

THE TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY



by Clemente Guzman (detail)

Excellence in Wildlife Stewardship Through Science and Education

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TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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EDITOR, RACHEL A. LANGE

Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Newsletter is electronically 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 (Rachel Lange, gundog.dressage@gmail.com) by the 15th of the preceding month. Change of e-mail address should be submitted online through the Address Change Form or directly to the Treasurer. Membership in the Chapter is \$15/yr for students and \$25/yr for regular members, payable to the Treasurer (Terry Blankenship).

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



We are rapidly approaching February 19-22, the dates for our annual meeting in Austin! At this meeting, we will begin our jubilee year in celebration of 50 years as a chapter. The theme is “The Past 50 Years in Wildlife Management – Struggles and Achievements”. A special thanks goes to Program Co-chairs, Mike Tewes and Nova Silvy, and to Local Arrangements Co-chairs, Jeff Raasch and T. Wayne Schwertner, along with Kristin Rathburn, Chair of the Exhibits Committee. These folks have

worked many hours preparing for this special meeting. In addition, nearly \$20,000 has been raised in sponsorships to offset some of the costs. We have an inspiring group of plenary speakers to kick off the meeting Friday morning. If you have not pre-registered, or reserved a room at the Austin Sheraton, do so now as our room block is rapidly filling up, and may already be full by the time this newsletter goes out. If so, other nearby hotels are available. The deadline for pre-registration is January 28. Four workshops are planned for Wednesday and Thursday: R for Ecologists, Wildlife Track ID, Selling Conservation on Private Lands, and Finding Your Dream Job. Go to <http://www.txchapter50th.com/> for all the details.

Twenty-four fellows have been selected for the inaugural year of the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute. Selma Glasscock, who has led this effort, will be introducing these young professionals to us during the meeting, as they begin a year-long commitment in professional development and systems thinking.

The image above, is a detail of the painting created by TPWD artist, Clemente Guzman. Clemente was featured in the December, 2013 issue of the TPWD magazine. The original art, as well as 250 prints, are to commemorate our 50th year, as well as to raise funds for our leadership institute (an image of the entire painting is shown in the Chapter Business section of this newsletter). Clemente will be on hand at our meeting, to present his work, and sign a limited number of prints for sale. The bobwhite quail was voted among the chapter’s past presidents, to be the subject matter for this art. In thinking back 50 years, the bobwhite is symbolic of where we have been, and where we are headed, as a chapter. Historically, Texas has been a bastion of superb quail hunting, with a national reputation for excellence. Today, that recognition is uncertain as quail populations have experienced a long-term decline. Just as in the past, chapter members are rising to the challenge of reversing the decline through habitat management, research, and education. These efforts (along with timely rainfall!), are the only way back to the fortune we have enjoyed in the past.

It has been an honor to serve as your president over the past year. To our Executive Director, Doug Slack, board members, committee chairs, and members all across this state, thank you for your dedication and support to our chapter, and for being an inspiration to me. There are so many people yet to step up and lead the chapter into the next 50 years, and I will be calling on some of you to put your name in the hat as officers for 2015. When you are approached, think about the legacy of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, and what you can do to make it even better.

God Bless all of you!

Matt Wagner, President

TEXAS FLORA AND FAUNA



beech marten

With a name like Joachim and an accent that very few identify as East Texan, I often have to tell the story of how I ended up in the Panhandle of Texas. After all, my university in Munich, Germany is 5354.22 miles away. That's 8616.78 km; a number that makes more sense to me and that sounds a whole lot more dramatic.

People usually really want to know how I ended up here, but not what Germany is like. Why not? Because they already know: We wear lederhosen, eat sauerkraut, drink beer, build cars, drive them really fast on the autobahn, have no access to weapons due to Hitler's laws and are a socialist country.

Usually I just agree. After all, both of my kids actually do have a pair of lederhosen (they last forever), I really like cold beer, I like the high quality of German cars, I do like to drive fast (never with my TPWD state pick-up truck of course). And let's be honest, talking about modern weapon restrictions being based more on the doings of the Red Army Faction than our history of wars and explaining the difference between socialistic countries such as Cuba and North Korea vs. Germany's social market economy will bore anyone, including me.

