

Photo by Andrea Wiley

TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: *Jena Moon*.....1

NOMINATION NOTIFICATIONS3

TWS-SW SECTION NEWS
Fidel Hernandez.....5

TEER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
Maria "Masi" Mejia.....10

VIREO FLIES OFF LIST
Scott Summers.....12

TWS GOOD READS.....13

EDITORS, *Andrea Wiley and Maureen Frank*

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 Editors (Andrea Wiley; Andrea.Wiley@qpse.com or Maureen Frank; mgfrank@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



As I hung off the side of an airboat in the middle of the night last week snatching mottled ducks off the water as we blew by them, I realized that I might just be the luckiest girl on the planet in that moment. It had been over a decade since I had gotten to be a “catcher” on a mottled duck banding crew. In my past tenure on these crews I typically had been the driver of the airboat, not because I was unable to catch but because so many others were more sure-handed and footed than I. As we glided through the nighttime, the sights and sounds of the marsh came back to me; the moan of the airboat fluctuating with the driver’s foot pressure, the lightning in the distance of a far-off storm, the annoying buzz of mosquitoes when we would briefly stop to band the birds in our box. These precious field moments are fewer and farther between for me these days, but I still relish these moments in the field doing what I love.

It also makes me reflect on where my time is best spent and where I will make the most impact. When I went back for my Ph.D. several years ago I knew that when I finished that degree that it would likely mean more office time for me professionally. While not as fun, I always knew that spending more time in the office would be the best path forward for me and the conservation issues I hold near and dear. In order to truly touch the issues I cared most about like large-scale coastal restoration efforts, subsidence along the Texas Gulf coast, whooping crane and mottled duck ecology, I knew I would be spending more time collaborating with partners, writing grants, permits, environmental assessments, and the like. This would ultimately mean less time getting mud in hair on fun marsh outings, and more time behind a desk. This meant that I had to get out of the way of the next generation of biologists who would take my seat in the airplane for aerial surveys or out of the driver’s seat for the next airboat operator and duck catching crew. I have found myself teaching field skills and techniques to those coming up in the ranks, while honing my office skills and trying

to figure out how to improve my efficiency in the office so I can still keep a foot in the field and my fingers on the pulse of what needs to be done in the office. It is a dance, and not one I have mastered yet. Practice makes perfect, and I am dancing daily trying to improve.

So how is your foot work? Do you know you are on the right track to get you where you want to go professionally? Do you question the trail you are on? Are you looking for a new job or a career change? Do you know what you want to do professionally and how to get there? If you answered yes to any of the questions above or are unsure about your dancing skills, I sincerely hope that you will attend this year's meeting in Conroe. We have plans to shake the meeting up with workshops to help you master communication with others, dress your resume up, prepare for job interviews, and form truly collaborative partnerships with others. We also plan to improve mixers to make finding people you want to meet and talking with them easier. Beyond this we plan to have a special session to help you land your dream job! Whether you are a student, young professional, teacher, mentor, or old timer within TCTWS there will be something for everyone and we all have much to learn from each other. Be there or be square!

Thank you.

Jena Moon, President

NOMINATION NOTIFICATIONS

Excellence in Wildlife Conservation Award

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: Steve DeMaso, Wetlands and Aquatics Research Center, 700 Cajundome Blvd., Lafayette, LA 70506; steve_demaso@fws.gov. The deadline for nominations is November 1, 2018.

Publication Awards

Call for Nominations

This is the first call for nominations of publications that include a Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society member as one of the first three authors, and that were published within the last 3 years (2016-2018). Please indicate the individuals (chapter member(s)) that should receive the award if selected. At least 3 publications within a category are required in order to offer the award. The deadline for submission is **15 October 2018**.

Categories include:

- Books
- Electronic Media (i.e. websites, CDs, DVDs, listservs, or similar)
- Peer-reviewed Scientific Articles (journal or peer-reviewed proceedings)
- Popular Articles (published in magazines, newspapers, newsletters, or similar)
- Technical Publications (reports, factsheets, or similar)

To nominate a publication, please submit: 1) a cover letter stating why the publication is being nominated, and 2) six (6) hard copies or a digital pdf to the Publication Awards Committee Chair: David Butler, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept., 210-A West 1st Street, Freeport, TX 77541; e-mail: David.Butler@tpwd.texas.gov.

