

The Grapevine

Volume 44



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Remarks from the President



Fall weather has finally hit and I find myself wanting to spend more time outdoors and less time at my desk! These are anxious and exciting times in the world of wildlife conservation and management. Now more than ever we need to work together through challenges of low budgets and full calendars to help our wildlife and natural resources. The hard-working individuals I get to work with motivate me and I hope to hear more stories from our membership.

In response to a request from one of our long-time members, we drafted a letter and sent it to J. D. Strong, the Director of Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation in regards to the draft proposal for the Chronic Wasting Disease Response. We praised ODWC and ODAFF for recognizing the dynamic nature of CWD research and management and their willingness an adaptive approach for CWD control. We offered 7 suggestions that we feel would strengthen the

effectiveness and success of the program. A copy of this letter is included towards the end of the newsletter.

The Executive Board of Oklahoma Chapter of The Wildlife Society is excited to see everyone at our Annual Business meeting this year at the 5th Annual Oklahoma Natural Resources Conference in Tulsa from February 20-22. This is our year to head the planning committee and we have been working hard to make sure this conference will be great. From outstanding plenary speakers to dynamic workshops and presentations you will want to make sure to come and participate. We will be announcing award winners at our meeting as well as the banquet on Thursday evening. Make sure to come and celebrate wildlife conservation across our state.

We are looking for nominations for our annual awards: Publication and Creativity Award, Student Research Award, Undergraduate Scholarship, Private Land Management Award, Honorary Membership, Harold C. Stuart Conservation Excellence Award, and Oklahoma Award. Later in the newsletter I will describe each of the awards and the nomination process. If you know of someone deserving of recognition, please do not hesitate to

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Executive Board

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contact us. We would really like to acknowledge the hard work and effort put into wildlife conservation in Oklahoma.

Lastly, I would like to ask you to consider becoming more active in the chapter. We need folks who are willing to give up some of their time to work as executive board members and to head committees for our society. Everyone is busy with work and family and no one really needs more responsibilities; however, service to our society is necessary to keep it functioning. This year we will need to elect a new President-Elect, Treasurer, and At-large Board member. Please feel free to contact our current officers for more information about what each position entails.

Hope all is well with you, I hope to see you all in February!

Vicki Jackson

Simple things Make for Low Hurdles in Curbing Pollinator Insect Declines Matt Fullerton, Wildlife Biologist - Threatened and Endangered Species, ODWC

As a biologist whose focus is on Oklahoma's rare and declining species, I am often asked "What can I do to help 'Species A'?" Mind you, "Species A" in the conversation may be anything from an endangered bat to a freshwater mussel. As you might expect, there is typically no easy answer. One factor that can be attributed to nearly all declining species is habitat loss resulting from anthropogenic (manmade) activities. Different species face various hurdles in the race towards population recovery. In recent decades, scientific research has made it glaringly obvious that pollinator species across the board have been experiencing declines. Initially, the "buzz" was on European honey bees, but that was merely the catalyst for pollinator insects as a whole. Thanks to the charismatic and iconic Monarch Butterfly, people from all walks of life are becoming increasingly engaged in learning how to help pollinators. The excellent news is that anyone, even the average "city-dweller", has the profound ability to both attract and foster pollinator insects in their own backyard with relative ease. Speaking from my own experience, I have recently had the pleasure of documenting at least 10 butterfly species in my backyard since spring. While I have been establishing multiple "pollinator magnet" native plants in my yard over the last 3 years, for several years prior I simply maintained a handful of shrubby, exotic ornamental plants and mainly kept my property pesticide and herbicide-free. That simple decision still yielded results, as insect life has always been relatively diverse in my Oklahoma City yard. After I "stepped up my game" and began establishing patches of native plants, the pollinator response was fast and fierce. The importance of establishing patches suitable, native, nectar-producing plants, especially in urban areas, cannot be overstated. As Monarchs migrate through Oklahoma in spring and fall, they are in critical need of fueling stations along the way, and Bermudagrass lawns don't cut it. Your 3ft x 5ft native sunflower garden could literally be the difference between life and death for a weathered Monarch as it makes its incredible journey. How can you help, you ask? Establish some native blooming plants – they're easy keepers and most are extremely low maintenance because they're adapted to the local climate. Best of all, you can share the fruits of your labor and demonstrate how simple it is to provide habitat for a whole host of beautiful butterflies and other insect species. No matter the size or the scope, the benefits will be realized quickly and you will have contributed to reversing the widespread decline of not only Monarchs, but hundreds of other species within the diverse world of pollinator insect communities.