But now I've been invited to write about wildlife and wildlife management in the country that invented Gummi Bears. This is a chance to inform others about an aspect of Germany that few people know about, so here I go:

Germany is about half the size of Texas but has almost 3 times its population. Despite its high density of people, there is still plenty of room for nature: Germany has 14 National Parks and 8,413 nature conservation areas. Additionally there are thousands of public parks and any forest in Germany has to be publicly accessible, regardless of who owns it. As a result, no matter where



wild cat

you live in Germany, you have access to nature nearby. Any given day, rain or shine, you will see kids playing outside, people taking walks or meeting in public parks. The connection to nature is still pretty strong over there. In fact, some kindergartens (Waldkindergarten) spend their entire time in forests, year round.

So what kind of wildlife does Germany have to offer? Moose, brown bears and even the occasional mountain lion are animals that you will not find here anywhere in the wild. Germany is small and overall too fragmented to offer the necessary habitat. Instead the country is home to a variety of smaller wildlife such as red deer, fallow deer, sika deer, wild boar (sorry for that), roe deer, chamois, mouflon, brown hare, rabbit, pheasant, grey partridge, Eurasian woodcock, greylag goose, ducks (mainly mallards), red fox, European badger, beech marten, European polecat, least weasel, raccoon and raccoon dog.

I've pretty much listed them in order of their importance to hunting in Germany. Non-hunable



Elementary school children at one of Germany's National Parks

TEXAS FLORA AND FAUNA

wildlife in Germany includes a declining number of wild cats (*Felis silvestris silvestris*), lynx, the slowly returning wolf and a variety of other animals.

Wildlife management in Germany is important to keep wildlife populations at desirable levels and to protect the land, especially the 1/3 of Germany that is covered by forests. The number of people involved in German wildlife management is surprisingly large. The most important parties are the legislators, the hunters and hunting associations, the hunting administration, the landowners and their associations, the foresters and several NGOs that focus on environmental protection. About 89% of Germany is considered huntable. German landowners who own more than 370 acres (618 acres in Bavaria) get to decide who hunts on their place. The problem is that very few own that much land. In this case they automatically become a member of a hunting association.

Several smaller pieces of land are then combined to one big hunting ground. The hunting association decides by majority vote on who gets the right to hunt where. This obviously leads to the majority of landowners having a very small say in who actually gets to hunt. The upside of this system is that the landowners get compensated for wildlife damage to their property. The hunting association will therefore carefully attempt to maintain a healthy wildlife population with numbers high enough to offer successful hunts yet low enough to avoid pricy wildlife damage claims.

Germany has about 70,000 hunting associations with an average size of 1,112 acres. In order to hunt here you will have to buy in or be invited by someone that is

a member.

Ok, so we have the animals, we have the land, now let's go and whack 'em! No problem.

All you need is the new online course for \$24.50 and if you are older than 17, you will need to pay an additional \$5.00 charge for the Hunter Education Certificate. Oh, wait, no, that's somewhere else... Here is what you will need to do in Germany:



Those who desire to hunt must undergo rigorous examination

You merely need a minimum of 130 hours of theory in a classroom setting, in addition to field activities, shooting lessons and veterinary training in order to identify potential illnesses in the game animals or its meat. Once you have learned all of this, you can go ahead and take the test: The written test requires you to answer 100 questions from the following subjects: Natural history, biology and health of wildlife, trapping, weapons and ballistics, forestry and farming practices, hunting dogs, hunting and

firearm laws and environmental protection. Next up is the shooting test that includes handguns, shotguns (clay pigeons and rabbit targets - the hunter must hit at least half of all targets) and rifles (five shots from bench at 100 meters, must hit 9-ring or better) and five shots off-hand at "running game" (must hit 5-ring or better). Once you've successfully showed that you are proficient with weapons, you are ready for the oral examination, usually to be taken a week later: Here they will ask you in depth about the areas that you were least proficient in during the written test. Additionally you will have to id plants as well as wildlife mounts, skulls, tracks, inner organs etc. They can really ask anything that is related to hunting,

TEXAS' FLORA AND FAUNA

nothing is off limits. While handling weapons there is a strict 0-tolerance law. If you point your weapon even once in an unsafe direction then you will have to retake your test(s) the following year.

Passed that, too? Congratulations, now you are one of the very few in Germany that have. Only 0.4% of Germans hunt (about 7% in the US). That might be because the test is so difficult (very high failure rate); or it might be because you have to spend about \$3,000 – \$4,000 in the process.

