

The Wildlife Society

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2022 VOLUME 64, NUMBER 3
KATHERINE EDWARDS, EDITOR

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Fall is finally here!!

The days are getting shorter, the temperatures are getting cooler, students are settling into their new semester, and you can smell the pumpkin spice wafting from every local coffee shop!

The last time I addressed everyone, I was sitting in the airport waiting to catch a flight to the Midwest for emergency response deployment. This time, I'm back at the airport (no joke), waiting to deploy to Alaska for avian influenza surveillance in wild birds. Definitely a bucket list location for me! So, hello from the front lines, again!!

Your SETWS Executive Board continues to be hard at work. We've held two meetings since the last newsletter – one in May and one in July – and already have our next meeting on the books at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Conference. As mentioned in my last address, one of our primary objectives is to increase communication with our members and organization units within the Section. With that in mind, we invited the leadership of every state chapter within our Section boundaries to attend our July board meeting to create an open and transparent line of communication directly between the Section and the organization units within our boundaries. We had representatives from four state chapters attend – Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina – and had some great discussions on organization unit incorporation, travel challenges associated with the TWS conference and economic inclusivity, and organizational structure of the Section.

But don't worry if your state chapter leadership couldn't make it this last meeting! We will continue to invite them to future SETWS Executive Board meetings to help maintain that communication connection.

In other news, our inaugural SETWS Wildlife and Forestry Field Techniques Course was held June 1-15, 2022 at The Jones Center in Newton, Georgia. We had 16 students from seven different states attend – Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, Florida, Alabama, and Virginia – and received rave reviews from our participants! Thank you so much to the state chapters who sponsored a student to attend, and many thanks to everyone else who helped us advertise this fantastic opportunity! We are already in the process of planning our next field course... so stay tuned for dates and details!

In addition, I'm happy to announce that the SETWS Executive Board voted to sponsor The Wildlife Society's Out in the Field (OITF) Initiative to help provide two travel grants for LGBTQ+ members of TWS (students and professionals) to assist them in offsetting the cost of attending the

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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

2022 TWS Annual Conference. In fact, we were the largest TWS organization unit donor to the cause this year! We realize that LGBTQ+ wildlifers are a growing component of our membership and we want them to know that their Section fully supports them in all their wildlife endeavors.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Conference at our annual SETWS Members Meeting (Tuesday October 25, 2022 from 8:30-10am) but if you can't make it to SEAFWA, we still hope you will join us virtually for the meeting. Keep an eye on your inbox for the meeting invite link/number!

As always, please [reach out to us](#) if you have any thoughts, ideas, questions, concerns, or suggestions as we move forward. And happy autumn!

Kelly Douglass
President, Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society



SECTION REPRESENTATIVE

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Happy start to Fall! This is always a busy time of year for everyone but hope you can take the time to enjoy the beautiful scenery. Many exciting changes with TWS publications, some of which I am sure you have already seen such as formatting for easier online access. **Steeve Côté** is the new Editor-in-Chief of the *Wildlife Monographs* (WM). The plans are to grow WM and include some technical reviews in addition to the traditional research reports.

Looking forward to TWS meeting in Spokane! Looks like many great learning and networking opportunities including The Plenary Session which is devoted to recognizing the importance of tribal wildlife management. The Southeastern Section is well represented in all the awards categories. I really appreciate all of you who have made sure your colleagues were nominated for their excellent work in wildlife conservation. Thank you for taking the time to submit nominations; it is not too early to think about next year!

TWS will be planning for future activities and initiatives important for members and the wildlife profession. Please let me know if I can help in anyway with any suggestions for Council or if you have any questions. All the best!

Lisa Muller
Southeastern Section Representative to TWS Council



COMMITTEE REPORTS

MINORITIES IN NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

The MINRC Committee is diligently planning for the 2022 SEAFWA Annual Conference in Charleston, WV, where we will host both a Student and a Professional Development Workshop. Students will get tips and tricks for resume and cover letter writing, participate in mock interviews, and will gain insight on employment opportunities from SEAFWA's sixteen member states, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and attending federal agencies.

MINRC is also hosting a professional development workshop titled, "Relevancy: Where R3 and DEI intersect." The workshop will include a presentation from keynote speaker, **Ashley Smith** with Minority Outdoor Alliance, a presentation from the 2021 SEAFWA Diversity and Inclusion Awardees, and a panel that will focus on how agencies can meet their goals by collaborating with affinity organizations and partnering with Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU) and Hispanic Serving Institutes (HSI). This workshop is open to all professionals attending SEAFWA. Visit the [SEAFWA website](#) to see a full agenda.

Lastly, we want to highlight the work of one of our former MINRC students! **Kaitlyn Tiffany** participated in MINRC last year as a student at the North Carolina State University (NCSU). She graduated from NCSU in December 2021 with a B.S. in Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology, and immediately began working with William B. Umstead State Park on invasive species control, educational programming, and wildlife research. Kaitlyn recently started graduate school at NCSU where her thesis research will focus on regional wildlife conservation collaboration with an emphasis on cross-boundary DEI initiatives.



Former MINRC student, **Kaitlyn Tiffany**, is holding an Eastern Box Turtle as she prepares for an educational program at William B. Umstead State Park.

When asked about her experience with MINRC, she said, "My experience at SEAFWA with MINRC was formative. Speaking with professionals in the broader conservation field, I realized that my career path doesn't have to be a straight cohesive line. MINRC also provided me with a structured way to step out of my comfort zone where I could work on building professional interpersonal skills (without fear of floundering). Partly as a result of my experience with MINRC, I was open minded enough to apply for a graduate assistantship. I learned a ton about networking at the conference, and as a MINRC alum I'm already drawing on that network for support."

To keep up to date on MINRC news, jobs, and events throughout the Southeast, please follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

Mercedes Maddox
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COMMITTEE REPORTS

DEER COMMITTEE

Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting

The 46th Meeting of the Southeast Deer Study Group will be held from February 26-28, 2023 in Baton Rouge, LA. The Southeast Deer Study Group provides an important forum to share the latest research and management strategies relative to the management of white-tailed deer.