A couple of excellent sources for pollinator information include the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation (<https://xerces.org>) and the Monarch Joint Venture (<https://monarchjointventure.org>), a site that I consider to be single greatest repository for Monarch Butterfly information.

OSU TWS Student Chapter Board

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OSU - TWS Student Chapter Update

The Oklahoma State University chapter of the wildlife society has hit the ground running for the 2018-2019 school year. Member participation has increased significantly this year with around 70 members in attendance at our meetings, roughly 40 of which are due paying members. We have 381 students on our email roster and have an active social media presence. Our plans for the semester include professional conferences, professor lead field meetings, guest speakers, outside hands on workshops, and other special projects.

Our chapter has partnered with the University of Central Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) for a research project gathering data on bobcat distribution across the state. For this project members can participate and gain field experience by building and setting hair-snare traps around Oklahoma over Christmas break. Later this year we will also be continuing the tradition of helping the ODWC pull and age deer jaws at various processing plants around the state on the first day of deer rifle season.

During one of our October meetings we held a snake handling field demonstration lead by Dr. Moen, a herpetology professor at OSU. Attending members learned the safest way to handle and look for snakes with a focus in venomous snake safety. For another of our meetings

we hosted Laurel Poff from the U.S. Forest Service. She presented and held a question-answer session over the best strategies to successfully apply for USFS and other federal jobs. In early October, our members had the opportunity to showcase their own presentation skills by presenting to Stillwater High School students about previous internships and future job opportunities in the fields of wildlife and ecology.

In addition to these activities we will also be making trips and providing transportation to the Wildlife Expo, Oklahoma Natural Resources Conference, conclave, and several wildlife rehabilitation centers in Oklahoma. We also remain active in OSU homecoming festivities including the window painting competition, Harvest Carnival, the chili cook-off, and the sign competition on library lawn. On October 26th, the Friday before the homecoming game, we will sell turkey legs at Walk-around. This is our main fundraiser for the fall semester. Our officer team meets weekly and will continue planning events for the remainder of this and next semester to continue our mission of providing our members with valuable experiences, knowledge, and professional development in the field of wildlife management.



Oklahoma Natural Resources Conference



February 20-22, 2019
Hyatt Regency Tulsa Hotel

Please join us at the 2019 Oklahoma Natural Resource Conference February 20-22, 2019 at the Hyatt Regency Tulsa Hotel. The OKNRC is hosted by the Oklahoma Chapters of The Wildlife Society, American Fisheries Society, Society for Range Management, Oklahoma Invasive Plant Council, Prescribed Fire Council, the Soil and Water Conservation Society, Oklahoma Ornithological Society, and the Oklahoma Division Society of American Foresters. The conference will have presentation topics on range, wildlife, fisheries, forestry and environmental sciences.

Room Blocks

The OKNRC has rooms blocked at the Hyatt Regency Tulsa Hotel. The Hyatt hotel is located at 100 East 2nd St., Tulsa OK 74103 and just steps away from Downtown. This location makes it very convenient for meeting attendees. Use the code "WILD" for the room block. Rooms are \$91+tax per night. Room block rate deadline is **January 25, 2019**. Prices cannot be guaranteed after that date.

Registration

Is available online at www.oknrc.com. Early registration ends February 11, 2019.

