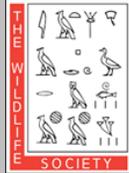




NC Wildlifer



Fall 2016



Inside Look: Rehabilitating Black Bear Cubs in NC



Research Feature: Eastern Spotted Skunk



Awards, Updates, and Opportunities

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Your NCTWS Executive Board

| Position | Officers | Phone | E-mail |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
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Design: Steve Grodsky

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JEFF'S JUMBLED JOTTINGS

President's Column, aka Jeff's Jumbled Jottings



Greetings!

This year I am serving as Acting President because current President Jamie Sasser is deployed as a member of the national guard until November 2016. I would like to extend my appreciation to Jamie on behalf of the chapter for his service to our country.

This is one of the busiest years for our chapter in recent memory. We are deeply and broadly engaged in the planning for the 2016 TWS conference in Raleigh October 15-19. NC Chapter members are organizing field trips, reviewing contributed papers, organizing symposia, making logistical arrangements, developing information on local resources, recruiting and coordinating volunteers, and raising significant sums of money, among many other tasks.

While the conference planning is going full bore, the rest of the work of our chapter is also clipping along. We awarded student scholarships for NC State summer camp, Haywood Community College internship, and the Fur Fish and Game Rendezvous. We awarded travel grants to support members attending the national conference. New ideas are being developed to enhance our mentoring program. Our finances are well managed and are in the best shape they've been in years. We've published this newsletter thanks to our new editors. I could go on and on.

JEFF'S JUMBLED JOTTINGS

One of our more exciting developments is planning for the 2017 NCTWS annual meeting. The theme will be “Wildlife Management: Then and Now” and will feature retired and highly experienced wildlifers along with students and new professionals on the cutting edge of what comes next for our profession. This conference will explore where we came from and where we are going and will provide great opportunities for all to network and learn from each other. Stay tuned for more details this fall.

There's an old saying that the majority of the work for most organizations is done by the STP – the “same ten people”. This year not only are those who have traditionally been active in the chapter doing even more, but there are dozens of chapter members who are playing an active role, including several who are active for the first time. This makes for a vibrant, engaged, and highly effective state chapter of which we should all be proud. My thanks and my admiration goes out to all those who have stepped up to the plate, and I extend an invitation to those who are not yet involved to be part of this groundswell of chapter involvement.

Jeff Marcus

Acting NCTWS Chapter President

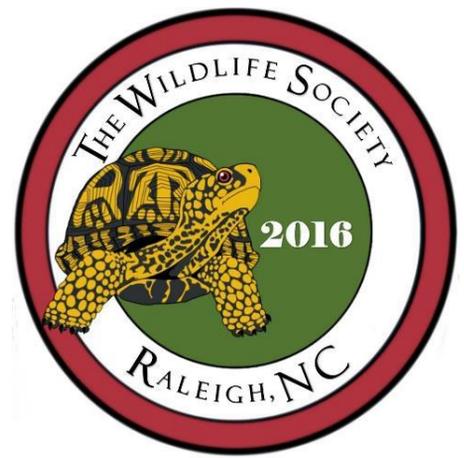


The official “Passing of the Goat” from Past President Kelly Douglass to Acting President, Jeff Marcus, at the 2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting.

TWS 2016: The Countdown is On!

October 15-19, 2016

twskonference.org



By the time you read this newsletter, the 2016 Wildlife Society Annual Conference may be in full swing in Raleigh! We hope to see you there!

This is the 1st time the national conference is in the Southeast region since 2008 and the NCTWS is honored to host all TWS members from all across North America and beyond!



John Ann Shearer, the TWS Arrangements Chair, has worked tirelessly over the past 2 years to not only make this conference a success, but to also give it a North Carolina flair! As thanks for her efforts, the NCTWS Executive Board rewarded John Ann with a NCTWS Lifetime Membership #2 at our annual meeting in March 2016.

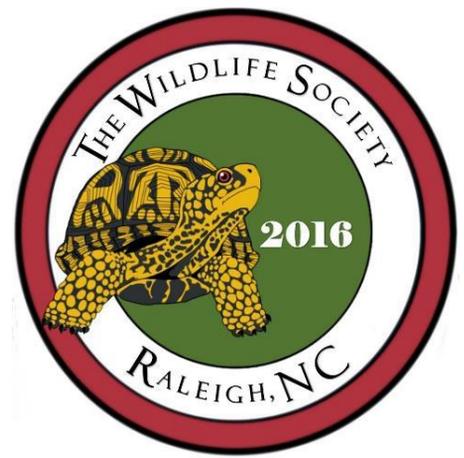
At the TWS Annual Conference, there will be several university receptions, including one for NC State staff, faculty, and alumni! Check out the conference website to see if your alma mater has an event:

twskonference.org/associated-networking-events/

TWS 2016: The Countdown is On!

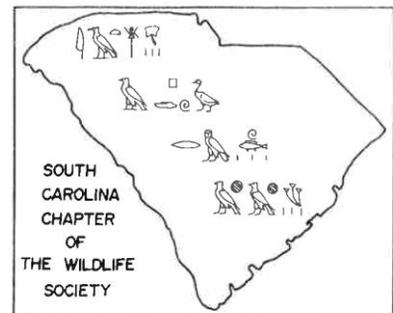
October 15-19, 2016

twconference.org



There will be 900+ educational opportunities at the TWS Annual Conference, as well as many networking events! We would like to take this opportunity to highlight a couple evening events.

NCTWS Executive Board would like to invite all NCTWS members to a mixer with the South Carolina chapter of TWS. Join us for dinner or drinks (Dutch treat), or just mix and mingle with your colleagues from the Carolinas. This informal social will take place on Monday, Oct. 17th from 5:30 to 7pm at Mash & Lauter, the upstairs portion of Busy Bee Café, only a few blocks from the Raleigh Convention Center.



