



TEXAS' FLORA AND FAUNA: The White-winged Dove



Photo by Josh Berckenhoff

Most hunters are looking forward to the start of dove hunting season. Depending on which of four state zones you hunt, you may be enjoying the early opener on September 1st (north and central zones). For those that enjoy hunting white-winged doves, Texas even has a special white-winged dove season in the South Zone, during each of the first and second weekends in September, with the regular South Zone opening September 18th. For many, the dove season signals the start of a new hunting season full of tradi-

tions and for new hunters it is a rite of passage that goes back generations.

White-winged doves are so named because of the white wing bars along their wings, which are easily visible in flight. No other dove species in the United States possesses this trait. Adult white-winged doves also have blue eye-rings that develop during their first 5 months. Adult plumage consists of brownish feathers while juveniles are typically gray-brown. There are about 12 subspecies of the white-winged dove, of

which four breed in the southern United States. The western white-winged dove and the eastern white-winged dove are two subspecies that have been studied the most in Texas. The eastern white-winged dove is the most common subspecies found in South Texas.

The eastern white-winged dove's population status within its historical range of the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) of Texas has been transformed over the past century from an over abundant rural species to one of lower numbers because of habitat loss. Although it appears that the high numbers of white-winged doves found in the LRGV of Texas in the 1900s will not return, geographic range expansion and exploitation of urban areas outside their historical range in Texas have allowed this species to flourish. Just ask the folks in cities such as San Antonio, Austin, and Waco.

Many studies have been conducted in the LRGV of Texas to learn about the ecology of the eastern white-winged dove, much of which has been supported through funds by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's White-winged Dove Stamp. Through management efforts and the white-winged dove's ability to expand into and exploit urban areas, this species has increased their overall numbers in the past 50 years across its

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WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Newsletter is published in January, April, July, and October. Contributions on any topic pertaining to wildlife, announcements of interest to members, or Chapter business are welcome and should be submitted to the Editor (Patricia Harveson, pharveson@sulross.edu) by the 15th of the preceding month. Change of address should be sent to the Mailing-list Coordinator (Terry Blankenship, tblankenship@welderwildlife.org). Membership in the Chapter is \$10/yr for students and \$15/yr for regular members, payable to the Treasurer (Terry Blankenship).

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer. Wow, what a hot and dry one we are experiencing in South Texas. I just looked at some historical data and it is the driest October to July we have experienced on record. The only positives I can come up with are that there are no mosquitoes and I haven't had to mow the lawn much.



The summer newsletter is a bit later than usual because our Texas Chapter Conservation Camp was scheduled later. The summer newsletter is our chance to showcase the camp and update you on its success. Megan Dominguez-Brazil, Liz Bates, and Amy Stevens did a superb job of organizing and directing a summer camp that the campers will remember for a long time. The summer camp committee is one of our most time-consuming and stressful committees we have. I commend these ladies on a job well done. I spent most of the week at the camp and was able to visit with all the campers and most of the volunteer staff. We had a great bunch of high school students attend this year and I was impressed with the interest they showed throughout the long week. Many of the campers told me that the experience at camp really opened their eyes to the natural world. It is hard not to absorb information and remain engaged when you have an enthusiastic staff teaching the campers different aspects of wildlife ecology, management, and conservation ethics. Make sure you read the article about the camp in this issue.

I have become more aware of the important role that the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's Wildlife Conservation Camp and Outreach committees plays in engaging youth on wildlife topics. It is no secret that today's youth are becoming less in touch with the natural world. I realize that some of this is because a greater percentage of our population is becoming urban, but even those kids growing up in rural areas don't get exposed to the outdoors as much as they used to. I remember as a young kid exploring the great outdoors almost on a daily basis. My friends and I spent much of our time hunting, fishing, trapping, exploring the life in and around streams, fields, ditches, etc. Because of this, we were familiar with most of the critters that inhabited the area that we enjoyed exploring. Of course we didn't have 200 TV channels, video games, and cell phones to compete with our time, but I don't think that would have made any difference to many of us. This really hit home to me on a recent week-long summer camp with our local Boy Scout Troop. On the third day of the Boy Scout camp, I observed a scout crying as he sat along side the lake. I figured he was home sick and missed his parents, but when I questioned him as to why he was crying, he turned to me and said he missed his television and Game Boy. I was dumbfounded with his response as I visited with him along the side of a beautiful lake at a Boy Scout camp that offered fishing, canoeing, swimming, rappelling, archery, rifle shooting, environmental science, and much more. I had a hard time believing that a teenaged boy would have time to think about a Game Boy when all these fantastic activities were going on – boy, how times have changed.

I am proud to be part of an organization that actively promotes getting people in touch with the outdoors. Educating people on the importance of our wildlife and their habitats will become more critical as our population becomes less connected to our natural world and there becomes more competition for our limited natural resources. After seeing the responses of campers at this year's Wildlife Conservation Camp, as well as results from the Outreach Committee chaired by Richard Heilbrun, I feel confident that we are making a difference.

