I began writing this address two weeks after Spring Break 2020. It was a Friday, but honestly, I didn’t know. I was having a “retiree” moment thinking, “What day is it?” March eventually merged into April, and balancing homeschooling and work became a daily ritual. COVID-19 cases skyrocketed and then began bending towards their hopeful plateau, and now, as I finish developing this address, we’re hopeful for a bending of the curve concomitant to reopening America.

Meanwhile, the natural things we conserve and manage don’t know what we, humans, are facing regarding COVID-19 and the potential economic aftermath. While a part of our surrounding ecosystem’s structure and influencers of its function, much of society separates themselves from nature for the easy life. For example, the air-conditioned life here in Mississippi. While we are facing budget cuts, job loss, changes to our daily norms, teleworking, grocery store shortages, and isolation, wildlife keeps on trucking along. As we look ahead, we still face uncertainty and building concern, while wildlife just try to survive the day.

When will we return to normal, even a new normal? How will our wildlife profession be impacted by COVID-19? Will universities have fall classes or move mostly online? Will we enter another economic depression or see our economy boom soon after everyone returns to work? Will we have our TWS Annual Conference?

Dealing with uncertainty is nothing new for our profession. Unexpected wildlife responses to traditional and new management techniques, unique animal (and coworker) behaviors, and complex interactions among ever-changing landscapes, population sizes, and nutritional availability are only a few of the contradictions we experience every year, let alone each month or day. It’s times like these that heroes emerge, and each of you reading this can likely identify a few of heroes, mentors, friends, family, or coworkers that have made a positive impact on you during these times. Those individuals that have selflessly stepped up their game to help others. At the same time, I hope all of you have had time to self-reflect on your efforts to go the extra mile, to help others, even be strong for those in your immediate, inner circle. Perhaps you have reinvigorated a group of friends, taken time to reach out to others, put a bear in your window for the neighborhood kids, or sent a brief message of appreciation to a coworker just to let them know you are thinking of them and have their back.
Some may say these are desperate times, and they’re not wrong per se. However, we can make them the “not so bad” times by making the best of it. For the Southeastern Section of TWS, we had to cancel our inaugural Field Course. So much time and effort went into the planning and coordination of the 2020 SE TWS Field Course. Most notably, now Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Daniel Greene took the lead on this endeavor with full support from fellow board members. But with its cancellation came the planning of its postponement to 2021 allowing more time for planning, fundraising and other preparations. Meanwhile, two new TWS Fellows were recognized from the SE Section, Kelly Douglass (SE TWS President-elect) and Dr. Leslie Burger. Congratulations to both of you and well deserved! And, college seniors didn’t have to walk during graduation!! But seriously, congratulations to all college graduates in the SE Section from undergraduate to doctoral students. Last but certainly not least, our TWS Annual Conference is still scheduled as planned as well as the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference.

I’m hopeful for the near future, not just because I want to get out of my house more but also for us to get away from the oxymoron #Alone-Together and be able to be together, to have actual face-to-face meetings and gatherings, not video conferences. Afterall, we need to unplug more, right? If you need anything, have concerns, or even suggestions regarding what we can do as a section to help fellow members and the profession, please contact me. In the meantime, stay safe and let’s continue to make the best of it!

Raymond Iglay  
President, Southeastern Section TWS
Friends, I am not much for memes. I sometimes see a post or quote on social media that gives me a chuckle or makes me think about something a little differently, but I am not one to forward or share a great deal on social media. However, one recent Facebook post had a quote that has really stuck with me. I use it a lot. It said “This mess = Southern for COVID-19”. I think that is appropriate. This mess has created some really odd times for all of us, and those odd times seem to have just showed up – all of a sudden like. Since our last newsletter, we have all experienced some drastic changes. Terms we seldom if ever used before like ‘social distancing’ and ‘flatten the curve’ are now common. I am sure we have all seen plenty of recipes for hand sanitizer as well. We have experienced a whirlwind of thoughts and opinions as we have traveled through this time of great uncertainty. Through it all, I hope that you are all staying well and that we will all come through this mess with a renewed appreciation for our family, friends, and colleagues.

I am really proud that TWS has taken measures to assist our membership during these times. As I am sure you are aware, many of our academic colleagues were suddenly faced with the immediate need to transfer their course material into an online format. In an attempt to help meet these online education demands, TWS allowed educator access to the Live Learning Center. This Center contained the presentations from our 2019 annual meeting. Once instructors register, they are then able to share presentations with their students. Also, search your email as TWS recently emailed members asking for YOUR perspectives with regard to how COVID-19 may have affected your work as a wildlife professional. Take time to share your concerns and offer any ideas you may have regarding how TWS may better serve our members.

During the past few SETWS Newsletters, we have consistently promoted a SETWS sponsored wildlife field techniques course. We had students from throughout the Southeast enrolled in the course, and most State Chapters within the section had developed scholarships to help defray costs for a student from their state to attend. The Executive Board of SETWS met in mid-March and decided – out of an abundance of caution and based on recommendations from TWS President, Dr. Gary White – that we should postpone the course until 2021. You will be hearing more about the 2021 course offering once dates are finalized.

The Wildlife Society Annual meeting continues to be scheduled for September 27 – October 1 in Louisville, KY. Although TWS Council will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation, I think we are all hopeful that we will be able to meet as planned. Shortly after the TWS meeting in Louisville, the 74th annual meeting of SEAFWA will take place in Springfield, MO. Both meetings are always excellent and I hope to see you at one, if not both, of these gatherings.

We have a few SETWS colleagues who deserve our congratulations. Dr. Leslie Burger, Mississippi State University, and Kelly Douglass, USDA Wildlife Services, will be named as TWS Fellows during our TWS meeting in Louisville. The Wildlife Society Fellows are considered as TWS ambassadors and they receive this designation for life. Kelly and Leslie are both very active in TWS and well deserving of the award. Congratulations and a big thank you is also in order for Dr. Bret Collier, Louisiana State University. Dr. Collier will be our next Editor-in-Chief for the Wildlife Society Bulletin.

As always, please let me know if I can help out with any TWS issues. Stay well.

Mike Conner
SETWS, Representative to Council
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DEER COMMITTEE

2020 Southeast Deer Study Group Update

The 43rd Annual Meeting of the Southeast Deer Study Group (SEDSG) was hosted by the Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries in Auburn on February 23-25, 2020. The agency host team was led by Chris Cook (Deer Program Coordinator). Approximately 300 registrants enjoyed great hospitality, an excellent meeting theme on Deer Management in a Rapidly Changing World: Bridging a Generational Disconnect that included 3 plenary session presentations and 32 other presentations in 7 technical sessions. The technical portion of the meeting included 15 student presentations and 16 student posters. The SE Section TWS Deer Committee also met and its minutes are posted on the SEDSG website, www.SEDSG.com.

