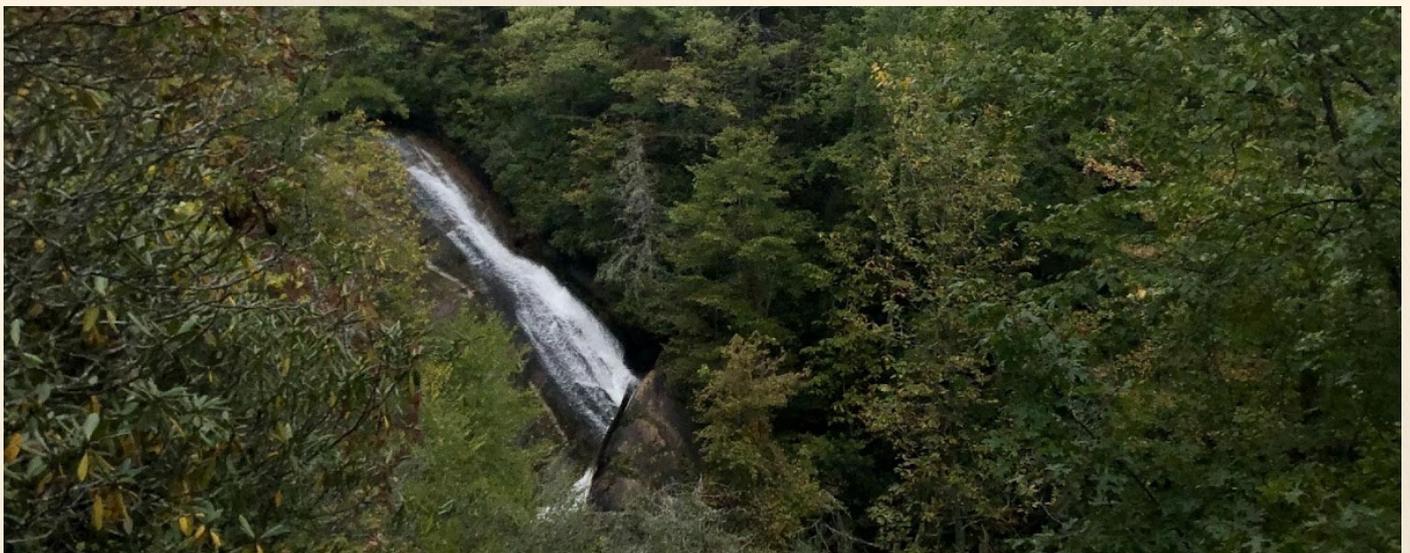




Excellence in Wildlife Stewardship Through Science and Education

NC Wildlifer



Waterfall near the Cradle of National Forestry.
Photo courtesy Hanne Parks.

At a glance:

2023 NCTWS Annual Meeting

SAVE THE DATE
February 7th – 9th, 2023
Dogwood on Lake Norman
Sherrills Ford, NC 28673

2023 Annual Meeting

Meeting flyer. Photo courtesy of Dogwood's Facebook.



Recognition Awards

Allyson Cowen holding an eastern newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens*) from week two of summer camp.
Photo courtesy Kaitlin Lospinosa.



Fur Fish & Game Rendezvous

Photo courtesy Millstone 4-H Camp.

In this issue

3	President's Column	12	Membership Spotlight
5	2023 Annual Meeting	14	Featured Articles
6	Call for Abstracts	17	#ExploreNC
7	Recognition Awards	18	Did You Know?
10	Other Chapter News	19	Upcoming Events
11	Lifetime Membership	21	Life After Retirement

NCTWS Executive Board

Position	Officer Name	Phone	Email
Past President	Matthew Harrell	252-299-1655	mallenate@gmail.com
President	Danny Ray	828-433-8880	daniel.ray@ncwildlife.org
President-elect	Gabriela Garrison	910-409-7350	gabriela.garrison@ncwildlife.org
Treasurer	James Tomberlin	828-234-8823	jimmert10@yahoo.com
Secretary	Liz Hillard	217-840-4613	liz@wildlandsnetwork.org
At-large Board	Gary Marshall	980-616-3230	g_marsha@bellsouth.net
At-large Board	David Mattocks	336-456-3929	dlmattoc@gmail.com
SE Section Rep.	Kelsey Pistner	910-368-3654	kelseynicolepistner@gmail.com

President's Column



Danny in Ireland courtesy Pam Ray.