Bart Ballard, President

TEXAS' FLORA AND FAUNA

geographic range. One study suggested that over 50% of the white-winged doves now occur outside the historical range of the LRGV.

Historically, most of the white-winged doves migrated south to Mexico and Central America. However, it appears that some occurring in large cities outside their historical range no longer migrate. For those that do, migration south to wintering areas appears to start in September, and they return to their breeding grounds beginning sometime in March or April.

As the breeding season begins, males begin calling and displaying for potential female mates. When a male finally attracts a female, she will fly to him, they copulate, and afterwards they preen each other. Within a few days, the pair will begin construction of a nest using small twigs. White-winged doves prefer native vegetation such as Texas ebony, Texas sugarberry, and huisache; however, in urban areas they readily nest in large ornamental shade trees including live oak and Rio Grande ash. In the LRGV, they nest in the citrus orchards that have been planted where native habitat once existed. Interestingly, white-winged doves rarely nest in mesquite, likely because the tree canopies are too open. The nests are between 8 to 30 feet above the ground, but several animals including hawks, owls, snakes, and feral and domestic cats, among others, still prey upon the eggs and nestlings.

White-winged doves normally lay 2 creamy-brown eggs per clutch and may have 1 to 4 clutches per breeding season. Eggs are laid a day apart with the parents taking turns incubating. After about 14 days, the eggs hatch resulting in little chicks covered in white downy feathers and closed eyes. The parents



Photo by William Coleson

continue to take turns sitting on the nest and regularly feed crop milk to the nestlings. Crop milk is similar to mammalian milk and is fed to the nestlings during the first week after which they are fed regurgitated seeds. These include agricultural grains, doveweed, leatherweed, and wild sunflower.

Nestlings grow quickly over a 14-day period with their wing flight feathers erupting about 2 days after hatching; the tail feathers erupt a few days later. Beginning on the third day, the eyes slowly open over a 2–3 day period. Fourteen days after hatching, the nestlings are fully fledged and flight capable. The parents may still feed the fledglings

but if a re-nesting attempt is made, the parents will turn aggressive toward the fledglings effectively booting them from the nest. Over the next few months, the fledglings replace their primary flight feathers one at a time and the eye ringlet forms. Then the eye ringlet turns blue, it signals that the bird is now an adult.

The white-winged dove is a unique species that has adapted to an ever-changing world. They have overcome great obstacles to their survival by changing with their environment. Several universities in Texas have studied aspects of white-winged dove ecology including nutrition, effects of pesticides and parasites, genetics, as well as nesting preferences, but there remains more to be learned about

white-winged doves.



Article by William Coleson, M.S. Graduate Student, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Department of Animal and Wildlife Sciences, Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

CONSERVATION CAMP

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE TCTWS CONSERVATION CAMP IN KINGSVILLE, TX



Have you heard the rumors about riding “noodle” horses, talking over campfires, eating gourmet food, and sweating through the 108 degree days? That’s right! After a year of planning, the 16th annual Wildlife Conservation Camp seems to have come and gone in the blink of an eye. As the main service project conducted every summer by TCTWS, Conservation Camp introduces young adults to wildlife conservation and management, instilling an appreciation of wildlife and creating conservation wise voters. This year’s camp was held July 12-18 on King Ranch, Kingsville, Texas. Besides fabulous accommodations, we had 22 outstanding campers from around the state.

The campers arrived on Sunday afternoon at the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute’s Wildlife Research Park and started their week long adventure with a historical tour of King Ranch. The week’s schedule was filled with hands on activities such as shot gunning, archery, spotlight surveys, kayaking, fishing, plant collecting, seining, and mist netting to name a few. They also heard from professionals in the field of wildlife management on a variety of topics including digestive systems, North American Management Model, the role of insects, soils, GPS/Google Earth, and habitat management. Mid-week we spent the day at Norias Division of King Ranch studying oak habitats, sand dunes, and coastal ecology. Even though the schedule was packed with activities from sunrise until late at night, the campers maintained their enthusiasm and dedication. During the evenings, we had the opportunity to listen and interact with professionals in an informal setting while roasting marshmallows around a campfire. Most of this year’s campers were interested in pursuing a career related to wildlife or range management. They were very inquisitive about college and what avenues they should pursue to be successful in the field of wildlife and range management. We’re looking forward to this year’s top camper, Shelby McFall of Riviera, TX, attending the TCTWS Meeting in Galveston to tell all of us what camp meant to her!

Although planning and organizing a camp of this scale can be challenging, we were blessed to have so many volunteers, many of which have dedicated a week to this camp for years. These volunteers certainly made our job easier! We feel privileged to have worked with such professional, dedicated, and fun volunteers. The camp would not be possible without these hard working individuals. This year’s professional volunteer staff included: Annaliese Scoggin, Allen Rasmussen, Bart Ballard, Brent Ortego, Brock Minton, Cory Wilson, Eddie Earwood, Emily Rollison, Eric Garza, Eric Redeker, Fey Hysmith, Fred Bryant, Jason McFall, Jim Gallagher, Karla Dominguez, Kyle Brazil, Larry Hysmith, Marc Bartoskewitz, Mike Leidner, Natalie Benton, Richard Heilbrun, Selma Glasscock, Shanna Dunn, Stephen Ross, Terry Blankenship, Terry Gallagher, and Matt Strauss.

