

# Texas Chapter Tails

## of Wildlife and Stewardship



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### President's Note

As the sweltering heat of summer fades(ed) into autumn, the Texas Chapter was notably proactive in promoting our mission, collaborating with key resource leaders, hosting Wildlife Conservation Camp, and preparing for fall activities and the upcoming 2024 annual meeting. The annual meeting will be held February 21st – 23rd at the Omni Galleria – Houston. The meeting structure and format will be familiar for our members who have attended in the past. I thank the professional and student members who completed the post-meeting survey from the 2023 meeting. The board, local arrangements, program, student affairs, and numerous other committees have coordinated to incorporate as many revisions as possible to the meeting structure, format, location, and delivery based on your feedback. I thank Mary Pearl, Mikaela Egbert, and Olivia Gray for representing TCTWS at the Omni Houston Galleria this August to prepare for the February meeting. The theme for the 2024 meeting is “Thinking Like a Draba”. The plenary session will feature presentations from the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute on the 50th Anniversary of the Endangered Species Act and invited experts on Texas’ “lesser known” flora and fauna. I encourage our student members who are at the end of their degree track to submit abstracts for consideration in the Cottam Award session and all student members should consider applying for an undergraduate/graduate scholarship. Compiling and submitting any



A hungry pronghorn enjoys a very tasty meal of yucca fruit.  
*Courtesy of S. J. Turner.*

# President's Note

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applications for financial assistance/award session are of high value for your own careers and are an easy, attractive bullet point to include in your resume (even if not awarded!). All members, please be sure to note the deadlines for abstracts, awards, scholarships, and other solicited submissions and please consider nominating your colleagues, students, and other collaborators for these awards. Deadlines for each are included in this volume.

I extend my sincerest thank you to TCTWS members, committee chairs, and elected officials for their efforts this summer. I personally thank you for additional efforts; calls, texts, and emails; and other (and numerous) demonstrated acts of kindness associated with my illness in August. I thank Mary Pearl Meuth for attending the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission meeting to present TCTWS' public testimony in support of TPW Commission proposed actions on chronic wasting disease containment and surveillance zones, Dr. Steinbach for his comprehensive and exhaustive efforts before, during, and after the legislative session, and Jen Mock and team for their efforts pertaining to mountain lion management, SB 1648, and other important conservation affairs. Combined, TCTWS leaders have been active this summer promoting our mission in Austin, and a comprehensive update of our conservation affairs committee's activities is included in this volume on page 7.

I thank Kelley Mundy, Masi Serna, and a legion of TCTWS student and professional volunteers for their contributions to a successful Wildlife Conservation Camp. We hosted 24 new and 5 returning campers from numerous Texas high schools, and I thank the 8 university student mentors and 41 professional volunteers for their time dedicated to Wildlife Conservation Camp and our next cohort of TCTWS members and leaders. Camp was held at the Texas Tech University Center at Junction, 17-21 July 2023, and activities included, but were not limited to, small mammal trapping, bird mist-netting, wildlife tracking, radio telemetry, Global Positioning System, fish seining, plant identification and collection, invertebrate sampling, and wildlife spotlighting. Other outdoor recreational activities included kayaking, nature trail walks, boat rides, archery, and shooting. Examples of discussion topics included history of wildlife conservation and management, hunter education and ethics, land management, and wildlife survey techniques such as tracking and trapping. I thank all donors who contributed to another successful Wildlife Conservation Camp, including, but not limited to, Texas Farm Bureau, Stephen F. Austin Student Chapter of the Wildlife Society, Caeser Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Tarleton Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society, The Wildlife Society at Texas Tech, The Aldo Leopold Foundation, Texas Wildlife Association, Natural Resource Conservation Service, East Foundation, Latino Outdoors, Bowman Consulting, Quail Forever, Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute, Texas A&M Department of Range, Wildlife, and Fisheries, Management, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and Past Presidents.

# President's Note

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Join us Monday, 6 November 2023, 1730 – 1930 (EST) at The Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society Evening Reception as part of The Wildlife Society's 30th Annual Conference. Our reception will be in the Jones room at the Galt House; more information will be available as the conference approaches.

Stay tuned to our social media accounts for more information about our reception at the annual meeting, and we look forward to seeing you in Louisville in November and at our annual meeting in February.

With Kind Regards (and Wreck 'Em!),



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





Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society

## Going to Louisville for The Wildlife Society 30th Annual Conference?



*Look for us at the TCTWS Reception!*

**Monday, November 6th from  
7:30-9:30 in the Jones Meeting Room**

## President's Note

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### *A word from our Executive Director, Dr. Don Steinbach:*

We are saddened to share the news that Charles Ramsey, Past President of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, has passed away. His obituary is below, and we ask our membership to keep his family and friends in their thoughts during this difficult time.