The event was capped off by a recognition banquet that included student awards for the top three student presentations and posters. University of Georgia’s Jordan Dyal, Auburn University’s Mark Turner and Mississippi State University’s Moriah Boggess took 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishes, respectively, in the Student Presentation Award competition. University of Tennessee’s Lindsey Phillips, Mississippi State University’s Rainer Nichols and Auburn University’s Arielle Fay took 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishes, respectively, in the Student Poster Award competition.

Charles Ruth, the Big Game Program Coordinator for the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was recipient of 2020 Deer Management Career Achievement Award. Charles’ contribution and dedication to white-tailed deer management in South Carolina and the Southeast over the past 32 years are exemplary and were highlighted at the awards ceremony.

SEDSG student award recipients from left to right: back row; Mark Turner, Jordan Dyal, Moriah Boggess and SE Section of TWS Deer Committee Student Award Coordinator Bob Zaiglin, front row; Rainer Nichols, Lindsey Phillips and Arielle Fay.
Charles Ruth, Big Game Program Coordinator for South Carolina Department of Natural Resources receives the 2020 Deer Management Career Achievement Award from Steve Shea, Chairman SE Section of TWS Deer Committee.

This award is one of, if not the most, prestigious recognition given for work dedicated to white-tailed deer in North America. The award was first established in 1995 to recognize outstanding contributions to the understanding of white-tailed deer ecology and management in the southeastern United States. The award is given for activities conducted within the member states of the SE Section of The Wildlife Society and the states of Delaware, Missouri, Texas, and West Virginia. The SE Section and all SEAFWA agencies convey congratulations and appreciation to Charles for this well-deserved recognition and praise his leadership, dedication and management excellence in the field of white-tailed deer ecology.

The 2020 SEDSG Meeting will be hosted by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources on February 21-23, 2021 at the USFWS National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown. Please monitor the SEDSG and SE Section websites for details in the coming months.

Deer Committee Chair: Steve Shea sheawildlife@gmail.com

C.W. WATSON AWARD COMMITTEE

C.W. Watson Award

The C. W. Watson Award Committee is responsible for the annual selection of the recipient of this award. The Committee is composed of a representation of the SEAFWA, the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society, and the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society. Members are appointed by the organizations represented for a three-year term, each member scheduled to serve as Chairman in their third year. Procedures and qualifications for nomination of recipients shall be as prescribed by the previously approved C. W. Watson Award criteria. This award shall be presented at the annual conference banquet by the Chairman of the Watson committee. See seafwa.org, Awards and Committees, or p.29 of this newsletter for more information on the 2020 nominating process.

SETWS Committee Chair: Lisa Muller lmuller@utk.edu
MINRC is finalizing the application for students to apply for a sponsorship to attend the 2020 SEAFWA Annual Conference in Springfield, Missouri. The application will consist of a cover letter, a copy of transcripts, two letters of recommendation, resume, and the Teddy Roosevelt Award Essay. This is a great opportunity for current students and recent graduates to attend the SEAFWA Conference free of charge, and to participate in the student workshop, networking events, and professional presentations. Stay tuned for more information, and if you are interested in applying or know of a student that could benefit from this opportunity, please contact us at SEAFWA.MINRC@yahoo.com.

MINRC Secretary/Treasurer:
Mercedes Bartkovich
mercedes.bartkovich@dcnr.alabama.gov

MINRC is made up of 17 agencies, all of which are doing their part to enhance the overall representation of minorities and women in the field of natural resource conservation. Although considered a part of the Southwest Section of TWS, one of MINRC’s state agencies, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), is leveraging new strategies to expand diversity recruitment which has a clear pathway to employment within their agency. One strategic action has been the development of a non-traditional university recruitment plan which is inclusive of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutes (HIS’s) and seeking other opportunities to engage women and minority students. The TPWD has established strategic relationships with administrators and professors at colleges and universities who offer mission-relevant educational training. They also assist with establishing a relevant curriculum for their agency at universities with whom we traditionally have not had long-term partnerships. MINRC is proud to have such an active committee throughout the Southeast that is dedicated to diversifying the field of wildlife and natural resources. To learn more about the TPWD’s efforts, please view our newsletter minrc.org.

Last but not least, we have new social media accounts! The mission of the MINRC social media platforms is to distribute information to past, current, and future MINRC students. Our social media pages aim to generate interest in natural resources conservation while highlighting our broader mission of assisting SEAFWA member agencies. If you want to stay up to date on MINRC news, jobs, and events throughout the Southeast, please follow us on social media! You can find us on Facebook (MINRC2020), Instagram (@minrcjobs), and LinkedIn.

MINRC Secretary/Treasurer:
Mercedes Bartkovich
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Alabama Chapter TWS

The Executive Board has been closely monitoring the status of COVID-19 (“coronavirus”). After consulting with National TWS, and with the health and wellbeing of our members being of utmost importance to us, we have made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Beginner Birding Workshop, and we are postponing the 2020 ACTWS Annual Meeting until late fall.

While conditions will hopefully improve between now and July, given how soon the meeting is, it is nearly impossible to continue planning the meeting with the uncertainties ahead. The coordination of the Annual Meeting requires multiple in-person meetings, which we cannot conduct under these circumstances. Following that, in addition to our members, the Professional Development instructors and guest speakers all have travel restrictions to overcome. Lastly, under the current recommendations of limit group sizes to 10 – 25 people and maintaining 6 feet of separation, it makes it impossible to hold presentations and lab exercises without compromising everyone’s safety.

This is not a decision that we take lightly, and we apologize to all that were planning to attend either event.

We will continue to communicate with you as we solidify new dates for the Annual Meeting and thank you for your patience and understanding. Stay safe and we look forward to seeing you at an ACTWS event again soon.

NWTF Donates Almost $168,000 for Wildlife Management

The Alabama Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) recently allocated $167,685 in Hunting Heritage Super Funds for wild turkey projects in Alabama. Of that total, $76,770 was donated to the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division (WFF) of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) to fund projects including wildlife habitat management and the publication of the annual wild turkey report, *Full Fans & Sharp Spurs*.

Approximately $91,000 was approved for other projects statewide, including funding to improve wild turkey habitat on public lands as well as to help launch outdoor education programs in schools. This funding supports the enhancement of turkey habitat, increases access opportunities, funds educational programs and is an excellent fit for the NWTF “Save the Habitat, Save the Hunt” initiative.

Most of the WFF dollars will be used on Wildlife Management Areas throughout the state to support habitat management and other wild turkey programs. Some of the grant money will also be used to purchase much-needed wildlife habitat management equipment.

“More than $57,000 of this generous donation offers us access to federal matching dollars, which makes the donation go even further,” said Chuck Sykes, WFF Director. “Since federal matching dollars play such a major role in how our division is funded, contributions like this are extremely important.”
WFF is primarily funded by money generated through the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. That money is then matched nearly three to one by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. WFF does not receive an appropriation from the state’s General Fund.

