

Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society



<http://joomla.wildlife.org/Illinois/>

Excellence in Wildlife Conservation through Science and Education

Edited by Bob Clevestine, President-Elect, ICTWS

President's Corner – Good Old Days / Bad Old Days

Eric M. Schauber

The year's ending brings thoughts of how this point in time fits in to the grand scheme. When older versions of ourselves look back, will they yearn wistfully for what once was or thank their stars that times have changed? The answer, of course, depends on whom you ask and in what context.

Josh Stafford recently remarked on Facebook that “the good old days are now” after a banner hunt along the Illinois River. Indeed, evidence-based adaptive management of waterfowl as currently practiced in North America is a model for wildlife management in general, and tremendous effort and funding are contributed by individuals and organizations to establish, restore, and manage waterfowl habitat. Population estimates are at or near record levels for a number of popular waterfowl species and even historically declining scaup population appears to have turned the corner. Migratory Canada goose populations wintering in Illinois have also recovered substantially in the past decade. However, the benefits of this waterfowl largesse are highly localized in Illinois, and folks who established southern Illinois goose hunting clubs during the “good old days” now find themselves squarely in the “bad old days” as most fall-migrating geese remain in central Illinois, at least until forced south by deep snow.

The successful recovery of several endangered species also suggests that these may be remembered as “good old days.” Eastern woodrats have spread well beyond sites of their reintroduction a decade ago, and we could not have asked for a better woodrat habitat improvement program than what the 2009 Super Derecho provided gratis. Marsh rice rats, too, are expanding, and research through flooding in 2011 and drought in 2012 has shown that these wetland rodents are remarkably resilient.

On the flip side, bobwhite and cottontail rabbit hunters will surely not look back on this period as “good old days.” Both species continue their long glide toward rarity, and perhaps extirpation. This trend is no surprise given that both species thrive only in ephemeral, early successional habitat types. High crop prices goad farmers to put the ground back into production. Even untilled, such habitats quickly

lose value if not actively maintained through disturbance such as fire, mowing, or herbicide. Walk et al.'s landmark study "Illinois Birds: A Century of Change" documents that this sad state is hardly limited to quail and bunnies, as grassland and shrubland birds have shown consistent and alarming declines.

Yes, "good old days" or "bad old days" depends on who you ask and about what. However, it also depends on what the future holds. As physicist Niels Bohr is famously quoted: "Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future." Some trends are fairly certain: agricultural production will intensify, suburbanization will expand, climate will warm. It will be interesting to watch the arrival and establishment of plant and wildlife species from "the South" into southern Illinois, already the northern range limit for many species. Some will be welcome immigrants, others (e.g., kudzu, nutria) much less so. Other trends, particularly those regarding human attitudes and practices, are treacherous to predict. How will Illinois deal with the increasingly frequent visits by large predators? Will education and information shift public perception of the value of active forest management in the Shawnee? Will the state maintain a professionally run and adequately staffed Department of Natural Resources? Will CWD management be permitted to continue and, if not, how will it impact the state's famous deer resource?

The questions keep coming and our predictive power is mocked, as I look out at my bird feeder and note the lack of exotic house sparrows, whose decline is well-documented but poorly understood and certainly not predicted. For the native birds at my feeder, these may indeed be the good old days.

■ Eric

Notes and Contributions

News Updates from North Central Section and Parent Chapter of The Wildlife Society

By Gary E. Potts, Vice President and Fellow, TWS

North Central Section News

The North Central Section of The Wildlife Society has been busy this year ramping up benefits and activities for members. Some of the highlights I've been involved with include:

