



The Wildlife Society Western Section

~~Vol. 57, No. 1~~

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Spring Newsletter 2012

President's Message

Linda Leeman



We have all had those days (or sometimes weeks), when we have had to drag ourselves to work or out to our research site. There is a seemingly insurmountable obstacle, nothing is going as we planned, we seem bound for failure, the task is too great. And yet we persevere, push through the problem, struggle to identify a solution...maybe it works out, maybe it doesn't. But the hope is that we learned something in the process.

I think wildlife biologists have greater-than-average fortitude and tenacity. We have had to work really hard to get into this profession, define a career path that is not common or, at times, not clear, and suffer the indignities of low wages and lack of long-term stability. (Not to mention the bugs, dirt, and extreme weather conditions.) However, we have stayed in the profession. Why? Because we feel passionate about our profession, we care deeply

about the resources, and we think our work is more important than the money or career title. Plus, there are those days when the weather is perfect, the scenery is breath-taking, and we can hardly believe that we are making our way by following our dreams.

We are still experiencing tough economic times, with budgets stretched incredibly thin. Although I have never liked how our profession is categorized by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

**"It's not hard work
when you enjoy
what you do!"**

(which divides us into zoologists and wildlife biologists, natural science managers, life scientists, etc.), I do think demand for our collective skills is going to continue to grow as our society experiences more resource shortages and conflicts over consumptive uses. Indeed, the latest Monthly Labor Review (BLS, January 2012) reports that occupations for which a master's degree is typically needed are expected to grow by 21.7 %, faster than the growth rate for any other education category.¹ The need for analytic thinkers and creative problem-solvers

photo by C. Renger

has never been greater when it comes to natural resources in the west. I see a strong role for professional organizations, such as The Wildlife Society, to continue to offer technical training, mentorship, and ethical standards to our members.

The future for wildlife professionals, in all our capacities as researchers, managers, regulators, educators, technicians, desk jockeys, and field grunts, looks very bright. Especially when I know that we wouldn't be doing this work if we didn't love it. I hope spring finds you outdoors doing what you love!

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¹ <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2012/01/art1full.pdf>

President-Elect Message

Douglas A. Bell



As your new President-Elect, please allow me to take this opportunity to introduce myself. Before I do that, however, I would like to thank Linda Connolly for having accepted her nomination to also run for this position and for being a gracious co-competitor. I would hope that at least several others in the Western Section will be ready to step up and run for President-Elect in 2013. I would also like to thank the Board and general membership for your support as we move forward in 2012 and humbly submit to you that I will do my best to fulfill the responsibilities of the position and then some.

To provide you with some background – I have been involved with wildlife for pretty much my whole life. In fact, I had an incident with a duck when I was about three years old and it was all downhill from there (but that is another story). Soon after I fell in love with birds, I fell in love with raptors, and it was then all off a cliff from there. Always knowing my direction would be wildlife/science, I attended Humboldt State as an undergrad, then went to Germany for what turned out to be five years, where I first worked and lived with a family on a farm, then in an agricultural chemistry lab, and then attended the Univ. of Muenster where I obtained the rough equivalent of a Master's degree. The latter involved a field stint in India to do research on chameleons for my thesis. I returned to the states to pursue a Ph.D. in zoology from U.C. Berkeley, working with Ned Johnson on hybridization between western and glaucous-winged gulls. After that I worked for a "few" years as a post-doc at the California Academy of Sciences (where I am still a Research Associate) with Luis Baptista on white-crowned sparrow song evolution and peregrine falcon population genetics. On the academic track I have had the good fortune to teach at Sonoma State and California State University Sacramento, where I currently hold an Adjunct position. My day job is with the East Bay Regional Park District as the Wildlife Program Manager, a position that is responsible for wildlife across 112,000 acres in the east SF Bay Area. In this position I have enjoyed incorporating many of my research interests into on-the-ground actions, such as using radiotelemetry of local prairie falcons to inform land acquisition and management decisions and investigating ways to lessen

the impacts of wind energy development on golden eagles and other raptors.

When I was president of the SF Bay Chapter of the Wildlife Society I was struck by the incredible dedication and commitment of the Chapter's officers. My appreciation has grown by an order of magnitude as I now see the flurry of activity that goes behind the scenes at the Section level. If you thought our officers were resting after the Section meeting in February – wrong! Plans are moving full speed ahead for next year's meeting and for the various directions the Section wishes to go. From my perspective, topics that I would like to see in next year's meeting include continuing coverage of renewable energy, wildlife diseases, urban/exurban wildlife issues, and hot-button taxon-specific symposia or sessions ("What, wolves in California!?"). Speaking of crossing borders, some of my recent efforts have been focused on issues south of the border. If at all possible, I would like to reach out and see if we can have Mexican colleagues participate in our workshops or sessions. Other topics to cover at the next meeting could include expanding upon the timely environmental offsets / mitigation measures sessions. Similarly, the intersection of policy, environmental regulations and implementation intrigues me, as it seems that many of the gains that have been made over the last decades are falling victim to budget cuts across all levels. If you will pardon the cliché, a workshop on "how to do more with less" or how innovative thinkers are still advancing their programs despite dwindling budgets (e.g. "Look what you can do with duct tape!"), would be topical. These are just a few ideas. I welcome your input on any topic you would like to see at the next Western Section meeting. Please feel free to contact me to discuss these and other (better?) ideas at any time.

I have been a member of three Chapters for some time. In a few weeks we plan to enjoy an outing with the SF Bay Chapter to the Pinnacles National Monument. I can think of no greater advice than to urge you to sign up for that next field trip or workshop, go to the next meeting or brown bag, and join your fellow Chapter or Section members in supporting the organization while networking, learning new things and having fun at the same time. Aloha.

Past-President Message

John McNerney



I want to start by saying that it was truly an honor to serve as President of the Western Section. I have grown professionally and established strong friendships with many great people. The Section had a productive year and I leave the post confident that the Section will continue to move forward with strength in the very capable hands of our new President, Linda Leeman. Linda did an outstanding job planning and executing the recent annual conference in Sacramento. I think we were all inspired by her ability to produce such an interesting and well attended conference. I have full confidence she will be an effective chair for the Executive Board.

I'd like to welcome and congratulate Doug Bell on his election to the office of President-Elect. Doug has great enthusiasm and I'm very much looking forward to working with him during my final term on the Executive Board.

I've been told that a President's third term is relaxing. I'll re-gain a vote on the board, and sit back and enjoy the fruit of our collective labor. While these may be true, I'm also committed to keeping busy chairing the Elections and Annual Meeting Site Selection Committees, in addition to assisting the Program Director in pushing forward several of our new environmental education pilot programs.

The Site Selection Committee is busy securing a venue for the TWS-WS 2014 Annual Conference in Reno, NV. We are excited about bringing the conference back to Reno and have already received significant commitment from members in the Nevada and UNR Chapters, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

As chair of the Elections Committee, I'll be recruiting the next round of President-Elect nominees for the 2013 election. As I've mentioned several times in the last two years, the Western Section is only as strong as the volunteers who run it. I have several strong President-Elect candidates in mind, but if you feel like you're ready to help lead the Western Section, let me know. Serving as President is an extremely rewarding experience!

Finally, I'll be helping our Program Director (Cynthia Perrine) advance some of the environmental education initiatives that the Section has been developing over the last year. The success of these initiatives hinges on continued support, through volunteerism, of the many dedicated wildlife students and professionals in our membership. If you have an interest in these environmental education programs and want to get involved, be sure to contact Cynthia or myself. Have a great spring!

Welcome and Thanks to Our New Board Members

We are happy to welcome the following new board members (or familiar board members to new roles):

- Douglas A. Bell - President-Elect
- Craig Bailey - Treasurer
- Armand Gonzales - Conservation Affairs Committee Chair
- David Wyatt and Bridgette Kirk - Student Affairs Committee Co-Chairs
- Cassidee Shinn and Jeff Simeon - UC Santa Barbara Student Chapter Representatives
- Tierra Groff and Karen Petrities - UC Davis Student Chapter Representatives
- Tony Bush - University of Nevada, Reno Student Chapter Representative
- Bennett Hardy - Humboldt State University Student Chapter Representative

We also thank Scott Osborn and Tina Bartlett who have served the board so well over the years but are departing to pursue other efforts. We appreciate your dedication and contributions to the Section!

As you know, our Section leadership is primarily voluntary. If you are interested in getting more involved with Section operations, please contact your Chapter Representative, Section Officer, or Section Committee Chair to see how you can help.

Treasurer's Report

Craig Bailey



Donate to the Western Section Endowment Fund!