Can we go hunting now? Almost! You still need to show proof of your hunting liability insurance (minimum 1.5 Million Euro coverage), submit a flawless criminal record and proof of your personal trustworthiness. There are actually several more hoops you will have to jump through, from purchasing your rifle and storing it correctly to actually buying ammunition for it, but I don't want to bore you.

The core message I'm trying to share is this: The German Model of hunting and wildlife management is very different from the North American Model. The next time you hear someone complaining about the 10 minute online test they have to take or the incredibly small amount of money they will have to spend to become a hunter, tell them about becoming a hunter in Germany! The North American Model is very affordable and inclusive. So be really grateful for that and advertise it whenever you can.

(Next time I will write about why Germans won't wear camouflage while hunting, why the harvested deer has to be laid on its right side and covered with a coniferous twig and why the legal open market for wild meat is successful.)



*clockwise, from above:
red deer, chamois, and
greylag goose*

STUDENT CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT



Our chapter has been growing as WTAMU's wildlife program has been growing, and this is allowing us to become more involved with other activities. In addition to our twice monthly meetings with speakers, our members are actively engaged in research with graduate students and faculty, travel to professional meetings, volunteer with local TPWD biologists, and participate in outreach events, such as the Amarillo Zoo's Conservation Celebration to help educate the public about local endangered species issues.

One of our chapter's highlights is that in years past we invite members to partake in a black-footed ferret survey, where we travel west to assist Arizona Game and Fish Department biologists with trapping. Two years ago, on one of our best trips, our group of volunteers captured 9 ferrets over the 4 night survey period. Given the rigors of the all night surveys, this was no small task, but it continues to be an awesome opportunity, where volunteers get to experience first hand one of North America's most endangered species and the efforts to conserve it.

This year we were able to participate in the Mule Deer Foundation Banquet for the Amarillo Chapter. Members donated their time to help set up tables and run the auction. This was also an opportunity to learn about the declining numbers in the mule deer population and to receive a donation of \$500.00 towards our society from the Mule Deer Foundation.

In November, members also participated in a land navigation course taught by Randy Glass. Members were given the opportunity to take a course about land navigation and topography. Then participants were given set locations on individual maps and were sent in groups to find these set locations out in the field. We are hoping to do this again next year along with a star navigation course.

We also hosted a "Game Feed" at the end of the year. The dinner was a chance to get everyone together and invite the public. Our dinner menu included roasted beaver, Javelina kabobs and casserole, buffalo chili, jalapeño dove poppers, and antelope jerky. A raffle drawing also heightened some of the excitement with great prizes such as a guided hog hunt, a GPS, book sets, and a skull collection that had been graciously donated from local suppliers. Given that it helped get our name out and raise funds for our activities, the Game Feed was a huge success!

Our society is continuing to grow, and it is our hope that we can begin to interact more with the community by increasing our presentations to local schools and hosting booths at more outreach events.

2013-2014 West Texas A&M University Student Chapter Officers:

President: Mark Cancellare
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CHAPTER BUSINESS



TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAMP

The first Wildlife Conservation Camp was held at the Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation near Sinton, Texas in 1993. Since this time, Camp has often found its way back to the Foundation and does so again for 2014. From July 20-26, campers will have the opportunity to observe and study species such as white-tailed deer, javelina, coyotes, bobcats, alligators, snakes, and hundreds of species of birds while at the refuge. Campers will also enjoy a mid-week trip to the coast for some fun in the sun!

The Executive Board of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society provides oversight to the Camp, and ensures that the camp experience reflects the values and professional integrity of our organization. Camp staff and mentors are carefully selected based on their professional background, resource knowledge, and experience in working with high school students.

