



Spring-Summer 2020 Newsletter

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► 2020 Workshop Announcements

Unfortunately due to the current COVID19 health crisis and in accordance with National TWS guidance, we postponed the July 23rd workshop on early successional habitat management until 2021. As much as we want to make something work for this year, it is such a great agenda full of phenomenal speakers with important field components – short-changing the event on a remote platform just wouldn't be right. We will announce the new date in the next newsletter.

The 2020 spring student workshop on chainsaw safety training was also canceled due to coronavirus concerns, but we have been working with the Ohio Forestry Association to re-schedule for this fall. The workshop will have a few extra requirements, such as a cap of 10 people and social distancing/sanitation requirements, but we are confident it will be rewarding for students who attend. Date TBD but likely Nov. 14 or 21.

SAVE THE DATE – PROFESSIONAL WORKSHOP 7/23/20

We are excited to announce a professional's workshop for ~~Thursday, July 23rd~~. Here is the summary blurb for the workshop – stayed tuned for location details in the coming months. MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The need to manage and maintain diverse, native vegetation is crucial for our natural resources. As key wildlife populations decline and invasive populations increase, the need for long-term management plans to address these challenges. In this workshop, we will focus on creating, enhancing, and maintaining habitats through addressing challenges, such as invasive plant species control, via an Integrated Vegetation Management approach.

Postponed until 2021



SAVE THE DATE – STUDENT C-SAW Workshop

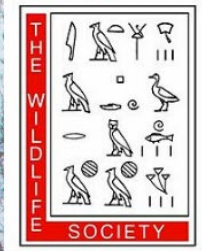
Speaking of student chapters, please make your memberships aware of Saturday, ~~March 21st~~ at Scioto Trails near Waverly. Each student chapter will have an opportunity to send a limited number of members to become C-SAW Level 1 Certified. This is an exceptional opportunity and more details are being extended to each student chapter as I type up this newsletter.

Rescheduled for November



Available to Ohio Student
Wildlife Chapters
3 students/chapter
Max Capacity **9**
ONLY \$20/participant

Location (tentative) Scioto
Trail State Park
in Chillicothe
TBD
GET Level 1 CSAW
Certification



OWMA
OHIO WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY OHIO CHAPTER
OHIO WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
Columbus Pint Night



OWMA & Tri-Org Pint Night a SUCCESS!!

OWMA celebrated 60 years of excellence with yet another fantastic wildlife conference in January. A high caliber of speakers presented topics ranging broadly from butterflies to grouse and raptors to rails. Matt Shumar presented a new publication *Managing Small Forest Patches for Birds: A Guide for Ohio Landowners*, an applied document that emerged from rich collaborative partnerships. [You can download the PDF here.](#)

The pre-conference social organized by the Ohio Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and hosted by Land Grant Brewery was another highlight. It capped a great evening that started over at D1 Headquarters of Ohio Division of Wildlife for a joint business meeting and ended with good drinks and great times with colleagues.

OCTWS Business Meeting Minutes (January 2020)

OCTWS Annual Business Meeting

(1/23/2020 5:15-6:30 at District 1 Division of Wildlife HQ)

All current OCTWS officers in attendance

➤ *New Officer Introductions*

- G. Karns taking 3rd shift as Secretary, running unopposed (G. Dietsch)
- No other openings this cycle

➤ *Financial Report*

- \$22,454; \$2,310 expenses; \$1,212 income; year-end \$21,365 balance (T. Butler)

➤ *Secretary's Report*

- No report (G. Karns)

➤ *Policy/Legislative Affairs Update*

- Policy updates – RAWA update, Sunny Oaks Draft Notice of No Significant Impact (G. Karns)

➤ *Student Chapter Updates*

- Thorough report from Rio Grande, no student representative for Hocking or OSU

➤ *Old Business*

- Take note of D. Althoff's retirement / recognition (G. Dietsch)
- \$250 award for Fenske at Midwest F&W Conference; OPHI Student Monarch challenge in partnership with Marci; supported Student Wildlife Research Symposium; sponsored OPHI Symposium; hosted Student Workshop on IMMP at Gwynne (G. Dietsch)

