

# THE TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY



Photo by Chip Ruthven

Excellence in Wildlife Stewardship Through Science and Education

Number 194 • October 2017

## TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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### EXECUTIVE BOARD

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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 (John M. Tomecek; tomecek@tamu.edu) 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



Fall is here, at least that is what the calendar tells us. Hunting season has started and tales of trips to the mountains and the best and worst shots in the dove field are quickly spreading. I hope that you are scheduling some time this fall to be outdoors to enjoy all that our great state has to offer. I encourage you to take someone along to get them outside and enjoying what we all treasure.

As you all know, the devastating Hurricane Harvey hit much of south and coastal Texas. The impacts were catastrophic and it will take many years to recover. Additionally, many of our members were directly impacted. For those in the process of recovery, I am so sorry for your loss and hardship. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. As often occurs in this profession, when in need, others come alongside us to assist. We were recently contacted by the Presidents of the Alabama and Mississippi Chapters of TWS. They held a fundraiser in an effort to send needed dollars to the Texas coast to aid with hurricane recovery at Aransas NWR. Their contribution speaks to the heart and intent of those that we have the privilege to work with and for. A thank you to the Alabama and Mississippi Chapters of TWS for their thoughts and generous donation.

As for Chapter business, Andy James and his team held a great Wildlife Conservation Camp in July. The camp returned to its roots and took advantage of the great facilities and resources at the Welder Wildlife Foundation. Twenty eight campers attended plus returning high school students, college mentors, and numerous professionals and presenters. Activities included field sampling, tracking, wildlife ID, mist netting, spotlight surveys, fish surveys, plant ID and collections, shot-gunning, trips to the state aquarium and Padre National Sea Shore, formal group presentations to their peers and the Executive Board, and much more. I am very glad that I am not in a speaking competition with the campers - considering their age and amount of speaking experience (plus very little sleep for a week), they were very impressive!

As tradition, the Executive Board held its summer board meeting concurrent with camp. Agenda items included an update on the Legislative Session from our Executive Director, committee reports, discussion on resolutions and position statements and the need for retention of a lobbyist.

The Wildlife Society's Annual Conference was recently held in New Mexico and a number of Texas Chapter members attended. My schedule prevented me from attending, but all accounts are that it was a great meeting with very relevant information. Along those lines, our annual meeting is not far out! Please put it on your calendars and plan to attend. The meeting will be February 8-10 at the Sheraton Dallas. Registration and hotel block information can be found in the newsletter; please remember to register and book your hotel room in a timely manner so that you are guaranteed a room.

It is a privilege to work alongside each of you for the benefit of the Chapter.

Corey Mason, President

# NOMINATION NOTIFICATION

## Honorary Life Membership Committee Seeking Nominees

The Honorary Life Membership Committee is seeking nominees for this honor. Certainly, the Texas Chapter is blessed with numerous members who have made outstanding contributions to wildlife conservation on a state, national and/or international scale. These individuals deserve the recognition of their peers for their outstanding long-term service to our wildlife resources.

To be eligible a nominee should have been (1) active for 20 or more years 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) They should have made significant contributions to the Chapter and/or the Profession and/or the conservation of the natural resources of Texas.

To act on a nomination the Committee needs:

1. A reasonably complete vitae for the nominee which should contain his/her full name (present position, organizational affiliation, address, phone number), and a reasonably complete history of professional accomplishments.
2. One or more letters of nomination from close friends or associates.

Nominations should be kept confidential, especially from the nominee. Many people have a vitae that they use for various purposes. Surreptitiously obtain one. If there isn't one available, patch something together, with the help of friends, associates and spouses. From those nominations that we receive the committee can select one or more recipients to be honored at the 2018 annual meeting. Please take a moment right now and consider who among your coworkers qualifies and deserves this honor. Set some time aside on your calendar to gather the data to support his or her nomination.

