

The Wildlife Society

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION



FEBRUARY 2024 VOLUME 66, NUMBER 1
KATHERINE EDWARDS, EDITOR

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

As we enter into a new year, our first order of business is to express our gratitude to our (now) Past-President **Kelly Douglass** and past Secretary-Treasurer **Lynn Lewis**. It was an honor to work with Kelly and Lynn as President-Elect, and I believe their service and dedication to SETWS has made us more relevant than ever. Let's also welcome and congratulate our new board members: President-Elect **Dr. Rachael Urbanek**, Professor in the Department of Environmental Sciences at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, and Secretary-Treasurer **Dr. Vanessa Lane**, Professor of Wildlife Ecology and Management in the School of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Thank you to the members of the SETWS nominating committee, SETWS members who accepted their nomination to serve as a board member, if elected, and to the SETWS members who voted during the election.

I would also like to thank the committee chairs and all committee members for your services to the Section last year. The important work that was accomplished would not be possible without you. As such, many of our committees would appreciate additional support – please contact me if you are interested in helping a specific committee, or learning more about opportunities to get involved.

Our annual SETWS members meeting was held in October in conjunction with the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) Annual Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas. We had a great turnout and covered a lot of the Section business conducted over the last year.

An astounding 63 abstracts were submitted to the Wildlife Technical Sessions, resulting in 17 posters and 46 oral presentations. Along with concurrent Wildlife Technical Sessions throughout the conference, there were eight incredible special symposia covering multiple facets of wildlife management and conservation. From the abstract submissions, 24 manuscripts were submitted for publication in the Journal of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (JSEAFWA)! As I wrap up my 5th year on the editorial board, **Dr. Ray Iglay** has graciously agreed to advance from the Assistant Editor role to Associate Editor, and **Dr. Andrea Darracq** has accepted the invitation to serve as the incoming Assistant Editor. In addition to their dedication, I would like to thank **Dr. Bob Gitzen** as our journal editor. Thank you everyone for your time, effort, and dedication to keeping the journal active and relevant.

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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

We have a lot planned for the next few years. We will finish revisions on our bylaws and update and finalize our Strategic Plan. Next year, we will host the third Wildlife and Forestry Field Course. We have received several grants to support the SETWS Wildlife and Forestry Field Techniques Course, which has made us more financially secure than before.

Lastly, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the Executive Board members with suggestions or ideas on how the Section can better serve its membership. Send us an email, give us a call, or find us at one of the many venues we will be attending this year. We would love to hear from you!

It is an incredible honor to serve as your President over the next two years, and I am looking forward to the great things our board and committee members will accomplish.

***Daniel Greene, President
Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society***



SECTION REPRESENTATIVE

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

This is a bit crazy for me, but as I'm writing this address I am looking out over a snow-covered landscape. I think I had 12-14 inches of snow at my house and then there was freezing rain and single digit temperatures. Which as you can imagine shut everything down. I am sure many of you experienced the same arctic blast. Been hard to just sit back and enjoy the beautiful scenery and not worry about my to-do list. But something we should all embrace – the beauty around us.

Lots going on with TWS. I enjoyed catching up with many of you in Louisville. The final number in attendance was around 2,000. There was a great plenary session on communicating science and dealing with mistrust. We need to build trust and relationships in our communities and share the great work we do for wildlife conservation. It was a great meeting and always amazed at how much I see and learn. **Bob Lanka** took over as our new President of TWS. Executive leadership is passionate about shared governance and has been working hard to move TWS forward with the work on the Strategic Plan. I appreciate all of you who took the survey, were members of focus groups, and served on the Strategic Planning Committee. Please thank **Mike Mengak** who was our SE representative on the committee. I have been amazed at all the input received and summarized. Most of TWS work the next couple of months will be to finalize the plan and start work on implementation.

I am always impressed with the amount of work the Government Affairs staff do behind the scenes. They are very active with congressional offices and engagement with governmental and nonprofit agencies to prioritize wildlife issues. For example, TWS is working hard to make sure our wildlife coop units are adequately funded to complete their mission.

A lot of work behind the scenes is to make our TWS publications more relevant and competitive with other outlets in today's market. If you have comments/suggestions, be glad to listen and bring forward to the Council Publications Committee. **Paul Krausman** will be stepping down from his editorial position from the Journal of Wildlife Management. At the March Council meeting, a new Editor in Chief will be discussed and voted on for the upcoming year. Hope everyone has had a chance to look at the new TWS website. Hopefully the revisions will help you search for what you need.

Other areas where I would love feedback is on TWS Certification. We are looking to see how it could be more effective for applicants and more useful for employers. Are current requirements keeping up with all the needs of the profession? How can we make requirements more inclusive but at the same time make sure we keep what makes certification special?

As you can see there are many ways for you to be involved and provide input to our professional society. I would love to talk with you whenever you have a chance and want to share your thoughts. All the best and enjoy the beauty in your area!

Lisa Muller, Southeastern Section Representative to TWS Council



COMMITTEE REPORTS

C.W. WATSON AWARD COMMITTEE

C.W. Watson Award

The C.W. Watson Award is the most prestigious award given in the Southeast and is presented to the career individual who, in the opinion of the Award Committee, has made the greatest contribution to wildlife or fish conservation during the previous year or years. Consideration includes research, administration, law enforcement, I&E, wildlife management, fish management, and includes teachers, professionals, and students. This award is presented jointly by the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society, and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The committee named **Dr. Robert J. Warren** as recipient of the 2023 C.W. Watson Award at the 77th annual SEAFWA conference, held in October (more on pp. 26-27 of this newsletter).

Committee Chair (SETWS):
Lisa Muller, lmuller@utk.edu

DEER COMMITTEE

Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting

The 47th Annual Meeting of the Southeast Deer Study Group was hosted by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV, from February 11-14, 2024. More information about the SEDSG meeting's activities and award recipients will be shared in the May newsletter.

Committee Chair: Steve Shea
sheawildlife@gmail.com

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Wildlife Outstanding Technical Paper Award

Committee members: **Lora Smith** (Jones Center at Ichauway), **Micah Perkins** (Owensboro Tech), and **Aubrey Greene** (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission)

The committee reviewed the 7 wildlife papers published in the 2023 Proceedings and selected the paper by **Beau A. Bauer, Richard M. Kaminski, Patrick D. Gerard, Ernie P. Wiggers, and J. Drew Lanham** titled *Aquatic Biomass in Coastal South Carolina Impoundments Managed for Waterfowl* for the SEAFWA 2023 Outstanding Technical Paper Award.

Committee Chair: Lora Smith
lora.smith@jonesctr.org

MINORITIES IN NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

NO NEWS REPORTED



COMMITTEE REPORTS

STUDENT AWARDS COMMITTEE

Student presentations and posters in the Wildlife Technical Sessions at the 77th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Corpus Christi, TX, were evaluated for the Best Student Presentation Award and the Best Student Poster Award.

Student Presentation Award

There were 24 student oral presentations at SEAFWA. The winning presentation was given by **Lindsey M. Phillips** from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville for her talk entitled, “Wild Turkey Hunter Satisfaction and Behavior, and the Effects of COVID-19 on Hunter Behavior in Tennessee”. She will receive a monetary award and will be publicly recognized at the SEAFWA banquet in Augusta, GA, in October 2024.

