



Louisiana Natural Resources News

Newsletter of the Louisiana Association of Professional Biologists
January, 2010

CONTENTS	Page
Announcements.....	1
Governor's Conservation Awards Nominations Sought	2
Black Mangrove in Coastal LA – <i>T. Michot, R. Day, C. Wells</i>	4
NRCS Wildlife Priorities Meeting – <i>J. Pitre, K Lemoine</i>	6
Take Action to Influence Policy – <i>TWS</i>	7
LWF 2009 Accomplishments – <i>J. Huner</i>	8
TWS Report	10
USFWS Southeast Student Job Announcement.....	17

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Announcements

LWF 2010 Convention/LAPB Spring Meeting

The 2010 LWF Annual Convention will be held on Feb. 26 – February 28, 2010 at the Cypress Bend Resort on Toledo Bend. The LAPB annual spring business meeting, held in conjunction with the convention, will be on Saturday Feb. 27 at 1:30 p.m. For more information see the following websites: www.lawildlifefed.org and www.cypressbend.com

LAPB Call for Resolutions

Last year LAPB passed four resolutions that were then submitted to the Louisiana Wildlife Federation. These four resolutions: 1) Assessment of Coastal Restoration Projects that Incorporate Organism Ingress/Egress Features, 2) Study and Monitoring of Borrow Areas in Coastal Restoration Program, 3) Protecting Wooded Cheniers, Barrier Headlands and Ridges in Louisiana's Coastal Zone and 4) Neighborhood Fishing Program. All four were passed by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation.

At our fall symposium it was announced that resolutions were needed to be proposed, and these would then be sent electronically to LAPB members for comments. Please send any proposed resolutions to Marty Floyd at Progne99@aol.com. If you need a copy of resolution format please contact Marty.

Natural Heritage Program Changes

News from the Natural Heritage Program includes some changes in personnel. Amity Bass has been hired as the LNHP Ecologist, replacing Patti Faulkner, who relocated to West Virginia. Additionally, Judy Jones has been hired as a 3-yr job appointment as Coordinator of our Natural Areas Registry Program. Judy has been serving in that capacity for over 5 years, but as a contracted position on a year-to-year basis. Other newsworthy staff issues include Michael Seymour, LNHP Ornithologist, was prominently featured on the LPB Documentary *A Summer of Birds, which debuted December 2, 2009*. The film, based on Danny Heitman's book with the same name, documents the story of John James Audubon's time in Louisiana.

Gulf Coastal Plain Office Relocation

The Gulf Coastal Plain (East) region office for the LDWF is moving from Baton Rouge to Hammond this month and should be fully operational by January. The new office is centrally located within the region and will hopefully be more accessible to the public.

Nominations Sought For Top Conservation Awards

The Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) is now accepting nominations for the 46th Governor's State Conservation Achievement Awards. The program recognizes those persons and organizations who make outstanding contributions to the natural resource welfare and environmental quality of the community, parish and state. There are eight award categories for which nominations can be made. They are: professional; volunteer; business; educator; youth; elected official; communications and organization.

The awards themselves, handsome statuettes of majestic wild animals, are unique to the program and highly coveted by all who receive them. According to Joe L. Herring, awards program co-chair, "For over 40 years the federation's annual conservation awards program has recognized those individuals, organizations and businesses who have gone 'above and beyond' in their efforts to conserve fish and wildlife resources, to enhance opportunities for all of our

citizens to enjoy the outdoors, to improve the quality of the environment, and to educate and advocate on behalf of our natural resources here in Louisiana. Thanks to the participation of hundreds of Louisiana citizens who have, over the years, encouraged good conservation work by submitting nominations to the program, these awards are widely acclaimed as the most prestigious recognitions of conservation accomplishment that are presented annually in our state." Herring noted that, in keeping with tradition, Governor Jindal has endorsed the program. He encouraged the public to make nominations.

Nominations are now open and will be accepted until February 2, 2010. The awards will be presented on February 27 at a special banquet held in conjunction with the 71st annual convention of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation at Cypress Bend Resort on Toledo Bend Reservoir near Many, Louisiana. More details of the program, including rules, descriptions of award categories, a nomination form and tips on submitting a nomination are posted on the LWF website (www.lawildlifefed.org) along with a "model" nomination prospective participants can consult.