UCO - TWS Student Chapter Update

The UCO Wildlife Society is continuing to grow as an organization at UCO. In Fall 2017 we had the opportunity to tour and volunteer with Wildcare, at our meetings some of UCO's own graduate students talked about their research experiences, and we were able to offer many undergraduate research and volunteer opportunities. In Spring 2018 we had the opportunity to educate kids about wildlife with Positive Tomorrows, had multiple speakers come to our meetings, and some of our members attended

the OKNRC conference. For the 2018/19 school year the new executive board has decided to focus on student engagement and hope to grow an even stronger presence on campus. We are planning on volunteering at the OKC Zoo for their Stomp and Chomp this Fall and continue to offer opportunities for students to volunteer and research with professors at UCO. We also hope to work with Wildcare, continue student education, and help out at the 2018 Wildlife Expo.

Upcoming Events

-  National Society for Range Management Meeting
Feb. 10-14, 2019, Minneapolis, MN
-  OK Natural Resource Conference
Feb. 20-22, 2019, Tulsa OK
-  American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting
Sept. 29 - Oct. 3, Reno, NV
-  Oklahoma Wildlife Expo
September 28 & 29, 2019, Guthrie
-  The Wildlife Society National Meeting
Sept. 29 - Oct. 3, Reno, NV
-  Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting
October 27-30, 2019 Hilton Head, South Carolina

Call for Student Papers for TWS Research Award

This award rewards undergraduate and graduate students who conduct outstanding research in natural resource ecology and management. Subject matter includes topics in range, wildlife, natural resource, and environmental sciences. Please send electronic files to Craig Davis, craig.a.davis@okstate.edu. Contact Craig for more information. Entries are due by February 1, 2019. Awards of \$500, \$200 and \$50 and plaques will be given to the top three competitors.

Eligibility

Graduate and undergraduate students are eligible. Students who have graduated since the last OCTWS meeting are eligible if they are members of OCTWS at the time of the annual meeting. Students must be the senior author of the abstract and oral presentation. The work being reported must be primarily that of the student. Research projects should be based on at least one season or year of data collection. Only students who are affiliated with an Oklahoma college or university at the time of research or students who conducted field work in Oklahoma, but are affiliated with an out-of-state college or university, are eligible to compete.

Extended Abstract Submission - see OKNRC.com for submission details.

TWS Publication and Creativity Award

Please consider nominating someone for the TWS Publication and Creativity Award presented to member(s) of the Oklahoma Chapter who, as individuals or members of a team, make outstanding contributions to natural resource management and conservation through books, technical articles, popular articles, videos, or other media or programs completed within the last 3 years, including the current year. The award will be presented at the annual meeting, February 20-22, 2019.

Entries are due by February 1, 2019. Send your nomination for the Publication and Creativity Award in the form of an electronic letter and any other documents needed to support your nomination, to Craig Davis, Chair, OCTWS Awards Committee (craig.a.davis@okstate.edu). For further information, contact Craig Davis.

Harold C. Stuart Conservation Excellence Award

This award recognizes a lay person or group that has contributed significantly towards enhancing conservation stewardship and perpetuating a conservation ethic through activities in Oklahoma. The award will be presented at the annual meeting, February 20-22, 2019.

Entries are due by February 1, 2019. Send your nomination for the Harold C. Stuart Conservation Excellence Award in the form of an electronic letter, with attached photo, maps, and any other documents needed to support your nomination, to Craig Davis, Chair, OCTWS Awards Committee (craig.a.davis@okstate.edu). For further information, contact Craig Davis.

Private Land Management Award

This award recognizes exemplary contributions to natural resource management on private land. Nominations should include descriptions of the landowner's goals, property, and wildlife management practices. The nominator should be prepared to give a brief slide presentation about the recipient and the property at the annual meeting, February 20-22, 2019.

Entries are due by February 1, 2019. Send your nomination for the Private Land Management Award in the form of an electronic letter, with attached photo, maps, and any other documents needed to support your nomination, to Craig Davis, Chair, OCTWS Awards Committee (craig.a.davis@okstate.edu). For further information, contact Craig Davis.