Past recipients of this honor are listed under Historical Information at <http://tctws.org/about-us-2/history/>

Send nomination materials to:  
Chip Ruthven--Committee Chair  
[chip.ruthven@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:chip.ruthven@tpwd.texas.gov)  
806-492-3405

# NOMINATION NOTIFICATION

## **Student Scholarships Call for Applications**

This is the last call for undergraduate and graduate student scholarship applications for the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The deadline for submission is December 15, 2017.

To apply for a scholarship, all students must submit a single pdf with their completed and signed application and transcript (please mark out or remove any personal information such as your social security number and birth date). Graduate students also need to include a letter of recommendation from their major professor/ advisor and a short synopsis of their graduate research project (≤300 words). Please email scholarship applications to: Chris Farrell, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, 21187 County Road 4106, Lindale, TX 75771; e-mail: [christopher.farrell@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:christopher.farrell@tpwd.texas.gov) ; office: 903-881-8233.

Undergraduate and graduate student scholarship guidelines are located on the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society website, or can be obtained by following the hyperlinks above. To download the scholarship application, please click [here](#) for undergraduate students and [here](#) for graduate students.

## **Attention Student Chapter Advisors Outstanding Wildlife Student Recognition**

This is the first notice regarding the Outstanding Wildlife Student Recognition Award; an email will follow to all Student Chapter Advisors from the Scholarship Chair, Chris Farrell, providing additional information on the selection process and requirements.

The purpose of the Outstanding Wildlife Student Recognition is for each university with a wildlife program to select its most outstanding student during the past year. The student could be an undergraduate or a graduate student who has shown himself/herself to be a leader. Individual schools are free to select the criteria they deem important in the selection of their outstanding student. However, the selected student **MUST** be a member of their collegiate student chapter **AND** the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Student Chapter Advisors should contact Chris Farrell ([christopher.farrell@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:christopher.farrell@tpwd.texas.gov)) with any questions. The deadline for submission is December 15, 2017.

# NOMINATION NOTIFICATION

The Excellence in Wildlife Conservation Committee is asking you to help us recognize exceptional wildlife conservation efforts in Texas by submitting nominations for one or more of the following award categories:

## **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 bulleted statement explaining why the nominee is deserving of the award, along with a curriculum vitae of the nominee.

## **Land Stewardship Award**

The Land Stewardship Award recognizes landowners who have been instrumental in the development, application, and promotion of sound wildlife management principles on their land. Please submit a ½ to 1 page letter of nomination explaining why the nominee is deserving of the award.

## **Outstanding Achievement Award**

The Outstanding Achievement Award recognizes wildlife professionals for their outstanding achievements during the course of their involvement with natural resource management and conservation. Please submit a 5-point bulleted statement explaining why the nominee is deserving of the award, along with a curriculum vitae of the nominee (if possible).

All nominations should be submitted to: Mike Miller, Box T-0050, Stephenville, TX 76401 [mike.miller@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:mike.miller@tpwd.texas.gov). ***The deadline for nominations is November 1, 2017.***

# TWS-SW SECTION NEWS

## Southwest Section Tracks

### Fall Issue 2017

*By Fidel Hernandez, Southwest Section Representative*



I had a pleasant, climatic surprise last week. After months of humid, warm mornings, I stepped outside to a cool, crisp dawn. A cool front had rolled into South Texas and decreased the humidity and temperature. I welcomed the refreshing feeling, and I thought, “Autumn must be on its way...”

Autumn is a wonderful season. It is a time of migration for many wildlife as well as a time of senescence for many plants. Autumn also signifies the season when we gather as professional group during the annual conference of The Wildlife Society (TWS).

Below is brief update on TWS activities from the summer as well as information on the upcoming conference in Albuquerque.

