

2022 WY-TWS Conference Recap

Thank you to everyone who attended this spring's conference in Jackson and made it such a huge success! The atmosphere was very energetic and joyful after a two-year hiatus from meeting in-person. We had 180 people attend, which is one of the strongest showings ever for our annual conference.

Thank you to our 32 sponsors who contributed over \$34,000, and also to Jerod Merkle, Board Member-at-Large, who spear-headed the effort to secure sponsorships. These sponsorships were pivotal in allowing us to hold a conference in Jackson while keeping registration costs reasonable for attendees. <http://wytwsconference.org/sponsors/>

We heard from 45 oral presentations, 29 poster presentations, two roundtable discussions, and our wonderful invited plenary speaker, Riley Black.

We planned 5 workshops and 1 field trip (unfortunately 1 workshop and the field trip had to be cancelled due to bad weather). Thank you to the 9 workshop and field trip leaders, many of whom contributed their time for free!

We had a very special guest, Ed Arnett, CEO of The Wildlife Society, who delivered a very engaging presentation about the future of TWS. We are very grateful that Ed took the time out of his very busy schedule to attend the entire conference, which gave attendees lots of time to interact with him. This was the first time a TWS CEO has attended a Wyoming Chapter conference.

The annual conference is an important source of income for the chapter and money raised goes back into supporting scholarships, travel grants, student chapter support, and more. Thanks to all of your generosity, we raised approximately \$12,000 this year! Special thanks to Heather O'Brien, Board Member-at-Large, for organizing this year's silent auction and raffle. This funding is especially important this year to replenish our chapter reserves, which we dipped into during the past two years of COVID when our income declined substantially but we continued with many of our chapter expenses to support our members (especially students) during a very difficult time. The board is also in discussions of new opportunities and resources to offer our members, which will be supported by these funds.

Please enjoy the following photos that capture some moments from the conference. Thank you to Rhiannon Jakopak for being our unofficial conference photographer!

Thank you to all for a wonderful event!

Aly Courtemanch, President



First night poster session and social featuring 29 poster presentations



Molly Caldwell (right) explains her research to WY-TWS Board Member-at-Large, Emily Reed (left)



Renee Lile (left), WY-TWS Student Chapter Liaison, explains her research on bats



Invited plenary speaker, Riley Black, delivers her talk on "Out in the Field: Making the Wilderness safer for LGBTQIA+ people"



Roundtable discussion on “Building more inclusive spaces in the wildlife field” moderated by Aly Courtemanch (left). Panelists (left to right) were Jill Randall (Wyoming Game and Fish Department), Dr. Samantha Allen (Wyoming Game and Fish Department), Riley Black (paleontologist and science writer), Tricia O’Connor (U.S. Forest Service), and Dr. Justine Becker (Post-Doc at University of Wyoming).



This year’s winning Quiz Bowl team with the “stick of knowledge”. Congratulations!



Everyone pitched in to help the conference run smoothly, including moving this table with five giant bowls of Thai curry without spilling a drop!



Ed Arnett, CEO of The Wildlife Society, delivers a presentation during the banquet



The silent auction and raffle were a huge success. Thank you to everyone for your generosity!



Congratulations to the best student oral presentation and poster presentation winners, and thank you to Anna Chalfoun (left), President-Elect, for organizing the judges and feedback. Winner were (right to left): Don Jones, Emily Gelzer, Molly Caldwell, and Anna Ortega.



A surprise award was given during the banquet to Dan Bjornlie (left) for WY-TWS Lifetime Achievement for his many years of service to Wyoming and its bears. The award was presented by nominator Dan Thompson (right).



Our out-going WY-TWS board members, Eric Maichak (second from left), Embere Hall (second from right), Daly Edmunds (not pictured), and Nyssa Whitford (not pictured) were recognized during the banquet. President-Elect, Anna Chalfoun (left), and President, Aly Courtemanch (right) will try our best to continue your excellence!



Andrea Orabona, TWS Council Representative, leads a lively auction for the Aldo Leopold 100th Anniversary Commemorative Print (donated by Bob Lanka, TWS Vice President)



Big thanks to Rich Guenzel (left) for winning the live auction of the Aldo Leopold print and to Bob Lanka (right) for donating it. The proceeds will go to funding for students and early career professionals. An honorable mention goes to Ed Arnett, TWS CEO, for getting into a bidding war with Rich! This print will be re-auctioned every year to generate ongoing funding support. Thank you!