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TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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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; awiley@quantaenv.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

Wow! What a fantastic Annual Meeting in Montgomery! What we do at these meetings truly matters, and Jena Moon and her team hosted an absolutely wonderful meeting. A big thank you to all the volunteers, Texas Chapter members, and students who made this meeting so special. Some meeting highlights:



- 291 Professional Attendees
- 329 Student Attendees
- 620 Total Attendees
- 6 Workshops with 275 Attendees
- Plenary Session delivered by our 8 Jim G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute - Early Career Professional Development graduates, on
 - o Recovering America's Wildlife Act
 - o Captive Bred Deer Identification

Also, a full list of professional and student award winners that were announced at the Annual Meeting can be found later in this newsletter. Again, Jena Moon and her team did an excellent job and the venue – La Torretta Lake Resort and Spa – was outstanding. All...very well done!

A couple of housekeeping items. First, plans are underway for the 2020 Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting, which will be held in Corpus Christi at the American Bank Center and Omni Hotel from February 13–15. This venue will be familiar to many of us, as the 2015 Annual Meeting was held at the same site. Back in 2015, there were 710 total attendees and with the wealth of nearby attractions, we are anticipating another great turnout.

Second, it is my privilege to welcome new members to the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Executive Board. Your new Board Member at Large is Michelle Haggerty, your new Secretary is Whitney Gann, and your new Vice President is Romey Swanson. Some additional Executive Board updates – John Tomeček is now

your President Elect and Jena Moon is now your Past President. Collectively, we are here to serve you, so please let us know what you are thinking – all with the aim of making the Texas Chapter the best it can be.

Third, the backbone of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society is its volunteers – whether these are committee chairs or co-chairs, committee members, or student volunteers. For the 2019–2020 term there are 25 committees and 37 committee chairs. The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society encourages involvement from all its members. If you desire to become more involved with the Texas Chapter, please consider this a personal invitation to reach out to the Executive Board or committee chairs and we will do our best to get you plugged-in at a deeper level. Also, committee chair contact information is available at the Texas Chapter website (<https://tctws.org/>).

Lastly, thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President for the 2019/2020 term. I am truly honored and humbled. I look forward to working with you as we deliver “Excellence in Wildlife Stewardship Through Science and Education” throughout Texas and beyond.

Tyler Campbell

TWS - SW SECTION NEWS

Southwest Section Tracks

By Jim Ramakka
Southwest Section Representative

The snow has finally melted in Northwest New Mexico and now the March winds have started. Hopefully they will calm down before we're faced with our usual Spring dust storms.

Over the past month I was lucky enough to squeeze travel between winter storms to attend the Joint Annual Meeting (JAM) of the Arizona and New Mexico Chapters in Albuquerque, the Texas Chapter meeting in Montgomery, and the Spring TWS Council meeting in Denver.



I always look forward to TWS chapter meetings as way keep up on the latest research and management issues in the Southwest and for the opportunity to reconnect with old friends and colleagues. The AZ/NM JAM banquet and award ceremony began with a very nice memorial to Dr. Sanford D. Schemnitz presented by Dr. Martha Desmond his colleague at NMSU. Sandy was my M.S. advisor at the University of Maine before he moved on to be the first head of the Wildlife program at NMSU. Over the years Sandy trained hundreds of students and received the 2017 Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award for Conservation before his passing in May 2018.

It was especially gratifying to see old friends John Sherman (Wildlife Program Lead for BLM NM) and Stan Cunningham (Arizona State University) receive awards for their career accomplishments. They are both outstanding wildlife biologists who have had a lasting influence on wildlife management in the Southwest.

A week and a half after the JAM, I left behind a foot and a half of snow and single digit temperatures to fly to the Houston area to attend my first Texas Chapter meeting. Again, it was great to catch up with friends and to observe a large gathering that, in many ways, mirrored the complexity and excitement that students and professionals experience at TWS Annual Meetings. The Chapter Executive Board and the various committees did an outstanding job developing and presenting a program with an outstanding plenary session, 5 workshops, film presentations, 2 poster sessions, 13 technical sessions, 2 sessions devoted to "Finding Your Dream Job", and plenty of opportunities for students to interact with working professionals.