### **Tws Administration and Finance**

**Leadership succession.** As you know, former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ken Williams retired on June 30 and was succeeded by the incoming CEO Ed Thompson. The transition was seamless. CEO Thompson met with the entire staff multiple times during the final two weeks of June to plan for a smooth transition and make organizational preparations for the new budget year (1 July–30 June). CEO Thompson also participated in conference calls with the Finance Committee and Investments Committee as part of the TWS transition plan. TWS looks forward to this next phase under its new leadership.

# TWS-SW SECTION NEWS

**Finance.** With the passing of Jane Jorgenson, TWS Office and Finance Manager, TWS lost a valuable friend and a tremendous asset. Jane was 30-year employee of TWS, and her long tenure and intimate knowledge made her an irreplaceable pillar of the organization. Thus, this summer, TWS reached out to Renner & Associates to handle TWS finances in the immediate future. Given this transition, TWS taking the opportunity to identify, improve, and automate accounting processes so that the 2017–2018 financial processes will be more streamlined and effective. As of June, TWS was projected to close out the fiscal year in the black.

**Audit.** Preparations were made for the annual audit given the closing of the budget year in June. Because Renner & Associates presently is handling the society's finances, TWS is in the process of selecting a new auditor. CEO Thompson has received recommendations of qualified auditors and a draft request for proposals is being reviewed by President Thompson. TWS Council will be updated on the status of auditors and the audit process this September during the annual conference.

## **TWS Partnership Engagement**

One of the primary duties of TWS Leadership is to engage with other professional societies on important conservation initiatives. This engagement occurs at many levels in TWS. Below is a brief summary of some of these engagement activities that occurred during summer.

- **Multi-agency Engagement.** Director Norris and Executive Director Williams met with representatives from the American Fisheries Society (AFS), the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, and the USGS Cooperative Research Units to continue planning for a workshop at the 2018 North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference. In addition, Director Norris joined leaders of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and AFS to review elements of TWS's joint MOU and in particular the elements that call for joint efforts in growing diversity in the natural resource workforce.
- **Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies.** Director Norris attended the director's meeting of the Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies near Omaha, Nebraska. TWS applied for and was approved as an affiliated member of MAFWA.
- **Feral Horse and Burro Coalition.** Director Norris engaged with state and tribal agency leaders regarding management challenges posed by feral horses and burros. Discussions included potential policy solutions, advocacy needs, management approaches, and social research opportunities. In addition, TWS was invited for a

# TWS-SW SECTION NEWS

second year by the Mustang Heritage Foundation and Bureau of Land Management to participate in an Extreme Mustang Makeover Event on behalf of the National Horse and Burro Rangeland Management Coalition. Kovach attended the weekend event along with a representative from the Society for Rangeland Management. During the event, Associate Director Kovach hosted two presentations that educated over 150 individuals on the effects that overpopulation of wild horses has on western rangelands and native wildlife.

- **Farm Bill Coalition.** A collaborative meeting of the Farm Bill Conservation Coalition was convened to discuss consensus building efforts for the 2018 Farm Bill. Associate Director Kovach advocated for dedicated funding for monitoring and evaluation of conservation outcomes and increased funding for wildlife in both CSP and EQIP programs.

## TWS General Operations

**Membership.** TWS membership continues to maintain strong trends. For the first time since 2012, TWS closed the fiscal year (1 July – 30 June) with a membership growth higher than the previous year. The final count for the closing budget year was 9,133 members compared to 9,076 last June (+57, +0.6%). While the increase was modest, demonstrating growth in membership after three consecutive years of losses is a huge turnaround for the society. During June, TWS added three distinctly-themed email campaigns at members who lapsed during 2014, 2015, and the first five months of 2016 with positive responses. TWS also is announcing two new major member benefits in the coming months that should continue to showcase the value of TWS membership. One minor but critical improvement in membership services was the automatic renewal option. This membership option continues to perform beyond expectations. Since January, 3,394 members (32.6%) are enrolled in Automatic Renewal.