DAN'S DISCOURSE BY DANNY RAY

Greetings NC Wildlifers!

The last time you read this commentary, you were doing so in the sweltering heat of summer. I hope this time it is much cooler, and you are enjoying the transition into fall.

Fall brings out a variety of emotions and opinions in us all. I had an aunt who once said she didn't like fall because the flowers and green vegetation died out, making the landscape look gray and depressing. I, as a kid, loved fall because it brought with it hunting seasons. I couldn't wait for the school day to end so I could grab my trusty .22 rifle and chase around a few squirrels. As I grew older, I gained more appreciation for the changing leaf color and the social aspects of fall. Football has always been a favorite sport of mine, but it became even more prominent as a college student sitting in the stands watching my alma mater's mediocre team lose yet

another game. The team has vastly improved since those days but my attendance at the games has subsided as my life has moved on to other equally enjoyable fall activities.

Colleges are now back in session and students are fully engaged in their studies.

I'm sure student wildlife society chapters are up and running with new leadership and unparalleled enthusiasm. I'd like to take this moment to tell each chapter's student leadership that NCTWS is proud to serve the wildlife community alongside them and we welcome their involvement in the state's wildlife society chapter as well. Students, please don't hesitate to contact me or any other NCTWS Board member if you have questions, comments, or ideas that we can assist you with. You will hear from me soon enough, but I encourage you not to wait on me.

President's Column

Oftentimes, I think we ol' timers don't really appreciate the true value that student chapters offer. It's amazing what the student chapters do today, from fund-raising and workshops to multi-state conclaves and professional development opportunities. I didn't have that opportunity when I was a student. My first exposure to TWS and its subunits was a couple of years after I graduated and was working a full-time wildlife job. I'll never forget a conversation I had with my supervisor one morning. We were doing a study on rodent populations and had several traps to check that day. While traveling to our research site, he asked me, "Danny, what do you want your contribution to be?" My first thought was "What is he talking about?" but I didn't blurt that out of my mouth. Instead, I did what any respectable young wildlife professional would do. I began stuttering and stammering over my words as I tried to compose a not-so-well thought out rendition of something I can't even remember today. In other words, I tried to BS my way through it! [Word to the wise: quit digging before you get in over your head!] Thankfully, I had an understanding supervisor who began explaining that a wildlife career should be more than just doing the job and getting a paycheck. He explained that we should purpose our lives to make things better than they were when we found them. We should push for improvement and not get caught up in the status quo. That day was a turning point for me. I loved my job and always wanted to do it well, but I never thought about making my mark on the profession. I often think of that moment when I think of today's student wildlife chapters. Learning the ethical value of a wildlife career early on in one's education is HUGE! And putting that knowledge to work in the profession is PRICELESS!

Now that I've motivated everyone to go out and change the world, here comes the sales pitch. VERY SOON, Gabriela will be talking to folks about leadership opportunities in the upcoming year. It is easy to lay low and hope that she doesn't see you, or worse yet, want to learn more about how to serve the state chapter but not be willing to speak up and ask questions. Don't be that person. You've heard that opportunity only knocks once.

Well knock, knock! Here's a great opportunity to be part of something bigger than yourself. There are three Board positions on the ballot this winter: at-large, treasurer, and president-elect. Feel free to contact me or Gabriela (gabriela.garrison@ncwildlife.org) anytime to discuss any one of the positions. Better yet, attend the next Board meeting on October 19th; 9am-2pm to see how the Board operates. You can attend in person at the Greensboro Science Center or online via TEAMS. The meeting announcement will be sent to the membership a couple weeks prior to the meeting. If you are not ready to serve on the Board yet, there are lots of committee opportunities just waiting for you. Come join others who are making a difference and having a blast doing it!

I'll end my commentary with a few words of wisdom. For those of you who deny evolution, in my younger years a "tailgater" was someone who rode your bumper on the way to the football game. Today, that same "tailgater" is the one who shows up three hours early in his \$70,000 SUV with a corn hole game, a grill, and a spread that would feed an army. Tell me that's not evolution in action!

Enjoy your pumpkin spiced everything this fall!