“We thank NWTF and the Alabama Chapter Board of Directors for helping to support the conservation of wild turkey in Alabama,” said Christopher Blankenship, ADCNR Commissioner. “With their assistance we will continue working to ensure the future of this resource for generations to come.”

In addition to the monetary donation, the Alabama NWTF chapter provides financial support for prescribed burning projects that help restore longleaf pine habitat, the Adult Mentored Hunting Program, the Archery in the Schools State Championship (an annual event for school students across the state), and the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program, which introduces women to a wide variety of outdoor activities.

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources promotes wise stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama’s natural resources through four divisions: Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries. To learn more about ADCNR, visit www.outdooralabama.com.

From ADCNR: WFF Director Chuck Sykes, Wildlife Biologist Steve Barnett, Commissioner Christopher Blankenship, and Upland Game Bird Program Coordinator Steven Mitchell (far right). From the Alabama Chapter NWTF Board of Directors: Keith Arnett, Craig Harris (State Chapter President), Scott Brandon, and Charlie Duckett.
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) recently awarded the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division (WFF) of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) nearly $9 million in land conservation grants authorized by Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act to apply toward the purchase of two land tracts totaling 4,911 acres of critical Red Hills salamander (RHS) habitat in Monroe County, Alabama. The Forever Wild Land Trust will provide the remainder of the funding for the acquisitions. The land acquisitions – known as the Red Hills Brown-Schutt Trust tract and the Red Hills Flat Creek Phase III tract – are part of a long-term conservation goal of delisting the RHS, which has been federally listed as a threatened species since 1977.

The tracts are located near the community of Franklin in Monroe County, Alabama, and join the 6,120-acre Forever Wild Red Hills Complex in the effort to increase the amount of protected RHS habitat. In addition to habitat conservation, these tracts will eventually be accessible to the public for outdoor recreation including hunting, wildlife watching, and birding.

Partners in the acquisitions include the USFWS, ADCNR, the Forever Wild Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy in Alabama, Conservation Resources, and the Brown-Schutt Trust.

“This is a great acquisition, and not just for Alabama,” said Leopoldo Miranda, USFWS Southeast Regional Director. “The state’s commitment to conservation means that everyone – the residents of Alabama, as well as the visitors from elsewhere, people who hunt and fish or just like to get outside – have a chance to experience nature at its finest. And, last but not least, so do the animals that benefit from these purchases.”

Christopher M. Blankenship, ADCNR Commissioner, echoes Director Miranda’s statement.

“I am so excited for the partnerships that have led to these very important land acquisitions,” Commissioner Blankenship said. “These projects continue the work that we and our partners began several years ago to acquire enough land to conserve habitat for the long-term success of the Red Hills salamander. When state and federal governments, conservation groups, and industry work this well together, there is no limit to what can be accomplished.”

The Nature Conservancy in Alabama has worked with landowners, ADCNR, and other partners in the Red Hills region for more than 10 years to conserve RHS habitat.

“We have partnered for many years with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Forever Wild, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect the endangered Red Hills salamander in Monroe County,” said Keith Tassin, Interim Director of The Nature Conservancy in Alabama. “We are very excited to see these efforts really moving the needle for the conservation of this species, and we look forward to our continued efforts to restore and protect this unique habitat.”
Conservation Resources, an investment organization that offers investment opportunities in land with significant conservation and natural resource value, helped facilitate the Flat Creek Phase III acquisition.

Managing Director of Conservation Resources **Kent Gilges** said his organization is proud to be involved in the effort to protect habitat for endangered species and help create new areas for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation.

“When private companies, public agencies, and conservation organizations work together, we can conserve enough area to assure the future of Alabama’s rich natural heritage,” Gilges said.

Projects like these acquisitions help create a better understanding of the natural world and have the potential to benefit not only the plants and animals they protect but also the communities located near public lands.

**Al Stokes** is a Regional Director for Senator **Doug Jones’** office. He is based in Mobile, Alabama, but grew up in the community of Franklin near the Brown-Schutt and Flat Creek tracts.

“These acquisitions are very significant to the vitality and growth of conservation in the state, particularly in communities that many are unfamiliar with such as the Red Hills region of Alabama,” Stokes said. “Now, through these conservation efforts, the world can learn more about the Red Hills and the Franklin community.”

In addition to conserving RHS habitat, many other rare animals are potentially present or have the potential for reintroduction on the Brown-Schutt Trust and Flat Creek tracts. These species include the Bachman’s sparrow, worm-eating warbler, endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, gopher tortoise, southern hognose snake, coral snake, eastern fox squirrel, as well as many aquatic species that may be present in headwater streams located on or near the newly protected land.


**Carrie Threadgill**  
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**ARKANSAS**

Arkansas Chapter TWS

The Arkansas chapter held its annual meeting at the C.A. Vines 4-H center on March 5-6. Besides good fellowship and many great presentations, **Dr. Maureen McClung**, of Hendrix University, was elected to serve as the chapter’s board member at large. **Steven Fowler** received a plaque for his service as chapter president from President elect, **Dr. Jorista Garrie**.
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

J.P. Fairhead, feral hog coordinator, left the agency to become the Arkansas Agricultural Department's first feral hog coordinator. Arkansas recently received a 3.4 million dollar grant from the USDA for feral hog control and J.P. will be heading up these efforts.

Arkansas State University

Emily Donahue was selected as the outstanding M.S. student in biology and Joe Youtz defended his M.S. thesis.

Arkansas Tech University

The student chapter partnered with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and the Yell county Wildlife Federation to remove undesirable trees on the Petit Jean Wildlife Management Area on February 22nd as part of the Commission's habitat management program.

USDA-Wildlife Services

Thurman Booth, long-time Arkansas State Director, passed away on February 4th.

Blake Sasse
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FLORIDA

FLTWS Spring Meeting

After much deliberation and consideration, the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society Spring Conference scheduled to occur March 25-27, 2020 had to be cancelled. The decision was a difficult one, but as time passed and the COVID-19 virus spread through our country it was clear we made the right decision. We are hopeful that our members stay healthy and safe during these trying times. We are looking forward to hosting our fall workshop this October and returning to our normal schedule for 2021.

Chapter Involvement

Chapter members who are Wildlife Extension Specialists from the University of Florida’s Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation recently posted a new fact sheet summarizing the effectiveness and humaneness of Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) for feral cat management. The article can be accessed via UF’s Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS): https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw468. Their fact sheet supports TWS’s position statement on feral cats.