Student Poster Award

There were 13 student posters presented at SEAFWA. **Miriam Boucher** from Clemson University received the award for her poster entitled, “Creation and Deployment of a Novel Tool for Crocodylian Snout Opening”. She will receive a monetary award and will be publicly recognized at the SEAFWA banquet in Augusta, GA, in October 2024.



Student Chapter Award

Student chapters in the SETWS were evaluated from an overall application package including professionalism and involvement in research, education, management, stewardship, and outreach to name a few categories. The University of Tennessee at Knoxville Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society was recognized at the SEAFWA banquet in Corpus Christi, TX, as the Student Chapter of the Year for their outstanding service to their members and SETWS.

Committee Chair: Andy Madison
amadison@uu.edu

TWS Southeastern Student Wildlife Conclave

The Murray State University Student Chapter of TWS will host the 2024 TWS Southeastern Student Wildlife Conclave March 14-16, 2024.

Students and faculty from wildlife programs at colleges and universities throughout the Southeast will gather for three days of competitions and learning opportunities. The Southeastern Wildlife Conclave provides college students with valuable hands-on training in wildlife management and conservation, and networking opportunities with wildlife professionals. Some activities include field trips, workshops (i.e., telemetry, trapping, chemical immobilization, mist-netting), field competitions, local tours, game-calling competitions, quiz bowls, banquets, photography contests, and guest speakers.

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ALABAMA



Alabama Chapter TWS

A new year means a thankful and heartfelt farewell to some board members and a warm welcome to new ones. We would like to thank 2023 board member, **Ryan Mitchell**, for his guidance and leadership throughout the last two years. We would also like to welcome a new at-large member, **Logan McCord**, to the board. We look forward to seeing what your experience and insight will bring to the chapter!



2023 Alabama Chapter of The Wildlife Society Board at their Annual Meeting in August 2023. Left to right: **Allison Cochran, Ryan Mitchell, Mercedes Maddox, Janna Willoughby, Derek Colbert, Jeff Baker.**

New board member highlight!

Logan McCord is a wildlife biologist with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, who oversees the Charles D. Kelley-Autauga WMA and the William R. Ireland-Cahaba

River WMA. Logan has worked with ADCNR for 5 years. He graduated from Auburn University with a degree in Wildlife Management and Ecology. While at Auburn, he developed a passion for habitat restoration using prescribed burning. He has been an ACTWS member for 4 years and looks forward to serving the chapter.



Alabama Chapter Members at TWS Conference

With the 2023 TWS Conference being hosted in the Southeastern Section, many of our members could attend, learn, and network with wildlifers worldwide. The vastness of the conference, coupled with the quick pace of the city, left every moment occupied with excitement and wishing you could clone yourself to attend more talks (and restaurants). Louisville was a fantastic city to host the meeting, and TWS staff and volunteers did an incredible job throughout the week. While being surrounded by over 2,000 people at a conference can easily become overwhelming, finding and being together with some fellow Alabamians was nice. Our state was well represented, and I am proud of our members who presented their research.

Mercedes Maddox, ACTWS Chapter President



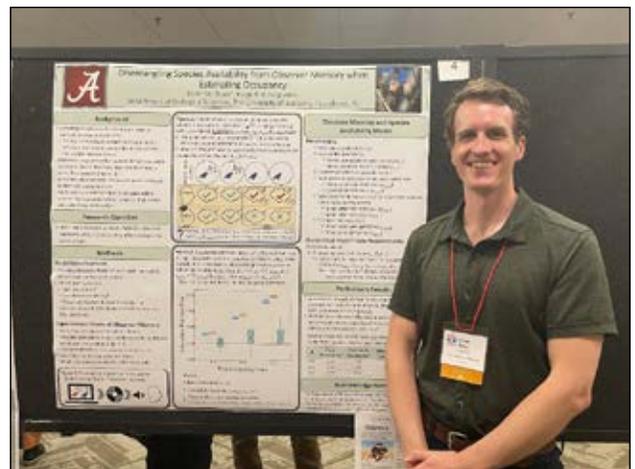
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Impromptu Alabama Meet-up at the TWS Annual Conference, Louisville, KY.



President, **Mercedes Maddox**, and Past-President, **Allison Cochran**, at the TWS Annual Conference.



Kevin Shaw, PhD Candidate at the University of Alabama, presented on his research “Disentangling Species Availability from Observer Memory when Estimating Occupancy.”



Mercedes Maddox (left) was an invited speaker for the “Women at Work: Stories of Wildlife Research and Management” symposium, which was organized by Women of Wildlife. She presented on “Summary of Long-term Monitoring of Golden Eagles in Alabama.”

Paige Ferguson, University of Alabama, presented on “Rapid, Recurring, Structured Survey vs Bioblitz for Generating Biodiversity Data.”

Wesley Anderson, Alabama Extension, presented on “The Marble Bowl – Gamifying Citizen Science in Alabama.”

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Hannah Henry, an Auburn University Master's Student, presented on "Using Social Science to Manage Human-Wildlife Conflict of Bottlenose Dolphins in the Cetacean Tourism Industry in Mobile Bay, Alabama."

Gina Lamka, Ph.D. student at Auburn University, presented on "Eco-evolutionary Models of Population Decline: How and When Can We Use Connectivity to Support and Restore Populations on the Brink of Extirpation."



Olivia Sciandra, Masters Student at Auburn University, presented "Alabama Homeowners' Tolerance and Management of Nine-Banded Armadillos."



Andrea Miranda, PhD Student at Auburn University, presented her research, "Analysis of the Population Genetics of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd Located in Southwest Alaska."



SHELL-E-BRATE WILD TURTLE WEEK!

JUNE 10-14, 2024

PARC PARTNERS
AMPHIBIAN AND REPTILE CONSERVATION

PARCPLACE.ORG/WILD-TURTLE-WEEK/

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ACTWS Member Awarded at TWS Conference

Auburn University Master's student **Hannah Henry** was awarded the Ronald F. Labisky Graduate Fellowship in Wildlife Policy. This award encourages early-career students to understand, formulate, and recommend wildlife policy on critical conservation issues. Hannah graduated from the University of Florida in 2022 with a B.S. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. During her undergraduate studies, she worked for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), performing year-round environmental education programming and instructing firearm/hunter safety training across the state. Hannah spent the summer of 2022 in the Caribbean archipelago of St. Vincent and the Grenadines researching endangered parrot and cetacean conservation with the national forestry department. Hannah's MS research will focus on the human dimensions of marine wildlife on the Alabama coast as a model for gulf-wide management.

U.S. Forest Service

The National Forests in Alabama would like to congratulate and welcome the following employees joining our team as wildlife biologists in 2024: **Lauren Wright** (Conecuh Ranger District), **Greg Bushey** (Bankhead Ranger District), and **Bobby Cochran** (Oakmulgee Ranger District). We look forward to the knowledge and skill sets they bring to wildlife management throughout Alabama!

We would also like to congratulate **Allison Cochran** on accepting her new position as a Partnership Coordinator with the National Forests in Alabama. Thank you for your ~20 years of service as the District Wildlife Biologist on the Bankhead Ranger District!

Derek Colbert
derek.s.colbert@usda.gov



Hannah Henry (middle) received the Ronald F. Labisky Graduate Fellowship in Wildlife Policy award. She was presented the award at the 2023 TWS Annual Conference by **Ed Arnett**, TWS Chief Executive Officer, and **Don Yasuda**, TWS Immediate Past-President.