The Western Section established an Endowment Fund through a member-approved change to our Bylaws in 2007. The goal of the fund is accumulate a core of principal that will not be depleted. Interest generated from the fund will be used to support the Section's education, outreach, and scholarship programs. The Endowment Fund principal receives input from all bequests, life membership dues, and donations specifically made for the fund. The fund is administered by three Trustees, including the Treasurer and two other Section members appointed by the President. Currently, Treasurer Scott Osborn, former Treasurer Gary Falxa, and Past-President Marshall White are the Trustees.

The Endowment Fund was established with a \$38,000 bequest from the estate of Section member Douglas Donaldson. Please consider adding to the Section's fund by making a donation or becoming a Lifetime Member of the Section. Donations to the Fund are tax-deductible. Lifetime memberships cost \$450, which may be paid in up to three installments. Either way, helping to increase the core principal in the Endowment Fund is a great way to support the Section's programs for students and education/outreach!

I'd like to start this message by thanking Scott Osborn for all of his hard work in 2011. It was a great pleasure to work with Scott and our bookkeeper, Mike Chapel, over the past year as Assistant Treasurer. The two of them, along with the Executive Board and Gary Falxa, have been a big help as I transition into the new role of Treasurer.

Section assets were \$353,729 on March 1, 2012. Of this total, \$37K is in the Section's Endowment Fund. The remainder of these assets are split between our Wells Fargo accounts (about \$193K) and Charles Schwab liquid investment accounts (about \$123K). As stated in previous Treasurer reports, The Endowment Fund took initial losses due to market conditions, but continues to recover.

Overall, the Section is in good financial health.

We had a successful Annual Meeting and association workshops. The Section made approximately \$50k from the Annual Meeting and \$10k from the workshops. A huge thank you to all of the Section members, participants, volunteers and sponsors who contributed to all of these events!



Jumping Spider (Phidippus) - Carrizo Plain, San Luis Obispo Co., CA.

Photo by Howard O. Clark, Jr., M.S., TWS-CWB®
San Joaquin Valley Chapter Webmaster



Update From The Wildlife Society Headquarters

The Wildlife Society Partners to Sponsor National Lobby Day—The Teaming With Wildlife coalition, consisting of more than 6,300 organizations including TWS, took to the halls of Congress on for its annual “Fly-In” to secure financial support for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program (SWG). The effort, which took place on February 28-29, brought participants from 23 states, many of whom were TWS members, to advocate for federal funding for state-implemented non-game wildlife science and management. Participants met with Dan Ashe, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and attended an advocacy training with many outstanding guest speakers representing environmental organizations and state agencies.

Upcoming Wildlife Professional Release—The summer issue of *The Wildlife Professional* will feature a special package on the challenges and complexities of managing invasive species as well as a handful of articles on wildlife management issues around the world that will tie in to the upcoming International Wildlife Management Congress in Durban, South Africa. We'll also feature articles on a wide variety of wildlife-related topics, including tools to measure feral cat behavior and acoustic research to study marine mammals. The summer issue of the magazine will mail the second week of June.

International Wildlife Management Congress Registration—The conference will take place in Durban, South Africa on July 9-12. The IWMC theme is Cooperative Wildlife Management across Borders: Learning in the Face of Change. South Africa is an ideal venue because of the numerous examples of exemplary practices in wildlife management and the human capacity for building innovations ranging from adaption of scientific developments to community-based natural resource management and empowerment programs to share in the global forum. The IV IWMC 2012 in Durban, South Africa will be informative, exciting, and an ideal venue to establish new and lasting partnerships to benefit wildlife and their management.

TWS Annual Conference in Portland, Oregon Upcoming—TWS' annual conference will be held in Portland, Oregon on October 13-17, 2012. The meeting will include workshops, symposia, panel discussions, breakfast roundtables, special poster sessions, contributed papers (oral presentations), and contributed posters. We invite submission of contributed papers and posters on topics of wildlife ecology, management, conservation, education, or policy. Presentations will not be published, so we encourage reports from the author's most recent scientific investigations and management experiences. Presentations will be audio recorded and made available to conference attendee at the conclusion of the conference. Registration for the conference will open in June.

Certification Update—TWS' Certification Directory has now been updated to display current AWBs' and CWBs' mailing address, work phone, and email. Should an AWB or CWB wish to make any changes to the Certification Directory, please send an email with your desired contact information to be displayed to Shannon@wildlife.org. Remember that you have to be a current member to hold a valid certificate.

Help Foster the Next Generation of Wildlife Professionals!

The Western Section is collaborating this summer with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to introduce wildlife conservation and field exercises to a pre-college audience. The AAUW's 2012 Tech Trek program, held at UC Davis, will engage 84 middle school girls and focus on wildlife conservation. The Western Section is looking for students and professionals (active or retired) to participate in the Tech Trek program. Aside from helping guide more pre-college students toward a career in wildlife, participation will also provide mentoring and leadership experience for university students studying wildlife conservation, and Scientist Citizen opportunities for wildlife professionals. If you are interested in participating as a mentor, field guide, or lecturer in the Tech Trek program, please contact John McNerney.

(jmcnerney@cityofdavis.org).

Program Director Notes

Cynthia Perrine

**Connecting Wildlife Professionals to
Scientist Citizenship Opportunities and
Fostering University Student Mentoring**

Scientist Citizens are professional (working or retired) scientists who directly communicate scientific principles, theories, and research findings, for the purpose of legislative advocacy and to educate the general public of all ages.

While the practice is not new, a revival of the Scientist Citizen has been called for in recent years by many professional societies, from the National Academies to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in response to the range of modern, complex scientific issues dependent upon policy decisions. Legislative action is often informed by the most influential advocates, but perhaps not the most well-informed. Wildlife-related policy is no exception, and would be better informed via both advocacy and education from its best ally – the wildlife professional.

Through a coalition of professional societies, universities, research institutions, non-profit organizations and funding agencies, the individual scientist can join in directly communicating to the public -- sharing the knowledge and practical benefits emerging from scientific research, as well as the process of scientific inquiry and culture of stewardship. I'm developing and implementing two Section initiatives that partner within this coalition to engage Western Section members as Scientist Citizens:

Scientist Citizen Support of Conservation Affairs

Teaming With Wildlife Fly-in to Washington, D.C.

The Western Section of TWS participated in (www.teaming.com) Teaming With Wildlife Coalition's D. C. Fly-in activities on February 28-29, 2012. Event participants reviewed and discussed strategies to educate congressional staff members on the benefits of State and Tribal Wildlife Grants, and to advocate for members of Congress' support of the \$61 million dollar appropriation in the 2013 Executive's proposed budget for the program. Consider participating in future fly-ins to meet with state and local policy-makers in the subject areas you are knowledgeable about.

Talk with your Conservation Affairs Committee members if you'd like to see policy education sessions as part of the TWS Western Section annual meetings to prepare Scientist Citizens for future advocacy initiatives. (agonzales7200@yahoo.com).

Advocating in response to current and focused initiatives may result in an immediate outcome. However, mobilizing enduring public support for pressing scientific and conservation issues requires a sustained strategy and long-term commitment to educating and engaging the public, undertaken by the scientific community. Who knows better the intricacies, strengths and weaknesses of our scientific process than us? Who better to connect the next generation to a conservation value or land ethic?



Scientist Citizens Lead Weekly Walks

Get Outside: Weekly Walks With a Scientist

The proposed model to engage TWS Wildlife Scientists directly with public education is called, "Get Outside" -- weekly walks provide school-dependent youth with unstructured time to explore city parks and open space within a 15-minute walk from the school campus. Piloting in San Luis Obispo this Spring, Get Outside enlists community scientists from the coalition (hydrologists, engineers, botanists and wildlife ecologists) to form a Guide Team with university students to facilitate inquiry-led observation and monitoring of natural resources and municipal engineering projects for youth ages 5-14.

Community scientists rotate in for a 2-hour commitment in a given week, and are encouraged to share academic and career objectives and experiences with participants, as well as to inspire and connect them to nature and scientific processes. The college students from various backgrounds and disciplines provide consistent motivation for youth observations, encouraging discovery and learning through inquiry. Participants are led to observe organisms in natural habitats, noting natural and anthropogenic processes, and forming questions about what is seen, heard, touched, or smelled. Students engage in place-based education and participate in service learning projects.

