

Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society



<http://www.wildlife.org/illinois/>

Excellence in Wildlife Conservation through Science and Education

Edited by Eric Schaubert, President, ICTWS

President's Corner

Eric M. Schaubert

This "Spring" ICTWS newsletter will be the last one that I will edit – I will be handing the newsletter reins off to Bob Clevestine (his contact info is on last page) and, in keeping with my procrastinational nature, it is late. However, the delay has provided fodder for my President's Corner, because last week I had the chance to get out from behind my desk and join in the annual Goose Roundup organized by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. As always, the roundup was a great chance for healthy sunshine and sweat, camaraderie with long-time and future wildlifers, and a few scratches and bites thrown in to season the experience.

For me (and my kids, who also got to lend a hand), the most impressive thing about the roundup is watching the helicopter work the birds. The way the pilots can make their craft dance and wheel just above the water as they respond to shifts in behavior of each group of geese is mesmerizing to watch.



Pilot Dave Read, bringing in the geese at Kinkaid Lake -- June 20, 2013

Mesmerizing, but also a bit nerve-wracking. Even knowing how skilled the pilots are, I still gasp a bit and bite my nails nervously. Aircraft accidents are one of the leading causes of death among wildlife biologists, and have taken a number of prominent and promising folks in our field in recent years. The risks struck home in 2010 when Ray Bentley, who had worked with me on my master's project at Oregon State, was killed while piloting a fixed-wing waterfowl survey. When people ask me if I worry about dangerous animals that I might encounter while gallivanting out in the woods, I reply that ticks worry me more, certain humans more still, but small aircraft worry me perhaps most of all. And "worry" is the right word here, because I am not afraid of flying, and find working from small planes or helicopters to be exhilarating (in the rare occasions when I get the chance). I know that the pilots involved in wildlife research are exceptionally skilled and careful, and understand that travelling by road or (especially) boat can be quite hazardous as well. It's just that, in the back of my mind, I know that the chances of something going wrong are not zero and that "something going wrong" can be more difficult to recover from in an aircraft than in another vehicle.

In considering the risks and benefits of aircraft in wildlife research, the current debate over unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs, commonly referred to as "drones") is extremely relevant. As the power and sensitivity of instruments goes up while their cost and size goes down, we are at a point now where many of the objectives that historically have been met with manned aircraft (particularly population surveys and radiotelemetry) could be met with UAVs. Aside from the safety issue, UAVs could greatly expand biologists' ability to locate, observe, and count wildlife, as well as measure habitat characteristics, such as quantifying 3-D vegetation structure via LiDAR. Being smaller and quieter than full-sized aircraft, UAVs are less likely to cause animals to flee or otherwise alter their behavior. It's a groan-worthy cliché, but the sky's the limit for clever and creative biologists and engineers collaborating to expand and maximize the capabilities of UAVs for wildlife research.

Obviously, some activities still require manned flights (especially large-animal capture), and the costs and benefits of UAVs will need to be assessed as the technology matures. For example, identifying waterfowl is probably more difficult from digital images than from direct viewing. Flight times are short for smaller (and more affordable) models. Proliferation of UAVs could make low-level flight even more dangerous for manned craft. Also, it is clear that many Americans are deeply uncomfortable with routine use of UAVs carrying cameras or other monitoring instruments (despite the existing capabilities of aerial photography and high-resolution satellite imagery). Expanded UAV use by researchers could exacerbate that discomfort. Plus, I have a feeling that geese would not be quite as intimidated by a buzzing UAV as they are by the WHOP WHOP WHOP of a skillfully flown 'copter. --- EMS

Upcoming Meetings:



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

ANNUAL CONFERENCE - MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

October 5-10, 2013

Conference Website: wildlifesociety.org


37th Midwest Deer and Turkey Study Group


SAVE THE DATE!

