



Photo by Danielle Miller

TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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EDITOR, JOHN M. TOMECEK

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, rlange@browngay.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



A Message from the President Happy New Year from all of us at TCTWS! We are grateful for your support and participation entering into this new season. We are making final preparations for our 52nd Annual Chapter meeting coming up February 17-20 in San Antonio and hope you can join us for this year's meeting. The meeting will offer >200 papers and posters – a new record for TCTWS! The program chairs – Drs. Tyler Campbell and Dean Ransom – have organized an excellent and timely plenary session, “Chronic Wasting Disease in Texas

Whitetails...Now What?”. The Plenary Session, along with six concurrent sessions, offer a full day and plenty of interesting topics for everyone. Be sure to register soon and visit tctws.org for more information. My sincere gratitude and recognition to all who have volunteered their time and talent as committee chairs/members, as well as those unsung heroes who are assisting them as we prepare for over 700+ participants. With soaring participation and the assistance of the TCTWS Treasurer – Dr. Terry Blankenship –our Chapter's financial standing continues to grow. In addition to the annual meeting, the Chapter supports important activities ranging from the newly established Jim G. Teer Leadership Institute for young professionals to the annual Wildlife Conservation Camp for high school students. I will continue to work with the Executive Committee to find ways of maintaining our current levels of support for programs that realize the Chapter's mission, to include developing a more formal annual budget for the Chapter, which I hope to discuss at the business meeting. Stay tuned for more details. As an organization, our goal is to sustain diversity of wildlife and their habitats in Texas, and your participation facilitates this vision. Do consider attending our annual chapter meeting, which provides a space where conservation of wildlife is a common goal. We look forward to seeing you in February! It has been a pleasure and honor to serve this year as your President –thank you for your confidence and support. Wishing you a fruitful New Year.

Roel Lopez, President

Exclosures for Preventing Beaver Damage

Michael D. Porter
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Much of this article's content was originally published in a Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation 1997 Annual Report article with the same title; a portion was originally published in a Noble Foundation Ag News and Views article "Beaver Damage Preventable with Appropriate Techniques"; and a portion was written for this article.



Figure 1. A 2-inch by 4-inch woven wire beaver exclosure protecting a pecan tree at Noble Foundation Pasture Demonstration Farm 2 Northeast Pond.

Beaver damage concerns many pond and land managers. I am not aware of any effective pesticides, toxicants or fumigants registered with the Environmental Protection Agency for beaver control. Trapping and shooting are the most effective lethal control techniques. Conibear traps probably are the most effective beaver traps. Beavers primarily are nocturnal so effective shooting generally occurs at dusk or night.

All beavers from a small impoundment or a relatively small watershed can be temporarily eliminated with lethal control techniques, but beavers usually move back into the area. To be effective, lethal control methods should be combined with frequent periodic monitoring of beaver activity. Due to beavers' nocturnal activity, a disadvantage of the lethal control approach is new beaver damage usually occurs before pond or land managers realize beavers have returned.

Beavers have intrinsic values, but unfortunately they damage some things that we grow or build. Beavers are natural components of natural ecosystems and serve important ecological functions in native plant and animal communities. Their impoundments and cutting can add diversity and enhance habitats for several other species. Beavers can help suppress black willow, which can be a weedy pest around some impoundments. Beaver activity can be enjoyable to watch; they create wetlands; and they provide a source of fur. However, they frequently conflict with human interests when they girdle or cut desirable woody plants, dam drainages, plug drain or overflow pipes, or excavate dens into embankments. I do not dislike beavers – I dislike their damage. Ideally, I look for ways to prevent beaver damage while coexisting with beavers. Most human-beaver conflicts can be prevented with relatively permanent nonlethal techniques.



Figure 2 A perforated intake pipe that carries water from near the bottom of Noble Foundation Pasture Demonstration Farm 6 Pond into a box-type, parallel-bar barrier. Some of the intake holes are exposed due to very low water levels during an extended drought; very little pipe is exposed at conservation pool level.

Noble Foundation staff expended about 40 to 80 hours annually for beaver damage control at the Noble Foundation Pasture Demonstration Farm during 1981-86. This labor involved trapping beavers, shooting beavers, removing beaver-felled trees from fences, unplugging beaver-plugged overflow pipes, removing beaver dams from earthen spillways, monitoring beaver activity, and associated travel.

