

# Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society

*Excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education*



Photo by: Jared Schlottman

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## TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY EXECUTIVE BOARD

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SECRETARY, AMANDA GOBELI  
BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE, SARA WEAVER

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EDITORS: CHEYENNE MACK &  
SARAH TURNER

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## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

*by Blake Grisham*

I am honored to welcome Dr. Sara Weaver (Board Member at Large), Amanda Gobeli (Secretary), and Dr. Jessica Glasscock (Vice President) as elected officers of The Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society (TCTWS). Noting spring is in the air, and baseball season is upon us, I am ecstatic to have Mary Pearl Meuth (President-Elect) and Dr. Glasscock (VP) behind me batting cleanup. Similarly, I am grateful to have John Kinsey (President-Elect) and Dr. Don Steinbach's wisdom and expertise serving as my head coach and general manager, respectively. Collectively, we represent our membership as the TCTWS Executive Board (EB), and we are in Spring Training mode as we prepare for the various activities, events, and other TCTWS action-items.

Thank you to the >650 TCTWS members who joined us for the 59th Annual Meeting of the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society. I was overjoyed to see our membership gather at the Omni Houston, and we missed members who were unable to join us. Next year's annual meeting will be our 60th Annual Meeting, and we will celebrate our sixth decade of congregation again at the Omni Houston Galleria.

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## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

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Thank you to our committee chairs, student volunteers, and any person who worked diligently, non-stop, and without regard for their own wellbeing to make the 59th Annual Meeting a huge success. Echoing Mr. Kinsey's outgoing speech, I thank and applaud Grant Lawrence, Amanda Gobeli, and Michaela O'Donnell for smashing fundraising records and establishing a framework for future TCTWS monetary efforts. Special thank you to The Wildlife Society at Tarleton State University for arriving early and staying late to do anything and everything that was asked of them; you are an astute group of young professionals and this year's meeting would not have been possible without your volunteer efforts. Thank you to Mary Pearl Meuth, Hope Zubek, and Mikaela Egbert for their selfless contributions and hours of behind-the-scenes work as our Local Arrangements committee. Last, but certainly not least, thank you to every committee chair, co-chair, and member who has volunteered their time and energy to make the annual meeting and TCTWS what it is today: the epitome of communication, advocacy, and togetherness.



"If Mr. Joseph F. B. Fitzsimmons asks for a selfie together, you oblige."  
-Dr. Blake Grisham

If you had similar feelings to what I had after our annual meeting, you let feeling exhausted, but uplifted. I was astonished by the number of students and professionals who spoke to the EB about becoming an active, engaged member of TCTWS. As such, the EB have worked to incorporate you into our efforts, and we are working on the backlog of email outreach to ensure each person who reached out to volunteer gets their opportunity and chance to serve. Please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the EB if you are interested in similar volunteer roles. We have established committee chairs and co-chairs for the 2023-2024 year but welcome all members to serve; we have space, desire, and the team to help incorporate your expertise, and I personally want to help any member achieve their own professional goals via service to TCTWS. Our organization's positive reputation within and beyond our state's borders is due to your individual efforts that represents the collective us. We are better with and because of you, and your dedication to all

things wild and free was my sole source of energy as I boarded my plane to Lubbock late Friday evening after the 59th annual meeting.

I thank Dr. Ed Arnett, Chief Executive Officer, The Wildlife Society, and Mr. Ed Roberson, host of the Mountain and Prairie podcast, for their presence and contributions to the 59th Annual Meeting. Likewise, thank you to Roel Lopez, Chad Ellis, Terry Anderson, Billy Tarrant, Jaime González, Sarah Coles, Joseph B.C. Fitzsimons, Neal Wilkins, and Immanuel Salas for contributing their expertise to the plenary and special panel discussions. I had a special, yet unexpected, allegorical interaction with Mr. Joseph Fitzsimons at the Past President's lunch. Before the lunch, he and I had never met, but we did know each other, but not formally. We unknowingly shared a special connection with another person, Mr. Gene Juarez, who has worked for Mr. Fitzsimons since he was a teenager.