Those awarded for accomplishments in 2009 were:

Leonard "Len" Bahr of Baton Rouge, recently retired after many years with the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities where he helped to coordinate and lead the state's coastal restoration efforts, for creating LACOSTPOST.com, a weblog about all things coastal that serves as a new conscience for Louisiana's coastal protection & restoration endeavors;

John Pitre of Alexandria, State Wildlife Biologist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service for developing and delivering habitat conservation strategies through coordination with and outreach to other agencies and private landowners throughout the state;

R. King Milling of New Orleans, Chairman of the Board of the America's WETLAND Foundation and Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Coastal Protection & Restoration for effectively impressing the urgency of Louisiana's coastal land loss on diverse and influential audiences and for leading efforts to rally those constituencies in support of effective restoration and protection strategies;

The **Lafayette 4-H Junior Leader Club** for outreach and assistance to 4-Hers and their families in Cameron Parish after the hurricanes and continuing with hands-on coastal restoration activities there;

The **Toledo Bend Lake Association** for uniting the community in support of protecting, conserving and enhancing Toledo Bend Lake with a variety of projects ranging from Florida bass stocking and improving fishing habitat, access and opportunities to teaching all the 5th graders in the Parish how to fish.

(Note: Nominations were not made in every category, therefore only 5 of the possible nine awards were presented.)

The Louisiana Wildlife Federation is a statewide conservation education and advocacy organization with over 10,000 members and 25 affiliate groups. Established in 1940, it is affiliated with the National Wildlife Federation and represents a broad constituency of conservationists including hunters, fishers, campers, birders, boaters, and other outdoor enthusiasts.

Increase in Black Mangrove Abundance in Coastal Louisiana

Thomas C. Michot, Richard H. Day, and Christopher J. Wells

U.S. Geological Survey, National Wetlands Research Center, Lafayette, LA 70506

Black mangrove (*Avicennia germinans*), a subtropical species, has historically occurred in saline marsh habitat along the Louisiana coast, but their distribution has always been sparse and they seldom achieved heights of greater than 1 m. The distribution of black mangrove in Louisiana has been largely limited by freezing temperatures. Weather records show a decrease in freeze frequency and duration in the coastal zone of Louisiana. At the same time, we and others have noted an apparent, but as of yet undocumented and unquantified, increase in mangrove distribution and abundance in the state. The last hard freeze in coastal Louisiana was in 1989, so mangroves have had 20 years to grow and spread. We conducted aerial surveys along fixed transects from 2000 to 2002 and again in 2009 to determine if mangroves are indeed more numerous along the coast. For each flight we surveyed about 5,000 patches of landscape, each

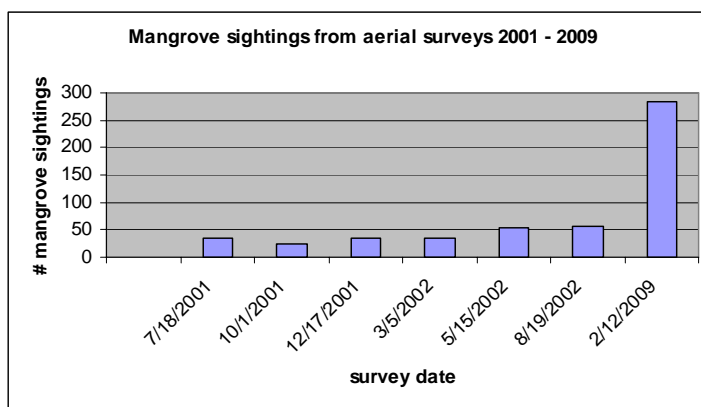


Figure 1. Number of observations of 100-m diameter patches of landscape along fixed marsh transects in coastal Louisiana that were populated with mangroves during marsh dieback surveys, 2001 to 2009 (total n = ca. 5,000 per survey).

approximately 100 m in diameter, and classified them as to vegetation characteristics. We found that the number of such patches that were vegetated with *Avicennia* more than doubled from October 2001 (22 patches) to August 2002 (55 patches – Figure 1). But more importantly we found about 275 mangrove patches along the same transects in 2009, a 5-fold increase in abundance over that 6.5 year period.