“Charles Ramsey died on September 16, 2023 from an accidental fall. Charles was born September 25, 1936. He graduated from Texas A&M University Wildlife and Fisheries Department in 1959 and worked for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department at the Kerr Wildlife Management Area from 1962 to 1968. He oversaw the installation of a high fence on the KWMA and began studies of livestock and wildlife interactions impacts. Charles was employed by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service as a Wildlife Specialist at College Station in 1963. He was the Past President of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society in 1979. He retired from TAEX in 1997 to his home in Brady, Texas.”

# Editor's Note

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Hi everyone!

Due to the quantity of Committee News, below is an expanded table of contents for this edition. Happy reading!

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# TCTWS Committee News

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## Conservation Affairs

Texas Chapter leadership and members have been active this past spring and summer promoting the mission and position of TCTWS in Austin and with resource leaders. A short summary of activity is below, as well as future dates. Current TCTWS positions statements can be found on our [website](#). Please reach out to Conservation Affairs Chairs for further information or to get involved. TCTWS members are encouraged to participate in these activities.

- Chronic Wasting Disease
  - Joining other wildlife organizations, TCTWS has shared the "[Chronic Wasting Disease](#)" [StoryMap](#) site as a resource for members and constituents
  - March '23 - Submitted letter to TPW Commission requesting the immediate stop to movement of live deer in the state
  - June '23 - TCTWS leadership signed on to emergency action request letter sent to TPW Commission
    - Action - TPWD signed [Executive Order 23-004](#).
  - August '23 - TCTWS leadership and members gave public testimony in support of TPW Commission proposed actions on containment and surveillance zones. Also supported the publishing of additional rules to be heard at the November TPWC meeting
  - October '23 - TCTWS shared the [comment portal](#) for the November TPW Commission meeting & CWD rules package with entire TCTWS membership
- Mountain Lion Management
  - Executive Director represented TCTWS on Mountain Lion task force.
  - Proposal from task force under review and will be presented in October and tentatively scheduled for January TPW Commission Meeting
- Centennial Parks Conservation Fund
  - Texas Legislature pass [SB 1648](#) to put to voters this fall Prop 14 - a proposal that would establish a \$1 billion endowment fund to create new parks and support the current 89 state parks operated by TPWD. Texas Chapter members are encouraged to support this proposition locally and within their conservation circles.
- 2024 Land and Water Plan
  - TCTWS leadership is participating in [Land and Water Plan webinars](#)
- Upcoming Dates
  - November 1-2, Austin - [TPW Commission Meeting](#)\*
  - November 7, statewide - Election Date
  - January 24-25, Austin - TPW Commission Meeting

\*If you are interested in attending this or any Commission Meeting and/or want to participate, please reach out to [Mary Pearl Meuth](#). This November 1-2 meeting is a major milestone in CWD regulation and disease management.

## Excellence in Wildlife Conservation

Help us honor and recognize the educators, landowners, and wildlife professionals that inspire you! Please nominate an individual for one or more of the following award categories to recognize exceptional wildlife conservation efforts in Texas.

### **Educator of the Year Award**

The Educator of the Year Award recognizes wildlife professionals for outstanding achievements in wildlife conservation education. Since 1992, this award has honored the best wildlife educators in Texas, including 2023 recipient Dr. Clint Boal of Texas Tech University. Nominees should be current or past members of TCTWS. Please submit a 5-point bulleted statement explaining why your 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. There are no property size restrictions or TCTWS membership requirements for this award (nominees do not need to be current or past members of TCTWS). The 2023 award went to Roy Leslie for his excellent management of the Leslie Ranch. Please submit a ½ to 1 page letter of nomination explaining why your 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. Honoring remarkable individuals and groups for their contributions to conservation in Texas since 1966, this is the oldest recorded TCTWS award. Nominees should be current or past members of TCTWS. Please submit a 5-point bulleted statement explaining why your nominee is deserving of the award, along with a curriculum vitae of the nominee (if possible).

All nominations should be submitted to: Jim Mueller at [jim.mueller@tctws.org](mailto:jim.mueller@tctws.org) with the subject "Nomination for 2024 TCTWS Excellence in Wildlife Conservation Awards." For questions, call 512-755-3286. The deadline for nominations is **November 17, 2023**.



## Nominations

We are happy to introduce our nominees for our 2024 Vice President, Secretary, and Board Member at Large positions! We will publish candidate bios in both the October and January editions of *The Tails* along with highlighting candidates on our social platforms. Our online voting system will go live in early 2024, so please read up on our candidates and vote! Every member's voice matters!

### 2024 Vice President

- **Bill Adams, CWB®**
- **Stephen L. Webb, Ph.D.**

### 2024 Secretary

- **Mikayla Killam**
- **Anna Mathews**

### 2024 Board Member at Large

- **Chris Farrell**
- **Adam Terry**

## Nominations

### 2024 Vice President Candidate- Bill Adams, CWB®



I am the Associate Director of Operations for the Borderlands Research Institute (BRI) at Sul Ross State University. I serve BRI faculty, staff, and students to create operational efficiencies in support of their research, outreach, academic, and administrative efforts. My goal is to grease-the-skids so they can optimize their roles. I have been here since January and am energized by the eagerness of students preparing to professionally engage conservation stewardship.