UF Student Chapter News

The UF Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society allows students to build wildlife skills and network with wildlife professionals. They had many events this winter. Brigham Mason and Hunter Slade from Lykes Ranch presented to students about their wildlife management internship. Three TWS members interviewed for the position, and one member was selected for the internship. Brigham and Hunter also taught students how to obtain their Associate Wildlife Biologist® certification from The Wildlife Society.
UF TWS hosted a camping retreat for 20 members at the Ocala Conservation Center in January. This was their first time being able to use this facility, and they were very grateful for Will Burnett, director of Ocala Conservation Center, for allowing them to enjoy it. They enjoyed hiking the Florida Trail, spotting bears while helping to clean the main road of any litter, slacklining, shooting archery, herping, birding, insect collecting, taking in the beautiful scenery, and s’mores around the campfire!

In February, they had their 37th annual wild game dinner, Beast Feast, at Cypress and Grove Brewing Company on February 15th. It was a HUGE success with over 150 attendees! They served wild game and invasive species including hog, venison, quail, moose, pheasant, and alligator, all cooked by Rollin’ Smokes BBQ. They also had live educational animals, informational booths about conservation, a raffle, and a silent auction to win a bow from Bear Archery. UFTWS also took a field trip to the Reptile Discovery Center in Deland where we toured their reptile collection and watched live venom extractions. And finally, representatives from Camp Kids in the Woods presented about their summer internship at Austin Cary Forest to UFTWS members.

In April, due to COVID-19, UFTWS suspended our in-person meetings and instead had a Netflix watch party of the nature documentary "Night on Earth" with members.

FWC and Partner Agencies

In the largest conservation win of its kind in over a decade, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), in collaboration with Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has successfully protected Lake Wimico, a 20,161-acre piece of land in northwest Florida that surrounds the 4,000-acre lake after which the parcel is named. The property is within a biodiversity hotspot and helps preserve and protect the water quality of the highly productive Apalachicola River, Apalachicola Bay and Gulf of Mexico: waters critical to nurseries of fish and oysters, and is important for resident and migratory wildlife, including many federally and state listed imperiled species.

Since last year, nearly 61,000 acres of conservation lands were added in Florida, including additions to state forests, wildlife management areas, state parks, refuges, trails, and aquatic preserves.

Robin Boughton
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GEORGIA

NO NEWS REPORTED
Kentucky Chapter TWS (KCTWS)

KCTWS held its annual meeting at Lake Cumberland State Resort Park on February 20-21, 2020. The meeting was well attended by 104 members, 52 of whom were student members! The theme of this year’s meeting was “Emerging Infectious Wildlife Diseases”. The Keynote Speaker was Dr. Michael Yabsley from The University of Georgia, who presented findings from his tick research. Other topics included tularemia, snake fungal disease, CWD, and Batrachochytrium fungal disease in amphibians. The Kentucky Chapter is planning to hold a workshop on pollinators and pollinator habitat management in September, pending restrictions on large group meetings.

Kentucky Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Resources (KDFWR)

KDFWR herpetologist John MacGregor joined select company at the Southeastern Bat Diversity Networks’ recent annual meeting when he became one of only a few biologists and naturalists ever to be honored with the Networks’ Lifetime Achievement Award. KDFWR, along with the USGS, USFWS, USFS, TVA and other partners participated in a two week project at Kentucky Lake to observe an experimental new method to rid waterways of large numbers of invasive Asian carp. Crews used underwater speakers and electrofishing gear to drive the carp into successively smaller areas for harvesting. The method has been successful at removing large numbers of Asian carp from waters in Illinois and Missouri. The effort at Kentucky Lake represented the first test of the method on a U.S. reservoir larger than 500 acres. Tens of thousands of pounds of Asian carp were removed; the few native fish that were caught were released back into the reservoir. Harvested carp were commercially processed to test a compost product. The contour of the lake bottom, underwater structures and warmer water temperatures (resulting in increased activity by silver carp) were reported to cause problems during seine hauls. As part of the department’s state-wide Elk Management Plan, KDFWR in collaboration with the University of Kentucky has started a three-year elk capture-and-release radio-telemetry-based project geared toward gathering data on elk reproduction and population growth within Kentucky’s 16-county elk zone.

Chuck Elliott
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LOUISIANA

Louisiana Association of Professional Biologists / LA TWS

Louisiana Association of Professional Biologists/ LA TWS executive committee met on March 12 to discuss their annual meeting. They have tentatively scheduled their two-day meeting for early August in Alexandria, LA. Student presentations will be held on day one and a focus session on Waterfowl will follow on day two.

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries hosted the Dove EMU Technical Committee meeting February 10-12 at Rockefeller Refuge in Grand Chenier, LA. Dove research, management, and hunting information and needs were discussed. Jeff Duguay (Louisiana), outgoing chair, turned the gavel over to Justyn Foth (Delaware), incoming chair, and Seth Maddox (Alabama) was elected vice chair.
LDWF is sponsoring nine student interns this summer. The interns will be working around the state on various projects including dove banding, deer browse surveys, amphibian call surveys, red-cockaded woodpecker surveys, reddish egrets nest surveillance, coastal prairie research, black-bellied whistling duck research, and exotic vegetation control.

**Louisiana State University Student Chapter**

On January 17, 2020, Olivia Roy and Ty Price, undergraduates in LSU’s chapter of The Wildlife Society, set up a display at the Feliciana 4-H Mini Farm in St. Francisville, LA to teach Pre-K through 3rd graders about wildlife and their habitats. Throughout the course of the day, they interacted with approximately 1,000 kids and adult volunteers from the East and West Feliciana parishes.

Jeff Duguay  
jduguay@wlf.la.gov

**MARYLAND/DELAWARE**

Maryland/DE Chapter TWS

**2020 Spring Meeting**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chapter Board decided to cancel the Spring Meeting scheduled for April 8-9, 2020 at Redden State Forest in Delaware. The Spring Meeting will not be postponed to a later date. This decision was made with careful consideration in the interest of protecting our members and their families from contact with the novel coronavirus. At this time, we believe that the Fall Meeting, date and location TBD, will proceed as normal. However, the Chapter Board will be assessing the situation later in the year, and may choose to postpone or cancel the Fall Meeting based on the best available information, as well as guidance from The Wildlife Society.

News provided in the Spring 2020 Newsletter at: https://mddechapter.wixsite.com/mdde/news

Olivia Roy, LSU, showing a coyote pelt to students as they teach about wildlife and their habitats.
Mississippi Chapter TWS

With widespread adjustments being made due to COVID-19, the MSTWS chapter compiled stories of change and triumph from its membership to document how groups have adapted to the novel virus. Responses are included with office/agency news below.

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

Widespread closures of state park camping areas and regional offices were enacted in early April to help reduce large group gatherings. Wildlife Management Areas remain open for hunting and fishing opportunities; however, most of the 2020 Fishing Rodeos sponsored by MDWFP were cancelled.