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ARKANSAS



Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

Matt Mourot has been selected as the Wildlife Management Division's new Region 5 Supervisor covering primarily the Ouachita Mountains and the Arkansas River Valley from Little Rock to Fort Smith. **Randy Brents** has been hired as the Assistant Chief and **Lee Chambers** has been hired as a Biologist II in the Private Lands Habitat Division. **Landon Griffith**, **William Guy**, and **Lane Smith** have been hired as Biological Technician Is in the Wildlife Management Division's Region 2 in east-central Arkansas. **Karen Rowe**, Migratory Bird Program Coordinator, was recently presented with a certificate for 40 years of service to the Commission.

U.S. Department of Agriculture APHIS-Wildlife Services

Jessie Rogers has been hired as part of a program in which this agency is taking on responsibility for responding to most nuisance wildlife complaints in the state from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

University of Arkansas

In November, **Mike Shaw** successfully defended his thesis on the habitat associations of Plains Spotted Skunk and landcover occupancy models of the Gray Fox in the southeastern plains region in Arkansas.

Blake Sasse, blake.sasse@agfc.ar.gov

FLORIDA



Florida Chapter TWS 2024 Spring Meeting

The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society will hold its annual Spring Meeting at the Westin Cape Coral Resort at Marina Village, Cape Coral, Florida, April 24-26, 2024. This year's theme is "Restoring Balance: Integrating Invasive Species Management and Native Wildlife Conservation." The Meeting will include a symposium, business meeting, networking socials, student interaction activities, keynote speakers, technical sessions, poster session, banquet dinner, awards ceremony, a field trip, and an invasive species workshop on Friday.

This meeting provides an excellent opportunity for students and professionals working on wildlife research or habitat management in Florida to present results of recent research, talk about ongoing monitoring efforts, discuss collaborations, and share ideas. A symposium on Wednesday afternoon will include presentations on the theme: Success Stories from Invasive Species Management. Our overall meeting theme relates to invasive species, but all types of presentations are welcome to be submitted. We will have tracks on research and tracks on management.

Students will have special incentives to attend, such as reduced registration and lodging, interactive activities, a chance to win awards for best student presenter and poster, as well as networking opportunities throughout. Oral presentations and posters dealing with any wildlife-related topic are encouraged, including ecology,



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economics, management, restoration, risk assessment, policy and regulation, evolutionary biology, and interdisciplinary projects. Abstracts will be edited and included in a meeting program booklet; proceedings will not be published.

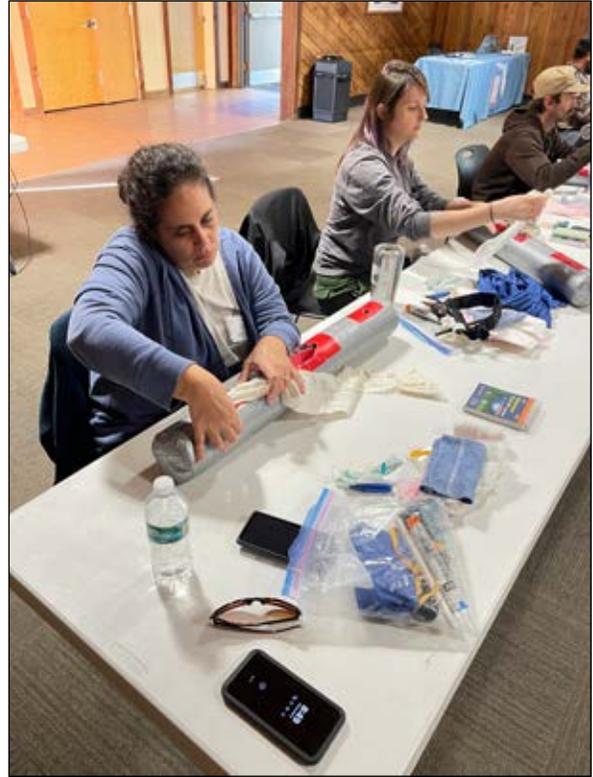
Larame Ferry, larame.ferry@gmail.com

Wilderness First Aid Training at Wekiva Springs State Park: A Resounding Success!

We're thrilled to share the exciting news that The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society recently hosted a Wilderness First Aid Training at the picturesque Wekiva Springs State Park. The event, held in early December, brought together passionate individuals dedicated to preserving our natural habitats while equipping them with essential life-saving skills.

Over the course of two days, 17 enthusiastic participants delved into a comprehensive training program, earning not one, but three vital certifications. The certifications obtained included Wilderness First Aid, Basic First Aid CPR & AED, and Stop the Bleed – a testament to the commitment of those involved in ensuring the safety and well-being of both humans and wildlife in the great outdoors.

The training covered a wide range of crucial topics, empowering attendees with the knowledge and skills necessary to handle emergencies in remote and challenging environments. Participants learned how to treat heat strokes, pack wounds, attend to broken bones and sprains, and handle severe allergic reactions, among other essential skills. The emphasis was on practical, hands-on learning, providing a unique opportunity to apply these skills in simulated emergency situations.



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One of the key takeaways from the training was the importance of improvisation in emergency situations. Attendees discovered how to use the resources available in the wilderness to address medical emergencies effectively. Learning to adapt and make the most of what's at hand can make a significant difference in critical situations, especially in environments where standard medical assistance may not be readily accessible.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the 17 individuals who successfully completed the training and obtained these valuable certifications. Their dedication to enhancing their capabilities in the field of wilderness first aid is commendable and reflects a shared commitment to the well-being of our natural world.

As wildlife biologists and environmentalists, being equipped with these skills adds an extra layer of preparedness when working in the field. The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society is proud to contribute to the development of a community that values safety, preparedness, and a deep understanding of the intricacies of working in diverse ecosystems.

Thank you to all who participated, and we look forward to continuing our shared mission of safeguarding our environment and its inhabitants.

Wishing you safe and successful adventures in the field!

Maryann Krisovitch, Maryann@FLTWS.org



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GEORGIA

NO NEWS REPORTED



KENTUCKY

NO NEWS REPORTED



LOUISIANA

NO NEWS REPORTED



MARYLAND/DELAWARE

NO NEWS REPORTED



MISSISSIPPI

NO NEWS REPORTED



Lori/Pixabay

SAVE THE DATE!
78th Annual SEAFWA Conference
OCTOBER 12-16, 2024 | Augusta, Georgia
Host: Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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, and private wildlife research groups, fisheries and wildlife scientists, agency enforcement personnel, and other natural resource-related organizations.

Visit <https://seafwa.org/conference/2024> for more information.

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NORTH CAROLINA



North Carolina

Please join your fellow wildlife professionals at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain, April 2-4, 2024! This year's theme is 'Partnerships in Habitat Conservation for At-risk Species'. Mark your calendars and plan for an engaging conference at a beautiful location with fun social activities and auctions! Candidates have been selected for the 2024 officer elections. Come show your support by voting at the upcoming Annual Meeting! A raffle will be held on April 3, 2024, at the Annual Meeting. This year's prize is a Tundra 45 Yeti Cooler! Anyone can win so reach out to North Carolina Chapter Members to get your tickets!

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

For additional news and upcoming events, check out our newsletter (NC Wildlifer) on the Chapter website (www.nctws.org/wordpress/).