A partnership with a Cal Poly program, "Sustain SLO"



Conservation Affairs Committee

*Armand
Gonzales*

The Conservation Affairs Committee met for the first time in a long time during the Western Section's annual conference in early February. Besides our initial introductions, we began discussing what we want to accomplish as a committee. We were treated to a guest speaker, Terra Rentz, TWS Assistant Director of Government Affairs and Partnerships, who spoke to us about advocacy and conflict resolution. Taking advantage of the near record attendance at the conference, the committee conducted an informal survey to garner member input on what priorities we as a committee should focus on. We received over seventy suggestions, everything from species conservation to public outreach and education. The committee will meet monthly to wade through the suggestions and develop plan to take action. Committee membership is open to everyone. We plan to meet monthly via conference call on the third Wednesday 12:00-1:00 PM. To get call-in information, contact Armand Gonzales, agonzales7200@yahoo.com.

ma'ukele

strolling through the woods
'lo cries, ferns whisper, mist falls
lush green embraces

Written by: Tiana Maple
February 2012

Tiana is a student member of The Western Section of The Wildlife Society. She is currently working as an intern with the Kohala Watershed Partnership on the Big Island of Hawaii. They have been doing surveys in the Kohala mountains this month searching for invasive weeds. The Hawaiian rainforest is so alive with wildlife of many kinds- both native and introduced. Her days in the forest inspired this haiku.

Cynthia Perrine cont'd from page 6

brings seven first-year students to the Get Outside project from January to June, developing outreach materials, communicating with other community partners, and getting scientists and participants interested in the program. Sustain SLO students will also serve on the Guide Teams for weekly walks, along with Cal Poly Student Chapter of TWS members and pre-teaching (multiple subject and single subject) students.

The Section applied for grant funding to expand the Get Outside program beyond the pilot and for 2012-2013 serve both middle school and elementary school youth in a year-round program. Additional grant proposals are under development to fund segments of the program.

Questions about either of these initiatives should be directed to me at csgperrine@yahoo.com, especially if you are interested in leading a weekly walk or in participating in future Scientist Citizen opportunities.

2012 Annual Conference

Program Chair Wrap-Up, Linda Leeman



I'd like to express my gratitude to all who were able to participate in the 2012 Annual Conference in Sacramento! The meeting was a great success with almost 600 professionals and students in attendance. Turnout is typically high when we hold a conference in Sacramento given the central location within our Section, but to our delight, we think that this may have broken all previous records!

Thank you to the conference committee, symposium organizers, speakers, instructors, presenters, and volunteers who contributed to make the conference a great event for all of us. Special thanks to our many sponsors whose contributions helped keep the conference costs down. It also allows us to use our funds to support our professional development programs, offer scholarships, and other opportunities for students and young professionals. It was a wonderfully rewarding experience for me to see (most) things go off without a (major) hitch after a year of planning.

The work of the Professional Development Committee to organize a pre-conference symposium and two workshops added to the high caliber

of the technical content of the conference. The outstanding Wilderness First Aid and Technical Writing workshops were sold out—we will be offering these workshops again in the future due to their success! Thank you to the instructors Bobbi Foster and Jack Barclay for their fine work. The West Coast Fisher Symposium was an amazing gathering of many of the top researchers and managers and provided a fresh approach to discussing conservation issues. Kudos to symposium organizers J. Scott Yaeger and Katie Moriarty for their dedication and hard work.

The Sacramento conference program was strong, offering 13 technical sessions, nearly 120 oral presentations, a record-breaking 33 poster presentations, and a diverse plenary panel on the topic of "Conservation in the Age of Litigation." A highlight for many was the keynote presentation of Chuck Bonham, the Director of the California Department of Fish and Game. We are grateful for his participation and are working on getting a video of his presentation posted to our website for those who missed it (or would like to see it again!).

The program also included our ever-popular Resume workshop led by Mrs. Barbara Peters and the Effective Oral Presentation workshop led by Dr. Jon Hooper. David Wyatt, Student Affairs Committee Chair, moderated a Job Interview Panel, which was a great new offering to

help recent grads and other professionals land a job. The Conservation Affairs Committee held a re-initiation meeting, with the assistance of TWS Government Affairs Assistant Director Terra Rentz. We look forward to past, past president, Armand Gonzalez, reinvigorating the important work of this committee.

While we were very pleased with the technical content of annual conference, we felt that the conference facilities and hotel rooms were not in very good condition. The cost of food and drink also did not seem commensurate with the quality. The change in name (from Radisson to Woodlake Hotel) and subsequent changes in ownership and management have led us to change our venue for the 2013 Conference to the DoubleTree Hotel in Sacramento. While the Woodlake Hotel has plans to renovate their facilities, we feel that the DoubleTree will better be able to meet our needs in 2013.

As the Program Chair, I'd like to again thank all the hardworking folks that helped make the 2012 conference a success. Conference organizing requires a huge team effort and the dedication of many people, but it is the membership involvement that makes it successful and so rewarding. We hope to see you in Sacramento again next year!

Awards and Grants Committee Report

Richard Burg

2012 Award Winners Presented at Annual Meeting Banquet

The **Raymond F. Dasmann Award** for the Professional of the Year went to **Dr. Scott Osborn** a Staff Environmental Scientist at the Department of Fish and Game. Dr. Osborn's work spans a career of three decades and represent important and significant additions to our body of knowledge dealing with Mohave ground squirrel and other small-mid sized mammals. In addition, Scott also facilitates a variety of important interagency groups, such as the California Pika Consortium and the Mohave Ground Squirrel Technical Advisory Group. For the past two years, he has worked closely with the Conservation Biology Institute on the ongoing California Mammal Species of Special Concern update. His long-standing commitment and passion for wildlife conservation and his consistent professionalism throughout his career makes him the ideal recipient of this Award.



The **Conservationist of the Year Award** - This year we are very pleased to honor the **Trust for Public Land** (TPL) for their dedication to the conservation of over 350,000 acres of land throughout California. The Trust for Public Land's first office opened in San Francisco in 1973 with a dozen staff and a new model for land conservation. Today, TPL has grown to become a respected voice in California on a wide range of land use issues, including habitat and wildlife linkage preservation, long-range planning and cooperative public-private initiatives.

The **Barrett A. Garrison Outstanding Mentor Award**. This award was bestowed upon **David Wyatt**. As a professional Wildlife Biologist and professor working in northern California, Dave has mentored many an up and coming wildlife biologist on an individual basis over his 20 years as a professional. He and his co-professors at Sacramento City College have created a field ecology certificate program that gives students the basics in field survey methods techniques and routinely sponsors students to wildlife conferences to give presentations, and he is extra proud when his students are the only community college students presenting at these conferences. It is his mentoring, dedication to conservation, and passion for teaching others about biology that drove many to become who they are today.



The **Chapter of the Year Award** went to **The Sacramento-Shasta Coast Chapter**. They had a busy 2011 including continued hosting of numerous brown bag lunch seminars as well as a giant garter snake workshop, and annual Natural Resources Symposium at California State University, Sacramento which was attended by numerous students and wildlife professionals. In addition the Chapter continued its commitment to assisting students by awarding numerous grants and scholarships totaling over \$3,750, to students from throughout the region.



The **James D. Yoakum Award** for Outstanding Service and Commitment to The Western Section of The Wildlife Society went to **Don Yasuda**. Don has been a long standing member of the Western Section and started his Section involvement by stepping up at an annual meeting when there was a problem with the slide projector during a session. He has since carved out his very recognizable role as A/V Captain coordinating and overseeing the audio-visual arrangements at the Western Section Annual Conferences since 2000, and chairing the A/V Subcommittee for the TWS Reno 2001 and TWS Monterey 2009 meetings. Don has served as chair (and often, only member) of the Membership Committee since (2001). He also serves the Section in his second term as Western Section Representative to TWS Council where he has participated in issues such as Federal employee participation in professional societies and

the unified membership initiative. The “James D. Yoakum Award” is intended to recognize individuals who have provided outstanding, long-term service, support, and commitment to the Western Section of The Wildlife Society and Don’s dedication of time and energy epitomize this award.

The following TWS member received a past-presidents pin for his service to the Western Section at the annual business meeting:

- **Armand Gonzalez**, Past-President 2011

The following TWS members received plaques for their service to the Western Section at the annual business meeting:

- **John McNerney**, President 2011
- **Linda Leeman**, President-Elect 2011
- **Natasha Dvorak**, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter Representative 2007-2011



Enjoying the 2012 Annual Meeting Awards Banquet!

Karen Swaim (Swaim Biological), Bridgette Kirk (TWS-UCD), Sam Young (Cal Poly Alumnus & Swaim Biological), Brett Anne Balamuth (TWS-UCD), Tierra Groff (TWS-UCD), Karin Petrites (TWS-UCD), Monica Stupackzuk (TWS-UCD).

STUDENT PAPERS AND POSTERS AT 2012 ANNUAL MEETING

Rhys Evans

I am pleased to share the results of student paper and poster judging at our annual meeting in Sacramento. Some years, we're able to announce these during the actual meeting, but students were scheduled to speak all the way until Friday afternoon (and I didn't have time to compile all the poster scores until Saturday morning). I think we had an unprecedented number of students entered in the competition this year...25 papers and 13 posters!