SETWS Committee Chair: Steve Shea
sheawildlife@gmail.com

FUR RESOURCES COMMITTEE

During their March 2022 board meeting, the SETWS Executive Board approved three recommendations put forth from the SETWS's Fur Resources Committee (FRC). The SETWS Executive Board agreed with the FRC's recommendation to endorse the [Eastern Spotted Skunk Conservation Plan](#), which was created in 2018, and updated in 2019 and 2020. This document was authored by the Eastern Spotted Skunk Cooperative Study Group ([ESSCSG](#)) to provide a summary of what is known about the species, identify knowledge gaps, and act as a resource for wildlife professionals, universities, and agencies. The plan is a living document and is updated periodically as research and monitoring projects are completed. In the four years that the plan has existed, it has helped guide state and federal agencies and universities on identifying research priorities and implementing recommended surveys and monitoring study designs. The SETWS Executive Board's endorsement joins that of other regional organizations, including SEAFWA, and will help the conservation plan gain increased credibility and awareness within the range of the Eastern Spotted Skunk. To learn more about the conservation plan and the ESSCSG, visit easternspottedskunk.weebly.com

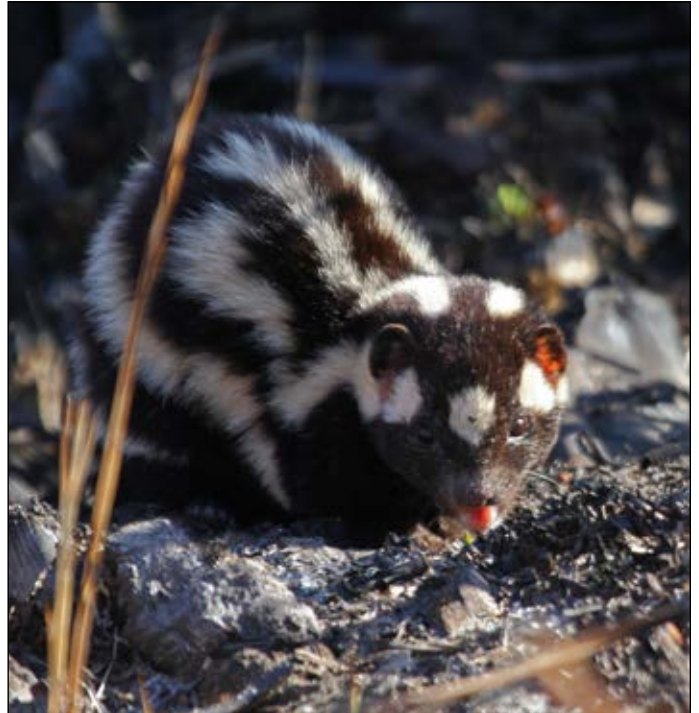


Photo credit: Neil Pearson.

The SETWS Executive Board also agreed with the recommendations of the FRC and endorsed two documents produced by the [SEAFWA Fur-bearer Working Group](#) and approved by the SEAFWA Directors. The first document entitled "[Recommendations for State Oversight of Wildlife Damage Control Agents](#)" provides recommendations for Wildlife Damage Control Agents (WDCAs), often called nuisance wildlife control operators (NWCO), regarding regulatory oversight that addresses regulatory and statutory compliance, animal welfare, human safety, wildlife diseases, wanton waste, and customer expectations. Over the past 10 years, the number of private individuals and businesses engaging in wildlife damage control services has increased, as have concerns about the quality and extent of training and oversight this industry receives. These recommendations provide guidance to state wildlife agencies to implement regulations that better assure that WDCA activities provide benefits to the public and minimize negative impacts on wildlife populations.

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The second document endorsed by SETWS Executive Board based on the FRC's recommendation was "[Recommended Best Management Practices to Address Possession, Transportation, and Disposition of Rabies Vector Species.](#)" This document addresses the possession, translocation, and disposition of rabies-vector species by the public, counties, municipalities, WDCAs, rehabilitators, trappers, hunters, and wildlife agency personnel. It also provides a state-by-state summary of state laws and regulations regarding rabies-vector species. The BMPs were meant to serve as guidance on preventing the spread of rabies among wildlife populations and address risks to human safety. Both SEAFWA documents had the support of the FRC and the FRC felt endorsement by the SETWS Executive Board would bring greater awareness of these recommendations within the southeast region. The FRC would like to thank the SETWS Executive Board for their endorsement of all three documents and look forward to more opportunities to promote these documents to SETWS members.

FRC Chair: Colleen Olfenbittel, CWB®
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CONSERVATION AFFAIRS NETWORK

Help Bring Recovering America's Wildlife Act Across the Finish Line

The [Recovering America's Wildlife Act \(S. 2372/H.R. 2773\)](#) is still awaiting consideration by the Senate. Now that the continuing resolution has passed in Congress, TWS and partners are targeting later in this session of Congress for Senate action. Your continued engagement with congressional offices helps to build crucial support for the legislation. Take action now using the following resources.

- Share the Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife [action alert center](#) with members of your TWS organization unit and encourage them to use this tool to ask their Senators to advance and pass the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

- Tell members to call offices in their congressional delegation and share their support for the legislation using TWS' [phone call script](#). Call activities can be logged and shared with TWS staff using this [Google form](#).

- Units can ask Senators to bring the legislation to the Senate floor using TWS' [letter template](#).

TWS staff contact:

Kelly O'Connor, koconnor@wildlife.org

TWS CEO Appointed to Federal Advisory Council

TWS CEO **Ed Arnett** is now an alternate member of the [Hunting and Wildlife Conservation Council](#). Members of the Council will provide recommendations to the U.S. Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on policies that aid in the conservation of wildlife while also enhancing hunting opportunities on federal lands. This iteration of the Council will also focus on assisting in the advancement of the [America the Beautiful Initiative](#), working to increase efforts to conserve wildlife and public lands while connecting more people to them. Arnett will serve on the Council for a three-year term, alongside a variety of resource management stakeholders such as state and tribal agencies, the National Association of Conservation Districts, and the Mule Deer Foundation.

TWS staff contact:

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ALABAMA



Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR), in partnership with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Pennsylvania Game Commission, and Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, was awarded a competitive state wildlife grant for the proposal, “Identifying SGCN habitat use across multiple scales throughout the eastern U.S. using the Motus Wildlife Tracking System”. The Motus Wildlife Tracking System uses automated radio telemetry receiving stations that can detect digitally coded radio tags within up to 15 km of receiving stations. While tracking technology used to be limited to larger-bodied animals (>20 g), the Motus radio tags can be put on small-bodied (<10g) animals, enabling researchers to study the movements of species that were previously too small for most tracking devices. The only limiting factor is that the resolution of movement data depends on the location and number of receiving stations within a migrating species’ pathway. Through this grant, the four agencies, and numerous other state and nonprofit partners, aim to expand the Motus station network in the southeast and maintain existing stations in the northeast. Additional grant participants will use the Motus network to better understand the annual cycles (i.e., breeding, migration, and winter ecology) of six Species of Greatest Conservation Need. ADCNR is excited to be the lead state for this project and looks forward to contributing to the Motus network across the eastern U.S. To learn more about this project and the other awarded proposals, visit [\\$7.6 Million in Grants to Support Imperiled Species | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service \(fws.gov\)](#).

