



Texas Chapter Tails

of Wildlife and Stewardship

Inside this Edition

President's Note	1
Annual Meeting of TCTWS	3
Save the Date	3
Sponsors	4
TCTWS Committee News	6
Photo and Art	6
Dr. Slack Memorial Funds	7
Conservation Affairs	8
Student Spotlight	10
Witty Wildlife Words	14
Southwest Section Tracks	15

President's Note

Greetings all! I ended my last note encouraging a unified approach to fulfilling and sustaining conservation efforts. So, while I certainly respect my elders, in 1 regard I disagree with our Father of Wildlife Management, Aldo Leopold, who opined, "One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds." We are most definitely not alone. Some the hands and feet, some the arms and legs, some the eyes and ears, and some are down in the soil and herbaceous stuff doing the finer work of fingers and toes. We all have our roles in conservation as students, professionals, committee members, editors, influencers, artists, etc...The point is, do what you're good at whenever you are, wherever you are. Collectively, that's unity.

Stories in this newsletter exemplify our common focus of conservation. I sincerely thank those in this newsletter for taking time to share their efforts. In the mid-1800s, French Author, Jean-Babiste Alphonse Karr scribed, "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose." We'd say, "The more things change, the more they stay the same." Our profession will perpetually have challenges to face, and I appreciate our Executive Director, Dr. Matt Wagner, and our Conservation Affairs Committee, for striving to keep us updated about wildlife diseases, and providing expert opinion related to potential policy changes and legislative affairs. Navigating the science and art of government is tedious, non-stop business.



Photo by J. Coyle.

President's Note

Likewise, I commend TAMU's student chapter, our most recent Student Chapter of the Year, for their accomplishment sure, but also for their mission focus to prepare students for professional careers. Again, they're doing what they're good at right now for a future pay-off.

The impact of art in wildlife science is not a trivial thing. Who among us aren't challenged and inspired by A Sand County Almanac, or the pieces deftly developed by wildlife photographers and artists. Personally, beyond going on squirrel hunts and trips to the zoo as a youngster, the Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom show inspired my interest in wildlife and the outdoors. So, to the Photo and Art Contest Committee, and to those who take the time to capture wildlife and landscapes on camera or canvas, thank you for committing to that inspiring endeavor.

I hope y'all will take a few minutes to discover what's shared in this publication, and remember, our modern, unified progress began with observations from centuries ago!

From LaSalle's expedition (late 1600s), somewhere upstream from Lavaca Bay..."We were on a small rise from which one could see a long distance. Toward the west and southwest there was prairie, very level, that continued beyond our view. Beautiful, good grasses grow here serving as pasturage to an infinite number of bison. Toward the north and northeast, there are woods usually found along the riverbanks...some oaks are always green. The listing of local game must begin with the bison, which are very numerous, and it could be said that they were our daily bread. After bison, there are the deer, the turkey, geese, swans, cranes, ducks....Just as the country is bountiful in all kinds of animals, so the lakes and rivers are full of fish."

Until next time compadres....Farewell!



Bill Adams
President, Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society



Annual Meeting of TCTWS 2027

Save the Date



A note from the Local Arrangements Committee:

Save the Date!

The **Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's 2027 Annual Meeting** is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 10th – Friday, February 12th** at the **Waco Convention Center in Waco, Texas.**

Hotels for this meeting will be the **Hilton Waco, Courtyard by Marriott Waco, EVEN Hotel and Cambria Hotel.** All hotels are adjacent to the convention center. Additional details about room block will be provided later this fall.

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.



Sponsors of the Annual Meeting of TCTWS

A special thank you to the donors who make our work possible!

Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society was fortunate enough to have many sponsors at this year's annual meeting. The work the chapter accomplishes throughout the year and at our annual meeting would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors. We want to take a moment to recognize our sponsors who went above and beyond this year.

Gold Sponsors

CAESAR  KLEBERG
WILDLIFE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - KINGSVILLE



CONSERVATION
EQUITY MANAGEMENT



TEXAS
FARM CREDIT



Gold Sponsors *(continued)*



Silver Sponsors



Thank you to all of our sponsors!