Mississippi State University Extension Service

Written into the Mississippi Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan as a supporting agency, MSU Extension Service’s personnel are being called upon to respond to immediate needs such as setting up Extension facilities for COVID-19 testing or tornado relief to more diffuse needs for information. The pandemic has required Extension to rapidly advance to programs, information transfer, and problem-solving through electronic media, which requires becoming quickly creative in anticipating and responding to diverse needs for information and presenting it in a way that can be found, interpreted correctly, and used appropriately by those that need it.

USFWS

The onset of maximum telework for DOI employees forced many refuge offices to suddenly close doors to visitors; however, approved essential employees are on-site to ensure that public lands safely remain open for hunting and fishing. Also, fire management programs were recently suspended across the state, limiting total acres burned during what would normally be active prescribed fire season.

USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service/Wildlife Services

State Director Kris Godwin reports that the two main Mississippi offices as well as the aquaculture office in Stoneville are operating at maximum telework when able. Field personnel are still conducting fieldwork in socially distant and agency advised safe ways, with proper use of all PPE.

Mississippi State University

Dr. Chris Ayers of Mississippi State University reflects on the sudden move of teaching in the wildlife field via online formats, stating, “The obvious challenge for many of the courses we teach is how to replicate the experiential learning and field experiences in an online course.” For instance, his ornithology students are utilizing eBird to document species they hear or see when bird watching, but with limited supervision they could be unintentionally uploading false information to a global database. He also notes that interacting with students is difficult as many do not use the video function or have limited internet capabilities.
Mississippi State University graduate student Ichu Godwill Ichu is embarking on a research project to find the best methods to monitor pangolin species in his home country of Cameroon. His work will look at species distribution of three species, including the white-bellied pangolin (*Phataginus tricuspis*), black-bellied pangolin (*P. tetradactyla*), and giant pangolin (*Smutsia gigantea*), and will aid in focusing future conservation efforts to help combat trafficking of pangolins and their parts (mainly scales).

*Taylor Hackemack th8370@gmail.com*

**SEAFWA Annual Conference**  
**Sunday, October 25 - Wednesday, October 28, 2020**  
**Springfield, Missouri**

We realize the impact of the coronavirus is being felt across our region right now. Since we can’t predict the prolonged impact for the future, we plan to run the conference as scheduled and will adapt conference deadlines and policies as necessary. We will continue to provide updates on our plans for a successful event.

**Call for Abstracts Now Open!**

Deadline to submit all abstracts (individual speakers within a symposium, general oral, posters, and peer-reviewed papers): **June 26**

Deadline to submit peer-reviewed manuscripts: **June 26**.

Notifications of acceptance will be sent by end of June, and the schedule will be posted online in early August.

http://www.seafwa.org/conference/overview/

*White-bellied pangolin (Phataginus tricuspis) detected by a camera trap in Cameroon.*
North Carolina Chapter TWS

We held our annual meeting at Haw River State Park from February 11-13 and had a great turnout! Our theme was ‘Climate Change – Adaptation, Biodiversity and Communication’. We had speakers representing many distinguished organizations, including Michael S. Regan, Secretary for the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality. We also offered several workshops, to include Tools used in Wildlife Damage Management, GIS Basic Skills, Dendrology ID and Bird Banding/Radio Telemetry. This meeting is a unique opportunity to host several fundraisers to support our Chapter and raise funds for chapter and student awards, as well as student chapter endowments. We had a great time with both our silent and live auctions as well as raffles. We’re always thankful for the support!

TWS Southeastern Student Conclave

The Haywood Community College and Western Carolina University Student Chapters were scheduled to co-host the 2020 TWS Southeastern Student Conclave March 12-14, 2020. Regrettably, the conclave needed to be canceled due to restrictions on large gatherings as a result of the pandemic.

Michael Regan (third from left), Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, discussed climate change and resiliency at our annual NC Chapter meeting.

Photo credit: Holly Ferrerira.
In our most recent newsletter, we ‘visited’ Jockey’s Ridge State Park, located in Nags Head. Established in 1975, the park encompasses 426 acres and seven natural communities, including dune grass, estuarine fringe pine forest, interdune marsh, live dune barren, maritime evergreen forest, maritime shrub and tidal freshwater marsh. There are many opportunities for outdoor recreation, including hiking, kite flying, picnicking, hang gliding, wildlife watching and sandboarding. Jockey’s Ridge is home to the tallest living sand dune system on the East Coast. In fact, the tallest dune has been recorded at 100 feet. Geologists believe the dunes formed 3,000 to 4,000 years ago when hurricanes and storms washed large amounts of sand onto the beach. It’s certainly worth a visit to see these spectacular sights!

In these confusing and stressful times, many of us are facing challenges in how we work, where we work and what we do. Above anything, we are learning to come together as a community and gain strength from one another as we push through to the other side. While practicing social distancing and self-isolation, we remember that we are still able to appreciate and take advantage of the beautiful treasures the natural world holds and enjoy this beautiful spring that we are fortunate to experience.

For additional news and upcoming events, check out the quarterly newsletter (NC Wildlifer) on the Chapter website (www.nctws.org/wordpress/).

Gabriela Garrison
gabriela.garrison@ncwildlife.org
Canyon before finally making it to beautiful Snow Canyon State Park in St. George, Utah. Conclave was fantastic and we were given many amazing opportunities to do and see things. During Conclave, we got the chance to learn about different fish sampling methods, try our hands at radio telemetry, and explore Zion National Park. We had so much fun and can’t wait to start planning for the Central Mountains and Plains Student Conclave in 2021, which we will be hosting with the University of Central Oklahoma. We are currently having executive board elections for the upcoming year and are thrilled to welcoming the new board members.

Vicki Jackson  
vjackson4@uco.edu

University of Central Oklahoma’s Student Chapter members.

TENNESSEE

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

Strategic Planning Efforts

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) has recently been invested in the development of three different wildlife species strategic plans: White-tailed Deer, Wild Turkey, and Northern Bobwhite Quail. These plans describe a vision for the management of each of these species, and include goals, objectives, and strategies to be carried out over the course of the next five years to make the visions a reality. Each plan serves the mission of the TWRA, which is to “protect, preserve, and perpetuate Tennessee’s wildlife and ecosystems for the sustainable use and recreational benefits for our state’s residents and visitors.”

Each of these strategic plans was developed by a unique standing team dedicated to guiding the best management of the individual species. The three teams are made up of TWRA staff from across the state and across departments that have a vested interest in quality management for each of the three species. Specifically, TWRA staff specializing in game biology, wildlife law enforcement, biodiversity, forestry, wildlife veterinary medicine, and private and public lands habitat management comprise membership of each of the species management teams. As deemed appropriate by the team members, key stakeholders and academic experts are sometimes included in team conversations.
As of April 2020, the three plans are in different stages. The Deer Management in Tennessee strategic plan was officially finalized and adopted in February 2019. The final draft of the Turkey Management in Tennessee plan was posted on the TWRA website for public comment in March and should be finalized soon. The Quail Management in Tennessee plan has been drafted and is being edited to integrate stakeholder feedback. The TWRA is excited about forging the clear, well-informed pathways designated by these plans and the resulting outcomes for Tennessee White-tailed deer, wild turkey, and northern bobwhite populations as well as Tennessee citizens and visitors who care about these populations.

