

# The Wildlife Society



## Ohio Chapter Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2016  
Newsletter

### President's Message from Michael Enright

For most people focused on wildlife, they would rather spend time in the field than indoors. I fall solidly in that group. But once a year, students, scientists, managers, and those who simply love wildlife gather from all over the nation and world for the Wildlife Society Annual meeting. This meeting is more than hearing the latest research (of which there is plenty to choose from) or seeing the latest technical toys (drones that shoot tranquilizers, anyone?) or seeing friends, both old and new. The Wildlife Society Annual meeting is a chance to gather with like-minded people and recharge for the challenges that lie ahead. Let me share a few of my observations from the meeting this fall in Raleigh, NC:

1. It was great to see so many papers and presentations by both graduate and undergraduate students. These are the future leaders of the wildlife profession and introducing them to the importance of the annual meeting for networking and professional development is a critical function of the Wildlife Society.
2. The attendees were more diverse than ever from racial, age, gender, and background perspectives. There certainly is still work to do in this area but the future of wildlife depends on engaging representatives from all walks of life to protect and conserve wildlife in the future.
3. Speakers did not shy away from difficult issues. Whether it was the increasing privatization of wildlife, the role of emotion rather than science in wildlife management, or wildlife as a disease reservoir for humans, a number of highly recognized speakers offered perspectives and encouragement as wildlife professionals across the world struggle with these (and many other) issues.

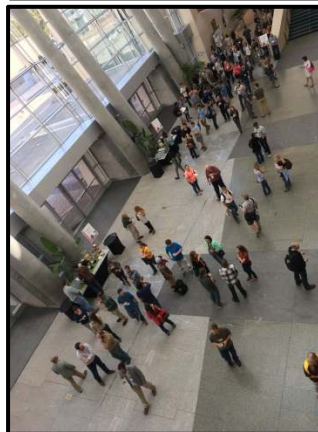
4. Field trips offered a great way to learn about local projects and habitats from experts. There were a range of field trips from zoo facilities to rare habitats to restoration projects. Getting into the field and exchanging ideas, whether on invasive plant management or how to deal with reduced budgets, was one of the best parts of the conference and was a great way for students to interact with professionals.
5. Collaboration and partnerships are the key to the future. No matter what role or type of organization one works for, no one person or organization can make as great an impact as is possible through collaborations and partnerships. When faced with a wildlife challenge, the first question should be who else might be interested in helping to solve it? Answers in the future will include not just federal and state agencies, but private organizations, businesses, universities, local schools, hospitals, interested individuals, parks, and municipalities all working together.

I am always recharged and renewed by spending time with people who have the same passion for wildlife and conservation. With the help of the executive committee and others, we hope to take many of the concepts above and create engaging events for Ohio Chapter members in the future.

The annual meeting of the Wildlife Society will be coming to Cleveland in fall 2018. Hosting this meeting will take time, energy, and money but I believe it offers the opportunity to bring a once-in-a-lifetime focus and energy on wildlife issues and developing the wildlife leaders of the future to Ohio. Stay tuned for more information on how you can help in the coming months.



At the convention center in Raleigh, North Carolina, each conference is allowed to decorate the statue of Sir Walter Raleigh according to its own theme. Hence, the marsh grass, binoculars, birder's vest, and black bear.



## 2017 OFWMA Conference Announcement

The 57<sup>th</sup> Ohio Fish and Wildlife Conference will be held January 26-27, 2017. This year's OFWMA meeting is moving venues (Nationwide & Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center) and holding a special Thursday social and business meeting event in the Cabelas conference room at Polaris. Even the cost of registration will possess more value as lunch will be provided for all registrants, all this without raising the cost over prior years!!

The conference changes aren't the only things to be excited about, as the lineup of Friday speakers will feature Dr. Paul Curtis from Cornell University who will discuss urban and suburban deer management. This is an issue that has consistently ranked high on our OCTWS member surveys of interesting workshop topics. Dr. Curtis is a renowned expert in this arena and has co-authored the National Wildlife Control Training Program books and online course.



His research interests focus on human-wildlife conflict mitigation ranging from agricultural crop depredation to zoonotic disease transmission to fertility control to forest regeneration. His applied research and extension background makes him the perfect speaker for a venue like OFWMA, and we look forward to the full complement of other speakers and topics at the conference.