2023 Annual Meeting

SAVE THE DATE

February 7th – 9th, 2023

Dogwood on Lake Norman

Sherrills Ford, NC 28673



Photo courtesy of Dogwood's Facebook

Please join your fellow wildlife professionals at Dogwood on Lake Norman in Sherrills Ford, February 7-9, 2023. This year's theme is **Partnerships for Conservation and Resiliency in a Changing Climate**. Sessions will focus on climate change impacts on ecosystem health, wildlife, fire ecology, and coastal ecology in North Carolina, and will explore actions we can be taking now to increase climate resilience. Mark your calendars and plan for an engaging conference at a beautiful location with fun social activities and auctions!

2023 Annual Meeting

Call for Abstracts

We invite you to submit an abstract for a contributed oral or poster presentation to the 2023 North Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting. The theme this year is **Partnerships for Conservation and Resiliency in a Changing Climate**.

Contributed Oral Presentations: We invite abstracts for sessions of oral presentations on topics germane to Partnerships for Conservation and Resiliency in a Changing Climate including, but not exclusively, regarding the impacts of climate change on:

- Vegetation Communities
- Wildlife
- Mitigation and Resilience
- Fire Ecology
- Coastal Ecology

Contributed Posters (not student posters): We invite abstracts for the poster session on any wildlife topic relevant to North Carolina. The posters will be on display for the duration of the meeting. It is the responsibility of the author(s) to bring a printed poster that will be displayed on the wall or on an easel.

Student Research or Research in Progress Posters: Any undergraduate or graduate student conducting wildlife research related to North Carolina can submit an abstract for this meeting. Abstracts can include: research in progress, proposed research project, results from completed undergraduate project, or student chapter research projects. It is the responsibility of the author(s) to provide a printed poster that will be displayed on the wall or on an easel. Student posters will be judged during Tuesday night of the opening night social and a Best Student Poster Award will be awarded on Wednesday.

Submission Deadline: no later than November 1, 2022.

All abstracts must be ≤300 words and should include a statement of objectives, brief description of methods, results, and conclusions. Please include scientific names in the abstract. Also, include a title, all authors and their affiliations, and proposed session(s) (Contributed Oral Presentation, Contributed Poster, Student Research or Research in Progress Poster).

All abstracts will be reviewed by 2-3 reviewers. Please note that oral presentations from students are welcome but are not given preferential treatment. Due to time/space limitations we may not be able to accept all papers and posters submitted.

Submit abstracts via Google Form: <https://forms.gle/9kuBcr2UWixsD3Ck8>

Notice of Decision via email: no later than January 1, 2023

Recognition Awards



**CALL FOR
NCTWS 2023**



AWARD



NOMINATIONS

Josh Johnson accepts Ken Wilson Memorial Award in 2022. Photo courtesy Diane Styers.

Each year at the annual meeting, the NCTWS publicly recognizes Chapter members and other individuals and groups, including students attending wildlife programs in North Carolina, for achievement in wildlife conservation, education, research, Chapter activities, and related endeavors. Award categories include a [Chapter Award](#) and a [Wildlife Conservation Award](#).

Nominations for the awards to be presented at the annual meeting must be received by the Awards Committee Chair **no later than December 2, 2022**. All chapter members are encouraged to nominate deserving candidates for these awards. Previously unselected nominees can be resubmitted. Nominations are kept active for two years after the year in which a nomination was made.

Contact Dr. Chris DePerno, Awards 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 [NCTWS website](#) for previous award winners, award descriptions, and nomination forms.

Recognition Awards



NCTWS 2022 **DAVE DUDEK** **WILDLIFE AWARD**



Presented to



Harry
Weisbecker
& Kai Picciano

Pictured Left to Right: Shannon Rabby (Co-Advisor), Harry Weisbecker, Kai Picciano Andrew Isenhower (Co-Advisor).
Photo courtesy Shannon Rabby.

Haywood Community College (HCC) fish and wildlife management technology students Harry Weisbecker and Kai Picciano received the annual Dave Dudek Wildlife Award on Wednesday, May 11th. The award is designed to recognize outstanding leadership and dedication to the wildlife management profession.

The award is named for a former HCC fish and wildlife management technology instructor. As well as the founder of the HCC student chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS) advisor Dave Dudek.