All NCTWS members are welcome and encouraged to attend this mixer, regardless of whether you are attending the conference.

Is your alma mater having a reception??? There will also be several university receptions for university staff, faculty, and alumni during the TWS Annual Conference! This includes universities both in and adjacent to North Carolina, such as N.C. State University, Clemson University, University of Georgia, and Virginia Tech!!

To find out if your alma mater is having a reception, check out the conference website :

twconference.org/associated-networking-events/

NCTWS Lifetime Memberships Now Available!

Many of us renew our NCTWS membership when we renew our national, regional, or working group memberships through TWS. But some of us wait to renew our membership until we attend the annual meeting. Only problem is, if we can't attend the annual meeting, we tend to forget to renew it later. And then we have to deal with reminders from the Chapter and the hassle of mailing in a check.

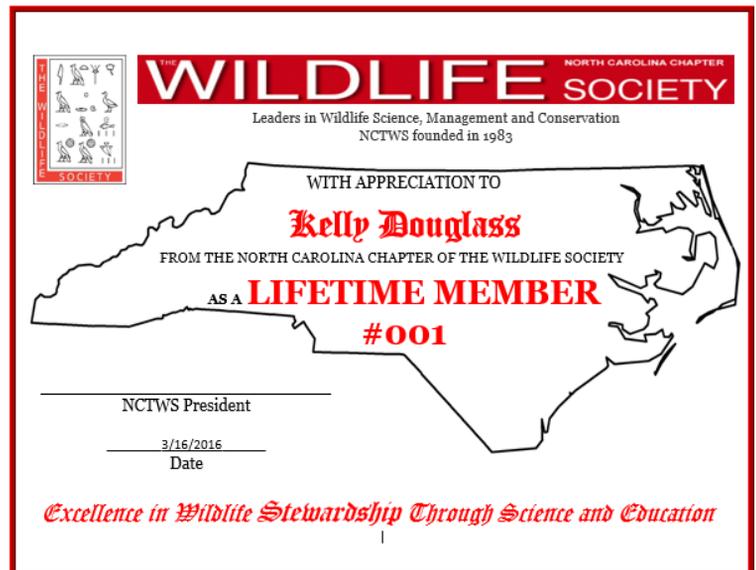
Now you can stop worrying about whether you renewed your membership and skip the hassle by getting a lifetime membership to NCTWS! This year, for the first time ever, you will have the option to obtain either an annual membership (still \$10) or a lifetime membership for \$200.

To kick off the new membership, we auctioned off the honor of becoming the inaugural lifetime member with membership #001 at the 2016 NCTWS annual meeting and Kelly Douglass, Past President, generously and successfully bid for the opportunity after a fierce bidding war!

Membership dues may increase in future years, so buy your lifetime membership now! Lifetime wildlifera will receive a certificate of appreciation with their membership, and will be noticed in future issues of the *NC Wildlifer* and at annual meetings. The proceeds of these membership sales will be used to fund the good work of our organization, and ensure our Chapter's financial sustainability into the future. So invest in your Chapter today!

New Lifetime Members:

- #001 – Kelly Douglass
- #002 – John Ann Shearer
- #003 – Colleen Olfenbuttel
- #004 – Ken Knight
- #005 – Susan Campbell
- #006 – Jeff Marcus
- #007 – Pete Campbell
- #008 – Brad Gunn
- #009 – Todd Menke
- #010 – Daron Barnes
- #011 – Pete Benjamin



2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting Haw River State Park March 16-17th, 2016

The theme of the 2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting was “Conservation Through Communication: Addressing Emerging Issues with Science” and 129 attendees, representing 25 different agencies, universities, and organizations, participated in the meeting.

The NCTWS would like to thank Laura Fogo and Gary Marshall for organizing the annual meeting and Casey Gray, for being the unofficial meeting photographer!



Curtis Smaling, Director of Bird Conservation, Audubon NC

To kick off the meeting, four speakers representing US Fish and Wildlife Services, Audubon North Carolina, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, and USDA-Wildlife Services presented on “Emerging Conservation Issues.”



Dr. Keith Wehner, State Director, USDA-Wildlife Services



Pete Benjamin, Field Supervisor, USFWS

2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting In Pictures

NCTWS would like to thank all the speakers that helped make the annual meeting educational, informative, and a success!



Sara Ward, USFWS, presented on the response to the coal ash spill in the Dan River.



Dr. Adam Terando, SE Climate Science Center, USGS, discussed adapting to climate.



Dr. Nancy Lee Adamson, Xerces Society and NRCS, talked about the status of pollinators and current research efforts.



Dr. Bridgett Lassiter, NCDA&CS, provided an update on cogongrass and other invasive weeds.

2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting In Pictures



Dr. Matina Kalcounis-Ruppell, UNC-Greensboro, discussed bat ecology.



Jon Shaw, NCWRC, discussed the balance between hunter desires and resource needs



Jeff Hall, NCWRC, discussed emerging infectious diseases in amphibians and reptiles.



Kathy Matthews, USFWS, talked about solar & wind energy development and its potential impacts on wildlife.

2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting In Pictures

Evening Social, Poster Session, Silent Auction, and Live Auction



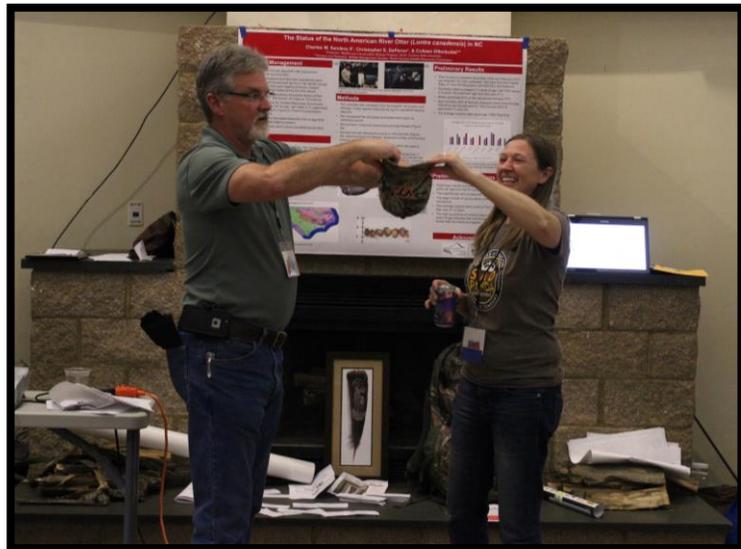
Haywood Community College students sold their always highly-desirable t-shirts!