Southeastern Bat Diversity Network Annual Bat Blitz

The Southeastern Bat Diversity Network’s Annual Bat Blitz was hosted by the Alabama Bat Working Group on the Bankhead National Forest in August. The goal of the Blitz was to conduct a comprehensive survey of the bat community of the Bankhead National Forest and surrounding environments. The SBDN held its Bat Blitz at Bankhead in 2008, prior to the arrival of white-nose syndrome. The 2022 Blitz replicated the 2008 Blitz and will directly compare the composition of the bat community at Bankhead 6 years before and 8 years after the arrival of WNS. Bats were captured in mist nets and harp traps at 29 sites in two counties across the Forest by ten teams of biologists over a three night period. In 2022, 189 bats of five species were captured, including red, big brown, tricolored, evening and Seminole bats. No Indiana, gray or Northern long-eared bats, federally listed species, were captured. In comparison, in 2008 before the arrival of WNS, at the same sites biologists captured 385 bats of seven species including big brown, red, gray, Northern long-eared, Indiana, evening and tricolored bat. The impact of WNS on the Northern long-eared bat was especially evident when 101 were captured in 2008 and none were captured in 2022. This year, as part of the Bat Blitz, four tricolored bats were tagged with radio transmitters and tracked by ground crews and airplane for the life of the transmitters. One bat was successfully tracked to a tree roost about eight miles from the capture site. About 70 individuals including biologists and students from around the southeast and representing multiple federal and state agencies, power companies, consultants and universities participated in the Bat Blitz. Numerous sponsors made the event possible, including the Alabama Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

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Alabama Wildlife Federation

Kevin McKinstry Awarded Wildlife Conservationist of the Year

Kevin McKinstry was presented the Wildlife Conservationist of the Year Award at the 2022 Alabama Wildlife Federation Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards banquet. The Alabama Wildlife Federation (AWF) held the banquet, co-sponsored by Alabama Power Company and PowerSouth Energy on Friday, August 5, 2022, at The Marriott Legends at Capitol Hill in Prattville. **Governor Kay Ivey** provided a congratulatory video prepared specifically for the 2022 Award Recipients.

The AWF Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards (GCAA) are the most respected conservation honors in the state of Alabama. Over the past 50 years, AWF has presented these awards to individuals and organizations that make great contributions to the conservation of Alabama's wildlife and related natural resources.

Kevin is a Certified Wildlife Biologist® who has devoted his 40-year career to sustainable management of wildlife resources and outdoor recreation. As Recreation Director for The Westervelt Company, Kevin leads the team that provides outdoor recreation opportunities on 600,000 acres across the southeast, including historic Westervelt Lodge.

He has also been instrumental in significant wildlife management practices and studies taking place on Westervelt lands, including white-tailed deer and eastern wild turkey studies, a comprehensive wildlife openings program, wildlife-oriented prescribed burning, and aquatic species habitat improvements.

Kevin is also active with professional wildlife associations and conservation groups, such as The Wildlife Society, Southeast Deer Study Group, Chairman of the Georgia Wildlife Federation, and 3rd Vice President with the Alabama Wildlife Federation.



*Kevin McKinstry was awarded Wildlife Conservationist of the Year by the Alabama Wildlife Federation. Presenting the awards were **Horace Horn** with PowerSouth Energy; **Susan Comensky** with Alabama Power Company; and **Jesse Vogtle**, AWF President.*

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Kevin was appointed by Governor Ivey to the Alabama Environmental Management Commission and he currently serves as Coordinator of the Chronic Wasting Disease Coalition, encompassing 25 million acres of private timberland ownership across the U.S.

Earlier this year, based on sound science and Kevin's leadership, The Westervelt Company took proactive steps to protect against chronic wasting disease occurring and spreading on their lands by prohibiting feeding, baiting, and other sources of unnatural congregation of white-tailed deer.

A Westervelt colleague summed up Kevin this way, "He is tireless, unwavering, professional, and forward-thinking." One of his long-time Westervelt mentors shared, "Westervelt and the entire wildlife community are the beneficiary of his practical insight and strategic vision."

Presenting sponsors for the event were Alabama Power Company and PowerSouth Energy. The Westervelt Company, Lockheed Martin, and Alabama Farm Credit sponsored the food and refreshments for the event. Alabama Gulf Seafood was sponsored by the Alabama Seafood Marketing Commission. Additional sponsor support was provided by the National Wildlife Federation, Southeast Region, **David & Kelly Thomas, Ralph & Catherine Martin, III**, CDG Engineers & Associates, Consolidated Construction Company, **David McGiffert**, First South Farm Credit, **Josh & Mary Virginia Mandell, Lee Thuston**, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, Russell Lands, and Stifel.

AWF's GCAA was created to promote leadership by example and in turn increase conservation of the natural resources in the state of Alabama including its wildlife, forests, soils, water and air. The program is designed to bring about a greater knowledge and awareness of conservation practices and projects and to give proper recognition

to those persons and organizations that make outstanding contributions to the natural resource welfare of their community and state.

The Alabama Wildlife Federation, established by sportsmen in 1935, is the state's oldest and largest citizens' conservation organization. The mission of the Alabama Wildlife Federation, a 501(c) 3 non-profit group supported by membership dues and donations, is to promote conservation and wise use of Alabama's wildlife and related natural resources as a basis for economic and social prosperity. To learn more about AWF, including membership details, programs and projects, contact Alabama Wildlife Federation at 334-285-4550 or visit www.alabamawildlife.org.

Will Gulsby, wdg0010@auburn.edu

ARKANSAS



Arkansas Chapter

The Arkansas Chapter held its annual meeting on March 3-4 at DeGray Lake State Park. **Idun Guenther** was elected to the office of Secretary and **Bubba Groves** as Board Member at large. May 22nd was the 50th anniversary of the chartering of the Arkansas Chapter in 1972.

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

In June, Wildlife Division Chief **Brad Carner** was promoted to Deputy Director and Waterfowl Program Coordinator **Luke Naylor** was chosen to replace him.

Randy Brents, who serves as the agency Fire Management Officer, won the Biologist of the Year Award for his outstanding leadership in

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prescribed fire across the state. **Kaleb Ward**, who serves as the Senior Conservation Program Technician in the East Central Delta Region, won the Technician of the Year Award for his leadership in disease monitoring and mentoring new staff in Region 2. **Luke Naylor** and **Jason “Buck” Jackson**, AGFC Wetlands Program coordinator, were honored with Delta Waterfowl’s Conservation Leader Award for spearheading the AGFC’s Waterfowl Rice Incentive Conservation Enhancement Program, a new effort to increase flooded rice on the landscape and offer increased hunting opportunities on managed lands.

Clint Johnson, newly promoted to the position as Quail Program Coordinator was recognized as the Arkansas NWTF Wildlife Manager of the Year for his work in managing habitat for eastern wild turkey on private lands throughout the state in his previous position as Private Lands Biologist. In February, **Jason Mitchell** received the National Wild Turkey Federation’s Joe Kurz Wildlife Manager of Year Award and **Karen Rowe** was honored with Lifetime Membership in the Arkansas Hawking Association.