# TWS-SW SECTION NEWS

**THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**  
Leaders in Wildlife Science, Management and Conservation



**GIVE BACK** to the  
**WILDLIFE PROFESSION**

When you renew your TWS membership nominate a deserving professional for a *six-month complimentary membership* which includes benefits such as:

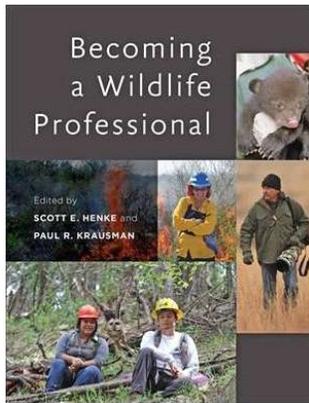
- Free online access to all TWS journals and publications
- A variety of members-only discounts, including \$200 off TWS Annual Conference registration
- Weekly editions of the *eWildlife* newsletter, including two featured TWS Talks presentations
- Bimonthly issues of *The Wildlife Professional* magazine

Visit [wildlife.org/giveback/](http://wildlife.org/giveback/) for more information on how you can Give Back.

While we're on the topic of membership, I'd like to take the opportunity to highlight the Give Back Program. This program extends a free 6-month TWS membership to a colleague of your choosing. Nominees do not have to join TWS at the end of their 6-month free membership, but get to enjoy all membership benefits during the 6-month period. If you did not take advantage of this opportunity last December, be sure to do so the next time you renew your membership. It does not cost you anything more than a simple click of a box in your renewal form and the nomination of a colleague, who—if he/she accepts your nomination—will enjoy a 6-month free membership and many TWS benefits.

**Publications.** TWS has just completed an author survey of the *Wildlife Monographs*, *Journal of Wildlife Management*, and *Wildlife Society Bulletin*. This is an effort to improve the publication process in these journals while enhancing their effectiveness. Survey results are being compiled, and I will report back on the findings in my next newsletter. Of worthy mention is the recent increase in the impact factors for all 3 TWS journals. We extend our gratitude to the current editors of these journals—Drs. Merav Ben-David (*Wildlife Monographs*), Paul Krausman (*Journal of Wildlife Management*), and David Haukos (*Wildlife Society Bulletin*)—for their professional service.

# TWS-SW SECTION NEWS



I would also like to highlight the recent release of a new book, *Becoming a Wildlife Professional*, that is part of TWS's book-series agreement with the John Hopkins University Press. This book is an edited volume by Drs. Scott Henke (Texas A&M University-Kingsville) and Paul Krausman (Professor Emeritus, University of Arizona). The book represents a compilation of perspectives on the wildlife profession from students to early-career professionals to seasoned biologists. Topics are wide ranging and include careers in wildlife, graduate-school advice for prospective students, student perspectives on higher education in wildlife, contemplations on the future of the profession, and many more topics. It is an excellent textbook to include as part of an undergraduate wildlife course. For more information on TWS book publications, please visit the following website: <https://jhupbooks.press.jhu.edu/books-published-association-wildlife-society>

**Certification.** Certification of wildlife biologists is one of the many services TWS provides to its members. During the month of June, 12 applications were reviewed for certification by the Certification Review Board. The review resulted in the approval of 9 Associate Wildlife Biologist® applications and 4 Certified Wildlife Biologist® applications. In addition, 6 renewal applications and 1 Professional Development Certificate application were approved. In an effort to increase the relevance of certification, Government Affairs Associate Caroline Murphy and Director Norris engaged in a meeting organized by the Ecological Society of America on the merits and challenges faced by other professional societies when operating their certification programs.

Until next time,

Fidel Hernández

Fidel Hernández

Southwest Section Representative of TWS

## James Teer Leadership Institute Now Accepting Applications

The James Teer Leadership Institute welcomed its first cohort in 2014 to ensure that the natural resource profession in Texas has access to well-trained conservation leaders adept at identifying conservation challenges and finding solutions. The JGTCLI seeks early-career professionals 1 to 10 years out of college who are working full time in a natural resource-related field and have demonstrated leadership potential. Professionals from diverse natural resource fields are welcome to apply. These fields include federal and state natural resource agencies, environmental and conservation organizations, educational institutions, natural resource policy development, private consultants and individuals from other natural resource programs.