Andy Richardson, NCSU, discussed his poster on bobwhite quail nesting ecology in agricultural landscapes.



Pete Campbell, USFWS, auctioned off the exhibition trips during the evening social.

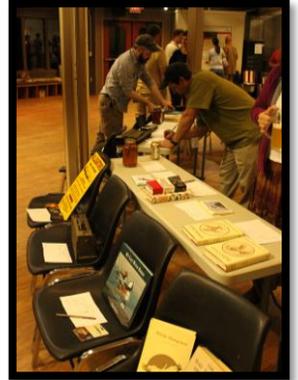


Pete Campbell and Colleen Olfenbutt, NCWRC, picked out the winning raffle tickets for the exhibition trips.

2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting Fundraising Results

During the 2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting, we raised **\$2,126.13** from the live auction (\$625.42), silent auction (\$944.71), and raffle (\$556.00)!

Thanks to the Finance Committee (Jon Shaw, Jeff Marcus, Susan Campbell, Brandon Sherrill, and Laura Fogo) for organizing the silent auction and obtaining exhibition trips and raffle items.



A special thanks to all our members who donated over 60 items for the silent auction! We could not do it without your generous donations!

Lastly, NCTWS would like to thank our generous raffle and live auction donors for not only helping with fundraising, but offering exciting opportunities for our members:

| | Donor | Expedition/Item | Winning Bidder |
|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Live Auction | Bob Pendergrass | Falconry Quest | April Boggs & Sam Freeze |
| Live Auction | John Bishop | Anson County Bunny Bonanza | Brandon Sherrill & Colleen Olfenbuttel |
| Live Auction | David Woody | Coyote Night Hunt | Joe Fuller |
| Live Auction | NCTWS | Lifetime Membership #001 | Kelly Douglass |
| Live Auction | Matthew Harrell | Hand-crafted Antler Table | |
| Live Auction | Mark Hopey | Raptor Banding at Big Bald | Kelly Douglass |
| Raffle | Pete Campbell | Crabbin/Fishing Trip at Mattamuskeet NWR | Jackie Trickel |
| Raffle | Lincoln Sadler & Terry Sharpe | Catfish Grabblin' on the Pee Dee River | Worth McAlister |
| Raffle | Jerry Reynolds | Black River Paddle Trip | John Ann Shearer |
| Raffle | Kendrick Weeks | Elevational Bird Watching | Ken Bridle |

2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting Sustainability Initiative



NC GREEN POWER

EST 2003

This year, for the 1st time ever, our NCTWS Chapter partnered with NC Green Power to reduce our environmental footprint for our annual meeting!

How much we raised. For those who attended the 2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting, and donated to the cause, **THANK YOU!** Our Chapter was able to raise and donate **\$154.57** to NC Green Power to offset the actual energy and carbon consumption at our Chapter's annual meeting. That amount exceeded the total calculated offset!

How the offset was calculated. NC Green Power used data we collected on the annual meeting location and registered attendees to calculate the actual amount of environmental impact we had.

The environmental benefits of our donation. Our Chapter's contribution to NC Green Power resulted in the following environmental benefits:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 6 Blocks of Renewable Energy | 31 Blocks of Carbon Offset |
| 600 Kilowatt hours of green energy | 31,488 Pounds of GHG mitigation |
| 486 Pounds of coal not consumed | 1,069 Equivalent days not driven |
| 0.042 Homes powered for a year | 19,639 Equivalent miles not driven |
| 96 Equivalent trees planted | 2,384 Equivalent trees planted |

Learn more. To learn more about how NC Green Power reduced our annual meeting's environmental footprint, check out their website at:

ncgreenpower.org

NCTWS 2016 Recognition Awards



Photo credit: Casey Gray

2016 Chapter Award Kelly E. Douglass

Kelly Douglass took over the presidency during a very active time for the state chapter. Several of the committees were at crossroads and Kelly, working with others, helped to re-invigorate many of them with an activity at the annual meeting that encouraged members to learn more and get involved. One committee that realized increased activity was Conservation Review. This committee took on important biological issues that happened to be tinged with political interests which resulted in some scrutiny and uncomfortable moments for Kelly, but she took a courageous stand to ensure that The Wildlife Society remains an independent voice for the profession and sound science.

Also, Kelly's presidency coincided with the busiest planning year for the 2016 TWS conference in Raleigh. Kelly has been actively involved in the work of many committees and helped to represent North Carolina well at the 2015 conference in Winnipeg.

Kelly works with private landowners to provide technical guidance and assistance for wildlife habitat enhancement. Overall, she has interacted with hundreds of landowners across the NC Piedmont and has influenced many acres of habitat on private lands. Also, Kelly is active in many conservation partnerships and other initiatives that help make the delivery of conservation programs more effective.

NCTWS 2016 Recognition Awards

2016 Wildlife Conservation Award Dean M. Simon



Photo credit: Casey Gray

Dean Simon is highly deserving of recognition by the NC community of wildlife professionals for his many professional achievements in wildlife conservation and education, and for his strong support of scientific research on issues related to wildlife conservation and management.