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## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

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Mr. Juarez is a graduate of Texas Tech University and was among my first official NRM student advisees when I started my faculty position in 2013. Mr. Juarez casually references me as “my professor” and Mr. Fitzsimons as “my boss”. When I joined the special guests and past presidents at the table, I was overwhelmed with the level of expertise of these persons and the outstanding entities they represent. But because I owe it to my students to practice what I preach; I sat down between Dr. Tomeček and Mr. Fitzsimons and did what I tell them to do. After a few minutes of introductions and small talk, Mr. Fitzsimons and I simultaneously realized that we were “the boss” and “the professor”, respectively, and we immediately bonded over our common and important connection. Spring represents rebirth and renewal, and as we approach another daunting Texas summer, I encourage us all to reevaluate and remind ourselves what our sources of inspiration and motivation are among taxa, topic, and the personal. The 59th Annual Meeting was my professional and personal source of renewal, and I thank our members, committee chairs, EB, and special guests for providing the motivation necessary to step into the batter’s box as President of The Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

With Kind Regards (and Wreck 'Em!),



Blake A. Grisham, Ph.D.  
President, Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society



There's no such thing as a connection too big or small. Together we are better, and we all share a common sense of responsibility and desire to protect Texas' resources, including the young professionals we produce.



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## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

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### P.S. from the President:



Thank you to Mr. Romey Swanson, Mr. John Kinsey, and Mrs. Mary Pearl Meuth for their friendship, expertise, guidance, and service to TCTWS. Between 1997-2005, the Houston Astros reached the postseason six times in nine seasons. This historic era was led by "The Killer B's" - Jeff Bagwell, Craig Biggio, Sean Berry, and Derek Bell. I consider Romey, John, and Mary Pearl my professional/personal "Killer SKM's", which is not eloquent or clever, but is sincere.

# 59TH ANNUAL TCTWS MEETING



# ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS



Honorary Life Membership Award  
Dr. Roel Lopez



Educator of the Year  
Dr. Clint Boal



Land Stewardship Award  
Roy Leslie, Leslie Ranch



1st Place Cottam Award  
Madison Nadler



2nd Place Cottam Award  
Katie Pennartz



3rd Place Cottam Award  
Emily Card



Outstanding Electronic Media  
Olivia Haun



Outstanding Technical Publication  
Alison Lund & Drew Finn (accepted  
by Roel Lopez, Director-NRI)



Outstanding Scientific Article  
J. M. Mueller, S. E. Sesnie, S. E. Lehnen, H. T. Davis, J. J. Giocomo, J. N. Macy, A. M. Long

# ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS



Honorary Scientific Publication  
 A. D. Ritzell, F. Hernandez, J. T. Edwards  
 A. Montalvo, D. B. Wester, E. D. Grahmann,  
 D. Rollins, K. G. Stewart, R. A. Smith, D. A.  
 Woodard, L. A. Brennan



Outstanding Book  
 C. Craig Farquhar &  
 Clint W. Boal



Student Chapter of the Year  
 Stephen F. Austin  
 State University



Best in Show and 1st Place  
 Texas Scenery  
 Kirstin deBlonk



1st Place Art  
 Cameron Martin



1st Place Texas Wildlife Photo  
 Lauren Spjut



1st Place Humor Photo  
 Dana Karelus



1st Place Conservation Photo  
 Austin Kelly



1st Place Texas Plants Photo  
 Austin Kelly

# ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS



1st Place Non-Texas Photo  
Austin Kelly



1st Place Work Related Photo  
Austin Kelly



1st Place Remote Camera Photo  
Jim Peterson



Colin Caruthers  
Memorial Scholarship  
Madeleine Rawlings



Charly McTee  
Memorial Scholarship  
Gavin Moon



Dan Boone  
Memorial Scholarship  
Lindsey Chiesl



Sam Beasom  
Memorial Scholarship  
Gage Grantham



Carl D. Shoemaker  
Memorial Scholarship  
Andres N. Rosales



Conservation Equity Partners &  
Wildlife Systems, Inc. Scholarship  
Alejandra Martinez



# ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS



1st Place Undergraduate Poster  
Ty Goodwin



1st Place Graduate Poster  
Georgina Eccles



Outstanding Student  
Stephen F. Austin State  
Ethan Menzel



Outstanding Student  
Sul Ross State University  
Morgan Hassell



Outstanding Student  
Tarleton State University  
Ty Cosper



Outstanding Student  
Texas A&M University  
Becky Arch



Outstanding Student  
Abilene Christian University  
Grace Howe



Outstanding Student  
Texas A&M University-  
Commerce  
Tina Reichner



Outstanding Student  
Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
Andres Rosales

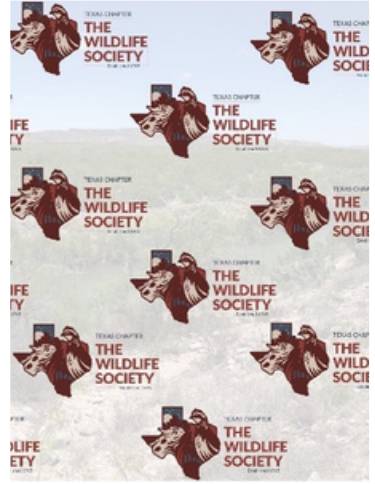
# ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS



Outstanding Student  
Texas Tech University  
Dakota Holden



Outstanding Student  
Sam Houston State University  
Sarah Goodman



Outstanding Student  
Texas State University  
Rei De La Riva



1st Place Plant ID  
Peter Cole



Camper of the Year  
Lacie Warren



1st Place Team Plant ID  
Texas A&M University- Kingsville



1st Place Quiz Bowl  
Texas A&M University

## Wildlife Conservation Camp

*by Cate Douglas*

This summer, I attended TCTWS Conservation Camp at Big Woods on the Trinity. Conservation Camp was packed with hands-on activities ranging from various research and management techniques to cultivating our networking and presentation skills. This camp was unique from others; it was engaging, fast-paced, and allowed campers to get dirty and involved in every activity. The first night was the ultimate icebreaker; we went herping and spotlighting for whitetail deer (most of which, to our disappointment and amusement, were stuffed deer with shiny eyes or the reflection of spiders). It's hard to pick just one favorite activity at camp, but the people are one aspect that trumps everything else. The dedication and passion of the professional and college mentors are unmatched. Each mentor shared their experiences in the field and taught us so much. My favorite part of the day was eating dinner with everyone and having our daily Quiz Bowl Competition. Quiz Bowls are very effective- I can still remember the four compartments of a ruminant stomach, the glands of a whitetail deer, and the name of our medic and amazing cooks. I still have my plant press and a growing species collection on iNaturalist. Also, after attending Conservation Camp, I applied to be a Land Stewardship Ambassador with the Witte Museum and East Foundation and continue learning about conservation. Overall, TCTWS Conservation Camp was a fantastic experience and a great way to plunge into conservation.



## TCTWS members!

We need ***your*** help in recruiting and nominating students to participate in our Wildlife Conservation Camp. Students must be of high school age (13-17). Camp will take place July 17-21, 2023 at the Texas Tech University Center at Junction in Junction, Texas. Camp cost is \$350 and we encourage all students to apply and to not let camp cost hinder their application. We would also love your help whether it's being a presenter, college mentor, professional mentor, or helping solicit donations to ensure camp is successful. Wildlife Conservation Camp was established after many years of planning by Dr. Don Steinbach, and the first camp was held in 1993 under the guidance of Dr. Monty Whiting and Dr. Janice Greene. The first camp was held at Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation. This summer we will host the 29th camp! Feel free to reach out to Masi Mejia-Serna or Kelley Mundy, co-chairs of camp, at [conservation.camp@tctws.org](mailto:conservation.camp@tctws.org).