Student volunteers play a crucial role in the success of the camp every year, serving as mentors and teachers throughout the week. This year’s student volunteers included: Andy Tri, Chad Stasey, Chase Currie, Derek Ballard, Donny Kahl, Erin Cord, Jake Wimberley, Jennifer Korn, Kelly Haile, Michelle Wood, Matt Hewitt, Owen Fitzsimmons, Renee Keleher, Renae Ross, Richie Sinclair, Samantha Wisniewski, Sarah Bullock, Tracie Swetlick, and Trent Teinert.

We feel honored to have had the opportunity to chair the Wildlife Conservation Camp. It was a truly rewarding experience. It is inspiring to know that these 22 enthusiastic and devoted young adults will likely play a role in the future of wildlife and range management. Consider lending your expertise to next year’s camp, the reward is always more than the effort!

*Your 2009 Conservation Camp Directors,
Megan Dominguez-Brazil, Elizabeth Bates,
and Amy (Potts) Stevens*

WE SURE HAD SOME GOOD TIMES

by *Ron George*

I met Gary Waggerman June 15, 1981, my first day on the job with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). I had just been hired as TPWD's webless migratory game bird program leader, and Gary was TPWD's white-winged dove biologist in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Gary had worked with whitewings since 1968 and was a recognized authority on this important tropical, colony-nesting game species.

Gary took me on the grand tour. He showed me whitewings nesting in citrus orchards around Mission and in native brush tracts along the Rio Grande. I was absolutely amazed at the roar that came from the calls of hundreds of whitewings nesting in dense colonies.

Gary told me these state-owned brush tracts were collectively known as the Las Palomas Wildlife Management Area, and we inspected a new whitewing tract that TPWD was in the process of buying. Wildlife Division Director Ted Clark said he wanted us to "buy a bunch more." At the time, TPWD had about \$1 million in the White-winged Dove Stamp Fund that came from the sale of \$3 stamps to whitewing hunters. Ted said, "Ron, I want you and Gary to spend this money as rapidly and as wisely as you can." Not many young wildlife biologists ever get an assignment like that!

Over the years, Gary and I took Ted's instructions to heart and bought a lot of land for whitewings. Some of it still

had native brush growing on it, but more and more, we had to buy open cropland and figure out how to reforest (rebrush) it. The habitat restoration work that Gary and his crew did in the Valley served as an inspiration for much of the restoration work done there later by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other conservation organizations.

Gary spent long hours surveying whitewing populations, and his enthusiasm for whitewings and other wildlife was infectious. He gave hundreds of science-based, yet folksy, presentations to hunters, naturalists, garden clubs, and visiting wildlife professionals. Gary had many friends in Texas and Mexico.

On a trip to Mexico with Gary in 1982, we visited the big Parras de la Fuente whitewing nesting colony (near Abasolo on the Rio Soto la Marina). This colony was estimated to have 3-4 million breeding adults. We could hear the roar of the colony more than 2 miles away. As we were wading across that clear, waist-deep river to get some photographs, I slipped on the algae-covered rocks and fell down with Gary's camera. We tried to dry it out, but it never worked the same again. Only later, did our guides tell us crocodiles inhabited that stretch of the river.

On a later trip to Mexico, Gary and I hunted white-winged doves and red-billed pigeons near La Pesca. The hunting and fishing were great, but not all of our trips turned out like that.



Gary Waggerman conducting white-winged dove fall-flight survey at dawn in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (photo by Roy Tomlinson, USFWS).

IN MY YEARS...

(continued from previous page)

I took Gary on his first ever spring gobbler hunt north of Brackettville. The hunting lease belonged to a friend of a friend. When we pulled up to the ranch house in a big pecan bottom on the Nueces River, the woods around the ranch house were ringing with gobbling turkeys. The ranch foreman said he would show us where to camp and hunt the next morning. We followed his pickup through the river bottom where the sandy road was covered with turkey tracks. We crossed several cattle guards and slowly climbed out of the bottom and up to a small, rocky, over-grazed goat pasture 2 miles from the river. The foreman stopped his pickup, told us to not cross any fences, and left. Gary and I had a pleasant camp and a good visit

under the stars, but the next morning, I was unable to call any of those turkeys across 2 miles of bare rock. I thought Gary would be really disappointed with his first turkey hunt, but he just saw the humor in it.

As whitewings began to expand their breeding range northward during the 1980s, Gary spent more and more time outside the Valley, and Gary and his wife Kathy eventually moved to Austin. As usual, Gary made friends fast and was soon active in the Travis County Audubon Society and other conservation organizations.