A slate of candidates for office has been selected by the nominating committee and should be announced shortly as the NCS newsletter has just been released. Please cast your vote for these important positions. The NCS will provide financial awards to the Outstanding Undergraduate Student and Graduate Student to help promote the next generation of wildlife professionals. Two workshops are sponsored by the NCS to focus attention to wildlife needs and problems at the Midwest level: 1) a wolf plenary session was held in Milwaukee, WI at the recent annual conference of TWS and had hundreds of attendees, and 2) a workshop entitled "Feral Swine in the Midwest: Problems and Solutions" is scheduled for the upcoming 74th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in Kansas City, MO on 26 January. In the new NCS Newsletter, President Rochelle Renken writes about numerous activities the section is involved with. Dr. David Andersen is the new NCS Representative to Council and also writes about many of his activities on TWS Council. If you are not a member of the NCS, please join as many worthwhile projects are being done to benefit wildlife and wildlife professionals. To view the NCS newsletter go to <http://www.wildlife.org/ncs/newsletter>

Changes at TWS Headquarters

The website continues to be improved and we hope members appreciate and use it as a major source of information on wildlife and the wildlife profession. Go to <http://www.wildlife.org> and check out the website.

TWS Annual Conference in Milwaukee, WI

Prior to the conference, TWS Council and staff spent 2 days in a strategic planning retreat, with a goal of revising TWS's strategic vision and plan. The planning document will be finalized soon and will set the course for TWS for the next several years.

Attendance at the conference was over 1,300 despite the difficulties federal employees experienced with the partial federal government shutdown. The value of networking with colleagues from across the globe at the annual conference can't be expressed enough!

The TWS Council meetings dealt with multiple issues such as the website, budget, staffing, publications, subunits, etc. The highlights of the Council meeting will be available on our website.

How TWS is viewed by the public is important to Council. We want to continue to be viewed as a professional society. When TWS comments on various issues for agencies, the federal budget, or issues that have a direct threat to wildlife or wildlife habitat, a common statement by agencies or organizations is that "the issue was reviewed and commented on by the following conservation organizations." The Executive Committee of Council recently made the point to one agency that they use the designation "reviewed by the following professional societies and conservation organizations." Thus, we will strive to continue to make the distinction that TWS is a professional society.

The Leadership Institute was a huge success at the conference with 10 participants. The program has been very successful in garnering new officers in subunits, members of working groups and providing training on leadership skills to early-career professionals.

Our Government Affairs and Partnerships staff does a wonderful job working with committees on technical reviews and position statements and working with numerous agencies and organizations on many issues. We are now at a point where we need to expand how we as a professional society do business at all levels. Thus, TWS has created a Conservation Affairs Network designed to better engage the various levels of TWS on important issues that affect wildlife management and the wildlife profession. Stay tuned for more on this issue in upcoming subunit meetings.

TWS will have many important challenges in the future; your membership at each level (student, state, section, and parent) of the society is of vast importance. I believe TWS is headed in a positive direction and encourage members to look for opportunities to improve TWS - get involved with committees; join a working group; or run for office.

ICTWS 50th Anniversary: Still looking for Folks from the Early Days

By 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).

A Working Group of Working Groups? It Happened at the TWS Annual Meeting this Year...

By Heath Hagy, INHS Forbes Biological Station

For many of you who are members of TWS working groups, you'll understand that keeping up working group morale and enthusiasm can be a challenge. As the recently elected chair of the Wetlands Working Group, I'm extremely interested in ways to increase member participation and input – boost the WWG morale, if you will. Thus, I was pleasantly surprised to see a joint working group meeting, a working group of working groups, on the schedule this year and managed to carve out a couple of hours to attend on Sunday morning. The meeting was an excellent forum for chairs, officers, and engaged members to exchange successes and challenges, achievements and frustrations, and ideas for engaging working group members. I thoroughly enjoyed the meeting and exchange of ideas. It was uplifting to hear that the challenges I've faced in some working group were not unique and, in fact, were common to most groups. In my opinion, a major takeaway from the meeting was that working groups must sustain momentum to keep members engaged. I'm not sure that we decided exactly how to do that, but perhaps we'll cover that next year! I hope that this forum continues in the future and that many of you have the opportunity to participate in a working group and even a working group of working groups at the next Annual Meeting.