Blake Sasse

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FLORIDA

NO NEWS REPORTED



GEORGIA



National WHEP Contest: Burke Students Place Second at Wildlife Nationals

Have you ever wanted to have a career in wildlife or learn how to manage for certain wildlife species? The Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP) does just that. The Burke County 4-H wildlife team had been practicing since January to prepare for the state contest, which was held in May, and then the national contest, which they advanced to after winning at the state level. The national contest was held in late July/early August 2022. Students traveled to multiple wildlife management areas (WMA’s) around the state and took a visit to UGA’s Warnell School of Forestry & Natural Resources to practice for the contest.

Participants representing 11 states from across the United States visited J.M. Feltner 4-H Camp near London, Kentucky to compete in the 2022 4-H and FFA Wildlife Habitat Education Program National Contest. This was the first in-person contest since 2019. Burke County’s team earned second place with several students placing in the top 10 individually. **Josiah Brantley** was 4th high, **Emmaline Cunningham** was 6th high individual, and **Tony Gray** was 7th high individual, respectively.

In order to prepare for the national contest, the students had to learn a total of 42 new species ranging from nongame species such as tiger salamanders and golden-winged warblers to game species such as wood ducks, eastern cottontails, and American woodcock to species that commonly require damage management techniques such as the American beaver, coyotes, and European starlings. They also had to maintain their knowledge of 9 other species they learned for the state contest.

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The students had to be able to identify these 51 species by skulls, tracks, pelts, and calls. Other parts of the contest examined their knowledge of wildlife management practices and when to implement them, their ability to write a wildlife management plan and defend it individually to the judges from the National WHEP Committee, and finally take a written exam to show their knowledge of the plant communities, successional stages, and the wildlife associated with the eastern deciduous forest, wetland, and urban ecoregions. Two of the Burke County team members will be graduating in May of 2023 with ambitions of continuing their education in wildlife and natural resources and eventually starting their career as a wildlife biologist.

There were four students who competed on the national team: **Susanna Murray**, **Emmaline Cunningham**, **Tony Gray**, and **Josiah Brantley**. The team was coached by 4-H volunteer, **Ryan Meckel**. This is the second time that a team from Burke County has attended the National WHEP contest.

Meridith Meckel, County Extension Agent



L-R: **Emmaline Cunningham**, **Susanna Murray**, **Josiah Brantley**, and **Tony Gray**.

76th Annual SEAFWA Conference Charleston, West Virginia Sun, October 23 - Wed, October 26, 2022

The [Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies](#) is a forum for the exchange of ideas and critical information regarding the management and protection of fish and wildlife resources primarily in the southeast. The conference attracts over 500 representatives from state and federal agencies, citizens' organizations, universities, private wildlife research groups, fisheries and wildlife scientists, agency enforcement personnel, and other natural resource-related organizations.

Registration is now open! We hope to see you there!



KENTUCKY



Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

KDFWR biologist **Zach Couch** and ECU faculty member **Dr. David Hayes** identified a new species of crayfish, the 'MoWild' crayfish. (*Faxonius elix*), in the Lower Ohio River drainage. As the result of an auction whose goal was to raise awareness and resources for conservation of Kentucky's nongame and at-risk species, the naming rights for the newly discovered crayfish was awarded to the GoWild Alpha company. The published description of *Faxonius elix* can be found at <https://www.biotaxa.org/Zootaxa/article/view/zootaxa.5165.3.3>.

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Eastern Kentucky University

Students from the EKU Student Chapter organized and participated in the first prescribed fire at the Taylor Fork Ecological Area, which is one of three natural area field stations managed by EKU. Students from the chapter were instrumental in establishing the 60 acre site in 2010 and have since managed the trails and vegetation, including extensive removal of invasive species and native tree plantings. Students worked with chapter advisor, **Dr. David Brown**, to write a burn plan and then coordinated with university and city administrators to gain approval for the fire.

Biologists from the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, including **Tom Edwards** who served as the Burn Boss, helped lead the burn and provided valuable training to students. All participating students earned S-130/S-190 certifications before the event and most have worked on other prescribed burns or wildfires in Kentucky.

Graduate student **Jake Murphy** presented the results of his MS thesis project "Comparison of spawning habitat and nest density between Buck Darter and Striped Darter populations in the Cumberland River Drainage, Kentucky".

Chuck Elliott, charles.elliott@eku.edu



Students with the EKU Student Chapter participated in the first prescribed fire at the Taylor Fork Ecological Area.



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LOUISIANA

NO NEWS REPORTED



MARYLAND/DELAWARE



Maryland-Delaware Chapter TWS

The MD/DE Chapter meeting is coming up on October 13th at Robinson Nature Center in Columbia, MD. The meeting will be a hybrid of in-person and virtual attendees and is being held free of charge. We have lined up some great speakers for the meeting this fall, including talks on herpetofaunal issues, bird safe glass research, white nose syndrome in bats, acoustic bird monitoring, and the recent declaration of nutria eradication on the Delmarva Peninsula!

Carson Coriell, ccoriell@terpmail.umd.edu

USFWS/Maryland DNR

Decades-long Partnership Eradicates Destructive Nutria Rodents from Maryland

The Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication Project (CBNEP) announced at an event at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge that Maryland is now free of the exotic, invasive nutria.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services (WS), and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have worked more than 20 years to make this difficult task -- never accomplished before on this scale -- a success.

Nutria were introduced to the Delmarva peninsula in Maryland from South America in the

1940s for the fur market. Since then, they have decimated thousands of acres of marshes with their destructive feeding habits, accelerated by the impacts of sea-level rise. Nowhere has this been more evident than Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, which lost more than 5,000 acres of wetlands through a combination of nutria impacts, sea-level rise and land subsidence.

The impacted marshes provide critical habitat for migrating and wintering waterfowl, breeding areas for at-risk wildlife such as the saltmarsh sparrow, spawning grounds for commercial fisheries including striped bass and blue crab, and homes for threatened and endangered species such as the black rail. These wetlands also provide resiliency to coastal communities, protecting communities from increasingly intense storms.

"The Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication Project is an excellent example of foresight and collaboration," said Service Director **Martha Williams**, who delivered remarks at today's event. "This project is a powerful case study for how federal and state agencies can work closely together to achieve a shared goal that benefits the environment and the community."



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In 2004, the total annual economic, environmental and social services losses due to nutria damage were estimated at \$5.8 million, with projections to drastically increase if nutria were not addressed.

Nutria eradication was possible through the coordination of federal and state agencies working closely with public and private landowners. One half of the 14,000 nutria removed during the project were from private lands, thanks to over 700 participating landowners, which ultimately protected over 250,000 acres of marshes on the Delmarva Peninsula.

The CBNEP used multiple techniques to detect and remove nutria. Eradication would not have been possible without highly trained detector dogs. These specialized dogs were trained to detect scat, which was easier to find on the expansive landscape than an individual animal. Dog and handler teams proved invaluable in confirming the absence of nutria in previously trapped areas.