TEXAS FLORA AND FAUNA

In 1986, I began investigating means to decrease the Noble Foundation's annual labor commitment to beaver damage control. We began implementing relatively permanent beaver damage prevention measures in an attempt to save money and labor while more effectively preventing damage and allowing beaver populations to exist. I selected seven ponds and a drainage ditch to receive beaver exclusion devices where most beaver damage had been occurring at the Noble Foundation Pasture Demonstration Farm.

Tree Protection

We protected 317 trees with 268 exclosures around seven ponds and a drainage. Some of the beaver exclosures were constructed around trees each year during 1986 through 1996. We placed beaver exclosures around trees that were located from 0 to 168 feet from the water's edge,



Figure 3. Box-type, parallel bar-barrier protecting a hooded inlet overflow pipe intake at Noble Foundation Pasture Demonstration Farm 3 South Pond.

with an average distance of 35 feet. No beaver damage occurred to trees at these sites farther than 168 feet from water. Exclosure heights varied from 28 to 32 inches, and diameters ranged from 13 to 106 inches, with an average diameter of 43 inches. Initially, we tried five types of wire for beaver exclosures, but eventually used primarily 2-inch x 4-inch non-climb horse fence woven wire. We purchased this wire in 100-200 foot long 60-inch tall rolls that were cut in half to create 200-400 feet of 30-inch tall wire. Tops of the exclosures were usually separated at least

12 inches from tree trunks, allowing trees room to grow. We drove an average of five steel rods along most exclo-



Figure 4. Flapper gate designed and installed by former Noble Foundation employee John Holman on the overflow pipe outlet at Noble Foundation Pasture Demonstration Farm 6 Pond.

sures to provide support and anchor exclosures. We used more rods to provide extra support on large exclosures, exclosures on uneven ground, and exclosures exposed to cattle.

We examined trees and shrubs more than 4 feet high for beaver damage during July and August 1997. At each site, we examined unprotected trees and shrubs out to the distance of the beaver exclosure farthest from the water's edge. At one pond where all exclosures were located at water's edge, we examined trees and shrubs within 24 feet of the water's edge. We examined a total of 2,079 trees and shrubs outside the exclosures.

We saw no beaver damage on protected trees away from the water's edge. Eight of 317 protected trees were gnawed, but not killed by beavers during the 28-year period that exclosures have been in use. All eight trees gnawed by beaver were bald cypress planted at the water's edge. Beavers cut some lower limbs of two trees outside of the exclosures, but did not harm the main stems. Beaver cut some roots of four trees outside the exclosures by trenching along the exclosures, but did not harm the main stems. Beavers gained access inside two exclosures by trenching under them, where they cut the main stems.

Beaver cutting the roots and main stems on five of the eight damaged bald cypress trees occurred during the initial years of the project. We recognized beaver used the wet soil at water's edge to facilitate their trenching activity. To prevent additional damage, we placed two to three

TEXAS' FLORA AND FAUNA

rows of 6- to 12-inch rock around the bases of exclosures that were located at the water's edge. Fifty-four exclosures received such rock. No additional trenching under the wire exclosures or main stem damage occurred after placement of the rock.

At the eight sites with exclosures, visible beaver damage to unprotected trees and shrubs varied from 4 to 60 percent, with an average of 39 percent. These measurements of beaver damage probably underestimated the actual damage because some beaver damage to unprotected trees and shrubs occurred every year of the project and most of it occurred prior to the damage evaluation in 1997. Some of the prior damage was difficult to find, especially when the plants did not resprout.

Exclosures adequately prevented beaver damage, and when fenced from cattle, were still functional in 2014. Rubbing and trampling by cattle usually destroyed exclosures built with welded wire. We replaced welded wire exclosures with 2-inch x 4-inch woven wire wherever cattle destroyed them because woven wire exclosures better withstood cattle damage.

Using 1997 prices, material costs to build the wire exclosures in this project ranged from \$1.40 to \$43.68. For the average exclosure used in this project (new 2-inch x 4-inch woven wire that was 30 inches tall with an exclosure diameter of 43 inches and five 5/8-inch rods that were 42 inches long), 1997 material costs were \$8.93 and 2014 material costs were \$14.59. Construction of a typical exclosure generally required 30 to 60 minutes of labor including travel, accumulation of materials and tools, cutting of materials, and installation. Exclosures on steeply sloping ground and those requiring rock generally required more labor and materials.