Gary finally retired in 2003 after 35 years with TPWD, but he remained active, leading birding trips to Oklahoma and northern Mexico. My last time in the field with Gary was on a Christmas Bird

Count in 2007. He was struggling with cancer but still doing his best for wildlife conservation. He was in and out of the hospital, but he never complained about his condition. He just wanted to know how the birds were doing.

I visited with Gary in his hospital room for the last time 3 days before he passed away on May 7, 2009. He was very weak and could barely whisper, so I mostly talked about whitewings, whitewing habitat, birding, and hunting and fishing trips we had taken. When I finished, he whispered, "We sure had some good times."

Ron George is a past president of the Texas Chapter, TWS and a retired deputy director of the Wildlife Division, TPWD.



Gary Waggener (second from right) organizing whitewing nesting survey in Mexico (photo by Roy Tomlinson, USFWS).

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

by *Jim Bergan*



Since 1951, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has been working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. Our mission is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. The Conservancy has protected 120 million acres of land and 5,000 miles of rivers worldwide. We manage more than 100 marine conservation projects across the globe as well. As a non-profit organization, our core support comes from over 1 million members which allows us to work in all 50 states and 30 countries around the world. We also derive support from foundations, corporations, and public grants. In addition to land protection work, we work to address key threats to conservation that relate to climate change, freshwater, forests, marine habitats, fire, and invasive species.

We have over 2600 employees in the organization and more than 700 of them deal primarily with conservation science and stewardship issues. We use a science-based approach to conservation. We work with private landowners which include both traditional,

production based ranchers/farmers as well as landowners that are primarily only interested in recreational aspects of their land. We value partnerships with developers, energy companies, state and federal agencies, academic institutions, other NGO's, and local communities.

In Texas, our work began in 1964, with the late Edward C. "Ned" Fritz as our first state board of trustees' president. Ned went on to establish the Natural Areas Preservation Association (now, called the Texas Land Conservancy). The very first project undertaken by the Texas chapter was acquisition of 2,626 acres just west of Houston that was established as the Attwater's Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Since that time, the Conservancy has acquired nearly 400,000 acres of conservation lands presently under management by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other public entities. Iconic places such as the Brazoria NWR, Matagorda Island NWR, Guadalupe Delta WMA, Enchanted Rock State Park, Mad Island WMA, Big Bend State Park, Caddo Lake State Park/WMA and many others were established or expanded with the assistance of The Nature Conservancy. In 2008, the Norsworthy Ranch was acquired by the Conservancy and just recently was added to Big Bend State Park by TPWD.

In Texas, our community-based conservation projects are most critical in relation to meeting our mission. These projects include the Davis Mountains Preserve where we own 32,000 acres of the highest elevation

habitat around Mount Livermore and work with private landowners that have donated conservation easements on an additional 66,000 acres. We conduct landscape scale prescribed fire in this region in partnership with the Texas Forest Service, local volunteer fire departments, and most importantly, private landowners in the region. Thus far in 2009, the Conservancy has conducted over 10,000 acres of prescribed fires in West Texas. Other community-based conservation projects include our Barton Creek Habitat Preserve near Austin, Clive Runnells Family Mad Island Marsh Preserve in Matagorda County, Roy E. Larsen Sandylands Sanctuary near Silsbee and our Clymer Meadow Preserve near Greenville. We focus upon strategies that incorporate conservation value added practices within working landscapes. For example, we conduct rice farming operations in addition to a grazing management program at our Mad Island Marsh Preserve. Incorporating local landowners into our efforts via outreach and technical guidance we can leverage our preserve based activities at a larger scale. We also work with TPWD and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension staff at many of these projects to expand outreach and land stewardship practices.

The Conservancy also has several private lands initiatives, many of which are watershed based. Our river projects include the Lower Pecos, Blanco, Western Rivers (Nueces, Sabinal, Frio), Pedernales, Lower Brazos, and Devils Rivers. Conservancy staff manage these

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES

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projects by working with local landowners to synthesize detailed conservation action plans that focus upon the key threats to conservation targets (species or ecological systems) in these landscapes. Science partnerships related to environmental flows, riparian habitat management, survey/inventory, and invasive species are vital to the success of these river projects. We also provide prescribed fire services to cooperating landowners in these areas where appropriate. Our largest prescribed fire effort is based at our Refugio-Goliad Prairie Project where we are working exclusively with private landowners on increasing fire efforts across a 600,000 acre working landscape. The Conservancy has also developed specific habitat and invasive (Chinese tallow, and KR bluestem) management guides for landowners within these private land initiatives.

One of our premier science-based efforts in Texas has been the Fort Hood Project. Fort Hood is a U.S. Army installation which covers 217,000 acres in Bell and Coryell counties in central Texas. A range of military training activities including mechanized maneuvers, weapons firing and aviation training take place at Fort Hood. Two mechanized divisions are currently assigned to the post. The Conservancy

has been working with the Army at Fort Hood since 1993. Our work is primarily focused upon 3 areas: 1) golden-cheeked warbler monitoring and research, 2)

golden-cheeked warbler populations.