Oklahoma Award

The Chapter's most prestigious award, the Oklahoma Award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the profession of wildlife management in the state of Oklahoma. The award will be presented at the annual meeting, February 20-22, 2019.

Entries are due by February 1, 2019. Send your nomination for the Oklahoma Award in the form of an electronic letter, with attached photo, maps, and any other documents needed to support your nomination, to Craig Davis, Chair, OCTWS Awards Committee (craig.a.davis@okstate.edu). For further information, contact Craig Davis.

General criteria to be used for nominations for the Private Land Management Award, the Harold C. Stuart Conservation Excellence Award, and The Oklahoma Award :

1. A nominee should live or work in Oklahoma or have done so during period pertinent to the nomination.
2. A nominee may have received professional training or be a layman in the field of wildlife management.
3. A nominee is not required to be a member of The Wildlife Society or the Oklahoma Chapter.
4. A nominee's achievement need not have occurred in the 12 months prior to the date his accomplishments are recognized.

The information for nominations should include:

1. Name, title.
2. Education – place, degree(s).
3. Pertinent Employment – past and present, place and dates.
4. Distinguishing activities (may include papers).
5. Reason for which nomination is being made.
6. Signature of nominator.

Entries are due by February 1, 2019. Submit nominations in writing via an electronic letter to, Craig Davis, Chair, OCTWS Awards Committee (craig.a.davis@okstate.edu). For further information, contact Craig Davis.

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP (\$500) APPLICATION

Name

Phone number

Email

Street address

University

Major

Hours Completed

GPA

Names(s) of the TWS chapter(s) of which you are a member

Criteria the must be met to qualify:

1. Member of a chapter of TWS (if not a member, you may join using the attached form)
2. Classified as a junior or senior (at least 60 semester hours completed)
3. Majoring in wildlife biology/management or a closely related field

Application materials:

1. A current resume
2. A current transcript (unofficial is acceptable) indicating total hours and grade point average
3. An essay (300-600 words, double spaced) on "What are the most important issues confronting wild life conservation today?"

Scoring Criteria

Resume Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 High

Transcript Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 High

Essay Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 High

Applications will be scored by a panel of judges at the annual meeting of the Oklahoma Chapter of the Wildlife Society. Judges will be the same as those for the Student Presentation Award. The panel includes at least 3 members selected on the basis of objectivity and experience.

Submit scholarship and membership form by February 1, 2019. Return scholarship application to Craig A. Davis (craig.a.davis@okstate.edu). Return membership form below to Kristen Gillman (address on form).



12 November 2018

Mr. J. D. Strong, Director
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
1801 N. Lincoln
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Re: Oklahoma Chapter of The Wildlife Society Comments on ODWC and ODAFF
Chronic Wasting Disease Response Strategy

Dear Mr. Strong:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the ODWC and ODAFF Chronic Wasting Disease Response Strategy. The Oklahoma Chapter of The Wildlife Society is the state chapter of The Wildlife Society, which is a non-profit professional society representing over 10,000 wildlife biologists and managers dedicated to the wise stewardship of wildlife resources through science-based management and conservation.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a major threat to the health of our wild cervid populations in the state. Management and control of CWD is a major concern of professional wildlife biologists and we appreciate the cooperative effort of ODWC and ODAFF to address CWD issues in the state through their Chronic Wasting Disease Response Strategy.

As pointed out in the document, CWD research and management is very dynamic. New research results and information continue to enlighten our understanding of CWD transmission, control, and management. We are encouraged that ODWC and ODAFF recognize this and state they will modify and augment the plan as new information becomes available. An adaptive approach to CWD control and management is necessary for the State to implement an effective plan. Additionally, it is critical that this plan be based upon our current knowledge and understanding of CWD. As such, we applaud the State for using general frameworks for control and management of CWD as outlined in plans and recommendations of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA), the Center for Disease Control (CDC) U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and the CWD Alliance as well as through consultation with fish and wildlife agencies from surrounding states (e.g., Arkansas and Texas). This plan must be based on the professional recommendations of these organizations to be defensible to the public.