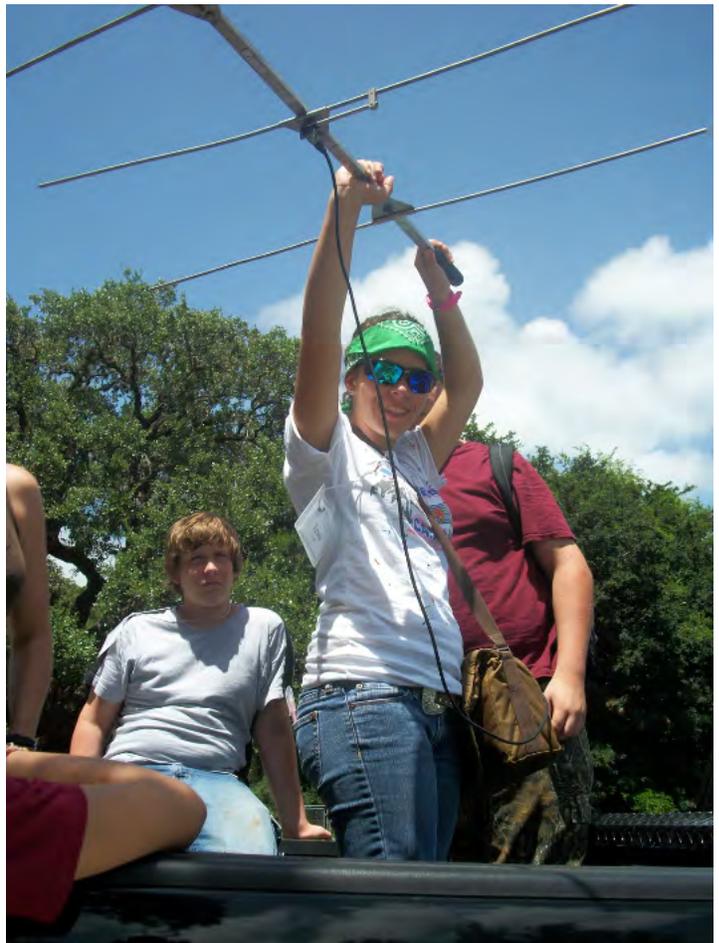
Camp is staffed by professional wildlife biologists, each of whom is knowledgeable in an array of subject matter areas. Camp staff may have experience working as professional wildlife consultants, agency biologists, academic researchers, University faculty, private ranch managers, or any number of professional backgrounds. Interested in volunteering for camp? Serving as a Camp Volunteer is a rewarding experience that will teach you valuable leadership skills and provide countless opportunities for networking with fellow natural resource students and professionals. Volunteering for camp is a big commitment, and well worth it! We rely on your dedication and hard work to ensure the success of this camp each year.

CHAPTER BUSINESS



The goal of Wildlife Conservation Camp is to provide a fun experience for kids to learn about nature, ecology, and wildlife in a healthy, secure setting. Regardless of career interests of our campers, we are excited for them to join us as we explore a “whole-ecology” approach to learning about natural resources!

Applications for both campers and college mentors are available on the camp’s new website (<http://www.wildlifecamptx.org/>). The deadline for application as college mentor is April 1, 2014. High School students who wish to attend camp must submit their application by May 1, 2014.



CHAPTER BUSINESS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SOUTHWEST SECTION

Submitted by Carol Chambers, TWS Council Representative

TWS Finances

What's going on with TWS finances? The short answer is that Council received brief financial reports over the years that made it difficult to see we were overspending revenues. The recession also affected income because of the drop in interest and investment returns. We are correcting this with changes in accounting processes, review of accounts, and tight budgeting to rebuild reserve accounts. Ken Williams has been working hard during his first half year as TWS Executive Director to correct budget problems.

At the October Council meeting in Milwaukee, we reviewed expenses and approved a balanced budget. We are discussing changes to bylaws and an operating manual that will make financial reporting more transparent and provide more guidance to Council members on what and how to review. TWS is healthy, but we will be much more aware of budgets in the future.

