



Texas Chapter Tails

of Wildlife and Stewardship

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President's Note

As summer takes hold across Texas, many of us find ourselves deep in the field, occasionally questioning our life choices as we work through triple-digit heat. Still, that heat is more than just a challenge, it is a testament to the dedication and passion that fuels our profession. This season reminds us why we do what we do: connect with the land, advance conservation, and mentor the next generation of natural resource professionals.

Recently at SFA, my colleagues and I lead our annual six-week undergraduate Forestry Field Station, an intensive stretch of fieldwork for both students and instructors. From learning how to monitor for birds and flying squirrels to cruising timber and climbing trees, the program offers immersive, hands-on experiences that go far beyond the classroom. These long days in the field not only deepen technical skills but also foster strong bonds among students, connections that grow through shared challenges, teamwork, and a passion for the outdoors.

In that same spirit of exploration and mentorship, I'm looking forward to traveling to the beautiful Davis Mountains Preserve in Fort Davis, Texas, for the 31st Wildlife Conservation Camp, hosted by the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society from July 21-25. Under the guidance of our dedicated natural resource professionals, campers will take part in wildlife and conservation-based activities designed to help them understand the "big picture"



An SFA Forestry Field Station student with a tanager in hand.

Photo by Jessica Glasscock

President's Note

of how everything in nature, including us, is deeply interconnected.

As we prepare to welcome our campers from across the state, we are mindful of the devastating flooding that has affected central Texas in recent days. Our hearts are with the families and communities who have been impacted, as well as the first responders and volunteers who continue to provide critical support and relief. I would like to encourage you to consider donating to an organization, of your choice, that is actively working to help with flood relief. Below are several trusted, vetted organizations working directly in the hardest-hit areas:

- **Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country – Kerr County Flood Relief Fund**
A locally administered fund distributing donations to vetted nonprofits, first responders, and local governments in Kerr, Hunt, Ingram, Center Point, Comfort, and more.
- **The Salvation Army (Texas Floods July 2025 response)**
Operating as the Volunteer Reception Center in Kerrville. They encourage monetary gifts only—everything is used directly for meals, supplies, volunteers, and coordination.
- **The San Angelo Area Foundation** has established the - **San Angelo Disaster Relief Fund**, which will provide financial support to flood victims in San Angelo and surrounding areas. The San Angelo Area Foundation is also working closely with local organizations to provide assistance to those in need.
- **Convoy of Hope** is going to Central Texas with team members and relief supplies to support evacuees and survivors. You can support its Crisis Relief Fund.

We would also like to reassure our camp families that the well-being of every camper is at the heart of everything we do. Our dedicated team includes volunteers trained in emergency response and first aid, and our instructors bring extensive experience in youth programs and outdoor safety. With a strong focus on preparation and care, we're committed to creating a safe, structured, and supportive environment where campers can explore, learn, and grow while connecting with the natural world.

As we look ahead to the coming weeks, may we remain steadfast in our commitment to conservation, education, and service. Whether we are guiding future professionals in the field, supporting communities in recovery, or stewarding the natural resources entrusted to our care, our collective efforts make a meaningful difference.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our shared mission. Together, we are making a lasting impact on the conservation of Texas' wildlife and habitats.

Warm regards,

Jessica L. Glasscock, PhD

President, Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society



TCTWS 2026 Annual Meeting

Save the Date

A note from the Local Arrangements Committee:

Save the Date!

The **Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's 2026 Annual Meeting** is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 18th – Friday, February 20th** at the **Moody Gardens Hotel, Spa & Convention Center on Galveston Island.**



A call for abstracts is expected later this Fall with registration launching in December tentatively. The TCTWS Annual Meeting each year offers opportunities to hear from leading experts in the natural resource community, get updates on breaking research from wildlife and conservation students, and meet professionals from across the state.



Venue Map



TCTWS Committee News

Conservation Affairs

By Matt Wagner, Executive Director, and Mary Pearl Meuth, Past President

Legislative Matters

On March 20, the first Texas Chapter Day at The Capitol was attended by 14 people, with half of them students. They met with Representative Metcalf, chair of the House Culture, Recreation and Tourism (CRT) Committee and Senator Perry, chair of the Senate Water, Agriculture and Rural Affairs (WARA) Committee. We were recognized by Rep Metcalf on the House floor, attended CRT hearing, and visited several other legislator offices. Of the 61 bills that the chapter was tracking during the 89th Legislative Session, 20 were acted on by chapter members (testimony, registration or written comments submitted). Eleven bills were signed or sent to the Governor for signature as of June 16. They are:

Bill Number	Author	Related to
HB609	Vasut	Cleaning oyster mariculture structures
HB 654	Leo-Wison	Dismissal of charges for Illegal hunting of certain deer
HB1592	Plesa	Alert system for dangerous plant and wildlife pests and diseases by AgriLife
HB2018	Ashby	Clarification of Farm and Ranch Conservation Program
HB2842	Zwiener	Lethal control of white-tailed deer in certain areas
HB3556	Vasut	Certain structures exceeding a height near National Wildlife Refuges
HB4530	Romero	Water rights in Water Trust and Water Bank
SB7	Perry	Water infrastructure
SB1245	Blanco	Hunting aoudads from helicopters
SB1247	Perry	Consolidating non resident hunting licenses
SB1302	Kolkhorst	Discharging waste into state waters

Conservation Affairs, cont.



Texas Chapter members and students with Senator Perry, March 20

New World Screwworm

At the current time, the New World Screwworm Fly is approximately 600 miles south of the Texas border in Mexico and advancing northward. We are continuing to monitor this progress and support efforts to educate ranchers and wildlife managers in how this challenge will be met. As a chapter, we are supporting the Stop Screwworm Act which would provide the federal funding needed to construct a sterile fly rearing facility in Texas and provide other resources necessary to combat this scourge. Multiple webinars and workshops are materializing through Texas A&M AgriLife, the Texas Wildlife Association and other natural resource organizations. New World Screwworm Fact Sheets are available from Texas AgriLife and the Texas Animal Health Commission at:

- <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/New-world-screwworm.RTS-Jun052025.pdf>
- https://www.tahc.texas.gov/news/brochures/TAHCFactsheet_NewWorldScrewworm.pdf

TAHC Fact Sheets are shared below on pages 8 and 9.

Conservation Affairs, cont.

FACT SHEET

NEW WORLD SCREWWORM

WHAT IS NEW WORLD SCREWWORM?
New World screwworms (NWS) are larvae or maggots of the NWS fly (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*), that cause the painful condition NWS myiasis. NWS flies lay eggs in open wounds or orifices of live tissue. These eggs hatch into dangerous parasitic larvae, and the maggots burrow or screw into flesh with sharp mouth hooks. The wound can become larger, and an infestation can often cause serious, deadly damage. NWS primarily infest livestock, but can also affect mammals, including humans, and birds.

The parasite was last eradicated from the United States in 1966, with costly efforts by federal and state animal health officials, livestock producers, and veterinary practitioners. Eradication efforts have continued in Central America, but the pest is considered endemic in Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and South America.

CLINICAL SIGNS
Clinical signs of NWS myiasis may include:

- Irritated or depressed behavior
- Loss of appetite
- Head shaking
- Smell of decaying flesh
- Evidence of fly strike
- Presence of fly larvae (maggots) in wounds
- Isolation from other animals or people

TRANSMISSION
NWS infestations begin when a female NWS fly is attracted to the odor of a wound or opening of a live warm-blooded animal to lay eggs. These openings can include wounds as small as a tick bite, nasal or eye openings, umbilicus of a newborn, or genitalia. One NWS female fly can lay 200-300 eggs at a time and may lay up to 3,000 eggs during her lifespan.

Eggs hatch into larvae (maggots) that burrow into an opening to feed. After feeding, larvae drop to the ground, burrow into the soil, and emerge as adult NWS flies. Adult NWS flies can fly long distances, and the movement of infested livestock or wildlife can lead to spread of even longer distances.

DIAGNOSIS
There are several flies associated with wounds, but only NWS feed on living tissues, compared to dead tissues and fluids. The identification of NWS is done by larvae collection and evaluation. NWS larvae have a series of backwardly protruding spines around a tapered body, giving a screw-like appearance, helping to identify the pest. Anyone who suspects suspicious wounds, maggots, or infestations should notify a veterinarian immediately.

REPORTING NEW WORLD SCREWWORM
The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) must be notified within 24 hours of all suspected and confirmed cases of NWS. Reports can be made to any TAHC region office by anyone, not just veterinarians or diagnostic laboratories. Suspected infestations of NWS should be immediately reported.

PREVENTION
To avoid introduction of NWS keep open wounds clean and covered and treat clothing, gear, and people with proper repellents. When traveling, especially in NWS-infested areas, ensure pets and vehicles are inspected for NWS flies and larvae. Monitor pets and livestock for clinical signs of NWS and immediately report suspicions.