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

In accord with the Charter of the WTWG, the Group held their annual election for Executive Board Officers August 4th to Sept. 3rd. The results are as follows: Louise Venne was elected as Chair-Elect, Katrina Leigh was elected to Vice Chair, and Stephanie Baker was elected as Treasurer. They thank all candidates for agreeing to run for office and for taking the time to prepare candidate statements. Aside from the newly elected Executive Board Officers, for the forthcoming year Brian Hiller will transition to Chair and Jeff Levengood to Past-Chair. Tom Augspurger completed his term as Past-Chair, Deb Rudis completed her term as Treasurer and Tim Bargar completed his term as Vice Chair. We thank all of them for serving the WTWG.

WTWG Workshop at TWS Annual Meeting: Done in by a double whammy of sequestration and the federal government shutdown, the WTWG was cancelled.

Exciting Times at the Illinois Natural History Survey's Forbes Biological Station

By Heath Hagy, INHS Forbes Biological Station

The Forbes Biological Station of the Illinois Natural History Survey has been around for more than 100 years. I must say, in her time, the Station has witnessed lots of changes and the old girl is pretty robust to new staff (especially new directors with crazy ideas!), record floods and drought, renovations, power outages, sewage leaks, and on and on... Recently, the staff scientists (Aaron Yetter, Michelle Horath, and Chris Hine) have had to train a new director and say goodbye to a seven-year veteran of the Station, Randy Smith. We are excited for Randy in his new position as Wetland Wildlife Program Manager for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. We have undertaken several projects which will help us redesign our fall waterfowl aerial surveys of the Illinois and central Mississippi rivers, which have been conducted since 1948.

Biologist Aaron Yetter started a blog where he discusses weekly his observations of waterfowl and other birds encountered during his aerial surveys. We've officially joined the social media world with a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/forbesbiologicalstation), but I'm sure we're missing the 10 "great" social media sensations that have probably already surpassed Facebook. In any case, we post interesting little tidbits about ducks, wetlands, and projects at the station. Sometimes, Aaron Yetter even provides insight on how decoy spreads and duck blind camouflage patterns look from a high-flying mallard's point of view.

Chris Hine recently completed a technical report outlining the results from 6-years of intensive bird and wetland vegetation monitoring and research at The Nature Conservancy's Emiquon Preserve (Fulton County, IL). This work, sponsored by TNC, helped us secure a small NSF Rapid grant, with other partners at INHS and UIS, to evaluate the effects of the spring 2013 Illinois River flood on newly-restored floodplains. Long-time staff biologist Michelle Horath is leading aspects of that grant which will provide important insight into the effects of river flooding on restored floodplains, previously disconnected from the river.

We are also extremely excited to announce that Josh Osborn from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville joined the FBS staff in November as an Assistant Waterfowl Ecologist. Josh will lead aspects of studies next spring that will explore diet, condition, foraging site selection, and contaminant loads of spring-migrating diving ducks in the Midwest.

As you can tell, there are lots of interesting things ongoing at the Forbes Biological Station and we anticipate more changes in the near future as we add graduate students, seasonal technicians, and volunteers to our fold. I'm incredibly thankful to be a part of the INHS FBS team and encourage you to check out our Facebook and web pages (www.bellrose.org) to explore our current and past projects as well as find opportunities where you can participate in future research activities.

New Home for Your Wildlife Literature

By Bob Clevestine, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

A couple meetings ago, I made a request on behalf of a former intern for wildlife textbooks and lab manuals that she could use during her Peace Corps stint in Ethiopia. Woreta Agricultural College was among the first to engage a new Peace Corps program aimed at natural resource management, but they were lacking basic course materials to frame up the program. Thanks to your contributions, I was able to pass along a number of textbooks, techniques manuals, and lab manuals that made it all the



way there. Pictured are Inge Harding, who spent a summer here at our Ecological Services Field Office before her final year at Texas A&M, and her in-country counterpart Melkie who were showing off the library improvements to the their Peace Corps Program Assistant on the far right. Inge sends her personal thanks to all who contributed, and she added that the school expanded it's broad band connection and internet access to the library (so now I don't have to ship the 6 boxes of hardcopy JWM, Bulletin, etc in our garage – anybody want those?).