2027 Photo and Art Contest

Showcase your talent and celebrate Texas wildlife at the 2027 Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Photo and Art Contest! Members are invited to submit their best photography and original artwork for display and judging during the Annual Meeting. Photography categories include Texas Wildlife, Non-Texas Wildlife, Plants and Scenery, Wildlife Conservation, Texas Plants, Humor, Texas Scenery, Work Related, and Remote Camera. The Art Division welcomes a variety of original creations, including drawings, paintings, sculptures, carvings, and more. Now is the perfect time to start capturing those memorable wildlife moments and begin planning or creating your artistic entries for next year's contest.

All photo and art entries must be submitted digitally through the TCTWS membership portal prior to the conference, and physical artwork and photo prints must be brought to the meeting for display. Participants may enter one photograph per category and up to five art entries. Similar to year's past, a small entry fee will be collected at submission to help support contest awards. Be on the lookout for the detailed contest rules and submission information in the Fall TCTWS Newsletter. Whether you're a professional, student, or hobbyist, we encourage you to share your creativity, highlight the beauty of wildlife and natural resources, and compete in the 2027 Photo and Art Contest!

Please reach out to photo.art@tctws.org with any questions.



Photo By Lisanne Petracca



Artwork by Brooklyn Day

Call for Committee Members for the Dr. R. Douglas Slack Memorial Fund

Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society is responsible for funds donated in memory of Dr. Doug Slack, and we are convening a group of people to decide how to best steward this fund. If you knew Dr. Slack and would like to be involved in this process, please email maureen.frank@tctws.org. As we develop a plan, we will keep the chapter informed of our progress.



Whooping for Blue Crabs
Photo By C. Camp

TCTWS Committee News

Executive Director and Conservation Affairs Committee Report

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

New World Screwworm

As of June 21, there have been fourteen confirmed cases of NWS in Texas (five calves in Zavalla and La Salle counties, four calves and one goat in Edwards County, one goat in Gillespie County, one calf in Tom Green County, one sheep in Crockett County and one sheep in Sutton County). There is an additional case in New Mexico (a dog in Lea County). The CAC continues to monitor any new developments regarding NWS. The USDA continues to coordinate the dispersal of about 100 million sterile flies per week, including Texas counties bordering Mexico. The CAC is subscribed to the Texas Agriculture Alert System from the Texas Department of Agriculture, and sent through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. For the latest developments on NWS, go to the Texas Animal Health website: <https://www.tahc.texas.gov/emergency/nws.html>, USDA NWS website: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/stop-screwworm> or the Screwworm Coalition of Texas website: <https://screwwormtx.org/>

May TPWD Commission Meeting

The May commission meeting included an agenda item to propose mandatory harvest reporting of mountain lions. The Texas Chapter sent a letter to the commission in support of the proposal. Two days before the meeting, this agenda item was withdrawn due to opposition from landowner and agricultural organizations. At the meeting, Chairman Foster directed these groups to work together, with TPWD, over the next year, to recommend an alternate approach to mountain lion data collection. Chapter members are present at all commission meetings to provide input as needed on any natural resource agenda items.



Photo By C. Nouzille



Photo By C. Nouzille

TCTWS Committee News

Conservation Affairs, cont.

CWD Task Force

A meeting of TPWD's CWD Task Force is being planned for June 22. Matt Wagner will serve on the task force and attend the meeting.

Preparations for the 90th Legislative Session

Matt Wagner attended hearings of the Senate Water Ag and Rural Affairs and House Culture Recreation and Tourism committees on interim charges. Desalination plants, declining Fund 9 and NWS were topics of discussion. Wagner also attended the Texas Ag Council (TAC) Legislative Field Day at Luling Foundation where he networked with Senator Perry and Senator Flores Offices. Lastly, Wagner attended a Zoom meeting with TAC members and Ag Commissioner candidate Nate Sheets.

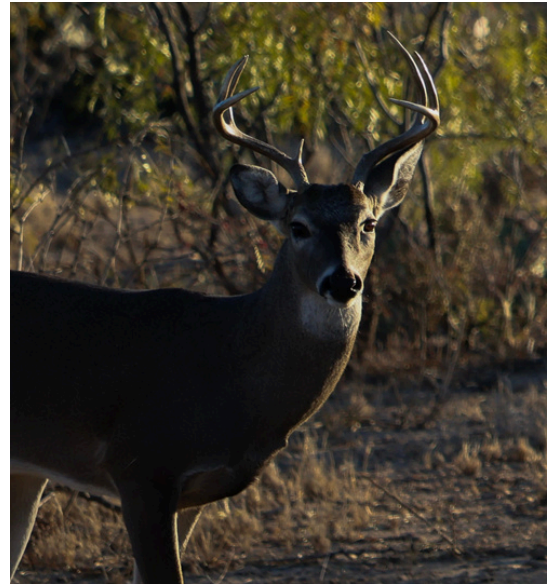


Photo By J. Zapalac-Janecka

Upcoming Meetings:

June 23, Austin, House Natural Resources Committee hearing (data center water use)
June 24, Austin, Senate Business and Commerce Committee hearing (765 kv transmission lines)
July 9-11, San Antonio, Texas Wildlife Association Annual Convention
July 20-24, Three Rivers Ranch, TCTWS Wildlife Conservation Camp
July 24, Three Rivers Ranch, TCTWS Summer Board Meeting
August 19-20, Austin, TPWD Commission Meeting and Annual Public Hearing
November 1-5, Des Moines Iowa, TWS Annual Conference
February 10-12, Waco, TCTWS Annual Meeting
February 17-19, Austin, Land Conservation Conference

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.

Student Spotlight

Student Chapter Spotlight: Texas A&M University Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society

By Clayton Russell (President) and Presley Griffin (Past President)

The Texas A&M University Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society is honored to have received the 2026 Student Chapter of The Year Award presented by the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TCTWS). We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to our members, advisors, officers, department, and community for their involvement and support. Throughout 2025, we worked hard to develop, introduce, and provide new, high quality events and opportunities that promoted career development and fostered a sense of community. These events also enhanced our campus, local communities, and surrounding regions.

Fun Fact: The TAMU Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society was officially chartered in 1967 by The Wildlife Society, making it the first (and oldest) student chapter!

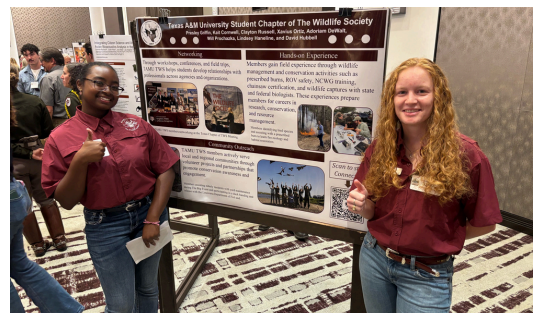
To maintain active involvement of our members, our society holds two meetings each month with the goal of providing professional development, networking, and hands-on learning opportunities. The first meeting of the month focuses on conducting regular society business and features a guest speaker based on membership interest. Some previous speakers have included Texas Parks and Wildlife Department biologists and game wardens, Past Presidents of TCTWS, conservation-focused nonprofits such as Texas Native Cats, and graduate students discussing research opportunities and detailing how to prepare for graduate school. The second meeting of the month is an immersive, hands-on workshop with the goal of teaching members new skills that they will use throughout their career.



TAMU TWS officers receiving the 2026 Student Chapter of the Year Award at the TCTWS Annual Meeting, pictured with Past President Dr. Jessica Glasscock.



TAMU TWS members listening to instructors at our NWCG Firefighter Training & Certification Day.



Officers Presley Griffin (President) and Adoriam DeWalt (Publicity Chair) present a poster about TAMU TWS at the Texas Master Naturalist Program annual meeting.

Student Spotlight

Student Chapter Spotlight: Texas A&M University, cont.

We host a variety of workshops, including hunter education, field techniques such as mist netting and drop-net deer captures, and certification programs through organizations such as the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). For several of our events, we strive to increase participation both within our chapter and in collaboration with other campus organizations (within the department or university) or across the state (other TWS student organizations). For example, during our NWCG firefighter training, we invited other student chapters of The Wildlife Society as well as industry professionals to renew or become certified in the NWCG Firefighter Type II blended training program.



The TAMU Conclave (Quiz Bowl) Team won 1st place at the 2026 TCTWS Annual Meeting, pictured with past president Dr. Jessica Glasscock.



The two Chairs of our BBQ committee at Christmas on the Wild Side (William Prochaska & Clayton Russell).

Our Conclave (quiz bowl) team is another way to get involved within our society - it's also a great way to make friends, build comradery, and learn while having fun! Holding weekly practices allows our members to interact regularly and make connections with peers who will soon be entering the same professional field. In addition to strengthening relationships, Conclave provides additional teaching and material application outside of the classroom for students to gain and retain valuable knowledge about wildlife conservation and natural resources. At the most recent annual meeting of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, we are proud to announce that our Conclave team won 1st place overall. Here's a huge shout out to our competing team members: Will Prochaska (Conclave Chair), Xavius Ortiz (Secretary), Jace Sandefur, and Jake Chapman.