Before I get to the part you all want to read, I'd like to thank our volunteer judges, in no particular order: Brooke Langle, Rich Burg, Pat Brown, Michaela Koenig, Kevin Cooper, John McNerney, Michelle Korpos, Sally DeBecker, Terri Wiest, Dawn Lobaugh, Janae Scruggs, Amy Parker, Laura Patterson, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Josh Baltz, Marin Meza, Doug Leslie, Lisa Kashiwase, Linda Connolly, Laura Patterson, Jeff Lincer, Brad Valentine, Sean Matthews, Dominic Bachman, Lisa Fields and Marina Riveccio (I really hope I got them all...), thank you!

POSTERS:

- 1st Place: **SACHA HEATH**, Humboldt State University -- THE EFFECTS OF BIRD AND BAT ARTHROPOD PREDATION ON SAPLING BLACK COTTONWOODS IN THE CONTEXT OF RESTORATION
- 2nd Place: **BRENDAN PHILLIPS**, Sonoma State University -- EFFECTS OF NEST TEMPERATURE VARIATION ON VIABILITY AND SEX DETERMINATION OF WESTERN POND TURTLES
- 3rd Place: **DANIEL NONNE**, University of Nevada-Reno -- THE INFLUENCE OF DISTURBANCE ON GREATER SAGE-GROUSE NEST SURVIVAL
- Honorable Mention: **KELLY WEINTRAUB**, Humboldt State University

PAPERS:

- 1st Place: **CODY MASSING**, Cal Poly State University, SLO -- CAN PIKAS ADAPT TO RISING TEMPERATURES? COMPARISONS OF BEHAVIOR BETWEEN HIGH AND LOW ELEVATION PIKAS IN THE SIERRA NEVADA
- 2nd Place: **WENDY PEARSON**, Humboldt State University -- NEST SUCCESS, MATE FIDELITY AND DISPERSAL IN SNOWY PLOVERS (*CHARADRIUS NIVOSUS*)
- 3rd Place: **WILLIAM GOLDENBERG**, Humboldt State University -- SPATIAL ECOLOGY OF STELLER'S JAYS IN REDWOOD NATIONAL AND STATE PARKS
- Honorable Mention (three papers separated by just 2 points out of 300!): **MICHAEL BEST**, Humboldt State University; **LUKE EBERHART-PHILLIPS**, Humboldt State University and **JESSICA BLICKLEY**, University of California, Davis

Isn't it cool to see FIVE universities represented on this list?? If anyone would like to volunteer to help President-elect Bell by taking on this fun and relatively easy task in 2013, let me know!

Are you following the wildlife student blog "What would Aldo do"?
Here is a sneak peak at the latest entries.... <http://whatwouldaldodo.blogspot.com/>

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2012

Notes on Graduate school, life and lessons from Oz

By Bridgette Kirk

For my senior year, I am participating in a study abroad program in Australia. I have just finished my first month and I would highly recommend it to anyone considering it. This has been a lifelong common sense lesson combined with hands on learning experiences in the field. I have gained information about how the natural resources field operates in Australia and the main message from our professors is to take your time and enjoy life. The route to higher education in Australia is one filled with much more leisure than the road paved by most American students. Many American students feel the need to get into their research right after their bachelors. In Australia, however, many of the researchers have just recently decided on their projects and may not have had any former knowledge about their subject beforehand, just the willingness to learn more. (Disclaimer: I would just like to say that I am not trying to generalize but rather I am trying to get the point across that being motivated and driven to learn about a subject is important. If you are very knowledgeable about your subject that is tremendous. More power to you). We all possess curiosity for the unknown, but for me the idea of trying something new for your masters or PhD is quite daunting.

Below are a few tidbits I have picked up from chatting with Aussie professors and graduate students:

Take advantage of every opportunity regardless of monetary reward. Volunteering is quite important for building your resume and adding to your skill set. Many employers see volunteering as dedication because you were willing to do the job without being financially compensated or motivated. Volunteering is also a great way to figure out what you like and what you cannot stand to do for another minute.

Travel, travel, travel! Enjoy your youth: travel, explore and find out what you are passionate about. Have adventures while you can and before you are tied down with other commitments. While you are off having adventures try to volunteer at some sort of wildlife-y company/organization/reserve just to gain some more experience. Traveling also helps you to gain an international perspective that will help you with communicating with international scientists that you may or may not have the opportunity to work with.



Bridgette Kirk, Australia Bat Clinic, Queensland

Bridgette Kirk, cont'd from page 12

Graduate school does not have to define your long-term career interests (unless you want it to, of course). One of my tutors here (we call them TA's in the U.S.) did their graduate work on one thing, completed their research and in the process of doing so realized that they did not want to continue working on that subject. They have since switched to work they are truly passionate about. At least in Australia, professors seem to be lenient with regard to students changing their topics or subjects before they have totally committed themselves.

Professors are people too, usually. They are familiar with your situation, although for some of them it may be much more recently than others. Regardless, the main point is that they probably understand a lot of what you are going through and in general would like to help see that you learn and grow as a researcher and scientist. Communication is very important, especially when you are trying to select a professor to work with for your graduate work and when you are figuring out your project and planning the work you need to do.

To wrap this up in a few words: college is what you make it. I took advantage of the opportunity to study abroad and I know it is going to influence my wildlife career. Who knows, maybe I will be going back to Australia for graduate school or work or maybe even some place new. And, although I will not be graduating debt free, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time and learned so much from the experiences I've had and the people I've met in Australia. In the end, especially in the wildlife field, it is about learning (even if it's mostly from mistakes), engaging yourself in worthwhile tasks and research to become a better biologist rather than a millionaire. So take the leap and travel somewhere, study if you can, meet people and discover how much more to the world there is outside of the U.S. bubble.

Bridgette is currently finishing up her undergraduate at U.C. Davis and serves as a co-chair on the Western Section Student Affairs Committee.



The Eagle

*I will go there then,
Across the peaks and pine trees
On a column of the wind
Soaring, while the air
Whistles my feathers.*

*Atop a crag I will rest,
Talons gripping the lichen
covered precipice, eyes
Focused on the cauldrea
Far below and clear.*

*There I make my leap
Of faith.*

*I stretch my wings,
Embrace the air,
And glide out across the water.*

--Kevin Cahill, Citrus Heights, Ca.

Distant Thoughts - Transactions Editor

David Wright

I'm recently back from a terrific vacation in New Zealand. It's a beautiful and biologically fascinating place, and it made me think about recurring themes in wildlife conservation. Three in particular stand out for me: **future-eating**, **habitat conversion**, and **invasive species**.

Future-eating – this is a term I find evocative, from a Down Under writer, though in America we'd probably say "mining the resource." In other words, a resource – even a potentially renewable one such as a wildlife population – is exploited so deeply that depletion far exceeds the capacity to renew, and is as if the resource was a finite non-renewable one being mined. In Tim Flannery's words such a situation is a case of eating your future. You can have your meal, or you can eat the meals of all your children and children's children. In New Zealand as in our country, future-eating has happened over and over again with few or tardy instances of learning from past mistakes. Why would we expect anyone to abstain if it's not governed and someone else will do it if you don't? The native Maori, themselves relative newcomers to the islands from Polynesia, quickly drove several species of giant moa to extinction, and the world's largest living eagle soon followed. Europeans nearly extirpated many species by harvest, including a local fur seal species, certain whales, and giant kauri trees. Fortunately the fur seals, some whales, and the kauri seem to be recovering now. It made me wonder in what ways we might now be blindly eating our own future.

Habitat conversion is stark and visible almost everywhere in New Zealand. The same is true here but I think I have more difficulty recognizing it because I'm accustomed to American landscapes and they seem normal. In New Zealand, forests were originally widespread but were very extensively cleared or burned, and now livestock graze most of the area. Areas that were never cleared are rare. Native "bush," as the Kiwis call their forest, is growing back, with some encouragement, mostly on the circumscribed areas of conserved lands. Native birds – the only native warm-blooded vertebrates save for a species or two of bats – are markedly more common in areas with native vegetation. The same pattern, that native birds (and other native species) prefer native vegetation, has been documented repeatedly in America but seems not to get the attention or application here it deserves.

