

Annual Fall Members Meeting Minutes  
Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society  
Omni Corpus Christi Hotel, Corpus Christi, TX  
17 October 2023

**ATTENDEES**

<u>Executive Board</u>	<u>Position</u>
Kelly Douglass	President
Dr. Dan Greene	President-elect
Dr. Lisa Muller	SE Section Rep to Council
Dr. Ray Iglay (virtual)	Past President

Members and guests in attendance: Kelli Applegate (virtual), Kris Godwin (virtual), Dr. Kristine Evans (virtual), Lora Smith (virtual), Sonia Monogold (virtual), Dr. Travis DeVault (virtual), Jeff Trollinger (virtual), Katie Edwards, Emma Schultz, Kennedy Funa, Zoe Protzman, Audrey Grimes, Rebecca Rangel, Andrea Darracq, Alix Pedraza, Mercedes Maddox, Leslie Burger, Jennifer Malpass, Allen Rutherford (virtual), Idun Guenther (virtual), Bill Bartush (virtual), and Michel Kohl.

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 08:10 A.M. CST.

Welcome and Opening: Kelly Douglass welcomed everyone. Members and guests, attending virtually and in-person, introduced themselves.

Kelly presented a service award to Katie Edwards for her 15 years of service to the SETWS as Newsletter Editor and Webmaster.

Secretary's Report: We currently have 625 SETWS members (while roughly 2,000 TWS members reside/work in SETWS boundaries). Kelly Douglass and Dan Greene took notes, since Lynn Lewis was not in attendance, and drafted the meeting minutes. No meeting minutes were reviewed.

Treasurer's Report: No Treasurer's Report was received, but Lynn Lewis shared her budgeting excel spreadsheet with Kelly who gave updated account balance. The current account balance is \$38,296.93. The current Fur Resources Committee funds balance is \$3,333.21. One outstanding check for the field course is pending, for \$6,375.00, which puts the current available balance at \$28,588.72.

Lynn Lewis provided Kelly with the 2023 budget, covering the calendar year to date (1 January 2023 – 28 September 2023) predicted and actual income and expenses, which Kelly reviewed for the group. The Section continues to maintain a self-mandated baseline account balance of \$10,000, to cover average Section expenditures for two calendar years if necessary. Dues income is on par with last year (membership remains relatively the same) although it remains

below the estimated \$6,000 in income; the Section should receive the remainder of anticipated membership dues (for Quarter 3) from The Wildlife Society in mid-October. Monetary student awards (\$700), the Newsletter Editor/Webmaster (\$1,500), and any plaque/award costs (up to \$350) will be expended immediately following the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife (SEAFWA) Conference 15-18 October 2023. The SEAFWA did not request funds for hosting the 2023 SEAFWA Conference, and since it is also not being held within SETWS boundaries, that budget line item remains \$0. The Wildlife Society (TWS) also did not request funds for hosting the 2023 TWS Conference; however, because the conference is being held within SETWS boundaries the Executive Board may still decide to expend the \$1,000 to support the conference in this calendar year. Funds for the 2023 Southeastern Wildlife Conclave, at Cleveland State Community College on 16-18 March 2023, were not requested (\$1,000 line item) by the hosting student chapter this year, thus the funds remain unexpended for this calendar year. Funds to support the 2023 SETWS Wildlife and Forestry Field Techniques Course were fully expended, for a total of \$22,472.83. Although it appears the Section went over budget on this line item (estimated expenditures were \$19,000), part of this expense included a payment to Castleton University that was overlooked in 2022 and paid in 2023; once that expenditure was taken into account, 2023 expenditures were close to the \$19,000 in planned expenditures.

Newsletter Update: Katie Edwards continues to serve as Newsletter Editor & Webmaster and provided a verbal update. The fall issue of the newsletter was published 10 October 2023. The issue included candidate biographies and a ballot for the upcoming elections. Katie requested newsletter submissions from state and student chapters, to augment newsletter content in future issues. The newsletter is published three times a year. TWS is turning over website administration to Katie.