NOMINATION NOTIFICATIONS

Clarence Cottam Award: Call for Abstracts & Requirements

Abstracts are now being accepted for consideration in the Clarence Cottam Award Session at the 55th Annual Meeting of Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society. This session is devoted to promoting excellence in student research. 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. This year, presenters will be allowed up to 20 min for presentation and questions.

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 Matthew Butler at matthew_butler@fws.gov. <http://tctws.org/student-menu/scholarship-opportunities/clarence-cottam-award/>

NOMINATION NOTIFICATIONS

Honorary Life Membership Committee Seeks Nominees

The Texas Chapter has members who have made outstanding contributions to wildlife conservation at eco-region, state, national and/or international scales. Such individuals deserve recognition.

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. (3) Not have won the award in the past.

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 remain confidential, especially from the nominee. If there is no vitae available, patch something together, with the help of friends, associates and spouses. From nominations received, the committee can select one or more recipients for the 2019 annual meeting.

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

Send nomination materials to:
Scott Summers--Committee Chair
scott.g.summers.civ@mail.mil

Southwest Section Tracks Summer Issue 2018

By Fidel Hernandez
Southwest Section Representative



It's amazing what rain can do for the spirit. Like most things, we usually don't notice its presence when it's plentiful, but we sure notice its absence when it's lacking. This spring and beginning of summer has been particularly dry for us in southern Texas. Year-to-date rainfall has been less than 4 inches, which is only about 45% of normal. Temperatures during the past 2 weeks have consistently reached in the 100s. The landscape is arid and parched, with few hopes for rain. Until today... as I write this newsletter, a few sprinkles have started to fall. A heavy rainstorm is not in the forecast, but a few grey clouds are strolling in from the far horizon and bringing sounds of thunder along with it. The temperature has dropped into the 80s, and the sparse raindrops that have begun to fall have filled the air with that familiar earthy smell of *petrichor* (the pleasant scent produced when rain falls on dry soil). Oh how that smell uplifts the spirit.



Rain in semiarid environments has been documented to stimulate breeding behavior in avifauna. (Photo: Tim E. Fulbright)

I have often wondered if animals living in hot, arid environments also feel a similar uplift in mood with rain. A few years ago, I began investigating the topic, and it appears that many do. As early as the 1800s, naturalists have commented how rain in the Australian outback stimulated courtship behavior in desert birds, with some species actually courting during rain. The same breeding phenomenon has been observed in other arid landscapes across the globe including South America, Africa, and even the American Southwest.

I must admit that I'm tempted to leave this desk and head outdoors to experience whatever rain comes and take the opportunity to observe if the avifauna breaks out into a chorus. But, not only do I run the chance of scaring the rain away, I also risk not completing this report in time. So, on that note, following is a brief update on the latest TWS happenings.

TWS ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE, AND GENERAL OPERATIONS

Membership. TWS continues to steadily narrow the gap between current membership and the society's goal of 10,000 members. The year-to-date paid member count is 9,911 members, which represents a 4.9% increase compared to last year (April 2017). If members enrolled in the Give Back Program are included (613 members), then the total member count increases to 10,524 members. TWS is continually trying to improve member experience, and automatic renewal is one such improvement in services. Many TWS members—4,489 members or 44% of total membership to be exact—are taking advantage of the Automatic Renewal option. Be sure to make use of this convenient service when renewing your membership to avoid membership lapses.

TWS-SW SECTION NEWS

Finance and Business Relations. The Wildlife Society also continues to make steady gains on providing a sound financial footing for the Society. Part of the TWS strategy for financial security involves a mixture of sound accounting practices, conservative investments, and strong partnerships. Below is a brief summary of some of the major activities happening in this arena through March 2018.