Overflow Pipe Protection

We constructed six box-type, parallel-bar barriers over the inlets of overflow pipes on ponds where we experienced problems with beaver plugging the pipes. The parallel-bar barriers had 1-inch gaps between horizontal steel rods, which prevented beaver plugging the pipes, were relatively maintenance free, and also restricted movement of sport fish and grass carp larger than 8 inches through the overflow pipes. Additional information about box-type, parallel-bar barriers is available in the Noble Foundation Ag News and Views article, "Box Type Parallel Bar Barrier" <http://www.noble.org/ag/wildlife/parallelbarrier>.



Figure 5. A riprap barrier being installed along the face of the Noble Foundation Pasture Demonstration Farm PDF 3 South Pond dam during drawdown to prevent beaver excavation in the dam.

During the 28 years that these barriers have been present, beavers restricted water flow through only one of the six overflow pipes protected with these barriers. Beavers built a dam around three sides of one barrier. After removing the beaver dam, we installed a perforated intake pipe on the bottom of the pond in front of the barrier. This pipe was anchored to the bottom of the pond and inserted into the front of the barrier. The intake pipe had an inside diameter larger than the overflow pipe to minimize reduction in overflow pipe efficiency. The lower end of the intake pipe was plugged with wood to prevent beaver access to the inside of the pipe. Enough 3/4- to 7/8-inch diameter holes were drilled in the top half of the lower portion of the pipe so their combined surface area exceeded the surface area of the pipe's end, which minimized reduction in overflow pipe efficiency. After installation, all the 3/4- to 7/8-inch holes were below the water's surface at normal impoundment water levels to prevent beaver plugging them.

After installation of the bottom intake pipe, beavers did not attempt to construct a dam around the outside of the barrier; however, they started building a dam along the inside of the barrier by crawling through the overflow pipe. A flapper gate was installed on the outlet end of the overflow pipe to prevent beavers from entering the pipe, which ceased all damming activity along the barrier even though beaver continued to live in the pond.

Dam or Levee Protection

Beaver den excavation into dams of two impoundments threatened the integrity of two Noble Foundation Pasture Demonstration Farm pond dams. We prevented additional excavation by installing a layer of riprap on the water side of the embankments. Riprap extend at least 4 feet below and about 2 feet above full impoundment water levels. We attempted to form a continuous layer of riprap because gaps of exposed soil would allow additional beaver excavation. Before covering beaver den entrances with riprap, we removed beaver populations from the two ponds with lethal control techniques because trapped beaver probably would have tried to escape through additional excavation, which would have caused additional problems.

Conclusions

Exclosures provide an effective means to prevent beavers from cutting specific trees, plugging pond overflow pipes, and excavating dens in pond dams. Overall, beaver gnawing was seen on less than 3 percent of the trees protected with exclosures, while at least 39 percent of the trees and shrubs outside exclosures were damaged. Most of the damage to trees with exclosures could have been prevented by placing two to three rows of rock around wire exclosures located at water's edge.

The material and labor expenses to build all the tree and overflow pipe exclosures at the Pasture Demonstration Farm cost less than 11 years of labor expense to control beaver and repair their damage, not considering the value of trees that were damaged and cost of traps and ammunition while using only lethal techniques. The exclosures continue to effectively prevent beaver damage with almost no additional labor and material expense 28 years later.

Properly constructed, tree and overflow pipe exclosures should last at least 30 to 40 years with minimal maintenance. These exclosures require significant initial investments of time and money, but in most situations provide better protection and lower cost over the long-term than trapping, shooting and damage cleanup.

TWS CERTIFICATION

TWS Certification Reminder

In the April 2015 Newsletter we outlined the clear professional advantages of becoming certified as a professional wildlife biologist by TWS. Although our Chapter does not have a direct role in the TWS certification application process, our committee is here to assist you with completing your application, and providing advice on how to document the educational and experience requirements. Advantages of obtaining Associate Wildlife Biologist (AWB) or Certified Wildlife Biologist (CWB) status are many and are especially helpful for anyone working their way up the career ladder, as well as those established wildlife biologists who must regularly speak, develop reports, or testify in the public arena. This is because the AWB and especially the CWB status shows that you have met a high standard established by The Wildlife Society, and eliminates the need for you to justify why you have not obtained the available certification.

The Texas Chapter can help with Certification. For example, the TWS Certification Review Board frequently is asked to substitute experience or other professional development for course credits especially in Botany, Communications, and Policy, Administration, and Law categories. In many cases, candidates can prepare a written explanation of why they think that their formal and continuing education course work and work experience, taken as a whole, qualify them to be certified as a wildlife biologist. Our Chapter Committee can help advise you on how to develop such substitute documentation.