# Save the Date!

57<sup>th</sup> Ohio Fish and Wildlife  
Conference

January 27,  
2017



## **Wildlife Student/Professional Pig Roast**

Students from Ohio State University, University of Rio Grande, and Hocking College gathered in Columbus on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016, to network with wildlife professionals from a diverse suite of agencies and organizations. Undergraduate Austin Roby treated attendees with heaping portions of roast pork, and OSU club president Jack Rabe handled meeting logistics. OCTWS contributed \$200 to offset event costs, and all active OCTWS officers were present. After the meal, approximately 30 students interacted with a panel of professionals from Cleveland Metro Parks (Erik Shaffer), The Nature Conservancy (Karen Adair), USDA APHIS (Andy Montoney), and Ohio Division of Wildlife (Geoff Westerfield). Shelby Weiss, a graduate student in OSU's School of Environment and Natural Resources, also spoke to students about the option of graduate school. Panelists drew on lessons from their own professional journeys to discuss do's and don'ts of interviewing and resume-writing, how to build experience through internships and seasonal positions, and strategic professional development by completing practical certification programs (e.g., heavy equipment, herbicide use). The entire event lasted a full 3 hours, and students left equipped with a wealth of knowledge to help "get their foot in the door" and ultimately succeed in the natural resources field.

## **Fall OCTWS Workshop—Wetlands from A to Z**

Nearly 40 wildlife professionals convened at the Cedar Ridge Lodge at Darby Creek Metro Park west of Columbus on September 14<sup>th</sup>. As the workshop title suggested, attendees listened to speakers address topics ranging from wetland design to water level manipulation to dike repair to muskrat and beaver trapping to cost-share programs. Experts from at least 7 different local, state, and federal agencies instructed registrants on a myriad of wetlands-related subjects. With a split itinerary between indoor discussion and outdoor demonstration, the day was composed of a nice "talk" and "experience" blend. A couple days after the workshop, Jon Cepek (Cleveland Metro Parks) remarked, "I can honestly say for the first time EVER that I enjoyed every talk and every speaker and took something positive away from each." I believe many attendees shared that same sentiment. By any measure, the wetlands workshop was a huge success and we thank all the speakers and attendees one more time for their participation!!





## OCTWS Survey Results for Future Workshop Topics

The top 5 ranked workshop topics (in order) for future consideration were as follows:

- Human-wildlife conflicts
- Wildlife population monitoring techniques
- GIS/GPS technical training
- Farm Bill & wildlife conservation
- Human dimensions of wildlife methodology

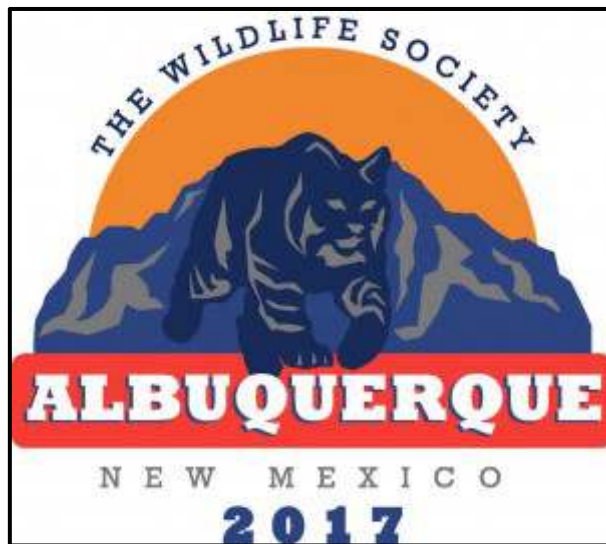
Obviously, human-wildlife conflict will be a topic of focus at the upcoming OFWMA conference, and your OCTWS officers are looking for opportunities to provide future workshops to focus on these identified needs! Currently for 2017, we are exploring a firearms workshop to cater towards undergraduate and graduate students within our state's university/college chapters and a grasslands workshop tailored to professionals.

## National Membership for The Wildlife Society

As a state chapter of national TWS, we strongly encourage our members to support the national organization through annual membership. It is your supporting professional organization as a wildlife practitioner after all. National TWS has made significant efforts to increase member benefits which currently include discounted rates to the annual conference, weekly links to digital presentations from past conferences, a weekly update email to keep you abreast of recent developments within the field of wildlife ecology and management, opportunities for certification, and 6 issues/year of The Wildlife Professional magazine. Beginning on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017—and this is a BIG deal in mine and others' opinions—members will have full online access to all Journal of Wildlife Management, Wildlife Society Bulletin, and Wildlife Monographs publications. Visit the link (<http://wildlife.org/join/>) to start your membership today.