- Net operational income through March is \$286,000. The goal for TWS is to conclude the fiscal year (June 30) with an annual, net-operational income of \$94,000. TWS appears on target to achieve this goal; however, expenses remain for the last few weeks of the fiscal year, and this will ultimately determine whether TWS achieves this goal. So, stay tuned.
- Net assets have increased considerably (+32%) from last year, increasing from \$1.7 million (January 2017) to \$2.2 million (January 2018).
- Net income from organizations and businesses is \$378,000, which is about \$111,000 less than the TWS target goal. This decrease reflects the anticipated decrease in partnership income arising from partners completing financial agreements and deciding whether to sign-up for future multi-year sponsorships.
- TWS was able to book 2 advertisers, 30 exhibitors, and 12 Sponsors for the 2018 Annual Conference. TWS has commitments from another 3 advertisers, 5 Exhibitors, and 11 Sponsors.
- TWS also received \$10,000 in conference contributions and \$19,600 in verbal commitments for a total of \$30,150.

Government Affairs. The Program of Government Affairs and Partnerships is lead by Director Keith Norris. Director Norris and his team are responsible for overseeing TWS' policy activities, providing support to TWS Chapters and Sections on conservation policy issues, strategically expanding TWS' engagement with other organizations, and providing direction to the Society professional development and certification programs. Below is a brief summary of key TWS Government Affairs activities since the last update.

- Engaged members and chapter/section boards at the conferences of the Alaska Chapter, Northwest Section, and Northeast Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies.
- Met with AFWA staff to discuss future collaboration and communication opportunities to strengthen the relationship between our organizations
- Met with Secretary of the Interior Zinke, BLM Acting Director, and other DOI officials in an invited stakeholder meeting to discuss a BLM report outlining new plans for managing wild horses and burros.



Building partnerships is an important part of TWS Government Affairs Program. Here, Keith Norris (TWS Director of Government Affairs & Partnerships) and Jim Miller (TWS Past President and Aldo Leopold Award Winner) take Davia Palmeri (AFWA) and Robert Schoepe (Arizona) on a mentored pheasant hunt as part of the 100th Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow workshop. (Photo: Keith Norris).

TWS-SW SECTION NEWS

- Submitted testimony to the Interior and Agriculture Appropriations subcommittees in support of federal programs that further conservation and wildlife science.
- Participated in a State and Tribal Wildlife Grants fly-in to advocate for adequate funding for the program in FY19.

1ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF WILDLIFE ECOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT IN MEXICO

1ST NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION

AMPHIBIANS / REPTILES / BIRDS / MAMMALS
THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BIODIVERSITY

Meeting of professionals, managers,
students and general public interested in
the management and conservation of wildlife

**November
13-16, 2018**

San Luis Potosí, Mexico
Convention Center

Postgraduate and
Research Unit
Autonomous
University of
San Luis Potosí

INFORMATION:
<http://www.conferenciafaunasilvestre.com>
informacion@conferenciafaunasilvestre.com

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CP, SLP, FCF, CEMEX, THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY, AAM, G, SLP, FCF, CEMEX

The first annual conference of wildlife management and ecology in Mexico is being organized. The conference will convene in San Luis Potosí, Mexico on **13–16 November 2018** and is being organized by long-time TWS members, Dr. Luis Tarango (Colegio de Postgraduados, San Luis Potosí, México) and Dr. Raul Valdez (New Mexico State University), along with a conference committee comprised of Mexican wildlife professionals. Estimated attendance is 350–450 participants and will be comprised of students, professors, researchers, biologists, landowners, and federal agency personnel. It is anticipated that about 20 Mexican universities will be in attendance. This national conference will be the first of its kind in Mexico and is devoted to Mexican wildlife. It is planned to convene annually with subsequent annual conferences being held in different cities of Mexico.

The goal of the conference is to form an established venue whereby Mexican wildlife professionals can learn, network, and engage professionally. As many of you know, there has been a perennial need in México for wildlife biologists to engage in the exchange of

current wildlife-science knowledge not only of México but also North America. Presently, there are no effective means for Mexican professionals to become aware of the vast wildlife conservation efforts in North America or to engage with North American wildlife biologists. Drs. Tarango, Valdez, and the organizing committee wish to address these needs by 1) bringing together wildlife professionals in Mexico, 2) providing a venue for information exchange, professional development, and networking opportunities for Mexican wildlife biologists with peers and North American counterparts, and 3) increasing TWS presence and engagement in Mexico. Along with other Mexican organizations and government agencies, TWS has provided financial support for this conference. The call for abstracts and conference information may be found at the following website (<http://conferenciafaunasilvestre.com/>).