**Executive Director Announces Retirement**

**Ed Carter**, executive director for the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA), has announced that he will retire effective May 31, 2020. Director Carter assumed his current role in 2009. He began his career in 1972 and has held positions in the divisions of Law Enforcement, Information and Education, and as TWRA Region II assistant manager. He became TWRA's first Chief of the Boating Division when the division was formed in 1990.

Director Carter’s career has been marked by outstanding accomplishments and he has received numerous awards. Two of his most recent honors were being named the Bass Pro Shops Conservation Partner of the Year and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) top honor. He received the Seth Gordon Award for lifetime achievement in conserving North America’s natural resources in the public trust and contributing to the programs of the Association.

The TN Fish and Wildlife Commission will begin the process of hiring a new executive director. TWRA has had only two executive directors since 1978. **Gary Myers** served from that year until his retirement and was succeeded by Director Carter.

**Mallard Wintering Ecology in Western Tennessee**

During fall of 2019 the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) and Tennessee Technological University (TTU) embarked on a 4-year study to conduct a comprehensive assessment of mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) use of wetland areas in western Tennessee. The study is tracking mallard movements within and around state and federally owned waterfowl refuges to provide information on how mallards move across west Tennessee and neighboring states, what areas they select within Tennessee’s waterfowl refuge system, and what factors influence their movements and use of these areas.

During winter 2019–2020, 128 mallards were captured and fitted with GPS/GSM solar rechargeable transmitters. Mallards used state and federal waterfowl refuges extensively during winter. Most of the mallards had begun migration with an average departure on March 14, 2020. In general, stopover duration during the spring migration was short and concentrated within the Upper Mississippi River floodplain and Illinois River Valley. As expected, mallards are dispersing across several northern states and several Canadian provinces.

In subsequent winters, the team will continue to mark and monitor at least 120 mallards each year. The team will simulate distinct disturbance treatments which represent activities that potentially
occur on waterfowl refuges including 1) waterfowl surveys from a vehicle, 2) bird watching while walking, and 3) hunting in planted corn or wooded areas. This will provide insight into direct and indirect effects of disturbance on wintering waterfowl and further inform acceptable levels of disturbance for state and federal refuges to better meet the needs of waterfowl and people.

Cleveland State Community College

The Cleveland State Student Chapter logged over 1,000 hours of volunteer service over the last year. We have participated in APCs in Region 3, manned deer checking stations in several counties for opening day of muzzleloader season and opening day of gun season, and assisted with a bear checking station at North River in the Tellico Ranger District of Cherokee National Forest. We worked the Hunt for Warriors at Fall Creek Falls and at Enterprise South. Members tagged fish and salamanders to examine use of Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) culverts on Sina Branch in the Ocoee Ranger District of Cherokee National Forest. We worked both days of the 29th Tennessee Sandhill Crane Festival in Birchwood, doing everything from coordinating parking to keeping bird lists. We also had a cleanup day at Cherokee Removal Memorial Park in Meigs County. Additionally, members attended the Tennessee Chapter Meeting and students presented posters and presentations on their original research. On campus, our members hosted a conservation camp for 400+ fourth and fifth graders and had 12 members certified in Project WILD and Aquatic WILD. In the coming months, students will be starting two new research projects conducting wildlife and plant inventories on several large private properties in Meigs and Hamilton counties. We will also be working on those properties to control invasive plants and convert several areas to better quail habitat.

Tennessee Tech University

It’s been both a challenging and rewarding year for the Tennessee Tech Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society. In the fall, student members participated in a number of professional development activities, including assisting the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency at deer checking stations, checking deer age and collecting tissue samples for CWD testing. Students also partnered with the National Wild Turkey Federation for their annual local Wheelin’ Sportsmen hunt, where students assisted disabled veterans on a deer hunt. Over the holiday break, students who were experienced trappers led a trapping class for members who did not have trapping experience but had an interest in learning and keeping the tradition alive. Students also assisted with a TTU-based study of mallard movements in western Tennessee during winter break. In February, we held our annual Beast Feast fundraising dinner and were blessed with our largest turnout ever. A number of our members then attended our TN-TWS meeting in Murfreesboro at the end of February. March brought challenges for our chapter, campus, and community, first in the form of deadly tornadoes and later by the COVID-19 pandemic. Chapter members assisted with local tornado relief efforts in early March, and later they worked to transition chapter activities (and all campus
activities) to an online format. The necessary cancellations of spring chapter activities associated with the pandemic has been disappointing, but our chapter has risen to the challenges of online-only completion of the spring semester, and we look forward to what the future holds for all of our members.

**Lincoln Memorial University**

The LMU Wildlife Society has had to cancel many of their end-of-year events due to the COVID-19 shutdown. On March 16th, Lincoln Memorial University moved to online classes and shutdown the campus. The 29th annual Wild Game dinner was cancelled along with any other events until August. There have been a few students who have received internships. **Jonah Moore** received an internship at Frozen Head State Park as a Seasonal Interpreter/Recreator. **Justin Woodard-Anderson** received an internship at Pickett State Park and **Hunter Wyatt** received an internship at Norris Dam State Park. To bring an end to the school year, the LMU Wildlife Society held officer elections. The new officers are **Elizabeth Burke** as president, **Rachel Teeter** as vice president, **Madison Chriswell** as treasurer, **Bethany Boggs** as secretary, and **Lane Hopper** as sergeant of arms. The LMU Wildlife Society is looking forward to the next year and the activities it has to bring.

**Chuck Yoest**  
**Chuck.Yoest@tn.gov**

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**National Wild Pig Task Force - 2020 Wild Pig Conference**

We’ve gone VIRTUAL!  
Registration is FREE! Get access to wild pig presentations, workshops, and plenary sessions!

One of the main missions of the NWPTF is to provide our constituents with the latest information on science, research, and management in the arena of wild pig control. As such, we are still committed to providing a venue for making presentations available to the wild pig research and management community in a timely manner. We cordially invite you to participate in our “**2020 Virtual Wild Pig Conference**” where pre-recorded presentations of our wild pig speakers will be available for viewing beginning **June 1, 2020**. Please register for this free conference to gain access into the video portal: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7Z7CXGC
Virginia Chapter TWS

At the Virginia annual TWS meeting in February, for the first time, three different student chapters were represented; Virginia Tech, James Madison University, and Radford University with additional student representatives from Bridgewater College, Randolph-Macon College, and University of Richmond.

