

Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1

President's Message

Kay Nicholson - 2023 President SW Section of The Wildlife Society

Greetings, TWS Southwest Section members! As winter gradually gives way to spring, I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to you with the latest edition of the TWS Southwest Section newsletter. I hope you enjoy perusing the articles enclosed within the pages that follow.

The TWS Southwest Section's Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC) is seeking a new Committee Chair. The duties include attending bi-monthly (i.e., every other month) meetings of the Conservation Affairs Network (CAN). The CAN serves as a platform to engage in discussions about wildlife policies crucial to our region. The Southwest Section's CAC Chair will play a key role in disseminating relevant information gathered from these meetings to the CAC Chairs for each of the Southwest Section's chapters.

We also have an open position for a Newsletter Co-editor. The Co-editor will work with our existing co-editor to compile newsletter content and prepare two newsletters per year, one in spring and the other in fall.

If you are interested in serving as the Southwest Section's CAC Chair or as a Newsletter Co-editor, please don't hesitate to contact me at kay.e.nicholson@jacobs.com or the 2024 TWS Southwest Section President Nicole Tatman at nicole.tatman@dgf.nm.gov. We look forward to hearing from you!

Before joining the TWS Southwest Section board, I was uncertain about the Section's overarching purpose. The active engagement of individual Chapters within the Southwest Section, marked by their regular meetings, newsletters, and consistent member interaction, left me questioning the distinctive role of the Section itself. These ponderings prompted me to seek clarity and, recognizing that others may share similar inquiries, I wanted to share the insights I've gained. The primary function of the TWS Southwest Section is to provide support to its affiliated chapters within its geographic extent. This collective support extends to chapters spanning three U.S. states—Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas—as well as two international regions in Mexico and Costa Rica; soon there will be a Mexico chapter. The Section's principal goal involves aiding chapters in achieving their objectives while fostering relationships among them.



From the Board

Southwest Section

National News

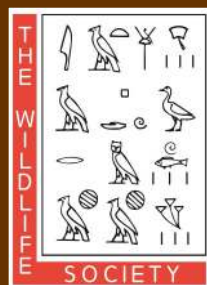
State News

International News

Tribal News

Student News

Council News



Current Members

AZ	NM	TX	Int	Oth
65	67	124	2	66

Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1

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By facilitating connections across the Section's expansive geographic reach, there's a heightened potential for collaboration on shared goals throughout the Southwest. The TWS Board has been actively exploring options to enhance member connectivity. Most notably, communication strategies underwent a significant update in the past year, transitioning from the outdated ListServ format to the more dynamic Google Groups. Further innovations are currently under consideration, and additional details on these developments will be shared soon. Stay tuned for more information as we continue to evolve and strengthen our Section-wide connections.

The election for the new year's Section officers ended in mid-January. We had candidates for the positions of President-Elect and Treasurer. Thank you to those that ran for office and those of you that took the time to vote! Please consider throwing your hat in the ring later this year when we prepare for next year's election. The Treasurer and Secretary positions rotate each year, so we will be looking for candidates to fill the Secretary position, in addition to candidates for President-elect. Please ensure that your Section membership is up to date so you maintain your eligibility to run for office and to cast your vote during the next election.

It was a pleasure serving as your Section President this past year. I want to thank Whitney Gann and Erika Nowak, as their time serving on the TWS Southwest Section Board is winding down, for the help and insight they provided over the past year. I look forward to assisting Nicole Tatman as she now takes over as the 2024 Southwest Section President. And, thank you to Masa Ohnishi and Kathy Granillo (Southwest Section Secretary and Section Representative to TWS Council, respectively) for continuing in your ongoing roles with the Section. Jamie Killian and Anna Lad, thank you for all your efforts on compiling and preparing the Section newsletters. I thoroughly enjoyed working with you all!

In closing, I would like to say thank you to all our members for all you do for wildlife in the Southwest!

Kay Nicholson

TWS Southwest Section President

From the Board

Southwest Section

National News

State News

International News

Tribal News

Student News

Council News



Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1

In this Issue

From the Board

President's Message	1
Southwest Section Tracks – SW Section Rep's message	4

Southwest Section

Kay Nicholson– Inspirational Leadership, Carol Chambers Bestowed with Aldo Leopold Award	7
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State News

Lias Hastings - Tomorrow's Wildlifers	9
---------------------------------------	---

Section News and Information

SWS Board & Committee Chairs	11
Join! Membership Form	12

Thank you to those that contributed to this newsletter: **Kay Nicholson, Kathy Granillo**, and Lias Hastings.

We need photos and/or articles from YOU!