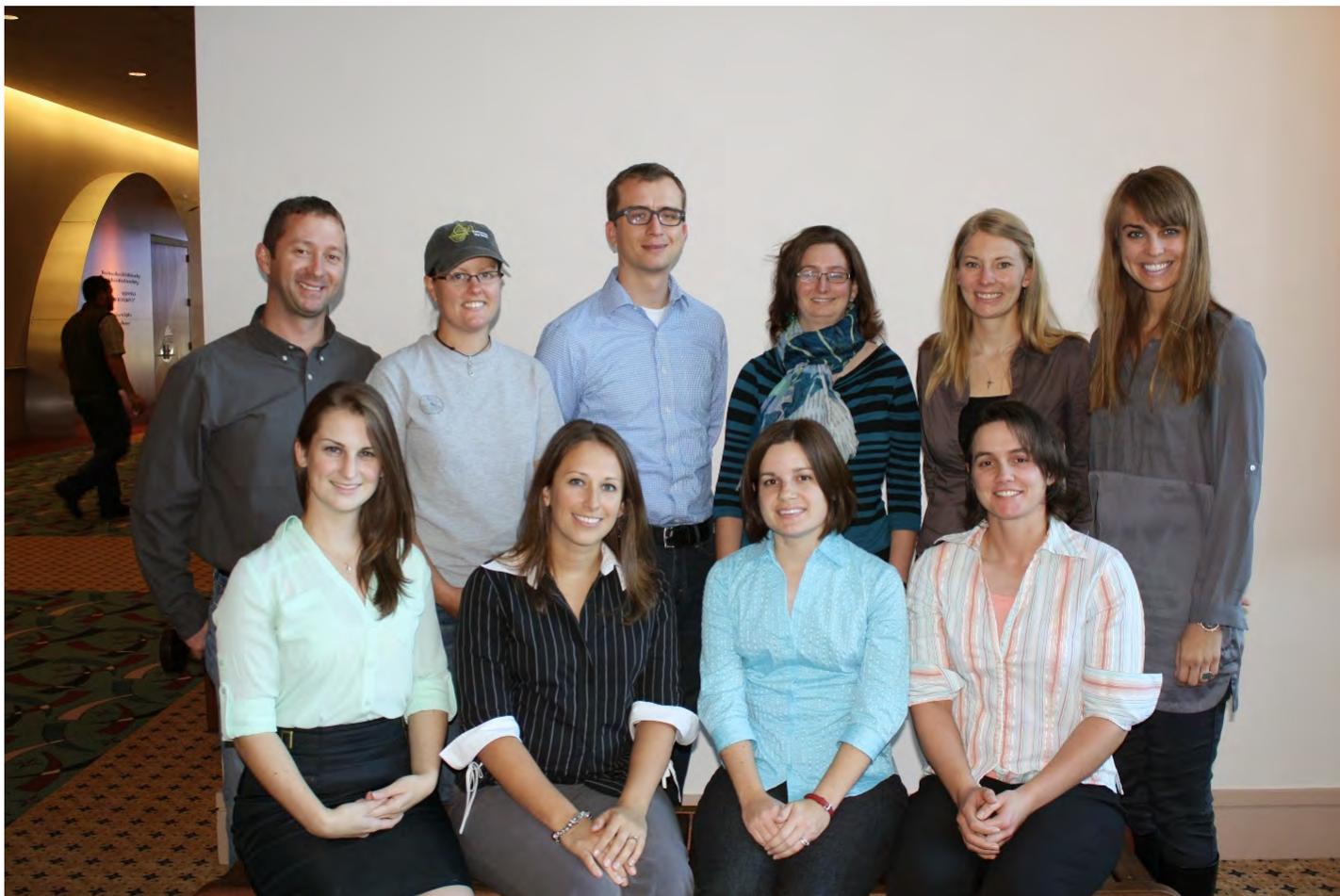
“To recap, the financial difficulties of TWS are a result of complicated reporting, the aggregation of operational income and investment yield, a lack of a focus on accrual accounting, a failure to track changes in financial status through time, and a general lack of engagement by the Council on finances, all of which made it difficult to recognize the status and trends in TWS finances.” – Ken Williams

Read more from Ken in his column “Thoughts from the Executive Director” (25 Oct 2013) at <http://news.wildlife.org/the-wildlifer/the-wildlifer-2013-october/thoughts-from-the-executive-director-4/>.

Upcoming opportunity from the Southwest Section

How can the Section better serve you? One idea I got from the Canadian Section is to offer a once-a-month webinar, free for SW Section members, small charge for non-Section members (so become a member!) on management, research, and policy topics. What types of topics would be of interest to you? Topics could range from conservation genetic applications in wildlife management to communicating with lay audiences, updates on wildlife biology for T&E species or whatever our membership wants to learn. I envision a 45 minute low-cost approach that would require participants to have access to a computer and software that will show a presentation while an expert talks about the topic. I'm also interested in developing and offering Southwest Section-sponsored workshops such as ecology of venomous snakes and their safe handling techniques, communicating wildlife science. I would also like to start promoting our top-cited TWS articles through the Listserv and Facebook. Let me know your thoughts.

