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# Passport

The Newsletter of the International Wildlife Management Working Group of The Wildlife Society

Volume 1, Issue 1

October 2012

## Greetings from the Chair: Inaugural Edition of Newsletter

### Going to Portland?

- Please join us for the Working Group Meeting
- October 15, 12:15—2:15
- Oregon Convention Center, Room C-124
- Draft agenda on page 4
- Bring your ideas, concerns and opinions. Input from all working group members is encouraged.
- **Not going to Portland?** Email your input to an officer—see page 5

Greetings from the Chair of the International Wildlife Management Working Group!

I hope everyone is having a fun and productive fall. We, the officers of the IWMWG, are working hard to increase communication among the members and visibility across TWS of our working group. Claire Crow, working group member, has graciously stepped forward and agreed to assist us in producing a newsletter for our membership. We plan to start by producing a newsletter twice a year and eventually move to a quarterly publication. I hope you find this edition interesting and informative. Additionally, I hope it increases your interest in being active in the IWMWG. For this first issue, secretary/

treasurer Theresa Fiorino conducted a lengthy interview with Jim Ramakka, long-time working group chair and champion. This interview is timely for our first newsletter as it provides members with history related to the working group and puts forth ideas for moving our group forward. We also have a section from Lori Huffman, TWS student member, and former officer from the New Mexico State University Student Chapter, detailing her international experience in Belize as a student on a field course last spring. In future issues of the newsletter, we plan to continue to highlight international experiences of members and to showcase some of our international members and their contributions to wildlife



**Martha Desmond, Chair, TWS International Wildlife Management Working Group, presents the inaugural edition of the working group's newsletter.**

management and conservation. In this issue, we also have included (continued on Page 3)

### Inside this issue:

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## International Experience Enhances US Career of Jim Ramakka

Interview by Theresa Fiorino

Congratulations go out to Jim Ramakka, IWMWG's former chair, who was recently appointed as the National Wildlife Program Lead for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). In his new position, Jim is responsible for overseeing the wildlife budget and policy develop-

ment for BLM, which manages more land (245 million acres) than any other land management agency.

Jim officially "retired" in 2007 after 32 years of federal service, 27 of which were with the BLM. During his tenure with the agencies, he

was involved in numerous wildlife inventory and monitoring and planning projects and worked with many natural resource programs.

Jim has a lifelong interest in international wildlife management issues and feels that (continued on Page 4)



**The author, NMSU student Lori Huffman (right), with La Milpa field guide Melvis (center), and NMSU student Corrie Reasner (left).**

***"The first day we saw iguanas, howler monkeys, a fer-de-lance... and other species in the wild that most people see only in zoos."***



**Belizean student making bird observations.**

## Belize Field Course Experience: Perspectives from a student

Lori Huffman, senior at New Mexico State University and TWS student chapter Vice President (2010-2011), writes about her experience on the Belize Field Course in Spring of 2012.

Being part of an International Study Abroad course was an amazing experience for me. It not only helped me face my fear of open-ocean snorkeling, but changed my entire perspective of my future career. I almost didn't take the Belize Field School Course because it offered many things I had never experienced. I had never been out of the country but considering the opportunity available, I knew I had to take the chance. I was a bit nervous at first but my nerves quickly went away once we ar-

rived in Belize. Seeing the diversity of plants and animals was astounding. The first day we saw iguanas, howler monkeys, a fer-de-lance, a red-eyed tree frog and several other species in the wild that most people only get to see in zoos. We went caving with only headlamps, trekking through water the entire length of the cave. We got to see Mayan ruins and snorkel among coral reefs. The people were great and the food was to die for. I came back from this trip with a lot of great friends and mentors. Belize has made me realize there is so much more to experience in the world. I really enjoyed my time in the tropics and seeing the vast diversity. Working internationally never crossed my mind until

this trip and now it is one of my career goals. I would definitely recommend studying abroad to everyone. It is an experience of a lifetime!