Recipients receive a framed certificate and a check for at least \$250 (amount varies) from the HCC Wildlife Club Endowment Fund.

Award winner names will be engraved upon a perpetual plaque and displayed in the Natural Resources Department. Harry and Kai are both great leaders of our chapter and well-deserving of this award!

Recognition Awards

NCTWS 2022

**STUDENT
ENDOWMENT
SCHOLARSHIP**



Presented to



**Allyson
Cowen**



Allyson holding a black sea bass (*Centropristis striata*) she caught on a boat from week one of summer camp.
Photo courtesy Cecelia Adkins.

My name is Allyson Cowen. I am from Jacksonville, NC and I am in the Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology (FWCB) program at NC State. I intend to minor in forestry management, and possibly intern with the National Forest Service. Eventually, I would like to work as a wildlife biologist out in the Pacific Northwest. Outside of my degree program, I am a part of the Geology Club, the Leopold Wildlife Club, and the Women's Rugby Club.

At the FWCB summer camp, I gained a wide variety of skills that would've taken years to accumulate otherwise. It was such a diverse experience, and I am extremely grateful for it. After attending, I am more interested in fisheries, and herpetology. The camp allowed me to see an expanded view of what I could do with my degree. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity that I will forever cherish.

Other Chapter News

Wanted: Poster Judges for NCTWS Annual Meeting

We are looking for 10-12 individuals to help judge 2-3 student posters. Poster judging should only take ~30 minutes. If interested, please contact Dr. Chris DePerno (chris_deperno@ncsu.edu).

NCTWS Now Accepting Applications for 2022 Professional Development Grant

BY PETE CAMPBELL

The NCTWS Chapter is pleased to announce the opening of the fall application period for the Chapter's Professional Development Grant. This grant program is normally funded on a semiannual basis upon approval by the Executive Board of the NCTWS. **However, since no grant was awarded this past spring, the board has agreed to increase the fall grant award from \$250 to \$500.** The objective of this program is to provide grants to NCTWS members to assist them in offsetting the cost of attending a professional conference, professional development workshop, training, or other appropriate professional development program. Preference for funding will be given to applicants who have been members of the NCTWS for at least 2 years, and/or who are, or have been, actively involved in the Chapter (e.g., officers, committee members, etc.), and/or who need to gain credits to maintain their TWS Certified Wildlife Biologist certification. Recipients must be members in good standing of the NCTWS at the time of application and attendance at the professional development event as certified by the TWS. The grant application can be found on the [Chapter's website](#). **All application materials must be received by 11:59 pm on October 14, 2022 for consideration.**

NCTWS Lifetime Memberships

GET YOUR LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP
TODAY FOR A ONE-TIME COST OF \$250!

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
- #012 – Liz Rutledge
- #013 – Scott Kiser
- #014 – Will Ricks
- #015 – Jason Allen
- #016 – Don Seriff
- #017 – Scott McNeely
- #018 – Allen Basala
- #019 – Matina Kalcounis-Rueppell
- #020 – Riddick Ricks
- #021 – Radmila Petric
- #023 – Lara Pacifici
- #024 – Silwal Saubhagya
- #025 – James McRacken, Jr.
- #026 – Brandon Sherrill
- #027 – Gabriela Garrison
- #028 – Cliff Bampton
- #029 – Steve Everhart
- #030 – This could be YOU!

INTERESTED IN LIFETIME BENEFITS?

1. You won't ever have to worry about renewing your Chapter membership again.
2. You get your name published in future issues of the *NC Wildlifer*.
3. You get a letter of appreciation from the Chapter & a signed certificate of membership from the President.
4. You are helping fund the good work of our organization & ensure our Chapter's financial sustainability into the future.

UPGRADE TODAY

DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN CHECK YOUR MEMBERSHIP STATUS ON- LINE, INCLUDING WHEN YOUR MEMBER EXPIRES IN 3 EASY STEPS?