In 2009, in addition to the fixed transects, we conducted an aerial cruise census from a fixed-wing aircraft of the entire coastal area of Louisiana to document and map the total distribution of mangroves in Louisiana. Observations were grouped into three patch sizes, each with a height modifier (>1m or <1m), for a total of 6 categories. We found 3738 patches of mangroves in coastal Louisiana (Figure 2). Almost all patches were located in southeast Louisiana, in the Deltaic Plain, except that two small patches were found in the Chenier Plain at Marsh Island in Iberia Parish (one tree) and on Monkey Island in Cameron Parish (3 trees). Mangroves were absent from the currently active Mississippi River Delta and north of 30 degrees N latitude. Taller, denser patches, representing older colonies, were more abundant close to the coast while short, sparse patches

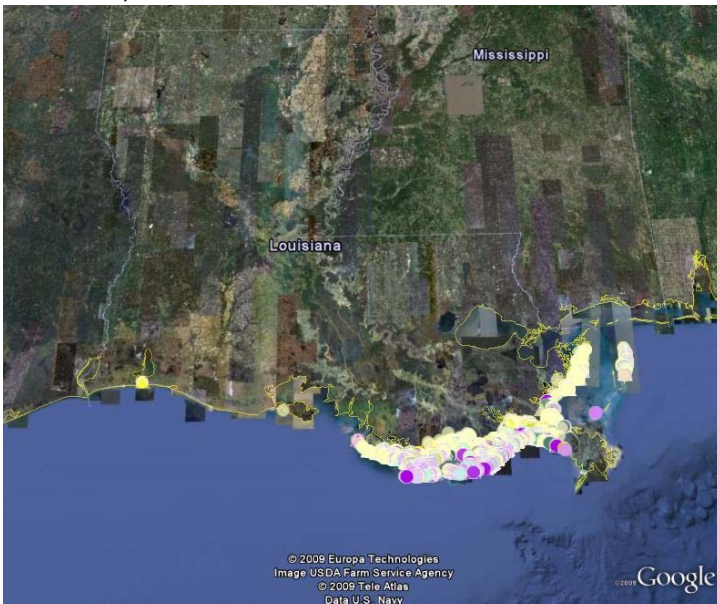


Figure 2. Map showing distribution of mangrove patches (each patch maximum 100 m in diameter) in coastal Louisiana, based on a complete count via aerial cruise survey in January – April 2009 that covered the entire coastal salt marsh zone. Symbol color represents patch density class: yellow = sparse, green = medium, and purple = dense; darker shades = tall trees present; triangle = left side of aircraft, circle = right side.

(new colonies) were concentrated more inland. We estimated a range of values for area covered by mangroves in each patch based on the size of the viewing window as observed from the aircraft. Based on these calculations, we estimated that, in 2009, black mangrove covered from 300 to 1200 ha, or up to 0.5%, of the saline marsh zone of coastal Louisiana.

(submitted to Louisiana Association of Professional Biologists Newsletter, January 2010)

NRCS Hosts Wildlife Priorities Meeting

John Pitre and Kristen Lemoine, NRCS

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Louisiana hosted an open forum on November 10, 2009, to discuss wildlife priorities for the state. The forum was held at the LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Outdoor Education Center in Woodworth, Louisiana. NRCS was interested in hosting this forum because wildlife resource concerns on private lands often can be significantly

addressed (at a landscape scale) through the use of Farm Bill conservation programs; e.g. Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), etc. A prime example of past successes with federal and state agency, non-governmental organization, and private landowner collaboration is the benefits provided to the federally threatened Louisiana black bear through WRP and other conservation programs.



To ensure that the direction of programs and technical assistance is addressing priorities aligned with national and state initiatives, needs, and plans, Kevin Norton, NRCS State Conservationist and John Pitre, NRCS Wildlife Biologist, facilitated insight and recommendations from 33 participants. The participants represented several state, federal, and non-governmental wildlife organizations including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, LA Wildlife Federation, LA Cooperative Extension Service, LA Association of Professional Biologists, Black Bear



Kevin Norton (NRCS State Conservationist) addresses participants.

Conservation Coalition, Gulf Coast Joint Venture, Ducks Unlimited, and the National Wild Turkey Federation. The meeting was held in an open forum style encouraging participants to discuss any and all options. Key issues identified

by the participants included: (a) concerns from invasion and competition of exotic species, especially feral hogs, cogongrass, and Chinese tallow trees, (b) how to address essential needs of species of conservation concern (e.g. Louisiana black bear, mottled duck, secretive marsh birds such as the king rail, migratory shorebirds and land birds), (c) identifying gaps in habitats, addressing gaps with corridors, and providing shallow water habitats (e.g. mud flats, moist soil, etc.) throughout the year in agricultural settings, (d) the promotion and use of prescribed fire to maintain fire-evolved habitats, (e) and focusing on a coordinated landscape level scale approach such as by partnering on Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.