The effects of habitat conversion in New Zealand are deeply entwined with the effects of **invasive species**. With invasive species it seems that the lessons of experience are being taken very seriously,



if the questionnaires, inspections and tent- and boot-washing imposed at the Auckland airport are any measure. And yes – mistakes were made. With the benefit of hindsight we ask ourselves, "What on earth was the person thinking who brought gorse to this wonderful place?" In fact I asked the same question the first time I encountered gorse – not in New Zealand or Scotland but on San Bruno Mountain on the San Francisco peninsula. As in California, imported weeds are commonplace in wild places in New Zealand, and I suspect degrade native habitat. Imported animals are also wildly problematic – beginning with Polynesian rats and extending to Australian possums, stoats, dogs, etc., native bird populations have been decimated and several species have been driven extinct. It looks to me as if in New Zealand just as here, invasive species problems can be manageable if they are detected when only a handful of an invader is present; beyond this point an invasive population may quickly exceed practical control. New Zealanders have taken a reverse tack on their established sea of invaders which we might consider copying more frequently: they are building exclusion zones where invaders are wiped out and kept out. There are several island parks treated in this way, and small areas of the mainland are tightly fenced and regularly trapped for stoats, rats, and possum. Some of the islands are the last refuges for a few endangered birds. Poison is another method of choice for invasive mammal control, a method that is controversial. Handmade signs opposing aerial broadcast of "1080," a poison bait, are widespread, such as a sarcastic one that read, "Thanks DOC [Department of Conservation] for killing everything."

Though there's a sobering side of New Zealand's beautiful landscapes, I hope you may all get to enjoy a visit there someday. It's stunning, the people are extraordinarily warm, and it's a thought-provoking place.



Professional Development Committee

Rhys Evans

In Sacramento, we kicked off what's sure to be an amazing 2012 for the TWS West Professional Development Committee. We taught several members all sorts of emergency procedures with "Wilderness First Aid." We're probably doing that again next year (we see this as a small, but quite important niche...). Thanks to Bobbie Foster, who I'm told is a great instructor.

Almost 30 of you made great strides in your authorship abilities at the workshop "Scientific and Technical Writing – From Field Work to Final Draft." One participant told us... "I valued the scientific/technical writing workshop. I got alot [sic!] of questions answered and found many good resources." Another participant: "The writing workshop was great!" And a third: "Please make the Scientific and Technical Writing workshop available more often." So, how about a response to that last one? "Okay!" Look for it next year!! A million thanks to Jack Barclay; we've been searching for someone to lead a workshop like this for a few years, and it sure looks like we've picked an instructor who is a winner!

Finally, nearly 130 biologists attended our outstanding "West Coast Fisher Symposium, Contemporary Conservation Perspectives." There's a long list of folks to thank for this one: Scott Yaeger, Katie Moriarty, Matt Delheimer, Bill Zielinski, Laura Finley, Sean Matthews, and Kathryn Purcell.

We're working with chapters on not one, but two San Joaquin kit fox events (one fairly short and sweet, the other long and in-depth...). Sacramento-Shasta is organizing a Swainson's Hawk workshop.

There's a lot more – so keep an eye on our website, and if you haven't for some bizarre reason signed up for our TWS Western Section Members e-mail messaging system...do it!

Contact the List Manager at: dyasudaTWS@comcast.net

Upcoming Events

- Bat Ecology and Field Techniques Workshop
April 19 - 22, 2012
Dye Creek Preserve, near Red Bluff
- Noninvasive Acoustic Monitoring of Bats
Field Techniques Workshop
May 15 - 18, 2012
Swanton Pacific Ranch
Santa Cruz Mountains
- Remote Camera Techniques in
Wildlife Studies
June 21-24, 2012
Dye Creek Preserve, near Red Bluff
- 2013 Annual Meeting
January 30 - February 1, 2013
Sacramento, CA - DoubleTree Hotel
New venue!
- 2014 Annual Meeting
Date TBD
Reno, NV



Section Representative Report

Don Yasuda

TWS Council met in Atlanta, Georgia on March 10-11 for our mid-year Council meeting. In case you aren't aware, our Executive Director, Michael Hutchins,

has recently had surgery and is recovering at home but will have more surgery scheduled later this year. Council has appointed Darryl Walter, Director of Membership, Marketing and Conferences as Temporary Executive Director to cover the periods when Dr. Hutchins is unable to work. Darryl will address administrative and day-to-day functions of TWS and policy and other coordination functions will be addressed by the Executive Committee (President Paul Krausman, President-Elect Wini Kessler, Immediate Past-President Tom Ryder, and Vice President Jon Haufler). We wish Dr. Hutchins a speedy recovery and expect to have him back at the helm for the Annual Conference in Portland.

Administration One of the most substantial and serious topics that we addressed was the discovery of a budget shortfall and the steps that TWS staff proposed to re-balance the budget. The bulk of our discussion was regarding establishing better monthly budget tracking practices for staff Directors to ensure that the situation does not recur. Staff was able to identify cost-savings and revenue generating options to address the situation.

Government Affairs Council is re-evaluating its practices related to Position Statements. We currently have 46 Position Statements and every position statement must be reviewed every 5 years. This is creating a substantial workload on our Government Affairs staff and Council and limiting our ability to nimbly respond to emerging issues. We are evaluating a proposal to use a combination of Position Statements, Fact Sheets, and our Strategic Plan to streamline our existing Position Statements. Government Affairs is also about to pilot a new tool to help keep you informed of and engaged with conservation issues. The TWS Action Center will allow you to receive email blasts about emerging issues and facilitate legislative contacts. This service will allow you to customize your contact email and to opt-out if you are not interested in participating. Expect to see more information

soon from TWS on this.

Membership and Member Benefits TWS membership continues to grow with our 2011 membership at 10,745 members. See my Membership report for more interesting information about the composition of TWS membership. Our online mentoring program currently has over 700 registered members. If you are a student or new professional and haven't signed up yet, please check out this valuable member benefit along with the Career Center where you can post a resume or search through the job listings.

Communications The most recent issue of our member magazine, *The Wildlife Professional* (TWP), features a series on wildlife diseases. Council deliberated whether TWP should be made open access and decided that the most recent editions will remain members only but after one year it will be made open access. We hope that by making TWP accessible to others it will increase awareness of the quality work of our members. TWP welcomes articles written by TWS members so don't hesitate to contact TWS staff with your ideas for articles. The *Wildlife Society Bulletin* was successfully re-published as an online journal starting last March. Please check it out and spread the word as many are still not aware that it is back in publication.

Website The website will be changing... the website will be changing! After much struggling with the Joomla interface, TWS will soon begin updating and migrating to using Drupal for its website. The main TWS site will be converted first, then TWS will begin working with Sections and Chapters that want to convert. For the interim period, both Joomla and Drupal will be supported so existing websites will continue to function. TWS will soon be developing templates and contacting webmasters to assist those who want to migrate.

Affinity Program Finally, I briefly mentioned this at the members meeting. TWS continues to make great progress in implementing our Strategic Plan. As with everything else, the primary limitation to doing more is budget and staff. Staff are currently fully committed to our existing programs and it's difficult to add more to their plates. In fact, at the

Don Yasuda cont'd from page 16

Council meeting we directed staff to focus on existing initiatives. TWS will need to find additional sources of income, in addition to membership dues, in order to move to the next level in providing services to our members and to benefit our profession. One topic being discussed amongst Council is if TWS should expand its affinity program. In the past, TWS has carefully entered into affiliation agreements with companies that offer products and services at discount to members. TWS had an agreement in the past with Bank of America to offer a TWS credit card and currently has an affiliation with Liberty Mutual Insurance that offers insurance at a substantial discount to members. Council is very mindful of protecting our professional reputation, but also recognizes that affinity programs and sponsorships can be valuable sources of revenue to support our activities.

A possible funding source could be developed by allowing companies to use TWS's logo accompanied by a statement indicating that the company was a proud sponsor of TWS, or similar wording, on product packaging or websites in exchange for a financial contribution. TWS and the statement would make it clear that no endorsement of a product was being made, only that the company has made a financial contribution to TWS. Specific guidelines for the use of TWS's logo would be developed. TWS Council must decide whether or not TWS should pursue opportunities to market use of its logo on product packaging materials or websites on a case by case basis when accompanied by an appropriate statement. Think of this as similar to the "Proud sponsor of the US Olympic Team" type of program. All of the Section representatives are seeking input on this decision and I need your input.

As your Section Representative, please let me know if have information, ideas, or comments for me to share with Council or TWS staff. You can always find up to date information on activities on the TWS website (<http://www.wildlife.org>).

Membership Report

Don Yasuda

Our membership at the end of 2011 was 863, up approximately 100 from last year. We had 708 regular members; 114 student members; 21 new professional members; 17 lifetime members; 2 partial lifetime members; and 1 honorary member. As of March 15, our membership stands at 790. Thank you to all of you that have renewed already. To those that haven't renewed for 2012 yet, I'll be sending another renewal note out soon, but don't wait for me, please renew soon!