Throughout the year-long course of study, Institute Fellows will be exposed to different types of leadership styles, will go through an examination process that identifies skills and weaknesses, become familiar with the policy-making process, and will tackle a problem-solving challenge on behalf of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society related to current statewide conservation issues. Participants will be grouped into teams and will develop their communication, problem solving, and project management skills.

TCTWS is pleased to begin accepting applications for the 2018 Leadership Institute. Applicants must have completed their undergraduate degree, and have worked as a natural resource professional for between 1 and 10 years. Participants will participate in several workshops and will work as a team throughout 2018 on their projects that solve a critical issue in the field of resource conservation. Applications are due January 15, 2018. For more information, and to apply, please visit <http://tctws.org/conservation-institute-menu/jgtcli-early-career-professional-training/>



We look forward to meeting you! For more information, please contact Richard Heilbrun at [Richard.heilbrun@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Richard.heilbrun@tpwd.texas.gov) or at 210-307-0413.

# TEER INSTITUTE

## James Teer Institute soliciting “Hot Topics” Project Ideas

The James G Teer Conservation Leadership Institute is hosting the 3rd installation of our Early Career Professional Training Program in 2018. An integral part of the Institute is asking the Fellows to work on a project of statewide conservation importance. We are soliciting project topics from TCTWS members.

Project topics should be a conservation issue, challenge, or problem of state, regional, or national importance with a proposed deliverable. “Deliverables” is undefined. Participants may be asked to develop a product, produce and execute an event, or any other outcome worthy of emerging conservation leaders. Previous projects included “Water rights” in which the product was a model and a set of recommendations for the TCTWS, “Workforce Diversity” that resulted in a position statement, and “Recovering America’s Wildlife Act” that also resulted in a position statement. Project ideas should be complex enough to warrant collaboration between at least 4 participants, should require the team members to interact with conservation professionals, and should be specific enough to guide the formulation of objectives and outcomes.

Please send project ideas to Richard Heilbrun at Richard.heilbrun@tpwd.texas.gov or at 210-307-0413. If you’d like to serve as a mentor for the 2018 participants, your assistance would be appreciated.



# CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

## Call for Abstracts for the 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society

### Paper and Poster Presentations

Abstracts will be accepted **beginning 1 September 2017** for the technical paper and poster presentation sessions at the 2018 Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's annual meeting to be held February 8th – 10th, 2018 at the Sheraton Hotel in Dallas. Papers/posters presenting the results of wildlife investigations and analyses as well as topic reviews of interest to wildlife students and professionals in Texas are encouraged. Paper (oral) presentations should present results or outcomes and abstracts reporting preliminary or no data should be submitted as a poster. The theme for this year's plenary session is *"The relevance of conservation to a diverse society...How to make it a reality"*. This session will feature wildlife science and management professionals with expertise in the topic.

In addition to the plenary session, the meeting will offer numerous technical paper sessions and a poster presentation session for students (undergraduate or graduate) and wildlife professionals, and the Clarence Cottam award presentations and competition for graduate students. Best poster presentation awards will be presented for undergraduate and graduate students, as in previous years. **Only one poster will be judged per student presenter, though students may present >1 poster.**

Abstracts should be submitted via the abstract submission website at: <http://tctws.tamu.edu/>. **Deadline for receipt of abstracts is 30 November 2017.**

Please indicate, where requested, your preference for presentation format (i.e., paper, poster, or no preference) and session. For those entering no preference, a decision will be made by the program committee. For poster presentations, please also check the appropriate box indicating whether you would like to be included in the judging for the best poster presentation awards. Papers not accepted for oral presentations will be considered for poster format.