***"The diversity of plants and animals was astounding"***



**NMSU student Dustin Toledo holds a captured catbird.**

***"Working internationally is now one of my career goals."***



**NMSU students Daniel Macias (red shirt) and Dachin Francis watch birds in the canopy.**



**Ocellated Turkey (*Meleagris ocellata*) a relatively unresearched species.**



**La Milpa field guide Melvis and NMSU student Dustin Toledo put up mist nets.**

## Greetings from the Chair (*continued from Page 1*)

the agenda for our upcoming meeting in Portland, a call for nominations for election of officers, a competition for designing a working group logo and a request for help from an individual interested in working with the TWS webmaster, updating our website and keeping it informative for the working group membership.

As the WG moves forward, one of the items we have identified as important for our group is to find venues for our young members to increase international experiences through summer internships and field cours-

es. We are actively seeking funding both to host international field courses through New Mexico State University for student members across the country and to provide field or advocacy internship experiences for students in a foreign country. I expect that this will include opportunities for members to lead courses, identify potential international internships and serve as intern hosts. Once funding is in place, I anticipate 1-2 field courses and 5 internship experiences annually. These opportunities are still in

early stages of development and I welcome any input from the membership regarding ideas for advancing or participating in such activities. I would welcome other ideas on potential activities for the IWMWG, as well as volunteers to lead future initiatives. I would like to thank our current slate of officers, Jim Ramakka past chair, Robin White chair elect and Theresa Fiorino secretary/treasurer for their dedication and enthusiasm for this working group. I look forward to your input and to seeing many of you in Portland.

*Martha*



**“We need your unique logo design for our website, newsletter and membership announcements.”**

## Your Creativity Needed: Logo Design Contest

We need a unique logo for our website, newsletter and membership announcements. This is an awesome opportunity to apply your creative energy and/or skill to the field of international wildlife management. If interested in helping the working group make our mark, please join in the competition and submit your ideas for a distinctive logo. The logo should be a simple design involving two to three colors, be of adequate resolution that can be printed in a variety of sizes without losing quality, and reflect the international nature of the group. Please send your submissions to either Robin White ([Rpwhite@usgs.gov](mailto:Rpwhite@usgs.gov)) or Tree Fiorino ([Theresa.fiorino@gmail.com](mailto:Theresa.fiorino@gmail.com)) by December 15, 2012. We will announce the winner in our next newsletter.

## Get Involved with Activities for the IWMWG!

Looking for ways to become more involved with TWS and the IWMWG? Become the International Wildlife Management Working Group liaison to the TWS webmaster! The best way to communicate with our working group membership is through the website and we need help keeping our site up-to-date and informative. Take advantage of the opportunity to support the group by volunteering your time. If interested, please contact one of the working group officers.



## Jim Ramakka (*continued from Page 1*)

some level of international experience is vital for North American natural resource managers. "International work provides you a much broader view of the world and different ecosystems...it teaches you how to consider other cultures." Jim feels that his international experience, much of which was gained through his term as a Peace Corps volunteer, has made him more adaptable to handling any number of resource challenges in the American West.

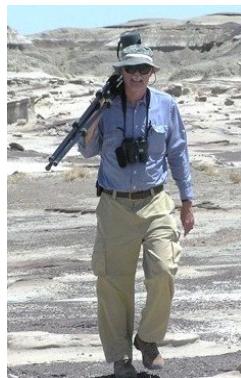
Jim's international interests brought him to the IWMWG in 1994, around the time that working groups were first formed in TWS; he served as secretary-treasurer from 2002 to 2006 and chair from 2006 to 2010. Jim sees a vital role for the IWMWG in serving as a forum for wildlife management practitioners to network and share their experiences in addressing wildlife conservation and management issues. "We

in North America can share our knowledge" and, "at the same time, we can learn from their experiences. I believe most North American biologists would be blown away by how much their international counterparts accomplish with far less money and logistical support."

Thanks Jim for your years of involvement in the group as well as your continued service to conserving our wildlife heritage.

