



Central Mountains and Plains Section of The Wildlife Society

Excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education

Summer 2024, Vol. 68, No. 2

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CMPS website:

<https://wildlife.org/cmp/>

CMPS President's Message

Howdy CMPS of TWS Members,

CMPS of TWS' 2024 elections are here! You have the opportunity to decide who represents you across the region and to review a proposed bylaws revision. A BIG Thank You to the candidates for being willing to step up and volunteer to serve their colleagues and the wildlife profession!

The CMPS of TWS Strategic Plan (2022-2024) outlines significant goals we have to move towards our vision to be a strong and effective voice of wildlife science, conservation, and management. In pursuing this vision, CMPS of TWS continues to grow in opportunities offered to members and membership reach.

Many of the CMPS of TWS goals include strengthening the network of wildlife professionals throughout the region. We are thrilled to see ongoing progress made in this arena through brainstorming gatherings with State Chapters of TWS leaders, a webinar training on Leadership with TWS CEO Ed Arnett & Exemplify Leadership Coach Carl Bowden, and coordination with State Chapter leaders to disseminate information.

We are pleased to announce this year's budget includes funding for Associate Wildlife Biologist and Certified Wildlife Biologist Certification. CMPS of TWS will be offering partial scholarships to help members become certified. Be on the lookout for more information about this opportunity later this summer.

According to the annual estimates, CMPS of TWS has grown in membership. This increase stems from each of the State Chapters within CMPS of TWS having increased number of members. As a result, CMPS of TWS grew by approximately 152 members in the past year. We want to continue supporting the seven State Chapters of TWS as they effectively reach more people. CMPS of TWS also looks forward to engaging in more outreach efforts to collectively benefit the seven State Chapters of TWS.

CMPS of TWS has a big year coming up. 2025 will be our 70th Anniversary. The Combined Annual Meeting with the Nebraska Chapter of TWS will be a milestone celebration. CMPS of TWS was founded on April 22, 1955, exactly 15 years before the 1st Earth Day. How appropriate that our Section of TWS has always been aligned with protecting the environment. The leaders, who chartered CMPS of TWS with typewriters & landline phones, and those who have continued to carry the torch through the many changes over the decades, have brought CMPS of TWS to where we are now. All of us in CMPS of TWS get to share this trust with future generations. What an important and fulfilling purpose!

Thank you for everything you do for wildlife conservation!

Stephanie Ferrero

President, Central Mountains and Plains Section of The Wildlife Society

Section Business

CMPS Elections

We're excited to announce the voting for two crucial positions on our board, two Board-Member-At-Large and Vice President. We also have important updates to our bylaws and our annual audit budget summary. Your participation is vital in shaping the future of CMPS! Voting is open until July 15th please see the candidates bios, the audit summary, and the proposed Bylaws in the ballot link below: <https://forms.gle/RQaVrJ9A5zFirXB36> by July 15.

Position Descriptions

ALL POSITIONS: Time commitments include a monthly 1-hour virtual board meeting. Serving on special committees and helping with CMPS Annual Business Meeting (held in conjunction with one of the 7 state's annual conference) will take more commitment. Travel to one of the 7 states' conferences is elective but encouraged. Elected board members will start their term August 31, 2024 and will hold their position for 2 years following.

VICE-PRESIDENT. The Vice-President shall assume the duties of President during any absence or upon any inability of the President to serve and shall perform any duties assigned by the President. This office shall preside over the Awards Committee. In the event the Vice-President cannot serve in the President's absence, the Executive Board shall appoint a President, pro tempore.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE. Members-At-large assist in general administration of Section business affairs as delegated by the President and serve on committees such as awards, membership/communications, and elections.

Mark Lindvall, Candidate for Board Member At-Large

Mark has a world of experience from TWS and US Fish and Wildlife Service. He worked at refugees in Colorado, Massachusetts, New York, and Nebraska. He became a lifetime member of the Nebraska Chapter and now a member of the South Dakota Chapter. With the Nebraska Chapter, he serves many roles and several committees. His involvement kept him current on conservation science and built relationships with fellow biologists. He experienced the importance of building relationships with fellow biologists. Attendance at annual meetings has been difficult with shortened budgets and a host of other meetings. Perhaps, more attractive and joint meetings would strengthen relations. For the future, Mark hopes that better relations, communications, and meeting attendance can further efforts towards our goals.