We are also challenging all Past Presidents to donate  
\$100 towards this year's camp!

*Is your name on the committed list?*

Penny Bartnicki	John Kinsey
Fred Bryant	Roel Lopez
Linda Campbell	Corey Mason
Tyler Campbell	Jena Moon
Ruben Cantu	Don Steinbach
Ronnie George	Romey Swanson
Selma Glasscock	Ray C. Telfair II
Blake Grisham	John Tomeček
Louis Harveson	Neal Wilkins
David Hewitt	Monty Whiting

In honor of James Teer  
(donated by Roel Lopez)

*Thank you to our 2023 donors!*

- SWCA Environmental Consultants
- Tarrant Regional Water District
- Texas A&M University Department of Rangeland, Wildlife & Fisheries Management
- Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute

# TCTWS Webinar Series

Tune in on May 4th, June 15th, and October 26th at 11 a.m. CST to learn about current topics and applied research in natural resources! Register at [TCTWS.org/webinar](https://TCTWS.org/webinar).

**TEXAS CHAPTER**  
**THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**  
Established 1965

**Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society**

# Webinar Series

 <b>PANEL</b>	 <b>DR HUNTER J REED</b>	 <b>DR SARA WYCKOFF</b>	 <b>COLE FAGEN</b>
<b>APRIL 6</b>	<b>MAY 4</b>	<b>JUNE 15</b>	<b>OCTOBER 26</b>
<b>Skill building: Employer Panel</b>	<b>Wildlife Diseases: Chronic Wasting Disease</b>	<b>Wildlife Diseases: Emerging Diseases</b>	<b>Emerging Technologies: Fire and Drones</b>

**Quarterly**  
**11 am CST Thursdays**  
**RSVP now:**  
**[TCTWS.org/webinar](https://TCTWS.org/webinar)**

## CWD Story Map

*As a current issue influencing cultural, professional, and economic activities within natural resources management in Texas, the evaluation and mitigation of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has been a large focus of recent legislative actions. The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society recently endorsed a story map entitled "Chronic Wasting Disease in Texas- A Real Disease with Proven Impacts" created by an independent coalition of concerned hunters, landowners, and conservationists. This interactive webpage chronicles the spread and impacts of CWD in Texas, and provides outreach opportunities for engaged viewers.*

Texas deer and hunting culture is at risk! Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal neurological disease similar to "Mad Cow Disease" that affects deer, elk and other members of the deer family known as cervids. Due to the prolific unnatural movement of captive deer and other exotics in Texas, the disease is spreading rapidly, causing great concern for deer hunters, landowners, conservationists, and rural communities across our state. It is time for Texas to act and put in place proactive policies to protect our wild deer herds and hunting heritage.

Realizing the gravity and urgency of this issue, a broad coalition of stakeholders have recently come together to develop the informational Story Map linked below. Click on the link to learn more about CWD, captive deer movement in Texas, and what can be done to stop the spread of this serious disease.

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b93f528938ac48e9b56dcc79953cbec0>