There is no requirement that you go through the Chapter or otherwise contact our committee when applying for certification. Rather, we are here to help answer any questions you might have on the value of certification, how to complete the application, and so forth. More details on certification including the application and required fees are on the TWS web site at:

<http://wildlife.org/learn/professional-development-certification/certification-programs/>

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Michael Morrison, Chair

TCTWS Certification Committee

mlmorrison@tamu.edu

Cell: 979-204-3015

TWS-SW SECTION NEWS

Fellow Chapter and SW Section Members,

This is my inaugural newsletter article as your Southwest Section Representative. I recently assumed this role at the 22nd Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society (TWS) in Winnipeg, Manitoba in October. As you know, Carol Chambers was our representative for the past 6 years and did an outstanding job. I was able to attend the Council meetings prior to the beginning of the conference, and it was a great experience to shadow Carol during these few days and learn gems of wisdom from her 6-year tenure as the SW Section representative. She has been a tremendous help getting me up-to-speed on the workings of the Section and TWS Council. Her wealth of experience has been invaluable during this transition, and I sincerely appreciate her willingness to help. Thank you, Carol.

I look forward to serving as your TWS Council representative for the next 3 years. My goal is to build on Carol's success during the past 2 terms and cultivate the energy, enthusiasm, and excitement that currently surrounds the Section and our parent Society.

In a Nutshell

Below is a concise synopsis of the latest happenings at the national level based on our recent TWS Council meetings in Winnipeg. You may find additional information in the respective sections following these bulleted highlights.

- Financially, 2013 was the turn-around year for TWS. TWS currently is exhibiting financial growth and is experiencing accelerated progress in financial equity.
- The 22nd Annual Conference of TWS in Winnipeg, Manitoba was a tremendous success. It met or exceeded all performance indicators and had more than 1,500 attendees.
- Many exciting new changes have been or will be implemented during the coming months to better serve TWS membership and increase the value of membership. For example, The Wildlife Professional (TWP) has increased its offering from 4 to 6 issues per year. In addition, a new partnership with American Public University (APU) allows TWS members to enroll in courses at a reduced cost. This is an important new change given that APU has restructured its curriculum and now offers courses that apply towards wildlife certification should members be lacking in particular courses.
- Our new President, Gary Potts, has outlined his presidency goals and is focusing his sights on increasing and facilitating TWS engagement with state, provincial, and federal agencies. He is working closely with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) to strengthening these ties.

Membership

TWS membership has stabilized after a recent decline. Current membership is at 9,403. This is only 84 members down from last year, and TWS membership shows evidence that the steep downward trend has been arrested. Part of the reason for this stabilizing trend reflects focused work on improving benefits to members such as a new website, conference enhancements, and service to Sections and Chapters. The current member composition is 55%

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regular members, 26% students, 9% new professionals, and 9% retirees. The greatest gains in membership were in the student category; the greatest losses were in the professional category. A recent analysis of TWS membership indicated that the greatest loss occurred during the first year of membership and that improvements in retention of first-year members needed to involve better communication of membership benefits. TWS also noted upcoming changes to increase benefits to current members including greater frequency of *The Wildlife Professional*, updating the Member Directory, launching a conference presentation archive and a policy database, and offering a 5% discount on courses taken from American Public University.

Finances

The financial status and outlook for TWS has improved greatly in recent years. In reviewing the operational budget for July 2014 – June 2015, actual revenues (\$2,446,079) were higher than expected revenues (\$2,329,912), and actual expenses (\$2,255,900) were lower than expected expenses (\$2,282,477). This resulted in a surplus (\$237,888) that was nearly twice the anticipated surplus (\$122,435) in the budget. In addition, the total equity position for TWS increased dramatically over the year, with a growth in equity of \$190,368 or 21%. This represented a remarkable improvement in the financial situation of TWS. One reason for this improvement was significant growth in the Contributions category. TWS has invested in development positions and has experienced subsequent success in attracting outside financial support. One of its new initiatives was *The 1,000*, a program started in June 2014 by TWS Chief Operating Officer Ed Thompson and former President Bruce Leopold. The goal of the initiative is to unify 1,000 members through annual donations ranging from \$100 to \$1,000 in support of TWS Strategic Plan Initiatives. *The 1,000* exceeded expectations (\approx \$50,000) and generated \$104,000 in its first year.