Award winners were as follows:

2020 VATWS Scholarship
Megan Dillon (Randolph-Macon College)

2020 A. Willis Robertson Award
Leon Boyd

2020 Henry S. Mosby Award
Elizabeth “Betsy” Stinson

2020 Student Poster/Presentation Awards
Katherine Russell, Ava Johnson, Phyllys Gichuru, Hila Taylor, Taina McLeod, William Moore, Shannon Walker, & Heather Abernathy

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) staff captured and placed radio-transmitters on 30 woodcock this past fall and winter in three different geographic areas of the state; the mountain region, the south piedmont, and on the coastal plain. This effort is part of a large migration and habitat study being conducted in cooperation with 12 other states and 3 Canadian Provinces.
The State Chapter of the NWTF awarded the Andrew Huffman Award to Mr. Bill Bassinger, District Biologist in Region 3.

Virginia DGIF received a portion of the 2020 Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Improvement Program grant, funded through the Farm Bill, and administered by the NRCS. The $2,998,250 award will be used to lease private lands for the purposes of hunting, fishing, trapping, boating and viewing wildlife.

DGIF was awarded the QDMA 2020 Agency of the Year Award in recognition of the Department’s deer management program(s). Additionally, Matt Knox, Deer Program Coordinator was awarded the QDMA Joe Hamilton Lifetime Achievement Award for 2020.

David Kalb
david.kalb@dgif.virginia.gov

Arkansas

Dave Donaldson WMA Enhanced

DU and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) are working together to restore more than 1,000 acres of waterfowl habitat on Dave Donaldson Black River Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The Brookings Unit is located just north of Delaplaine on the south side of the Black River and managed for moist soil habitat. Ducks Unlimited recently secured a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant to support water-control infrastructure improvements, allowing AGFC to flood 215 acres as needed. As part of this project, AGFC will also restore lost hydrologic function and positively affect 880 acres of bottomland hardwood wetlands.

Louisiana

Phil’s Cut Marsh Enhancement Project

Ducks Unlimited’s Phil’s Cut Marsh Enhancement Project is currently under construction in Terrebonne Parish. This project will enhance 2,700 acres of fresh and intermediate marsh in the Terrebonne Basin, where rates of coastal land loss are high. The project includes the installation of a new flap gate water-control structure and construction of earthen terraces along Voss Canal. The structure will improve delivery of freshwater and sediment from the Atchafalaya River through Bayou Penchant and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The project will nourish estuarine marshes that are starved of sediment, reduce flooding stress to the marsh, and prohibit the intrusion of saltwater from the Gulf of Mexico into the marsh. DU will also build terraces in an area near Voss Canal where 50 percent of the marsh has eroded away. Marsh loss has resulted in areas of cloudy, open water of little value to migratory birds and other wetland-dependent wildlife. The terraces will decrease wave energy, lessen erosion, create marsh, increase submerged aquatic vegetation productivity, and improve water quality. This project will benefit waterfowl and waterbird species by improving nesting, foraging, and loafing habitat. We expect to complete construction by the end of
Tennessee

Cross Creeks NWR

DU partnered with the USFWS, The Maddox Charitable Fund and NAWCA to perform wetland enhancement work on three different management units at Cross Creeks NWR, near Dover, TN (Stewart county). Total enhancement work will positively impact 340 acres at Cross Creeks by allowing for more efficient water level management. Part of the enhancement work included installation of new water control structures and a relift pump. The new structures will replace old, poorly functioning ones, and allow for more efficient water level management. The new relift pump will allow the USFWS staff the ability to pump water out of the impoundments so they can manipulate the soil for better moist soil management during the spring/summer months.

Virginia

Back Bay NWR Wetland Enhancement Project

In partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Ducks Unlimited recently completed the enhancement of 609 acres of wetlands within managed impoundments on the refuge in Virginia Beach. This project included the installation of a pump station and water control structures, as well as canal enhancement to increase habitat management capabilities and improve water delivery throughout the wetland system. DU biological and engineering staff delivered this project from start to finish, providing engineering survey and design, biological expertise and construction oversight and management. Now that the project is complete, refuge managers are able to independently manage impoundments to provide critical breeding, migrating, and wintering habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds and wading birds that utilize the refuge. This project leveraged funding provided by Ducks Unlimited and the Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp Fund to secured additional grant funding through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA).

Emily Austin
eaustin@ducks.org

Back Bay NWR Wetland Enhancement.
Congratulations to TWS’ Leadership Institute Class of 2020

The Wildlife Society is pleased to announce the Leadership Institute Class of 2020. Each year, a group of 10 early-career wildlife professionals are selected from a competitive pool of applicants to participate in TWS’ flagship leadership training program.

Starting in May, participants will engage in a variety of distance learning and hands-on projects and develop a greater understanding of how to apply leadership action in their professional career. The Leadership Institute will culminate at TWS’ 27th Annual Conference, scheduled to take place in Louisville, Kentucky, this October.

Leadership Institute participants are selected by a committee of TWS members and staff based on academic record, evidence of leadership capability or potential, demonstrated level of excellence in their current position and commitment and involvement in TWS. The year’s class represents nine states or provinces and seven sections of TWS.

Leadership Institute Class of 2020:

- **Chalis Bird** – Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
- **Matt Gould** – New Mexico State University
- **Katie Gundermann**, AWB – Great Basin Institute, Pennsylvania
- **Sara Kramer** – City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks, Colorado
- **Jenn Malpass**, AWB – US Geological Survey, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Maryland
- **Elizabeth Meisman** – GHD Inc., California
- **Mariana Nagy-Reis** – Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute/University of Alberta
- **Tempe Regan** – Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- **Julien St-Amand** – Parks Canada, Alberta
- **Lisa Zoromski** – USDA APHIS-Wildlife Services, Ohio

Over the course of the Leadership Institute experience, this cohort will have the opportunity to learn from TWS Council and senior staff, take part in discussions with leading wildlife professionals and engage in mentorship activities with established TWS members — like members of TWS Heritage Committee and Leadership Institute Alumni. Congratulations to the Leadership Institute Class of 2020!

*Jamila Blake, TWS Professional Development Coordinator*
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Introducing the Drone Working Group

Do you use currently use drones in your wildlife work? Are you considering drones but were confused by the technology, permitting or potential safety and legal issues? Would you like to collaborate and share ideas and experiences with others who use drones in wildlife and natural resources work?

The primary mission of the Drone Working Group is to provide support and information to those in The Wildlife Society who use unmanned aerial systems (UAS), more commonly called drones, in natural resources/wildlife research and management and to see the use of this technology in our profession move forward professionally, ethically and legally.

The Drone Working Group works to increase awareness of drones for conducting wildlife management and survey activities and to promote their safe and ethical use by users in universities, federal and state governments and the private sector, including nongovernmental organizations.