As “Wildlife Forester” for the NC Mountain Region with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), Dean prescribes, coordinates, and administers wildlife habitat management projects on state owned lands in western North Carolina. For more than two decades Dean has been a proponent of bringing back “fire in the mountains” to promote yellow pine and mixed pine-oak forests on drier upland sites, and to create important habitat components for wildlife including early successional vegetation, open-canopy forests, oak-savannah woodlands, and snags.

Dean is a leader in reintroducing prescribed burning to the southern Appalachians through cooperative, multi-agency prescribed burning projects with NC State Parks, The Nature Conservancy, The NC Division of Forestry, and the US Forest Service. He was instrumental in helping to establish the NC Prescribed Fire Council; he served as vice president (2008) and president (2009), and continues to serve in an advisory capacity. In addition, Dean has been closely involved with the Southern Blue Ridge Fire Learning Network (FLN) since its inception several years ago, and has served as the lead for the South Mountains landscape and as a partner in five additional FLN landscapes.

Dean is a strong believer in the importance of scientific research in guiding wildlife management, and he is a true partner in several scientific studies addressing vegetation and wildlife response to prescribed fire and other silvicultural treatments in upland hardwood forests. Since 2000, Dean has worked closely with US Forest Service, Southern Research Station (USFS, SRS) scientists on the southern Appalachian “Fire and Fire Surrogate Study,” a national study addressing effects of different fuel reduction methods, including repeated prescribed fire, on vegetation and wildlife. Dean has presented this work in dozens of presentations and field trips and he contributed to over 100 publications from this study alone.

In short, Dean has been a leading pioneer in promoting the historical importance of fire in some southern Appalachian forest types, applying prescribed fire across the landscape, and building cooperative partnerships to conduct research and use results to guide adaptive fire management across the region. Dean arguably is the single most important person responsible for the substantial increase in use of prescribed fire as a wildlife habitat management tool in western North Carolina. Dean’s professional contributions have been recognized by the Southeastern Section of the Wildlife Society (Management Excellence Award in 2008) and the NCWRC (Prescribed Burner of the Year award in 2011, and Wildlife Biologist of the Year in 2007), but not by the NCTWS despite the invaluable contributions he has made to wildlife conservation in the state of North Carolina.

NCTWS 2016 Recognition Awards

Ken Wilson Memorial Award – North Carolina State University
Samuel Freeze



Photo credit: Casey Gray

Samuel Freeze’s enthusiasm and dedication to the field is exemplified by his wide range of wildlife experiences. Sam worked as a research technician for Clemson University’s bat research team to assess the impacts of rock climbing on the Eastern small-footed bat. Also, he worked as an intern at Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge, conducting small mammal inventories, invasive species management, dove banding, and raccoon damage management.

In addition to his work and research experience, Sam is dedicated to service, especially related to wildlife conservation. Sam was the North Carolina State University student chapter Leopold Wildlife Club President from 2014 – 2015 and the secretary from 2013 – 2014. He has been a volunteer at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences since he began his undergraduate career, and is a prescribed fire volunteer with the NC Nature Conservancy and the NC Forest Service. Sam is well respected by faculty, peers, and the wildlife professionals he works with in the field. He is a strong example for other wildlife students.

NCTWS 2016 Recognition Awards

Ken Wilson Memorial Award – Haywood Community College
Candice Moreau



Candice Moreau has an outstanding record of academic achievement. She has maintained a 3.8 grade point average in the challenging Fish and Wildlife Management Technology program at Haywood Community College while demonstrating outstanding leadership and dedication to the field of wildlife management.

In addition to her academic endeavors, Candice is highly active in the Haywood Community College Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society. While serving as chapter president, she has demonstrated a high capacity for leadership as she has guided our very active student chapter to new levels of accomplishment. She leads by example, takes praise and criticism with the same calm demeanor, and is never too busy to take on a new challenge.

Recently, Candice was selected as a recipient of the Dave Dudek Wildlife Award, given to two outstanding fish and wildlife management students each fall. She has served as captain of the wildlife quiz bowl team and has served as the chapter coordinator for the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and Georgia Department of Natural Resources volunteer activities.

She has repeatedly demonstrated involvement with wildlife professional organizations, agencies and non-profit conservation groups that is above and beyond the typical student. She has spent hundreds of hours in the field assisting biologists and technicians with projects. Candice exhibits the passion, professionalism, and dedication that are the hallmarks of a wildlife professional and has a very high probability of future success in her chosen field.

NCTWS 2016 Recognition Awards

Ken Wilson Memorial Award – Western Carolina University

Aaron Perez

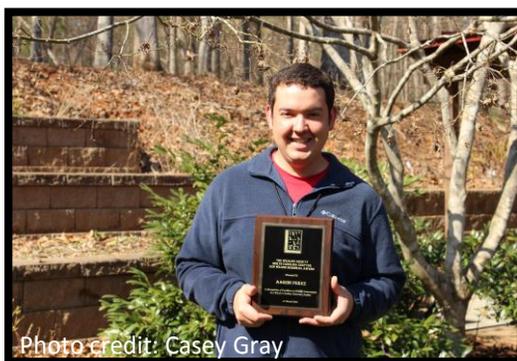


Photo credit: Casey Gray

Aaron Perez has been involved with the TWS student chapter since arriving at Western Carolina University and during this past year has served as chapter vice-president. Aaron's strong interest in wildlife and willingness to serve as a club officer (vice-president) have directly helped to ensure the student chapter at Western Carolina University remains an active organization providing numerous opportunities for members to gain professional knowledge and experiences in the field of wildlife management.



Photo credit: Casey Gray



Photo credit: Casey Gray



Photo credit: Casey Gray

NCTWS thanks all the award winners for their significant contributions to the field of wildlife conservation. We would also like to thank the Awards Committee, chaired by Dr. Chris Deperno, for their dedication in reviewing & selecting nominated candidates.