For 20 years prior to BRI, I worked on Texas Parks & Wildlife Department Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). I began my career on the Panhandle Plains WMAs and transferred to the Middle Trinity River Ecosystem WMA Project in the Post Oak Savannah Ecoregion. I spent my last 16 years as the project leader for the Pineywoods Ecosystem Project WMAs, where, with partner agencies, our team managed over 260,000 acres of habitat to benefit game and non-game wildlife, demonstrated habitat management techniques to constituents, taught youth and adult hunters how to hunt, and coordinated several wildlife research projects.

I began TCTWS membership as a student in 1998. Beyond giving presentations as a student, I have served on several committees and chaired the Student Chapter of the Year, Activities, Local Arrangements, and Honorary Life Membership committees, but as a student and younger professional, I neglected networking and leadership opportunities due to introversion and selfishness with my time. As I've grown older there is nothing I look more forward to professionally attending each year than our conference. Young people, do not fear getting involved. Old(er) people, show them the way! I look forward to helping in this capacity if I am elected Vice-President of TCTWS.

## Nominations

### 2024 Vice President Candidate- Stephen L. Webb, Ph.D.



Stephen Webb is a research assistant professor in the Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute and the Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management at Texas A&M University. Stephen is a proud, 7th generation Texan who received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from Texas A&M University-Kingsville (TAMUK), and Ph.D. from Mississippi State University. His research focuses primarily on the ecology and management of game and large mammal species. He uses advanced and novel tracking and sensor devices to develop behaviorally and spatially explicit models of animal movement, habitat selection, animal interaction, and changes in population demographics. He also teaches a graduate level quantitative ecology class.

Webb is a Certified Wildlife Biologist®, Certified Senior Ecologist, and the current book review editor for the *Journal of Wildlife Management*, and past associate editor for *Rangeland Ecology and Management*. After joining the TAMUK Student Chapter of TWS, where he served as Vice President and President, Stephen immediately joined TWS in 1997 where he has maintained membership ever since. He is a charter member and sustaining donor of The 1,000, and is involved actively in multiple working groups.

Soon thereafter, in 1998, Stephen joined the Texas Chapter of TWS. He has contributed to TCTWS in multiple capacities, having served as chair of the Publication Awards (4x) and Scholarship committees, and member for the Clarence Cottam Awards and Local Arrangements committees. He is proud to have received the Colin Caruthers Memorial and Dallas Ecological Foundation scholarships as an undergraduate, and Lower Colorado River Authority Graduate Research Assistance Grant as a graduate student.

## Nominations

### 2024 Vice President Candidate- Stephen L. Webb, Ph.D.



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Stephen is fortunate for all of the opportunities he has received, and for being part of a state chapter that shaped and developed his vision and career in wildlife management. Now, one of his primary goals is to give back in every way he can to the organizations that he knows can benefit the wildlife profession by investing in future generations and those leading, and at the forefront of, our discipline. His commitment to giving back is also evident through his service as co-advisor to the TAMU Student Chapter of TWS, and member of Texas Wildlife Association's Conservation Legacy Advisory Committee.

## Nominations

### 2024 Secretary Nominee- Mikayla Killam



Mikayla (House) Killam is a Wildlife Damage Management Program Specialist for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. In this position, Mikayla's primary responsibilities are managing multiple educational websites, generating educational programs, providing peer training on new content, and developing extension publications. Mikayla has been a Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society member for 10 years. Throughout that time, she has experienced the chapter from the perspective of a student, graduate student, and an early career professional. She has made it a point to be an involved chapter member throughout the various stages of her membership. As a student, Mikayla was a student chapter officer for 3 years and competed on the Texas A&M University quiz bowl team for 4 years. When she became a graduate student, she continued to be involved in the quiz bowl contest working as a score keeper, judge, and student chapter coach over the years. As a professional, Mikayla volunteered to judge posters and tally score totals, she helped with the photo and art contest, and joined the scholarship committee in evaluating applications.

In recent years, Mikayla has taken on even more responsibility within the chapter by participating in executive board committees. For the last two years, she has been a co-chair of the activities committee. As a co-chair of this committee, she helped to plan and coordinate the pre-conference workshops attended by close to 250 members for the past Houston meeting and for the upcoming Houston meeting. Additionally, for the last two years, Mikayla has been responsible for compiling the Chapter of the Year application that our chapter submits to The Wildlife Society. Through this responsibility, Mikayla has collaborated with all members of the executive board, and many committee chairs from multiple presidencies. Mikayla says that these responsibilities have allowed her to see just how productive and passionate the members of this chapter are, which only makes her more eager to increase her involvement and give back to the organization by acting as an officer.

