dictated by his own conscience, rather than a mob of onlookers. Ethical behavior is doing the right thing when no one else is watching’.” He said this describes his father well.

Growing up in the 1990s, Garver can remember when nearby counties were opened for their first turkey hunting season since 1903. Efforts to repopulate the Illinois turkey after it was almost eradicated began in the 1960s and eventually took hold in each county.

During his high school years, Garver worked in the summers with a large-animal veterinarian at the Illinois State Fair. This experience, along with having his interest in science fostered by science teacher Jim Herget, resulted in him pursuing a career as a veterinarian.

During the coursework at the University of Illinois, Garver became more interested in the outside aspect of animal health. He said he found himself drawn to wildlife populations, managing habitats and the health of entire ecosystems more so than the health of an individual animal.

His research bolstered the interest. He worked with black bears and turkeys in Louisiana and several species in South Africa. He studied deer on a 120,000-acre ranch in Texas during his graduate work at Texas A&M University.

“There, I studied white tail deer and their foraging and behavior actions,” he said. “[It] was an endless wildlife habitat untouched by man.”

In 2012, Garver became a soil conservation technician for the Natural Resource Conservation Service in Ford County. That served as a foot in the door to conservation work in the state.

He later went to Pike County as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program coordinator.

“My expertise as a private land coordinator made this a great fit,” he said. “I loved that job and really enjoyed it. But in the back of my head I knew I might aspire to a job like this one. I did not expect it this early in my career. This is the only possible job that could have lured me away from the one I had.”

Now he has to watch over not just one county but 102.

“It’s overwhelming to – I’m not calling the shots – but to have so many people listening to my recommendations,” he said.

Part of his responsibilities include managing the forest and woodlands campaign of the state’s Wildlife Action Plan. This is part of an initiative to ensure the quality of wildlife in the state and allows Garver to focus on a broad swath of wildlife, particularly non-game, which often is overlooked.

He said the biggest factor affecting turkey and other wildlife habitat is invasive plant species.

“Bush honeysuckle is the number one worst and it’s getting worse and worse,” he said.

To counter it, Garver said, increasing prescribed burns is effective, particularly after a herbicide is used in the fall. He has been working with a team of conservationists in Macoupin County on an aerial application process that is proving to be promising.

He also is a member of the technical committee of the National Wild Turkey Federation. He works as a liaison between the state and the agency to coordinate efforts to improve turkey habitat throughout the state.

“The NWTF is a positive voice in this work. Those that are skeptical of the government often turn to them,” he said. “They raise a lot of money for habitat work and are great folks to work with.”

*Scott Meister, ICTWS CAN Representative*

## **Meeting Notes from Annual TWS Meeting in Albuquerque**

I want to highlight several events from the recent annual conference and some of the initiatives of TWS Council. The information will be especially useful to members who are only members of TWS at the state chapter level and are not a member at the International level.

Back in the 1990’s, I attended the first annual conference of TWS in Albuquerque, N.M and this was the location of the recent 24<sup>th</sup> annual conference. The first annual conference had somewhere around 1,000 attendees and the recent meeting had over 1,800. Many changes and improvements have occurred with the conferences over the years with the most significant one being student attendance which is now around 40% of the attendees.

It was at that first TWS annual conference where I met Dr. Winifred Kessler who was then a Professor at the University of Northern British Columbia, Canada. Wini and I served 6 years as section rep.’s from 2001-2007 and both went on to serve 4 year stints on the Executive Committee with Wini serving as President in 2012-13. Wini has had a productive career in academia, the US Forest Service, the policy arena and influencing the careers of many wildlifers. She was one of the women who started the Women of Wildlife (WOW) which is now a major networking event at the annual conference. When Dr. Wini Kessler was announced as the winner of the Aldo Leopold Memorial Award, it was a special moment for all who have been inspired by her leadership. You can read more about Wini’s amazing

career and the Leopold Award at <http://wildlife.org/kessler-celebrates-pinnacle-of-career-with-aldo-leopold-award/>

Another highlight at the annual conference was the induction of Dr. John McDonald as the new President of TWS. John formerly worked as a research scientist many years ago at the Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory at SIU-C, and served as the advisor of the student chapter of TWS. Go to <http://wildlife.org/live-from-albuquerque/> and scroll down to the article on Dr. John McDonald.

The Give Back program started on December 1, 2016. When professionals, early-career professionals and retired TWS members renew their memberships, they have the opportunity to “Give Back” to the wildlife profession by gifting a six-month complimentary membership to an active wildlife professional of their choice to introduce that person to the many benefits that TWS has to offer. Prior to renewing your membership, please have the name and email of the person that you will be nominating in order to facilitate the transaction. To date, several folks participating in the Give Back program have become regular members. Thus, this is a real opportunity to increase our membership so I encourage everyone to “gift” a membership to a colleague when they renew. This opportunity is also now open to students! More information about the Student Give Back Program can be found [here](#).