2016 NCTWS Annual Meeting Best Student Poster



Co-winners

Alexander Fish (pictured at right)

Fish, A. C., C. E. Moorman, C. S. DePerno, and J. M. Shillaci. Juvenile songbird survival, habitat selection, and movement in the southeastern United State: a Bachman's sparrow case study. Best Student Poster 2016 Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society, Haw River State Park, Browns Summit, North Carolina.

Charlie Sanders (pictured at left)

Sanders, C., C. S. DePerno., and C. Olfenbuttel. Age structure and reproduction of North American river otters in North Carolina. Best Student Poster 2016 Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society, Haw River State Park, Browns Summit, North Carolina.

**NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
RECOGNITION AWARDS FOR 2017**

SOLICITATION FOR NOMINEES

The NCTWS recognizes and honors individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of wildlife conservation in the broadest sense. Each year at the annual meeting, several awards are presented to deserving individuals. Nominations for awards to be presented at the annual meeting must be received by the Awards Committee Chairman ***no later than December 1, 2016***. All chapter members are encouraged to consider and nominate deserving candidates for these awards. Previously unselected nominees can be re-submitted. Nominations are kept active for two years after the year in which a nomination is made. The only way to recognize individuals is to nominate them.

Contact Dr. Chris DePerno, Committee Chair (NCSU, Turner House, Box 7646, Raleigh, NC 27695, 919-513-7559, chris_deperno@ncsu.edu) if you have questions, need additional information, or to submit a nomination. Consult the Society website (<http://www.nctws.org>) for general information about our Chapter, previous award winners, award descriptions, and nomination forms.

Inside Look: Rehabilitating Black Bear Cubs in NC

By Colleen Olfenbuttel (Black Bear and Furbearer Biologist)
and
Casey Gray (Black Bear and Furbearer Temporary Biologist)



An orphaned cub brought to the rehabilitation facility at the NC Zoo in April 2016.

Photo credit: NCWRC/Colleen Olfenbuttel

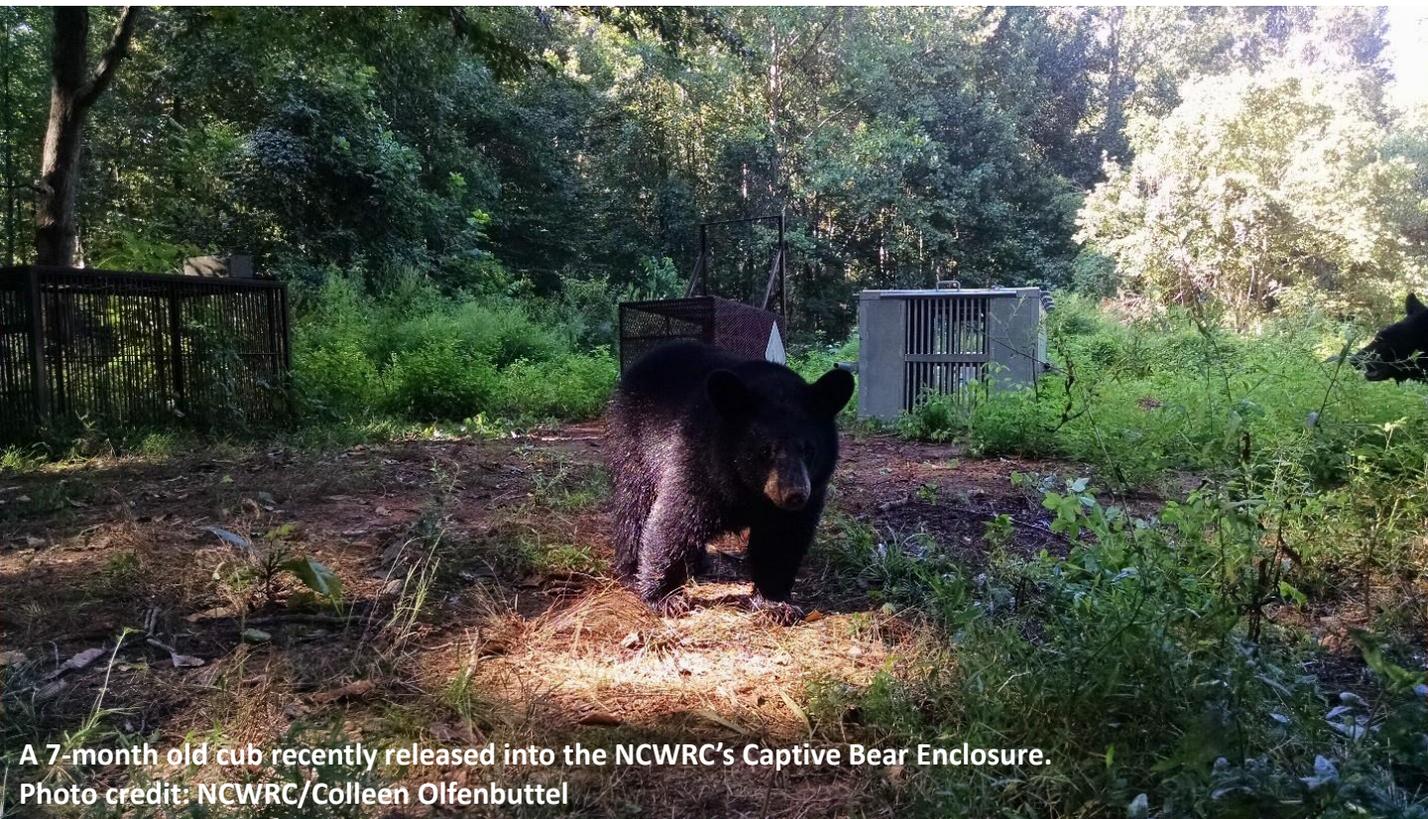
Since 1976, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) has rehabilitated and released 114 black bear cubs back into the wild through our agency's cub rehabilitation program. The NCWRC receives orphaned cubs from a variety of circumstances, with the majority arriving April–June. The cubs are initially placed with a licensed private rehabilitator (20+ years of experience with bears) or the North Carolina Zoo. The rehabilitators provide the necessary care with limited to no human interaction until the bears are about 7–8 months old; at that age the cubs are released into a 0.92 ha wooded enclosure that is owned by the NCWRC and managed by the Land Management Division. By taking over the direct care of the orphaned cubs, our agency is able to maintain oversight on the program, which better assures that rehabilitated bears are released in excellent condition and are not habituated.