Kelsey Pistner, Kelsey.pistner@ncwildlife.org

North Carolina – UNCW Student Chapter

The UNCW Seahawk Wildlife Society has just recently elected a new board for the upcoming year. **Olivia Trahan** was elected as President, **Sarah Stevens** as Vice President, **Ethan Williams** as Secretary, and **Madison John** as Treasurer.

President **Olivia Trahan** is a junior from Garner, NC. She is majoring in Biology, with a Pre-Veterinary Science concentration with plans to pursue a career as a wildlife and large animal veterinarian. She joined UNCW SWS her freshman year and served last year as Secretary.

Vice-President **Sarah Stevens** is a junior from a rural town in New York, majoring in Environmental Science. She is also a peer educator for the UNCW Office of Sustainability, intern at the Cape Fear Bird Observatory, and research assistant in a molecular genetics lab which focuses on species of conservation concern. She is thrilled to be a part of this team and help create meaningful opportunities for fellow TWS members.

Secretary **Ethan Williams** is a freshman from Raleigh, NC. He is a double major in Biology and Environmental Science and plans to pursue a career as a Wildlife Biologist. A fun fact about Ethan is that he is a wildlife and nature photographer.

Treasurer **Madison John** is a junior majoring in Biology, with a minor in Environmental Science and Business. She joined the UNCW SWS last semester and was given so many opportunities to be introduced to a variety of different aspects of environmental science and jobs in the wildlife field. Ever since she joined, she knew she wanted to have a more hands-on role. She is excited for the upcoming semester.

Olivia Trahan, UNCW Student Chapter

OKLAHOMA



NO NEWS REPORTED



Peter Paplanus/FLICKR

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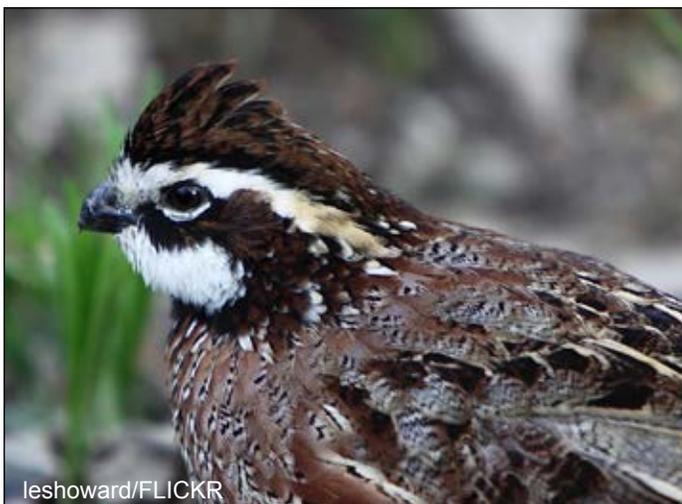
SOUTH CAROLINA



South Carolina Chapter TWS

The South Carolina Chapter of TWS held its annual meeting on October 25, 2023, at the Clemson Sandhills REC, Columbia, SC. Retired South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) biologist **Mark Bara** gave a stirring presentation about the importance of being a Certified Wildlife Biologist® in today's workplace. The morning session was themed "Conservation Successes" and had a diverse array of speakers from state and federal agencies, private NGO's, consultants, and the Catawba Indian Nation. The afternoon session featured student presentations from Clemson University, University of Georgia and University of South Carolina-Aiken. Awards were presented to **Judy Barnes** (SCDNR retired, Lifetime Achievement Award), **Jennifer Kindle** (SCDNR, Professional Wildlife Management Award), and **Tucker Cribb** (Clemson University, Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award).

Beau Bauer, CWB®
Nemours Wildlife Foundation
President, South Carolina Chapter of TWS



leshoward/FLICKR

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

Amy Tegeler received the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative's Fire Bird Conservation Award. Amy serves as SCDNR's Bird Conservation Coordinator and was instrumental in setting up the bobwhite and non-game bird species monitoring for the South Carolina Bobwhite Initiative (SCBI) monitoring of our 5 focal areas. This monitoring is critical to documenting the success of SCBI habitat restoration efforts. In addition to leading the Monitoring Subcommittee for the SCBI, she assists with an automatic recording unit (ARU) monitoring project in collaboration with researchers from New York.

Greg Lucas
SCDNR, Public Information Officer

Clemson University Wildlife Biologist Wins Young Alumni Award

Mallory Maher, CWB®, (BS in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology 2012, MS Agricultural Education 2015, MS Wildlife and Fisheries Biology 2023) was awarded the 2023 College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences (CAFLS) Young Alumni Award. Maher works for the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service as a 4-H Extension Agent and has served on the Women's Alumni Council, serves as a UPIC-Intern Mentor for CAFLS students, serves on the National Wildlife Habitat Education Program committee, and regularly speaks with wildlife and fisheries classes, agriculture education and various other CAFLS classes about possible career opportunities.

Steven Bradley, Clemson University College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences

Uncovering Arthropods Living on Appalachian Mountain Sky Islands

To protect some of the oldest inhabitants of the Appalachian Mountains, Clemson University scientists are exploring the diversity of high-elevation arthropods at risk from climate change affecting the forests these creatures call home. The team, led by Clemson University entomologist **Michael Caterino**, is studying arthropods that live in leaf litter on mountaintops in the Appalachians. Clemson post-doc **Ernesto Recuero** and doctoral students **Patricia Wooden** and **Adam Haberski** are also involved in the study, which began in July 2019.

Leaf litter on Appalachian Mountain forest floors is home to tiny arthropods that help keep mountain forests healthy. “There is a lot of unknown diversity in the arthropod world,” said Caterino, the John and Suzanne Morse Endowed Chair of Arthropod Biodiversity. “Many of these arthropods can’t fly and are confined to spruce-fir forests, which face numerous threats. A lack of information about native species diversity hinders their conservation.”

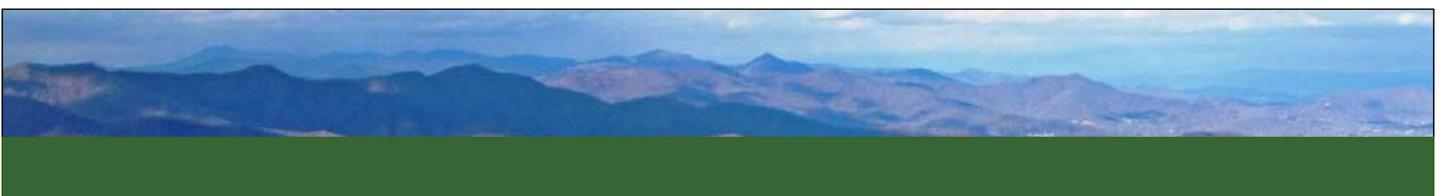
The scientists are studying arthropods at 22 of the highest points in the southern Appalachian Mountains. By sorting leaf litter and documenting arthropods found, they can determine species diversity and uniqueness to highlight their role in ecosystem health. “We need to know what’s there and what is required to protect them for as long as we can,” Caterino said. “This study allows us to fill in knowledge and determine what programs should be implemented to conserve their populations.”

In the southern Appalachian Mountains, the highest elevations, above 1,500 m (5,000 ft), reveal a sky-island forest community dominated by red spruce and Fraser fir. These forests are different from the predominantly deciduous broadleaf forests of lower elevations. The higher elevations allow for cooler, moister environmental conditions not found anywhere else in the southeastern United States. Climate change is producing warmer temperatures, threatening these forests that are home to many arthropod species. Understanding the diversity and ecological roles of arthropod communities is crucial to preserving the ecosystem.