TREATMENT AND ERADICATION
Animals infested with NWS, myiasis, or secondary infection should be immediately treated with an appropriate method by a veterinarian. Left untreated, animals may die within one week of infestation.

Eradication of NWS infestations is accomplished through the sterile insect technique. Sterilized male flies are released to mate in an area with an established NWS population. Females, only mating once in their lifetime, then lay nonviable eggs. The population decreases without the addition of new larvae and dies off naturally over a few lifecycles.

REQUIREMENTS
Requirements related to the control and eradication of NWS can be found in [Title 4, Part 2, Chapter 37, Screwworms, of the Texas Administrative Code](#).

WWW.TAHC.TEXAS.GOVREVISED 11.24

Conservation Affairs, cont.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GUIDE

Protocols for the Potential Detection of New World Screwworm in Livestock

Livestock Producer Guidance

New World screwworms (NWS) are larvae or maggots of the NWS fly (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) that cause the painful condition NWS myiasis. This guide is provided to livestock producers for general information and instructions related to NWS in Texas livestock.

Know the Pest

NWS flies are attracted to the odor, serum, and blood of wounds in living, warm-blooded mammals and birds. Once a host is found, the flies lay eggs in an opening. After the eggs hatch, maggots burrow or screw into the living tissue, feeding as they go. Damage due to the tearing of tissue deepens the wound while more maggots continue to hatch and feed. This can lead to the condition NWS myiasis, co-infestation with other species, and infections, resulting in serious, sometimes deadly damage.

Monitor Livestock

- Check livestock for evidence of NWS infestations, including flies, maggots, larvae, or eggs.
- Monitor body openings such as the nose, ears, umbilicus, or genitalia for drainage or enlargement.
- Observe animals for clinical signs of NWS myiasis and secondary infections.

Report Suspicions

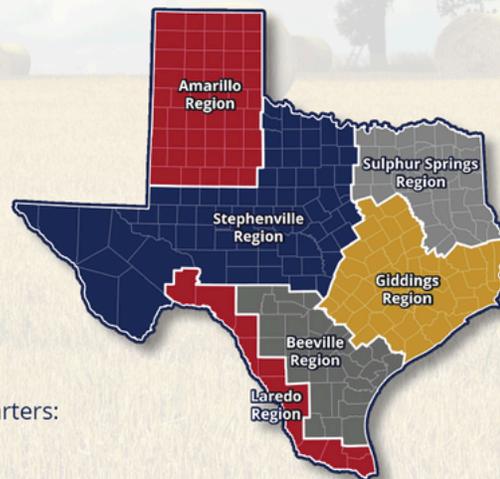
Immediately call a state animal health official if you suspect NWS have affected your livestock.

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, contact a local TAHC region office:

Amarillo.....	806-641-7000
Beeville.....	361-358-3234
Giddings.....	979-212-5440
Laredo.....	956-568-5741
Stephenville.....	512-556-6277
Sulphur Springs.....	903-919-3748

5:00 PM - 8:00 AM and on weekends, contact the TAHC headquarters:

Veterinarian on Call.....1-800-550-8242



Prevent Further Spread

- Monitor animals on a regular basis for signs of NWS flies, NWS myiasis, or secondary infections.
- Ensure pets and vehicles are inspected for NWS flies before travelling, especially in NWS-infested areas. If an animal has an infestation, it should not be moved.
- Keep open wounds clean and covered.
- Treat clothing, gear, and people with proper repellents.



TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION
Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893

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TCTWS Committee News

Conservation Affairs, cont.

TPWD Commission Meetings

Prior to the March commission meeting, Matt Wagner provided a webinar on wildlife law and policy to students at Texas A&M's Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management. He then coordinated with Drs. Gabriela Sosa and Jim Cathey to bring the students to the commission meeting on March 27. Mary Pearl Meuth and Matt Wagner attended the commission meeting on May 21 and 22 in support of the department's proposals on public hunting lands, oyster mariculture and new park development.



Texas A&M Students with TPWD commissioners, March 27

Endangered Species Act

Changes in the Endangered Species Act are being proposed to remove habitat loss from the definition of "harm" and to improve the implementation of voluntary conservation agreements under section 10(a) of the ESA. Comments in opposition to the removal of habitat were provided in the Federal Register before the May 19 deadline. Comments regarding the implementation of 10(a) agreements are due July 9.

TCTWS Committee News

Conservation Affairs, cont.

Chronic Wasting Disease

In April, a one-page position statement on CWD and deer breeder rules was sent to all members of the Senate WARA and House CRT committees.