Several participants also stressed the need for key coordination between NRCS Field Office personnel and LDWF private land counterparts in order to be successful in addressing wildlife priorities. These issues will be further discussed with the LA Technical Advisory Committee and considered in NRCS landscape planning of wildlife resource concerns.

Take Action to Influence Wildlife Policy!

Kazantseva and Angela Whitney, TWS

Comprehensive science-based legislation is critical to safeguarding our nation's wildlife and habitats. TWS' Government Affairs Program works on behalf of its members to give a voice to the views of wildlife professionals in the legislative and policy processes. But we can't do it without you!

To ensure a bright future for wildlife, it is key that management and conservation policy and legislation is based on science generated by wildlife professionals, such as members of The Wildlife Society! We have three great tools to help you get involved in wildlife policy, either at the federal or local level:

1) Check out the [Government Affairs Toolkit](#) available on TWS' website. It will give you an overview of the Government Affairs program, how you can write a letter to Congress, and other useful policy information.

2) See the more recent edition of [The Wildlifer](#), TWS' monthly e-newsletter, to 'Take Action' on issues ranging from climate legislation to migratory bird conservation.

3) Check your inbox for [Wildlife Policy News](#), which comes out every other month, to stay up-to-date on the latest policy initiatives.

We appreciate all of your efforts. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Laura Bies, Director of Government Affairs, at laura@wildlife.org.

Louisiana Wildlife Federation, 2009 Accomplishments

Jay Huner

In 2009, the Louisiana Wildlife Federation was active in support of wildlife, fisheries and environmental conservation in the state. Highlights follow:

1. Staunch support of the conservation rule-making process of the 7-member Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, and defense from manipulation by the Legislature.
2. Re-establishment of public access to Elmer's Island, renowned surf-fishing and birding paradise across Caminada Pass from Grand Isle, and development of a larger vision of a Louisiana State Seashore between Caminada and Belle Passes on the central Louisiana coast.
3. Legislative approval for restoring the endangered Whooping Crane to the marshes of southwest Louisiana, which was once home to both non-migratory and migratory flocks of this spectacular species. Research to determine the feasibility of this project is underway.
4. Protection of hunting, fishing and other conservation user fees in the Conservation Fund from raids and allocations to non-related purposes.
5. Advanced the conceptual framework for the Coastal Forest Conservation Initiative to conserve coastal wetland forests that provide important buffers against wind and storm surge from the Gulf and are also strategically important to birds and wildlife.
6. Continued efforts to maintain and restore the public's right to use public waterways for outdoor activities like fishing, paddling, birding, and boating.
7. Establishment of the Louisiana Prescribed Fire Council to promote sage use of controlled fire to maintain and enhance ecosystem productivity and wildlife habitat benefiting a wide range of native and endangered species such as the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and the threatened Gopher Tortoise.
8. Promotion of conservation law compliance efforts of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division through posting the status of certain benchmark violations of conservation laws on the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries website.

According to Louisiana Wildlife Federation President Barney Callahan, the Federation recognizes that the future of conservation depends on active, involved resource users whether that use be fishing, hunting, birding, boating, or hiking. Connecting people, especially youngsters, to nature is the next great conservation challenge and it must be met; not only to secure healthy habitat and

abundant resources, but to promote healthy minds and bodies for a generation side-tracked by video monitors and the ease of the indoors. The Federation is gearing up to address this threat to our wildlife heritage and will be working with state and national leaders to bring the great outdoors back into the lives of today's kids.

The Louisiana Association of Professional Biologists is an affiliate member of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation and so, too, are the association's members. However, the costs of sustaining the Federation continue to rise and association members with the resources to do so are encouraged to send contributions to the Federation and/or join the Federation as Members at Large. Do not hesitate to refer your friends and acquaintances to join the Federation as Members at Large.

[Louisiana Wildlife Federation, P. O. Box 65239 Audubon Station, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806]



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO'S MONTHLY REPORT
TO COUNCIL AND CHAPTER AND SECTION OFFICERS
November 2009**

**Michael Hutchins, Ph.D.
Executive Director/CEO**

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE (Hutchins, Pelkey, Walker)

Announcement for Assistant Director of Government Affairs Position Distributed: An announcement has been distributed describing the new Assistant Director of Government Affairs and Partnerships position being offered by TWS. Surveys have consistently identified TWS's policy work as being a high priority membership service by TWS members, and it was also identified as a top priority during the recent Council Retreat on the TWS Strategic Plan.