Annual Conference

The 22nd Annual Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba was a tremendous success. Conference registration exceeded 1,500 attendees and placed Winnipeg in the top 3 of the last 9 conferences. The conference revenue goal of \$220,000 was exceeded, and there was evidence of increased member engagement including sold-out fieldtrips and increased workshop registration. Student participation was high, comprising 46% of registrants. The Southwest Section shined at the annual conference, with several Chapter members of the Section winning national awards:

- Excellence in Wildlife Education: Nova J. Silvy, Texas A&M University
- Ethnic and Gender Diversity Award: Diana Dona-Crider, Texas A&M University
- TWS Outstanding Book: *Wildlife Science: Connecting Research and Management* by Joseph P. Sands, Stephen J. DeMaso, Matthew J. Schnupp, and Leonard A. Brennan, Texas A&M University-Kingsville
- Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society: Texas A&M University-Kingsville
- TWS Fellow: David G. Hewitt (Texas A&M University-Kingsville), Jim Ramakka (Retired)

In addition, TWS approved interim status for two new student chapters: Student Chapter of TWS at University of Arizona- Yuma and the Student Chapter of TWS at Texas Christian University. We look forward to supporting and engaging with these new student chapters as they work towards achieving permanent status.

Please mark your calendar for the 23rd Annual Conference, which will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina during October 15–19, 2016. Also, note that the annual conference will come home to where it all started, the Southwest, for 2017. The 24th Annual Conference will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico during September 23-27, 2017. Quentin Hays, President of the New Mexico Chapter of TWS, is chairing the Local Arrangements committee and is leading the charge for the conference. The NM Chapter has begun the planning process for the

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2017 annual conference. Quentin will be identifying the strategic needs during the coming months, so stay tuned for future details. As the details unfold, we look forward to helping Quentin and the NM Chapter of TWS in making the conference a success.

Presidential Agenda for Incoming TWS President Gary Potts



President Potts announced his theme for his TWS presidency: Expanding the Partnership. President Potts will use the recent survey on TWS members as a foundation for strengthening linkages with state, provincial, and federal agencies. His personal attention will focus on AFWA and strengthening the TWS-AFWA partnership. President Potts has noted that AFWA and its constituent agencies depend on societies like TWS for the latest science, continuing education, certification, and innovative thinking. He shared examples including online access of TWS journals for state and provincial agencies and a forum for addressing science and issues concerning lead (Pb) in the environment, the latter of which resulted in a new Lead Science Website for AFWA members. President Potts also noted progress in communicating work of the state and provincial wildlife agencies through *The Wildlife Professional*. He identified

ongoing science needs including pre-listing species conservation; landscape-scale habitat analysis; drought, fire, and climate analyses; and data information and management. He noted that new and emerging technologies, training, certification, and continuing education are another area where TWS could be of great service to states and provinces. States highly value certification, with about 15-20 states identifying certification as important in recruitment. President Potts also challenged Section Representatives to outreach to State and Student Chapters to increase local involvement. President Potts will have an article featured in *The Wildlife Professional* describing his goal of expanding the partnership. In addition, next year's annual conference in Raleigh will have an opening plenary on this theme.

There are numerous exciting changes occurring at the national level. I encourage you to remain involved. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to represent our SW Section. If I can be of any help, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail (fidel.hernandez@tamuk.edu) or phone (361-593-3926).

Until next time,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fidel Hernández". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fidel Hernández

STUDENT CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight on the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society

The Texas A&M University-Kingsville Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society had another busy and successful year. One major accomplishment was that we hosted the Western Wildlife Conclave where >125 wildlife students from 13 western universities (University of Wyoming, University of Idaho, Oklahoma State University, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Nevada-Reno, Washington State University, New Mexico State University, Western Colorado University, Kansas State University, Missouri Western State University, Sul Ross State University, Tarleton State University, and Texas State University) participated. Our chapter raised >\$30K and were able to provide all meals, awards, t-shirts, and field trips and transportation to Aransas Wildlife Refuge, CCA Marine Development Center, 7C's Deer Ranch, Los Palmas Exotic Ranch, and the Rob and Bessie Welder Wildlife Refuge. Conclave included academic contests such as quiz bowl, animal ID test, and plant ID test, and skill tests such as skeet and rifle shooting, orienteering, casting, archery, blow gun, and radio telemetry. A big congratulation goes to the University of Idaho for winning conclave!