Any questions pertaining to abstract submission should be directed to the Program Co-chair: T. Wayne Schwertner, 254-968-9219 or at [schwertner@tarleton.edu](mailto:schwertner@tarleton.edu) (preferred).

Contributed papers will be scheduled at 15-minute intervals to include time for questions and comments (2–3 minutes). The short and long program will be available at <http://tctws.org/> in advance of the meeting indicating day, time, and location of presentations.

Clarence Cottam Award presentations will be judged on topic originality, scientific procedures, quality of display, accuracy of conclusions, and response to questions from audience and judges. Abstracts should be submitted via the abstract submission website, <http://tctws.tamu.edu/>.

### Abstract Format

Abstracts should be no longer than 250 words and follow The Journal of Wildlife Management format. Abstracts should be concise and include general problem statement, brief review of methods/experimental design, results, and management implications. For needed statistical significance statements, report P-values only (no need for exact statistical test results). Please follow formatting instructions on the abstract submission website.

Please note not to use scientific names in title; use only in body of abstract.

Short title example:

**Landscape effects on gene flow and genetic structure of northern bobwhite in Texas and the Great Plains.**

Katherine S. Miller, Leonard A. Brennan, Randy DeYoung, Fidel Hernández, and X. Ben Wu.

Long Title: **LANDSCAPE EFFECTS ON GENE FLOW AND GENETIC STRUCTURE OF NORTHERN BOBWHITE IN TEXAS AND THE GREAT PLAINS**

KATHERINE S. MILLER, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 78363, USA

# CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

LEONARD A. BRENNAN, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 78363, USA

RANDY DEYOUNG, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 78363, USA FIDEL HERNÁNDEZ, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 78363, USA

X. BEN WU, Department of Ecosystem Science and Management, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, USA

**Abstract:** Northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) populations have declined due to habitat loss and fragmentation. Northern bobwhites have been considered poor dispersers, so biologists expect a moderate population structure and low genetic diversity in fragmented areas. Our goal was to determine how landscape affects the genetic structure of northern bobwhite in Texas and the Great Plains. We collected tissues from 641 northern bobwhites in 23 populations, and amplified 13 microsatellite loci. We determined population structure (FST) and genetic distance between populations (Dest). We used a land cover map (National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative) to develop a landscape resistance matrix. We compared Dest to geographic distance and resistance with Mantel and partial Mantel tests. Populations showed low levels of structure (FST = 0.025). We found moderate correlations to geographic distance ( $r = 0.542$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ) and landscape resistance ( $r = 0.416$ ,  $P = 0.001$ ). There was significant correlation between Dest and geographic distance when we accounted for resistance ( $r = 0.388$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), but no significant correlation between Dest and resistance we accounted for geographic distance. A spatial principal component analysis for South Texas samples revealed a global structure. Low genetic structure and moderate genetic diversity may suggest that more northern bobwhite individuals are dispersing further than previously thought. Other possible explanations lie in the northern bobwhite's fall covey shuffle, their boom-and-bust population cycle, and stochastic events. Habitat is an important factor for northern bobwhites; determined how habitat affects gene flow will help biologists to manage northern bobwhite.

## Clarence Cottam Award: Call for Abstracts & Requirements

The Clarence Cottam Award is given to recognize outstanding student research. Papers and Presentations at the Annual Meeting will be judged for significance, originality, creativity of research design and implementation, quality of methodology, validity of conclusions, neatness, and conformity to JWM style and format.

A \$500 scholarship is given to the winner by the Welder Wildlife Foundation. Second and third prizes will be awarded if more than 6 papers are accepted, and are sponsored by the Texas Chapter. A maximum of 8 papers will be included in the competition, excess submissions will be included in the regular sessions.