37th Midwest Deer and Turkey Study Group Meeting

August 18th - 21st, 2013

Allerton Park and Conference Center
 Monticello, Illinois <http://allerton.illinois.edu/>

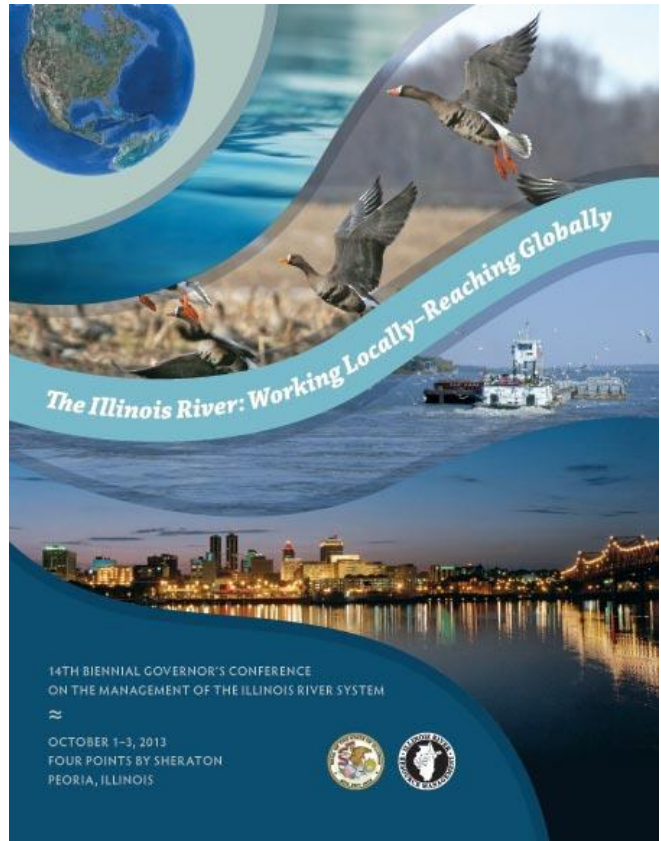


 **MIDWEST**
 Association of
 Fish & Wildlife
 Agencies

More information to follow soon!!

Estimated cost per person double occupancy is \$200. We will try to stay below that!

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The Illinois River: Working Locally - Reaching Globally

14TH BIENNIAL GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE
 ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ILLINOIS RIVER SYSTEM

≈

OCTOBER 1-3, 2013
 FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON
 PEORIA, ILLINOIS



Illinois River Conference Website:

<http://www.conferences.uiuc.edu/conferences/conference.asp?ID=413>

ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA 



98TH ANNUAL MEETING
SUSTAINABLE PATHWAYS: LEARNING FROM THE PAST AND SHAPING THE FUTURE
AUGUST 4-9, 2013

Ecological Society of America Conference Website:

<http://www.esa.org/minneapolis/>

62nd International Conference of the Wildlife Disease Association

Second International Symposium on Ranaviruses

2013 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians

July 27 – August 2, 2013, Knoxville, TN

WDA Conference Website: <http://fwf.ag.utk.edu/WDA2013/>

Notes and Contributions

TWS Leadership Institute Committee -- Gary E. Potts, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Certified Wildlife Biologist, The Wildlife Society Fellow

The Wildlife Society (TWS) recently announced the 10 participants for the 2013 TWS Leadership Institute (LI). These promising early-career wildlife professionals, selected from a competitive pool of applicants, will participate in a wide variety of exercises May-September, which include reading and reflection on leadership topics, presenting to peer groups, leading seminars, and developing summary documents regarding their professional leadership goals. In October, during the Annual Conference of TWS in Milwaukee, WI, the participants will meet for focused discussions, serve as mentors for students, be mentored by Institute alumni and TWS Council members, and attend Council meetings. According to TWS Executive Director Ken Williams, "The Wildlife Society established the LI in 2006 to enrich the future of our membership and our profession. There are few opportunities for early-career professionals to gain vital leadership training and the LI excels at filling that void. The program has garnered widespread support because it has been very successful in preparing our early-career members to adopt active professional leadership roles both within and outside TWS."

Two former students from Illinois were selected for the 2013 class. Dr. Sarah Anne (Yaremych) Hamer is an Assistant Professor in the Dept. of Veterinary Integrative Biosciences at Texas A&M University. Sarah received her M.S. in the Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences at the University of IL in 2003. Dr. Rachael E. Urbanek is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Arkansas Tech. University. Rachael received her Ph.D. in Zoology from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale in 2012. University faculty, mentors and colleagues who have helped guide the careers of Sarah and Rachael should be proud of their respective achievements!

