

Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society

Excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education



**TEXAS CHAPTER OF
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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EDITORS, ANDREA WILEY AND
 MAUREEN FRANK

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

by Tyler Campbell

Summer is the time for kids baseball/softball and other outdoor recreation (these are what my weekends currently involve, anyway). Another important summer activity for land managers and biologists in Texas is keeping a watchful eye on precipitation and its patterns throughout this great state. As Texans we know that from June to September... it is going to be hot! Rainfall, however, is less predictable. Nevertheless, reproduction, recruitment, and survival of many wildlife species are driven by the land receiving adequate rainfall during important times of the year. Therefore, we should keep track of rainfall patterns. One of the tools I use to accomplish this is the U.S. Drought Monitor accessible through numerous sites, including <https://www.drought.gov/drought/states/texas>. At the time of this writing, 93.8% of Texas was experiencing average or above av-

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-erage rainfall, 6% was abnormally dry, and only 0.2% was experiencing moderate drought (including all of the East Foundation's 27,000 acre El Sauz Ranch). Someone within the East Foundation must not be living right, whereas (most of) the rest of you are! Hmm... now, I am wondering, who is it?

On to some business. The 86th Texas Legislature, which convened from January 8 through May 27, has concluded. The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TCTWS) had an influential presence, with representation by our Executive Director Don Steinbach and outside counsel Katy Johnson. Specific proposed legislation or actions impacting wildlife conservation included, SB 810 (relating to the identification of breeder deer), condemnation reform, and generating state support for federal legislation, including the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. A big thanks to Don and Katy for their hard work and efforts!

Our Wildlife Conservation Camp will be held July 7-13 at the Clear Fork Ranch near Abilene. Camp Director Thomas Janke, from the Borderlands Research Institute, and his team have a fantastic venue and full slate of volunteers ready to make this year's Camp the best one yet. Our goal for the Wildlife Conservation Camp is to provide a fun environment for high schoolers to learn about nature, ecology, and wildlife. Our Camp uses a "whole-ecology" approach to learning about natural resources. Also, during Camp the TCTWS Executive Board will hold its mid-term board meeting which will also enable us to spend time and interact with the campers, including providing feedback on their final presentations. This is going to be fun!

We are proud sponsors of two upcoming events. First is the Texas Wildlife Association's 6th Annual Private Lands Summit occurring July 11 in San Antonio: "Grazing Matters - Soil Health, Habitat and Wildlife" (<https://www.texas-wildlife.org/resources/events/private-lands-summit>). Speakers for this event include TCTWS members and leaders: James Cathey, Steve Nelle, Louis Harveson, Alfonso Ortega, Ryan Luna, and others. Second is The Wildlife Society's 26th Annual Conference to be held from September 29-October 3 in Reno, Nevada (<https://afstws2019.org/>). The last time the TWS Conference was held

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in Reno was 2001, 18 years ago. I was able to sneak away from this meeting for a bit to visit Yosemite... very cool... BIG, BIG trees! I encourage all to attend this meeting (and sneak away, as appropriate!).

As a reminder, our 2020 Annual Meeting will be held from February 13-15 in Corpus Christi at the American Bank Center and Omni Hotel. We conducted a site visit on May 17 and were impressed with the staff and facilities. This is going to be a great meeting. Please mark your calendar now and attend (...but, no sneaking away from this meeting!)

As always, I welcome your feedback.



Best wishes and stay cool out there,

Tyler Campbell, President

tcampbell@eastfoundation.net

SOUTHWEST SECTION TRACKS

by Jim Ramakka

It has been a busy Spring for TWS Staff and contractors as they continue to work with American Fisheries Society (AFS) on arrangements for our 26th Annual Meeting to be held in Reno, Nevada Sept. 29-Oct. 3, 2019. The conference budget was one of several finance-related topics discussed during a Special Council Meeting via conference/video call on May 17, 2019.

Planning for the Annual Conference requires balancing projected costs versus projected attendance revenues. The AFS model for projecting revenue differs somewhat from that used by TWS. In order to maintain the best possible attendee experience, Council voted to give the Executive Committee the discretion to adjust the budget cap for portions of the budget if attendance exceeds the numbers projected based on past conferences.