## Nominations

### 2024 Secretary Nominee- Anna Matthews



I am the Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture Science Coordinator for American Bird Conservancy, where my work involves collaborating across organizations and agencies to perform bird conservation in Texas and Oklahoma. My co-workers range from American Bird Conservancy, Quail Forever, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and many more. I design and implement monitoring programs to assess the effectiveness of our partnership's habitat programs, identify science priorities and decision support tools that help further bird conservation in Texas and Oklahoma, and set bird population and habitat goals for our region. Our bird conservation partnership works at the gap between habitat/conservation delivery and scientific research, giving me the opportunity to dabble in both worlds and identify opportunities to bring these two critical pieces together.

As part of my role, I often work with young professionals and recent graduates via field positions that are part of our monitoring programs and undergraduate research projects. My own experiences as an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota's wildlife program and as a Master's student at Texas State University made it clear to me the importance of dedicated mentors, the critical role that young professionals play in uplifting students, and the value of connections made in places like the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society. As many of us realize, that one graduate student or agency supervisor taking a chance on you and providing that first field job, connecting you with a volunteer experience, or taking the time to provide advice can change the course of your career. Thus, it's part of my mission to not only do my best by the birds that I've dedicated my career to, but to also do my best by the young professionals that come through my door and pay forward the opportunities given to me. This mission was only enforced and strengthened by my experience with the James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute, and today I've implemented activities through my work with American Bird Conservancy and through Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

## Nominations

### 2024 Secretary Nominee- Anna Matthews



*continued from page 14.*

A few of the things I have already been proactive with include setting up “meet-and-greets” for my field crews with professionals who have careers they’re interested in, working on year-long programs with undergraduates on research projects, and co-chairing Texas Chapter’s Webinar Series and designing episodes such as the employer panel held this past spring.

As Secretary of Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, I hope to continue this work and identify how we as a chapter can continue to serve our students and help them succeed as early professionals. I plan to not only do my utmost best while recording and issuing minutes, but also to use my unique position of bridging the delivery and research worlds to identify how the Texas Chapter can assist with filling the gaps that exist between the information our students learn in class and what they need to be successful in their careers. Wildlife conservation is only possible if we support and uplift the people who make it happen, and I hope that our chapter can continue to be a leader in this aspect. I’m proud of our conservation community and our organization, and I hope that I have the opportunity to serve the society in this role.

## Nominations

### 2024 Board Member At Large Nominee- Chris Farrell



Chris Farrell is a Project Leader for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, overseeing seven wildlife management areas (WMAs) with 10 staff in northeast Texas. Prior to this, he was a WMA biologist on the Old Sabine Bottom and Tawakoni WMAs. He decided he wanted to work for TPWD after interning on a WMA the summer after his freshman year of college. Chris has a passion for the outdoors and conservation with a goal to leave the places he manages in a better state for future generations.

Chris earned his bachelor's degree in wildlife and fisheries management from Texas A&M University, and then his Master's of Science in Forest Resources, with an emphasis in wildlife ecology, from the Warnell School of Forestry at the University of Georgia. Chris studied the effects of biomass harvesting on reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals in Georgia and North Carolina for his research. He has served on several committees in both the Texas Chapter and the national chapter of TWS. He most recently was the program committee co-chair in 2022 and is a TWS Certified Wildlife Biologist®.

Chris lives in east Texas with his wife, Annie, his 2-year-old twin daughters, Eva and Ashlyn, and his yellow lab, Otter. He enjoys experiencing the outdoors with his family and showing his daughters the world around them. Chris's hobbies include smoking meats, hunting, fishing, watching college football, and spending time with his friends and family.



## Nominations

### 2024 Board Member At Large Nominee- Adam Terry



Adam Terry is the Forest Wildlife Biologist and Wildlife Program Manager for the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas (NFGT). On the NFGT, he leads a team of 6 biologists and 8 wildlife technicians. He oversees wildlife management and biological resource issues over 675,000 acres of public land. Adam has extensive expertise in threatened and endangered species, game and non-game species management, habitat restoration, East Texas ecology, forestry, and fire management/ecology. His experience spans wildlife management processes, from project design to implementation to policy issues. During his tenure, the Sam Houston National Forests Red-cockaded woodpecker population reached its property recovery goal of 350 breeding groups and over 100% population increase across the NFGT. He is also responsible for day-to-day operations for a partnership with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) on the state's largest Wildlife Management Area (WMA) program. Previously, he worked in the private sector as a forester, wildlife biologist, and WMA biologist for TPWD.

Adam has been a member of TCTWS for 10 years and has served on the Program Committee and as a poster judge. Adam has also been a member and attendee of the national TWS for 10 years. He is a Stephen F. Austin State University graduate with a major in forestry and wildlife and a minor in biology.