OCTWS Business Meeting Minutes (January 2020) (continued)

➤ *New Business*

- CSAW Workshop March 21st at Zaleski State Forest (tentative location); 15 students, 5 from each student chapter / seeking support from Cabelas to cover 85% of the costs, will still be asking participants to cover \$20 a head just to provide traction and permanency to each filled slot (G. Karns)
- Professionals Workshop on July 23rd / full agenda for 1-day workshop; stay tuned workshop details (G. Karns)
- Nationals Conference in Louisville, KY, 9/27-10/1 – seldom does the conference land this close in 2 out of 3 years; please consider submitting a proposal for workshops, field trips, or symposia by March 13th (G. Karns); Bob Gates added that he would see about assembling an Ohio reunion at the conference

➤ *Meeting Adjourned*

Obviously, a lot has changed since the minutes were recorded at our annual business meeting in January. Please note that Nationals has pulled the plug on the Louisville, KY Conference location and will instead host the 2020 National TWS Conference online. [Please check this link for the most up-to-date information regarding this fall's conference.](#)

OCTWS Swag!!

We still have a good inventory of OCTWS logo decals and shirts. Be on the lookout for an online order opportunity in the very near future to stock up on T's and more.



OCTWS Call for Officer Nominations

Though nominations are several months away, please be thinking about taking a more involved role with the Ohio Chapter of The Wildlife Society. It is an honor to serve our state's wildlife profession as a board member to the TWS state chapter, and the offices of President Elect and Treasurer will be open in January 2021. We will issue a formal call in late fall-early winter but please be pondering that decision NOW!!



► Student Chapter Update – Rio Grande

The Rio Student Chapter started off the spring semester with a busy agenda and hopes for a productive series of activities. But, like everyone else, the COVID-19 pandemic put a quick end to most planned activities as campus was closed and instruction offered exclusively online.

Before that shutdown, members attended conferences and worked on two “active” field projects. Nine student members attended the Ohio Wildlife Management Conference during January in Columbus and six members attended the Ohio Natural History Conference during February in Toledo. For both professional meetings student registrations and travel stipends were provided by the Rio student chapter.

As part of the ongoing wildlife management effort at a local family farm, over 200 cedars were removed from an oldfield area where the chapter installed 50 bluebird boxes in 2018. The boxes have been monitored during the breeding season and usage rates by eastern bluebirds, tree swallows, Carolina chickadees, and Carolina wrens exceeded 70% in 2019.



(continued, Rio Grande SP20 update)

Removal of more cedars and hopefully a prescribed burn will be accomplished in 2021 at this site. The other major field activity for late 2019 and early 2020 was expansion of kiosk-type signage on the campus Baby Moose Hill trail system—a project started by the chapter 5+ years ago. Four more kiosks were built by the chapter and installed near 3 of the existing kiosk map sites. Chapter members designed and installed four posters at these new kiosks featuring the wetlands site, wildflowers, songbirds, hardwood trees, and the southern flying squirrel project.

Before campus closed for the semester, the chapter were treated to a couple of invited speakers. Joe Moosebrugger of Crane Hollow Nature Preserve came to campus to share about the effort there, highlighting the both the basics of a non-profit conservation organization and effort to control invasive species on that property. Lucy Williams, a Rio 2019 graduate, returned in March to talk about her summer in Yellowstone National Park, working as an Ohio University tech assisting with bat research and her current assignment at OU that involved search for hibernating bats in Ohio.



Rio WILDLIFE CONSERVATION



Important Wildlife "Hardmast" Trees

Southern Flying Squirrel Research



Shagbark Hickory: *Carya ovata*
Leaf: Pinnately compound, 8-14" long. Leaflets finely toothed and hairy. Typically 5 leaflets (rarely 7).
Nut: 1 1/4 - 2 1/2" long elliptical or rounded. Flattened at the tip.
Bark: Grey, long, narrow strips of bark flair out and give "shaggy" appearance.
Habitat Type: Upland slopes of mixed hardwoods and moist soils in valleys.