CHAPTER BUSINESS



***TWS Leadership Institute Class of 2013:** Back row (left to right): Matt Bahm, Rachel Williams (AZ), Jonathan Wiens, Agnès Pelletier, Stephanie Ferrero, Sarah Hamer (TX). Front row (left to right): Krysten Zummo (NM), Rachael Urbanek, Amy Carrozzino-Lyon, Sarah Bullock.*

Leadership Institute

The Southwest Section had three 2013 Leadership Institute (LI) graduates this year: Rachel Williams (AZ), Sarah Hamer (TX), and Krysten Zummo (NM). Because of budget shortfalls, we weren't sure we could run LI this year. Generous contributions from Department of Natural Resources Management at Texas Tech University, Arizona Chapter TWS, and Southwest Section helped us keep LI funded. To date, 20% of LI grads have been from the Southwest Section. Many are already working as Chapter and Section officers or volunteers, as well as bringing leadership skills back to the agencies.

CHAPTER BUSINESS

Awards

Congratulations to 2013 TWS Fellow Leonard Brennan (TX). Bill Burger (AZ) received the Southwest Section Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to TWS. Nominations are due soon (<http://www.wildlife.org/who-we-are/awards>, February or March depending on award) so please nominate someone who has contributed to TWS and recognize their hard work.

Meetings

Get ready for the 21st annual TWS meeting in Pittsburg, October 25-30. TWS is currently requesting receptions and working group meetings, proposals, and contributed papers and posters (<http://www.wildlife.org/>). The 20th annual meeting in Milwaukee was successful with over 1300 attending. Unfortunately it coincided with the federal shutdown and we missed many members who were unable to attend. In future, TWS will avoid dates around the start of the federal fiscal year.

Publications

There are several new TWS publications to check out. Proceedings of the IV International Wildlife Management Congress (Durban, South Africa, 2012) is available at <http://wildlife.org/documents/conferences/iwmc/proceedings.pdf>. James W. Cain III (NM) and Jason Marshal (formerly AZ) edited the Proceedings. Essential Readings in Wildlife Management and Conservation, edited by Paul R. Krausman and Bruce D. Leopold (<http://wildlife.org/publications/special-publications/essential-readings>), is available to TWS members at a 25% discount (use code HTWS) at www.press.jhu.edu.

Social Media

Check out TWS on Facebook or Twitter (or both). The Southwest Section is up to 190 likes on its Facebook page, up from 140 likes in July. Job posts reach more followers so we'll continue to post those. Like us out at The Wildlife Society Southwest Section Chapters Hub (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Wildlife-Society-Southwest-Section-Chapters-Hub/205755042835210>). Selma Glasscock and I started a TWS Women of Wildlife (WOW) Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/TWS-Women-of-Wildlife/234411723382592>) in October. We are up to 736 likes (!). "Like" us (student and professional men and women at all stages in wildlife careers are welcome) so we can hit 750. In Milwaukee this year WOW organizers Selma Glasscock (TX), Misty Sumner (TX), Tabitha Graves (formerly AZ), and others put together a symposium, workshop, and panel discussion. The workshop educated attendees about scientifically sound, practical information to use in the workplace or at home to improve professional and personal interactions and was led by Dr. Tom Kalous, National Conservation Leadership Institute. The Symposium covered topics such as history of women in wildlife, gender-related differences, employers of choice for women and under-represented groups, mentoring, and more.

As always if you have questions or comments, please contact me at Carol.Chambers@nau.edu or 928-523-0014 (office).



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CHAPTER BUSINESS



Texas Parks and Wildlife Artist, Clemente Guzman, created the above painting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society. A limited number of prints will be available for purchase at the meeting in Austin. Proceeds will be directed towards the Chapter's new Leadership Institute.

CHAPTER BUSINESS

WE WANT TO KNOW!

About members' upcoming articles, activities, honors, and awards

We would like to keep our membership aware of colleagues in the news- if you have an in-press article, or have recieved a professional honor or award, tell us about it! Are you putting together a workshop for colleagues or the public? Share it here!

There's been some submissions lately- please keep them coming!

Send information for publication on Facebook to Rachel Lange (gundog.dressage@gmail.com). Links to publications and other news can also be shared on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Texas-Chapter-of-the-Wildlife-Society/200836666606716>).