Non-conference-related finances were a major topic of other Council discussions. The TWS financial situation has improved greatly over the last few years. During its Spring Meeting in Denver, Council established a new investment fund – the Council Action Fund (CAF). The concept for creating the CAF was to allow moving funds in the Permanent Reserve (PR) that exceed the goal set by the TWS Financial and Investments Policy, into the CAF from the PR. The CAF funds are to be invested with a growth objective and be available for use at Council’s discretion. The decision to establish the fund did not specify a dollar amount to move. Executive Director Ed Thompson informed Council that the balance of the PR Fund currently exceeded its goal by approximately \$157,000. Council members voted to move \$140,000 from the PR to the CAF. The full Council will have a in-depth discussion of existing TWS funds and strategies for ensuring TWS financial security at the Annual Meeting in September.

The following requests were considered and approved by Council for funding from the CAF:

- \$5,000 to assist in funding the 2nd National Wildlife Congress in Mexico in 2020
- \$2,500 to support the Jay N. Darling Institute at Drake University

SOUTHWEST SECTION TRACKS

- \$8,225 to support Women of Wildlife events at the 2019 AFS-TWS Joint Conference in September 2019
- \$750 to support the TWS International Wildlife Management Working Group-sponsored symposium to be held at the International Congress for Conservation Biology in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, July 21-25, 2019
- \$15,000 to support Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow during TWS fiscal year 2020 (FY 2020), contingent upon CLfT proceeding with a student workshop in FY 2020 and TWS selecting students for participation in all CLfT student workshops during FY 2020

Other actions taken during the special meeting included approval of the minutes of the Council meeting held in Reno, March 2-4, 2019, and acceptance of revisions and approval of the *The Wildlife Society Strategic Plan 2019–2023*.

Council also received a brief update on the status of the incorporation of the Canadian Section. The Section is now incorporated in Canada. The Section's proposed bylaws have been reviewed by legal counsel, TWS, and the Executive Committee. Next steps are addressing two areas of concern in the Canadian Section bylaws and developing a licensing agreement.

Also discussed was a request from the Ethnic & Gender Diversity Working Group as well as some other TWS members that future conference scheduling not conflict with Labor Day or religious holidays such as Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and others, or with other major meetings such as AFWA. Council expressed willingness to schedule outside the current September model, but also recognizes that not all conflicts can be avoided. In the cases where conflict is inevitable, the concept would be to schedule conferences so that the same conflict would not occur 2 years in a row.

The next TWS Council meeting will be September 28-29 at our joint TWS/AFS meeting in Reno, NV. I encourage all TWS members attending the joint meeting to sit in on at least a portion of the Council meeting to get a sense of the issues involved in managing our professional society.

Hopefully I will see many of you in Reno and, as always, please feel

SOUTHWEST SECTION TRACKS

free to contact me with any issues or topics you would like to see brought before Council for discussion.



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SEPT. 29 - OCT. 3

REGISTER TODAY!

<https://afstws2019.org/register/>

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS & NOMINATIONS

Cottam Awards

Abstracts will soon be accepted for consideration in the Clarence Cottam Award Session at the 56th Annual Meeting of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society. This special session is devoted to promoting student research excellence in wildlife biology, conservation, and management and is the most prestigious student award given by the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society. If selected, participants have the opportunity to present their research to the entire membership and the winners are recognized for their outstanding research contributions, awarded a scholarship, and become part of the more than 30-year history of the Clarence Cottam Award.

First place prize is a **\$1000** scholarship sponsored by the Welder Wildlife Foundation. Second and third prizes will be smaller scholarships sponsored by the Texas Chapter and will be awarded if more than 6 papers are accepted. A maximum of 8 papers will be included in the competition.

Submissions are judged for their significance, originality, creativity of research design and implementation, quality of methodology, validity of conclusions, neatness, and conformity to Journal of Wildlife Management style and format.

Abbreviated and extended abstracts should be submitted via the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society submission webpage and per the instructions outlined in the general call for abstract submission from the program committee. Deadline for the receipt of abstracts is **November 30, 2019**. For more information on eligibility, submission instructions, and participation, please refer to Clarence Cottam Award guidelines available online at <https://tctws.org/student-menu/scholarship-opportunities/clarence-cottam-award/>. For any questions, please contact the committee co-chairs at cottam.awards@tctws.org.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS & NOMINATIONS

Publication Awards

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 (2017-2019). At least 3 publications within a category are required for the reward category to be considered. The deadline for submission is 15 November 2019.