“This project was only possible due to the outstanding collaboration between private, state, and federal partners. This, coupled with science based wildlife management and research, led to eradication success,” said **Kevin Sullivan**, USDA-Wildlife Services State Director. “Historic tools, such as trapping and wildlife surveys, were integrated by wildlife biologists with new technology and detector dogs. These tools were applied by dedicated individuals to find nutria every day. Due to this hard work, partnership, and perseverance, we are excited to announce this destructive invasive species will no longer be damaging and destroying the marshes of Delmarva.”

After years of intense survey, the last known Maryland nutria was captured in May 2015. Since then, using a statistical model, the project

has been monitoring and revisiting historic nutria areas to ensure eradication. The team has moved into a scaled-down biosecurity phase to respond to any reported sightings and assist other states like Virginia that are experiencing an increase in nutria that could potentially reinvade the Delmarva if not controlled.

Beginning in 2021, when nutria were detected in Tidewater Virginia, the CBNEP has funded and trained state and federal wildlife biologists in an effort to control Virginia nutria and eliminate a source of reinfestation to Maryland.

“After years of hard work and partnership, we have proven that eradication of this invasive species is possible,” said Maryland DNR Secretary **Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio**. “Maryland’s wetlands, particularly in this region, are special because of their ecological and economic importance but also because of their historic and cultural significance, and we have successfully protected them from this threat.”

The removal of nutria coupled with marsh restoration builds resiliency against sea-level rise in impacted counties of the Chesapeake Bay. Marsh restoration techniques such as native plantings or thin-layer placement or protecting marsh migration corridors would not be possible if nutria remained on the Delmarva Peninsula.

The CBNEP is administered by the Service’s Chesapeake Bay Field Office Coastal Program and Chesapeake Marshlands National Wildlife Refuge Complex and funded through the Service’s Partners for Fish and Wildlife and refuge programs. WS performs the eradication work. Other partners include the DNR, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources, Delaware Division of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, and private landowners.

David Eisenhauer, USFWS Media Contact

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MISSISSIPPI



Mississippi Chapter TWS Annual Meeting

The Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society held their 2022 Annual Meeting virtually on September 8, 2022. The meeting consisted of Agency/Organizational Updates from the MSU Dept of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Aquaculture; MS Dept of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks; MS Dept of Ag and Commerce; MS Outdoor Stewardship Trust, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Research presentations were divided into two sessions throughout the day on a variety of topics of research being done in Mississippi. The meeting concluded with a business meeting with National, Section, and Chapter Updates, along with election results and awards. Results from the elections are President-Elect – **Houston Havens**, Secretary/Treasurer – **Rick Hamrick**, At-large Board Member – **Dr. Melanie Boudreau**. Elections results were tabulated and confirmed by the Nomination Committee as the current Secretary/Treasurer was on the ballot. In addition to the positions, two By-law changes were passed by election to help streamline operations of the Chapter. Awards were presented as the Kathy and Les Shelton Undergraduate

Scholarship – **Leslie Azwell**; Sam K. Riffell Award for Conservation Excellence – **Dr. Francisco Vilella**, along with an appreciation plaque to **Chad Dacus** for his term as President.

CYCC Success Due to Others Giving of Their Time

Members of the MS Chapter helped make the 2022 Session of the Choctaw Youth Conservation Corps (CYCC) a success through their respective career paths. The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians re-established the CYCC in 2016 and through the Choctaw Wildlife and Parks, they employ tribal youth aged 15-17 to gain experience in working and learning in the fields of conservation for four weeks during the month of June. This past summer, twelve students were exposed to various fieldwork and educational lessons from our conservation partners to spark interest in tribal students acquiring higher education in these fields of study. An array of topics was introduced to the students during the four weeks they are employed. Partnerships with our state conservation partners make these efforts vital to success, especially the experiences and pathways that they as students took to get to where they are in their respective fields.

Mitzi Reed, MReed@choctaw.org



The Wildlife Society - Certification Programs

The Wildlife Society is the only organization to provide the peer-reviewed wildlife biologist certification process that bestows the title of Associate Wildlife Biologist® and Certified Wildlife Biologist®. Learn more about this members-only program and log into your membership portal to see which of your colleagues and peers have already achieved this professional standing.

[Associate Wildlife Biologist® Application](#)

[Certified Wildlife Biologist® Application](#)

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STATE REPORTS

NORTH CAROLINA



North Carolina Chapter TWS

In the NCTWS meeting in August it was voted to discuss and possibly form a new Heritage/ad hoc Committee. This was presented to allow past presidents of NCTWS to advise members of bylaws. This committee will help with actions and procedures concerning our bylaws.

The Professional Development committee offered a field trip to Bent Creek Experimental Forest on April 28th. They also offered a Plant ID workshop at the Pocosin Lakes held on May 26th. These were successfully led excursions that were enjoyed by members. There will also be a future Lead Shot Demonstration to be held with dates TBD.

Save the date for our upcoming 2023 NCTWS Annual Meeting! It will be held on February 7-9th in Dogwood on Lake Norman in Sherrills Ford, NC. This year's theme is "Partnerships for Conservation and Resiliency in a Changing Climate". Sessions will focus on climate change and the impact that has on ecosystem health, wildlife, fire ecology, and coastal ecology in North Carolina.

If you are interested in supporting NCTWS while getting some awesome swag, please visit our online store here! <https://my-store-bdff14-2.creator-spring.com/>

For additional news and upcoming events, check out the summer newsletter (NC Wildlifer) on the Chapter website (www.nctws.org/word-press/).

Kelsey Pistner

kelseynicolepistner@gmail.com

OKLAHOMA



NO NEWS REPORTED

SOUTH CAROLINA



South Carolina Chapter TWS

South Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society's fall meeting is scheduled for October 12th at the Sandhills Research and Education Center located in Columbia. Registration begins at 9:30am and meeting starts at 10:00am.

Clemson CAFLS Alumni Board

Jamie Dozier, a wildlife biologist with SCDNR, was selected to serve on the Clemson University College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences (CAFLS) Alumni Board of Directors. Currently, Jamie is the only wildlife graduate represented on the alumni board. The board is excited to have Jamie's expertise and leadership.

Regional Longleaf Award

The Regional Longleaf Awards recognize individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to longleaf restoration across the southeastern U.S. region in conjunction with the Biennial Longleaf Conference, hosted by The Longleaf Alliance. The Longleaf Alliance and its Board of Directors has honored **Johnny Stowe** with the Burner Bob Prescribed Fire Champion Award. The Burner Bob Prescribed Fire Champion Award recognizes an individual or organization for outstanding efforts in championing prescribed fire to ensure the future of the longleaf ecosystem on private land. Johnny will be recognized during the Biennial Longleaf Conference Awards Luncheon this October in Wilmington, North Carolina.

STATE REPORTS

South Carolina FFA Team to Win 2022 National WHEP Contest

The Future Farmers of America (FFA) team from Battery Creek High School in Beaufort, South Carolina won the 2022 Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP) National Championship in its division. The national contest was held July 31 through August 3 in London, Kentucky.