A 6th generation Texan, Adam is a TWS Certified Wildlife Biologist® and SAF Certified Forester® currently living in Diboll, Texas with his wife, son, and 1 dog.

## Photo/Art Contest

The Photo and Art Committee is responsible for arranging the contest and for soliciting qualified entries for the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TCTWS) Annual Meeting. In 2024, the Photo and Art Contest will be conducted in the hybrid format described below.

- **Digital copies (JPEGs, etc.) must be submitted by 12 PM (noon) on Tuesday, February 20th, 2024. The submission link will be sent out in the *January newsletter*.**
- **You must bring your art submissions and the physical prints of your photo submissions to the Photo & Art table between 12 PM (noon) and 5 PM on Wednesday, February 21st, 2024.**

All contestants must be members of the TCTWS (if you have registered for the TCTWS Annual Meeting you are a member). Contestants will be limited to 1 entry per photography category.

Photography categories will be:

- 1) Texas Wildlife (not including captive animals)
- 2) Non-Texas Wildlife, Plants, and Scenery
- 3) Wildlife Conservation (may include captive animal or species of conservation concern)
- 4) Texas Plants (includes plant-like organisms such as fungi)
- 5) Humor
- 6) Texas Scenery
- 7) Work Related
- 8) Remote Camera (not including captive animals)

The Art category may include original drawings, paintings, carvings, sculpture, poetry, etc. Art submissions are limited to 5 entries per person.

To help defray the cost of awards, there will be an entry fee of \$1.00 per item, which will be paid at the time of submission.

Photographs should be a standard size (3" x 5" up to 11" x 14"), unmatted, and unframed; however, cardboard backing is permitted.

## Photo/Art Contest

An electronic voting platform will be available within the TCTWS 2024 Annual Meeting application from 12 PM (noon) on Wednesday, February 21st until 3 PM on Thursday, February 22nd.

- Open “TCTWS 2024 Annual Meeting” application
- Click “Menu” button in bottom left corner
- Click Rubiks Cube icon labelled “Photo Contest Voting”.
- Select the category of interest.
- To vote on an image, simply click the image and tap the “Vote For This Photo” button.

You may pick up your entries between 7 AM and 10 AM on Friday, February 23rd. The committee is not responsible for photos & art left after the close of the conference.

Winners will be announced during the Awards Banquet on Thursday evening, February 22nd. Provided there are at least 5 entries in a category, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places will be awarded in each category. If there are less than 5 entries in a category, only 1st place will be awarded. There will also be a “Best of Show” award for the most popular entry.

## Program

### Call for Abstracts

Presented Paper and Poster Presentation Abstract submission deadline: **November 30, 2023 by 11:59 p.m. Submit abstracts at <https://www.xcdsystem.com/tctws/member/index.cfm>.**

The meeting will offer technical paper sessions and an expanded poster presentation session for students (undergraduate or graduate) and wildlife professionals. Best poster presentation by an undergraduate and graduate will be awarded as in previous years these will be judged on significance of research, scientific procedures, quality of abstract and display, presentation of results, accuracy of conclusions, and response to questions from judges. Posters selected for the competition will be identified based on the submitted abstract and its conveyance of these criteria. Students with incomplete studies or proposals are encouraged to submit but will not be considered for the competition. However, space is limited, so quality of abstract may prioritize acceptance. Only one poster will be judged per student presenter, though students may present more than 1 poster. Maximum poster size is 4ft wide x 3ft tall.

Papers presenting the results of wildlife field investigations and analyses as well as topic reviews of interest to wildlife students and professionals in Texas are encouraged. Paper (oral) presentations should present results or outcomes. Abstracts reporting preliminary or no data should be submitted as a poster. Abstracts should be submitted digitally via the abstract submission website that will be linked on the TCTWS Annual Meeting website.

Please indicate your preference for presentation format (i.e., paper, poster, or no preference) and session (i.e., General Sessions, Clarence Cottam Award, or whether you would like to be included in the judging for the best poster presentation awards). Again, only one poster will be judged per student presenter, though students may present more than 1 poster. For those entering no preference, a decision will be made by the Program Committee and presenter notified via email. Any questions pertaining to paper abstract submission should be directed to Program Co-Chairs: [program@tctws.org](mailto:program@tctws.org).

Contributed papers will be scheduled at 15-minute intervals to include time (2–3 minutes) for questions and comments. All presenters will be notified of the day, time, and location of their presentations, and provided with instructions on how to prepare for the sessions. Clarence Cottam Award presentations will be judged on topic originality, scientific procedures, quality of display, accuracy of conclusions, and response to question from judges. Full Clarence Cottam Award instructions can be found at: <https://tctws.org/student-menu/scholarship-opportunities/clarence-cottam-award/>. Any questions can be submitted to the Cottam Award chair at: [cottam.awards@tctws.org](mailto:cottam.awards@tctws.org).