UPCOMING MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORKSHOPS

The following workshops will be held at the Annual Meeting in Austin. Please check the Meeting web page (<http://www.txchapter50th.com/>) for workshop updates.

Wildlife Track Identification

Cost: \$25 current students/\$50 others

When: Part I (Classroom) February 19th (1 – 5PM),

Part II (Field) February 20th (8AM – 12PM)

Registration may be capped at 35 participants



A good wildlife biologist should be a good naturalist. Here is your chance to work on improving those field skills. Jonah Evans (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Mammalogist) and Dave Scott (Earth Native Wilderness School, <http://earthnativeschool.com/>) will present a workshop for learning basic sign identification and tracking. You will find that a day in the field with these two will enrich your life and help you see signs in the natural world you may have been missing.

R for Wildlife Ecologists

Cost: \$25 current students/\$50 others

When: February 19th (9AM - 5PM)

Registration will be capped at 50 participants

R is a free program for statistical computation and graphics. It has become the most frequently used tool for data analysis in wildlife ecology for many reasons. However, getting started with R is daunting to those who are used to point-and-click programs. You can read more about R at <http://www.r-project.org/> and http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9239625/Beginner_s_guide_to_R_Introduction.

This workshop is geared for those who have not used R before but are eager to learn. Participants will bring their own laptops with R installed (directions will be provided). The workshop will be presented by Bret Collier, Research Scientist at Texas A&M University (<http://irnr.tamu.edu/bret/>).

“Find Your Dream Wildlife Job” Workshop for Students

Cost: Free

When: February 20th (12:30-2:30PM)

Registration will be capped at 65 participants

Back by popular demand, Joe Beach (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department) will give students the secrets to landing the job of your dreams.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Selling Conservation in a Private Lands State – How to Work More Effectively with Landowners

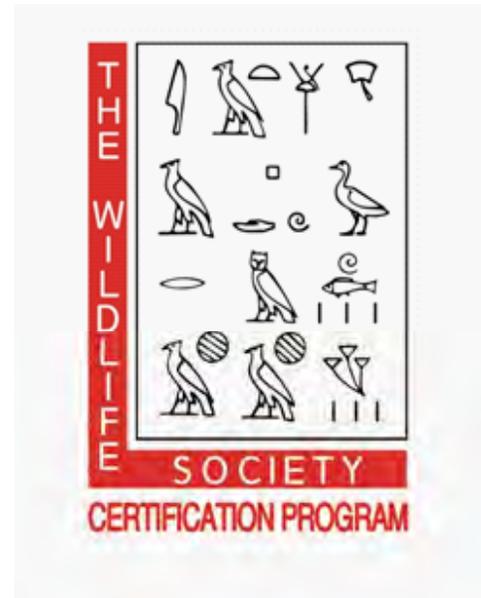
Cost: Free

When: February 20th (9 -11:30AM)

Registration will be capped at 65 participants

Conservation in Texas cannot be successful without private landowners. This workshop will present information on how this can be done most effectively through interactive and discussion-based presentations from seasoned biologists.

The Wildlife Society has approved 2.5 contact hours in Category I of the Certified Wildlife Biologist Renewal/Professional Development Certificate Program for participation in this workshop. Workshop participants are responsible for submitting their hours when they have accrued enough for certification renewal (80 hours) or professional development (150 hours). See workshop info at <http://www.txchapter50th.com/> for link to form.



9 a.m. – Welcome, Introductions and Purpose of the Workshop – Linda Campbell

9:05 a.m. – Changing demographics in Texas: People, Places, and Perspectives - Dr. Roel Lopez, Director of Institute of Renewable Natural Resources, Texas A&M University

9:35 a.m. – Scenarios from the field – what to do and what not to do – Kevin Schwausch, Jesse Oetgen, and Mike Miller, Technical Guidance Biologists, TPWD

10 a.m. – Do's and Don'ts and Other Words of Wisdom – Jimmy Rutledge, Wildlife Biologist (TPWD retired)

10:30 a.m. – Working with Private Landowners – Lessons Learned from 38 Years – Steve Nelle, Wildlife Biologist (NRCS retired)

11:00 a.m. – Panel Discussion – all participants – Questions and Discussion with audience

11:25 a.m. – Final remarks and Close – Linda Campbell and speakers