TWS-SW SECTION NEWS

TWS ANNUAL CONFERENCE: CLEVELAND



Mark your calendars for the 25th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society being held 7–11 October 2018 in Cleveland, Ohio. The welcome reception will be a networking event at Cleveland’s iconic Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. The theme for the Conference is Recognizing and Sustaining Conservation Success, and only two weeks remain to save \$50 on conference registration. Early registration closes on 30 June 2018. If you are interested in attending this year’s conference, be sure to visit the conference website at <http://wildlife.org/2018-conference>.

Well, that is all for now.

The rain didn’t come after all. Only a few rain drops fell before the sky cleared and clouds dissipated. On the bright side, I was able to complete this report on time. Plus, there appears to be rain in the forecast. I just may get my chance to be out in the rain and hearing a singing chorus.

Until next time,

Fidel Hernández

Fidel Hernández
Southwest Section Representative of TWS

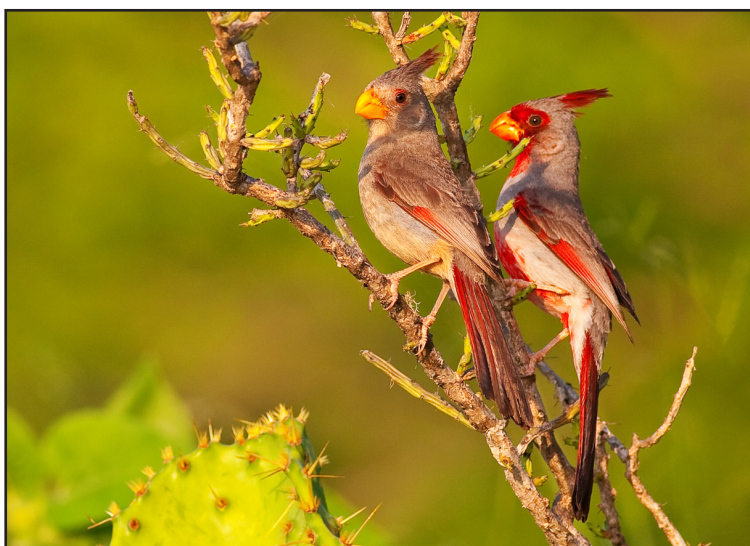


Photo: Tim E. Fulbright

TEER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

TEER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE'S EARLY CAREER PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM

By Maria F. "Masi" Mejia

"The contributions of some individuals to conservation of wildlife have been of heroic proportions, literally changing societal values and mores. Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, C. Hart Merriam, George Bird Grinnell, and Aldo Leopold quickly come to mind... and I suspect few students could name two of the five mentioned or describe the historic contributions they made."

James G. Teer, *It's a Long Way from Llano* (p. 53)

Notable conservation giants and their success in leadership have been well-documented, though how these individuals reached such heights is important to consider. The Texas Chapter of Wildlife Society recognized that conservation professionals today lack the training to address politics, social, and economic dimensions of challenges within natural resource management. To help remedy this, Dr. Selma Glasscock initiated the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute (JGTCLI) in 2013, with the first cohort entering the program in 2014.

The Institute is now in its third cohort of early career professionals. This program cultivates professional and personal skills for early career professionals in the field while focusing on unique issues associated with Texas' private lands. Throughout one year, participants are involved in projects, webinars, conference calls, webinars, online meetings, reading assignments, and four onsite workshop sessions held throughout the state. To date, the current cohort has met twice to discuss several different issues.

The first session occurred at the annual Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Meeting this past year in Dallas, Texas. According to the Committee Chair, Richard Helibrun, the first session was focused on cohort introductions, general leadership skills, TCTWS organizational structure, and how fellows can become more involved in the chapter.

Dr. Maureen Frank, an Assistant Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, says she was primarily interested in becoming a Teer Fellow because she wanted to do something that would help me grow in a way that is different from the day-to-day challenges of a job. "There is no such thing as a 'normal day' working in Extension and there are plenty of challenges in what I do, but this was an opportunity to grow and learn skills that I could apply in a lot of different scenarios." Dr. Frank also noted that the program will be helpful for learning project management and leadership skills that are critical for working effectively with other people to accomplish wildlife conservation goals.