TWS recently conducted an analysis of its membership data and CA has the highest number of TWS members at 972 followed by Texas at 555 then Colorado at 387. Hawaii has 144 and Nevada has 96 and there are 2 TWS members from Guam. This compares to our Section membership that has 680 members from CA; 20 from HI, 33 from NV and none from Guam. The rest of our members come from a variety of states, including 11 from Colorado and 9 from Oregon. What does this mean? There are many members of TWS that reside in our Section but who are not Section members. I'll be trying to outreach to them to make sure they are aware of all of the things we do.

As you may have noticed, I am in the process of implementing the individual membership renewal date that the Section adopted. What this means is if you are a member of TWS at the national/international level, I am aligning your Section renewal date to the TWS renewal date. If you are a new Section member, I will use your join date to set your member-

Don Yasuda cont'd from page 17

ship expiration date; however, note that this may change if you join TWS at the national level. If you have been a Section member for a while, your membership expiration date is set at the end of the calendar year like it always has been. The purpose of this move is to make it easier for our Section members who are also TWS members since your Section and TWS memberships will renew and expire at the same time now. However, don't forget that your Chapter memberships may still be on a calendar year basis. The Section will be evaluating this process at the end of the year.

Please contact me if you have any questions about your Section membership. I can also help if you have questions about your TWS membership that you cannot resolve directly with TWS.

TWS Military Lands Working Group

Rhys Evans and Robbie Knight
Interim Co-Chairs

You may have seen the following text published in a recent issue of "The Wildlife Professional."

"The Department of Defense manages nearly 30 million acres of land, in nearly all 50 states, U.S. Territories and several foreign lands. Our biodiversity is astounding, at least in part because our ecosystems range from tundra to tropics, rainforest to desert, and grassland plains to rugged mountains. To meet the requirements of the Sikes Act, we manage our lands and resources in support of military readiness and "no net loss" of training opportunities; but at the same time, we host more threatened and endangered species than any other Federal department. We face challenges common to any land manager, such as endangered/threatened species management, invasive species and wildfires; less common concerns such as airport pest abatement and Bird/Wildlife Aircraft Strike Hazard (BASH); and unique issues like unexploded ordnance. The TWS Military Lands Working Group (MLWG) is intended to provide opportunities for members to exchange information, meet professionals dealing with similar situations, and promote awareness of natural resource conservation requirements on these unique lands."



Photo courtesy USMC, Tara Huxley

The MLWG had a preliminary and informal meeting in 2010 in Snowbird, Utah. After having our charter accepted by Council in March 2011, we held our first official meeting at the annual meeting in Kona, Hawai'i. Our goals, which are highlighted above, will focus on providing communication and coordination among our members, but with an emphasis more on "biology" than "policy."

Over the next three years, we need to reach 50 paid members (we're at about 35 now); membership in the MLWG is only \$5 annually, but you also must be a dues-paying member of TWS at the national level. MLWG membership is open to any TWS member with an interest in facilitating communication with persons working on natural resources and wildlife management on military lands. To join, there's a simple "box check" on the TWS membership renewal form, or if you've already renewed, you can submit a separate form for just the working group membership.

A key benefit of a formal working group through TWS is that we will have the opportunity to sponsor topical symposia at national meeting. Prior to the MLWG, a number of us did this for the 2009 meeting in Monterey (sponsored by the Biodiversity Working Group) and we have an approved symposium for Portland (October 2012). The MLWG is also working with the "Early Career Professional Working Group" to co-sponsor a panel discussion on Federal career opportunities in wildlife management, including SCEP, STEP, internships, volunteerism and others. If anyone would like to help us with these plans, please join up and contact us!

Western Section Travel Grant Policy



Purpose and Objectives

In pursuit of the objective to encourage high stan-

dards of professional achievement, the Western Section has established an honoraria fund to assist participation in professional meetings, conferences, symposia and other continuing education activities.

Eligibility Applicants must be current dues paid members of the Western Section. Funds will not be provided when employer or agency funds are available to the applicant. Applicants must not have received a Travel Grant (from TWS-WS) in the current year.

Non-TWS and International Conferences/Symposia Travel grants to International and non-TWS conferences/symposia will only be reviewed by the Awards and Grants Committee if the requester is presenting a paper or poster at the subject conference. A travel grant may be granted contingent upon the papers acceptance by the program committee.

Review and Approval of Grant Requests Requests for funding must be submitted to the Awards and Grants Committee Chair. Proposals will be reviewed on a continual basis and support will depend on fund availability. The Awards and Grants Chair shall distribute copies to all Board members for review and consideration. Approval of requests will require

a majority vote by the TWS-WS board.

Priority will be given to attendees of TWS meetings (Parent, Western Section, Chapters) and to attendees presenting a poster or paper at a given conference, symposium, etc.

A maximum of two grants may be awarded for a particular meeting (depending on funding).

Combined requests for shared expenses for the same meeting by two or more students will be considered.

Amount In most cases, the amount of an award may only cover a portion of the total cost of attending an event. Applicants should consider the award only as a supplement to other funding sources. Individual awards/reimbursement will not exceed \$300.00 per applicant per event or per year.

Conditions Travel awards are to be used only for registration fees, meals, lodging, and or transportation expenses. Rates of reimbursement shall be as follows

Mileage (personal vehicle) may be claimed at the rate of:

48.5 cents per mile (if no Government Owned Vehicle available)

Reimbursement may be claimed for the actual cost of a meal, not to exceed \$6.00, \$10.00 and \$15.00 for breakfast, lunch and dinner, respectively.

Reimbursement may be claimed for the actual cost of lodging, not to exceed \$75.00 per night.

Administration Western Section funds will be budgeted in the spring of each year.

Requests/applications should be submitted to the Awards and Grants Chair. Each applicant must submit a written request at least 60 days in advance of attending an event. The application must clearly state the amount of support requested and identify how costs will be incurred. A statement that alternative funding is not available from any other source must be included in the application.

Applicants must submit receipts for reimbursement. A statement of the professional benefits derived from attending the event and a summary evaluation of information gathered must accompany the receipts.

To apply for a travel award, submit:

Application form (Word);

- Abstract of paper/poster (if presenting)
- Evidence of acceptance of the abstract (if required), and
- Draft text of paper/poster to be presented (2-4 pages)

Failure to provide the above requested material will disqualify the applicant.

Application and all requested materials should be submitted to: **Richard Burg Western Section of The Wildlife Society, Attn: Awards and Grants Chair, PO Box 6756, Albany, CA 94706.** All requested material shall be submitted at least 60 days in advance of attending an event.

Sacramento-Shasta Chapter Report

Laura Patterson

The Chapter is honored to have been awarded Chapter of the Year for a third year in a row. We'll continue trying to provide our members with great networking and professional development opportunities. We'll also continue reaching out to students in our Chapter and to those members in our northern region and to engage in community outreach programs that help educate kids about wildlife conservation. To that end, we've begun planning for a number of events this year.

We will continue to offer our free lunchtime Brown Bag Seminars the second Tuesday of April, June, August, and October. The first was scheduled for April 10th at noon in the Federal building's Cafeteria Conference Room. Angela Calde-raro discussed Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle life history, ID, and survey and mitigation protocols. We're also planning a Swainson's Hawk Workshop that will include one day of classroom work and three field days spread out over two months. The location of the workshop hasn't been determined yet, so please visit the website often for updates. We will again hold our Natural Resources Symposium in November, but the location and date have not been established yet. We're also looking into potentially holding a symposium on raptors and alternative energy issues.

The Chapter contributed \$500 to support Nature Bowl and was grateful for Western Section's matching contribution. The Chapter also contributed \$500 in goods to the student raffle at the Western Section's Annual Conference as well as \$500 toward the conference itself. We're pursuing having a professional panel go to UC Davis to discuss careers in wildlife and getting involved with a docent program at Cosumnes River Preserve to educate kids about local wildlife and ecosystems. In addition, we will be supporting Western Section in its involvement with developing a wildlife biology module for Tech Trek, a math and science camp for girls being held at UC Davis this year. In addition, we still have some funds available for academic scholarships and travel grants.

And, of course, it wouldn't be the Sacramento-Shasta Chapter if we didn't put on socials. None have been scheduled yet, but we plan on having at least one mixer and one BBQ up north, and we'll probably hold at least two events in the Sacramento area.

Lastly, we're proud to welcome three new Board Members: Carlos Alvarado, Tracy Walker, and Michelle Havens, and we're excited to see so many people have already renewed their memberships this year...close to 150! Thanks! Your membership dues really do help us keep providing great services.

Feel free to contact me with any questions lpatters@water.ca.gov, and as always, if you want more information on Sacramento-Shasta Chapter activities, events, and opportunities check our webpage at <http://joomla.wildlife.org/sacramentoshasta> or "like" us on Facebook.