Please contribute to the next newsletter. Consider submitting articles or photos on work-related adventures, conservation happenings, or any topics of interest to Southwest Section members. If you're interested in contributing but don't know what to write, give us a call!

Deadline for the Spring newsletter articles is **March 1st**.

Deadline for the Fall newsletter articles is **September 30th**.

Submit all photos and articles to your newsletter editor(s).



From the Board
Southwest Section
National News
State News
International News
Tribal News
Student News
Council News



Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1



Southwest Section Tracks

Kathy Granillo - Southwest Section Representative To Council

I want to start off with a BIG CONGRATULATIONS to one of our own from the Southwest Section: Fidel Hernandez on his election to Vice President of TWS. His 4-year term (VP, President-elect, President, Past-President) started at the end of the Annual Conference last November. I think many of you know Dr. Hernandez from his previous involvement in TWS in Texas and as the Southwest Section Representative to Council a few years



back. But for those who may not know him, he is a Professor in the Department of Rangeland and Wildlife Sciences at Texas A&M Kingsville, and the Alfred C. Glassell, Jr. Endowed Professor in Quail Research with the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute. His research interests include upland game birds, rangeland ecology and management, and wildlife population dynamics. Dr. Hernandez also was named Fulbright Scholar in 2014, where he investigated rangeland and wildlife conservation issues in Patagonia, Chile. I am looking forward to working with him on Council!

We have a lot on our plate on Council right now (really, always). We are deep into developing the strategic plan that will guide TWS for the next 5 years. We have a goal to complete this by Spring of this year. As part of this planning effort, Council is discussing the following 3 primary mission priorities:

1. Building Community: Convene, unify, and build a strong, connected community of wildlife professionals to address the most critical issues facing wildlife. Build meaningful connection across a diverse network of wildlife professionals.
 - a) Foster dialogue and productive debate across divides to advance the profession.
 - b) Engage and sustain a broad-reaching, diverse network of wildlife professionals.
2. Supporting Professionals: Enhance support, share knowledge, and provide resources to ensure professionals are able to most effectively influence the future of wildlife.
 - a) Effectively disseminate credible, relevant, and future-oriented scientific and technical information to inform wildlife

From the Board

Southwest Section

National News

State News

International News

Tribal News

Student News

Council News



Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1



Southwest Section Tracks

Kathy Granillo - Southwest Section Representative To Council

professionals' work and decision-making.

b) Ensure professionals have the skills and tools they need to effectively shape the future of the profession and of wildlife conservation and management.

3. Maintain relevant standards that sustain the profession's value.

a) Exercising External Influence: Ensure TWS is an effective voice for wildlife by translating science to define collective priorities for the field, influencing key policies, and enhancing existing public engagement efforts.

b) Define collective priorities for the field.

c) Enhance TWS' influence on policy that impacts wildlife professionals and wildlife.

d) Support key partners focused on increasing public engagement and interest in wildlife.

e) Expand partnerships to advance collective priorities affecting wildlife and wildlife professionals.

If you have thoughts or comments on these priorities or anything else related to strategic planning, Council welcomes your input. You can always email me at KGBirder55@gmail.com.

The 2023 Annual Conference was held November 5-9 in Louisville, Kentucky. We had about 2,000 attendees. It was great to see many Section members there. The opening plenary was titled Communicating in an Era of Science Mistrust. I want to give a shout-out to the sponsors of the plenary, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

The 2024 Annual Conference will be held October 19-24 in Baltimore Maryland. Proposals for education and training programs including workshops, symposia and panel discussions are due March 6, and general science sessions abstract are due May 3. I hope to see many of you there!

I want to encourage Section members to nominate qualified members for the Distinguished Service Award. This is an award that the Section Board selects. Nominations are due April 1 to the Section Board. The SWS has not had an awardee since 2016! Please help

From the Board

Southwest Section

National News

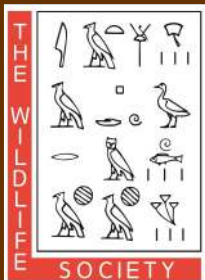
State News

International News

Tribal News

Student News

Council News



Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1



Southwest Section Tracks

Kathy Granillo - Southwest Section Representative To Council

recognize your fellow members. Visit the TWS website for particulars <https://wildlife.org/distinguished-service-award/>

The Section also submits nominations for TWS Fellow Award – please help think of good candidates to nominate from our Section. Read more about the award at the website <https://wildlife.org/tws-fellows-program/>

TWS maintains several Position Statements. These are broad and topical statements on a wildlife issue that defines the issue, contains factual background data, describes the most probable biological, social, and economics results of alternative actions, and may also contain a recommended course(s) of action. These authoritative statements on wildlife issues are essential for interjecting wildlife concerns into decision-making processes.