Pignut Hickory: *Carya globra*
Leaf: Pinnately compound, 6-10" long with a slender hairless axis. Typically 5 leaflets. Slightly smaller than other hickories.
Nut: 1-2" long. Pair shaped into pig-like nose.
Bark: Light grey, smooth or becoming furrowed with forking ridges.
Habitat type: Dry and moist upland with other oaks and hickories.



Mockernut Hickory: *Carya tomentosa*
Leaf: Pinnately compound, 8-20 in. long with a hairy axis. Usually 7 - 9 leaflets to a leaf.
Nut: 1 1/2 - 2 in. long. Husk is split down to the middle or almost to base.
Bark: Grey, irregularly furrowed into narrow forking ridges.
Habitat type: Upland on slopes near mainly oak and white pine.



Chestnut Oak: *Quercus montana*
Leaf: Obovate shape, rounded margins, with shallow sinuses.
Nut: 1-1 1/2" long with a bumpy scaled cap covering 1/3 - 1/2 of the acorn.
Bark: Dark grey, deeply ridged and furrowed. Reddish between furrows.
Habitat type: Dry, well-drained, acidic soil.



Black Oak: *Quercus velutina*
Leaf: Bristle like tips, lobed indentations along margins. Brown hairs beneath the leaf.
Nut: <1" long, rough-fringe like, hairy scale cap that covers 1/2 the acorn, elliptical shaped.
Bark: Almost black in color, moderately to deeply ridged and furrowed.
Habitat type: Dry uplands, rocky ridges, and slopes.



White Oak: *Quercus alba*
Leaf: Rounded margins, wedged shaped base.
Nut: <1" long, warty scaled cap covering 1/4 of acorn, elliptical shaped.
Bark: Whitish to grey in color. Can be scaly, platy, or ridged and furrowed.
Habitat type: Best on course, deep, moist, well-drained, acidic soil.



Southern Flying Squirrels (*Glaucomys volans*) in Ohio are found in mature deciduous forests consisting of hard mast producing trees such as oak, hickory, and beech. Despite their name they do not fly. Flying squirrels glide using the excess skin attached from the wrist to the ankle referred to as the patagium. Flying squirrels are nocturnal and require tree cavities to nest and den in during the day, meaning they nest in holes in trees. Their diet includes acorn and hickory nuts and even insects. Hickory nuts are favored over acorns during the years they are available because of their higher fat content, calcium content, and protein content along with having fewer tannins. In spring they feed on soft mast such as tree buds and maple tree samaras (aka "helicopters").



The Rio EcoMonitoring Project monitors southern flying squirrel at 14 sites—including this woodlot—in southeast Ohio. Each site has 25 boxes installed that are checked every winter—the time when flying squirrels are most colonial. The most number of flying squirrels find in a box at one time is 13 !!!



The entrance of the nest box is plugged to prevent any occupants from escaping. The box is temporarily removed from the tree so that squirrels can be processed on the ground. A clear tube is attached to the box entrance allowing a flying squirrel to "exit" that way or be taken by hand when the door is opened. A cake icing bag is used to hold a squirrel for weighing.

Each squirrels is sexed, aged, and ear tagged. After all data is recorded they are released and the nest box is put back up on the tree.



► Student Chapter Update – Ohio State University

In Fall 2019, the OSU Fish & Wildlife Society took several trips to local Columbus Metroparks, state parks, and Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Each fall semester, the club takes a November camping trip each year that serves as a time to connect with fellow members and enjoy the outdoors; the weekend was spent at West Branch State Park and Cuyahoga Valley National Park. During the hikes, members practiced their plant and animal identification skills while taking in some incredible views. Our members also had the opportunity to volunteer with Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW) by assisting in the preparation planting of trees.

(continued, OSU SP20 update)

The club began the Spring 2020 semester by attending the 60th Annual Ohio Wildlife Conference. The members had valuable opportunities to connect with peers and professionals in the field. During Spring Break, the club took a trip to South Carolina and Tennessee to visit Congaree National Park and Great Smokey Mountains National Park. At Congaree, the club was able to experience the largest expanse of old-growth bottomland hardwood forest in the southeastern U.S. During the trip, additional short visits were made to the Audubon Center at Beidler Forest and Biltmore Forest.