Student Chapter News

This space is kinda vacant isn't it? Your school's chapter update could be here instead.

We're looking forward to a bit more from around the state for the next Newsletter. We mean you.

- *The Editor*

In Remembrance

By Paul Willms

Jack Allen Ellis, President of the Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society (ICTWS) in 1984 and Secretary/Treasurer in 1966 & 1967, passed away on Tuesday, July 5, 2011. He was 82 years old and lived in Effingham, Ill. Jack was a charter member of the Illinois Chapter, which originated in 1964.

Jack was born August 17, 1928 in Bardwell, Kentucky. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1946 (W W II) and was stationed in Pearl Harbor at the U.S. Naval Receiving Station. Jack received his B.S. in zoology from the University of Tennessee in 1952. He earned his master's degree in wildlife management from Southern Illinois University (SIU) at Carbondale in 1955. He was Dr. Willard Klimstra's fourth graduate student in the newly developed wildlife management MS program at SIU.

Ellis began his professional career working for the Illinois Natural History Survey in Champaign - Urbana. He designed the first comprehensive pheasant nesting study on the Sibley Study Area, north of Gibson City in 1954.



According to Stan Etter, a longtime colleague, Jack and his crews searched all of the presumed nesting cover on 60 randomly selected 40 acre plots. Variations of the nesting study continued for more than 30 years and led to the development of the successful Roadsides for Wildlife Project.

Stan referred to Jack as a life-long friend and mentor. Stan tells that they always gave credit to Jack by telling that he, as a small boy, discovered the Sibley Study Area shortly after the glacial ice melted. Jack seemed to enjoy hearing it as much as they enjoyed telling it.

In 1957, Jack moved on to the pheasant range extension project at the Neoga and Belmont pheasant release areas. The project evaluated the response of "California pheasants" and their habitat needs. He and assistant project leader, Bill Anderson also evaluated the release of Korean ring-necked and Japanese green pheasants.



In the early 1960's Jack conducted research projects on bobwhite quail in south central Illinois. Jack was the senior author of two bobwhite quail publications; Spatial Relationships Among Quail Coveys JWM 33(2) and Responses of Bobwhites to Management in Illinois JWM 33(4). John Roseberry (SIU), commented on the valuable insight the reports contain regarding successful quail management.

In 1974 he transferred to the Illinois Department of Conservation (IDOC).

In 1976 he was appointed Chief of the IDOC Division of Wildlife Resources. In 1978, Ellis became the Wildlife Division - Wildlife Survey and Populations program manager. He was appointed head of the Wildlife Planning and Operations program in 1984 and eventually wrote the initial "Division of Wildlife Resources Strategic Plan" for the IDOC. Jack retired from the IDOC – Division of Wildlife Resources in 1990.

Jack was always one for a good joke or humorous comment. Stan Etter recalls an interesting encounter he had with Jack regarding neckties. Stan was preparing to give two formal presentations that required he wear a necktie. Jack mentioned to Stan that it was a shame he would have to get another tie for the second presentation.

Stan said that what came next was quite amusing. Jack said, "it was extravagant and wasteful for any wildlifer to own more than one tie. Chuck Nixon and I had quite successfully shared one tie for years, coordinating our public presentations around who needed the tie next." Leave it to Jack for a comment like that.

Jack was also my friend and mentor. He frequently provided sage advice when he felt that I needed it. He would say, "Willms, remember to operate by two rules, Rule No 1: Don't sweat the small stuff and Rule No. 2: Everything is small stuff." Jack had a great sense of humor.



In 2000, Jack was recognized with the Professional Award of Merit from the Illinois Chapter of the Wildlife Society for his outstanding contributions to the wildlife profession in research, leadership and ethics. He was truly a credit and icon for natural resources and wildlife management in Illinois.

Rest in peace, my friend.