## 2017 TWS Annual Conference

After the 2017 annual conference (<http://wildlife.org/tws-24th-annual-conference/>) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, next year (September 23-27), the national conference will descend on Cleveland, Ohio, for what will surely be a huge 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the TWS annual conference in 2018!!





## OCTWS Recent Donations and Contributions

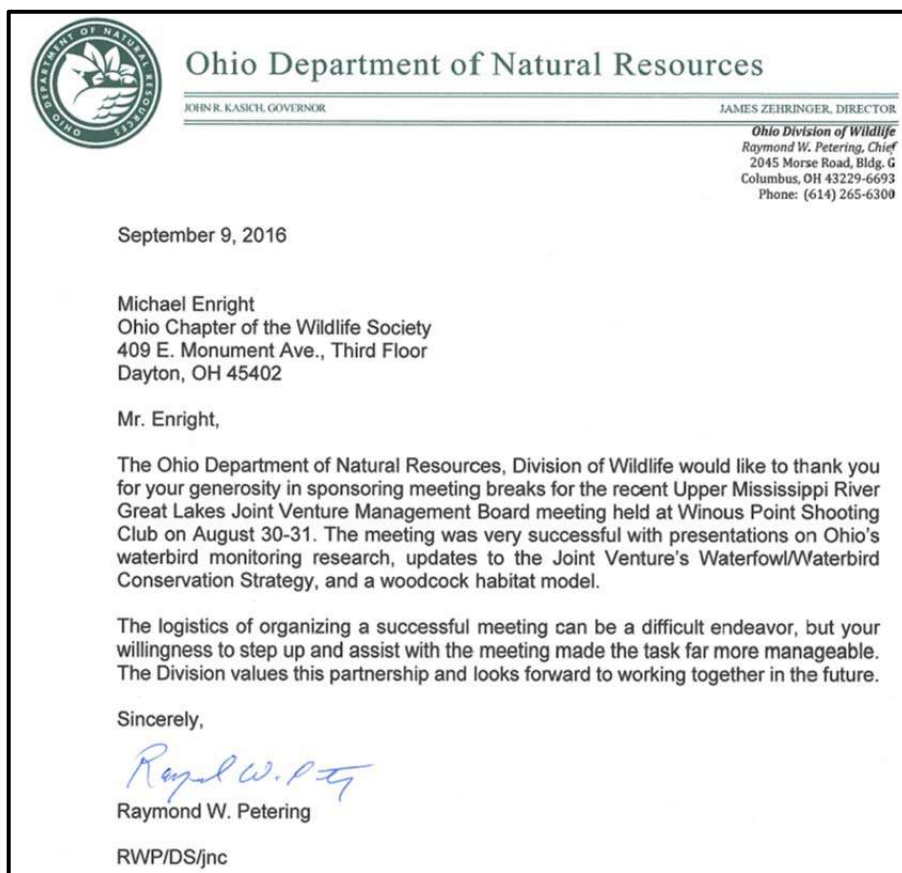
Through a \$500 sponsorship through the national TWS, OCTWS' generosity provided Colleen Hartel with travel funds to attend the recent conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. Colleen is a master's student of Alia Dietsch with a specialization in Environmental Social Science at The Ohio State University. She presented a poster entitled "The role of social values and context in framing interactions with wildlife"—essentially, exploring what factors dictate why individuals identify interactions with wildlife as negative or "conflict." She and co-author Alia Dietsch collected data from surveys of Washington State residents, a quick glance at their poster demonstrates how the same circumstance can be interpreted far differently from 2 different people's perspectives.

"People are making pets of deer in the area. They lose their fear of people and are in everyone's yards eating everything." – ID12429

"I enjoy and respect the deer. A doe and fawn harvested the last of my cherry tomatoes this year – but I still love them!" – ID2709

With the help of other state chapters across the country, at least \$3,000 in travel funding was generated to help students attend the 2016 TWS Conference.

The Ohio chapter also sponsored meeting breaks for the Upper Mississippi River Great Lakes Joint Venture Management Board (August 30-31, 2016) in the amount of \$100.



## **Formal Support for State Wildlife Grants**

Geoff Westerfield sent letters on behalf of OCTWS urging 17 politicians (Steve Chabot, Brad Wenstrup, Joyce Beatty, Jim Jordan, Robert Latta, Bill Johnson, Bob Gibbs, Marcy Kaptur, Michael Turner, Marcia Fudge, Pat Tiberi, Tim Ryan, David Joyce, Steve Stivers, Jim Renacci, Sherrod Brown, Rob Portman) to support the State Wildlife Grants (SWG) Program. The letter had to be delivered under constraints of timeliness; therefore, we did not have time to solicit the membership for approval to send.