The Conservancy has advanced tremendously in our conservation approach since 1964. Using our business and conservation framework called Conservation by Design, we are now able to better prioritize our on-the-ground conservation actions to ensure that every dollar invested reaps a tangible and lasting conservation benefit. Working with partners and maintaining our science-based approach to conservation will be critical as we continue to work towards conserving the last great places in Texas.



black-capped vireo monitoring and research, and 3) brown-headed cowbird control, management, and research. Since 1993, the Army has also requested and supported our efforts in regards to karst feature and faunal inventories, oak wilt, prescribed fire, wintering grassland bird ecology, vegetation community research, fire ecology, golden-cheeked warbler wintering ecology, feral hog control, and brush management. The project presently employs 17 full time staff and up to 45 seasonal positions. Over 40 peer reviewed publications have been produced from this project along with countless reports and presentations at professional wildlife meetings. Working with partners and landowners, knowledge generated from our Fort Hood work has been exported to other parts of Texas to assist efforts in recovering black-capped vireo and



Jim Bergan completed his Ph.D. in 1990 at Texas Tech. He is Director of Science and Stewardship for The Nature Conservancy of Texas, based in San Antonio. His interests are wetland ecology, invasive species, restoration ecology, and ecosystem management.

NEWS FROM THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY COUNCIL

This installment of highlights focuses on a recent TWS Council Strategic Planning Retreat in late July and the upcoming transition to a new Section Representative.

First, I congratulate **Carol Chambers** from the Arizona TWS Chapter and Northern Arizona University on her recent election as Southwest Section Representative to begin in September 2009. Carol is well known to many of you, and I think that she will be a tremendous addition to TWS Council to participate on behalf of Southwest interests. We will transition this representation at the upcoming TWS Annual Conference in Monterey, California.

The Council Strategic Planning Retreat was held at the Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation west of Chicago on 20-22 July. All Council members and senior TWS staff were present and participated. The session was devoted to reviewing progress and assessing

priorities regarding the TWS Strategic Plan that was adopted by Council in fall 2008. Much has already been initiated and there are some completions already under that relatively new Plan. Much has been happening with the Annual Conference, electronic capabilities, publications, and overall services to members. While Council affirmed that all of the Strategic Plan content remains strategically important, we recognized that there are variations in level of importance and that we need to be sensitive to ongoing financial circumstances. We succeeded in clearly identifying major priorities and provided guidance to TWS staff on how to make judgments when it appears that multiple priorities appear to be competing. Among the reaffirmed priorities is the continued strong dedication to developing TWS engagement in natural resource conservation policy matters at national and continental scale in North America. That included more detailed work on how to staff a previously approved position as Assistant Director

for Government Affairs. A key action in that arena is TWS Council approval of a position statement on lead in the environment associated with use of ammunition and fishing tackle. Anticipate hearing more about the prioritization and policy actions in coming weeks as TWS President Tom Franklin and TWS Executive Director Michael Hutchins provide summaries of final actions.

In the meantime, I ask that all of you show the support and provide the ideas to Carol Chambers that I have received during the past 3 years.

Dr. Bruce Thompson is the Southwest Section Representative to the TWS Council and is also the Land Conservation, Habitat Corridors, & Wildlife Adaption Coordinator with the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department in Santa Fe.

2008-09 Honorary Life Member Award Winner: Doug Slack

This year's recipient of the Honorary Life Member Award is well known to all Texas Chapter members, as well as non-members engaged in wildlife conservation in our great state and beyond.

Dr. Doug Slack served as chapter president in 1990 and 91. He had the insight at that time to create the first ever Executive Director position. This was a first not only for the Texas Chapter, but among all chapters in The Wildlife Society.

Dr. Slack has served in leadership positions within the Texas Chapter as Board Member at Large, Chair of Membership Committee, the Nominations Committee, and the Cottam Award Committee. He was the Texas A&M Student Chapter Advisor in 2002 when they won The Wildlife Society's Student Chapter of the Year Award. This award was a great honor not only for the student chapter, but also for the Texas Chapter. Without Doug's support and mentoring, this achievement would not have been possible. In short, his leadership has helped the chapter become the best in the nation.

In addition to his chapter duties, Doug serves as President of the Southwest Section of The Wildlife Society. He also chaired the Program Committee of the First Annual Conference of the Wildlife Society in 1993-94.



Among his many honors and awards, Dr. Slack is the recipient of the Texas A&M Vice Chancellors Award in Teaching Excellence along with 6 other Outstanding Professor Awards. During his 25 year tenure with Texas A&M, his students have produced 42 theses or dissertations. He has produced over 60 journal articles, symposia proceedings, or book chapters, in addition to numerous professional presentations. His work has influenced critical thinking in the fields of conservation biology and endangered species management, most recently to secure sufficient in-stream flows for healthy habitat for the whooping crane and many other wetland-dependant species.