Denise Attaway, Clemson University College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Outbreak in Wood Ducks

In December, the SCDNR and the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) received numerous calls concerning an apparent die-off of Wood Ducks in waterfowl impoundments and river swamps along the South Carolina coast. Preliminary testing indicates two of these events can be attributed to highly pathogenic Eurasian H5 avian influenza (HPAI). Results are pending from additional die-off locations. Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza was first detected in the United States in January 2022 in two wild ducks harvested by a hunter in Colleton County, South Carolina, and one wild duck in Hyde County, North Carolina. Prior to these findings, HPAI had not been detected in a wild bird in the United States since 2016. Following the detection of HPAI in early 2022, portions of the United States experienced large die-off events of snow geese and eiders. “Since 2022, the greatest impact on



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wild birds in South Carolina has been seen in black vultures and bald eagles," said **Molly Kneece**, SCDNR state waterfowl biologist. "Up to this point, we had not experienced any noticeable die-offs of waterfowl species in South Carolina. These recently reported wood duck die-offs seem to be localized but do have potential to spread into other counties and to other waterfowl species given the social and migratory behaviors of wood ducks."

Greg Lucas; Public Information Officer, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

Another Above Average Nesting Season for Sea Turtles

South Carolina's sea turtle nesting season officially concluded in November with a total of 6,628 nests for the state – a higher than average year that was tempered by losses from tropical storm Idalia, high tides and predators. Two loggerhead sea turtle nests kicked off the season on May 2, 2023, and nesting peaked in the first full week of July. Loggerheads lay the vast majority of the sea turtle nests in South Carolina, but 2023 also saw 19 green and two Kemp's ridley sea turtle nests. In late August, Idalia moved into

South Carolina as a tropical storm and grazed the southern coastline. "Idalia was a trifecta of water issues," said South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) biologist **Michelle Pate**, who oversees the agency's nest protection program. "We had a supermoon, king tide and tropical storm all at once." The tide, rain and storm surge flooded many coastal beaches, washing away sea turtle nests and habitat in the process. All told, SCDNR biologists estimate 600 nests drowned or washed away due to Idalia.

Sea turtle nest numbers have been trending upward not just in South Carolina but across the southeastern coast in the past decade. The 2019 season marked an all-time high for the state with 8,792 nests, followed by 5,562 (2020), 5,638 (2021) and 7,968 (2022) nests.

Greg Lucas; Public Information Officer, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources



TENNESSEE



NO NEWS REPORTED

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VIRGINIA



Virginia Chapter TWS

The Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society (VATWS) completed the second season of our Fall seminar series from September through November. This series features monthly talks from natural resource professionals around the country speaking on a variety of topics.

In August, we welcomed **Dr. Abigail Lynch** and **Dr. Laura Thompson** of the USGS National Climate Adaptation Science Center speaking on Resist-Accept-Direct (RAD) framework for ecosystem transformations. In October, we heard from **Jeff Trollinger** from the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources discuss his experiences building relationships with the sovereign nations of Virginia. Our final speaker of the series was **Dr. Marc Stern** from the Virginia Tech Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation

introducing his work on working with diverse stakeholders by building and nurturing trust relationships.

We greatly appreciate all of our speakers for their time and expertise, and are looking for speakers to engage for our 2024 series. Anyone interested in reviewing the talks can do so through the VATWS YouTube channel, or through our chapter website at <http://www.wildlife.org/virginia>.

We are also wrapping up the final details on our 2024 Annual Meeting to be held March 19-21, 2024 at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Front Royal. Attendees will be able to take a tour of this unique facility in addition to speakers, posters, and the annual chapter meeting. All information will be available via the annual meeting website (<http://vatwsannualmeeting.info>). For more information on the meeting, or any questions, please contact President **Mike Fies** (fiesmk@yahoo.com).

Scott Klopfer, sklopfer@vt.edu

TWS CONSERVATION AFFAIRS NETWORK

The Wildlife Society's [Conservation Affairs Network](#) (CAN) supports communication, collaboration, and coordination on policy engagement across our organization and participating chapters, sections, and working groups. Establishing better connections among the individual units of TWS is part of a larger strategic effort that will propel our entire Society into the future as a stronger organization and make each of us more effective at achieving our mission. Wildlife professionals now have an effective method for bringing their valuable and crucial perspectives into the policy process, to the betterment of wildlife conservation.

The Conservation Affairs Network communicates, in part, through a newsletter distributed to all Section and Chapter Conservation Affairs Committees. The CAN newsletter provides a structured venue for Conservation Affairs Committees (CAC) and interested TWS members to learn about various policy issues occurring at local, regional, and national levels and opportunities for wildlife professionals to engage with those issues.

STATE REPORTS

DUCKS UNLIMITED

\$6.25 million Coastal Resiliency Project Coming to Lafourche Parish

Ducks Unlimited Awarded Monumental National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant

Ducks Unlimited was recently [awarded](#) \$6.25 million from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to construct living shorelines and marsh terraces in Lafourche Parish. Grant support will be combined with \$300,000 in match funds provided by Lafourche Parish Government, ConocoPhillips, and Apache Louisiana Minerals for a total investment of \$6,551,900 for the conservation project. The grants were awarded through the National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF), a partnership between NFWF, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of Defense, Shell USA, TransRe, SalesForce and Oxy.

The conservation organization will facilitate the construction of 10,000 linear feet of living shoreline and 88,650 linear feet of marsh terraces along Highway 1.

“Projects of this nature provide numerous benefits to both people and wildlife,” said **Scott Graham**, Ducks Unlimited Regional Biologist. “Terracing is effective at reducing wave energy, thereby increasing water quality through reduced turbidity, allowing sunlight for submerged aquatic vegetation to establish. This vegetation then provides habitat for fish and other wildlife.” Terraces provide storm surge protection, help prevent shoreline erosion rates, and provide habitat for waterfowl and other marsh birds.



Lafourche Parish. Photo Credit: Scott Graham

Louisiana’s coastal wetlands are critical natural resources and an economic driver for the region. The state’s coastal wetlands protect local communities and nationally important energy infrastructure from storm events; provide nursery grounds for fish and shellfish to support a \$2.4 billion seafood industry; sustain a \$12.2 billion outdoor recreation economy; and provide breeding, migrating and wintering habitat for millions of waterfowl and other birds. With the highest coastal wetland loss rate of any state in the U.S., Louisiana has lost over 1.2 million acres of coastal wetlands since the 1930s and could lose the same amount or more over the next 50 years without adequate restoration efforts.

A full list of projects receiving funding can be [found here](#).

For more information, visit www.ducks.org, and be sure to follow DU’s Twitter feed – @DucksUnlimited and @DUConserve – to get the most up-to-date news from Ducks Unlimited.

Emily Austin, eaustin@ducks.org



BUSINESS

Southeastern Section TWS Officer Election Results

This past fall, the Southeastern Section held elections for the officer positions of President-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer. We wish to thank all the candidates for accepting their nomination for the SETWS board positions and to our members who cast their votes. This year, we had four outstanding candidates that accepted nominations. For President-Elect, **Dr. Rachael Urbanek**, and **Dr. Travis DeVault**. And, for Secretary-Treasurer, **Dr. Kristine Evans**, and **Dr. Vanessa Lane**.