The Texas Animal Health Commission is proposing new rules regarding CWD management in white-tailed deer including eliminating mandatory hold orders and quarantines, making them optional and eliminating the 5-year trace-back period. More responsibility would fall on TPWD without additional resources. The comment period is from June 6 – July 6 with opportunity for a public hearing.

The new CWD rules for deer breeders that were approved at the TPWD commission meeting in January are now being implemented. More details on implementation will be available in August.

Texas Mountain Lion Management Plan

A second draft of TPWD's Mountain Lion Management Plan was distributed to the initial reviewers. Matt Wagner was invited to review the document, and has submitted comments. An opportunity for wider public comment will be available moving forward.

Texas Agricultural Council

The chapter is now a member of the Texas Agriculture Council (TAC). This organization was organized in the 1970s to monitor and discuss legislation important to agricultural and natural resource interests in the state. Wagner attended multiple meetings of the TAC to network with leaders in the agriculture community and discuss the progress of bills of mutual interest.

TWS Private Lands Working Group

A new working group regarding wildlife management on private lands has been formed within The Wildlife Society. Wagner is assisting with the organizational development of this group and will present a paper on the wildlife tax valuation in Texas at the annual conference in Edmonton, Alberta.

TCTWS Committee News

Conservation Affairs, cont.

Upcoming Meetings 2025:

July 10-13, San Antonio – Texas Wildlife Association Private Lands Summit and Annual Convention

July 21-25, Davis Mountains – TCTWS Summer Camp

July 21-23 – Southeast Deer Working Group meets in South Texas

July 24, Davis Mountains – TCTWS Summer Board Meeting

August 20-21, Austin – TPWD Commission Meeting and Annual Public Hearing

October 5-9, Edmonton, Alberta – TWS Annual Conference

November 5-6, Austin – TPWD Commission Meeting

Upcoming Meetings 2026:

January 21-22, Austin – TPWD Commission Meeting

February 18-20, Galveston – TCTWS Annual Meeting

February 25-27, Austin – Land Conservation Conference

March 25-26, Austin – TPWD Commission Meeting

If you are interested in participating in TCTWS policy discussion activities or attending Commission Meeting(s), legislative hearings or more alongside TCTWS, please reach out to the Conservation Affairs Committee (conservation.affairs@tctws.org). TCTWS members are always encouraged to participate in these activities.



TCTWS 2025 Photo & Art Contest entries by I. Lozano, H. Hawkins, and L. Spjut.

JGTCLI Now Accepting Applications for 2026–2027

The James G. Teer Conservation Leadership Institute (JGTCLI) was established in 2014 to ensure that the future of conservation in Texas is guided by professionals who are not only passionate but also prepared. The Institute develops early-career natural resource professionals into effective, thoughtful leaders capable of identifying complex conservation challenges and creating meaningful, lasting solutions.

We are excited to announce that applications for the 2026–2027 cohort will open on August 1, 2025.

JGTCLI seeks applicants who:

- Are 1 to 12 years out of college
- Work full-time in a natural resource-related field
- Have demonstrated leadership potential
- Are eager to reflect, grow, collaborate, and lead with purpose

Professionals from all sectors of the conservation field are encouraged to apply, including:

- Federal and state natural resource agencies
- Environmental nonprofits and conservation organizations
- Academic institutions and educational outreach
- Policy development and advocacy
- Private industry and consulting
- Tribal, local, and community-led initiatives

Throughout this year-long program, Fellows will:

- Explore diverse leadership styles
- Engage in self-assessment and peer feedback
- Learn about policy and conservation decision-making
- Collaborate in teams to solve a real-world conservation challenge facing the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society
- Build skills in communication, project management, and problem-solving

Application information on next page.



JGTCLI logo created by Jamie Killian.

TCTWS Committee News

JGTCLI Now Accepting Applications for 2026–2027, cont.

Key Dates

- Applications Open: August 1, 2025
- Applications Close: October 3, 2025
- Cohort Launch: February 2026 at the TCTWS Annual Meeting in Galveston
- Program Conclusion: February 2027 at the TCTWS Annual Meeting
- Tuition: \$600 (non-refundable), due upon acceptance

Apply Here

➔ <https://tctws.org/limesurvey/index.php/67139>

We look forward to welcoming a new cohort of conservation leaders dedicated to the future of Texas wildlife and natural resources.

For more information, contact:

John Kinsey

john.kinsey@TCTWS.org



2014-2015 cohort at Kerr Wildlife Management Area.