WHEP is a hands-on environmental education program that provides youth with an opportunity to test their wildlife knowledge in a friendly competition, as each state supporting WHEP conducts an annual contest where teams of three to four similarly aged individuals gather. The winning senior (14-19 years of age) WHEP team from each state earns the right to attend the annual National WHEP Contest. Battery Creek FFA participated and won in the South Carolina WHEP Contest held at Nemours Wildlife Foundation this past April. The state WHEP contest had eight teams from across the state participate, which were separated into a junior and senior division competition.



The S.C. Future Farmers of America (FFA) team from Battery Creek High School in Beaufort, comprised of team members **Hunter Hollingworth, Tanner McCracken, Hunter Smith and Diego Vega**, won the 2022 Wildlife Habitat Education Program National Championship in its division.

Battery Creek High School FFA was comprised of team members **Hunter Hollingworth, Tanner McCracken, Hunter Smith and Diego Vega**. Vega also came in third place for the individual contest.

The South Carolina 4-H team from Laurens County also made a great performance at the National WHEP contest. The squad was comprised of **Katelyn Campbell, Kaden Cooley, Emma Garrett and Stacey Martin**, with **Erika Pisik** as their coach.

Full story, visit <https://news.clemson.edu/young-sandlappers-show-prowess-on-big-stage-at-national-wildlife-contest/>



The S.C. 4-H team of **Katelyn Campbell, Kaden Cooley, Emma Garrett, and Stacey Martin** from Laurens County, with **Erika Pisik** as their coach, competed in the 2022 National WHEP Contest.



The Wildlife Society

[Wildlife Vocalizations](#)
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STATE REPORTS

TENNESSEE



University of Tennessee - Knoxville

Why Amphibian and Reptile Health Matters, and What UT Researchers are Doing to Protect It

More than 250 scientists from 25 countries gathered in Knoxville on August 4-10, either in person or virtually, for the inaugural Global Amphibian and Reptile Disease Conference. Pioneering research on amphibian diseases conducted through the University of Tennessee Center for Wildlife Health at the UT Institute of Agriculture resulted in Knoxville's selection as host city for the seven-day conference. Center researchers **Matt Gray**, **Mark Wilber**, **Deb Miller**, **Wesley Sheley**, and **Davis Carter** all contributed in important ways to the event's success, as did **Alyssa Merka** of the UT Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries.

The conference included seven workshops and 149 scientific presentations. Topics ranged from herpetofauna and One Health to mathematical modeling of amphibian and reptile diseases to the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in science, which **Craig Pickett Jr.**, director of the UTIA Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, led. Research field trips, social events and evening activities for participants rounded out the event.

Conference participants included students, scientists, veterinarians and natural resource practitioners, as well as policy makers and other stakeholders. Despite the diversity of their backgrounds, individuals at the event were united in the goal of using the conference as a springboard to find solutions to emerging infectious diseases that are plaguing global amphibian and reptile populations.

Prominent among the conference's 21 sponsors were the National Science Foundation, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Herpetologie und Terrarienkunde, Environment, and Climate Change Canada, Morris Animal Foundation, Wildlife Disease Association, Amphibian Survival Alliance, U.S. Geological Survey and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

Gray and other organizers successfully raised more than \$85,000 to increase diversity, equity and inclusion at the conference. The funds supported participation by students and early career professionals from five continents. In total, organizers were able to provide 44 travel grants to participants from nine countries and 13 U.S. states.

Gray says organizers accomplished their goal of fostering discussions among researchers on various amphibian and reptile disease threats. They also fostered unity among globally dispersed scientists and students, he adds.

"To me, the most impressive outcome of this inaugural conference was its inclusive atmosphere. More than half of the presentations were delivered by students, and they frequently engaged in discussions without inhibition. It was inspiring to see the next generation of scientists enthusiastic about solving the complexities of global emerging herpetofaunal diseases. Our hope is that the knowledge participants took away about the similarities and differences among host-pathogen systems and disease management strategies will help set research agendas and foster conservation of herpetofauna species for years to come."

Positive impacts are needed, starting with recognizing that biodiversity matters. Biodiversity is

STATE REPORTS

the foundation of a healthy planet and a One Health approach is necessary to achieve planetary health. When pathogen infection causes disease, populations of amphibians and reptiles can be reduced and even species extinctions could occur. Such losses threaten to unleash a chain of harmful consequences. Reptiles and amphibians are important food sources for various birds and mammals, and frogs, toads and lizards are important consumers of insects, many of which are agricultural pests or, in the case of mosquitos and ticks, carry and transmit zoonotic diseases. The loss of amphibians or reptiles from an ecosystem can have cascading effects that influence natural processes such as nutrient cycling and climate change, and also can negatively impact human health.

“Human, animal, plant and ecosystem health are interconnected; the health of one is impacted by and also impacts the health of the others. From a One Health perspective, it’s hard to predict all the consequences that loss of populations of specific amphibians and reptiles could have,” says **Deb Miller**, UT professor of wildlife health and director of the UT One Health Initiative. “What we do know is that high-concern diseases such as snake fungal disease, pond turtle shell disease, ranaviral disease and chytridiomycosis have already resulted in die-off events and, in some cases, extinction of herpetofauna species across the world.”



Some participants at the first Global Amphibian and Reptile Disease Conference traveled to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park for a firsthand look at salamander diversity. Other field trips included capturing hellbenders in an East Tennessee watershed; surveying snakes; and joining biologists with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency in finding rare Wehrle’s and green salamanders. Photo courtesy of M. Gray.

STATE REPORTS



Some of the 250-plus participants in the inaugural Global Amphibian and Reptile Disease Conference, which researchers with the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture helped organize and lead. Participants came from across the world and included students, scientists, veterinarians, natural resource practitioners, policy makers and other stakeholders. Photo courtesy of M. Gray.

Diverse factors causing diseases to emerge in amphibians and reptiles include changes to the environment that negatively affect the health of species and give pathogens an advantage over their immune systems. Humans also affect host-pathogen interactions by unnaturally transporting pathogens long geographic distances during international trade or on footwear and other gear when traveling abroad.

Gray and his team along with collaborators at four other institutions have for years engaged in [basic and field science to characterize environmental threats to amphibians](#). Now their studies are branching in a new direction.

In August 2022, three federal agencies awarded a \$2.75 million grant to a UT-led team to conduct a study that will identify and assess how pet amphibian trade networks may amplify pathogens. Funding for the project comes from the National Science Federation (NSF), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA NIFA). The project's leadership reflects the teamwork and strength of UTIA

and UT Knoxville with principal investigators being Gray; **Neelam Poudyal**, a professor of natural resource policy and human dimensions in the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries; and **Nina Fefferman**, professor in the Department of Mathematics and Department of Ecological and Evolutionary Biology, director of the National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis (NIMBioS) and associate director of the UT One Health Initiative. Project collaborators include scientists at Washington State University, Michigan State University, University of Massachusetts, and Rutgers University. The Pet Advocacy Network is an important partner.