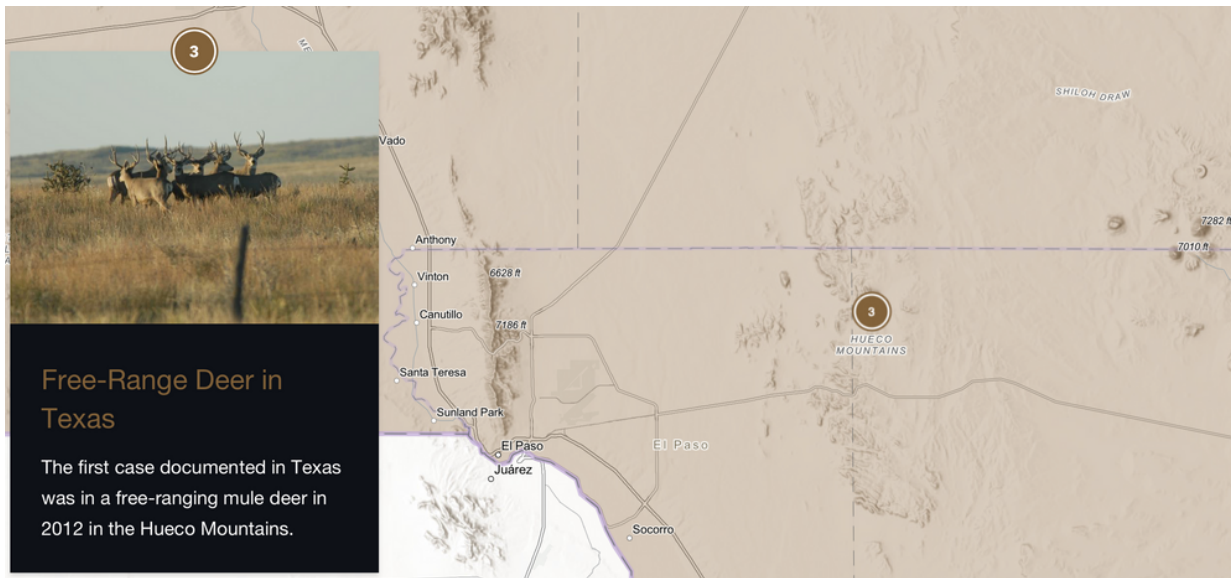
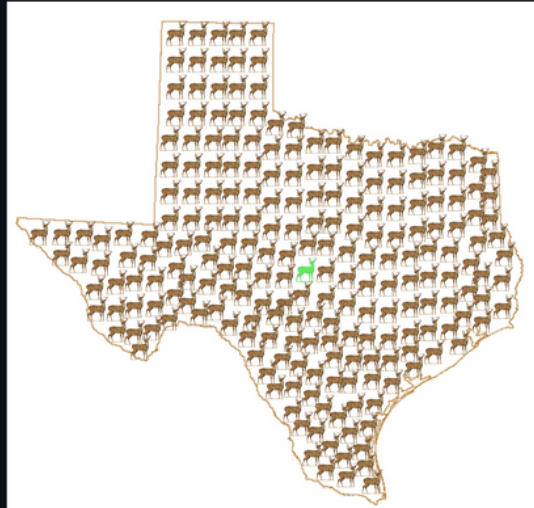
# CWD Story Map