Publication Awards: CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Don't forget to submit your nominations for The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's 2026 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 2023, 2024, and 2025 are eligible in the following categories:

- Books
- Electronic Media (i.e., websites, DVDs, listservs, social media accounts, podcasts, 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 ≥ 3 nominations will be considered for an award.

Please send nominations to cord.eversole@tctws.org by 5 PM on November 30, 2025.



Some 2025 Publication Award winners. Left: Outstanding Popular Article - Amber Brown.

Middle: Outstanding Technical Pub - Shraddha Hegde, Alison Lund, Jacob Dykes, Tammi Johnson, Angelica Lopez, Roel Lopez, and Kevin Skow.

Right: Outstanding Scientific Article - Samarth Mathur, John. M. Tomeček, Luis A. Tarango-Arámbula, Robert M. Perez, and J. Andrew DeWoody.

Honorary Life Membership: SEEKING NOMINEES

The Honorary Life Membership Committee is seeking nominees for this honor. The Committee will continue the policy of seeking and considering nominees submitted from the membership. Certainly, the Texas Chapter is blessed with numerous members who have made outstanding contributions to wildlife conservation on a state, national and/or international scale. These individuals deserve the recognition of their peers for their outstanding long-term service to the wildlife resource.



2025 Honorary Life Membership Award: Jon Purvis

To be eligible a nominee should have been (1) active for 20 or more years in the wildlife profession as an employee of a natural resource agency, academia, or a private organization as a wildlife biologist or consultant; or an effective non-professional activist. (2) He/she should 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:

1. A reasonably complete vitae for the nominee which should contain his/her full name (present position, organizational affiliation, address, phone number), and a reasonably complete history of professional accomplishments.
2. One or more letters of nomination from close friends or associates.

Nominations should be kept confidential, especially from the nominee, but you can enlist the assistance of your co-workers. Many people have vitae that they use for various purposes. Surreptitiously obtain one. If there isn't one available, patch something together, with the help of their own websites, social media, friends, associates, and spouses. From those nominations that we receive, the committee can select one or more recipients to be honored at the annual meeting. Dossiers of people not selected this year will be filed for future consideration. Please take a moment right now and consider who among your coworkers qualifies and deserves this honor? Set some time aside on your calendar to gather the data to support his or her nomination.

Deadline: The last business day of November, but act now!!!
YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO DESERVES TO BE HONORED THIS WAY!!!

Send material to: Megan.Clayton@tctws.org

Excellence in Wildlife Conservation: SEEKING NOMINEES

The Excellence in Wildlife Conservation Committee is seeking nominees for the 2026 awards. The Committee will grant the following awards in the 2026 TCTWS banquet: Outstanding Achievement, Early Career Professional, Mid-Career Professional, Educator of the Year, and Land Stewardship. The Committee will continue the policy of seeking and considering nominees submitted from the membership. Certainly, the Texas Chapter is blessed with numerous members who have made outstanding contributions to wildlife conservation on a state, national and/or international scale. These individuals deserve the recognition of their peers for their outstanding long-term service to our shared wildlife resources.

To submit a nomination for one of the following awards, please send the required documents to: excellence@tctws.org during the application period of: July 1st – October 31st.



Two 2025 awardees. Left: Land Stewardship - East Foundation. Right: Educator of the Year - Helen Holdsworth.

Early Career Professional award:

- Nominees for this award should be an active natural resource (or related field) professional within 1–10 years out of college who are working full time. They should be actively engaged in the wildlife profession, either in a natural resource agency, academia, or as a private wildlife biologist or consultant, or even as a non-professional activist with significant contributions. The nomination process will entail the submission of a biography of the nominee, a comprehensive vita, letter(s) of nomination, and maintenance of confidentiality throughout the process.

Mid-Career Professional award:

- Nominees for this award should be within 10–20 years out of college who are working full-time and meet the professional activity requirements as the Early Career award. Their contributions should be significant and appropriate to their career timeline. The nomination process is identical to that of the Early Career award, with an emphasis on two letters of nomination to provide a broader perspective on the nominee's impact.

Awards continued on the next page.

Excellence in Wildlife Conservation: SEEKING NOMINEES, cont.

Outstanding Achievement award:

- Nominees for this award should be individuals or teams who have made outstanding contributions to the interests of the Texas Chapter. These contributions might include noteworthy research, development of outstanding outreach programs, or application of conservation principals. Recipients of this award should be current or past members of the Texas Chapter. If the award is given to a group, then the key individual(s) should be members of the Texas Chapter, but it is not necessary for the entire team to be members. The nomination process mirrors that of the above, with a biography of the nominee, a comprehensive vita, and a minimum of two (2) letters of nomination.