Inside Look: Rehabilitating Black Bear Cubs in NC continued...

The current enclosure uses the naturally-existing hardwood forest for habitat structure. The bears overwinter together in this enclosure, which may help to remove any habituated behavior that may have occurred during the preliminary rehabilitation process.

Rehabilitated bears are released as yearlings in late May and June; we chose this period because this is the time that natural family break-up occurs and early summer foods are starting to appear. Bears are typically released in the region where they were originally found, at sites that are reasonably far from human development and on state-managed lands.

In December 2012, the NCWRC's Black Bear Committee, comprised of agency biologists, recommended that the fates of rehabilitated black bears be determined in order to assess the rehabilitation program and determine if any changes needed to be made. Our agency was also getting questions from NCWRC staff and the public, who wondered if rehabilitated bears were more likely to become "nuisance" bears. In addition, GPS collars were coming on the market that could be placed on yearling black bears because of their light weight and mechanisms to remotely remove collars (e.g., radio and timer controlled drop off).



A 7-month old cub recently released into the NCWRC's Captive Bear Enclosure.

Photo credit: NCWRC/Colleen Olfenbuttel

Inside Look: Rehabilitating Black Bear Cubs in NC continued...



NCWRC staff carrying a transport cage containing a yearling bear out of the enclosure in July 2015.
Photo Credit: NCWRC/Colleen Olfenbuttel

Starting in 2015, we began to collar the rehabilitated bears, now yearlings, prior to release using GPS collars with a remote release mechanism. Since July 2015, 12 bears have been collared and released, including 10 in the Mountain region and 2 in the Coastal Plain region. Since yearling black bears are known for their rapid growth rates, our general policy is to have the collars remotely drop off these bears a year after release to prevent collars from becoming in-grown. Of the four bears released in 2015, one was legally harvested, one slipped its collar, and one was found dead from starvation related to megaesophagus. In August 2016, we remotely triggered the collar to drop off the 4th bear, who is moving between the North Carolina and Tennessee border. The 8 bears released in 2016 were all still alive and sending data as of the writing of this article, just under 12 weeks after their release.

In order to have sufficient sample sizes from our three bear management regions (Mountains, Piedmont, Coastal Plain), we plan to continue placing GPS tracking collars on rehabilitated bears over the next several years. Through collaboration with other researchers, we hope to gain better insight on the fate of rehabilitated bears that will not only help our agency, but assist other bear conservation programs, especially those programs at the international level, where successful cub rehabilitation programs are essential in supplementing imperiled bear populations.

Research Feature: Eastern Spotted Skunk

By Geriann Albers

Assistant Black Bear and Furbearer Biologist

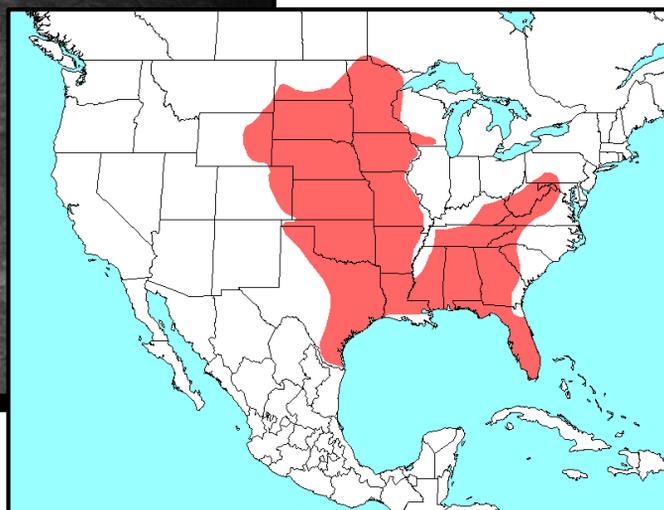


The Eastern Spotted Skunk, the elusive tree-squirrel-sized cousin to the better known striped skunk, has been the focus on more attention lately, in North Carolina and throughout their range. This cryptic species is found as far west as Texas, Colorado, and Wyoming and ranges throughout the Southeastern U.S. Historically they were sometimes referred to as a “civet cat”. Information on spotted skunk populations and natural history is sparse throughout its entire range, including North Carolina. Old harvest records had the two skunk species lumped together, so it’s hard to find historic information.

A subspecies of spotted skunk, the Plains Spotted Skunk, was proposed for listing under the ESA and will be reviewed in 2023. This sparked a bevy of research across much of the eastern spotted skunk’s range. It’s an interesting time because many states are on the same level when it comes to learning about spotted skunks since so little is known about them. It provides an opportunity for collaboration and comparing data among states. There are parts of their range, especially in states like Missouri, Iowa, and Arkansas, where spotted skunks do seem to be declining, but the reasons are unknown. You can visit easternspottedskunk.weebly.com to see blog updates and information about eastern spotted skunk research throughout their range.

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) began research on spotted skunks in 2015, which stemmed from the identification of the eastern spotted skunk in North Carolina as a priority mammal in the 2005 Wildlife Action Plan, a “species of special concern” by the 2011 Scientific Council on Mammals, and the species with the greatest knowledge gap in the 2015 Wildlife Action Plan. Currently, the NCWRC’s efforts are focused on a Mountain region camera trap survey to determine occupancy and range of spotted skunks. After a pilot year, the NCWRC partnered with Clemson University on a graduate student project using cameras to survey spotted skunk range in South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina. The Clemson project is also attempting to assess if elevation, month of year (January, February, March), or lure used impacts detection rates. NCWRC Wildlife Management staff are working with NCWRC Game Lands staff and other partners such as Cherokee Nation biologists to deploy cameras throughout the western portion of the state. This project will continue through 2017.