Other programs conducted by TAMUK Student Chapter of TWS included a Hunter's Education Certification program, where 43 adult and youth hunters became Hunter safety-trained, an ecology education program, where 42 presentations involving 13 schools within 9 school districts were given, and a congressional bill advocacy program, in which our members wrote 108 letters to congressmen concerning 22 bills before state and federal governments. In addition, we attended numerous wildlife-related conferences throughout the year, including the annual TCTWS conference in which we assisted with running the registration desk during the conference. We also hosted a special raffle and raised \$500 to donate to the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute.

We assisted our members in gaining valuable wildlife experience by helping graduate students with the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute complete their data collection for research projects, as well as several of our members conducted their own research as undergraduates. We also helped with the TCTWS Conservation Camp, the WAY competition held at the Welder Wildlife Refuge, US Navy Blue Angel Show, Halo Flight fundraiser, and the San Patricio County beach clean-up.

However, it's not all work for our members. We have biweekly bar-b-ques associated with our meetings where our members socialize and play games like washers, bocce ball, and cowboy golf.

Our hard work and effort paid off as our chapter was awarded the Student Chapter of the Year for 2015 by The Wildlife Society. We received the award at the annual conference of TWS held in Canada. This was the 5th time TAMUK Student Chapter of TWS received this prestigious award. We recently held elections and our new officers are busy planning the next year of activities. Our goal is to continue the success that has become a tradition at Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

CHAPTER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

TCTWS Meeting 2016? We've got an App for that!

We will have a mobile app instead of our traditional printed long program this year. The long program will also be available in pdf form on tctws.org.

The mobile app (TCTWS Annual Meeting) is available for free on Android and Apple devices. You can install the app at any time (though full functionality won't be available until the meeting details are confirmed). Once installed, meeting details will be updated real time to your device when you have an internet connection and once downloaded, content is available offline.

To get the app, visit the app store on your mobile device and use the search term "TCTWS".

Five app highlights:

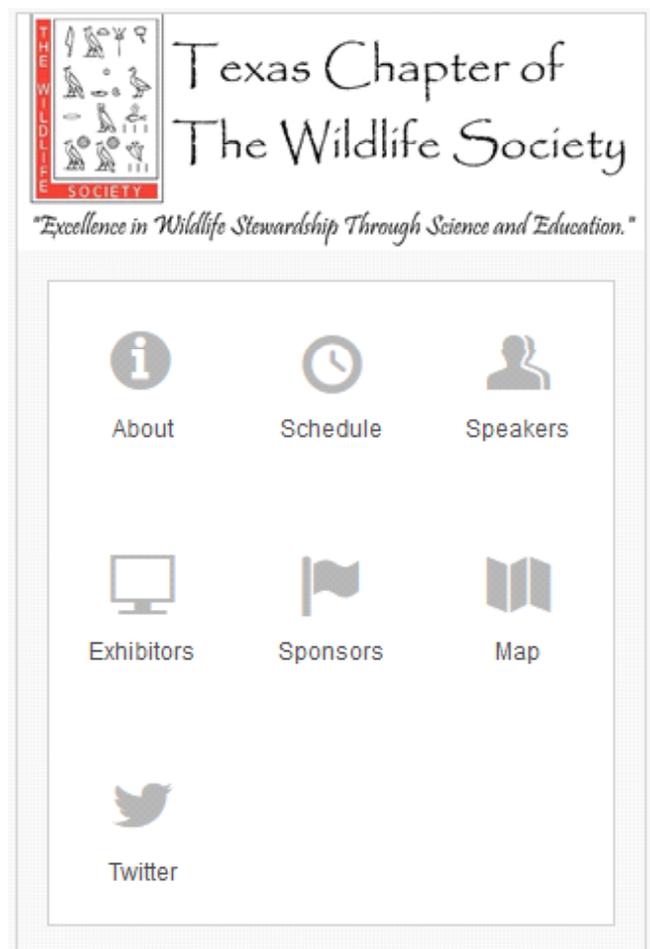
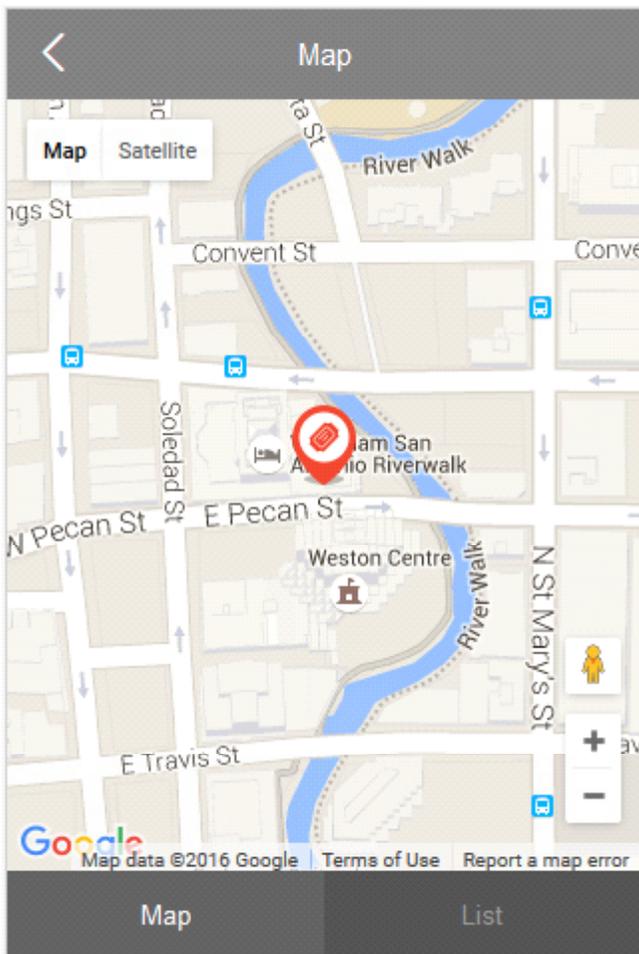
Digital – Natural resource friendly choice, no wasted paper