The working group provides networking and communication opportunities for wildlife professionals working with drones in wildlife management, research and education and any other facet of drone use who would benefit from discussion and transfer of information between like-minded users. The working group plans to conduct special sessions and workshops at the TWS annual conference and other forums.

You may join the Drone Working Group online through the TWS Member Portal. Dues are $5. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Interim Chair Rick Spaulding. We will hold our first official meeting in Louisville during the TWS annual conference in September.

2020 Southeastern Section Officers

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Amid Pandemic, TWS Urges Consideration of Biodiversity in Wildlife Trade

The Wildlife Society joined more than 250 conservation and development experts and organizations from around the world in writing to the heads of the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme and other U.N. and inter-governmental bodies, asking them to consider impacts on biodiversity and the world’s most vulnerable people in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Urgent, far-reaching steps must be taken to reduce zoonotic pandemic risks and secure a better future not only for humans but also for nature, which underpins the health and well-being of all humanity,” reads the letter, which provides recommendations for taking a targeted approach to identifying where wildlife trade poses the highest risks of zoonotic disease transmission and developing locally appropriate solutions.

The letter cautions against an outright ban on wildlife markets, noting that while there is “an urgent need to tackle wildlife trade that is illegal, unsustainable or carries major risks to human health, biodiversity or animal welfare … indiscriminate bans and restrictions risk being inequitable and ineffective.” Wildlife markets provide invaluable food security for people around the world and “billions of people worldwide trade or consume wild meat and rely on wildlife use for livelihoods.” The letter also points out that wildlife and wildlife markets are not the only source of zoonotic disease; diseases can be transmitted from livestock as well as wildlife.

In recent weeks, other organizations have called for a complete ban on wildlife markets and more strict regulations on wildlife trade. When the COVID-19 outbreak began, China imposed a ban on wildlife trade and live wildlife markets. However, the trade of wildlife for non-food purposes, such as traditional medicine, while regulated, would not be banned.

Laura Bies, TWS Government Relations
C.W. Watson Award Nomination Format

I. Name of Individual making the Nomination
   A. Contact Email
   B. Contact Phone Number

II. Background Information of Nominee
   A. Name
   B. Birthdate
   C. Education
   D. Employment History

III. Accomplishments – include information upon which the Award should be based.
   A. (1) Problem or program that nominee was involved with.
      (2) Action nominee took to solve the problem, develop the program and/or capitalize on opportunity.
      (3) Results (accomplishments) of nominee’s actions.

Information should be comprehensive. Include as many problems, programs and/or opportunities addressed by the nominee that should be considered during the award review process.

The C.W. Watson Award may be given for accomplishing a single item or a series of different nonrelated items. But, the award is given to a nominee who has contributed the most to any of the appropriate areas of fish and wildlife conservation. Emphasis is on the contribution, not tenure. Those making nominations are requested to ensure that they explain clearly what was accomplished and how it contributed to fish and wildlife conservation.

The C.W. Watson Award is the most prestigious award given by SEAFWA and is presented to the career individual who, in the opinion of the Award Committee, has made the greatest contribution to wildlife or fish conservation during the previous year or years. Consideration includes research, administration, law enforcement, I&E, wildlife management, fish management, and includes teachers, professionals, and students. This award is presented jointly by the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society, and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. C.W. Watson Award nominations should be submitted to the Chair of the C.W. Watson Award Committee - **Kevin J. Dockendorf** at **kevin.dockendorf@ncwildlife.org**, by **August 31, 2020**. See seafwa.org for any changes or updates to the nominating process.
NOMINATIONS

Wildlife Management Excellence Award

Each year during its annual meeting, the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society (SETWS) may present the Wildlife Management Excellence Award to recognize excellence in wildlife management activities carried out within the member states of the SETWS.

Persons making nominations must be current members of the SETWS; however, nominees need not be members. Nominations may include either an individual or group and evaluation of nominees will be based upon a single management achievement, not a “lifetime service” that has been accomplished in the field of wildlife management.

Examples of management achievements worthy of the award include (but definitely are not limited to) activities such as an exceptional break-through in bringing back an endangered species, the rapid (over a few years) development of a management area due to an individual or group effort, a major effort in stopping a particularly environmentally damaging project or an extension education effort that results in substantial and measurable change in private landowner acreage set aside for wildlife use.

Nominations should be submitted following the nomination format found on the SETWS website (https://wildlife.org/se-section/about/awards/wildlife-management-excellence-award/) and will be reviewed by a five-member committee. The committee is seeking nominations of individuals or groups who have performed “above and beyond” in their nominated category with good quantitative data to support the nomination.

The deadline for nominations is **August 1, 2020** and should be emailed directly to the Chair of the WMEA Committee, **Dr. Steven Castleberry (scastle@uga.edu)**. The recipient will be presented with the Wildlife Management Excellence Award at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society. Your participation is vital to the awards programs of the SETWS and is greatly appreciated. We all are aware of the multitude of deserving individuals and groups within our essential profession. As such, please take the time to nominate these deserving professionals.
MEETINGS OF INTEREST

AUGUST 2020

Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting

ESA’s 2020 Annual Meeting is going virtual!

August 3-6, 2020
https://www.esa.org

SEPTEMBER 2020

110th AFWA Annual Meeting

September 13-16, 2020
Sacramento, California
https://www.afwaannualmeeting.org/

The Wildlife Society 27th Annual Conference

September 27 - October 1, 2020
Louisville, Kentucky
https://twsconference.org/

OCTOBER 2020

74th SEAFWA Conference

October 25-28, 2020
Springfield, MO
www.seafwa.org/conference

FEBRUARY 2021

44th Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting

February 21-23, 2021
USFWS National Conservation Training Center
Shepherdstown, West Virginia
http://www.sedsg.com

MARCH 2021

North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference

March 8-12, 2021
The Amway Grand Hotel
Grand Rapids, Michigan
https://wildlifemanagement.institute

COVID-19 Update

The COVID-19 recovery landscape is changing on a daily basis, and therefore the impact to future annual meetings and conferences is still unknown. Hosting agencies, societies and partners are carefully monitoring the situation and are preparing for possible alternate scenarios. Please check the websites for up-to-date information and any changes or cancellations.
Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society
Membership Application

☐ New  ☐ Renewal  ☐ Change of Address

☐ Number of years (multiple year membership)

(please print)

NAME ____________________________________________________________

ADDRESS _________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

CITY, STATE, ZIP _________________________________________________

E-MAIL ___________________________________________________________

PHONE ___________________________________________________________

For new memberships or renewals, please enclose a check for $10.00 per year
(students: $6.00) payable to Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society with this application
and send to:

Daniel Greene
Wildlife Scientist, Environmental Research South
Weyerhaeuser Company
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Phone (850) 890-9360
dgreene907@gmail.com