A major effort by TWS Council and staff in 2016 resulted with a new addition to our list of membership benefits: online access to TWS’ three journals. Now you can read all the latest papers in each issue of The Journal of Wildlife Management, the Wildlife Society Bulletin, and Wildlife Monographs and access the complete archives of these journals as part of your TWS membership. This new benefit, worth \$75 is nearly the cost of a full membership! This means that everything TWS publishes will be free to all members. In the past members had to pay for TWS publications and not all members subscribed to the publications. This initiative reinforces TWS’ commitment to science-based management and conservation and many members have expressed appreciation for this initiative that will expand our outreach.

Ten early career professionals were picked earlier in the year to participate in TWS’s Leadership Institute (LI). TWS started the LI in 2006 to facilitate training opportunities for participants over a several month period which included attending the annual conference. Ten new members were chosen for the LI in 2017 and we now have over 150 alumni in the program with several coming from IL. Learn more about the LI at <http://wildlife.org/next-generation/leadership-institute/>. An announcement for the next class for the LI will be announced on [www.wildlife.org](http://www.wildlife.org) this winter.

TWS initiated a student travel grant program in 2008 to assist with student travel to our annual conference. To qualify for the grant, students must have an approved poster and/or paper for the annual conference. Twenty three students were approved by a committee this past year. Stay tuned for the next announcement about travel grants on [www.wildlife.org](http://www.wildlife.org) this winter.

My theme last year as president was on Expanding Partnerships. I’m happy to state that TWS has gone from a few partners to now over 30. The partnerships vary in nature but overall will lead to an expansion of our networking opportunities and work with coalition partners.

There are many more programs and initiatives such as the Conservation Affairs Network, our new Policy Library, etc. that members can learn more about on [www.wildlife.org](http://www.wildlife.org).

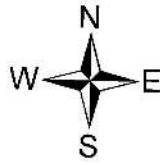
The member value proposition has certainly increased over the last few years. The Wildlife Society continues to make major strides to improve our profession. I hope members of the ICTWS who are not a member of TWS at the International level will consider joining. The cost of membership is \$41.00 for students and \$81.00 for regular members. We must continue to value and promote membership at all levels, continue mentoring students and early career professionals, expand our networking within our profession and expand our partnerships and outreach. Please be a part of something larger than yourself. All the activities of TWS are important because together “We are The Wildlife Society.”

*Gary Potts*  
*Past-President, TWS*

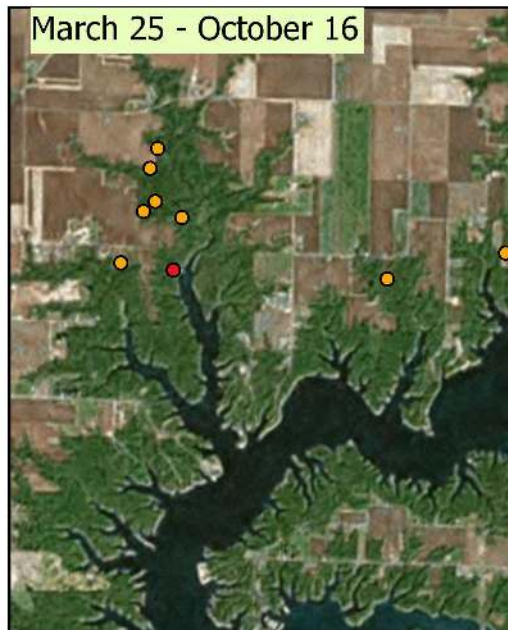
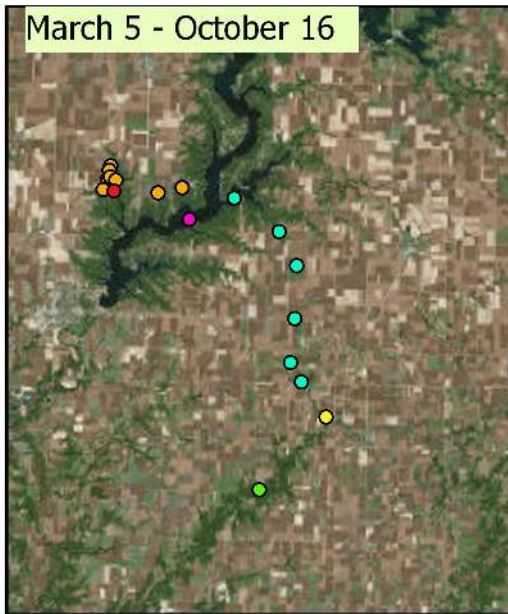
## **Turkey Travels**