## Program

Sample Abstract (please note not to use scientific names in title; use only in body of abstract).

### LANDSCAPE EFFECTS ON GENE FLOW AND GENETIC STRUCTURE OF NORTHERN BOBWHITE IN TEXAS AND THE GREAT PLAINS

Katherine S. Miller, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University–Kingsville, Kingsville, TX, 78363, USA

Leonard A. Brennan, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University–Kingsville, Kingsville, TX, 78363, USA

Randy DeYoung, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University–Kingsville, Kingsville, TX, 78363, USA

Fidel Hernández, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A&M University–Kingsville, Kingsville, TX, 78363, USA

X. Ben Wu, Department of Ecosystem Science and Management, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, 77843-2138, USA

Example:

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

## Publication Awards

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

**Don't forget to submit your nominations for The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's 2024 Wildlife Publication Awards!**

The Society's Wildlife Publication Awards recognize excellence in scientific literature of wildlife biology and management issued within the last three years. The publications selected are characterized by originality of research or thought and a high scholastic standard in the manner of presentation.

Works published in 2021, 2022, and 2023 are eligible in the following categories:

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

To nominate a publication, submit:

- 1) A cover letter stating which category the publication is being submitted under.
- 2) Why the publication should be considered for the award.
- 3) A digital pdf or six (6) hard copies.

Categories with  $\geq 3$  nominations will be considered for an award.

**Please send nominations to [jhunter.reed@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:jhunter.reed@tpwd.texas.gov) by 5 p.m. on December 8th, 2023!**

## Webinar



TEXAS CHAPTER  
**THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**  
Established 1965

Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society

## Webinar Series

### Emerging Technologies

Cole Fagen, American Bird Conservancy  
11am CST Thursday  
October 26, 2023

In this TCTWS webinar, Cole Fagen from American Bird Conservancy will speak with us about prescribed fire and the application of drones. Join us quarterly as we learn about what makes Texas wildlife stewardship excellent.



RSVP today:  
[TCTWS.org/webinar](https://www.tctws.org/webinar)

Join us on October 26, 2023 at 11 AM CST. Our guest professional is Cole Fagan from American Bird Conservancy who will be discussing using drones for prescribed fire.

Date: **October 26 at 11 AM Central**

Link to webinar: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/551530110407/>

**[Click here to join via Microsoft Teams:](#)**

Cole is an avid outdoorsman, with degrees in Natural Resource Management from Angelo State University and Oklahoma State University. He has worked with UAV technology to aid in the safe and effective use of prescribed fire in Oklahoma. Cole is a prescribed fire practitioner helping private landowners and partner agencies improve habitat for grassland bird species in Oklahoma and Texas.

## Webinar



The graphic is a rectangular promotional poster for a webinar. In the top left corner is the logo for the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, featuring a stylized animal head and the text 'TEXAS CHAPTER THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY Established 1965'. In the top right corner, it says 'Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society' in a dark box, followed by 'Webinar Series' in large, bold, dark red letters. The main title 'Emerging Technologies' is in a large, bold, dark blue font. Below it, the speaker's name 'Cole Fagen, American Bird Conservancy' is in a smaller, bold, dark red font. The date and time '11am CST Thursday October 26, 2023' are in a bold, dark blue font. A short paragraph in dark red text describes the webinar's content. On the right side, there is a portrait of Cole Fagen, a man with short brown hair and a light beard, wearing a grey button-down shirt. At the bottom left, the text 'RSVP today: TCTWS.org/webinar' is in a dark red font.

Learn something new at the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's Webinar series. The quarterly webinar series for the chapter features professionals, research, and initiatives relevant to our chapter. Registration is open to both TCTWS members and nonmembers. The series will follow a quarterly schedule and rotate themes throughout the year, giving listeners a peek into topics such as emerging technologies, career skill-building, partner highlights, and knowledge deep-dives.

Join us quarterly as we learn about what makes Texas wildlife stewardship excellent. Each webinar is hosted virtually through Microsoft Teams. Register in advance for each individual webinar through [tctws.org/webinar](https://tctws.org/webinar). If you are interested in presenting an upcoming webinar please email the webinar chair at [webinar@tctws.org](mailto:webinar@tctws.org).



## Wildlife Conservation Camp

Our 2023 Wildlife Conservation Camp was held on July 17-21, 2023 at the Texas Tech University Center at Junction and was a huge success! Below we have articles from our top two campers to highlight the impact of this experience on their lives. Following their notes, we would like to thank every donor who helped make the camp possible.

### Josi Longson - 2023 Top Camper

“This summer’s camp was one of the most profound experiences I’ve ever been at. I enjoyed every single aspect of camp, but what really made the week the best time of my life was all of the people that made the camp happen. It was amazing to listen to how everyone did their jobs and taught us a little aspect of them.