Please join us in congratulating and welcoming our new board members, President-Elect: **Dr. Rachael Urbanek**, and Secretary-Treasurer: **Dr. Vanessa Lane**. Rachel and Vanessa began their positions on January 1 with incoming President **Dan Greene**, and Past-President **Kelly Douglass**.



Dr. Rachael Urbanek



Dr. Vanessa Lane

SETWS Members Meeting

The annual fall members meeting of the Southeastern Section was held on October 17, 2023 during the SEAFWA Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas. The meeting was well attended, both in person and with virtual attendees. Topics covered included a welcome from President **Kelly Douglass**, report from Secretary-Treasurer **Lynn Lewis**, report from Newsletter Editor/Webmaster **Dr. Katie Edwards**, and summaries of SETWS committees' activities during 2023. Dr. Katie Edwards was presented with a plaque recognizing her 15 years of service to the Southeastern Section (right). Members also received updates from the Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and North Carolina State Chapters, Minorities in Natural Resources Conservation (SEAFWA) Committee, and student chapters at Oklahoma State University, University of Georgia, and University of Tennessee at Martin. Lastly, members were given an open forum to discuss matters of importance with the Executive Board.



BUSINESS

SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT

January - December 2023

Submitted by: Lynn Lewis, SE Section Secretary-Treasurer

Beginning Balance (01/01/23)	\$39,247.53
Deposits	\$30,988.57
Debits (including outstanding checks)	\$33,371.77
Outstanding Checks	\$500.00
Ending Balance (12/31/23)	\$36,864.33
SETWS Fur Resources Committee Balance	\$6,755.78
SETWS Available Balance	\$27,582.55

Deposits

Item	Amount
TWS 4th Quarter (October-December) 2022 Dues	\$2,526.00
TWS 1st Quarter (Jan-Mar) 2023 Dues	\$1,354.00
TWS 2nd Quarter (April-June) 2023 Dues	\$874.00
TWS 3rd Quarter (Jul-September) 2023 Dues	\$962.00
2023 Field Course Registrations	\$19,750.00
SETWS Fur Resources Committee Registrations	\$4,022.57
America Online Giving	\$1,500.00
Total Deposits	\$30,988.57

Debits

Item	Amount
SETWS Fur Resources Committee Meeting	\$418.31
TWS OiTF Support	\$1,000.00
2024 Conclave	\$1,000.00
Newsletter/Website Support	\$1,500.00
Stamps	\$26.75
2022 Field Course (Castleton University)	\$6,000.00
2023 Field Course	\$22,472.83
Awards, Plaques, and Postage	\$950.88
Banking Fees	\$3.00
Total Debits	\$33,371.77

BUSINESS

2024 Southeastern Section Officers

President

Dr. Daniel Greene, CWB®

Wildlife Scientist, Environmental
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President-Elect

Dr. Rachael E. Urbanek, CWB®

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Southeastern Section Representative

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Immediate Past-President

Kelly Douglass, CWB®

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Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. Vanessa R. Lane, CWB®

Associate Professor of Wildlife Ecology
and Management
School of Agriculture and Natural Resources
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
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Tifton, GA, USA 31793
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vlane@abac.edu



Michael Oberman/Flickr

NOMINATIONS

Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society Student Chapter of the Year Contest

The SETWS annually presents the Student Chapter of the Year Award to encourage and recognize exceptional achievements by Student Chapters in the Southeastern Section. This award is normally presented at the Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Winning chapters receive a certificate and monetary award. All student chapters in the Southeastern Section are invited to compete in a contest for the award by completing the application form, which can be obtained from the SETWS Awards Committee Chairperson, **Andy Madison** (amadison@uu.edu). The deadline to submit an application is **May 1, 2024**. Student Chapters are encouraged to complete and submit the application any time during the Spring 2024 semester. Please note that this is a separate award and application from the national TWS.



Toby Gray/Flickr

NOMINATIONS

TWS Awards

The Wildlife Society's Awards Program annually honors professional excellence, recognizes outstanding achievement and highlights contributions to wildlife science and management. Through the years many new awards have been established to recognize accomplishments in wildlife publications, management, science and professionalism. Special recognition by The Wildlife Society promotes the professional growth of our members, provides our membership with role models and strengthens the image of our membership in the eyes of their peers, employers, our leadership and society. We encourage members to recognize the contributions of their peers by participating in the nomination process. Detailed nomination instructions and criteria can be found at <https://wildlife.org/awards/>

All award nominations are due by May 1, 2024, unless otherwise noted:
Wildlife Publication Awards Nominations due March 1, 2024

LIST OF TWS AWARDS

Education Awards

Conservation Education Award
Donald H. Rusch Memorial Game Bird Research Scholarship
Excellence in Wildlife Education Award
Ronald F. Labisky Graduate Fellowship in Wildlife Policy

Professional Achievement Awards

Aldo Leopold Memorial Award
Caesar Kleberg Award For Excellence in Applied Wildlife Research
Diversity Award
Jay N. "Ding" Darling Award for Wildlife Stewardship Through Art
Jim McDonough Award
Special Recognition Service Award
The Wildlife Professional Best Contributed Article Award
Wildlife Publication Awards
Wildlife Restoration Awards

Service Awards

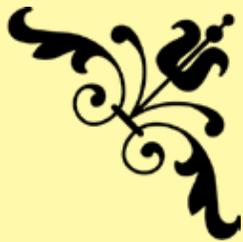
Chapter of the Year Award
Distinguished Service Awards
Honorary Membership
Student Chapter Advisor of the Year
Student Chapter of the Year Award
W.L. McAtee and G.V. Burger Award for Outstanding Service as an Associate Editor
TWS Fellows Award



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION



Awards 2023



C.W. Watson Award (SEAFWA)

Robert Warren, University of Georgia (retired Professor Emeritus)

SEAFWA Publication of the Year (2023)

Beau A. Bauer, Richard M. Kaminski, Patrick D. Gerard, Ernie P. Wiggers, and J. Drew Lanham. Aquatic biomass in coastal South Carolina impoundments managed for waterfowl. *Journal of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies* 10:85-91.

SEAFWA Best Student Presentation

Lindsey M. Phillips, University of Tennessee-Knoxville
Wild turkey hunter satisfaction and behavior, and the effects of COVID-19 on hunter behavior in Tennessee

SEAFWA Best Student Poster

Miriam Boucher, Clemson University
Creation and deployment of a novel tool for crocodylian snout opening

SETWS Student Chapter of the Year

University of Tennessee-Knoxville Student Chapter

SEAFWA MINRC Awards

Silver- Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries, Gold- South Carolina DNR
Gold- Oklahoma Dept. of Wildlife Conservation

SEAFWA Wildlife Biologist of the Year

Gary Costanzo, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

SEAFWA Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

Game Warden Riley Willman, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

SEAFWA Special Recognition Award

Amy Silvano, Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
Betsy York, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

TWS Fellow

Ray Iglay, Mississippi State University

TWS Student Chapter Advisor of the Year

Robert Brewer, Cleveland State Community College

TWS Ronald F. Labisky Graduate Fellowship in Wildlife Policy

Hannah Henry, Auburn University

TWS Wildlife Restoration Award-Wildlife Management

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

77th Annual Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Conference

Several Southeastern Section TWS Members were recognized during the 77th Annual Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Conference held in Corpus Christi, TX in October.