For more pictures, the club's Instagram is [@osu_fishandwildlifesociety](https://www.instagram.com/osu_fishandwildlifesociety)



► Policy and Legislative Update

► RAWA (Recovering America's Wildlife Act; H.R. 3742)

It makes sense to pick up where we left off in the fall-winter policy update. OCTWS made a strong statement of support and engaged Ohio House of Representatives for the bill's passage. It has been a grind since the bill was first introduced back in 2017, but it is a fight worth fighting; passage of RAWA could go down as one of the single biggest conservation victories of the modern era. On to the Senate!!

Recovering America's Wildlife Act is a bill with a strong financial backbone, and the more we learn about how investments in wild habitats and wildlife and the environment return far more gains than the costs they incur, it has gained bipartisan momentum. In fact, just a couple months ago, RAWA cleared the House Natural Resources Committee with a sweeping 26-6 victory and at last count the number of Congressional cosponsors was at 181 and climbing.

You want to hear even more exciting news? Just last week, RAWA was adopted and approved as an amendment to a much larger piece of legislation by the House. H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act, has a massive budget of \$1.5 trillion dollars and is headed for the Senate. As political moving and shaking goes, H.R. 3742 was folded in under the H.R. 2 bill which passed mostly along party lines. H.R. 2 is fundamentally a transportation and infrastructure bill with additional components that focus on clean air, clean water, renewable energy, bird friendly buildings, and of course – WILDLIFE! The road ahead for RAWA is still not easy, but slowly and surely, it is heading in a direction that eventually may result in a veritable landslide of funding. RAWA will have far-reaching impacts that will endure well beyond generation. Support RAWA!!

► **GAOA (Great American Outdoors Act; S. 3422)**

Another bill to consider advocating for is the GAOA which cleared the Senate with an overwhelmingly bipartisan show of support. 73-25!! Now the bill is on to the House of Representatives where you can contact your local House Rep and encourage them A) to cosponsor the bill and B) SUPPORT the bill.

GAOA has strong bipartisan support and limited special interest opposition (chiefly those industries which prioritize private land interests out West). That certainly does not guarantee an easy road though.

Two core features of the bill stand out. First, the enormous maintenance backlog for federal agencies, such as National Parks Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, will be addressed with a 5-year funding plan. Second, and most will argue more importantly, is that the Land and Water Conservation Fund, LWCF for short, will have permanently reauthorized funding. LWCF has done great work in every single county of every single state nationwide since its inception. While LWCF *can be* funded up to nearly a billion dollars annually, it hardly ever receives that level of funding from Congress. This would fix that issue and designate funds from offshore oil and gas drilling royalties (funds that currently disappear into the general federal Treasury) to fully back LWCF at full capacity into the foreseeable future.


- Wayne National Forest 10-year Forest Mgt Plan Revision process continues to make progress. [Check out the latest June 2020 update](#) for detailed information of their progress and periodically check their website to see when and how you can engage the process at the next step.

Additionally, Wayne NF is currently seeking public input for a pine management plan which would increase young forest habitat for wildlife and deal with senescing pine plantation stands throughout the Athens District. [Click here for the project overview](#) and make your voice heard in the next 30 days.

Student Wildlife Research Symposium

Though the spring research symposium was cancelled due to COVID19 concerns, SWRS is re-scheduled for September 10 at Hueston Woods in southwestern Ohio. If the September event is cancelled, everything will push to a date in April 2021 location TBD.

The good news, despite all the pandemonium and cancellations, is that students who *would have* presented at the 2020 spring event still received a nice show of support through some recognition and prizes. The highlight was supported in conjunction by OCTWS and OWMA and put a one-of-a-kind custom wildlife observation field journal in each student's hands. We look forward to continuing our support of SWRS.



Grace Dietsch, President
Renee Buck, President Elect
Geoffrey Westerfield, outgoing President
Thomas Butler, Treasurer
Gabriel Karns, Secretary