**This announcement should have been in the April newsletter. My apologies for the omission Dr. Slack and congratulations on your award! -Patricia Harveson, newsletter editor*

Clarence Cottam Awards Call for Student Abstracts

Abstracts are now being accepted for consideration in the Clarence Cottam Award Session at the 45th Annual Meeting of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society in Galveston. This session is devoted to promoting and recognizing excellence in student research.

Clarence Cottam Award Eligibility:

Graduate and undergraduate students are eligible to enter. Students who have graduated since the last annual meeting are also eligible if they are members of the Texas Chapter of TWS at the time of the annual meeting. Students must be the senior author of the abstract and oral presentation. The work being reported must be primarily that of the student. Research projects should be nearing completion so that results and their interpretations can be included. To ensure that students present 'final' results, they will be limited to one Cottam presentation per academic degree (M.S./Ph.D.). Additionally, only students that are affiliated with a Texas college or university at the time of research OR students that have conducted field work in Texas, but are affiliated with a non-Texas based college or university, are eligible.

Judging Criteria:

The judging of Cottam Award presentations will be conducted in two phases. First, Cottam Award abstracts are reviewed by committee and ranked numerically. The highest rankings will be invited to present their papers for the competition; the number of presentations will be dependent upon the number of submissions, number of available slots, and the quality of the extended abstracts. Second, Cottam Award presentations will be reviewed using a standardized form (adopted and modified from TWS). Seventy-five percent of the score is from the presentation and 25% from the abstract.

Extended Abstract:

The extended abstract must be < 3 pages, double-spaced 12 pt., and in the style and format of the Journal of Wildlife Management (JWM). First give the title in bold, all caps, double space, and then list authors and their affiliation. Capitalize all authors' names and state abbreviations. After authors and their affiliations have been given, double space, start with the word "Abstract" in bold font then begin the abstract. Do not indent any part of the abstract. The abstract should be a single paragraph. Abstracts should include a statement of objectives, brief description of methods used, concise presentation of results, and a summary of conclusions and inferences drawn. Do not include tables, appendices, or a literature cited section.

Abstract Submission Requirements:

Deadline for receipt of abstracts is November 30, 2009. Extended abstracts can be submitted as hard copy (4 copies) through regular mail, or as a PDF file attached to an e-mail (email submission preferred). Hard copy or PDF file format are preferred to facilitate accurate representation of formatting. The presenting author's last name and the words "Clarence Cottam" must appear in the upper left margin of the abstract and in the subject line of the e-mail, if electronic submission. Abstracts should be submitted to Andrew Kasner, Department of Biology, Wayland Baptist University, 1900 West 7th Street, Plainview, TX 79072; Email: kasnera@wbu.edu; Phone: (830) 480-2770. Additionally, students must submit one (1) abbreviated abstract (<=250 words) to the Program Chair by November 30, 2009. The abbreviated abstract should follow instructions outlined in the general call for abstract submission from the program committee and should be labeled "Cottam Award Entry" in the upper left hand margin. For additional information regarding the Clarence Cottam Award, follow the scholarship link on the TCTWS web page (www.tctws.org) or contact Andrew Kasner.

Clarence Cottam Awards Call for Student Abstracts (*continued*)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Judging of extended abstracts will be based on:

1. Significance and originality of ideas.
2. Creativity of research design and implementation.
3. Quality of methodology, including statistical analyses.
4. Validity of conclusions drawn from the results.
5. Neatness and conformity to JWM style and format.

Oral Presentations:

Clarence Cottam Award Session Papers will be scheduled at 15-minute intervals. Presentations should therefore be limited to 10-12 minutes in order to allow 3-5 minutes for questions and comments. All presenters must use PowerPoint as the presentation medium for their oral presentations; traditional slides and overheads will not be allowed. Presentations must be submitted on disk or CD in accordance with the requirements established by the program committee for general session presentations.

Judging of oral presentations will be based on:

Scientific Merit

1. Significance of ideas and originality.
2. Creativity of research design and implementation.
3. Quality of methodology, including statistical analyses.
4. Validity of conclusions drawn from the results.

Presentation

5. Justification for research and introduction.
6. Clarity of objectives, and hypotheses being tested.
7. Clarity of methods (including analytical procedures), results, interpretation of results, and implications.
8. Quality and clarity of slides and /or graphics.
9. Student's ability to engage the audience's attention throughout the presentation, including fielding questions and staying within the allotted time.

Prizes:

- 1st place-\$500 provided by the Welder Wildlife Foundation + TCTWS plaque
2nd place*-\$200
3rd place*-\$50

* 2nd and 3rd places will be awarded only if 6 or more entries are submitted for consideration.