Dear Congressman,

As you may be aware, Teaming With Wildlife (TWW) is a coalition comprised of more than 6,400 State fish and wildlife agencies, wildlife biologists, hunters, anglers, birdwatchers, hikers, nature-based businesses, and other conservationists. TWW is the largest and most diverse coalition ever assembled in support of wildlife conservation efforts and is the leading advocate for the State Wildlife Grants (SWG) Program, which is aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife is a proud member of this respected organization. Once each year, TWW members join together in Washington, DC for our annual “Fly-In Event” to advocate for the funding of the State Wildlife Grants Program. Recognizing the need for government on all levels to be more fiscally conscious, ODNR has chosen not to participate in this year’s annual event in person. Instead, it is our hope to convey the importance of maintaining funding for the State Wildlife Grant Program through this letter.

The State Wildlife Grants Program provides federal money to every state and territory for cost-effective conservation aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. This program continues the long history of cooperation between the federal government and the states for managing and conserving wildlife species, going back to landmark laws like the 1937 Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and the 1950 Dingell-Johnson Sportfish Restoration Act.

President Obama’s budget requested \$67 million for FY17 for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grant Program. Additionally, the President’s request maintains the 35% state funding match required for implementation projects, which is greatly appreciated, as opposed to the 50/50 match that was once required. Of the \$67 million requested, the President designated that \$10 million be awarded for Tribal Grants and \$6 million be awarded for Competitive Grants, leaving \$51 million for the main portion of the Grant. Ohio’s FY16 share is \$1,292,952 and our FY17 share would be comparable under the President’s request.

State and Tribal Wildlife Grants is the only funding allocated to support species of greatest conservation need. These are the species we don’t hunt, fish or trap, which are the remaining 85% of our wildlife. We have used this funding on important projects here in Ohio to protect critical habitat for endangered wildlife, and conduct research and



surveys on wildlife species that are imperiled by loss of habitat and other various factors. We have found that it is much cheaper to protect species before they become endangered and feel strongly that this is in the best interest of both the animals and the public. We hope you will support the SWG program on Ohio's behalf and would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to call (###-###-###) or email me ([email@gmail.com](mailto:email@gmail.com)) if you would like to discuss this funding request further. I appreciate your time and consideration on State Wildlife Grant funding.

Sincerely,

Geoff Westerfield  
President-Elect  
Ohio Chapter of The Wildlife Society

## State Science Fair Wildlife Awareness Award Winners

Leah Stanevich (*right*), a 10<sup>th</sup> grader at Garfield High School in Akron, OH, received 1<sup>st</sup> prize for her project titled "The effects of climate change on bird populations." Jordan Skates was runner-up for examining "The effect of artificial fish structure color and lighting on the behavior of *Micropterus salmoides*." Jordan (*left*), another 10<sup>th</sup> grader, attends Pettisville High School in Pettisville, OH. Full abstracts for both posters can be located on the OCTWS website (<http://wildlife.org/ohio/awards/>).



## University of Rio Grande Student Chapter Update



With 12 members participating, the Rio chapter once again produced sorghum syrup the old-fashioned way at the 3-day long Bob Evans Farms Festival in October for a fundraiser. Also, for the second year-in-a-row we designed and sold wall calendars (2017 version) to raise funds. Calendar photos were either donated by chapter members or friends of chapter members, and the final selection of 12 photos was determined by a chapter vote.



In November, 5 members helped erected a pair of bat maternity bat boxes and a pair of kestrel boxes at the Meigs County Soil and Water Conservation site just north of Rutland. Finally, throughout the fall semester we continued work on the Rio campus Baby Moose Hill trail system. All trails have been cleared and 54 trail markers (4 x 4 posts with color-coded circles denoting individual trails) along with 4 major trail kiosks have been installed.

In upcoming months, we are planning to install a set of bat houses on the Ohio Valley Conservation Coalition Buckeye Swamp property in Jackson county, assist with the annual winter check of southern flying boxes in Athens, Gallia, Jackson, and Vinton counties, and assist with the spring kestrel box check along U.S. Highways 23, 32, 33, and 35 in southeast Ohio. Because of our successful fund-raising efforts this fall, we will be able to cover registration and meal costs for many chapter members to attend the Ohio Fish and Wildlife and the Ohio Natural History Conferences.