An abbreviated abstract should be submitted via the TCTWS submission webpage and follow instructions outlined in the general call for abstract submission from the program committee. Cottam entries must also submit an extended abstract to the Chair of the Cottam Awards Committee. Extended abstract should follow the guidelines provided in the Cottam Award Guidelines website (Linked below). Deadline for receipt of abstracts will be posted in subsequent newsletters. Extended abstracts and any questions regarding the Clarence Cottam Award should be sent to John Kinsey at [john.kinsey@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:john.kinsey@tpwd.texas.gov).

<http://tctws.org/student-menu/scholarship-opportunities/clarence-cottam-award/>

## BOOK REVIEW

The Upland and Webless Migratory Game Birds of Texas. Leonard A. Brennan, Damon L. Williford, Bart M. Ballard, William P. Kuvlesky Jr., Eric D. Grahmann, and Stephen J. DeMaso. 2017. Texas A&M University Press, College Station, Texas. 272 pp. \$40.00 hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-62349-498-8.

The Upland and Webless Migratory Game Birds of Texas (hereafter Game Birds) is an invaluable resource for wildlife biologists, land managers, students, hunters, and anyone seeking information on the biology and management of upland and webless migratory game birds of Texas. The book is semi-technical in style, but wonderfully written so that it is easily interpretable to even laypersons seeking information on these birds. Game Birds serves its purpose well by providing comprehensive information on all of the game birds of Texas (excluding waterfowl: ducks, geese and brants, and swans) within a single book. In addition to having informative chapters on historical and cultural importance, evolutionary and taxonomic relationships, and conservation initiatives geared toward subject species, Game Birds includes treatises on eight upland and fourteen webless migratory game birds that inhabit Texas during at least a portion of their annual life cycle.

Game Birds also includes forward, preface, acknowledgments, and index sections. The book's first two chapters (Chapter 1: Historical and Cultural Importance of Upland and Webless Migratory Game Birds in Texas and Chapter 2: Evolutionary and Taxonomic Relationships) provide a relevant orientation to upland and webless migratory birds that sets the stage for the species accounts that follow. Each species has its own chapter except that the Common Gallinule and Common Moorhen (considered as one species by the authors for the purposes of the book) are combined into a single chapter (Chapter 9). Game Birds includes chapters on Sandhill Crane, Clapper Rail, King Rail, Virginia Rail, Sora Rail, American Coot, Common Gallinule and Common Moorhen, Purple Gallinule, Wilson's Snipe, American Woodcock, White-Tipped Dove, Mourning Dove, White-Winged Dove, Ring-Necked Pheasant, Lesser Prairie-Chicken, Gambel's Quail, Scaled Quail, Northern Bobwhite Quail, Montezuma Quail, Wild Turkey, and Plain Chachalaca.

Species' accounts are comprehensive and consistency is maintained throughout each chapter, containing sections for introduction, distribution, biology (e.g., migratory routes and timing, behavior, phenology, breeding biology, diet and foraging, demography, population status and trends, etc.), habitat and habitat management, Texas hunting regulations, conservation, and research needs and priority. Chapters include color photographs and distribution maps, both of very high quality. Thorough literature cited sections substantiate text and allow for further study to those interested.

Land managers and wildlife biologists will find sections relating to habitat requirements and management especially valuable and pertinent to Texas and like ecoregions of adjoining states. These are detailed and, in some cases, even to subspecies (e.g., scaled quail), ecoregion and land use. Each species account concludes with a section that focuses on research needs and priorities relevant at the time of the book's writing.

The authors of Game Birds consist of university, institute, and federal researchers and scientists; collectively spanning the expanse of upland and webless migratory bird management and research. Their expertise and the book's format delivers an informative book usable by the layman and professional alike. In summary, Game Birds met the purpose of providing a user-friendly reference on the upland and webless migratory game birds of Texas for a wide-range of audiences.

—James D. Ray, Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC, USDOE/NNSA Pantex Plant, Amarillo, TX 79120, USA. E-mail: James.Ray@cns.doe.gov.

Book Review Editor: Stephen L. Webb, Journal of Wildlife Management, The Wildlife Society and Noble Research Institute, LLC, Ardmore, Oklahoma.