CHAPTER BUSINESS

1st Call for Abstracts for the 45th Annual Meeting of TCTWS

Abstracts are now being accepted for technical paper and poster sessions at the 45th Annual Meeting of The Wildlife Society - Texas Chapter. The 45th Annual Meeting will be held February 18-20, 2010 in Galveston, TX. Papers presenting the results of wildlife field investigations and analyses, as well as topic reviews of interest to wildlife students and professionals in Texas are encouraged. Abstracts should be submitted electronically by email as a file attachment (Microsoft Word format) to alan.cain@att.net . **Deadline for receipt of abstracts is 30 Nov 2009.**

Papers

Contributed papers will be scheduled at 15-minute intervals. Presentations should therefore be limited to 10-12 minutes in order to allow time for questions and comments. Speakers in oral sessions will be notified of the day, time, and location of their presentations, and instructions on how to prepare for the sessions. Oral presentations must be in Microsoft PowerPoint format.

Poster Presentations

Posters presenting the results of wildlife field investigations and analyses are highly encouraged. An award will be given to the best poster presentation in undergraduate and graduate categories - these will be judged on topic originality, scientific procedures, quality of display, accuracy of conclusions, and response to questions from judges. Space may be limited, so quality of abstract may prioritize acceptance. Abstracts should be submitted electronically by email as a file attachment (Microsoft Word) to alan.cain@att.net . Deadline for receipt of abstracts is 30 Nov 2009.

Required Abstract Style

Abstracts, including author and title line, are to be no more than 250 words. The words "Poster Session" or "Oral Session" must appear in the upper left margin of the abstract. Abstracts should follow "The Journal of Wildlife Management" format. First give the title in all caps, double space, and then give authors and their affiliation. Capitalize all authors' name and state abbreviations. After authors and their affiliation have been given, double space, start with the word "Abstract:" then begin the abstract. Do not indent any part of the abstract. The abstract should be a single paragraph. In cases of two or more authors, place an asterisk after the name of the person presenting the paper. Abstracts should include a statement of objectives, brief description of methods used, concise presentation of results, and a summary of conclusions/inferences drawn. The Program Chair will notify persons submitting abstracts soon after their receipt.

Sample Abstract:

SURVEY FOR BLOOD PARASITES IN INCA DOVES FROM SOUTH TEXAS

SAMANTHA K. YELTATZIE*, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, TX 78363 USA
ALAN M. FEDYNICH, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, TX 78363 USA

Abstract: Inca doves (*Columbina inca*) are a native species of South Texas, which are locally abundant in urban areas. Unfortunately, little is known about the factors that may impact their populations such as predation, disease, and parasites. To learn more about factors that may influence the health of this species, we initiated a survey to determine if Inca doves in South Texas have blood parasites. Inca doves were live trapped using wire cages on the Texas A&M University-Kingsville campus and surrounding the city of Kingsville. At the time of capture, Inca doves were aged and sexed, banded to identify recaptured birds, sampled using blood from the leg vein, and released. Two blood smears from each bird were made on microscope slides. Each slide was preserved, stained, and examined under 1000X magnification for 15 minutes each (30 minutes/bird). Forty-one Inca doves were captured between June and October 2000. No blood parasites were observed on the smears. Our findings suggest that Inca doves were not infected or at least were not demonstrating active infections in the peripheral blood during summer 2000.

CHAPTER BUSINESS

PUBLICATION AWARDS - CALL FOR SUBMISSION

This is the first call for nominations for publications that include a Texas Chapter of TWS member as author or co-author and were (or will be) published within the last three years. Categories may include books, journal articles, bulletins, popular articles or other publications.

The deadline for submission is November 15, 2009.

To nominate a publication, please submit 4 copies to:

Tim Fulbright

TCTWS Publications Committee Chair

Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute

700 University Blvd., MSC 218

Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Kingsville, TX 78363

timothy.fulbright@tamuk.edu

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS - CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications are now being accepted for the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society Scholarship Program.

Three undergraduate and 3 graduate level scholarships will be awarded at the 2010 annual meeting in Galveston.

Scholarships total \$7,250.00.

Scholarship guidelines and applications can be found at www.tctws.org under the Students tab.

Scholarship applications must be submitted through your TWS Student Chapter advisor.

Chapter advisors are listed at www.tctws.org under the Students tab.

The deadline to get scholarship applications to the Scholarship Committee Chair has been changed to **1 December 2009.**

Although the deadline is still several months away, students are encouraged to apply early to avoid missing the deadline.