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
2. A digital pdf to the Publication Awards Committee Email:
publication.awards@tctws.org or mail six (6) hard copies to:
Stephen Webb, Committee Co-Chair
Noble Research Foundation
2510 Sam Noble Pkwy.
Ardmore, OK 73401

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS & NOMINATIONS

Honorary Life Membership

The Honorary Life Membership Committee is seeking nominees for this honor. To be eligible a nominee should: (1) have been 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, and (2) have made significant contributions to the Chapter and/or the Profession and/or wildlife conservation of Texas.

To act on a nomination the Committee needs:

- 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.
- One or more letters of nomination from close friends or associates.

Please send your nominations no later than November 22, 2019, to Neal Wilkins at nwilkins@eastfoundation.net

CONSERVATION AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The TCTWS Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC) is built as a working committee to help the Chapter address regional, state, and local wildlife management issues and promote science-based decision making. Additionally, the CAC works to communicate positions and support member engagement. The CAC is composed of 20+ wildlife professionals that represent the breadth of our profession, a depth of expertise, and a wide range of Texas ecoregions.

Among many issues addressed by the CAC, the TCTWS Executive Committee has identified two priorities:

1. Affirming the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation
2. Supporting Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA)

We invite TCTWS members to engage the CAC on any matters of wildlife management policy by e-mailing committee chair, Romey Swanson at romeyswanson@gmail.com

The CAC will be providing a full legislative summary as a separate supplement or within the next full TCTWS Newsletter.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAMP: CELEBRATING 25 YEARS AND LOOKING FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE

by M. F. "Masi" Mejia and Thomas S. Janke

This past summer the annual Wildlife Conservation Camp celebrated 25 years of providing hands-on experiences to students interested in nature and ecology, regardless of their career interests.

Campers experienced the great outdoors and learned from wildlife and natural resource professionals from around the state. The interactive activities for the students included wildlife and plant ecology, species identification, tracking, trapping, hunter education, conservation ethics, and much more – ultimately allowing the students to experience how everything in nature is interconnected.

Wildlife Conservation Camp has a multifaceted approach of allowing students to DISCOVER (organisms, ecology, and management strategies), OBSERVE (animal behavior and wildlife tracking), INVESTIGATE (Aldo Leopold's "Land Ethic"), and lastly, EXPLORE (research techniques, shooting sports, and hunter education).

Wildlife Conservation Camp operates under the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society and was founded in 1993. The first camp was under the direction of Dr. Selma Glasscock, Misty Sumner, and Richard Heilbrun, and was held on the Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation near Sinton, Texas. Since the Wildlife Conservation Camp's inception in the Gulf Prairie ecoregion, it has been held across the state from the Trans-Pecos, to the Piney Woods, to the South Texas Plains, and multiple places in between. This upcoming summer, camp will be held at the Clear Fork Ranch near Albany, Texas, July 7–13, 2019.

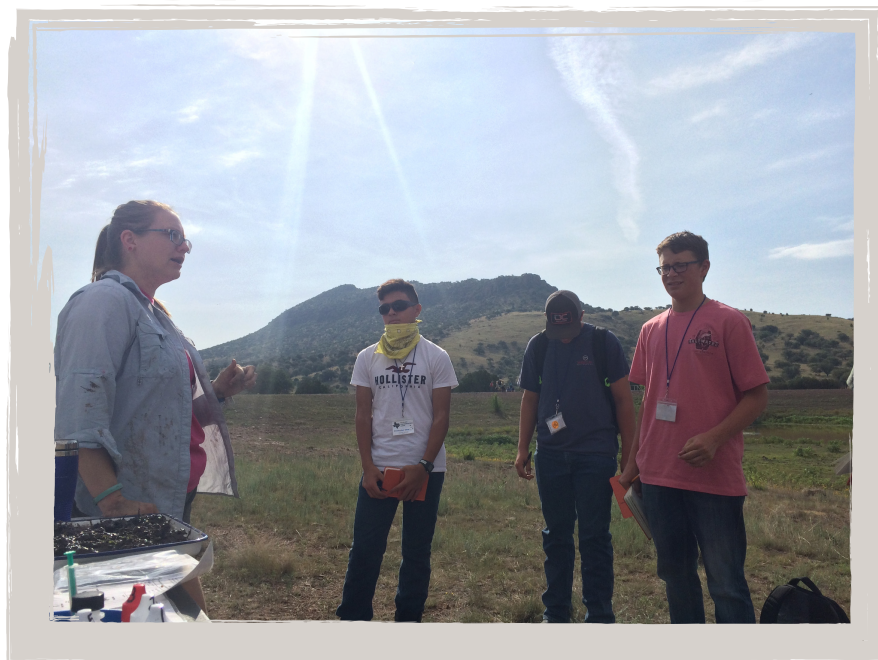
Wildlife Conservation Camp is open to incoming high school sophomores through college freshmen to participate as first-time campers. The deadline for applications is May 1 each year and applications can be submitted online through www.wildlifecamptx.org. The cost for a selected student to participate is \$350, which includes housing, meals, and a lifetime of experiences and memories.