Attending these Chapter meetings certainly highlighted the unique characteristics of the states that make up our section as well as the underlying interest and passion for wildlife so characteristic of our profession. That passion is also shared by our colleagues in Mexico. Dr. Luis Tarango gave an excellent presentation at the Texas Chapter business meeting describing the success of the First Annual Conference on Wildlife Conservation and Management in Mexico. Due to the efforts of Fidel Hernandez, The Wildlife Society donated \$5,000 to help fund the conference. Likewise, NMSU Emeritus Professor Dr. Raul Valdez deserves special recognition for his significant logistical and personal financial contributions to the conference.

I had to leave the Texas Chapter meeting a little early in order to prepare for the TWS Spring Council meeting that started a few days later. Council spent two full days reviewing and discussing committee reports, TWS staff activities and accomplishments, as well as examining a variety of budget issues. A brief summary of some of the main topics discussed is presented below.

Hopefully folks will note that, while the deadline for nominations for TWS Group Achievement, Publications,

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and Fellows Awards has passed, the nomination period for 17 other TWS Awards is open until May 1. Please take the time to review the award criteria at <http://wildlife.org/engage/awards/> and consider nominating folks worthy of recognition.

Finally, I hope everyone will try to attend the joint TWS/AFS Annual Meeting Reno this Fall. It should be a great event!

Jim Ramakka

Jim Ramakka, CWB®
69 Rd. 2785
Aztec, NM 87410
Email: j_ramakka@msn.com
Phone: 505-486-2746

TWS SPRING COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

Review of TWS Staff Reorganization

CEO Ed Thompson briefed Council on the new TWS Staff organization chart.

FY18-19 Operations Plan and Budget Updates

- Finance, Administration and Infrastructure: Expenses and income are on target with a small budget surplus at the end of 2018.
- Business Relations (income from other organizations and businesses): Income at the end of 2018 was approximately 6% ahead of the target
- Membership: Paid membership of 10,142. Up 4.4% compared to last year.
- Professional Development and Certification – 122 applications for Certification and 46 renewal applications received through January 2019. Average processing time for AWB/CWB is 4 months.

The Goal for Conference Attendance (1,800 attendees) was not met with a Cleveland attendance of 1,659. Likewise, one sub-goal of the Digital Media Goal was below target with only 352 wildlife.org articles published by Jan. 31 (target 434).

Partnerships

Council emphasized the importance of only developing outside funding partnerships with entities compatible with and supporting TWS mission and goals. Partnership and other agreements will be reviewed by the TWS Executive Committee and made available to Council members.

Financial and Investment Policy

Updated business practices and sound financial management over the last 7 years have restored TWS finances to a solid footing. At the 2018 Annual Meeting, Council voted to fully fund the Permanent Reserve Fund and, based on recommendations of the Finance Subcommittee, addressed two key topics ensure future financial stability:

- Rebalancing the investment mix in TWS Accounts to buffer the Permanent Reserve Fund from inevitable fluctuations in the stock market while focusing on an investment mix for growth in the Endowment Fund.

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- Establishment of an Investment Fund, also focused on growth, funded with any surplus income remaining at the end of the year. The fund would be the repository for unrestricted donations, annual budget surpluses, and distributions from the Permanent Reserve Fund, should that Fund exceed the target balance. Expenditures from the Investment Fund would be at the discretion of Council.

Additionally, Council discussed strategies for restructuring the for the McDonough and Rusch awards to meet the intent of the original donations.

TWS Confidentiality Policy

An Ad Hoc Committee, chaired by President-Elect Gary White, reviewed existing policies such as the TWS Western Section Resolution on Transparency, as well as other information and recommended that, rather than requiring signature of binding confidentiality agreements, new and existing Council members receive training on the need for confidentiality on some issues while maintaining as much transparency as possible.

Code of Ethics

Council voted to approve changes to the TWS Wildlife Biologist Certification Program Policies and Procedures Manual to align procedures for Ethics Code violations with those delineated in the TWS Code of Ethics so that the same process would apply for both Certified and non-Certified members.

Organizational Units

Council voted to:

- Dissolve two Student Chapters of TWS, one for little or no student involvement, the other due to closing of the college.
- Approve revised charter and petition for the formation of a Nutritional Ecology Working Group of TWS.
- Approve requested changes to one Student Chapter's Bylaws to be consistent with university policy.

Progress Report for the 2019 AFS-TWS Joint Conference in Reno

TWS Staff continue to collaborate with AFS to coordinate planning, marketing and execution of the 2019 Joint Conference in Reno including developing strategies to lower operational costs that level off or reduce registration costs while maintaining a good member experience and ensuring that the conference provides a net income that helps support other member benefits.