## Texas Deer

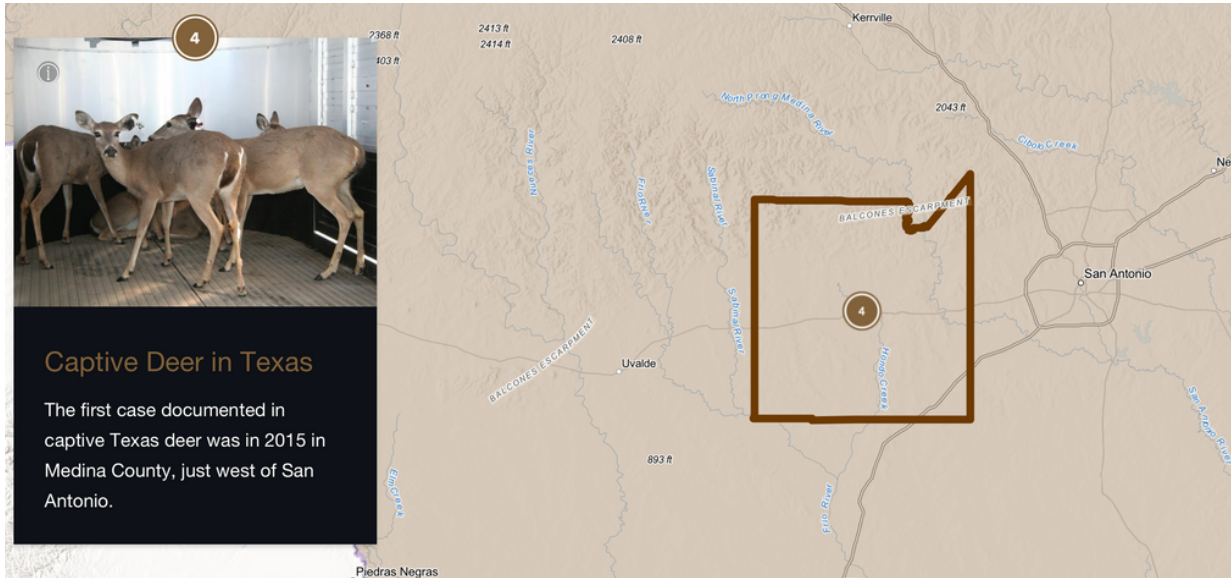
Texas is home to 5.8 million native deer, on habitat managed by more than 250,000 private land stewards.

1.7% of those deer are in 800 captive breeding operations, permitted by Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) has authority over **all native deer in Texas**, regardless of their location (free-range, behind high fence, captive deer breeding facility, etc.). All wildlife in Texas are considered public trust resources, managed by TPWD on behalf of all Texans.



# CWD Story Map



## Captive Deer in Texas

The first case documented in captive Texas deer was in 2015 in Medina County, just west of San Antonio.

## Call To Action

- [Share with friends and family](#)
- [Contact your state representative or senator](#)
- [Follow, support, and join pro wildlife groups](#)
  - [Texas Wildlife Association](#)
  - [National Deer Association](#)
  - [Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association](#)
  - [South Texans' Property Rights Association](#)
  - [Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#)
  - [Texas Foundation for Conservation](#)
  - [Audubon Texas](#)
  - [The Nature Conservancy - Texas](#)
  - [Texas Society of Mammalogists](#)
  - [Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation](#)
  - [Backcountry Hunters & Anglers](#)
  - [Archery Trade Association](#)





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## BOTANY BRIEFS

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Check out our recurring column, 'Botany Briefs.' Here we will share information about plants that are important to wildlife, whether beneficial or harmful. If you would like to contribute an article, please contact us at [newsletter@tctws.org](mailto:newsletter@tctws.org).

### ***Gaillardia pulchella* Foug., Indian Blanket**

by Sarah Turner

Commonly called "Firewheel" due to its striking red and yellow petals, *Gaillardia pulchella* is an annual sunflower in the Asteraceae family that occurs across much of Texas. It is an early *and* late bloomer, with a bloom period ranging from April through June dependent on rainfall. In addition to its "fiery" ray petals, Indian Blankets are visually distinct due to their hairy, branching growth pattern that can exceed 2 feet in height. Leaves are alternately arranged and mostly basal on the stem, with smooth to coarsely toothed or lobed margins. Inflorescences are 1-2 inches in diameter, with trilobed ray flowers that are red with yellow tips and brownish-red disk flowers that can be bristle tipped.



Photo 1: The trilobed ray flowers and dark-red disk flowers of an Indian Blanket inflorescence. Image sources from [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org).



Photo 2: The hairy stem and variable leaf margins of an Indian Blanket. Image sourced from [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org).

Nutritionally, Indian Blanket foliage has a high crude protein value (up to 25 percent in late winter and around 10 percent in the growing season), making them sought after by sheep and deer. Cattle do not normally consume the species. The flower produces an cypsela (a dry, single-seeded fruit of a sunflower formed from an inferior ovary) that is not consumed by songbirds or small game. Due to its eccentric petal coloration and early bloom period, Indian Blankets are highly utilized by pollinators.