The second session occurred at the Kerr Wildlife Management Area in May. The focus for this session was results-based management using the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation, or Adaptive Management. Fellows used this method to evaluate their two different projects: Recovering America's Wildlife Act and Breeder Deer Identification. During this session, the fellows were introduced to Open Standards models, which provide a measurable method to assess conservation initiatives and determine the best solution. Fellows evaluated their project's vision,

TEER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

targets, goals, threats, contributing factors, strategies, and liability analysis of strategies in an effort to adapt and improve each project. They will continue these projects throughout the rest of their year, working remotely through conference calls and emails. As the Teer fellows continue to work on their projects, they hope to provide education to members of TCTWS on how these projects can benefit and affect wildlife.

The current cohort has two remaining workshop sessions. The third session will be held on the Welder Wildlife Foundation & Refuge in Sinton, Texas. The last session will conclude with presentations and graduation at Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Meeting in Conroe, Texas.

For more information on the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute please contact Richard Heilbrun at richard.heilbrun@tpwd.texas.gov. Applications for the next cohort will be accepted beginning in October of 2019.

BLACK-CAPPED VIREO DELISTING

VIREO FLIES OFF LIST

By Scott Summers
Honorary Life Member Committee Chair



Perched for 30 years as an endangered species, the black-capped vireo is now recovered, according to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Thus, the small insectivorous passerine is no longer on the list of federally endangered species.

The vireo has a limited distribution occurring only in parts of Texas, Oklahoma, and Mexico. Loss of habitat due to goat ranching that removed preferred shrubs in which it nests, and excessive cowbird nest parasitism were implicated as major factors contributing to its decline, and henceforth a listing in 1987.

Due to private lands and public lands partnerships made possible by willing collaborators and funds appropriated to help the imperiled bird, conservation efforts grew the population in 4 major protected areas: Fort Hood, Fort Sill, Kerr WMA, and parts of the Devil's River watershed. Other populations resulted outside these areas due in part to population source movements, declining goat ranching operations, and habitat improvement.

“Anytime we are able to successfully recover an imperiled species and see it removed from the endangered species list is cause for celebration,” said Carter Smith, Executive Director of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

A post-delisting monitoring period is expected to run for the next 12 years to ensure the bird continues to remain recovered.

More information regarding this delisting action is on the web:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/04/16/2018-07350/endangered-and-threatened-wildlife-and-plants-removing-the-black-capped-vireo-from-the-federal-list>



GOOD READS

WHAT WILDLIFERS ARE READING IN TWS JOURNALS

By Nancy Sasavage
TWS Director of Publications and Communications

TWS' three premier wildlife journals — The Journal of Wildlife Management, Wildlife Monographs and the Wildlife Society Bulletin — support our mission to achieve a positive impact on the sustainability of wildlife populations through the dissemination of science-based wildlife conservation and management.

With online access now included as a membership benefit, TWS members are increasingly engaging with the latest research findings in wildlife science. In case you missed any of these, here's a list of the most-downloaded papers in 2017.

1. Free-roaming cat interactions with wildlife admitted to a wildlife hospital
2. Polar bear attacks on humans: Implications of a changing climate
3. Determining kill rates of ungulate calves by brown bears using neck-mounted cameras
4. Effects of control on the dynamics of an adjacent protected wolf population in interior Alaska
5. Predicting eagle fatalities at wind facilities
6. How publishing in open access journals threatens science and what we can do about it
7. Clarifying historical range to aid recovery of the Mexican wolf
8. Bat mortality due to wind turbines in Canada
9. Online hunting forums identify achievement as prominent among multiple satisfactions
10. Inefficiency of evolutionarily relevant selection in ungulate trophy hunting
11. Investigating impacts of oil and gas development on greater sage-grouse
12. The role of domestic cats in the admission of injured wildlife at rehabilitation and rescue centers
13. Consumption of intentional food subsidies by a hunted carnivore
14. How open access is crucial to the future of science
15. Predators, predator removal, and sage-grouse: A review
16. Annual elk calf survival in a multiple carnivore system
17. Demography of an increasing caribou herd with restricted wolf control
18. Manipulations of black bear and coyote affect caribou calf survival
19. Winter diet and hunting success of Canada lynx in Colorado
20. Overpasses and underpasses: Effectiveness of crossing structures for migratory ungulates

Log into Your Membership to read these papers by going to the "Publications" tab.