Member Publications & Publications of Interest

LONGITUDINAL STRUCTURING OF TURTLE ASSEMBLAGES IN AN ALTERED RIVER IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS, USA: IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSERVATION

Robert D. Bluett, Wade E. Louis, Daniel A. Newhouse, Carl J. Handel, Jr., and John H. Kube

ABSTRACT

Longitudinal gradients in stream conditions affect structuring of assemblages of many aquatic organisms. Common patterns include downstream additions of species and shifts in functional groups. We speculated these patterns would be evident in turtle assemblages of the Sangamon River in central Illinois. Using baited hoop nets, we captured 1,060 turtles during 441 trap-nights along a 357-km reach of the river. Number of species captured increased from two in the fourth stream order (Snapping Turtle, *Chelydra serpentina*; Spiny Softshell, *Apalone spinifera*) to eight in the seventh. Two generalists (Painted Turtle, *Chrysemys picta*; Red-eared Slider, *Trachemys scripta*) became established near an impoundment in the fifth stream order and were encountered regularly thereafter. Two lotic specialists (Smooth Softshell, *Apalone mutica*; Ouachita Map Turtle, *Graptemys ouachitensis*) first appeared in lower reaches of the fifth stream order, and another (Northern Map Turtle, *Graptemys geographica*) in the seventh. Longitudinal structuring calls for basin-wide approaches to conservation because threats such as siltation and pollution can originate in terrestrial settings and accumulate downstream.

ESTIMATING OCCUPANCY OF *TRACHEMYS SCRIPTA* AND *CHRYSEMYS PICTA* WITH TIME-LAPSE CAMERAS AND BASKING RAFTS: A PILOT STUDY IN ILLINOIS, USA

Robert D. Bluett and Bradley J. Cosentino

ABSTRACT

We evaluated time-lapse cameras aimed at man-made basking rafts (camera traps) by estimating probabilities of occupancy and detection for *Trachemys scripta* and *Chrysemys picta* at 15 isolated ponds or wetlands in three regions of Illinois. Evaluation of camera traps relied on comparisons with hoop nets and published accounts of relative abundances of target species. After accounting for imperfect detection, occupancy probabilities for *C. picta* were 0.75 (SE = 0.18) using hoop nets and 0.91 (SE = 0.09) using camera traps. Occupancy probabilities for *T. scripta* were 0.96 (SE = 0.42) using hoop nets and 0.71 (SE = 0.17) using camera traps. The most-supported model of detection with camera traps included region and date of survey for both species, whereas the top model of detection with hoop traps included region and trap effort for both species. Regional differences in occupancy and detection for both survey methods were consistent with reports of relative abundances of target species. Daily rates of detection with camera traps varied during the 20-day sampling period, but in a predictable manner described by a single covariate (date of survey). Environmental variables were uninformative for predicting detection probability. Costs of labor and travel were lower (at least half) for camera traps than hoop nets, which required three or more surveys per site given observed rates of occupancy and detection. Camera traps require more evaluation, but show promise as an efficient, relatively inexpensive, and minimally invasive method to assess presence-absence of species of freshwater turtles that bask aerially.

Tom Micetich, IDNR Deer Project Manager gave the head-up that the **October 25 TWS Newsbrief** contained a link to the U of I analysis of IDNR CWD management . . . which should be of interest to most Illinois Wildlifers.

<http://www.natureworldnews.com/articles/4543/20131021/mad-cow-disease-deer-controlled-targeted-culling-long-term-study.htm>

The direct link to the actual paper is here:

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167587713002894>

Don Sparling, Southern Illinois University Cooperative Wildlife Laboratory, Don Sparling has recently submitted the last chapters for a textbook entitled Administration of Natural Resources to be published by Elsevier. The book is geared for courses in wildlife, environmental science, forestry and other disciplines that require at least one course in administration. The book includes both the United States and Canada. It contains chapters on the history of natural resource conservation, especially wildlife in both nations; the structure mission, and function of federal, state and provincial conservation agencies; non-governmental organizations; the budget processes and funding of conservation; the need for public relations; profiles on users or stakeholders in natural resources; extensive descriptions of relevant conservation laws; and personal insights after working for more than 22 years for the federal government and teaching wildlife administration for 10 years afterwards.