Research Feature: Eastern Spotted Skunk continued...



Genetics of the Eastern Spotted Skunk and its potential subspecies is of interest because of the ESA proposal, as the original identification of subspecies was based primarily on pelt patterns and size. Many states are working on collaborating to collect genetic samples to assess this question. NCWRC staff are trying to collect roadkill and carcasses from trappers to get genetic samples and other tissue samples. We're also hoping to have an undergraduate student apply for a small grant to test a spotted skunk hair snare that was developed by a biologist in Pennsylvania and a retired biologist in West Virginia. Future plans to further our spotted skunk knowledge are to have a PhD student collar spotted skunks to better understand habitat use and movement of this elusive mammal.

It's an interesting time to be researching spotted skunks as almost everything we learn is new information. North Carolina hopes to continue to conduct research and partner with other states to improve our knowledge of the eastern spotted skunk. If you see a roadkill, please call or email Geriann Albers at 919-698-4655 or geriann.albers@ncwildlife.org or Casey Gray at 919-609-7226 or casey.gray@ncwildlife.org.

NCTWS Member Spotlight

Casey Gray

Black Bear and Furbearer Temporary Biologist

casey.gray@ncwildlife.org



Education:

- Dec. 2009, B.S. Natural Resources Ecology and Management, Louisiana State University
Concentration: Conservation Biology
- May 2015, M.S. Forest Resources-Wildlife, University of Georgia

Where did you grow up?

Baton Rouge, Louisiana until middle school and then moved to Katy, Texas (west-side of Houston).

Why did you go into a wildlife career?

I grew up running around our property in South Louisiana, exploring the woods and cane-pole fishing in the neighbor's pond. I loved being outside. Always, an animal lover, I had quite the collection of pets both wild and domestic. I started my undergraduate studies as a pre-vet student. Once I took my first renewable natural resources class and realized I could work with animals AND be outside, my path was set from there.

Have you always been interested in wildlife?

Absolutely. I remember many road trips with my face pressed up to the car window looking for alligators in the Atchafalaya NWR and looking for turtles in the woods around our house. I couldn't get enough of anything related to animals.

NCTWS Member Spotlight

Casey Gray

Black Bear and Furbearer Temporary Biologist

Who has been an influence on you in your career? How and why?

Both my mother and father have had an influence on my career. My mother is a teacher and not only taught me the value of a solid education but gave me the passion to teach others. I always try to incorporate educating the public in any wildlife job I have. My father encouraged my passion for the outdoors and wildlife and really instilled an independence in me that has gotten me through the trails that often come in the wildlife profession.

Have you ever worked outside the wildlife profession? What did you do?

For most of my summers during my undergraduate years, I worked as a horse wrangler for a camp that hosted kids with chronic illness or physical disabilities. After undergrad, I was the assistant director at an outdoor adventure camp in Wyoming for a summer.

What species or habitat do you know most about or work with the most?

My studies in graduate school fueled a passion for working with bears and I've been fortunate to have gained experience in different aspects of bear management and research in a relatively short amount of time. My focus in graduate school was researching black bear reproductive ecology, I then took a conflict-management position in south Florida, and now I am back to the research here in North Carolina. In my current position, my work focuses more on furbearer research. This has been a great opportunity to learn about different species in the mammal and carnivore field.

NCTWS Member Spotlight

Casey Gray

Black Bear and Furbearer Temporary Biologist

What advice would you give someone just starting out in wildlife?

Being pretty fresh out of graduate school, I would advise students to get as much experience as they can and make those experiences as diverse as possible. I have seen great value in having jobs in fisheries, waterfowl research, education, and game management and research. Not only have I been able to apply for a wider pool of jobs, but I feel like it's been beneficial to have an understanding of the wildlife field as a whole.

What song, quote, or movie title sums up your life philosophy?

"Wealth is the ability to fully experience life." -Henry David Thoreau. I've always valued experiences throughout my life whether that is trying something new in the wildlife field or traveling to a foreign place. I may not die a rich person, but I hope to have at least had a good time!

Did you know you can check your membership status on-line, including when your membership expires in 3 easy steps!

1. Go to nctws.org and click "Members".
2. Sign in with the password.
3. Then click "NCTWS Members Directory"

Did you forget the password? It gives you access to the directory and much more! E-mail Colleen: colfenbu@vt.edu to get the password!

NORTH CAROLINA



**TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION
INC.**



PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE TRAPPING



**NORTH CAROLINA TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL
FURBEARER GRANTS PROGRAM TO PROMOTE FURBEARER MANAGEMENT
AND RESPONSIBLE TRAPPING AS A WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT TOOL**

The North Carolina Trappers Association, Inc. (NCTA) is pleased to announce a new Furbearer Research Grant Program for students who are interested in supporting the wise-use and management of abundant and natural renewable resources – our wild furbearing animals. As a non-profit educational organization for trappers working to promote furbearer management and responsible trapping as a wildlife management tool, the NCTA (www.nctrapper.org) encourages professionalism, good sportsmanship, wildlife conservation, and a trapper code of ethics.

How the Program Works

The NCTA Professional Furbearer Research Grant provides financial aid to individuals or groups conducting research on North Carolina's furbearers. The grants will be awarded in December 2016 and will range up to \$800, depending on the number of qualified applicants and the requested budgets. In addition, recipients will receive a one-year membership to the NCTA and a subscription to the Trapper & Predator Caller or Trapper's Post magazine. NCTA has raised funds through their Advanced Trapper Education Workshops with hopes that future donations and the continued success of the workshop will enable NCTA to offer grants on an annual basis. Those interested in contributing to an enduring grant can do so by contacting Todd Menke, Education Coordinator at 919-885-6187.