Book Series Contract Signed: TWS and Johns Hopkins University Press (JHUP) have signed a Council-approved contract formalizing the creation of a new book series on wildlife conservation and management. The edited volumes will cover a wide range of relevant topics. Potential volume editors should contact series editor, Dr. Paul Krausman, Boone and Crockett Chair, Department of Wildlife Biology, by mail at College of Forestry and Conservation, 32 Campus Drive, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812, by phone at (406) 243.6011, or by e-mail at paul.krausman@umontana.edu to discuss possible projects. As you may know, TWS and JHUP had already entered into an agreement to publish the next edition of *Techniques for Wildlife Investigation and Management* (Nova Silvey, editor) and *Human Dimensions of Wildlife Management in North America* (D. Decker et al. editors). TWS used to publish and market such volumes independently with mixed success. However, with JHUP as our publishing partner, we expect to greatly improve marketing, sales, and use of these updated and improved volumes, both in North America and worldwide. JHUP is one of the oldest, largest, and most respected university presses in the world.

Meeting with the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Executive Director/CEO Michael Hutchins and Government Affairs and Partnerships Director Laura Bies met with new U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Sam Hamilton and Deputy Director Dan Ashe at the Main Interior Offices in Washington, DC on November 30, 2009. We discussed TWS' policy priorities, including restrictions on federal employee leadership in professional/scientific societies, and implications of the relatively new Memorandum of Agreement signed between TWS and USFWS in 2006.

APLGU Academic Programs Section Collaborator's Meeting: Executive Director/CEO Michael Hutchins attended the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities' Academic Programs Section Collaborator's Meeting at APLGU's administrative offices in Washington, DC on November 17, 2009. He met with several academic deans and administrators from public land grant universities with agricultural and natural resource programs, and with representatives of other professional/scientific societies, and government agencies. One of the items discussed was the role of professional and scientific societies and federal agencies in preparing the next generation of professionals. Hutchins was able to report on many of TWS' activities, including the recent survey by TWS' Ad Hoc Committee on Collegiate Wildlife Programs, as well as summarize many of our other activities, such as Leadership Institute, our new Career Center and Fair, and many others. There is a movement afoot through APLGU's Section on Agriculture and Natural Resources to begin to build stronger ties between academia, professional/scientific societies, and government agencies. A follow-up meeting is planned for June 21-22 at Penn State University. TWS Council identified assisting with the development of the next generation of wildlife professionals as one of its three highest priorities during its recent strategic planning retreat in Chicago, IL.

Meeting with University of Maryland CONS Program: Executive Director/CEO Hutchins met with Drs. Karen Lips and David Innouye from the University of Maryland's Graduate Program in Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development at the College Park Campus on October 30, 2009. The CONS program, which attracts students with some of the highest GPAs and GRE scores on campus, conducts a problem solving class every semester. Students work with local NGOs and federal agencies to research and study cutting edge issues in wildlife management and conservation. Lips, Innouye and Hutchins discussed how TWS and the CONS program and UMD academic staff could better collaborate on projects of mutual interest. Dr. Hutchins has been an adjunct associate professor with this program since 1994.

Wildlife Phenology Program: During November 2009, TWS Wildlife Phenology Program Coordinator, Abraham Miller-Rushing, began working with the staff of the USA National Phenology Network (USA-NPN) to integrate the wildlife phenology monitoring material that he and others had developed over the past year into the USA-NPN website. When the integration is finished, users will be able to visit the website to find information about focal species and monitoring protocols. The website will also allow people to submit their observations online, download data from around the country, and create maps and other summaries of the data. The integration of the wildlife program into the USA-NPN website is expected to be complete in March 2010.

Miller-Rushing is also working with NatureServe to develop protocols for monitoring the phenology of 100 additional animal species—this is in addition to the 60 species for which protocols are already prepared.

Miller-Rushing began working with the USFWS to establish a strategy for a partnership between USFWS and USA-NPN. The strategy will involve both a national approach and

local and regional pilots that can be replicated across the country. For example, Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska is expected monitor plant and animal phenology this coming summer, testing methods for both professionals and volunteers. The results of the pilot will contribute to our understanding of how species at Tetlin are responding to climate change, and will provide an example for methods that could be applied to refuges elsewhere.