The 2019 Camp Director is Thomas Janke. Janke is a Research Associate with the Borderlands Research Institute (Sul Ross State University) in Alpine, Texas. Camp Directors are responsible for ensuring that the camp secures appropriate funding; coordinating

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAMP

student and volunteer applications; organizing camp facilities, activities, and instructors; and making sure the camp meets all requirements of the Department of State Health Services.

Looking back, and looking forward, this camp would not be possible without the help of dedicated student mentors and professionals who ensure they share their knowledge and appreciation of our natural resources with younger generations. If you are interested in volunteering your time and talents to this great effort and adventure we call Conservation Camp, please do not hesitate to contact Thomas Janke (C: 254-541-5116; E: wildlifecampdirector@yahoo.com) or fill out an application at www.wildlifecamp.tx.org. The future of our field of study and work, and more importantly the health of our ecosystems, relies on our youth being educated and involved with our natural world.



MEMBER RECOGNITION

The U.S. Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA) Pantex Plant in Amarillo, Texas has been honored for their work with Swainson's hawks, purple martins, and other migratory birds. The plant received the 2019 Presidential Migratory Bird Federal Stewardship Award from the Council for the Conservation of Migratory Birds, a federal partnership that enhances coordination among federal agencies that affect migratory birds.

The Pantex Plant's winning project, "A multi-dimensional approach to contributing to migratory bird conservation across hemispheres," encompassed several collaborations sponsored by the facility. Their efforts helped monitor species of concern associated with wind energy research, support research on Swainson's hawks, and document and characterize stopover and wintering sites of purple martins.

Partner organizations included Texas Tech University, West Texas A&M University, University of Manitoba (Canada), York University (Canada), Purple Martin Conservation Association, Disney World Wide Fund, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Ornithological Society, and property owners and volunteers. More information about this award is available [online](#).

Congratulations to TCTWS member Jim Ray and the rest of the Pantex Plant crew!

Have you or a fellow TCTWS member received an award lately? Tell us about it! Just send us your story at newsletter@tctws.org.

TOP 10 TWS ARTICLES OF 2018

In 2018, there were over 240,000 downloads of articles from TWS' three premier wildlife journals: Journal of Wildlife Management, Wildlife Monographs, and Wildlife Society Bulletin. That's an average of 20,000 downloads per month!

More than ever before, wildlife professionals from around the globe are turning to TWS journals as their source for the latest research findings in wildlife science and management. Here's what they're reading:

Most-downloaded articles in 2018

- Population growth and status of California sea lions (JWM)
- From climate to caribou: How manufactured uncertainty is affecting wildlife management (WSB)
- Predicting the evolutionary consequences of trophy hunting on quantitative trait (JWM)
- Pneumonia in bighorn sheep: Risk and resilience (JWM)
- Chronic wasting disease influences activity and behavior in white tailed deer (JWM)
- Inefficiency of evolutionarily relevant selection in ungulate trophy hunting (JWM)
- Special section: Controversies in mountain sheep management (JWM)
- Effects of rotational grazing management on nesting greater sage-grouse (JWM)
- Review and synthesis of research investigating golden eagle electrocutions (JWM)
- Applying a random encounter model to estimate lion density from camera traps in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania (JWM)

Online access to all TWS journal articles is a benefit of TWS membership. To access, simply login to your TWS account through [Your Membership](#) or directly through the [TWS Journal Hub](#).

Pay dues, read previous newsletters, and find more information online:

tctws.org



Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society Newsletter is published electronically 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 and Maureen Frank, newsletter@tctws.org) by the 15th of the preceding month. Change of email address should be submitted online through the Address Change Form. Membership in the Chapter is \$15/year for students and \$25/year for regular members.