Go Don! Maybe we'll have copies for autographing by the author at the Chapter meeting.

Training, Continuing Education, and Conferences

The Central Hardwood Forest Conference

Carbondale, IL March 10 -12

<http://www.centralhardwood.org/index.php>

Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference



<http://www.midwestfw.org/index.html>

2014 ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION ILLINOIS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

When: 13–15 April 2014

Where: **Northfield Inn, Suites, and Conference Center**
3280 Northfield Drive
Springfield, IL 62702
(217) 523-7900 phone
(866) 577-7900 toll free
(217) 523-7273 fax
www.northfieldinn.com

Registration Cost: \$100 for regular members, \$75 for student members and retirees, spouses of members \$50. Sunday Social, Lunches, and Monday banquet are included!

Room Costs: Rates for rooms are \$70/night. The chapter has reserved a room block for Sunday and Monday night. This room block is only reserved until March 30. Please call 217.523.7900 to make your reservations. Also be sure to make your reservation under the “Illinois Chapter of the Wildlife Society” Business Block.

Schedule of Events:

Sunday, April 13 th	Registration and Evening Social
Monday, April 14 th	Registration continues Presentations and Posters Banquet & Raffle
Tuesday, April 15 th	Presentations (ending at noon) ICTWS business meeting

Additional Information:

The raffle will be run by our Student Chapters. The students will be bringing some items to raffle, but PLEASE BRING ITEMS OF YOUR OWN TO DONATE to the cause. The student chapters will share the proceeds to help discount registration costs for their members.

**Registration Form
ICTWS Annual Meeting
13-15 April 2014
Northfield Inn, Suites, and Conference Center
Springfield, Illinois**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Registration Fee (includes lunches, banquet and breaks)

Regular member \$100.00 \$ _____

Student or retiree \$75.00 \$ _____

Spouse of Member \$50.00 \$ _____

2014 Chapter Dues (If not yet paid or paid with TWS renewal)

Regular Membership \$10.00 \$ _____

Student Membership \$ 5.00 \$ _____

Return this form with your check or money order to:

Luke Garver, ICTWS Secretary Treasurer
USDA –Natural Resources Conservation Service
145 Pine St., Jacksonville, IL 6265
luke.garver@gmail.com
(217) 473-6187



2014 ANNUAL MEETING CALL FOR ABSTRACTS ILLINOIS CHAPTER OF TWS

Abstracts are being requested for the 50th ICTWS Annual Meeting to be held 13-15 April 2014 at the Northfield Inn, Suites, and Conference Center, Springfield, Illinois. Presentations will be 20 minutes in length (15 min for presentation, 5 min for questions) and should be given using PowerPoint. Please send abstracts in MS Word format. Abstracts should be ≤ 300 words in length according to the following format:

Title: Foraging behavior and dietary preferences of dung beetles in Illinois

Authors: Luck E. Student (presenter) and Rusty Ankh, Dept of Coprophagy, Tumblebug College, Fast Food, IL 65432; Phone: (217) 555-7667; Email: stinker@hotmail.com

Abstract: Foraging ecology of dung beetles (*Scarabaeoidea*) has received curiously little research attention. We observed dung beetle foraging in experimental treatments of dung origin, freshness, and quantity. Percent dung moisture was positively correlated with the diameter of dung balls and negatively related to rolling speed. Highest observed foraging efficiency was achieved with material originating from white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*). We recommend intensive therapy for anyone attempting to replicate our results.

Student paper?	No	X Yes	If yes: undergraduate, MS or PhD research?	PhD
Oral or Poster Presentation?	Oral			

Please send the abstract as an electronic file (MS Word format) **by 1 March 2014** to:

Eric Schauber
Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory
Southern Illinois University
schauber@siu.edu
(618) 536-7766

Presenters will be notified of acceptance by 15 March 2014.

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