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

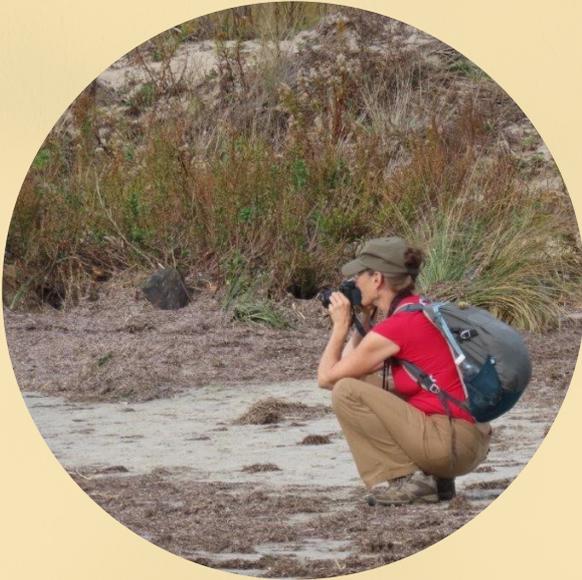
DID YOU FORGET THE PASSWORD?

It gives you access to the directory
& much more!

E-mail Colleen: colfenbu@vt.edu
to get the password!

NCTWS Member Spotlight

Nancy Lee Adamson



Visiting Oregon Inlet on the Outer Banks.
Photo courtesy Julien McCarthy.

OWNER, WILD BEE PLANTINGS, GREENSBORO, NC
(Owner since August 2021. I am also looking for a full-time position with a conservation organization)

EMAIL:
wildbeeplantings@gmail.com

EDUCATION:

- 2011 Ph.D. in Entomology (native bees), Virginia Tech
- 2000 M.S. in Natural Resources Sciences (native grasslands), University of Maryland
- 1992 M.A. in Environmental Geography, Ohio University

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

In a rural part of New Jersey in a multicultural neighborhood.

WHAT OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

Since arriving in NC in 2011, I worked for the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation as a partner biologist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. I promoted Farm Bill Programs that support enhancing diversity for pollinators and natural enemies of crop pests, along with other wildlife and for watershed protection. I took a similar job with an international research organization in Morocco in 2021. I had served in the Peace Corps in Tunisia, so spoke Arabic and French, and the position included more direct involvement with native pollinators on farms, but I did not end up staying. You can check out the few blogs I wrote about my time in Morocco at WildBeePlantings.com (still hoping to add the bit of travel I was able to do that included encounters with *Chamaeleo chamaeleo* and some other wildlife). Before Xerces, I had a lot of shorter term jobs mainly in environmental education or field botany. At one point, I didn't get what seemed like the perfect job for me (an internship promoting habitat gardens), and ended up at Echo Hill Outdoor School where I learned about experiential education. What seemed so disappointing at first ended up leading to one of the best experiences in my life.

WHY DID YOU GO INTO A WILDLIFE CAREER?

I grew up outdoors exploring the woods and creeks nearby. When I was in the Peace Corps in North Africa, I learned about desertification and larger scale environmental and cultural losses. I became interested in ecological restoration. This was about the time The Nature Conservancy was just starting to use fire to restore rare plant communities, something we take for granted these days. I was also interested

NCTWS Member Spotlight

in ethnobotany and had the chance to join an Organization for Tropical Studies course in Costa Rica, and then later worked as an intern in Guatemala supporting a local community's efforts to protect a communal forest when the Maya Biosphere was created in Guatemala, Belize, and Mexico. I was torn between work overseas and focusing more at home. When I went back to school in Maryland, I learned that upland bird habitats were at greatest risk at the time, due to loss of fallow farm fields, use of chemicals in agriculture, and more building, so I studied native grass establishment for restoration and started attending some of the Society for Ecological Restoration and also Orion Society events.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN WILDLIFE?

I spent my childhood outdoors catching frogs and exploring local woods and creeks, but it took a while for me to find my way to wildlife conservation as a career. I've been learning about native plants for restoration and all the wildlife they support since I went back to school for Environmental Geography.



I am a bit embarrassed to admit I would bring frogs home when my cousins visited, because one was afraid of them...
Photo courtesy Margie Adamson.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE GREATEST CHALLENGE FOR WILDLIFE PROFESSIONALS?