Amphibian Crisis Workshop: Executive Director/CEO Hutchins and Director of Government Affairs Bies, attended a University of Maryland-organized seminar on “the role of trade in the amphibian crisis” hosted by Defenders of Wildlife in Washington, DC on November 19, 2009. They heard from many experts on current and emerging issues related to the conservation of amphibians worldwide. Nearly one-third of the world’s amphibian species are currently classified as threatened or endangered with extinction. Former Director of the USFWS, and now Executive Vice President of Defenders of Wildlife, Jamie Clark, provided the introduction. Featured speakers included Robin Moore (Amphibian Conservation Director, Conservation International), Karen Lips (University of Maryland expert on chytrid fungus), Priya Nanjappa (AFWA coordinator of PARC, Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation), Brian Gratwick (Smithsonian National Zoo, an expert on amphibian trade), and Peter Daszak (Executive Director Wildlife Trust and expert on amphibian disease). Diseases, such as chytrid fungus and rana virus are a huge concern, along with the global trade in amphibians (for pets and food), which appears to be playing a major role in spreading these often fatal diseases, which are taking a huge toll on free-ranging amphibian populations worldwide.

Annual Performance Reviews and Work Plan Development: TWS staff is currently engaged in its year-end performance reviews and 2010 work plan development. Work plans list both critical routine tasks and special projects, and are negotiated between supervisor and employee. These plans are guided by the *TWS Strategic Plan, 2008-2013*. In addition, TWS Council, based on the results of its 2009 planning retreat also directed staff to pay particular attention to three high priority objectives from the Strategic Plan: (1) To demonstrate progressively increasing influence on wildlife management and conservation policy at regional, national and international levels consistent with priorities identified by Council; (2) To help build and nurture the next generation of leaders in the wildlife profession by providing a wide range of professional development opportunities; and (3) To fully serve the informational needs of TWS members and help them collaborate in defining and solving their most pressing wildlife management and conservation challenges.

COMMUNICATIONS (Moore)

The Wildlife Professional: Throughout November Communications Director Lisa Moore, Production Editor/Science Writer Divya Abhat, and Development Editor/Science Writer Katie Unger received drafts of the winter issue from the designer and spent the month reviewing the drafts, redesigning layouts, incorporating reviewers’ comments, proofreading, making corrections, changing photographs, writing captions, compiling web links and online content, and generally polishing the magazine to send to the printer.

We met our deadline (barely), sending all pages on November 23. The magazines will mail December 10. The winter issue is our biggest yet, running 80 pages, and featuring a special package of articles about education, tied to the release of a report on the status of university wildlife programs from TWS' ad hoc Committee on Collegiate Wildlife Programs. This issue also marks the debut of our new department, Field Notes, with practical tips for wildlife biologists.

Special Supplement on the North American Model: After consulting with Editorial Advisory Board Chair, Selma Glasscock and TWS President Elect Tom Ryder, Moore wrote a one-page set of guidelines for authors who will write for the special supplement, explaining style, word count, and other elements of TWP articles. The supplement will be published in the fall of 2010. Glasscock and Ryder are now working with John Organ, Michael Hutchins and others to solicit authors for articles and raise funds to pay for the project, which is estimated to cost approximately \$30,000.

Internship: The Communications staff posted an ad for an Editorial Intern, whom we hope to hire as soon as possible to assist with online content and reporting, writing, and clerical tasks for TWP. We posted the ad on the TWS online Career Center, with the Society for Environmental Journalists, and with several journalism schools including the University of Missouri and American University. We've received more than a dozen resumes to date, and will begin interviewing candidates later in November.

Meetings: Moore requested a meeting to discuss how to improve and expand TWS' online content in order to draw more traffic to the site and provide more information to members in an aesthetically pleasing and easy-to-navigate format. Attending were Michael Hutchins, Darryl Walter, Yanin Walker, Ruxi Giura, Michael Levin, Divya Abhat, and Katie Unger. All presented innovative ideas, many of which we will implement over time as Giura completes a redesign of the website.

Moore, Abhat, and Unger met to develop a proposal for a half-day workshop about "How to Write for TWP," which they hope to present at the Annual Conference in Snowbird, Utah. The goal is to demystify the process of writing science-based material in a 'popular' style, to generate interest in the magazine, and to entice more TWS members to contribute articles about their work.