Projected attendance could be 5,000 participants. At present, 112 symposia and workshops have been proposed (54 wildlife- and 68 fish-related).

Position Statements

Council reviewed a Draft Issue Statement directed toward Wildlife Killing Contests prepared by the Council Position Statements Ad hoc Committee. Council suggested a number of edits and referred the draft back to the Executive Committee for final review and approval. The issue statement was approved on March 7 and a copy was transmitted to the SW Section Conservation Affairs Committee.

An issue statement was crafted instead of a position statement because issue statements can be developed more quickly, as they do not require a 60-day comment period. Issue statements lean on existing or standing position statements, and do require approval by a unanimous vote of the Executive Committee. Once developed, issue statements can serve as the basis for letters, comments, and testimony. For more information about different policy documents, see the TWS Policy Engagement Documents Report at <https://wildlife.org/poition-statements>.

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Government Affairs

TWS Government Affairs staff continues to be involved in a number of legislative and policy issues including:

- Working with partners to advance the Recovering America's Wildlife Act and to generate changes to the Modernizing the Pittman-Robertson Fund for Tomorrow's Needs Act.
- Working alongside the Wild Sheep Foundation and others to produce a video highlighting the effects of feral horses and burros on wildlife (scheduled to launch on the TWS website in mid-March)
- Chairing the National Environmental Coalition on Invasive Species as a vehicle for advancing the modernization of federal invasive species policy.
- Prepared and transmitted, or co-signed with partners, 35 letters or comment summaries to legislative committees, individual legislators, or agency heads addressing topics of concern including budget appropriations and proposed changes to existing laws or regulations.
- Submitted testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources regarding RAWA and Modernizing the Pittman-Robertson Fund; testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture regarding adequate funding for USDA/APHIS, NRCS and NIFA and the Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA); and testimony to the Senate Interior Appropriations subcommittee on budget issues.
- The TWS Policy Internship Program, which had been discontinued due to past budget issues, will be reinstated with an intern based out of the Headquarters Office.

TWS ISSUE STATEMENT



Issue Statement

Wildlife Killing Contests

Wildlife killing contests are organized, competitive contests where participants compete for cash or other prizes for killing animals in a specified location during a specific time period. They are conducted on a wide range of species including coyotes, bobcats, foxes, raccoons, crows, wolves, and prairie dogs. Management of these contests by state and provincial wildlife agencies varies widely. Each state or province, even ones adjacent to each other with similar demographics, can have very different regulations and agency approaches. The public at large may often be unaware that these events take place.

When informed about killing contests, a segment of the public, including hunters and groups seeking ethical hunting and humane treatment of wildlife, find these contests offensive. Pictures and disturbing language posted on social media or other electronic communications can further negative perceptions about hunting. Because of controversy around killing contests, some jurisdictions have sought to limit or ban such killing contests. As of 2019, one state legislature has banned killing contests, some state wildlife agencies have banned them, other state agencies require permits or other special conditions to conduct them, and some states currently support killing contests for some species on the basis that removing predators improves prey populations.

Killing contests differ from typical regulated hunting by the very nature of the organized public competition and prizes being given specifically for killing the largest, smallest, or most animals. “Big Buck” pools or organized record books differ from killing contests because the animals recognized in these competitions are harvested consistent with ordinary and generally accepted hunting practices and then introduced to the competition.

Killing contests are viewed in widely different perspectives. Some people view them as making a game of killing animals, thus demonstrating disrespect for and devaluing animals; others view them as a potential management tool to be used to control predators and increase prey populations, or as entertainment without a perceived legitimate use of the harvested animals. In some cases, particularly for predators, justification for the killing contests is often based on flawed use of science. For example, coyote killing contests are often justified on the basis that coyotes kill deer or other game; however, that fails to recognize that predation is a proximal cause of mortality, but not necessarily the ultimate cause that limits a species’ population.

The policy of The Wildlife Society regarding wildlife killing contests:

1. Discourages contests that adversely affect the wildlife resource or the public appreciation of wildlife resources.
2. Supports that wildlife killed must be put to legitimate uses.
3. Opposes all contests that:
 - a. intentionally wound animals in a manner that causes excess pain and suffering,

TWS ISSUE STATEMENT

- b. kill parents resulting in orphaned, dependent young,
 - c. or devalue wildlife by showing disrespectful photos of piles of dead animals.
4. Discourage contests that portray hunting in an unethical fashion. If a contest is held, all applicable permitting and hunting regulations must be followed during the contest by all parties involved.
5. Support public attitude surveys to determine societal values regarding killing contests and encourage agencies to consider these survey results when managing and regulating killing contests.
6. Recognize that there is little evidence to support the use of killing contests for controlling predator populations.
7. Recognize that while species killed in contests can be legally killed in most states, making a contest of it may undermine the public's view of ethical hunting.