### ***Committee Reports***

#### ***Standing Committees***

Audit: Rachael Urbanek is chair. No report. Virginie Rolland (Arkansas Chapter of TWS) and Holly Ferreira (Florida Chapter of TWS) serve on the committee. The Section's annual audit was conducted 7 March 2023; no discrepancies were found. Committee activities will resume in January 2024 with the transition of Secretary/Treasurer.

Conservation Affairs: Lisa Lord is chair. No report. The committee is staffed by Conservation Affairs Committee chairs, or a delegate, from each state chapter. Lisa has served as chair of this committee for four years and will be stepping down in December 2023. She is currently polling the committee members for interest for a potential replacement chair, starting in January 2024.

Deer: Steve Shea is chair. No report.

Fur Resources: Colleen Olfenbuttel is chair. No report.

Membership: Jake Shurba is chair. No report. Jake is currently populating his committee. The committee is staffed by state chapter Section Reps. If a state chapter does not have a Section Rep position/officer, they can delegate a person to serve in this role. Jake is currently reviewing the Section roster to clarify the residency and/or professional activity of members with mailing

addresses found geographically outside of Section boundaries, for voting status (member, affiliate, etc.) in the upcoming election. The committee is also assessing how more TWS members located in the Southeast can be recruited to become members of SETWS.

Nominating: Dan Greene is chair. Dan provided a verbal update. Ray Iglay and Kelly Douglass serve on the committee. Elections will open within the next month. Two positions will be filled: President-elect and Secretary/Treasurer. Two candidates each have accepted their nominations: Dr. Rachel Urbanek and Dr. Travis DeVault for President-Elect, and Dr. Vanessa Lane and Dr. Kristine Evans for Secretary/Treasurer. Dan is working with Aniket Gajare, TWS Software Developer, to assist the Section with an online voting platform. Election materials (candidate biographies and ballot) will be published in the upcoming newsletter. Voting instructions will be emailed to Section members, with the link to the online voting platform, when the election opens, most likely within the next few weeks.

Publication [Awards]: Lora Smith is chair. Lora provided a verbal update. Micah Perkins and Aubrey Greene serve on the committee. Lora has served on the committee since 2018. Seven wildlife manuscripts were published in the 2023 *Journal of Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies*. The committee reviewed the seven manuscripts and selected the best paper for the SEAFWA 2023 Outstanding Technical Paper Award. The winner will be announced at the SEAFWA Conference awards banquet.

Best Paper Award 2023 winner: Beau A. Bauer, Richard M. Kaminski, Patrick D. Gerard, Ernie P. Wiggers, and J. Drew Lanham titled “Aquatic Invertebrate Biomass in Coastal South Carolina Impoundments Managed for Waterfowl”.

[Resolutions and] Bylaws: Ray Iglay is chair. No report. There are numerous revisions that need to be made to the bylaws; the Board will review the bylaws in 2024 and propose changes in 2024-2025.

[Student] Awards: Andy Madison is chair. No report. Andy was not able to attend the SEAFWA Conference this year, so Kelly and Lisa Muller will coordinate the student presentation and poster judging in his stead. The committee received five applications for Best Student Chapter Award this year and has selected a winner, which will be announced along with the Best Student Poster Award and Best Student Presentation Award at the SEAFWA Conference awards banquet.

Best Student Presentation Award 2023 winner: Lacy Rucker (West Virginia University) for her presentation entitled “Potential Impacts of Climate Change on the Geographic Distributions of *Plethodon netting* (Cheat Mountain Salamander) and its Primary Competitor”.

Best Student Poster Award 2023 winner: Cindy L. Von Haugg (Clemson University) for her poster entitled “Relative Abundance of Natural Cavities Suitable for Nesting Wood Ducks”.