Online and IT Services: As always, Web Services Program Manager Ruxi Giura and IT and Database Services Program Manager Michael Levin worked tirelessly to troubleshoot computer, website, and technology issues for TWS staff and members, and to provide enormous support and assistance to the Director of Membership Marketing and Conferences, Darryl Walter. Among other tasks, Levin continued to configure the new server, updated the certification database in iMIS, altered the online membership center to enable tracking new members for various campaigns, and ran membership renewals. Giura built and sent multiple email campaigns on such issues as renewals, student and gift memberships, the CFC campaign, the Career Center, and a call for papers for the 2010 Annual Conference in Utah. She installed a free test conference submission system,

which we plan to use for future TWS Conferences. In addition, Giura installed Joomla 1.5 on her computer and began the arduous process of migrating current website content and subunit extensions to the new platform. This will be a long process, but will result in far better service for members.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AND PARTNERSHIPS (Bies)

Policy Internship: A new intern for January to June 2010 has been hired. Grant Sizemore, who is just completing his Master's in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation at the University of Florida, will be starting in early January. Bies is also currently working on filling the unpaid intern position.

Wildlife Policy News: The latest *Wildlife Policy News* will be available on the Government Affairs Section on the TWS Website December 1st. The current issue includes articles on the designation of critical habitat for the endangered polar bear, a BLM report on the environmental threat of non-native constrictor snakes, and a climate adaptation bill introduced in the Senate.

TWS Comments on USFWS Climate Change Plan: TWS submitted comments on the Department of Interior's Strategic Plan Framework and the Fish and Wildlife Service's Climate Plan this month, stressing the role of science in wildlife management and policy decisions in both letters.

White House Energy Economy Forum: On November 2, 2009, Director of Government Affairs, Laura Bies attended the White House Energy Economy Forum, an opportunity for administration officials and partners to discuss priorities for clean energy development.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONFERENCES (Walter)

Membership: Director of Membership Marketing and Conferences Darryl Walter reports that membership as of November 23, 2009 is 8,767. This is a 13.9% increase (1,069 members) over November 2008 end of the month. Student membership is up 22.7% (355 members) and regular membership is up 10.6% (542 members). We will finish the year with an increase of more than 1,000 members. Renewals were mailed in the middle of the month to the vast majority of members who have a December 31 expire date. E-mails promoting a student gift membership were sent to Student Advisors the week of November 16. We also sent out gift e-mails to our members the week of November 16 and membership acquisition e-mails to non-members and former members.

2009 Annual Conference: Walter received from the Monterey Arrangement Committee Co-Chairs conference evaluations. Many of the comments and recommendations received will be reflected with changes in the *TWS Annual Conference Handbook* update.

2010 Annual Conference: Walter and Kerrell Farmelant, TWS Meeting Consultant, had conference call with the Arrangement Committee Co-Chairs on November 12. Farmelant completed a first draft of the conference schedule, which includes meeting room assignments. Walter is finishing an update to the *TWS Annual Conference Handbook*. An e-mail promoting the Call for Proposals for Workshops, Symposia, Panel Discussions, Breakfast Roundtables, and Special Poster Sessions is being sent out November 24. A similar notice was included in November issue of *The Wildlifer* that was e-mailed on November 20.

2012 Annual Conference: Walter is negotiating contracts with the Oregon Convention Center and Portland hotels for the 2012 Annual Conference. The contracts are likely to be signed in the next three weeks.

2013 Annual Conference: Walter is negotiating contracts with the Wisconsin Center District and Milwaukee hotels for the 2013 Annual Conference. The contracts are likely to be signed in the next three weeks.

Other Conferences: Walter will represent TWS at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in December being held in Springfield, IL. Walter negotiated exhibit booth swaps with the Wild Sheep Foundation and the Society for Range Management.

Wildlife Careers Online: An e-mail was sent November 16 promoting Wildlife Careers Online, our new-updated online career board.

Identity Building: Administrative Assistant Danielle Prete compiled edits for the *TWS Brand Identity Guide*. Walter will review these edits before sending the guide out one more time to Council for comments.

Promotions: Walter is pleased to announce the promotion of Shannon Pederson to the position of Program Manager, Subunits and Certification.