There are 4 position statements up for review/revision this year:

1. North American Model of Wildlife Conservation
2. Responsible Human Use of Wildlife
3. Hunting
4. Animal Rights Philosophy and Wildlife Conservation

If you have questions or comments about any of these position statements, please reach out to me and I'd be happy to hear from you.

Kathy Granillo

KGBirder55@gmail.com

From the Board

Southwest Section

National News

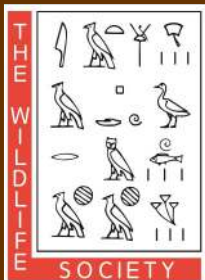
State News

International News

Tribal News

Student News

Council News



Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1



Southwest Section Tracks

Kay Nicholson - 2023 President SW Section of The Wildlife

Inspirational Leadership: Carol Chambers Bestowed with the Aldo Leopold Award

In a heartening recognition of dedication and passion, Carol Chambers was honored with the prestigious Aldo Leopold Award for her exceptional work in wildlife conservation and her significant contributions to supporting wildlife scientists. Carol graciously accepted the award at the 2023 Annual TWS meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. As Carol took the stage to accept the award, a wave of emotion swept through the room. The audience witnessed a genuine and heartfelt reaction that reflected not only the significance of the honor but also the depth of Carol's passion and dedication.

Carol Chambers is a professor of wildlife ecology at Northern Arizona University and Past President for The Wildlife Society (TWS). She is a dedicated researcher with an impressive list of publications, showcasing her commitment to the field of ecology and biodiversity. For some time now, she has been studying bats in Nicaragua, examining the impact of forest fragmentation. Through Carol's work in the region, she has identified at least 10 new bat species and helped establish a comprehensive dataset of bat occurrences in Nicaragua. In more recent years, Carol began studying the New Mexico meadow jumping mouse, a federally endangered subspecies endemic to the southwestern United States. She has conducted stable isotope analysis, examined movement patterns, and identified successful survey methods for this subspecies.

When nominating her for the award, her supporters stated, "We have repeatedly seen, firsthand, how Carol's leadership in the wildlife profession has dramatically changed careers, projects, and people inside and outside of our profession, for the better. Her critical mind, creativity, passion for wildlife and wildlifery, willingness to be open and wrong, and her strong moral character have influenced thousands and likely tens of thousands of wildlife professionals and the animals/habitat/systems they work to conserve."

From the Board

Southwest Section

National News

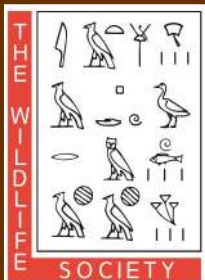
State News

International News

Tribal News

Student News

Council News



Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1



Southwest Section Tracks

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Inspirational Leadership: Carol Chambers Bestowed with the Aldo Leopold Award

Carol has been leading efforts in TWS to make the wildlife profession more inclusive. In 2010, she was instrumental in forming the group Women of Wildlife (WOW). Since then, WOW has held meetings, receptions, and symposia to bring together women in wildlife as well as men that support them. Along with Kerry Nicholson, Carol edited the book "Women in Wildlife Science: Building Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion," which was published in 2022. The book celebrates achievements of women in the wildlife profession. It also discusses challenges faced by women and how the profession could be more inclusive.

In conclusion, Carol's acceptance of this prestigious award marks a testament to her unwavering dedication, exceptional leadership, and significant contributions to the field of wildlife science. This recognition serves as a milestone in her illustrious career, highlighting the impact of her work and the admiration it has garnered from peers and the broader community. Carol serves as a source of inspiration, motivating others to make a positive impact and encouraging them to follow in her footsteps.



Carol Chambers accepting her award from Don Yasuda.

Photo courtesy David Frey.

From the Board

Southwest Section

National News

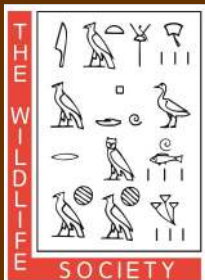
State News

International News

Tribal News

Student News

Council News



Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1



State News

Lias Hastings, Wildlife Specialist,

USDA APHIS Wildlife Services, Phoenix, AZ

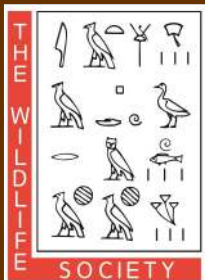
Today's world is vastly different from the one I grew up in. The advent of technology has brought about some of the greatest advancements but also introduced potential drawbacks. I grew up in an era where kids spent most of the time playing outside not spending hours staring at cell phone screens or days playing the latest greatest video game system. The favorite social media platforms of today did not exist yet. That gave us plenty of time to explore and enjoy the surrounding forest and experience all the amazing wildlife species it had to offer. From these experiences, I knew early on that I wanted to pursue a career working in the forest with wildlife. So, I am calling out to you, all my fellow wildlife professionals to invest some time in the youth and help ignite some curiosity in our profession. I have been fortunate enough to participate in youth outreach opportunities the last couple summers at a summer camp program called STEM Environmental En-