San Francisco Bay Area Chapter Report

Jessica Martini-Lamb



The San Francisco Bay Area Chapter welcomed new President, Natsasha Dvorak, in 2012 and thanks Past-President, Karen Swaim, for her leadership in 2011. Karen continues as a member of the Board along with Secretary/Treasurer Bryan Olnay and Newsletter Editor/Webmaster Brian Pittman.

Thanks to all of the members that attended our Chapter meeting at the 2012 Western Section conference. It was great to see so many SF Bay members at the conference. Lots of great information and ideas for future Chapter events and student outreach were shared. You all gave the board much to consider. The Chapter also contributed to the Student Raffle at this year's conference.

There is an activity scheduled for Chapter members every month in 2012. Hikes throughout the Bay Area are scheduled, as well as an upcoming camping trip to Pinnacles National Monument, and an opportunity for members to participate in a BioBlitz in the East Bay in May.

There are still free Student Memberships available for college students in the San Francisco Bay Area. If you are interested, or have any questions about Chapter events, please feel free to contact Chapter board members. Contact information may be found at the Chapter's website, <http://joomla.wildlife.org/SanFrancisco>

Western Section *Transactions* Going Electronic

Bit by bit, we are now getting all articles published in the *Transactions of the Western Section of the Wildlife Society* into a searchable online format! A few articles are already findable, for example using Google Scholar, and many more are to come. We are committed to keeping the *Transactions* an active, high-quality, and visible professional journal, so please keep your manuscripts coming. Submission is now fully electronic. Submittals can be made at any time; note there is a May 1 deadline for inclusion in the current year (2012) issue. There are no page charges for current members of the section. Presenters at the Western Section conference are encouraged to submit their findings.

San Joaquin Valley Chapter Report

Linda Connolly



The San Joaquin Valley Chapter is gearing up for a busy year in 2012. We just held our annual Natural Communities Conference on March 29 – at this event, researchers and other professionals working in our Chapter area exchange information, ideas, results, and the progress of their work. After the event we held a meeting of the Chapter board, with a good showing of the membership also in attendance. Now we're working out the final details for our San Joaquin kit fox workshop that will take place May 21st through 23rd in Bakersfield.



In February we donated \$100 to support the Western Section's involvement in the Teaming with Wildlife Fly-In in Washington, D.C. We also provided raffle and silent auction items totaling \$300 for the Western Section annual conference in Sacramento. With the new budget year we have fresh funding for research grants, and invite our members who are conducting research in our Chapter area to apply. Our application guidelines can be found on our Chapter website http://joomla.wildlife.org/SanJoaquin/images/Documents/Research_Grant_Guidelines.pdf, and it's easy to become a San Joaquin Chapter member with our ridiculously low annual dues of \$5! In addition to visiting our website for Chapter information, additional news and events are posted on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/San-Joaquin-Valley-Chapter-of-The-Wildlife-Society/202907939741620>.

The 2012 San Joaquin Valley Chapter Board: President Richard "Skip" Moss; President-elect Jeff Davis; Past President Curtis Uptain; Treasurer Justin Sloan; Secretary Erin Tennant; Chapter Representative Linda Connolly.

Birds of a feather

Birds of a feather
Coming together
More eyes to see with
More allies to be with
A propensity for communication
Underlying their aggregation
Taking wing they give us a show
Of synchronous elegance, I know
So lovely to take witness
Of their hypnotic patterned bliss

To fill the sky with such grace
Each individual in its right place
Powered by instinctive drives and abilities
Winged wonders of such capabilities
Evolving with strength and skill
Collectively with an attentive will
They have much to teach us
As our relations would beseech us
To learn to appreciate each other
As they soar with one another

*By Ronald Ward,
Avian Ecological Assessments,
Pacific Northwest Forest Plan and
Californian Survey Work*

UC Davis Student Chapter

Karen Petrites

Being students, we're busy folks - but we still manage to get outside occasionally! This past year, the Davis Student Chapter has worked on getting t-shirts designed and sold, and has started getting permits secured for an upcoming monitoring project in Sonoma County. We've had multiple graduate student speakers present their research at our meetings, giving students a chance to network and learn about colleagues' projects while providing our guests with an opportunity to refine their presentations. Selections from this past quarter included reproductive ecology of fishers in the southern Sierra Nevada, hummingbird ecology and disease transmission, and Great Gray Owls in Yosemite. In the fall, we had a trip to the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory and discussed migrating raptors with the director; that outing was also combined with a visit to the Marine Mammal Center. We also held a short camping trip to Pinnacles National Monument, and our members enjoyed seeing salamanders, condors, and learning about the feral hog exclusion efforts in place. More recently, we offered two mammal tracking workshops for our members: one introductory day, and a more technically advanced day which we included after previous attendees expressed continued interest in the event. Additionally, in early March we led our annual field trip down to Año Nuevo for members to see elephant seals and enjoy the fabulous birding in Point Reyes.

Upcoming projects for this year are still in the works, but we're getting our Picnic Day events planned out and hope to continue our annual member photo contest and silent auction. This is also an important fundraising and outreach event for the Chapter. We have speakers invited for upcoming meetings and are eager to provide more networking opportunities for our student members. The Western Section Conference was especially important in planning ways for students (especially undergraduates) to become more involved in the Society and develop themselves professionally; we hope to continue discussing the opportunities broached at the meeting, and get our members more involved in next year's conference.



UC Davis Student Chapter visits Año Nuevo State Park!

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

For more information and to register online: <http://joomla.wildlife.org/Western/>

Noninvasive Acoustic Monitoring of Bats, Field Techniques Workshop

Tuesday, May 15 to Friday, May 18, 2012

Location: Swanton Pacific Ranch, Santa Cruz Mountains

Instructor: Joe Szewczak, Ph.D., Professor, Humboldt State University, Developer of SonoBat software

Coordinator/Contact for Questions: Cynthia Perrine, csgperrine@yahoo.com

Description:

This workshop will introduce participants to noninvasive acoustic monitoring and species identification of bats. Beginning with the fundamentals of acoustics to interpret the biology and ecology of echolocation; we'll work to understand how bats use sound and how we can interlope into this realm to survey and monitor bats. From this foundation, participants will then learn the theory and practice of recording and analyzing ultrasonic bat vocalizations to interpret bat activity and species presence. Field outings will provide hands-on experience in deploying equipment and acquiring data to process. Tools and techniques for both short term and long-term passive monitoring of bats and automated data processing will be demonstrated. Participants will recognize the acoustic characteristics of western North American bats essential for species discrimination. Full spectrum acoustic techniques will be emphasized, as recommended by the new USFWS guidelines for Wind and Wildlife when species ID is important. Meals are included. NOTE: We will not handle bats during this workshop.

Bat Ecology and Field Techniques Workshop

April 19 – 22, 2012

Location: Dye Creek Preserve, near Red Bluff, CA (Tehama County)

Instructors:

- Dr. Dave Johnston, Santa Clara University/H.T. Harvey & Associates
- Dr. Joe Szewczak, Professor, Humboldt State University

Coordinator/Contact for Questions: Cynthia Perrine, csgperrine@yahoo.com

Description:

This workshop combines lecture, discussion and demonstrations to introduce participants to the ecology and conservation of California bats, covering species accounts, physiology, anatomy, behavioral ecology, conservation issues, and mitigation strategies. Field techniques of mist-netting, assessing species presence or absence, and acoustic monitoring will be demonstrated with participants gaining hands-on experience in mist-net set-up and acoustic monitoring and analysis. Evening field excursions typically capture a half dozen bat species and allow practice in extracting, handling, as well as collecting and recording data from captured bats. 20 participants maximum!

Requirements for Handling Bats During Workshop:

Handling bats is not a requirement of this workshop; participants will learn valuable field techniques with or without handling. To handle bats, participants must provide proof of rabies vaccination or sufficient rabies antibody titer results affirmed by a physician's note (Doctor's signature w/ "OK" on the titer results is sufficient) within past 3 years. We advise that participants start the 3-shot vaccination series immediately, as Occupational Health & Safety/Private Health Insurance approval may be lengthy.

Workshop participants operate under current federal and state permits held by the instructors, and follow Western Bat Working Group protocol to prevent transmission of WNS.

Bat Conservation International 2012 Field-training Workshops

Portal, Arizona • Tulelake, California • Barree, Pennsylvania

Bat Conservation International's field-training workshops provide real-world experience with the latest techniques for bat research and conservation. These intensive 5 to 6 day sessions blend lectures and field trips with hands-on training by veteran BCI biologists and regional experts. Because of the threat of White-nose Syndrome, participants at all BCI workshops will learn and follow approved decontamination guidelines. Sign up now for a BCI workshop at any of these outstanding locations:

Portal, Arizona: The Chiricahua Mountains, where landscapes range from deserts to high-country forests, offer a biodiversity unequaled anywhere else in North America. You can expect to capture and examine as many as 18 bat species.