Section Business

CMPS Elections (continued)

Rachel Shively CWB PhD, Candidate for Board Member At-Large

Rachel is a passionate advocate for the conservation and sustainable management of our natural resources with a diverse range of experience. After earning her master's degree in Fairbanks Alaska and doctoral degree in Kansas; she became a USGS contractor and currently a Natural Resources Specialist in BLM Utah. With experience in research and land management conservation, she has been able to navigate complex and difficult issues. She is interested in understanding how to integrate research to on the ground management strategies to help ensure sustainability of natural resources for the future. She is ready for the challenges and opportunities of technological and scientific advancements in which the section can continue to lead the way.



Anna Ortega, Candidate for Vice-President

After getting her PhD at the University of Wyoming in Laramie, Ortega earned 14 years of experience conducting research on a variety of taxa, from understanding plant-pollinator interactions to monitoring plant communities to Emperor Geese and ungulates research on behaviors. In 2022, Ortega and fellow researcher Emily Gelzer founded the Western Wildlife Research Collective, LLC. It's mission is built on the pillars of conservation explained in the North America Conservation Model. As well as seeking to provide the data and tools biologists and wildlife managers need help ensuring the preservation of wildlife and their habitat across the West. Anna has been a member of the Wyoming Chapter for seven years and her research at conferences. In December 2023, Anna was nominated by Dr. Embere Hall to fill in as acting VP of the section until August 2024. With all the experience and knowledge gained as Acting Vice President, she would easily start serving in the role and assist the President. Vice President would help Anna grow as a wildlife steward and continuing to have collaborative network of professionals.



Section Business

TWS Response to Wyoming Wolf Incident

CMPS of TWS strives to keep members up to speed on wildlife conservation in the region. We also want to applaud the admirable actions taken by TWS and the Wyoming Chapter of The Wildlife Society in response to a devastating situation earlier this year when a grey wolf was intentionally run over by a snowmobile and tortured for several hours before being euthanized.

[Letter](#) from TWS President Bob Lanka, President-Elect Art Rodgers, and 23 Past Presidents of TWS to the Governor of Wyoming.

[Message](#) from Wyoming Chapter of TWS.

[Media story](#) on TWS President Bob Lanka's testimony before Wyoming Legislators.

Find out more in this [TWS news article "TWS President Lanka Urges Wyoming to Address Wolf Laws"](#).

Thank you to TWS President Bob Lanka, TWS leaders, and Wyoming Chapter of TWS leaders who stepped up and are engaging policy makers along with the media on behalf of wildlife in this situation!



Killdeer nest at Marais des Cygnes National Wildlife Refuge. Photo contributed by Stephanie Ferrero, CMPS TWS President.

TWS Business

TWS Membership

Did You Know? As of April 11, 2024, The Wildlife Society has nearly 11,000 members based in 45 countries! Members are from:

Argentina	Hungary	Pakistan
Armenia	India	Paraguay
Australia	Indonesia	Poland
Austria	Ireland	Portugal
Bangladesh	Israel	Republic of Korea
Belgium	Italy	Saudi Arabia
Botswana	Japan	South Africa
Brazil	Kazakhstan	Spain
Canada	Kenya	Sweden
China	Mexico	Switzerland
Colombia	Namibia	Taiwan
Estonia	Netherlands	Thailand
France	New Zealand	United Arab Emirates
Germany	Nigeria	United Kingdom
Greece	Norway	United States



Chapter Updates

Western Colorado University Student Chapter Annual Report

By Erik Rathmann

Fall 2023 Activities

The Western Colorado University Student Chapter of the Wildlife Society started off ambitious last fall. Our first meeting kicked off with our traditional hike behind our campus on the Signal Peak recreation trails, playing group games, getting to know everyone, and learning about the historical and ecological significance of the land in Gunnison, CO, but not before having a little pizza.

On 12 September, we hosted an I-Naturalist workshop to get our students signed into the I- Naturalist app, taught them the functions of the application, where to use it, what to use it for, and opened them up for their involvement in a nationwide student chapter bioblitz competition.

We were later able to use some of those newfound naturalist skills for a couple of outdoor field hikes. The first hike was on 19 September at the Gunnison State Wildlife Area to look for beavers along Beaver Creek. On 10 October, as the sun began to set earlier in the afternoon and the nights were getting colder, we hosted our second fall hike at the Curecanti National Recreation Area. We hiked down into the Black Canyon alongside a waterfall as the sun was setting, heated and served hot apple cider beside the Gunnison River, and listened to the bugle calls of nearby rutting elk under the stars.

On 26 September, our student chapter was busy preparing for the annual homecoming parade. We gathered as much cardboard as we could find and cut out a large shape of a turtle. Our most artistic members helped paint the turtle, and we strapped and taped the pieces onto a Toyota Corolla for the parade. This was one of our most engaging homecoming parade preparation days yet.