I think environmental literacy, the chance, especially for children, to just experience the natural world regularly and explore outside has profound effects on our health, well-being, and understanding of how important diversity and the natural communities around us are to all of us and other wildlife. A young couple moved into my neighborhood a couple years ago and the wife had actually interned at North Carolina Botanical Garden, but they installed astroturf around their house so they didn't have to mow the lawn. They said they were helping the environment by preventing the plastic from going into a landfill. They had no understanding of how their dog's poo would not be broken down by microorganisms in the soil, how water infiltrates into soil (reduces runoff, replenishes the water table), how the plastics would disintegrate and affect the air, soil, and water in our community (and all of us), and that their dog, who spends nearly all his time on the turf, could be harmed.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES?

I love photographing wildlife, especially bees, on native plants and learning more about connections between native plants and the wildlife they support. I have been reading Reed Noss' *Forgotten Grasslands of the South: Natural History and Conservation* and it includes a lot of paleontology (and current info) about wildlife, and I highly recommend it.

WHAT SONG, QUOTE, OR MOVIE TITLE SUMS UP YOUR LIFE PHILOSOPHY?

"To be native to a place we must learn to speak its language." —Robin Wall Kimmerer in *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*

Article

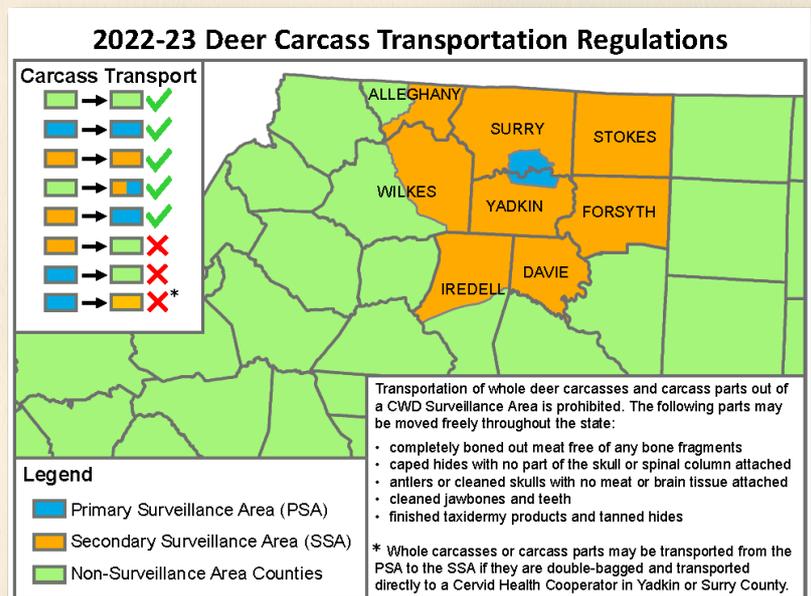
CWD in North Carolina: Fall 2022 Update

Following the confirmation of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in a Yadkin County deer on March 31, 2022, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission established CWD Surveillance Areas with special regulations in Yadkin and surrounding counties. In August a second deer tested CWD positive within a mile of the first CWD positive in northern Yadkin County. Because of the proximity to the first CWD detection, no changes to Surveillance Areas were made following this second detection.

Special regulations in CWD Surveillance Areas include a prohibition on wildlife feeding between January 2 and August 31st, except for bird feeders. During deer hunting season and in participating municipalities during urban archery season, wildlife feeding is legal. Carcass transportation restrictions prohibit the transport of high-risk carcass parts (i.e. central nervous system and bones) out of either Surveillance Area. Mandatory testing of hunter harvested deer is required during blackpowder and all or parts of gun season in the Surveillance Areas. Special restrictions apply to the use of deer lures/attractants that contain cervid excretions and fawn rehabilitation is prohibited.

There will be a concerted effort by the WRC to reach hunters who live in or hunt in Surveillance Area counties with CWD information via e-blasts, mailings, targeted social media, etc. Testing locations have been expanded greatly within the Surveillance Areas and include a combination of self-serve testing drop-off stations, NCWRC staffed check stations, and processors and taxidermists who collect samples as part of the Cervid Health Cooperator program.

While mandatory testing is required of all hunter harvested deer during particular weeks of season in Surveillance Areas, voluntary testing is available to hunters throughout deer season across the state. The WRC's updated [KNOW CWD website](#) serves as a resource to hunters looking for testing locations and all other CWD info.



Article



Photo courtesy Millstone 4-H Camp.