We also have similar events that are focused on the social aspect of our organization. The event that stands out the most is our game meat cookout and fundraiser at the end of the fall semester called Christmas on the Wild Side. This event is open to other organizations, students, staff, and faculty within the Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management (RWFM). Although events like this are focused on community engagement, we also teach members how to process, prepare, and cook a variety of game meats. These skills are essential for any hunter or person whose career is within the wildlife industry as they provide hands-on experience, strengthen technical skills, and practice field-based knowledge.

Student Spotlight

Student Chapter Spotlight: Texas A&M University, cont.

The overarching goal of our chapter is to better equip our members for their future endeavors as professionals in the conservation field. We accomplish this through meetings, workshops, and networking opportunities, but we also provide external hands-on events that allow our members to gain experience and practical skills. Our members have participated in deer captures with the East Foundation (helicopter deer capture) and at RWFM's Ecology and Natural Resources Teaching Area (drop net deer captures), retrieval of lymph node samples at chronic wasting disease checkpoints with Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, student-led game processing and cooking workshops, duck banding with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, prescribed burn opportunities, invasive species removal projects, herp walks, and so much more.

Receiving this award could not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our officers, members, and advisors who have all put in the effort to continue to grow our chapter. Additionally, we would like to thank all of the speakers, mentors, partnered organizations, professionals, and volunteers who invested their time, expertise, and connections into the development of our chapter and its members. We hope that the continued growth and enhancement of our chapter will provide even more opportunities for our members, making them well prepared for their careers as wildlife professionals.



*Members and officers of TAMU TWS
at the East Foundation deer capture.*

Member Testimonials:

"Through TAMU TWS, I have met many incredible people and gained experience in areas I had never known were available to me. I kept showing up to meetings because the people there are always welcoming and easy to call friends. This easy friendship is what makes our chapter different."

-Jackson LaFeir,
2025-2026 TAMU TWS Student of the Year

"Being both a member and an officer has shown me how deeply the chapter cares about helping its members succeed and make the most of every opportunity. This supportive environment, combined with the incredible opportunities the chapter provides, has helped me grow more confident in my technical abilities, networking skills, and professional communication."

-Kait Cornwell,
2025-2026 TAMU TWS Officer

Student Spotlight

Student Chapter Spotlight: Texas A&M University, cont.

“The Texas A&M Chapter of The Wildlife Society has been a fantastic way to have fun and get valuable experience for my career through undergrad. Our chapter did this through the many professional development opportunities it would promote, such as wildlife identification and capture events, grad school workshops and ranch work days.”

-Xavius Ortiz,
2025-2026 TAMU TWS Officer

From Our Partners:

“What stands out most to me is not any single activity, but the consistency of their involvement. This is a group that continues to show up—across events, organizations, and opportunities—and contributes in ways that make a real impact. That level of engagement speaks to the strength of their leadership and the culture they have built within the chapter.”

-Mary Pearl Meuth,
Past President of the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society

“The Texas A&M Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society exemplifies excellence in professional development, leadership, and community building. Their ability to integrate rigorous training, meaningful professional engagement, and inclusive organizational practices, paired with demonstrated recognition at the state level, distinguishes them as one of the premier student chapters in the nation.”

-Roel Lopez,
Department Head of Rangeland, Wildlife & Fisheries Management at TAMU



Photo by H. Atkinson



Photo by J. Johnston

Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*)

By Emily Blumentritt

Interested in highlighting your favorite plant or animal species? Contact newsletter@tctws.org !



Photo by Jeffrey Gammon

Photos of Ross exploring the
Moody Gardens aquarium pyramid
by Audrey Taulli



A delight to see along the Texas coast, Roseate Spoonbills are a stunning splash of color in marshy habitats. The Roseate is the only spoonbill species found in the New World, and it's the most colorful of the six spoonbill species worldwide. They feed by sweeping their spoon-shaped bill through shallow water, consuming primarily small fish, aquatic insects, and crustaceans. In Texas, the spoonbill breeding season ranges from April through August, and nesting typically occurs on islands or over standing water. Both parents work together to raise the young to adulthood. There are still many unknowns regarding Roseate Spoonbill movements, behavior, foraging and nesting ecology.