Best Student Chapter of the Year Award 2023 winner: The University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Wildlife Management Excellence Award (WMEA): Travis DeVault is chair. Travis provided a verbal update. No nominations were received this year. A few ideas for encouraging nominations next year were discussed; discussions will continue with the WMEA committee in 2024.

### ***Ad-hoc Committees***

SETWS Field Course: Dan Greene is chair. Dan provided a verbal update. Seventeen students attended the 2023 SETWS Wildlife & Forestry Field Techniques Course; these students were from 15 colleges/universities in 10 states and included two graduate students and two 'second career' students. Nine students received partial or full funding via state chapter sponsored scholarships. In the inaugural two years, 34 students have attended the field course (18 male, 16 female) from 22 universities in 12 states. More than 50 individuals from The Jones Center and the SETWS were involved in hosting the field course. The Section is unlikely to host a field course in 2024 and may shift to hosting the course biennially.

### ***Joint Party Committees***

CW Watson Award: Chris Racey is chair. No report. Lisa Muller's term on this committee ended June 2023; Vanessa Lane was appointed to replace her as Section Rep on this committee. Vanessa will serve a 3-year term, ending summer 2026, and will automatically serve as chair of this committee in her last year. No report. The committee is currently reviewing nominations and will announce the winner of the CW Watson Award at the SEAFWA Conference awards banquet.

C.W. Watson Award 2023 winner: Dr. Robert Warren (University of Georgia).

Wetland Wildlife: Jamie Feddersen is chair. No report.

### ***Section Representatives on SEAFWA Committees/Journals***

Minorities in Natural Resources Conservation (MINRC): Dr. Marcella Kelly is Section Rep on this committee. Marcella and Mercedes Maddox (MINRC Committee Vice-Chair) provided a verbal update. The MINRC Committee is technically a SEAFWA committee but has always functioned more like a joint party committee. In order to define and strengthen the relationship between SEAFWA and SETWS on minority issues, a new member position was established on the MINRC Committee to serve as the SETWS Rep. Dr. Marcella Kelly was appointed to serve in this capacity. The MINRC Committee sponsored 23 fellows to attend the SEAFWA Conference this year. MINRC is also hosted a professional workshop on 16 October 2013 at the conference, entitled "Relevancy – Advancing the Conservation Profession Through Inclusion." Lisa Muller served on the panel discussion as a representative for the Southeastern Section of TWS. The committee hopes to have a job portal specifically for MINRC fellows up and running by the end of this year. They also started a mentorship fellow program this year and had 4 applicants. In addition, this year was the first year they received sponsorship for their luncheon which was a huge help.

Journal of SEAFWA: Dr. Dan Greene (Weyerhaeuser) is Associate Editor. Dr. Ray Iglay (Mississippi State University) is Assistant Editor. Dan provided a verbal update. Ray started his term Assistant Editor this year. Twenty-four wildlife manuscripts were submitted this year; reviews are underway.

### ***Section Representatives on TWS Committees/Boards***

The Wildlife Professional Editorial Advisory Board: Matt Chopp is Section Rep on this board. No report. Kelly's meeting invitation to Matt bounced back; she will follow up with Matt via the email address listed for him in the Section roster.

Certification Review Board: Brett Dunlap is Section Rep on this board. No report.

### ***State Chapter Updates***

Alabama: Mercedes Maddox (AL Chapter President-elect) provided a verbal update. Her term as President begins 1 January 2024 (term is one year). The AL Chapter annual meeting was held in August and focused on drone applications in the field. USDA showed how they use drones for feral swine control. They had one of the highest attendance rates for an annual meeting post-covid. They also held a professional and student mixer with speed networking and received a presentation from one of the students that attended the SETWS field course. The AL Chapter is very supportive of the SETWS field course and committed to sponsoring a person next year to attend (student or early career professional). The Chapter started their third year of their mentor program; the last few years have been very successful, with 10 plus mentor pairs. This year, they have developed several committees – membership, awards, conservation policy, outreach, and social media. Nick Sharp received the Wildlife Biologist of the Year Award. Eric Soran received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Georgia: Michel Kohl (GA Chapter President-elect) provided a verbal update. The GA Chapter is considering the potential to hold a joint AL-GA Annual Meeting in 2025. Last year, they officially moved their annual conference to February to reduce competition with other meetings. GATWS is creating a gear swap at the state chapter meeting. The SEAFWA Conference 2024 will be held in Augusta, GA. The Urban Wildlife Working Group will host the 2025 International Urban Wildlife Conference in Atlanta, GA, potentially the first or second week of June. GA Department of Natural Resources and Warnell School of Forestry (UGA) are leading the local planning committee so contact Michel Kohl with questions or volunteer offers.