Educator of the Year award:

- Nominees should be individuals for excellence in developing and disseminating natural resource information to students, landowners, and others. Examples include, but are not limited to, university professors, extension personnel, and agency personnel. Recipients of this award should be current or past members of the Texas Chapter. To nominate a candidate for the Educator of the Year award, please provide a biography of the nominee, a comprehensive vita, and a minimum of two (2) letters of nomination.

Land Stewardship award:

- This award recognizes landowners who have been instrumental in the development, application, and promotion of sound wildlife management principles on their land. Special consideration is given to those individuals who, through their leadership, have set an example of hard work and dedication to the wildlife resource. Preference will be given to those who are members of the Texas Chapter, but membership in the Texas Chapter is NOT mandatory to receive this award.

All awards will culminate in the selection of recipients by the committee, to be honored at the annual meeting. In order for any given honor to be awarded, there must be at least one submission in the respective category. **If you would like further information for any award or have any questions, please email: excellence@tctws.org**

Student Chapter Spotlight

2025 Student Chapter of the Year: Tarleton State University

Submitted by Hannah Atkinson and advisor Dr. Heather Mathewson

The Tarleton Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society is honored to receive the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's 2025 Student Chapter of The Year Award for the second consecutive year. We would like to attribute the success of our chapter to our members, executive officers, advisor, and community. Over the course of the year, we strived to introduce new opportunities and events, strengthen community within our chapter, and promote professionalism.

Events held introducing student chapter members to wildlife conservation projects and research are some of the student chapter's most popular activities. Through the society, members volunteered for numerous graduate research projects, including behavioral studies, and surveys for nocturnal insects, wintering grassland birds, and waterfowl. Additionally, student chapter members assisted with hands-on research efforts including deer captures with the East Foundation and Lonesome Coyote Ranch, quail trapping with Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch, Fort Cavazos Natural and Cultural Resource Branch black-capped vireo banding, and turkey trapping with Texas Tech University. Participating in these research efforts not only aided the ongoing research but also allowed students to explore wildlife research through first-hand experience and connections and provided members with experience in field techniques outside of the classroom.

In addition to research focused activities, the student chapter focuses on providing first-time camping and hunting experiences specifically designed for students who may not have otherwise had the guidance, opportunity, or access to participate in these activities. Over the course of the year, members participated in mentored hunts with Texas Parks and Wildlife for white-tailed deer and dove, as well as ducks through partnership with Delta Waterfowl. Additionally, the student chapter held two first-time camping trips on the Colorado and Brazos rivers during which they cleaned sections of the rivers and their connected creeks by kayak and canoe.



Student and ranch manager handling scaled quail at Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch.

Student Chapter Spotlight

2025 Student Chapter of the Year: Tarleton State University, cont.

During bi-weekly general meetings, after briefly advertising upcoming events and opportunities, the student chapter invites speakers from various aspects of the wildlife profession to present their topic of expertise. Guest speakers provided insight into their career paths, advice on the career field, and spoke about opportunities related to their fields. Over the past year, speakers have included game wardens, and biologists from Texas Parks and Wildlife Division biologists, MT7 Ranch, and Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch.

In an effort to further professionalism among members, the student chapter also promoted travel to several conferences during the year, including the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, The Wildlife Society, the Texas Section Society of Range Management, and Texas Master Naturalist conferences. This opportunity granted students valuable connections while gaining insight into their careers. Student members also had the opportunity to participate in research presentations, intercollegiate plant identification competitions, and quiz bowl.



First time campers attending a morning bird walk at Rio Brazos Master Naturalist River Cleanup Campout.

Student Chapter Spotlight

2025 Student Chapter of the Year: Tarleton State University, cont.

Another goal of Tarleton’s Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society is to develop community awareness of wildlife conservation efforts and natural resource issues as part of our Education and Outreach committee. Efforts to promote community awareness included holding booths at local wildlife educational events such as the Dinosaur Valley State Park WingDing event, Prairie Oaks Master Naturalist Nature Fest, and our own Tarleton Outdoors. Our chapter members also assists with Future Farmers of America competitions, serve as mentors at Wildlife Conservation Camp and Texas Section Society of Range Management Youth Range Workshop, engage with elementary schools, and sponsor local animal shelter events. These outreach efforts allow us to give back to the community while supporting wildlife advocacy.



Students with collected trash at one of the quarterly highway cleanups.