I aspire to be a wildlife biologist, specifically studying nongame animals. I learned more of what the profession does and learned about various techniques for taking care of the lands and the animals that live there. It gave me lots of perspective towards how married to my job I will be in the future. I am looking forward to being as dedicated to my job as the people who gave us their time to talk to us were.

It was amazing to also listen to the graduate students tell us about their thesis projects. The one that stuck out to me the most was Matt Hewitt’s bear survey in Big Bend. It was compelling to hear him be so passionate about the bears.

Taking a step back from my aspirations, my absolute favorite part of camp was the remoteness of the location and the ability to see the stars. I grew up in the DFW metroplex up until I was 2017. I hadn’t had the opportunity to see anything quite as stunning as the stars and nebula that were out for the night we looked at the stars.”

## Wildlife Conservation Camp

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### Jaxon Eason - 2023 Top Camper

“The Wildlife Conservation Camp can easily be recognized as one of my favorite experiences throughout my high school career. The camp not only allowed for me to experience a week full of constant learning and engagement, but it also allowed for me to build connections with my peers and with professionals within the wildlife management industry. My favorite thing about the camp is that we were able to be involved in a hands-on learning experience in nearly every activity throughout the week. Whether it was kayaking down to Llano River or setting Sherman traps, we were directly engaged with the activities at hand. The instructors not only did an outstanding job of allowing us to experience various management techniques through live demonstrations but also ensuring that we had a fully developed understanding of what they were teaching. While the camp created a personal impact within that week, I believe that the camp will create a larger impact on my future. The camp created the ability to meet with professionals within various departments of wildlife management and gain knowledge from these people. I believe that the Wildlife Conservation Camp impacted my future significantly by helping guide me towards my decision of what I would like to pursue in the future. The leaders at this camp were capable of giving incredible advice for anyone deciding what they would like to pursue in the future and I believe that they effectively impacted every camper during that week. Overall, I cannot thank the Wildlife Conservation Camp enough for the experience they created for the other campers and I, and the impact they created on my future.”

## Wildlife Conservation Camp

Thank you to each and every donor for making the 2023 Wildlife Conservation Camp a success!

The Camp Committee and the Texas Chapter membership would like to express our gratitude to all patrons who helped make camp possible. Access to Paint Creek Ranch was provided by Ruth Russell and the ranch manager of Paint Creek Ranch (Billy), and food/drink items were sponsored by Alton Davis with Lowes Market and Thomas Janke with Quail Forever.

Thank you to every donor who sponsored a camper fee: Latino Outdoors; Texas Farm Bureau; West Nueces Las Moras SWCD; Coryell County Farm Bureau; Borne High School-FFA Parent Booster; Denise Ruffino.

Likewise, thank you to our generous sponsors for providing general camp funds: Stephen F. Austin Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society; Texas Farm Bureau; Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute; Tarleton Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society; Thomas R. Simpson; Texas Tech Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society; Latino Outdoors; Texas A&M University Department of Range, Wildlife, and Fisheries Management; Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute.

Thank you to the following donors for providing items used during camp: Aldo Leopold Foundation; East Foundation; Texas Wildlife Association; Latino Outdoors; Natural Resources Conservation Service; Purple Martin Conservation Association; Forestry Suppliers; Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Finally, thank you to all the Past Presidents who answered the call to step up and participate in the "Past President's Challenge!"

- Dr. Nova Silvy
- Gary Valentine
- Dr. Fred Bryant
- Dr. Bruce Thompson
- Dr. Ray Telfair II
- Dr. Doug Slack (sponsored by Dr. Heather Mathewson)
- Ron George
- Dr. Don Steinbach
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- Kirby Brown
- Dr. Neal Wilkins
- Dr. Selma Glasscock
- Dr. Fidel Hernandez
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- Dr. Warren Conway
- Dr. Matt Wagner
- Dr. David Hewitt
- Dr. Roel Lopez & Dr. James Teer
- Corey Mason
- Dr. Jena Moon
- Dr. Tyler Campbell
- Dr. John Tomeček
- Romey Swanson
- John Kinsey
- Dr. Blake Grisham

# Student Summer Spotlight

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*Check out what some of our student members have been up to during their summer breaks in our Student Summer Spotlight! If you're a student interested in sharing your summer experience, please submit your write up to the Newsletter Committee.*

## **Jake Mayhan, Stephen F. Austin State University**



My name is Jake Mayhan, and I am the president of the Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. I had the amazing opportunity to work for the East Foundation this summer at their San Antonio Viejo Ranch located in Hebbronville Texas. I spent three months working with a team of 5, monitoring white-tailed deer fawn survival and cause-specific mortality. This research helped determine survival rates and sources of mortality to better understand deer population dynamics in Deep South Texas. I monitored the parturition and mortality of white-tailed deer fawns using radiotelemetry and conducted mortality investigations to determine the predators that caused them. It was an unforgettable experience that I am thankful that I was a part of.