Mississippi: Leslie Burger (former MS Chapter President) provided a verbal update. Their annual meeting was held in September 2023 in Jackson, MS, for the first time in three years (for an in-person meeting) and had great attendance. The meeting was oriented towards students to give them the opportunity to give a presentation in a professional/friendly environment. They had 16 presentations (11 were students, 5 were professionals) and had an agency/organization update. The meeting had good activities to gain momentum doing monthly or bimonthly learning modules and community engagement. Dr. Kristine Evans received the Sam K. Riffell

Award for Conservation Excellence. Randy Spencer received the Dale H. Arner Honorary Membership Award.

North Carolina: Kelly Douglass (former NC Chapter President) provided a verbal update. The Chapter's annual meeting will be held at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain on 2-4 April 2024. The meeting theme is 'Partnerships in Habitat Conservation for At-risk Species'. The Nature Conservancy is bringing the Hunters of Color Program to North Carolina; the Chapter will be making a small monetary contribution to help start the program and are hoping to have members become more involved moving forward, either as mentors or volunteers.

Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland/Delaware, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia state chapters were not in attendance.

### ***Student Chapter Updates***

Oklahoma State University: Zoe Protzman gave a verbal update. Their student chapter membership numbers have tripled recently, bouncing back from the loss of membership they experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. This year their student chapter is hosting presentations from game wardens, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, and is looking at getting USDA to give a presentation as well. Next year they will be participating in monarch butterfly tracking. They also hold semester camping trips and bird walks (grade students, Payne County Audubon Society), and a pollinator tour. And they are fundraising to send people to meetings. Also, the Oklahoma State University student chapter, along with Mercedes Maddox, organized an impromptu Out in the Field (OiTF) luncheon today at 11:00 CST in the Omni hotel restaurant. LGBTQ+ members and allies are welcome.

University of Georgia: Michel Kohl gave a verbal update. The student chapter has won at least two quiz bowls at TWS. Eight students will be attending the 2023 TWS Conference in Louisville, KY.

University of Tennessee at Martin: The UT Martin Information and Education Chair gave a verbal update. The student chapter created a new chair for their DEI committee, and have held 10 events since August (e.g., helped host a fishing rodeo). They have a partnership with Tyson to put in a pollinator garden. They guided nature walks and went mussel diving with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

### ***Open Forum***

The Minorities in Natural Resources Conservation (MINRC) SEAFWA Committee thanked the Executive Board for helping to make collaborations and strengthen the relationship between MINRC and SETWS.

Ideas and questions about the SETWS Field Course were discussed. Leslie Burger recommended reaching out to wildlife / natural resource department deans for support. Jennifer Malpass recommended a new minority initiative within USGS that may be able to help. Michel Kohl suggested reaching out to the Native American Fish and Wildlife Association and the TWS Native Peoples' Wildlife Management Working Group.

Michael Kohl made a comment about increasing registration costs for state meetings and wanted to discuss what other state chapters were doing to combat or mitigate that increase. MS Chapter indicated that sponsorships have been very helpful. Other options include an option for members to donate at registration to keep registration costs down, and finding a place that is willing to host at no or low cost is great.

Kelly Douglass motioned to adjourn; Dan Greene seconded. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:52 AM CST.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Lewis  
SETWS Secretary/Treasurer