# WILDLIFE POLICY UPDATES

## Recovering America's Wildlife Act Soon to be Introduced

By Janice Bezanson, Executive Director of Texas Conservation Alliance

A bill soon to be introduced in Congress gives Americans the opportunity to solve our growing wildlife crisis. Despite successful recoveries of species such as bald eagles and Rocky Mountain Elk, thousands of species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and insects are in decline due to a lack of available funding for research and management. Across the country, 15,000 species have been identified as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), meaning they are at risk of becoming threatened or endangered due to habitat loss, disease, urbanization, or that we lack the knowledge to certify them as stable. 1,310 of these species call Texas home, among them pronghorn, black bear, loggerhead sea turtles, Texas horned lizards, golden-cheeked warblers, and the American bumblebee.

This fall, Representative Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE) and Representative Debbie Dingell (D-MI) will introduce the bi-partisan Recovering America's Wildlife Act. This legislation will dedicate \$1.3 billion annually in existing royalties from energy and mineral production on federal lands and waters to the currently-unfunded Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account, which is a subaccount of the Pittman-Robertson Program. These funds will then be distributed to the state natural resource agencies to implement State Wildlife Action Plans such as the Texas Conservation Action Plan. These plans are specifically designed to conserve at-risk species and keep them off of the threatened and endangered list. Texas' share of the funding is estimated at more than \$60 million per year.

If passed, the resulting funds can be used for habitat restoration, land acquisition, conservation easements, research, landowner incentives, education, outreach, technical guidance, and wildlife-based recreation, as long as these activities benefit SGCN species.



“Protecting wildlife and enhancing the space so wildlife can flourish not only is right in itself, but it brings extraordinary benefits to us for both recreation and hunting,” Fortenberry said.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act follows the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. This Panel, comprised of national business, energy, and conservation leaders, was convened in 2015 to identify a sustainable funding mechanism for fish and wildlife conservation. In March, 2016, the Panel recommended

that \$1.3 billion in existing revenue from energy and mineral production on federal lands and waters be used to support the implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans in every state.



# WILDLIFE POLICY UPDATES



The Recovering America's Wildlife Act is a potential game-changer for America's wildlife. The funding represents our best chance to build a safety net for all fish and wildlife while at the same time reducing the regulatory uncertainty and added cost for businesses of having additional species on the endangered species list.

"The Recovering America's Wildlife Act would bring much-needed funding to Texas to benefit wildlife without creating a new tax," said Rob Denkhaus, speaking for the Texas Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife. "It's a win for wildlife, a win for businesses, and a win for all of us who care about our natural resources."

The Texas Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife is a coalition of more than a hundred organizations representing over a million Texans speaking with one voice in support of wildlife conservation in Texas. The Texas Alliance invites you to join our efforts to ensure that Texas has adequate resources to conserve our at-risk fish and wildlife species, and the habitats they depend on.

For more information, visit the toolkit section of our website:  
<http://www.txwildlifealliance.org/get-involved/toolkit.html>

# ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

## TCTWS Annual Meeting

February 8-10, 2018

### **The relevance of conservation to a diverse society... How to make it a reality.**

Activities ranging from paper and poster sessions, workshops and field trips will make the event informative and interesting.

#### **Meeting Location:**

Sheraton Dallas Hotel. Reserve Rooms under Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society (must be made by January 7, 2018).

#### **Optional Workshops (no additional fee):**

Prescribed Fire Practice Workshop  
2/8/18, 8am-10am, 1pm-4pm

Introduction to "R"  
2/8/18, 8am-12pm

TWS Certification Workshop  
2/8/18, 8am-10am

Mobile Apps in Conservation Science  
2/8/18, 10am-12pm

#### **Registration Fees:**

Regular Registration: \$250 (earlybird until 1/31/2018), \$300  
standard

Student Registration: \$135 (earlybird until 1/31/2018), \$175  
standard