CHAPTER BUSINESS

EXCELLENCE IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AWARDS CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD:

The Excellence in Wildlife Conservation Committee is soliciting nomination for the Educator of the year Award. The Educator of the Year Award recognizes wildlife professionals for outstanding achievements in wildlife conservation education. Please submit a 5-point bullet statement explaining why the nominee is deserving of the award, along with a curriculum vitae of the nominee (if possible) to: Lynn Drawe, P.O. Box 836, Sinton, TX 78387). **The deadline for nominations is 15 October 2009.**

LAND STEWARDSHIP AWARD:

The Excellence in Wildlife Conservation Committee is soliciting nomination for the Land Stewardship Award. The Land Stewardship Award recognizes landowners or other appropriate individuals for their wildlife conservation efforts. Please submit a ½ to 1 page letter

of nomination explaining why the nominee is deserving of the award to: Lynn Drawe, P.O. Box 836, Sinton, TX 78387). **The deadline for nominations is 15 October 2009.**

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:

The Excellence in Wildlife Conservation Committee is soliciting nomination for the Outstanding Achievement Award. The Outstanding Achievement Award recognizes wildlife professionals for their outstanding achievements during the course of their involvement with natural resources management and conservation. Please submit a 5-point bullet statement explaining why the nominee is deserving of the award, along with a curriculum vitae of the nominee (if possible) to: Lynn Drawe, P.O. Box 836, Sinton, TX 78387). **The deadline for nominations is 15 October 2009.**

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP - CALL FOR NOMINEES

The Honorary Life Membership Committee is seeking nominations for this honor. The committee will continue the policy of seeking and considering nominees submitted from the membership.

To be eligible a nominee should have been

(1) active for 20 years or more in the wildlife profession as an employee of a natural resource agency, academia, or a private organization as a wildlife biologist or consultant; or an effective non professional activist.

(2) He/she should have made significant contributions to the Chapter and/or the profession and/or wildlife conservation in Texas.

Please submit a complete vitae and one or more letters of nomination from friends and associates to Mike Tewes, CKWRI-TAMUK, MSC 218, 700 University Blvd., Kingsville, TX 78363; michael.tewes@tamuk.edu. **The deadline for nominations is 15 October 2009.**

STUDENT CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT

TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

Tarleton State University's Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society has participated in various volunteer activities and community events this past year. Membership continues to maintain over 50 students. Bi-weekly meetings maintain high attendance and include discussion of wildlife issues and often host guest speakers. They continue to host the annual youth outdoor education event, Tarleton Outdoors. This past year, they held the first annual wild game dinner. Other notable volunteer activities include the TPWD Outdoor Expo where our students ran a recruitment booth. They assisted Texas Wildlife Association with their nature trail and this past year, built a water conservation model the students presented. The Chapter has an ongoing connection with TWA and hopes to be able to continue that in the future. Also recently they have forged a relationship

with some of the staff at the Fort Worth Nature Center and hope to maintain that avenue to gain field experience for members. They are looking forward to contacting area WMA's in an attempt to provide students with more opportunities to gain professional experience in the field.

The TSU student chapter makes it a priority to attend the annual state chapter meetings, and compete in the quiz bowl competition which they have won first place, two years in a row. The student chapter gained national recognition by attending the TWS national meeting in 2007, and the Western Student's Conclaves in 2008 and 2009.

Student Chapter members formed the Erath County Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, the only chapter completely run by students.

These students held their first annual banquet on February 5th, and plans are in the works to take some MHMR patients on fishing trip in the near future.

Current officers are diligently working on plans for the second wild game dinner this fall and gearing up for other activities. This outstanding group of students and dedicated advisors are committed to maintaining a quality educational and social experience for our future wildlife conservationists.



SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY



The Sul Ross State University Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society is an organization composed of students interested in managing natural resources through research, education, outreach, and volunteerism. This year, we upheld our legacy by providing opportunities in wildlife education, conservation, and management to our dedicated members.

The Chapter was active in many events throughout the year. This past summer, three of our members were camp counselors at the TCTWS

Conservation Camp-Davis Mountains, Texas. The Student Chapter continued its participation in the 2008 TPWD Wildlife EXPO. In addition to representing Sul Ross State University, several members assisted with the Texas Youth Hunting Program booth. During the fall we conducted spotlight surveys for west Texas landowners.

This spring, we assisted the Texas Wildlife Association with the Annual Region I Big Game Awards program. The student chapter prepared an elaborate menu of wild game served during the awards ceremony. One of the year's biggest highlights was sending eight of our members to Arkansas to compete in the 2009 Southeastern Student Wildlife Conclave. The Sul Ross Student Chapter was the only school present from Texas and placed 13th out of 22 other student chapters.

The Chapter hosted two guest lectures, "The Status of the Wolf in North America" given by Alan Armistead of Wildlife Services and, "Texas Bighorn" given by Clay Roberts of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The Chapter was represented at various events around the state such as; TPWD Wildlife Appreciation Day-Jeff Davis and Presidio County, Trans-Pecos Wildlife Conference, The Wildlife Society National Conference, Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society Annual Conference, West Texas Deer Study Group, and the West Texas Quail Study Group.

After receiving the 2008 TCTWS Student Chapter Professional Development Award, we hope to continue to serve our community through education and management of wildlife resources.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY 16TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2009

Monterrey, California, September 20-24, 2009



TCTWS 46TH ANNUAL MEETING, 2010

San Luis Resort in Galveston, February 18-20, 2010



Hotel: <http://www.galvestonhilton.com>

Convention Center: <http://www.galvestonislandconventioncenter.com>