*More of interview in box below.*

**"International work provides you a much broader view of the world and different ecosystems."**



**Jim monitoring historic raptor nest sites in the Bisti De Na Zin Wilderness in New Mexico.**

### TF: Why did you become involved in the working group?

JR: I have always had an interest in international wildlife management, which was one of the reasons I was in the Peace Corps. I realized that we could be doing a lot more in the developing world to help develop good conservation programs. At that time (in the 70s) there was perception in some countries that they were being subjected to intellectual imperialism. Sabbatical professors would do their international work and then publish papers back home and not in the language of the host country. This wasn't always the case, but it certainly did occur. At the time I couldn't understand why there seemed to be so little interest in international work. Later I learned that for a number of universities, international work didn't count towards tenure. Now there is a lot of work in Latin America and much of it being done by biologists working in their home countries. NGOs are now doing much of the work which in the 70s was conducted by just few museums or small in-country university programs. At the 1st International Wildlife Management Congress in Costa Rica in 1993, I talked with a Colombian biologist who told me there were more than 20 NGOs working on natural resources in Colombia. Now, almost 20 years later, there are likely more and there is a growing ecotourism market. Colombians are working with a number of North American NGOs and agencies to protect key habitats for migratory birds.

Beginning with my involvement with Partners in Flight in the 90s, I've seen that focused and dedicated Mexican and Central American biologists are working just as hard as their North American counterparts to address bird conservation in their countries.

### TF: Has your international experience influenced your career and how you approach wildlife conservation?

JR: The Peace Corps played a major role not just in my career, but my life in general. It certainly made me more adaptable and taught me the importance of learning about and respecting other cultures. Those lessons made it easier to understand and work with the various American sub-cultures you encounter when working in the rural West. To be effective, you have to communicate in a way that people can relate to in their own lives, (help them see) why protecting or managing a particular piece of ground in a certain way is important to them.

Beyond that, I've learned that many of the issues we face in wildlife conservation in North America can be transposed elsewhere in the world, whether it is Latin America or Australasia. The names of the players may change, but the problems (loss of habitat, growing energy demands, invasive species, etc.) remain the same.

**"There was a perception that some countries were being subjected to intellectual imperialism."**

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INTERNATIONAL  
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MANAGEMENT  
WORKING GROUP

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I hope you enjoy your  
Passport. Please send me  
your comments and  
suggestions for future  
issues!

We're on the Web!  
[http://joomla.wildlife.org/  
international/index.php](http://joomla.wildlife.org/international/index.php)



International  
Wildlife  
Management  
Working Group

The International Wildlife Management Working Group provides a forum for TWS members to network with wildlife professionals from around the world on a wide range of issues pertaining to wildlife management and habitat conservation.

The Working Group provides an opportunity to exchange information with colleagues worldwide and to seek technical assistance from other countries when local expertise is not available.

The Working Group reaches out to wildlife professionals in all areas of the world to offer the collected expertise of The Wildlife Society in an international context.

**Working Group Officers:**

Chair: Martha Desmond ([mdesmond@nmsu.edu](mailto:mdesmond@nmsu.edu))

Chair-elect: Robin White ([rpwhite@usgs.gov](mailto:rpwhite@usgs.gov))

Secretary/Treasurer: Theresa Fiorino ([theresa.fiorino@gmail.gov](mailto:theresa.fiorino@gmail.gov))

Past Chair: Jim Ramakka ([jramakka@aol.com](mailto:jramakka@aol.com))

AWMS Liaison and Representative: Rick Baydack ([Baydack@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:Baydack@cc.umanitoba.ca))

**Agenda for WG meeting at annual conference Oct 15, 2012  
12:15—2:15 PM, Room C-124, Oregon Convention Center, Portland**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Agenda Adjustment/Final
3. Review/approval of minutes from annual meeting, Kona, Hawaii, November 2011
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Report on International Wildlife Management Conference, Durban, South Africa, July 2012
6. Report from representatives:
  - a. International Union of Game Biologists (IUGB) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
  - b. Australasian Wildlife Management Society (AWMS)
7. New Business
  - a. International internship opportunities and field courses
  - b. Travel grants
  - c. Newsletter
  - d. Symposia proposals for annual meeting, Milwaukee, WI, October 5-9, 2013
  - e. Upcoming elections
8. Round Robin Working Group Discussion