Gray says the knowledge that the team develops will increase understanding of factors that contribute to the movement and persistence of pathogens in amphibian trade networks, as well as those of other wildlife. Foundational work for this project was supported by a seed grant from the UT One Health Initiative, which helps to facilitate research and other projects among faculty, students and the public across the UT System's statewide network of universities, institutes and centers.

STATE REPORTS

Lincoln Memorial University Student Chapter

Lincoln Memorial University's Student Chapter of TWS worked hard last year to support TWS' mission of inspiring current and future wildlife professionals to care about wildlife and habitat conservation through service, education, and fun. We were grateful for the opportunity to lead and participate in numerous community service projects last year. These projects included a bake sale in which profits were donated to the Tennessee 'Hunters for the Hungry' organization, a hiking trail clean up event that made the beloved Green Gate Trail on LMU's campus more accessible, and a food drive to donate Thanksgiving meals to a local family in need. We hosted a variety of fun educational events last year as well, such as an edible plant educational hike along Green Gate Trail. Each year in May, we host a

Wild Game Dinner and invite students, faculty, and community members to come to enjoy prepared wild game and fish while also educating them on the status of our local game and fish species and the importance of their management.

Barbara Shock

Barbara.Shock@LMU.net

TWS Southeastern Student Conclave

The Cleveland State Community College Student Chapter of TWS will host the 2023 TWS Southeastern Student Conclave March 16-18, 2023. More information will be shared as it becomes available.



Lincoln Memorial University Wildlife Society members conducted a trail clean-up on campus to ensure the campus Green Gate trail leading to the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park is accessible for the community.

STATE REPORTS

VIRGINIA



Virginia Chapter TWS

The Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society (VATWS) has announced that our Annual Meeting will be held on February 15-17 at the New College Institute and the Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville, Virginia. The meeting will provide a unique opportunity for attendees to visit the museum and experience behind-the-scenes tours. In addition, the meeting will feature workshops, presentations, and networking opportunities.

Scott Klopfer, sklopfer@vt.edu

DUCKS UNLIMITED

Innovative Partnership Protects Three Miles of Waccamaw River Frontage

Property to provide flood mitigation and public river access

Ducks Unlimited (DU) recently completed the transfer of River Oaks, a 1,005-acre property along the Waccamaw River in Horry County, to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), which will manage it as a Heritage Preserve (HP) and Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

In recent years, communities along the Waccamaw have endured catastrophic flooding from storms that have increased in number and intensity and suffered the impacts of historically high tides. According to the South Carolina Floodwater Commission established by Governor McMaster in 2018, 400,000 South Carolina citizens

live at risk of inland and coastal flooding. The natural infrastructure provided by forested wetlands can help mitigate those impacts.

The addition of the River Oaks tract will increase the size of the existing Waccamaw River HP/WMA to a total of 7,218 acres and provide habitat connectivity along the river for black bears and numerous neotropical migratory songbirds. While the SCDNR and its staff are excited about furthering habitat connectivity and protecting additional land for natural resources, the property will provide a much-needed opportunity for recreational use, including hunting, fishing and scenic paddling.

“Wild and natural places like those found along the Waccamaw River are important not only for the ecological value they provide and flood mitigation, but also as a place where people can immerse themselves in nature for relaxation and enjoyment,” said **Robert Boyles**, agency director, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

Funding for the acquisition was provided by the South Carolina Conservation Bank, the North American Wetland Conservation Act grant program, a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant, the Pathfinder Foundation, Post and Courier Foundation, funds from the South Carolina DU License Tag program and a generous contribution from the sellers.

“The need for land protection along coastal rivers is becoming increasingly urgent,” commented **Raleigh West**, executive director, South Carolina Conservation Bank. “We’re glad to see funding from the Conservation Bank, leveraged with matching dollars from local, state, and federal partners, help conserve this critical natural infrastructure.”

STATE REPORTS

DU New Staff - Southern Region

Tyler Hopper is the new Director of Development in North Carolina. Born and raised in Birmingham, AL before attending the University of Alabama where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Marketing and a master's degree in Sports Business Management. Tyler also completed the UA sales program during his time in Tuscaloosa. Passionate about relationship building, conservation and competition all lead him to DU! Tyler is an avid outdoorsman, Christ follower and golfer.

Erin Brown recently joined the Southern Region team as Director of Development for southeast Louisiana. Growing up the daughter of a wetland biologist in South Louisiana, Erin has always been passionate about the Louisiana coast and its coastal crisis. Erin graduated from Louisiana State University in Environmental Management-Resource Conservation. After graduation, Erin moved to New Orleans to work for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries as a biologist for three years. Most recently, Erin worked to advocate for the Louisiana Coastal Master

Plan with the Restore the Mississippi River Delta campaign as a sportsmen outreach coordinator for Vanishing Paradise, a sportsmen program of the National Wildlife Federation. Erin resides in Mandeville, LA, with her boyfriend and Labrador Retriever, Roseau. Erin enjoys hunting, fishing, seeing live music, and traveling.

Patrick Dill has joined Ducks Unlimited as the Rice Stewardship coordinator in Arkansas. Patrick grew up in Marion, AR, where he attended the annual Ducks Unlimited banquets. After high school, Patrick attended Arkansas State University (ASU), where he received his bachelor's degree in wildlife ecology and management. After interning with U.S Fish and Wildlife and working a short stint with Kansas Parks and Wildlife, Patrick worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. Following his time with NRCS, Patrick joined ASU as a research assistant helping with the Arkansas Groundwater Initiative. Patrick is currently working on his master's at ASU in agriculture and should graduate in the spring of 2023.

Emily Austin
eaustin@ducks.org



L-R: **Tyler Hopper**, **Erin Brown**, and **Patrick Dill** have joined the DU Southern Region Team.

POLICY

TWS Updates Position Statement On Lead Ammunition

The Wildlife Society's [Council](#) renewed and updated the organization's [Lead in Hunting Ammunition and Fishing Tackle](#) position statement that was due to expire later this year.

"The Wildlife Society has been a strong leader on the issue of lead in hunting ammunition and fishing tackle for many years," said **Gordon Batcheller**, President of The Wildlife Society.

The Wildlife Society's [position statements](#) are broad and topical statements on critical issues facing the wildlife profession and its conservation work. These statements are part of TWS' suite of [policy resources](#) that cover a wide range of topics relevant to wildlife management and conservation policy.

The new position statement is part of TWS' focus on this issue over the past several years. The Wildlife Society published a comprehensive [technical review](#) on lead ammunition in 2008 alongside the American Fisheries Society. A field workshop at the 2017 Annual Conference and a comprehensive symposium during the 2021 annual conference brought together key experts on lead toxicology, wildlife disease, hunting, shooting, and game management.