richment and Discovery (SEED) Program. This is an experience that gives middle school kids the opportunity to spend some time in nature and learn from several experts in different scientific fields ranging from Biology, Math, Engineering, Ecology, Hydrology. I partnered with Tad Theimer from Northern Arizona University (NAU) on a program called Nocturnal Animals. Over the course of the evening, we got to discuss our backgrounds/interest in wildlife and mention the potential for pursuing careers in the wildlife field.



Tad Theimer and Jackson Carranco introducing children to nocturnal animals. Photo courtesy Jackson Carranco

From the Board
Southwest Section
National News
State News
International News
Tribal News
Student News
Council News



Southwest Section Newsletter

Winter 2024 - Vol. 15 Issue #1



State News

Lias Hastings, Wildlife Specialist, USDA APHIS Wildlife

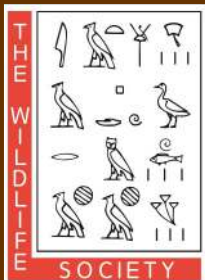
Services, Phoenix, AZ

Thanks to NAU's generosity, we got to showcase several nocturnal animal species from their mammalogy museum collection. One of the highlights of the night is leading a discussion about bats and giving the kids the opportunity to setup some mist nests and practice taking sock bats out of the nets. This all leads up to the grand finale when we capture some live bats and give the kids the opportunity to see these amazing little mammals up close. We have been fortunate enough to capture some cool species such as a red bat, hoary bat, silver-haired bat, big brown bat, and several different myotis species. I am hopeful that this exposure to many different wildlife species creates some excitement and allows the kids to recognize that this is a potential pathway that they can walk down later in life.



Jackson Carranco and Tad Theimer reaching youth through the SEED program. Photo courtesy Jackson Carranco

From the Board
Southwest Section
National News
State News
International News
Tribal News
Student News
Council News





Southwest Section News



From the Board
Southwest Section
National News
State News
International News
Tribal News
Student News
Council News

SWS Board & Committee Chairs

Current Board

President: **Kay Nicholson** kay.e.nicholson@jacobs.com 602-530-1605
President-Elect: **Nicole Tatman** Nicole.tatman@dgf.nm.gov 505-469-3966
Past President: **Whitney Gann** whitney.gann@tpwd.texas.gov
830-676-3413
Secretary: **Masa Ohnishi** masahiro.ohnishi@tamuk.edu
Treasurer: **Erika Nowak** Erika.Nowak@nau.edu 928-523-7760

Southwest Section Representative to TWS Council

Kathy Granillo kbirder55@gmail.com (505) 350-1007

Active Committees

Conservation Affairs:

Vacant Position

Geospatial Advisory Committee:

Leland Pierce leland.pierce@state.nm.us 505-476-8094
& **Ginny Seamster** virginia.seamster@state.nm.us 505-476-8111

Newsletter:

Jamie Killian jamie.killian@tpwd.texas.gov 254-566-5011
& **Anna Lad** annablairelad@gmail.com 254-702-1869

Women of Wildlife Committee:

Is now under TWS' Ethnic and Gender Diversity Working Group (EGDWG)

Don Yasuda Chair dyasudaTWS@gmail.com

Women of Wildlife Committee & EGDWG Liason

Kathy Granillo kbirder55@gmail.com 505-864-4021



Southwest Section News



Join!



Membership Application

Membership Fee \$5.00

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix
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Mailing Address			
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City	State	Zip Code	Country
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E-mail address	Phone
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Member Type (Please circle one): Student Regular Retired

Please include this form with your payment and mail to:

Erika Nowak, Treasurer TWS-SWS, Center for Adaptable Western Landscapes, Box 5694, Applied Research and Development Building, Suite 150, 1395 S. Knoles Dr, Flagstaff, AZ 86011

Membership benefits for the Southwest Section TWS

- SWS TWS Newsletter
- Scholarship opportunities
- Section-level meetings and conferences
- Strengthen your connections to national TWS
- Peer connections through Listserv and [Facebook](#)
- Website information at <http://wildlife.org/sw-section/about/>

From the Board
Southwest Section
National News
State News
International News
Tribal News
Student News
Council News



Current Members

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