Fun facts:

- 1) The fruit is sometimes called an achene, though technically an achene originates from a superior ovary (ovary on top of other floral parts) and a cypsela originates from an inferior ovary (ovary below the attachment of other floral parts).
- 2) Indian blankets were used medicinally by Native Americans for a variety of reasons- from gastrointestinal issues to remedying soreness.

Literature Cited:

- 1) [https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id\\_plant=GAPU](https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=GAPU)
- 2) <https://www.tmparksfoundation.org/plants-fungi/indian-blanket-flower>
- 3) Range Plants of North Central Texas- A Land User's Guide to Their Identification, Value and Management. 5th printing. USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service, Weatherford, Texas.

### SOUTHWEST SECTION TRACKS

*by Kathy Granillo*

Spring is upon us. Flowers are blooming, trees are leafing out, migratory birds are on the move, and the days are getting warmer and longer. I love spring. I can't wait for the first hummingbird to show up at my feeder and for the first Bullock's oriole to chatter at me from the nearby trees while he waits for me to put out the grape jelly. I realize that some parts of Texas are pretty similar to where I live in New Mexico, but also that Texas spans several biomes and that some of you have had flowers all winter, and maybe have had hummingbirds for weeks. But we do all share longer days and warmer temperatures. Hopefully this means more time in the field and hopefully more time enjoying the wildlife and wild places we value.

Speaking of wildlife conservation, I'm sure you are all aware that the last Congress failed to pass Recovering America's Wildlife Act. But the good news is that 2 Senators recently reintroduced the Act. Senators Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and Thom Tillis (R-NC) reintroduced it in early April in the U.S. Senate. The bill would provide nearly \$1.4 billion in dedicated funding annually for states and Tribes to conserve more than 12,000 at-risk species in the U.S.

The legislation, long endorsed by The Wildlife Society, supports deployment of State Wildlife Action Plans, which are crucial for addressing Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Further, the legislation would provide Tribal nations with a first-of-its-kind funding stream to keep common species common and address threats against species currently at-risk.

I urge you to contact your Senators and Representatives and ask them to support this important legislation. If you are interested in learning more about how to contact your legislators and what to say, please check out the Conservation Affairs Network <https://wildlife.org/conservation-affairs-network/> and the Policy Toolkit. This website is one of the many ways TWS seeks to help members affect conservation.

Which leads me to another effort underway at TWS. Strategic planning. Staff and Council kicked off development of a new strategic plan for TWS and welcomes all comments and ideas. We will reach out to all members through surveys and focal groups, for example, and I encourage you to invest some thought and effort into helping us develop this plan. There will be an all-member survey appearing in your inbox sometime in May. Please take the time to respond. We need your input to develop the best plan possible. I welcome any questions or comments you have, so please feel free to contact me via email at [KGBirder55@gmail.com](mailto:KGBirder55@gmail.com).

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## SOUTHWEST SECTION TRACKS

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Lastly, TWS recently completed an overhaul and redesign of the website. If you haven't been on the website lately, I urge you to check it out at [wildlife.org](http://wildlife.org). It is more user friendly than ever in terms of finding information and providing services for members. TWS would appreciate any feedback you have on the website and please let them know if you find a broken link or other problems.

Thank you for all that you do for wildlife today and for the future.



Kathy Granillo  
Southwest Section Representative  
[kgbirder55@gmail.com](mailto:kgbirder55@gmail.com)

**This is *your* newsletter.**

To submit an article, contact us: [newsletter@tctws.org](mailto:newsletter@tctws.org).

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

**[tctws.org](http://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 (Cheyenne Mack and Sarah Turner, [newsletter@tctws.org](mailto:newsletter@tctws.org)) by the 15th of the preceding month. Change of email address should be submitted online through the Address Change Form.

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Jared Schlottman**