*The Wildlife Society's Standing Position Statement on **Hunting** states that "hunting, when properly regulated following biological principles, is an appropriate means of managing wildlife populations" and "encourage decision makers to weigh the biological, societal, cultural, and economic considerations when making decisions on hunting and the welfare of wildlife". The Wildlife Society's Position Statement on **The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation** supports and promotes adherence to the seven core components of the model, one of which is "Wildlife Should Only be Killed for a Legitimate Purpose". The Wildlife Society's Standing Position on **Conserving Biological Diversity** supports and promotes "policies and programs to conserve biological diversity that are biologically, socially, environmentally, and economically valid, effective, and practical; and supports and promotes "efforts to educate decision makers, elected officials, educators, and the general public on the values that biological diversity provides to our society."*

ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Dr. Jim Giocomo

HONORARY LIFE MEMBER AWARD



Cristy Burch

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD



Dr. David Wester

1ST PLACE COTTAM



Sara Weaver

2ND PLACE COTTAM



Lisa Koetke

3RD PLACE COTTAM



Rebekah Ruzicka

OUTSTANDING BOOK



Dr. Roel Lopez; Israel D. Parker; Dr. Michael Morrison

OUTSTANDING SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE



Dr. Matthew Butler

OUTSTANDING POPULAR ARTICLE



Dr. David Hewitt

ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS CONT.

STUDENT CHAPTER OF THE YEAR



Texas State University

1ST PLACE PLANT ID TEAM



Texas A&M University

1ST PLACE PLANT INDIVIDUAL



Austin Kelly

TOP CAMPER WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAMP



Harper Wood

COLIN CARUTHERS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Kelley Wood

CHARLY MCTEE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Michael Page

DAN BOONE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Matthew Hewitt

CARL D. SHOEMAKER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Katherine Haile

SAM BEASON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Mikayla House

ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS CONT.

1ST PLACE QUIZ BOWL



Stephen F. Austin State University

JUDGES CHOICE AND 1ST PLACE SCENERY PHOTO



Katy Hoskins

1ST PLACE WILDLIFE



Gary Mizer

1ST PLACE IN ART AND PEOPLE'S CHOICE



Doug Jobes

1ST PLACE WORK RELATED PHOTO



Lalo Gonzalez

1ST PLACE PLANT PHOTO



Jessica Bernger

1ST PLACE UNDERGRADUATE POSTER



Johnathan Bentley

1ST PLACE GRADUATE POSTER



Caroline Skidmore

LAND STEWARDSHIP AWARD



*Johnson Ranch
Jason and Karen Hardin*

ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS CONT.



Outstanding Students in Wildlife:

*Abilene Christian
Stephen F. Austin
Sul Ross State University
Texas A&M Commerce
Texas A&M Kingsville
Texas A&M San Antonio
Texas State
Texas Tech
Tarleton State University*

*Michael Griffith
Jake Hill
Katherine Haile
Mitchell Feagin
Kelley Wood
Jessica Bergner
Sonia Duran
Mady Hill
Daniel Wilcox*

JTCLI Early Career Professionals

*L to R: Daniel Price, Kyle Brunson, Forrest Cobb,
Maureen Frank, David Riley, Cord Eversole,
Olivia Schmidt, Karrie Kolesar, Jena Moon*



*Thank you, Jena for a great year!
Congrats and good luck on the
upcoming year, Tyler!*

ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS CONT.

The Award Winners are listed below by category. Congratulations to each winner!