Subunits: Program Manager of Subunits and Certification Shannon Pederson and Director of Government Affairs and Partnerships Laura Bies participated in a Canadian Section teleconference call on November 20, 2009. Pederson approved bylaws changes for the Nebraska Chapter. Pederson has been working closely with Western State College of Colorado and University of Rio Grande to start new TWS student chapters and submitted their application packages respectively to the Central Mountains and Plains and North Central Sections for approval.

Pederson, Hutchins, Walter, and TWS Counsel Bob Weil created a waiver form to protect TWS, TWS subunits, and TWS subunit officers from liability due to any accidents that occur during an event hosted by a subunit. The waiver form was placed on the officers' website and will be encouraged to be used during next spring's student conclaves. Student conclaves are being announced via TWS' website, *The Wildlifer*, and *The Wildlife Professional*.

Pederson again announced new benefits to subunit officers (i.e., creation of an officers' website with all their annual forms and deadlines, access to their membership rosters through the new online membership center, and ability to recruit new members year-round now that membership renewals occur on the anniversary date, not annually). Pederson submitted the new working group guidelines draft to working group officers for their comments with plans to submit the final draft to Council for vote during their 2010 Midyear Meeting in Milwaukee, WI.

Pederson submitted next year's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) application and advertised this year's CFC program via *The Wildlifer* and an email blast to TWS members who selected their employer as federal government. The CFC is a campaign to raise funds through federal government employee workplace giving. Each fall, federal government employees can chose to donate to approved non-profit organizations.

Certification: Pederson sent nine Certified Wildlife Biologist (CWB) and nine Associate Wildlife Biologist (AWB) applications to the Certification Review Board (CRB) for their review. Pederson started processing a CWB appeal to send to the CRB and Board of Inquiry.

To advertise the bylaws change approved this summer by TWS members, Pederson and other staff created an ad for *The Wildlife Professional* and subunits' newsletters. Pederson is working with Hutchins, Walter, and Executive Committee to finalize the wording of the bylaws change announcement letter to member and nonmember AWBs and CWBs, new certificates, and new certificate approval letters. The bylaws change announcement letter is scheduled to be mailed out the week of November 30, 2009.



U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE
Southeast Region
STUDENT JOBS!



St. Catherine Creek NWR and Bayou Cocodrie NWR are accepting applications for the 2010 Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP).

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service mission is the protection, conservation and enhancement of fish, wildlife, and their habitats. Our [Student Temporary Employment Program \(STEP\)](#) introduces talented students to the advantages and challenges of working for the Service. It provides opportunities for students to gain valuable work experience that supports the occupational fields of Wildlife Refuge Management, Wildlife Biology, Forestry, Environmental Education and Natural Resources (*Outdoor Recreation*).

Funding is available for up to **3 positions** at St. Catherine Creek and Bayou Cocodrie NWRs to assist with the survey and management of forested and early successional wetlands. The interests and strengths of successful applicants will dictate exact duties. At least one position will focus on bottomland forest management and planning. Applicants should be familiar with bottomland hardwood tree and plant identification and be familiar with forest management techniques and terminology. At least one position will focus on surveying birds and assisting with wetlands management for birds. Applicants should have a strong interest in birds, capable of identifying forest breeding birds by call and wading and shore birds by sight and an interest and knowledge of wetland plant ID, ecology, and management.

The area of the refuges is diverse and rich in historical, cultural, and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Pay Scale: Entry level at GS-1 to GS-3 (approximately \$9.57/hour - \$ 11.74/hour). Salary will vary depending on the location of the position, duties to be performed, and the qualifications of the student. Refuge housing may be provided.

Time Frames and Location: **May 15 - August 15, 2010 (somewhat flexible, in fact, the position focusing on forestry could start as early as March 1).**

Eligibility Requirements: Applicants must be U.S. citizens and at least age 18 years old. Applicants must be accepted for enrollment, or enrolled, as a degree-seeking student at an accredited technical or vocational school, or 2 or 4 year college or university and have a 2.0 GPA. If the student is enrolled, they must be taking at least a half-time course load as defined by the school.

How to Apply:

- Resume describing past/present school and work experiences, knowledge/skill to address job duties listed above, ability to communicate, ability to work with others, and 3 references.

- College students should submit a copy of his/her most recent official transcript, and an official letter of good standing from the school.

Mail to: **Bob Strader, Refuge Manager**
 St. Catherine Creek NWR
 P.O. Box 217
 Sibley, MS 39165
 bob_strader@fws.gov

Questions: 601/442-6696

All required information must be received by **February 1, 2010 (early submission is encouraged)**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
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