Tulelake, California: The unique lava formations of Lava Beds National Monument in northern California

offer an outstanding opportunity to understand how varied cave environments affect where about 14 species of bats roost and forage.

Barree, Pennsylvania: Netting over trout streams and beaver ponds amid the rolling farmlands of central Pennsylvania, we will examine up to eight species of bats as we visit both summer and winter habitats.



Bat Conservation and Management Workshops

Arizona: May 7-12, May 13-18 California: July 6-11 Pennsylvania: August 17-22

These workshops offer hands-on experience using mist nets, harp traps, radiotracking gear and bat detectors, along with lectures, discussions and field trips. Lectures cover habitat assessment, conservation challenges, management, conflict resolution and much more. Field training includes capture techniques, safe and humane bat-handling and species identification, all taught by expert instructors. The \$1,595 course fee covers course materials, food, lodging, and transportation in the field.

Advanced Capture Techniques Workshops

Arizona: May 19-23 Pennsylvania: August 23-27

Explore more advanced monitoring and capture techniques – both contact and noncontact –for conducting bat inventories and survey programs. Intended for graduates of previous BCI field courses, the workshop is designed for wildlife biologists, researchers, and consultants who may implement their own bat-monitoring programs. We will combine physical capture techniques with passive bat-detector monitoring, video-monitoring, active acoustic monitoring, mobile acoustic transect inventory plans with the goal of accurately sampling bat diversity. The fee of \$1,595 covers course materials, food, lodging and transportation in the field.



Acoustic Monitoring Workshop

California: July 12-17

Designed for biologists, consultants and researchers, Bat Conservation International's Acoustic Monitoring Workshop provides direct experience with cutting-edge technologies. You'll work directly with AnaBat/AnaLook and SonoBat software developers Chris Corben and Joe Szewczak to learn techniques for collecting, recording and analyzing bat calls in the field. This session covers heterodyne, frequency-division, time-expansion and direct-recording techniques, and explains protocols for designing an acoustic-inventory project. The \$1,795 course fee covers course materials, lodging, food and transportation in the field.



For information and registration, visit www.batcon.org/workshops or contact Dianne Odegard at (512) 327-9721 or workshops@batcon.org

Birds of a Feather Flock Together: The Jailbirds of Elmwood Prison

By EMC Planning Group Senior Biologist Bill Goggin

You can hear the sound as you approach the courtyard of the Elmwood Correctional Facility, although it's not exactly clear what's causing all the commotion. It starts as a low, background chattering and builds to a near cacophony close to the mess hall. Beyond these seemingly discordant sounds, everything in the scene appears to be in order: the prison's inmates going about their daily routine dressed in white- and black-striped jumpsuits, sweeping, lifting weights or casually talking in groups while the watchful guards keep a dutiful eye out for anything out of the ordinary. All in all it's just another ordinary day at the Elmwood Correctional Facility. But what is causing all this noise you may ask yourself? Finally, out of ideas, you glance heavenward and that's when it hits you (no, not that): there are birds in the trees above your head; many birds...and they are large birds. Are you puzzled? Don't be, because this is the story of the jailbirds of Elmwood Prison.

The Elmwood Correctional Facility is a low-security Santa Clara County prison located west of Interstate 880 and north of Great American Parkway, in Milpitas, California. In order to solve an on-going maintenance problem that had become a health liability, the prison staff proposed to construct a paved path between to security fences so that the facility's guards could better patrol this area (several of the guards had suffered turned ankles and knees because of the uneven and pot-holed ground surface). Because the project had a potential to impact sensitive

biological resources, Santa Clara County staff contracted with EMC Planning Group to assist the County with complying with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other state and federal environmental laws established to protect sensitive animals and their habitats, including what is the subject of this short article, an established egret and heron rookery.

During the performance of an earlier biological pre-construction survey performed by EMC Planning Group in July 2010, an active *rookery* (a colonial breeding bird site) was observed within the south-central portion of the prison facility's main courtyard. The rookery is located within a cluster of densely foliated trees, and contained approximately 50-60 nests from three species of birds: great egret (*Ardea alba*), snowy egret (*Egretta thula*), and black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*). The ground surface beneath these trees showed evidence of long-term site use by rookery's birds, as was demonstrated by an accumulation of whitewash, feathers and egg shell fragments.

Especially unique in an urban area, the Elmwood rookery site is believed to be the only egret and heron rookery in the southern San Francisco Bay located within an entirely fenced, anthropogenic setting and may be the only one of its kind in northern California. Colonial breeding sites are especially important when located within urbanized environments, as development and land conversion often degrades or removes available rookery habitat, and as a result, opportunities

for colonial nesting species in urban areas are limited. These sites are also significant because they often support a sizeable segment of the local population, and because their proximity to foraging areas can reduce travel distances, they may potentially reduce predator-prey (i.e., mortality) interactions.

Because construction was planned during the most sensitive period of the birds natural life history cycle, the project's construction activities had a potential to cause detrimental impacts (i.e., elevated levels of noise, dust and fumes), possibly affecting the birds nesting and juvenile rearing, which could have led to fines and negative press for the County. Therefore, in order to protect this important resource, in spring 2011, the County retained EMC Planning Group to monitor the rookery during the project's construction whenever heavy equipment operation would be occurring within 500 feet of the rookery.

It is important to note that none of bird species living at the Elmwood rookery (great egret, snowy egret and night heron) are specifically listed as threatened or endangered by the state or federal Endangered Species Acts; however, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) considers colonial breeding sites to be sensitive resource areas that are afforded protection under CDFG Code during the breeding bird season, as they can be sensitive to human intrusion and disturbance. In addition to state regulations, the protection of egrets and herons are covered under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Once nests

Jailbirds, cont'd from page 26

have been constructed and eggs are present, the rookery site becomes a protected resource area and cannot be disturbed. Reproduction for the rookeries species generally occurs from early April through July, with the juvenile rearing period extending into mid-September.

Behavioral monitoring of the egret and heron rookery consisted of a qualified EMC Planning Group biologist stationed inside the facility's perimeter fence, in a direct line of site approximately 275 feet from the rookery during construction activities or during operation of heavy

equipment within 500 feet of the rookery. During construction, the monitoring biologist observed egret and heron behavior using hand held binoculars and a high magnification field spotting scope for signs of stress and/or agitation. Notes on behavioral interactions (i.e., preening/grooming, feeding, sibling competition, etc.) and daily counts on numbers of individuals and juveniles present were recorded.

Construction commenced on April 27 and an EMC Planning Group biologist conducted worker environmental awareness training concerning the presence

of the rookery and the importance of protecting the rookery. During the project's implementation, no disturbance of the rookery was noted and the rookeries behavior was essentially unchanged by project activities. Approximately 38 adult and 23 juvenile egrets and herons were observed throughout the construction period.

EMC Planning Group wishes to thank the County of Santa Clara, the project manager, Ms. Alicia Flynn for her support on the project, and the entire Elmwood facility staff's cooperation during the monitoring activities.

CalWeed Mapper - New website for Invasive Plant Spread and Planning Regional Management Strategies

CalWeedMapper is a new website for mapping invasive plant spread and planning regional management strategies (calweedmapper.calflora.org). Users generate a report for their region that synthesizes information into three types of strategic opportunities: surveillance, eradication and containment. Land managers can use these reports to prioritize their invasive plant management, to coordinate at the landscape level (county or larger) and to justify funding requests. For some species, CalWeedMapper also provides maps of suitable range that show where a plant might be able to grow in the future. The system was developed by the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) and is designed to stay current by allowing users to edit data.

The Calweedmapper website displays data on all 200 invasive plant species from Cal-IPC's statewide Inventory. These data combine two sources: interviews with invasive plant experts and occurrence information from Calflora and the Consortia of California Herbaria (CCH). The maps show abundance, spread and management status for each species, displayed by USGS quadrangle.

Users can generate reports in pdf format based on a selected region or species. The Regional Management Opportunity Report provides a summary table of information for all plants that present opportunities for management in the selected region. The Regional Species Report provides a map that illustrates the plant's spatial distribution in the region. These reports are designed to help land managers prioritize and fund their work.

This dynamic tool allows users to comment on and update abundance, spread and management information. Also, any new occurrence data submitted to either Calflora or CCH will update the data in CalWeedMapper. As a result, the maps will show current information.

To show where a given plant is most likely to spread, CalWeedMapper also displays suitable range based on climate. Computer models were used to generate suitable range for some plant species based on where they currently grow. The maps show the areas that contain suitable range based on climate conditions in 2010 and 2050. These maps can help land managers with climate adaptation planning and preparing for the movement of new invasive plants into their region.



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