The 2023 Outstanding Paper Award for the Wildlife Technical Session was awarded to **Beau A. Bauer, Richard M. Kaminski, Patrick D. Gerard, Ernie P. Wiggers, and J. Drew Lanham** for their paper entitled “Aquatic Biomass in Coastal South Carolina Impoundments Managed for Waterfowl.” Photo credit: **Chase Fountain, TPWD.**



The University of Tennessee-Knoxville Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society was recognized at the SEAFWA banquet as the Student Chapter of the Year for their outstanding service to their members and SETWS. Photo credit: **Chase Fountain, TPWD.**



Cindy L. Von Haugg from Clemson University was recognized for the 2022 student poster award at the SEAFWA banquet. Her poster was entitled, “Relative Abundance of Natural Cavities Suitable for Nesting Wood Ducks.” Photo credit: **Chase Fountain, TPWD.**

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

University of Georgia's Dr. Robert J. Warren Named 2023 C.W. Watson Award Recipient

At their annual conference held in Corpus Christi, Texas, October 15-18, the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) recognized **Dr. Robert J. Warren**, retired Professor Emeritus at University of Georgia's Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, as the recipient of their most prestigious award, the C.W. Watson Award.

The C.W. Watson Award, established in 1964, recognizes individuals with the most exceptional and impactful contributions to fish and wildlife conservation over their careers. The award is presented jointly by SEAFWA, the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, and the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society.

Dr. Warren has dedicated nearly 40 years of his professional career to wildlife conservation and education across the southeastern U.S. His innovative research was aimed at solving problems in human-wildlife interactions with a focus on addressing the political, social, and biological implications of wildlife management in developed landscapes.

Much of Dr. Warren's research focused on managing abundant wildlife populations. He also conducted research on many different species to evaluate conservation issues and was a strong advocate of the importance of wildlife physiology in understanding the function of animals in their environment.



Left to Right: **Robert Boyles**, President; **Chris Racey**, Chair of CW Watson Award Committee; **Dr. Robert J. Warren**; **JD Strong**, Chair of SEAFWA Awards Committee.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

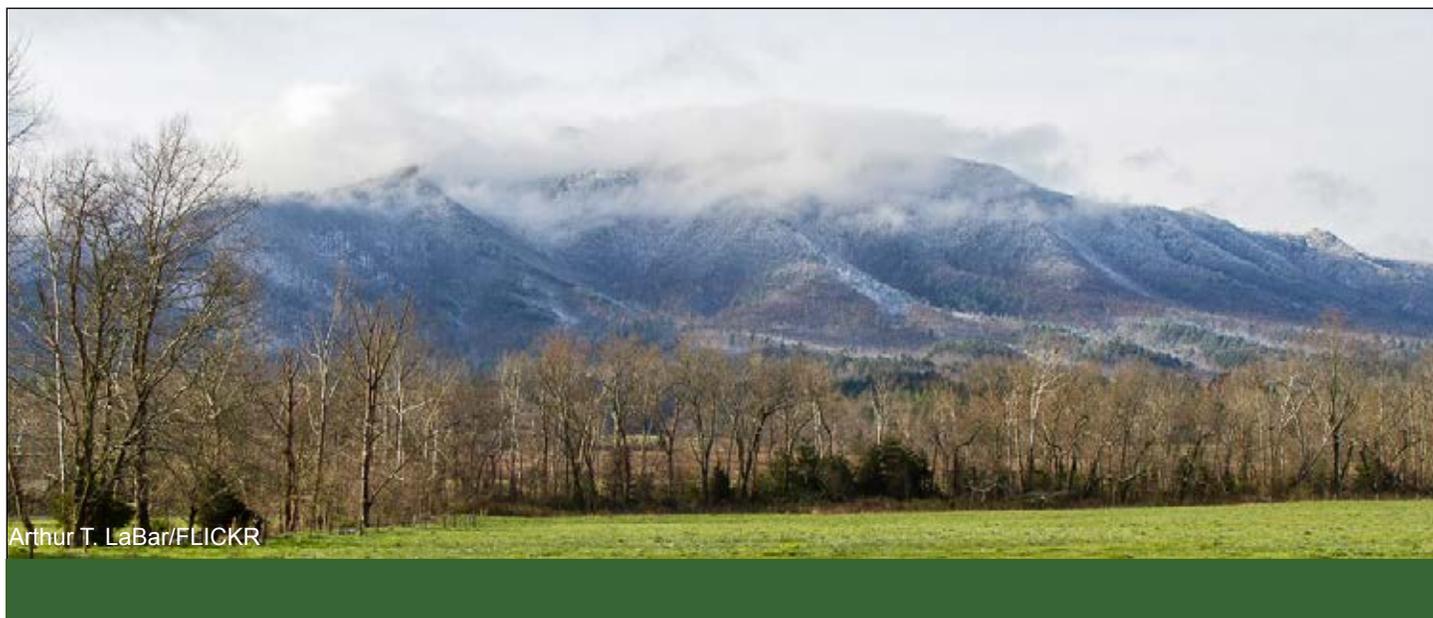
“I’d like to thank my former students and colleagues for submitting my nomination for this award—I’m very honored,” said Dr. Warren upon receiving the award. “I’ve always considered the SEAFWA conference to be one of the best professional meetings because it combines all the important functions of fish and wildlife conservation agencies—management, research, law enforcement, information/education, and policy/law—at a single venue. I attended my first SEAFWA conference in 1978 while I was still a graduate student at Virginia Tech. I could never have imagined back then that I’d be honored with this most prestigious award 45 years later.”

Dr. Warren provided extensive service to the profession, his students, and to the public. He joined the faculty at the University of Georgia in 1983 and served as Meigs Distinguished Professor since 2000. He was appointed as Interim Dean of the University of Georgia Daniel B. Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources from 2006-2007 and retired from the University of Georgia in 2016 after 33 years. He served as president of both The Wildlife Society and the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society and published nearly 160 scientific, peer-reviewed journal articles. His outreach record impacted wildlife policy discussions and moved the profession forward.

Perhaps most importantly, his passion for teaching influenced generations of wildlife professionals. **Karl V. Miller**, University of Georgia Professor Emeritus, and **Lisa Muller**, University of Tennessee Professor and Assistant Director, wrote in their nomination letter, “Dr. Bob Warren is a highly distinguished wildlife professional whose career spanned over four decades of education, research, and service. He served a very broad role during his career, but among his greatest passions were teaching natural resource students and mentoring graduate students. He taught and mentored a lasting legacy of outstanding wildlife professionals who have been a great influence on wildlife management and conservation across the Southeast. There are only a few individuals who can demonstrate comparable breadth and depth of contributions over their long and fruitful careers.”

The C.W. Watson Award recognizes Dr. Warren for his impactful and distinguished service.

The original publication of this article can be found on the [SEAFWA website here](#).



Arthur T. LaBar/Flickr

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

MSU Wildlife Ecologist Designated TWS Fellow

[Contact: Vanessa Beeson](#)

STARKVILLE, Miss.—**Ray Iglay**, an assistant professor in Mississippi State’s Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture, is among a handful of wildlife professionals throughout the U.S. and Canada newly recognized as a fellow of The Wildlife Society.