We had many wonderful workshops this semester. Some of which included a camera trapping workshop where we learned how to use and set up the schematics for a wildlife camera, and a weekend trip to a local wildlife area to learn how and where to physically set them up. We also spent two meetings this year going over the photos of what they caught.



Chapter Updates

On 17 October, we welcomed a local falconer, Jeff Ewert, who brought his peregrine falcon, Millenia, to campus, and taught our students about falconry and its importance and contribution to raptor conservation.

Towards the end of our semester, we had a talk given by one of our previous Student Chapter Presidents, Alyssa Rawinski, and two other members from the Gunnison office of the US Forest Service, to teach us a little about forest diseases and pine beetles. What our members thought was the coolest thing about this workshop, was getting a look at the collections they brought in showing what diseased or infected timber looked like, and a menagerie of beetles that are a threat to local forests.

Finally, our biggest event of the fall of 2023, was gathering ten of our members to attend the 2023 annual TWS conference in Louisville, KY. It was a long two-day road trip from Colorado to Kentucky, and a long two-day trip from Kentucky back to Colorado, but gratefully, we were able to gather enough funding for our travel expenses. It was an above all, excellent opportunity to learn about different types of wildlife studies across the nation, meet people from all these fields including federal, state, and private offices, and discovering more about what we can do with wildlife conservation studies.



Photo of our group before our hike at the Black Canyon Curecanti National Recreation Area.



Spring 2024 Activities

Kicking off 2024, we began planning more ways to help with our fundraising. We initiated a weekly coffee and bake sale supporting bird friendly coffee, which are coffee brands that do not contribute to large amounts of deforestation that lead to the habitat degradation that threaten thousands of bird species. We served bird friendly coffee and baked goods every Tuesday morning while getting a chance to promote our meetings during this time. We had a plant sale the day before Valentine's Day at the University Center, and it was a very successful fundraising event. We propagated plants in the greenhouse and grew them before for the sale.

Chapter Updates

On 7-10 February, the Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society hosted their conference in Pueblo, CO, and we gathered seven of our members to participate in this wonderful opportunity. Our student chapter members met up with members from the other Colorado student chapters, CSU Pueblo and CSU Fort Collins. We were all able to schedule a meeting and catch up and got the chance to make up some plans for collaborative activities.



CSU, CSU Pueblo, and Western Colorado University Student Chapter members at the CCTWS 2024 Conference in Pueblo.

We hosted some fascinating new workshop opportunities this spring semester. Some of which included a wildlife photography and track casting workshop by our very own vice president, Caleb Park. Casting tracks in snow proved to be a more difficult challenge than in dirt, but overall provided a great experience for our members, and even provided them with some materials to keep using on their own after the workshop. We did a snowshoe night hike at Mill Creek in Gunnison looking for some nighttime wildlife under the full moon. We also brought back one of the presenters from the forest diseases talk from the previous fall, John Nelson, to present about his studies of sea birds, coastal reptiles and whales when he lived in Hawaii. One of my personal favorite presentations we did this year was from Steve Vaggalis, who is a member of Project Healing Waters, which is a group that introduces fly fishing therapy to veterans and members of active-duty military. He also owns his own custom-made fly rod company, Agate Creek Custom Rods, and even showcased a few of his crafts for us.

We did a couple of other field trips this semester as well. On 18 February, we joined CPW's senior wildlife technician at the Gunnison office. Danny Zadra led us on an adventure to look for some wildlife tracks in the snow at the Gunnison State Wildlife Area and the Roaring Judy Fish Hatchery. This has been a traditional activity in our student chapter. We were also able to catch a view of the great sandhill crane spring migration in the San Luis Valley on the weekend before the Crane Festival in Monta Vista, CO on Saturday, 2 March. Luckily, we were able to see many of the resting cranes at the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge before the heavy winds and dust storms came rolling along in the afternoon.

Our biggest accomplishment this year was coordinating a trip with the CSU Fort Collins student chapter to Mission: Wolf, which is a wolf sanctuary in Westcliff, CO. We stayed overnight and camped outdoors under the stars and sounds of



Chapter Updates

howling wolves. This sanctuary offers a close connection to wolves and wolf dogs born in captivity that cannot be released in the wild and allows volunteer work/service opportunities for visitors. It was a privilege for us to meet the wolves and help around the sanctuary clearing out bones, picking up poop, and hauling soil into their greenhouse. It was such an important lesson to learn about the importance of wolves in the natural ecosystem, what their relationship with humans has been for hundreds of years in different cultures, how politics and government has viewed them, and why they do not belong in cages or in domesticated settings.