Photo and Art Contest Awards:

Remote Camera

- 1st Matt Hewitt*
- 2nd Erica Dunn*
- 3rd Madeleine Thornley*

Wildlife

- 1st Gary Mizer*
- 2nd Katy Hoskins*
- 3rd David Campbell*

Plant and Scenery

- 1st Jessica Bernger*
- 2nd Sterlin Spilinek*
- 3rd Matt Hewitt*

Humor

- 1st Jesus Franco*
- 2nd Lalo Gonzalez*
- 3rd Matt Hewitt*

Work Related

- 1st Lalo Gonzalez*
- 2nd Silvero Avila*
- 3rd Brandon Palmer*

Captive Wildlife

- 1st Joseph Richards*
- 2nd David Campbell*
- 3rd Christian Mungal*

Art

- 1st Doug Jobes*
- 2nd Camrin Martin*

People's Choice

- Doug Jobes*

Judges Choice

- Wildlife- Katy Hoskins*

Plant ID Awards:

Team

- 1st Texas A&M College Station*
- 2nd Texas A&M Kingsville*
- 3rd Sul Ross*

Individual

- 1st Austin Kelly*
- 2nd Sarah Galvan*
- 3rd Katherine Haile*

Open Member Plant ID

- Novice -Austin Kelly*
- Professional – Dr. Robert*

Knight

- Texas Quiz Bowl*
- Stephen F. Austin University*

Student Posters:

Undergraduate

- 1st Johnathon Bentley*
- 2nd Jason Loghry*
- 3rd Julie Schmidt*

Graduate

- 1st Caroline Skidmore*
- 2nd Jenny Harris*
- 3rd Brandon Palmer*

Student Chapter of the Year

- Texas State University*

Scholarships:

- Charley McTee Memorial Scholarship-*
- Michael Page*

- Carl D Shoemaker Memorial*
- Scholarship-*

- Katherine Haile*

- Carlin Caruthers Memorial*

Scholarship-

- Kelley Wood*

- Dan Boone Memorial Scholarship-*

- Matthew Hewitt*

- Sam Beason Memorial Scholarship-*

- Mikayla House*

Outstanding Wildlife Students:

Abilene Christian-

- Michael Griffith*

- Stephen F. Austin State University-*

- Jake Hill*

- Sul Ross State University-*

- Katherine Haile*

- Tarleton State University-*

- Daniel Wilcox*

Texas State University-

- Sonia Duran*

Texas Tech University-

- Mandy Hill*

Texas A&M University-

- Joseph Richards*

Texas A&M University-

- Kingsville- Kelley Wood*

Texas A&M Commerce-

- Mitchell Feagin*

Texas A&M San Antonio-

- Jessica Bergner*

Clarence Cottam Awards

- 1st Sara Weaver*

- 2nd Lisa Koetke*

- 3rd Rebekah Ruzicka*

Publication Awards:

- Popular Article- David Hewitt, Charlie DeYoung, Randy DeYoung, Bill Eikenhorst, F. Butch Weckerly, Matthew Wagner, and Ivan Castro-Arellano*

- Technical Publication- Alison Lund , Addie Smith, Angelica Lopez, and Roel Lopez*

- Book- Roel Lopez, Israel D. Parker,*

- Michael L. Morrison*

- Scientific Article- Matthew Butler,*

- Kristine Metzger, and Grant Harris*

Honorary Life Membership-

- Cristy Burch,*

- Bart Ballard,*

- Jim Sutherlin*

Excellence in Wildlife Conservation:

Educator of the Year –

- Dr. David Wester*

Outstanding Achievement-

- Dr. Jim Giocomo*

Land Stewardship-

- Johnson Ranch, Jason and Karen Hardin*

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAMP

Wildlife Conservation Camp

Now Accepting Applications

July 7th -13th, 2019
Clear Fork Ranch
Albany, Texas

The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's Wildlife Conservation Camp is designed for high school students who have completed 9th grade. Hands-on, outdoor activities such as • wildlife and plant ID • habitat management techniques • land stewardship • hunter safety • shooting sports • fishing • wildlife research • and more, are led by wildlife professionals in Texas.

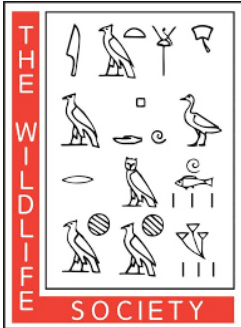


WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION
CAMP

Find applications at www.wildlifecamp.tx.org • Due May 1st, 2019
For more information, contact Thomas Janke at
wildlifecampdirector@yahoo.com



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:



The Wildlife Society is announcing a new, free benefit for Associate Members of TWS: a special monthly edition of the *eWildlifer*. This special edition is only available to Associate Members of the Wildlife Society. Associate Members are individuals who are members of a chapter, but not of the main organization. While all TCTWS members are certainly encouraged to join the parent society, TWS hopes that this special edition of the *eWildlifer* will provide Associate Members with the opportunity to learn more about TWS, its activities, and membership benefits.