Real time updates of schedule changes – updates when connected to internet, updates available offline

Customizable schedule with optional alarms – choose the presentations you want to hear & don't miss them

Integrated maps showing restaurants and attractions near our venue

It's on your phone – nothing extra to keep up with, schedule at your fingertips



CHAPTER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Program for the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society - 17–20 February 2016

The program is almost finalized and will be available on the Texas Chapter website (in draft, then final form) very soon at <http://tctws.org/>. The program will not be made available in print at the meeting, but meeting attendees will be able to access the program free through the website and through the mobile App for Android and Apple devices. These technological advances are saving the Texas Chapter a bunch of money and in keeping your registration fees for the meeting more manageable. More details on how to access the mobile App, will follow in this newsletter.

Program Highlights:

Plenary session will focus on the discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease in Texas white-tailed deer and include presentations, updates, and discussions on the topic from experts, including Dr. Walt Cook, Clayton Wolf, Dr. Andy Schwartz, Dr. Michael Miller, Dr. Dan McBride, Tom Vandivier, and Dr. Don Davis. A spirited discussion on the topic is anticipated, including questions from the audience – so come ready with your questions, comments, and ideas.

13 abstracts for the Clarence Cottam Award Competition were received and the Cottam Committee selected 8 of these for the competition based on established selection criteria. We wish the best of luck to all competing students.

108 abstracts for oral presentations were received. All of these will be included in one of the program's 6 Concurrent Sessions (running Friday afternoon through Saturday morning). If you are a presenter, please check the program for the time and location of your talk. Also, we are requesting that presenters download their final presentations at the designated location (noted in the final program) the day prior to their presentation.

92 abstracts for poster presentations were received to date. All of these will be included in the program's Poster Session. The program has 28 undergraduate student posters that will be judged for competition, 36 graduate student posters that will be judged for competition, and 28 professional posters that will not be judged. Poster presenters, please see program for poster set-up and take-down times. Again, we wish the best of luck to all competing students.

The sheer size of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting (we anticipate 800+ attendees – by the way, this is...Awesome!!) has created the need to restructure the Awards Ceremony/Banquet. We will have our presentation of awards on Friday, 19 February in the Texas Ballroom A, B & C – with theatre (row) seating from 5:30–6:30 PM (or so). ANYONE INTERESTED IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IN THE GREAT STATE OF TEXAS SHOULD ATTEND THIS CEREMONY! Upon dismissal from the Awards Ceremony, we will have an Awards Reception with heavy hors-d'oeuvres (meal-like) in the Fiesta Pavilion, instead of a seated round-table banquet. This too, will keep your registration fees for the meeting more manageable and allow all registrants to participate in the celebration of awardees.