# Student Summer Spotlight

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## **Kennedy Bailey, Texas A&M University**



This summer, Kennedy Bailey, worked as a Range Ecology Technician for the East Foundation at their San Antonio Viejo ranch in Hebronville, Texas. Her work included the collection of vegetation data in an experimental grazing study to determine biomass for stocking rates. She also conducted belt transects with her crew, to determine brush density, Bobwhite quail habitat, forage utilization, and vegetation structure, cover, and composition. She obtained hand-on experience with White-tail deer research and gained a deep understanding of range ecology management.

# Botany Brief

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## *Carya illinoensis* (Wangenh.) K. Koch, Pecan

By: Sarah Turner

From pies to furniture, the pecan is a highly valuable native and cultivated plant. The deciduous tree can be found natively in more than half the counties in Texas in wooded bottoms or stream banks. Pecan trees can reach heights of over 100 feet tall and are easy to identify with their large-diameter trunks with thick gray bark and symmetrical oval-shaped crown. The canopy foliage consists of pinnately-compound leaves containing 11-17 leaflets with finely-toothed blades that are sickle-shaped. The plant has inconspicuous flowers and is monoecious (both male and female flowers on the same plant), with male flowers aggregated in catkins and female flowers solitary or in short spikes. Fruits of pecans are hard, oblong nuts enclosed by a husk that splits at maturity.

Along with being a vital forage source for wildlife, humans consume pecans readily (pecan pie anyone?). Many varieties have been created for production agriculture to increase yield, and the state of Texas is the top producer of pecan fruits of any state where they are native. In addition to providing nesting/denning habitat for wildlife species, pecans are frequently used as ornamentals due to their extensive canopy. Pecans are also the larval host of the Gray hairstreak butterfly.

### Fun Facts:

- 1) The pecan is the state tree of Texas.
- 2) The word "pecan" is of Algonquin origin, and the Latin name stands for "Illinois nuts".

### Literature Cited:

- 1) [https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id\\_plant=cail2](https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=cail2)
- 2) <https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Grants-Services/Marketing-and-International-Trade/International/Buyers-and-Consumers/Pecans>.
- 3) Diggs, G. M., Lipscomb, B. L., & O'Kennon, B. (1999). *Shinners & Mahler's illustrated flora of north central Texas*.



The gray, grooved bark characteristic of the pecan. Photo courtesy of Damon E. Waitt from wildflower.org



The leaflets and fruit of the pecan. Note the sickle-shaped leaves. Photo courtesy of R. W. Smith from wildflower.org

# Southwest Section Tracks

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*By: Kathy Granillo, Southwest Section Representative*

Where did the summer go? It is still warm in our region, but cooling down a little, some leaves are starting to change color, and it's chile roasting season (one of the best smells ever!). Many animals start responding to the changing seasons through movement. Many bird species are migrating south. Elk, deer, and pronghorn might be starting some seasonal movements, too. For many wildlife species this is also the time of year when the juveniles get booted out of the home territory and they must venture out on their own in search of a new home. Even many humans will start their southward treks to their winter "snowbird" homes.

Movement can also put species at more risk, especially from human interactions. Crossing roads and interstates, navigating past cities and towns, and figuring out how to get over, under or around fences. Texas has made some good progress in establishing wildlife crossings and I want to highlight these efforts.

Wildlife crossings over roads have been popping up along major stretches of highway since the 1990s. To date, the Texas Department of Transportation has built 32 wildlife crossings to help keep both drivers and animals safe on the road. In August, TxDOT applied for a federal grant funding from the Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program for two more locations to protect the wild animals. The program is part of the \$1.12 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which made \$350 million available over five years for construction of wildlife crossings.

Twenty-one of the existing bridges were built in locations in South Texas—including Corpus Christi, Pharr, and Laredo—specifically to protect ocelots that live near the Mexico border. Wildlife crossings have also been installed in Corpus Christi, El Paso, and Austin. The crossings in Austin were created to protect the endangered Houston toad. The crossing in El Paso was spurred by vehicle collisions with mule deer in the Franklin Mountains. Of course, many other wildlife species use these crossings, too. The crossing help keep wildlife off the highways and reduces the number of wildlife vehicle collisions, which makes the roads a little safer for the traveling public, like those snowbirds headed for Brownsville.

Kudos to Texas! Now I have some questions for you wildlife students and professionals in Texas:

*What else is being done to make wildlife movements safer?*

*What else could be done?*

I will follow up on these questions in the next newsletter and would appreciate hearing from any of you with answers to the questions.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any concerns or comments or questions about TWS and TWS Council.



Kathy Granillo - TWS  
Southwest Section Representative

# So long and happy "tails"!

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Texas Chapter Tails of Wildlife and Stewardship 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.



Pay dues, read previous newsletters, and find more information online: [tctws.org](http://tctws.org)

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