I've served on the LI Committee since 2006 and am glad to finally have someone affiliated with Illinois to get accepted into the LI. In the future, early career professionals and graduate students should consider the LI for a great opportunity to enhance their leadership skills.

ICTWS 50th Anniversary: Looking for Folks from the Early Days – Steve Havera, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (retired)

In anticipation of the 50th Anniversary ICTWS Conference upcoming in 2014, Steve Havera and Stan Etter are tracking down information on ICTWS members who attended the first conference or were otherwise involved in the early years of the Chapter. The goal is to put together a presentation for the conference documenting the careers, contributions, and viewpoints of those “old timers.” Anyone with information about the identity and whereabouts of early ICTWS members, or points of interest and other remembrances please contact Steve Havera (s.birdman46@yahoo.com, Cell 309-338-1252, Home 309-547-2757) or Stan Etter (Stan.Etter@yahoo.com, 815-848-8644).

Wildlife Toxicology Working Group News – Jeff Levensgood, Working Group Chair, Illinois Natural History Survey

WTWG Workshop at TWS Annual Meeting

From settling of airborne pollutants to movement of contaminated groundwater and surface water, chemical pollutants can be important stressors to wildlife and liabilities on wild lands. But not all pollution is a wildlife management problem. Have you ever wondered how issues of pollution are managed? Worried about contamination on properties you manage? Want to know when it's necessary to call in an expert and want to be better able to direct that expert's work toward your management needs? We will answer these questions and more in a workshop entitled, “Pollutants and Wildlife Management: Ecotoxicology for Biologists and Land Managers” at the upcoming annual meeting of The Wildlife Society in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The workshop is intended for students, wildlife biologists, and land managers who want to have a basic understanding of approaches, methods and data interpretation of potential pollution issues they may encounter. We will explain basic pollution risk assessment concepts such as exposure (i.e., “how much pollution is at my site?”), effects levels (i.e., “how do I know how much is OK, or how much is bad?”), types of contaminants, effects of contaminants, safety considerations, and techniques and tools you can use to conduct pollution assessments or better interact with wildlife ecotoxicologists. Throughout, we will use case studies to illustrate concepts and provide real-world examples that other wildlife biologists and land managers have faced. Intended as an introductory to intermediate discussion of ecotoxicology, this workshop will be a repeat of the workshop that was presented at the past two TWS meetings. However, this year it will be a full day workshop, from 8 am to 5 pm on October 5th to allow more time for more in depth discussion of the covered topics and case studies. If anyone would like to help prepare or teach the course, please let Tim Bargar know: tbargar@usgs.gov

SIU Student Chapter News-- Eva Wiatek, President

The SIU Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society had a productive Spring 2013 semester. The semester started with a handful of members visiting Ph.D. candidate Matt Springer's field site in Sullivan, IL. Participants learned techniques for rocket netting and some were lucky enough to capture three adult does, one doe fawn, and a button buck; all animals were fitted with GPS/satellite collars, which was great learning experience.

The student chapter had a workday at a local walking trail restoration area, managed by Green Earth, Inc. Through this work the students were able to recognize methods of trail construction and dealing with problematic landscapes. During our biweekly meetings we have had several speakers from the Zoology and Forestry Departments at SIU. Scott Ballard, Herpetologist for the IDNR, also came to a meeting and spoke about the duties associated with his position and the species of reptiles and amphibians found in southern Illinois. Our group also attended the Midwest Student Conclave in April, hosted by Central Missouri University. The event enabled plenty of networking and interesting informational courses such as bird banding, small mammal capture, mist netting for bats, and of course the quiz bowl full of many brilliant minds. The club has also had two fundraising events this spring, hosting the raffle in conjunction with the University of Illinois Student Chapter for the ICTWS meeting, as well as our annual Beast Feast cookout which allowed even more networking and relaxation for both graduates and undergraduates alike. We look forward to another productive academic year in 2013-14!



Thumbs up all around at Garden of the Gods



Chapter advisor Clay Nielsen models flair for fashion and healthy eating habits

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