The Council's Position Statements Committee collaboratively reviewed the Lead in Hunting Ammunition and Fishing Tackle statement and recommended changes, incorporating input from a special advisory committee appointed by President Batcheller of topical experts and [TWS working groups](#). The committee also sought input from external organizations, including the [American Fisheries Society](#), and the [Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies](#). Council then reworked, reviewed, and approved the recommendations.

"Our background put us in a strong position to consider appropriate revisions to the policy statement," said President Batcheller. "As President, I am very grateful for the hard work of the advisory committee and the Position Statements Committee. Our new position statement is strong and continues our tradition and responsibility as leaders in the wildlife profession."

The revised position statement continues to recognize the harmful effects of lead exposure on wildlife, and conveys TWS support for the voluntary replacement of lead-based hunting ammunition and fishing tackle with non-lead products; support for educational opportunities, practices, and policies that promote the phase-out of lead; and support for human dimensions research into the use of lead hunting ammunition and fishing tackle.

Cassie Ferri, Wildlife Policy Intern, TWS Government Affairs



POLICY

USFWS Issues New Lead Ammunition Rules On Wildlife Refuges

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [announced](#) 2022-2023 hunting and sport fishing regulations in early September, including new wildlife refuge-specific restrictions on lead ammunition and tackle, and the authorization of hunting and fishing on certain refuges.

The USFWS reviews existing hunting and sport fishing regulations on its national wildlife refuges annually. The agency can alter or propose to open refuge areas for this use if they determine its compatible with the conservation mission of the refuge and state laws. In this year's final ruling, the USFWS announced the opening of two refuges to recreational hunting and sport fishing for the first time as well as the expansion of these opportunities in 16 other refuge sites. The USFWS also changed regulations in certain refuges pertaining to migratory game bird hunting, upland game hunting, big game hunting and sport fishing.

Additionally, various NWRs will require or have proposed non-lead ammunition and tackle by fall 2026. Patoka River NWR is the only station within the final rule that has a definitive non-lead requirement. Eight other refuge sites including Blackwater, Chincoteague, Eastern Neck, Erie, Great Thicket, Patuxent Research Refuge, Rachel Carson and Wallops Island NWRs also proposed a non-lead requirement that would take effect in 2026. The USFWS plans to continue monitoring the use of lead on refuges and will provide another opportunity to comment on the proposal for the other eight refuges during next year's 2023-2024 rulemaking.

In June 2022, a notice for comments on the proposed changes was published in the Federal Register. The USFWS then took the comments into consideration when drafting the final rule. The Wildlife Society [commented](#) on the hunting and fishing access proposal, encouraging the Service to continue to use the best available science when making its decision on lead use in national wildlife refuges. Additionally, TWS urged the Service to work closely with public stakeholders as well as state and tribal agencies on a comprehensive strategy for informing hunters and anglers on the negative effects lead poses to biological systems and providing information on non-lead alternatives.

The Wildlife Society's [position statement](#) recognizes the harmful effects of lead exposure on wildlife and promotes the phasing-out of lead hunting ammunition and fishing tackle with the support of voluntary replacement with non-lead products through education and outreach.

Madison Chudzik, Wildlife Policy Intern, TWS Government Affairs



BUSINESS

Southeastern Section TWS Annual Members Meeting

Please join us for the 2022 SETWS Annual Members meeting on **Tuesday, October 25, 2022** from **8:30-10:00am** at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Conference in Charleston, WV (room posted on the conference schedule). Come meet your Executive Board (if you haven't already), learn about our Section's accomplishments this past year, and participate in our discussion of what we hope to accomplish next year! We love hearing from our members, so please consider attending! For those who can't join us in person, a meeting invitation will be emailed for you to participate virtually.



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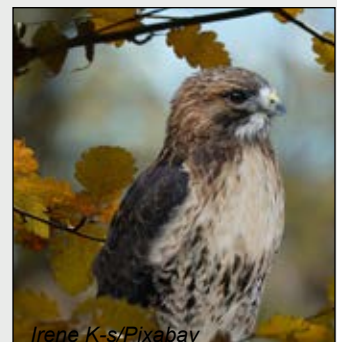
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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

USFS Native American Research Assistantship Program

The Native American Research Assistantship Program – developed collaboratively with U.S. Forest Service (USFS) – facilitates opportunities for Native American students to be mentored by USFS Research & Development (R&D) scientists and promotes student advancement and training for careers in natural resource and conservation-related fields. [Learn more](#) about this program and how to apply.

Applications for summer 2023 will be available November 2022. You can find more detailed information on the assistantship and application requirements by viewing the position posting. Any questions can be directed to Jamila Blake, AWB®, professional development manager at TWS (jblake@wildlife.org; 301-897-9770 x 307).

The Wildlife Society Webinar Series



Support wildlife professionals, make connections, and discover something new. The Wildlife Society's monthly webinar series brings you the latest in wildlife science, conservation, and management. Each webinar is supported by [TWS Working Groups](#) to ensure that you stay current on science-based research, techniques, and tools from experts in the field.

Upcoming Webinars

Thursday, October 27, 2022 from 1:00 – 2:00 PM EDT
Taking Action to Resist, Accept, or Direct Change: How Wildlife Managers
Can Thrive in an Uncertain Future
Hosted by the [Climate Change and Wildlife Working Group](#)

The mission of the USFWS is to conserve fish, wildlife and their habitats. But how can wildlife managers proceed when faced with biodiversity declines, extinction crises, and accelerating climate change where traditional approaches may no longer be effective? Here we describe the Resist-Accept-Direct (RAD) framework, which can serve as a blueprint for responding to change, and provide examples of USFWS climate change adaptation actions. Although operating under an increasingly uncertain future is daunting, wildlife managers can build on established methods to implement RAD actions and expand our capacity to effectively manage change on public lands. [Register Now!](#)

Up Next...November 2022 – See you in Spokane!

Coming soon.

December 2022 – hosted by the [Women of Wildlife Community Team](#)
January 2023 – hosted by the [Biological Diversity Working Group](#)

*If you are interested in presenting an upcoming webinar please email Tricia Fry, tricia@wildlife.org.

MEETINGS OF INTEREST

OCTOBER 2022

76th SEAFWA Conference

October 23-26, 2022

Charleston, West Virginia

<http://www.seafwa.org/conference/>

NOVEMBER 2022

The Wildlife Society 29th Annual Conference

November 6-10, 2022

Spokane, Washington

<https://twconference.org/>

FEBRUARY 2023

46th Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting

February 26-28, 2023

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

<http://www.lawff.org/sedsg>

MARCH 2023

33rd Annual Colloquium on the Conservation of Mammals in the Southeastern U.S. and 28th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network

March 8-10, 2023

Jonesboro, Arkansas

<https://sbdn.org/annual-meeting/>

88th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference

March 20-24, 2023

St. Louis, Missouri

<https://wildlifemanagement.institute/conference>