We look forward to continuing to grow our chapter and support the next generation of wildlife professionals. Receiving this award would not have been possible without the dedication of our officers and members, and the guidance of our advisor. We would also like to thank all the professionals, speakers, mentors, and partner organizations who have volunteered their time, shared their expertise, and collaborated with us throughout the year.



Student volunteers at the Tarleton Student Chapter’s own Tarleton Outdoors event.

Student Development Working Group

TWS GIVEBACK PROGRAM



Are you a student & want to receive a GiveBack membership?

OR

Have you not yet donated your GiveBack membership and want to help out a student?

Donate



Request



Any existing member of TWS (student or professional) is eligible to donate a GiveBack Membership.

Any student who is not yet a formal member of TWS, but wants to give it a shot, can receive a GiveBack Membership.

What you will receive with your GiveBack membership:

- Access to the Student Development Working Group Discord server & other professional development resources
- Free online access to all TWS publications
- Bimonthly issues of our magazine, The Wildlife Professional
- Weekly editions of the eWildlifer newsletter and TWS Talks, recorded presentations from the most recent Annual Conference
- Monthly editions of the Student & Early Career Professional Newsletter via email
- Networking opportunities through the TWS Network Online Directory
- Ability to pursue certification opportunities
- A variety of members-only discounts, including \$200 off TWS Annual Conference registration
- And much more!



Witty Wildlife Words

Ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*)

By Audrey Francell

Interested in highlighting your favorite species for the next Witty Wildlife Words? Contact newsletter@tctws.org

When you think of a small spotted cat in Texas, your mind may automatically jump to the bobcat with their short tail and tufted ears, but they are not the only small wildcat roaming the great state of Texas. Ocelots are native wildcats to Texas and play a vital role in their natural environment. Contrary to bobcats, ocelots have rounded ears and a long tail, as well as distinctive black stripes down their neck. Ocelots are carnivorous, preying on small mammals and birds, which helps keep those populations under control, and are also a food source for larger predators. Unfortunately, the ocelot has been listed as federally endangered since 1982, with fewer than 100 individuals believed to remain in the United States.

Ocelots' current habitat includes the Lower Rio Grande Valley and the Rio Grande Plains of South Texas, where they roam between Texas and Mexico. Although historically, the ocelots inhabited much of South Texas, including the southern Edwards Plateau and the Coastal Plains, as well as parts of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Arizona. As more of this land has been converted into agricultural land and urban areas, viable habitat for ocelots has drastically decreased. Other threats to this species include hunting and habitat fragmentation resulting from highway development. In fact, over half of ocelot mortality can be attributed to being hit by vehicles.



Ocelots are critically endangered in the United States , with only two small breeding populations existing in South Texas.

Photo by Katy Baldock.

Witty Wildlife Words

Ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*), cont.

Ocelots thrive in dense, shrubby, thorny brush, including hackberry, amargosa, and lotebush. Their keen senses, skills, and ability to adapt to their habitat make them exceptional predators and elusive prey. Conserving brushland in their inhabited region is key to protecting this endangered species. Ongoing efforts include bridging the fragmented habitat and promoting land stewardship among ranchers, as well as reintroducing ocelots without compromising working lands. These efforts are crucial in rebuilding lost habitat and growing ocelot populations.

Fun facts:

1. Ocelots are fantastic swimmers
2. Ocelots can turn their ankle joints around for climbing trees



Wild ocelot on The East Foundation's El Sauz Ranch near Port Mansfield in South Texas. These photos were taken with remote camera traps, which captured the first known high quality photos and video footage of wild ocelots in the United States.

Photo by Fin and Fur Films.

Literature Cited:

1. <https://ourtexasourfuture.com/endangered-ocelots/>
2. <https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/texas/stories-in-texas/mammals-ocelot>
3. <https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/species/ocelot/>
4. https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_w7000_0013_ocelot.pdf

Southwest Section Tracks

By Kathy Granillo, Southwest Section Representative

Happy summer. I'll start with some news from The Wildlife Society. The 2025 Annual Conference will be held October 5-8, 2025, in Edmonton, Alberta. I hope many of you will be able to attend – remember you'll need a passport. Registration is open now.