On March 5<sup>th</sup> of this year, my research crew and I captured and banded 4 male wild turkeys at Hidden Springs State Forest. We also deployed micro-GPS units, fitted backpack-style, on each turkey to log location and movement data throughout 2017. Typically, we only deploy the GPS units on female turkeys to study nesting behavior. However, the combined effects of little snow and abundant acorns made our trapping season a challenge. So, nearing the end of our capture season, we tagged these males and were interested to see what their movements looked like during the spring turkey hunting season. Each week we relocated the birds and remotely downloaded their data using VHF telemetry, and a special receiver that communicates with the GPS units (Lotek). Unfortunately, we were unable to relocate one of the males despite searching within a couple kilometers of Hidden Springs in all directions. By the end of April, we presumed the GPS unit had failed. Months later, on October 17<sup>th</sup>, a turkey hunter contacted us with information about our missing bird. The hunter revealed that he harvested the bird just north of Shelbyville, Illinois. We were able to retrieve location data from the transmitter, and here illustrate the path taken by this turkey during its emigration to Lake Shelbyville, a distance of about 17 kilometers from where the bird was originally captured and released. Thanks to a fortunate hunter, this well-traveled turkey, and the returned transmitter, we have a better understanding of the search radius needed during a search for “lost” turkeys. (See illustration on next page)

*Christine M. Parker | PhD Candidate*  
*Illinois Natural History Survey*



- March 5 2017 - Capture site
- March 19 - Departs Hidden Springs Forest
- March 22 - 24
- March 25 - Crosses Lake Shelbyville
- March 25 - October 1
- October 16 - Approximate harvest location



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/  
Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



## **ICTWS Member Publications**

Trying some new formats this issue! Let the editor know how these work!

**From Past-President Heath Hagy:**

<http://www.bioone.org/doi/full/10.1650/CONDOR-16-234.1>

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/wsb.807/abstract>

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jwmg.21346/abstract>

**From President-elect Scott Beckerman**

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jwmg.21332/abstract>

## **Science-based hunter recruitment, retention and reengagement in Illinois**

Illinois has experienced a continuous decline in hunting participation since the mid-1970's, subsequently reducing Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration funds for wildlife conservation. To bolster hunter participation in Illinois, the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) and IDNR began a collaborative statewide hunter recruitment, retention and reengagement (R3) program in 2017. The nationally unique program uses the scientific method to test hypotheses focused on factors known or suspected to influence hunter R3 in Illinois. In 2017, hypotheses focus on variation in household income, public hunting land access, child dependency and university students. Hypotheses are tested by marketing and conducting terrestrial game (e.g., deer and turkey) and waterfowl hunting workshops to focal spatiodemographic segments of the public that provide the research sample. The program works with the INHS Human Dimensions of Fish and Wildlife Laboratory to collect questionnaire and hunting license-purchasing data from workshop participants during and several years following workshops. From these results, limitations to hunter R3 are identified and new hypotheses are generated to refine and address new questions that perpetually improve hunter R3. Twenty workshops are being conducted in locations across Illinois from August through November 2017. The program website is linked here ( <https://publish.illinois.edu/huntrapillinois/> ) and Facebook page here ( <https://www.facebook.com/huntrapillinois/?ref=bookmarks> ).

*Jared Duquette, Hunter and Trapper Recruitment Scientist,*

[jfd2017@illinois.edu](mailto:jfd2017@illinois.edu)

or 217-300-5352

## **The Student Development Working Group**

Greeting Students,

Have you ever heard of the Student Development Working Group? We are a Working Group that promotes increased student awareness of TWS membership benefits, works to expand knowledge and technical capabilities of student members, and helps prepare student members for professional wildlife careers. The working group facilitates networking between students and experienced TWS members by hosting meetings, workshops, poster sessions, a mentoring program, and a student chapter leaders' breakfast. The working group also selects the recipient of The Wildlife Society's Student Chapter Advisor of the Year Award.

Our working group features the latest student's news in The Student Chronicles. We actively post on our TWS Student Development Working Group Facebook page. We delivery new topics, current student research and professional skill building.

We look forward to being the voice for students to the Parent Society of The Wildlife Society. We are always here to welcome new student members. We look forward to helping and providing for the next generation of the wildlife profession!

If you have any questions about the Student Development Working Group please contact Chair Kristi Confortin at [kaconfortin@bsu.edu](mailto:kaconfortin@bsu.edu).