Who is Eligible?

Students enrolled in an undergraduate, graduate, or post-graduate program majoring in wildlife management or a closely related field and conducting research involving furbearer species in North Carolina. Applicants do not have to be a member of NCTA but do have to be currently enrolled in an accredited university or college. Applicants must demonstrate a record of academic achievement and a strong interest in pursuing a career in wildlife management, science, or policy.

How to Apply

Your submission must include:

1. A detailed resume that contains: your name, address, e-mail address, phone number, name of your college or university, current level of study (undergraduate, graduate, or post-graduate), major or field of study, relevant extracurricular activities, awards and honors received, faculty advisor, and participation in professional societies.

2. Application materials should be assembled by interested students in close association with a faculty advisor. The name and contact information of the faculty advisor must be included in the application, as well as confirmation that the advisor will assist the student in fulfilling the work described, and that the faculty advisor, according to university/college rules, will administer the budget on behalf of the student. The student and advisor should submit complete applications electronically as described below. Grants of less than \$500 may, upon NCTA's discretion, be issued to the student or faculty advisor, but the student must keep a detailed excel spreadsheet of expenditures and justifications. Copies of the spreadsheet will need to be emailed to NCTA Grant Committee Chair (Todd Menke minkster1971@gmail.com) at least quarterly. Any grants over \$500 will not be transferred directly to the student or faculty but will be routed through formal university/college mechanisms on behalf of the student(s).

3. A copy of your most recent transcript (official or unofficial).

4. An essay (500 words or less) explaining why you would like to participate in the program, how you expect the grant to further your career development, and how your life experiences and skills can contribute to supporting the wise-use of our abundant natural renewable resources.

5. A copy of your research project proposal, which should include:

- Introduction (300 words or less): This should include appropriate literature to support your research questions and significance to knowledge. The last sentence should be a statement of objectives and hypotheses.
- Methodology (300 words or less): This should include a study area description and explain how you intend to meet your objectives and analytic techniques used to test your hypotheses or outline your experimental design.
- Requested budget and outline of current funding.
- Literature Cited.
- Timeline of project, including scheduled delivery of reports, updates, and final product. Multiple updates to NCTA should be scheduled; the number should correspond to length of project (e.g., once a month for 5-month project, once a week for one-month project, etc.)

6. A pending or approved research/collector's permit from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC).

- If the permit is pending, indicate if you have notified and are working with Colleen Olfenbuttel, the WRC Furbearer Biologist (colleen.olfenbuttel@ncwildlife.org), who will be reviewing your application for a WRC Permit.

****Projects must comply with all applicable federal, state, county laws and regulations****

*****NCTA does not pay indirect/overhead costs to grant/contract recipients*****

E-mail your complete application packet to Todd Menke (minkster1971@gmail.com)

NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 31, 2016



NCTWS Shirts Now Available

In October 2015, the NCTWS Executive Board set up an account with [Creative Caps](http://CreativeCaps.com) for members to purchase their own NCTWS shirts! A few of our members purchased shirts to wear to the 2015 TWS Conference in Winnipeg, and got many compliments on their professional attire.

Creative Caps has an enormous selection of professional wear, however NCTWS members will only be able to purchase shirts at this time – polos, button down collared shirts, quick dry shirts, etc. And we've limited the color selection to either dark gray or black, so the logo stands out.



The Chapter has paid to have the account set up (for graphics), so members will only need to purchase the shirt at cost. Creative Caps will let you pick up your order in person (they are located in Benson, NC) or you can have it shipped to your house.

If you are interested in ordering a NCWTS shirt, please contact Eva Hall at eva@creativecaps.net. For those who are a bit lazy (like me), here are some of the shirt styles that have already been ordered:

- DG105W Devon & Jones Ladies' Dri-Fast™ Piqué Polo
- S92CFX Russell Athletic Ladies' Team Game Day Polo
- D110W Devon & Jones Ladies' Pima Piqué Long-Sleeve Polo
- K420 Port Authority Men's Pique Knit Polo

Sizes are pretty true to fit. You will see several members wearing their NCTWS shirts at the 2016 TWS Annual Conference in Raleigh, so feel free to take a look and ask questions.

Buy yours today!

Upcoming Events

- [2016 TWS Annual Conference](#) – Raleigh, NC (October 15-19, 2016)
- [NCTWS-SCTWS Social](#) – Mash & Lauter (upstairs at Busy Bee Café), Raleigh, NC (October 17, 2016 from 5:30pm-7:00pm)
 - See page 6 for details!
- [NCTWS Wildlife Health Workshop](#) – Asheville, NC (November 2, 2016 from 9:00am-3:30pm)
 - Description: Join the NCTWS Professional Development Committee for a workshop on wildlife health in North Carolina. Experts will provide an overview of current wildlife health issues and discuss specific wildlife diseases including chronic wasting disease, white-nose syndrome, and chytridiomycosis. Topics will also include general necropsy and sample collection guidelines and human health risks of working with wildlife.
 - The workshop is FREE for NCTWS members and \$10 for non-members.
 - For more information and to register, please email Casey Gray at gray.casey.a@gmail.com.
- [NCTWS Annual Meeting](#) – *tentatively scheduled for Columbia, NC (February 7-9, 2017)*
 - Final dates, registration, and details will be in the next newsletter!
- [Southeastern Bat Diversity Network and Colloquium on the Conservation of Mammals in the Southeastern U.S.](#) - Asheville, NC (February 16-17, 2017)
- [Dixie Deer Classic](#)- Raleigh, NC (March 3-5, 2017)
- [North Carolina Trappers College](#) – Columbia, NC (March 10-12, 2017)
- [North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference](#) – Spokane, WA (March 4-11, 2017)



Chapter Vision Statement

To guide and promote the conservation
and management of wildlife resources
throughout North Carolina

Visit us online at:
www.nctws.org