For those impacted by recent events within the federal workforce, TWS hosts a resource website for federal employees. This website states: "The Wildlife Society stands with our members and colleagues affected by recent federal workforce reductions. We recognize the critical role federal employees play in wildlife conservation and understand the challenges these changes bring. TWS is committed to advocating for you and providing resources to support your professional and personal well-being during this time. On this page, you'll find information on membership extensions, career opportunities, policy engagement and more. You are a valued part of our community, and we are here to help." <https://wildlife.org/federal-resources/>

I hope that you enjoy summer as much as I do. Yes, it can be hot and humid but the early mornings are glorious. I love to sit on my back porch with a cup of coffee and enjoy my local birds, butterflies and bees. I watch the black-chinned hummers visiting the flowers and my feeder, the house finches (who should really be named the exuberant finch) taking an early morning bath, and the curve-billed thrashers trotting through the yard. I particularly enjoy the pair of western kingbirds who perch on the tallest trees, talking back and forth with each other, scanning the sky for their next meal and keeping watch for the neighborhood ravens and Cooper's hawks. I ran across a quote by Andrea Willis recently that nicely sums up summer: "Yellow butterflies look like flowers flying through the warm summer air."

The warm summer also reminds of the fact that our planet continues to warm up, and that there is such a thing as "too hot." The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has confirmed that 2024 was the warmest year on record, based on six international datasets. They state the past ten years 2015-2024 are the ten warmest years on record. We have likely seen the first calendar year with a global mean temperature of more than 1.5°C above the 1850-1900 average."

Wildlife species adapt in different ways to weather and climate, and some are better adapters than others. I know you are all familiar with the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). This plan is a great place to see what Texas Parks and Wildlife is doing for species of greatest conservation need. The current SWAP (2023) has a thorough discussion of climate change and projected effects on Texas wildlife.



Kathy Granillo
TWS Southwest Section
Representative

Southwest Section Tracks

I think one of the key points in the plan regarding climate change is this one (Pg 371): “While a lot of research has examined the effects increasing temperature or altered water availability may have on organisms, many scientists are starting to suggest that the greater frequency of extreme weather events is likely to have as much, or even a greater, impact on shaping future ecosystems. For example, climate scientists now think that spells of extreme winter conditions, such as much of the United States experienced during the 2009-10 and 2010- 11 winters, maybe as much the signature of climate change as increased average daily temperatures. Extreme conditions will make anticipating how climate change will affect species and habitats much more challenging.”

The plan goes on to say (Pg 371): “The best hedge against the uncertainty about exactly how climate change will manifest itself in Texas and its effects on species and habitats is improving connectivity between habitat patches and giving species room to disperse over large areas. With much of Texas’ landscape under private land ownership, implementing this strategy will require large-scale cooperation among many partners.”

TPWD is currently updating the SWAP and I urge you all to review the various proposed changes (including related to climate change) and provide comments.

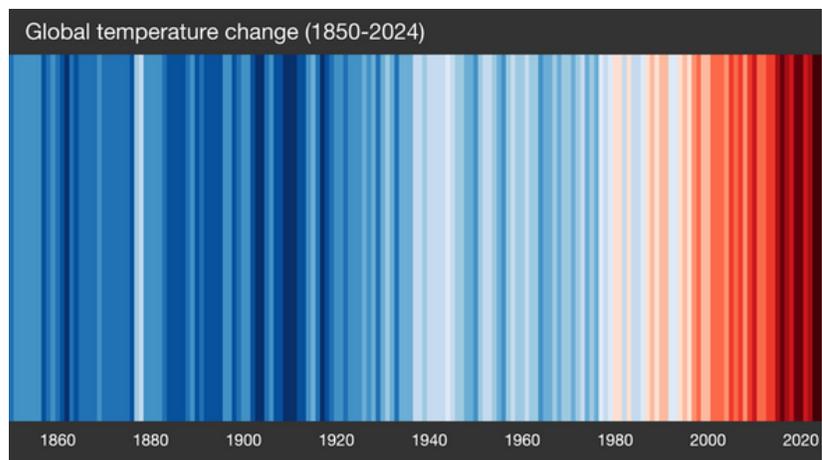
<https://tpwd.texas.gov/wildlife/wildlife-diversity/swap/>

I will close with a quote from the book, “The Singing Life of Birds: The Art and Science of Listening to Birdsong” by Dr. Donald Kroodsma.

“Somewhere, always, the sun is rising, and somewhere, always, the birds are singing. As spring and summer oscillate between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, so, too, does this singing planet pour forth song, like a giant player piano, in the north, then the south, and back again, as it has now for the 150 million years since the first birds appeared.”

I hope this continues to be true for the next 150 million years. As always, if you have any comments or questions, please feel free to email me at KGBirder55@gmail.com.

The Ed Hawkins Table on global temperature change



So long and happy "tails"!

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