Ross the Roseate Spoonbill, created by artist and biologist Audrey Taulli, was the honorary mascot for the 2026 TCTWS Annual Meeting in Galveston, TX, chosen for this meeting because it's such an iconic species of the Texas coast.

Fun Fact: The oldest Roseate Spoonbill documented in the wild was 18 years old.

Literature Cited:

1. Dumas, J. V. (2020). Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*), version 1.0. In *Birds of the World* (A. F. Poole and F. B. Gill, Editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA.
2. Waters, Hannah (2022, April 18). Oldest Known Roseate Spoonbill Identified Thanks to Lucky Photograph. Audubon Magazine.

Southwest Section Tracks

By Kathy Granillo, Southwest Section Representative

I recently returned home from an in-person retreat of both TWS staff and Council. In all the years that there have been paid TWS staff, we have never had such a meeting. Council meets in person twice a year; once at the Spring Council Meeting and once at the Fall Council Meeting, held in conjunction with the Annual Conference. There are usually several staff that attend the Annual Conference, but they all have fulltime jobs to do there, and Council has little interaction with them, other than brief presentations some of them give to Council. Staff also face new hurdles to working together given the massive shift in workplace culture over just the last few years. They've gone from an in-person workplace, to hybrid, to fully online staff over that short time span.



Kathy Granillo
TWS Southwest Section
Representative

I think it is true to say that this joint retreat we just had was mind-opening for all. We Council members became much more familiar with what staff do, and staff more familiar with what we do on Council. We discovered many shared values and beliefs about wildlife conservation and TWS, many areas of overlapping concerns, and many misunderstandings about the roles and responsibilities of Council and staff.

We found that we are all committed to mission alignment, to understanding leadership expectations and to achieving a shared purpose across the organization. Over the next few months, Council and Staff will continue working together to achieve greater clarity, efficiencies and improve communications both within and between Council and Staff. We believe that this is essential to be prepared for the incredible speed at which technologies are changing (think Artificial Intelligence) and the challenges of current-day policies and their impacts on wildlife and their habitats. We also want to provide the most up-to-date information and assistance to wildlife students and professionals.



Photo by C. Camp



Photo by C. Copher

Southwest Section Tracks

Speaking of impacts to wildlife, habitats and professionals, there are new threats to natural resource federal agencies and programs. One of these is the proposed closures, consolidations, and reorganization of multiple federal research facilities operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and particularly, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Most people are aware of the National Forest System; less well-known is their extensive research program. The Wildlife Society recently signed on to a letter, along with multiple other organizations, urging Congress to conduct robust oversight of the proposed USFS reorganization, to ensure appropriated funds for USFS Research & Development (R&D) are used consistently with congressional intent, to require USDA and USFS to provide detailed justification and implementation plans, and to protect and sustain the USFS R&D workforce and infrastructure necessary to meet statutory responsibilities related to forest management, wildfire, water resources, and ecosystem health.

A key paragraph for me was this one:

“We are at risk of losing irreplaceable national research assets that support the restoration and maintenance of healthy, productive forests, reduce wildfire risk, protect water quality and availability, strengthen environmental protection and natural disaster preparedness, bolster agricultural resilience, and sustain rural economies.”

I urge you to learn more about this effort and consider writing to your Senators and Representatives. You can find more information on TWS' website, wildlife.org and/or by connecting with your Chapter Conservation Affairs Network representative.

Another great way to learn more about wildlife conservation is to attend the Annual Conference. This year's conference is being held November 1-5, 2026, in Des Moines, Iowa. Registration opens soon. Did you know that Aldo Leopold was born in Iowa and Ding Darling first developed his appreciation for wildlife while living in Iowa? It is a state rich in wildlife and in the arts. This year's plenary theme will be centered on “the role of the arts in conservation.” I hope to see many of you there!

As always, I welcome your questions, concerns and ideas. Please contact me at KGBirder55@gmail.com.



Bighorn pyrography
Art by C. Martin

So long and happy "tails"!

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 always welcome and should be submitted to the Editor (Emily Blumentritt, 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

TCTWS 2026/2027 Executive Board

President, Bill Adams

Pres. Elect, Masi Mejia

Vice President, Matt Reidy

Secretary, Ben Olsen

Board Member at Large, Bobby Allcorn

Executive Director, Matt Wagner

Treasurer, Jon Purvis

Archivist, Maureen Frank

Past President, Jessica Glasscock