Please see attached link for the Student Development Working Group Facebook Page, all you have to do is "like" the page to get daily updates! [https://www.facebook.com/TWS-Student-Development-Working-Group-252817268125541/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](https://www.facebook.com/TWS-Student-Development-Working-Group-252817268125541/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel).

*Kristi Confortin*  
*Chair, Student Development Working Group*




## Upcoming Meetings

Past-President Gary Potts sends reminders of the upcoming Midwest, and reminds us that the Midwest Conference is fairly close this year in Milwaukee!

### 78th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference

January 28-31, 2018, Milwaukee, WI

<http://midwestfw.org>



**Strengthening  
Natural  
Resources  
through  
Collaboration**

**78th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference**  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin | January 28-31, 2018

**Seeking Presentation Proposals**  
*Deadline to submit: Monday, September 25, 2017*

The deadline to submit presentation proposals for the 78th Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference is just over 1 week away! Don't miss this opportunity to share your research and projects with over 1,000 biologists and students from state, federal, and tribal natural resources agencies from the Midwest, Great Plains, Rocky Mountains and Canadian provinces.

The scientific program will consist of three types of sessions: **Symposia** (oral presentations organized by a topic of interest); **Contributed Oral Presentation** (grouped into sessions by topic); and **Poster Presentations**. We'll also have a **Lightning Session** showcasing 10-minute presentations in a fast-paced format, to be scheduled in a one-hour session on Wednesday, January 31st.

All proposals must be submitted via the online form by Monday, September 25.

[Click Here to Get Started](#)

**Special Symposia Overviews**

Sixteen special symposia will be included as part of the technical program; some are accepting presentation proposals through the regular call for abstracts and others are by invitation only. [Read overviews here.](#)

**Questions**




For questions about program content, contact: Scott Hull, Director, Office of Applied Science, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources [Scott.Hull@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:Scott.Hull@Wisconsin.gov).

**Student Research-in-Progress Posters**

Undergraduate, M.S., and Ph.D. students are invited to submit a Research-in-Progress Poster to present at our 78th Annual Conference. Space is limited to 15 submissions; first-come, first-serve. Students can submit their abstract to reserve a space using the online registration form (coming soon!). [Learn more.](#)



Registration for the 78th Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference, **Strengthening Natural Resources Through Collaboration**, will open in October. Mark your calendar and make plans now to join us January 28-31, 2018 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. [www.midwestfw.org](http://www.midwestfw.org)

**2018 Conference Hosts**



Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference | [www.MidwestFW.org](http://www.MidwestFW.org)

STAY CONNECTED:



# TWS 25TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE



**SAVE THE DATE**

**CLEVELAND, OHIO | OCTOBER 7-11, 2018**

This year our conference travels to **Cleveland, Ohio, to celebrate our 25 years of educational conferences**. Each year our conference grows with more educational and networking sessions, and 2018 is no exception. We anticipate our biggest conference to date, as members from across North America gather to celebrate our 25th Annual Conference.

**Interested in presenting at next year's conference?**

**Call for Proposals**

NOV 13, 2017 - MAR 21, 2018

**Call for Abstracts**

*(papers & posters)*

FEB 19 - APR 22, 2018

More information on next year's conference will launch May 2018 on [twsconference.org](http://twsconference.org). Until then, we will keep this page updated with important dates

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# **SAVE THE DATE!**

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## **2018 Annual Meeting Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society**



**April 22-24, 2018**

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**at the Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham Hotel**

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**Champaign, Illinois**

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***More Information Including Agenda, Registration  
Information, and Call for Abstracts to Follow Soon!!***

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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. MS Word and .jpg formats are preferred for inclusion in the newsletter . Please email Scott Beckerman at [sc.Beckerman@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:sc.Beckerman@aphis.usda.gov) your contributions.

## **Student Chapter Information**

### ***Contacts:***

#### **Eastern Illinois University**

Advisor: TBA

#### **Southern Illinois University**

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

President: Becca Curtiss

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

#### **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

Advisors: Dr, Craig Miller,

President: Tristan Schramer

Webpage: [:https://www.facebook.com/groups/165683637551/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/165683637551/)

#### **Western Illinois University**

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

Webpage: <https://www.facebook.com/WIU.Wildlife.Society/>

### ***Student 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/>

For information on student travel grants to attend next year's ICTWS meeting in Champaign-Urbana, contact President Paul Brewer at [fireboss@mchsi.com](mailto:fireboss@mchsi.com) .

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## **ICTWS Executive Board**

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Retired, Illinois DNR

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Scott Beckerman, President-Elect

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Heath Hagy, Past President

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