## The Ohio State University Student Chapter Update



This past semester at Ohio State has been jam packed with student chapter events. One of our first meetings of the year we had Tom Parr, owner of the Trapping History Museum in Galloway, visit one of our club meetings. As a group, we learned about the history of different trap types, the origin of trapping, some different species that can be targeted in Ohio, and all kinds of other cool facts about trapping.

In October, I was fortunate to be able to introduce a keynote speaker, Tom Mangelsen, a world-renowned wildlife photographer from Montana at a signature event hosted by Ohio State's Environmental Professional Network. It was such an awesome opportunity to host him and Todd Wilkinson here at the university.

Another of our goals for student chapter meetings is to get snapshots of life in the field of fish and wildlife management from career professionals. We hosted OSU extension specialist, Eugene Braig, to discuss fisheries management and the career that that entails. Later, this semester, alongside our chapter advisor Dr. Robert Gates, four OSU-Division of Wildlife Interns presented their summer's work during our November meeting. Each talked about their experience working with the Division as well as offered advice for how to find and apply for these positions in the future.

Lastly, we participated in a falconry demonstration this semester. The Ohio School of Falconry teamed up with our student chapter to provide a hunt demonstration and explanation of the ancient sport of falconry. This was a very cool hands-on experience with wildlife and provided a fun opportunity to get out in the field! As we wrap up fall semester, we have a lot of exciting things to look forward to this spring, including the much anticipated annual OFWMA conference in January.





## **ESSAY: Blind Men and the Elephant of Conservation: Toward Ideological Diversity**

Tovar Cerulli will be remembered by all who attended the 2016 Ohio Fish and Wildlife Conference as the keynote speaker and author of The Mindful Carnivore. He illuminated emerging opportunities for hunter recruitment among some of the more unlikely and non-traditional ranks of society. Speaking for myself (Gabriel Karns writing now), I find him to be a compelling writer and the profundity of this essay struck me in light of recent events – events pertaining to our beloved environment and natural resources as well as the broader landscape of society. An interesting back story to this essay was that its composition occurred, at least partially, from within the 4 walls of *Mi Casita* – the former and first home of Aldo and Estella Leopold in northern New Mexico.

“As conservationists, we take it for granted that diversity is good. Biological diversity, at least.

We know that diverse, intact ecosystems are adaptable and resilient, benefiting not only us but all members of what Leopold called “the land community.” We take it on faith that all community members should be respected and that they have, as he put it, an inherent “right to continued existence.”

When I walk down to the beaver pond near home and look out at the water and surrounding land, I know that each plant, fungus, insect, amphibian, reptile, fish, bird, and mammal—even each unseen microbe in the soil—is part of that community, part of a larger, dynamic, evolving organism. As such, each deserves my respect: pine and alder, mayfly and jewelwing, salamander and turtle, minnow and trout, heron and mallard, mouse and coyote.

Concerning ideological and cultural diversity, we are ambivalent at best.

When we walk into a public meeting and look around at those who have gathered, we may not recognize each person and organization as part of the larger, dynamic, evolving endeavor called conservation. We may not feel that each deserves our respect: wildlife manager and conservation biologist, environmentalist and animal-rights advocate, state legislator and tribal chairman, rural hunter and suburban angler, black farmer and white rancher.

The idea of biodiversity, like Leopold’s related vision of a land ethic, is guided by the principle of inclusivity: by the recognition that all members of the land community belong to it and must be respected as part of it. As Leopold took pains to point out, this principle extends beyond the practical, beyond any material benefits that may accrue to us. It is rooted more deeply in a philosophical commitment to a way of belonging to the community.

What if we were to take ideological and cultural diversity just as seriously? What if, guided by the principle of inclusivity, we were to cultivate respect for diverse viewpoints

as part of the conservation community? What if we were to commit to an ideological and cultural conscience parallel to an ecological conscience?

“There are two things that interest me,” Leopold once wrote, “the relation of people to each other, and the relation of people to land.”

This line is often quoted. It is not so often taken seriously. In most cases, our attention remains focused on the land half of the dictum.

Yet we remain in dire need of better relations among people. We face a perennial choice between common ground and battle ground, between the centripetal forces drawing us toward what has been called the “radical center” and the centrifugal forces threatening to tear us apart. We face a choice between focusing on what connects us and focusing on what divides us. Like ecologists studying patterns in nature, we cannot afford to be inattentive to parts of the conservation community, to ignore links among those parts, or to disrespect community members whose usefulness is not immediately apparent to us.

