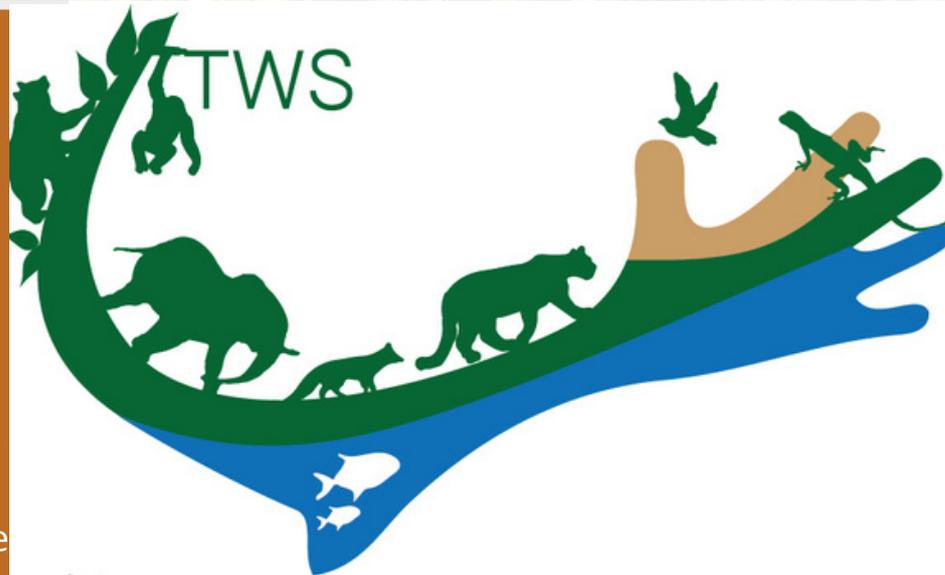


The Wildlife Society

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP

Spring Newsletter 2024



Biological Diversity Working Group

Welcome to the BDWG Newsletter!

- Call for content! If you have any photos or research you would like to share with BDWG, please contact our secretary at mary.k.hiney@gmail.com or Alexa our Social Media Facilitator at alexam96@vt.edu.
- BDWG Symposium proposal for 2025 - Contact TJ at tj74@stanford.edu, if interested, or if you have any advice or support.
- Student Travel Grants: The call for applicants will be sent out in early summer - Applicants need to be presenting at the Annual Conference.
- BDWG has submitted support for a Symposium titled: *Biodiversity, Forests, and Forestry: Evolution of Perspectives and Practices; Old Growth, Young Forests, and Everything in Between*. We will update everyone if the proposal is accepted.

The Mission of the Biological Diversity Working Group is to improve conservation of biological diversity as an integral part of ecosystem management and sustainable development and use of natural resources. This is accomplished by facilitating study and transfer of information within and outside of The Wildlife Society relative to maintenance and enhancement of the variety and variability of native living organisms, and the ecological complexes in which they occur. Of necessity, the Working Group's scope encompasses genetic, species, community, and ecosystem/landscape scales.

Board Members:

Chair - Greg Smith
Past Chair - Angie Larsen-Gray
Chair-elect - TJ Francisco
Secretary - Mary Hiney
Treasurer - Joe Drake
Board Members - Alexa Murray & Eric Stitt

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Alexa Murray

Ecological effects of a declining red wolf population



Photo courtesy of canva.com.

Carnivores, especially wolves (*Canis sp.*), have profound impacts on their ecosystems, affecting the abundance and behavior of prey and competitors, but this has not been examined in detail for red wolves (*C. rufus*). We studied a population of red wolves that was reintroduced to eastern North Carolina in 1987 and initially thrived, peaking at 120 animals. Due to an increase in anthropogenic mortality and a decline in government support, the population experienced a crash starting in 2014. We evaluated changes in the relative abundance of prey and competitor species during the red wolf decline with 25 camera traps run primarily on National Wildlife Refuges from 2015 to 2021. If red wolves were having an ecological effect on the mammal community, we expected this effect would decline as the wolf population waned, resulting in increased prey and competitor populations. Supporting this, we found that relative abundance increased for most prey and competitor species including American black bear (*Ursus americanus*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*) and Northern raccoon (*Procyon lotor*). For all species, this increase was most notable after spring 2018, the second year with low red wolf reproduction. For some species, the increase was dramatic; the detection rate for raccoon, bear and bobcat doubled from the spring of 2018 to the spring of 2021. White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) showed a general increase in relative abundance but remained prevalent even at their lowest detection rates. Our results lend correlational support to the hypothesis that red wolves had a strong effect on their ecosystems by suppressing prey and competitor populations when they were at their peak. This study adds to the growing body of evidence that reintroductions of large predators have ecological impacts, with the caveat that these impacts can decline rapidly if the predators dwindle back to critically low numbers.

To read more, please click [here](#).

Landmark UN Report

The world's migratory species of animals are in decline, and the global extinction risk is increasing



Photo courtesy of canva.com.

According to the State of the World's Migratory Species Report by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS),

- While some migratory species listed under CMS are improving, nearly half (44%) are showing population declines.
- More than one-in-five (22%) of CMS-listed species are threatened with extinction.
- Nearly all (97%) of CMS-listed fish are threatened with extinction.
- The extinction risk is growing for migratory species globally, including those not listed under CMS.
- Half (51%) of Key Biodiversity Areas identified as important for CMS-listed migratory animals do not have protected status, and 58% of the monitored sites recognized as being important for CMS-listed species are experiencing unsustainable levels of human-caused pressure.
- The two greatest threats to both CMS-listed and all migratory species are overexploitation and habitat loss due to human activity. Three out of four CMS-listed species are impacted by habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, and seven out of ten CMS-listed species are impacted by overexploitation (including intentional taking as well as incidental capture).
- Climate change, pollution and invasive species are also having profound impacts on migratory species.
- Globally, 399 migratory species that are threatened or near threatened with extinction are not currently listed under CMS.

TJ Francisco

B. asper



January Meeting Minutes

- Monthly online board meetings take place on the 2nd Friday of each month at 12 pm PT, 3pm ET. Members are invited to attend. Information on how to join the meeting and an agenda will be sent to all members via email about 1 week prior to the meeting.
- Let us know if you know someone who would be interested in being a speaker for the BDWG Webinar Series.
- Treasurer's Report: \$2,810.46.
- Call for content for social media, send to Alexa. Currently, X (Twitter) account is inactive.
- Changing bylaws? Particularly the cycle of elections. Article 4 in the by-laws.

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BDWG MERCH



The BDWG has an online shop **dedicated to raising funds for the student travel grants.** We have a baseball shirt, t-shirt, color block hoodie, drawstring bag, sticker, and baseball cap for sale.



To get your BDWG swag,
please visit:
[SpreadShop](#)