Keep on doing what you do...well – making a difference in wildlife conservation and land stewardship. All the best!

Tyler Campbell and Dean Ransom
Program Co-Chairs

CHAPTER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Photo, Art, and Video Contest Call for Submissions

The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society invites its members to submit entries for the Photo, Art, and Video Contest to take place in its 52nd Annual Conference in San Antonio, TX on February 18-20, 2016.

Photo Contest:

- All contestants must be members of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society.
- Photography categories will be 1) wildlife – not including captive animals, 2) plants and scenery, 3) humor, 4) work related, 5) wildlife conservation – captive animal photography of species of conservation concern, and 6) remote camera - not including captive animals.
- Photographs should be a standard size (3” x 5” up to 11” x 14”), unmatted, and unframed; cardboard backing is permitted. Please note: Slides will not be accepted.
- Contestants are requested to submit an electronic copy of photographs, if possible, to be used at the Awards Banquet. Electronic copies may be submitted to Jamie Killian at jamie.killian@tpwd.texas.gov.
- Art may include original drawings, paintings, carvings, sculpture, poetry, etc. All entries compete in one category.
- Contestants will be limited to 1 entry per photo category. Art submissions are limited to 5 entries per person. To help defray the cost of awards, there will be an entry fee of \$1.00 per item.
- Winners will be announced during the Friday Evening Awards Banquet. Provided there are at least 5 entries: 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places will be awarded in each category. There will also be Best of Show and Judges Choice awards. If there are < 5 entries in a category, only 1st place will be awarded.

Video Contest:

The period for video submissions has passed.

CHAPTER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Professional Photo, Art, and Video Judges Needed!

Please consider serving as a judge for the photo and art contest. Judges will offer a time for critiques of current Texas Chapter The Wildlife Society members photos on Friday, February 19th.

Please contact Jamie Killian if you are interested in serving your professional society or if you have a suggestion for a judge. In order to ensure that there are enough judges please sign up by January 31st. Contact Jamie with any questions about this opportunity.

Jamie Killian
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
jamie.killian@tpwd.texas.gov
830-480-9043

CHAPTER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Student Scholarship Opportunities- Call for Applications

Applications are now being accepted for the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society scholarship program. Three undergraduate and at least 2 graduate-level scholarships worth \$500-\$2,000 each will be awarded at the 2016 annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas!

Scholarship guidelines can be found at www.tctws.org under the "Students" tab and Applications will be sent out to Student Chapter Advisors (they can also be directly requested by students at the email addresses below). Applications must be completed fully; incomplete applications (including those without email addresses) will NOT be considered. Letters of recommendation are required for graduate applications and strongly encouraged for undergraduate applications. Applications may be submitted directly by students (in the past, guidelines called for applications to be submitted by the chapter advisor).

Applications must be received by the scholarship committee chair no later than 18 December, 2015 to be considered; postmarks are not accepted. E-mail is the preferred method of receiving applications and pdf is preferred format for applications. Undergraduate Applications should be emailed to John.Kinsey@tpwd.texas.gov and Graduate Applications should be emailed to Whitney142@jotmail.com. Please make sure that your Social Security Number and/or birth date are not included in the application; if this information is on your transcript please use a marker to blot them out prior to scanning or mailing. Applications received with social security numbers and/or birth dates will be immediately shredded and not sent out for review. All undergraduate and graduate students are encouraged to take advantage of these scholarship opportunities and submit applications well in advance of the 18 December deadline. Good luck!

Texas Big Game Awards Scholarships Available!

Eligibility - ONLY 9 SCHOLARSHIPS WILL BE AWARDED. EIGHT AT \$1,500 EACH (that is one per Region) AND ONE OVERALL TOP SCHOLARSHIP AT \$3,000!! All applicants must be Agriculture and/or Natural Resource related majors.

The selection process will be based on a point-scale scoring system and each application will be reviewed and ranked by a statewide scoring committee. These scholarships are open to any graduating high school senior, entering college freshman, sophomore, or junior. Students do not have to participate in the TBGA to be eligible for these scholarships, but those who have entered the Texas Big Game Awards will receive a preference point during the scoring process. Recipients must be able to attend their Regional TBGA Banquet in order to receive their scholarship. Please check the TBGA Regional Map to determine what Region you live in and the Banquet Dates to determine where your Regional Banquet will be held next spring.

All applications must be postmarked by March 31st annually.

See <http://www.texasbiggameawards.org/scholarships.php> for more information.