In reviewing the plan, it is clear that ODWC and ODAFF incorporated the best available science and the current recommendations of AFWA, WAFWA, USGS, and Center for Disease Control in developing their response actions for detection of CWD in Oklahoma. The response actions are appropriate, sound, scientifically-defendable, and address most issues associated with CWD detection, management, and control. More specifically, the State's approach to surveillance of CWD is proactive and provides transparency in that citizens of the State will be informed in a timely manner. As public servants, it is critical any confirmed CWD detection be made public knowledge immediately. That said, we do have the following suggestions that could potentially improve prevention and management of CWD:

1. We are supportive of restrictions on wildlife feeding or baiting within positive selective surveillance areas or CWD infection zones, but restrictions should be in place year-round as opposed to only occurring outside the 15 September through January 15 period. The intent of restricting feeding and baiting is to reduce concentrating cervids in an area and thereby limiting transmission and establishment of CWD in areas where the CWD agent is present. Biologically, this practice is not justifiable if the goal is to limit CWD transmission. Further, this sends a message to the public that the state is not serious about CWD control or that CWD is not a serious threat if concentrated baiting is allowed in a CWD detection area. Finally, we recognize the long history and tradition of baiting and supplemental feeding in wildlife management, but baiting and supplemental feeding can often be detrimental to wildlife and we encourage ODWC and ODAFF to consider the short and long-term consequences of such practices when considering future baiting and feeding policies.
2. The current surveillance of captive facilities relies on voluntary producer participation. We certainly understand the sensitivity of this issue, but we also recognize that monitoring of all captive facilities provides the best management practice for isolating CWD and preventing the spread of CWD to wild cervid populations. ODWC and ODAFF should consider expanding their surveillance of captive facilities as this will allow the State to more effectively protect the public-trust species ODWC is mandated to manage.
3. The Selective Surveillance Area (SSA) approach will rely on a 10-mile radius circle surrounding the location of a CWD-positive animal. Based on past research from Noble Foundation that suggest white-tailed deer movements occasionally exceed 10 miles (we can provide the data), it may be more



appropriate to expand the circular area radius to at least 15 miles, possibly 20 miles. This larger buffer provides greater assurances that surveillance will detect additional CWD-positive animals.

4. We recommend prohibiting the importation of any part of a deer carcass including meat and bones from a CWD positive county or facility with the sole exception of finished taxidermy products. Meat, bones, associated lymph nodes and other body parts can contain CWD prions.
5. Require any live cervid imported into Oklahoma to be quarantined and tested for CWD before importation, regardless whether its origin is a known CWD positive county or facility. Prevention is the only realistic means to manage CWD problems.
6. The plan should state/communicate where and how an individual hunter can have his/her meat tested for CWD, especially for deer harvested outside Oklahoma.
7. The plan should require an effective high-fenced enclosure to be maintained around the Oklahoma County property where CWD was identified in 1998. Research has shown that prions remain viable for many years post depopulation. This requirement probably should be incorporated into the deed for the property. We do not want free-ranging Oklahoma deer to have access to this property. Again, prevention is the only realistic means to manage CWD problems.

Again, the Chapter appreciates the efforts of ODWC and ODAFF to address a serious wildlife issue in Oklahoma. Thank you for considering our input as wildlife professionals.

Sincerely,

Victoria Jackson

President, Oklahoma Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Membership in the Oklahoma Chapter of

The Wildlife Society



Please print,
complete and mail
this page with your
check to:

Kristen Gillman
OCTWS Treasurer
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife
Conservation
P.O. Box 53465
Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma 73152

Name

Affiliation (Agency, University, Company, etc.)

Address

City, State, Zip

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_____ Regular Membership (\$10 per year)

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