In ecological and biological terms, we know the shortcomings of uniformity. Monocultures lack the species diversity necessary for adaptation and resilience. Likewise, isolated populations of a given species lack the genetic diversity necessary for long-term health and survival. Uniformity, in short, leads to instability and fragility.

Though the analogy is imperfect, ideological and cultural uniformity has similar shortcomings. Human monocultures, in which diverse views are suppressed or absent, lead to certainty and narrow-mindedness. Like proverbial blind men, committed to our partial and sectarian understandings of the elephant called conservation, we lack the diversity of perspective necessary for adaptation and efficacy.

What happens when conservation groups become intolerant of ideological and cultural diversity? What happens when we develop too much faith in one way of thinking, when we get entrenched in our own cultural silos and lose touch with the rest of the world? What happens, for instance, when a hunting-conservation organization becomes so invested in particular views that it begins avoiding language that might be heard as “green” or “environmental”? What happens when an environmental organization becomes so invested in other views that it begins avoiding collaboration with hunters or ranchers?

Conservation becomes fragmented and destabilized. Each sub-community’s aims become narrower in scope, more self-serving, more ephemeral. Competition with other sub-communities becomes a central focus. Our attention and energy get distracted by infighting. One group’s triumph becomes another group’s defeat, or—more likely—its next lawsuit.

We slip into polarized habits of mind. We begin to think in simple binaries: blue versus red, urban versus rural. We accuse each other of ignorance. We lose interest in, and even the capacity to perceive, common ground. The integral wholeness of conservation, even the possibility of such wholeness, is largely forgotten.

We tell stories about our differences. Hunter conservationists, the story goes, care about animals only as populations. Animal welfarists, the story goes, care about animals only as individuals. Ranchers and loggers, the story goes, care about land only as a source of profit. Wilderness proponents and endangered species advocates, the story goes, care nothing for the people who work the land.

Most of a century ago, writing of hunter and non-hunter conservationists, Leopold emphasized the need to question our insular thinking: “With both sides in doubt as to the infallibility of their own past dogmas, we might actually hang together long enough to save some wild life. At present, we are getting good and ready to hang separately.”

The relation of people to each other. The relation of people to land.

What if conservationists devoted equal attention to both? What if we devoted as much attention to cultural edges and changes as to ecological edges and changes? What if we devoted as much attention to geographies and histories of meaning as to geographies and histories of land?

What if we began listening? Not listening strategically, so we can refute what we hear. Not listening superficially, so we can pigeonhole the speaker. But listening carefully and deeply, with the respectful intention of understanding others’ perspectives: their experiences and perceptions, values and hopes, needs and fears, the meanings that underpin what they say.

What if we began listening with courage, willing to hear and understand beyond the confines of the familiar? What if we began listening with imagination, assuming that others’ voices, views, and stories are coherent, doing our best to step into their worlds?

Listening in these ways, we risk losing our bearings. What, after all, would happen if I understood those people, so very different from me? Who would I be? What would I do? What would the rest of my group think of me? And what, heaven forbid, if those very different people’s perceptions, values, and experiences turn out to be valid in some way? What if my own views are revealed as fallible and incomplete?

It is precisely in risking the loss of those familiar bearings that we can find new clarity and direction. Listening with courage, we can begin to recognize one another as fellow members of a dynamic, evolving community. Looking around those meeting rooms, both literal and figurative, we can begin to recognize that each of us is at least partially blind.

We can begin to understand that we need each other to see a larger picture.”





Mailing Address for Ohio Chapter of TWS:

Attn: Geoff Westerfield  
912 Portage Lakes Drive  
Akron, OH 44319  
(937) 277-4109

Executive Committee Members:

Michael Enright – President	<a href="mailto:menright@juno.com">menright@juno.com</a>
Andrew Montoney – Past President	<a href="mailto:Andrew.J.Montoney@aphis.usda.gov">Andrew.J.Montoney@aphis.usda.gov</a>
Geoff Westerfield – President Elect	<a href="mailto:Geoffrey.Westerfield@dnr.state.oh.us">Geoffrey.Westerfield@dnr.state.oh.us</a>
Gabriel Karns – Secretary	<a href="mailto:karns.36@osu.edu">karns.36@osu.edu</a>
Caleb Wellman – Treasurer	<a href="mailto:Caleb.T.Wellman@aphis.usda.gov">Caleb.T.Wellman@aphis.usda.gov</a>