On 26 April we had our final meeting of the year. A small group of our members took the chance to carpool to Hartman Rocks Recreational Area and had a little picknick dinner and campfire with smores. We got to go around and talk about our favorite times we had in the Wildlife Society and discussed some of our [future plans](#) for the student chapter.

Our officers this year, student chapter president Erik Rathmann, [Vice President](#) Caleb Park, Secretary Timothy Andrews, and Historian and Treasurer Anders Covey. They kept everything running and encouraged so many new students to experience the field of wildlife biology and conservation. The officers for the upcoming 2024-25 school year include student chapter co-Presidents Camren Hovey and Caleb Park, Secretary Rowen Robinson, Treasurer Alexandra Wilson, and Historian Alaina Holcombe. Patrick Magee is the advisor and has been doing so much work keeping this together. We also gratefully acknowledge the Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society for all their support, financially and through helping us network and form relationships at the annual state meeting. And for their general support and care for our members. We also thank Western Colorado University Interclub Council for their financial support, especially to help us secure a van for the trip to Louisville. We also are highly blessed by the support of the Thornton Biology Undergraduate Research Fund, the MSE, MEM and EMPLOYS programs for travel support. The TWS CMPS also provided funding and encouragement. We are so blessed by members of the natural resources profession and others who generously shared their time and expertise with us this year.



CSU Fort Collins and Western Colorado University Student Chapters of the Wildlife Society join forces at Mission Wolf in April 2024.



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Upcoming Events

Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 30th Pronghorn Workshop

Redmond, Oregon

June 24 — 27, 2024

MORE INFORMATION: <https://wafwa.org/workshops/pronghorn-workshop/>

VENUE: Eagle Crest Resort, Redmond, Oregon

American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists 2024 Annual Meeting

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

July 10 — 14, 2024

MORE INFORMATION: <https://burkclients.com/JMIH/meetings/2024/site/index.html>

Ecological Society of America 2024 Annual Meeting

Long Beach, California

August 4 — 9, 2024

MORE INFORMATION: <https://www.esa.org/longbeach2024/>

Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 34th Biennial Sage & Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse Workshop

Wenatchee, Washington

August 5 — 8, 2024

MORE INFORMATION: <https://wafwa.org/workshops/wafwa-grouse-workshop/>

VENUE: Wenatchee Convention Center, Wenatchee, Washington

American Fisheries Society 2024 Annual Meeting

Honolulu, Hawaii

September 15—19, 2024

MORE INFORMATION: <https://afsannualmeeting.fisheries.org>

American Ornithological Society 2024 Annual Meeting

Estes Park, Colorado

October 1 — 5, 2024

MORE INFORMATION: <https://meeting.americanornithology.org/>

The Wildlife Society's 31st Annual Conference

Baltimore, Maryland

October 19 — 23, 2024

MORE INFORMATION: <https://twconference.org/>

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CENTRAL MOUNTAINS AND PLAINS SECTION DIRECTORY

STATE CHAPTERS

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President-Elect vacant

KANSAS

President Adam Ahlers
President-Elect Andrew Ricketts

NEBRASKA

President Erin Considine
President-Elect Sarah Nevinson

NORTH DAKOTA

President Bob Newman
President-Elect Phil Mastrangelo

SOUTH DAKOTA

President Daniel Kim
President-Elect Dennie Mann

UTAH

President Barbara Sugarman
President-Elect Jason Kaitechuck

WYOMING

President Riley Bernard
President-Elect Katherine Gura

STUDENT CHAPTERS

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

President Remi Pattyn
Vice President Daniel Rice
Advisor Larissa Bailey

CSU-PUEBLO

President Grace Abbett
Vice President Paige Olson
Advisor Nate Bickford

WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY

President Erik Rathmann
Vice President Caleb Park
Advisor Patrick Magee

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY, KANSAS

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Advisor William Jensen

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

President Tess Van Buren
Vice President Lydia Waner
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President Isabelle Villafane
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Vice President Kristin VanBeek
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President Phoebe Dunbar
Vice President Nicole Mittman
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President Kaianna Hraban
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President Shayne Bennett
Vice President Amos Zelasney
Advisor Mark Hammer

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President Anna Rustad
Vice President Patrick Kirkpatrick
Advisors Erin Gillam & Matt Smith

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President Anthony Hedley
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Uvino

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President Devin Gearhart
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