The Wildlife Society was founded in 1937 and includes more than 11,000 leaders in wildlife science, management and conservation across North America. TWS Fellows are wildlife professionals engaged with the international organization with more than a decade of service. Iglay has been a TWS member for more than 20 years. As a Certified Wildlife Biologist® and scientist in the Forest and Wildlife Research Center, his research focuses on wildlife restoration, wildlife damage management and the application of precision technologies in wildlife conservation and science. He has authored 44 peer-reviewed publications and mentored more than 30 post-doctorates, graduate and undergraduate students and staff.

“I am honored to have been recognized as a TWS Fellow. It is truly amazing to have received it at this point in my career, and I am very thankful for it,” he said.

Iglay said support from fellow colleagues has helped him engage with the organization in meaningful and impactful ways.

“Throughout my time at Mississippi State University, I have been surrounded by TWS advocates who helped pair my interests in professional service with opportunities in TWS. From local volunteer opportunities with student and state chapters to serving in leadership roles for our regional section and working groups, I have been blessed with multiple chances to serve my profession, build a network of

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

phenomenal wildlife professionals and better understand the future outlook of our profession including opportunities for our MSU students,” he said.

Some of his TWS-elected leadership roles include past president, president and president-elect of the Southeastern Section from 2018-2023; secretary and treasurer of the Mississippi Chapter from 2016-2017 and past-president, president and interim president-elect of the Mississippi Chapter from 2012-2014. He currently serves as a volunteer instructor and co-coordinator for the Southeastern Section of the TWS Field Course and has previously served as a mentor, co-advisor, reviewer and webmaster on various programs.

“The Wildlife Society has been a strong supporter of my success through networking opportunities and leadership development,” he said.

For more on MSU’s Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture in the College of Forest Resources, visit www.wildlifefisheries.msstate.edu.

Visit the Mississippi State University [newsroom](#) for the original publication of this article.



Eric Kilby/FLICKR

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Steve Johnson Earns 2023 Excellence in Wildlife Education Award [November 3, 2023 by The Wildlife Society](#)

Steve Johnson, a professor of wildlife ecology and conservation at the University of Florida, has been awarded TWS' 2023 Excellence in Wildlife Education Award.

The award honors those who have demonstrated excellence in all areas of education, including teaching, advising, scholarships, program development and leadership.

During his tenure, Johnson has developed courses in natural resource ecology, Florida wildlife, invasive species and amphibian and reptile conservation. He has also developed two study abroad courses in Australia.

His work at the university has earned him numerous awards, including the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Innovation in Teaching and Undergraduate Teacher of the Year awards, the Educator Award from the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture, and the USDA Excellence in College and University Teaching in Food and Agricultural Science Regional Award. He has received his department's undergraduate faculty of the year award—an award voted on by students—five times since 2012.

Johnson has also delivered over 175 public presentations and maintains a popular website, with online guides to snakes and frogs, as well as information on invasive vertebrates.

Johnson has chaired and served on dozens graduate committees, has been as an advisor and mentor on numerous undergraduate research and honor projects and served as his department's undergraduate coordinator.

He regularly attends his college's annual Teaching Enhancement Symposium and was a member of the college's Roche Teaching Scholars Program, where he developed and facilitated a "teachers' bootcamp" workshop.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Apply Now for the TWS Leadership Institute Class of 2024

The Wildlife Society's flagship leadership training program, the [Leadership Institute](#), is now accepting applications for the Class of 2024. The **deadline to submit applications is March 17 by 11:59 p.m. ET.**

Leadership Institute participants work on a variety of distance learning and hands-on projects, which include analysis of leadership themes and concepts, engaging in mentoring opportunities and developing a greater understanding of how to apply their personal leadership skills to their vision for the conservation field.

The six-month program begins in May and concludes at The Wildlife Society's 31st Annual Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, in October. Participants will receive complimentary registration and a travel grant to attend the conference (attendance for the entire conference is required).

The Wildlife Society works with participants to build essential leadership skills and expand their capacity in their current and future roles in the wildlife profession. Throughout the program, participants will enhance their skills to lead both as an individual and part of a team, have opportunities to build community, identify meaningful support systems, and learn more about TWS and leadership within the conservation field. Participants can expect to dedicate approximately 2-3 hours a week from May to October to the program to complete readings, participate in calls and webinars, and work on individual and group assignments.

The Leadership Institute is geared toward early-career professionals (two to three years in the profession) who are employed or actively pursuing employment in the wildlife profession—whether that is seasonal, part-time or full-time position. Membership with TWS is not required to participate in the Leadership Institute. All applications are reviewed by the Leadership Institute Committee. The committee strives to create pathways to help enhance the diversity, capacity, and efficacy of current and future leaders of TWS and the wildlife profession.

To apply:

- Complete and submit the [Leadership Institute Application Form](#) and upload your resume
- Provide two letters of recommendation (instructions are at the top of the application form)

For questions, please contact leadership@wildlife.org.
Learn more about The Wildlife Society's [Leadership Institute](#).



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

 **USDA** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



The USDA APHIS Animal Care Program's Center for Animal Welfare is excited to invite all interested parties to a 2-day Bat Welfare Symposium on April 10-11, 2024. This virtual event will address proper care and welfare considerations for captive and wild bats. Speakers will cover a wide range of topics focusing on general improvements to bat health and welfare, managing bat populations, bat transportation, ensuring proper nutrition, welfare during rehabilitation, and anthropogenic issues affecting bat welfare. This symposium is aimed at zoological professionals, rehabilitators, veterinarians, biologists, students, and animal welfare scientists. There is no registration fee to register and we have applied for RACE credits for veterinarians and veterinary technicians. Please go [here](#) or more information and to register for the event. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at centerforanimalwelfare@usda.gov. We hope so see you all there!

BEYOND PUBLIC LANDS: BUILDING A CAREER IN PRIVATE LANDS WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION WEBINAR

Earlier this month, the North Central Section and [Rangeland Wildlife Working Group](#) presented a webinar to learn about private lands management. This webinar featured several professionals working in private lands management and a Wisconsin landowner's testimony covering why they sought out help to manage their property, the importance of private lands biologists, and how we, as managers, can better collaborate and educate private landowners on land management practices for wildlife.

To view the webinar, please visit: <https://wildlife.org/events/event/beyond-public-lands-building-a-career-in-private-lands-wildlife-habitat-conservation/>

MEETINGS OF INTEREST

MARCH 2024

89th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference

March 25-29, 2024
Grand Rapids, Michigan
<https://wildlifemanagement.institute/conference>

MAY 2024

Native American Fish and Wildlife Society 2024 Annual National Conference

May 13 – 16, 2024
Welch, Minnesota
<https://www.nafws.org/product/2024-national-conference/>

JUNE 2024

Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles SSAR 2024 Meeting

June 27-30, 2024
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, MI
<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/ummz-ssar2024/>

AUGUST 2024

Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting

August 4-9, 2024
Long Beach, California
<http://www.esa.org/longbeach2024/>

SEPTEMBER 2024

114th AFWA Annual Meeting

September 22-25, 2024
Madison, Wisconsin
<http://www.afwaannualmeeting.org>

OCTOBER 2024

78th SEAFWA Conference

October 12-16, 2024
Augusta, Georgia
<http://www.seafwa.org/conference/2024>

The Wildlife Society 31st Annual Conference

October 19-23, 2024
Baltimore, Maryland
<https://twconference.org/>