2022 Fur Fish & Game Rendezvous

**BY EMILY CALLICUTT | LAND PROTECTION SPECIALIST
ASSOCIATE WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST®
THREE RIVERS LAND TRUST**

In July of 2022, Three Rivers Land Trust had the opportunity to sponsor 11 campers at Millstone 4-H Camp's 38th annual Fur Fish and Game Rendezvous. Millstone 4-H Camp is located in Ellerbe, NC and has been in operation since 1938. They host a wide range of week-long residential camps, including traditional 4-H, horsemanship, and Fur Fish and Game Rendezvous.

Sponsorship funds were made available through the generous donation of the Susan Sharpe Memorial FFG Fund to TRLT, the purpose of this fund is to promote youth conservation and outdoor related activities.

The week-long Fur Fish and Game Rendezvous is designed to introduce campers to conservation, hunting, fishing, and a number of other outdoor activities. The camp is divided in two groups- beginner and advanced camp.

Beginner campers focus the first part of the week on completing the NC Wildlife Resource Commission's hunter education course and, after passing the exam, leave camp with their hunter's safety certificate. Campers also participate in canoeing, riflery, archery, snake ID, fishing, orienteering and much

Article

more! Beginner's camp is designed to introduce campers to the outdoors and give them the basic skills to continue these activities at home. Thanks to instructors from NC State University, The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Wake County Wildlife Club, NC 4-H, and the North Carolina Forestry Service, campers are exposed to a wide range of topics in the conservation field and learn more about careers in conservation.

Advanced campers come to camp having already completed their hunter safety certificate, and get to focus more on putting those skills to work. Campers are taught about trapping, tracking, prescribed burning, wilderness survival, and participate in a crow hunt. A highlight of the week for most campers is the crow hunt that takes place Wednesday morning.

I was able to join the crow hunt as a guide for campers on Wednesday. I arrived at camp at 5:30am and we loaded groups of three campers and three guides into vans, we drove to different locations around the sandhills gamelands hoping for a successful hunt. Campers were excited for the opportunity to put some of the shooting sports skills they learned that week to the test. After a morning of hunting where campers were able to harvest a few crows, we returned to Terry Sharpe's house for a lunch of deer burgers and vegetables, and campers tried their hand at fishing with homemade cane poles in the creek.

When talking to campers about their time at camp, for many in the beginner camp, this was the first time they learned about conservation and how it connects to the things they enjoy doing. They were excited by all the opportunities to be outdoors and learn about careers in the conservation field. There are no electronics allowed at Millstone, and many campers expressed how nice it was to be able to have fun with others and not have to worry about checking social media and text messages. One camper I spoke to said "I'm so happy I was able to come to camp, I can't wait to start hunting and fishing and being outdoors more when I get home". I think that proves that Millstone is helping create the next generation of conservationists, and I hope they continue for many more years to come.

If you would like to help send a kid to camp next year, please contact emily@trlt.org or checks can be mailed to Three Rivers Land Trust, 204 E. Innes St. Suite 120 Salisbury, NC 28144. Please include camp on the memo line.

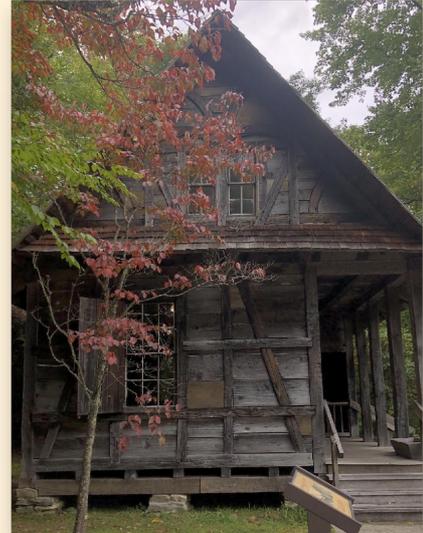
#ExploreNC



Waterfall near the Cradle of National Forestry



My mom & I exploring Pisgah National Forest



Historic building in the Cradle of National Forestry

Pisgah Ranger District

BY HANNE PARKS

Have you ever visited the Pisgah Ranger District? Just a short drive from Asheville, Hendersonville, Brevard, and Waynesville, the district has plenty of opportunities for gorgeous outdoor recreation. The Pisgah Ranger District covers 150,000 acres of Pisgah National Forest, with elevations ranging from 2,000 to 6,410 feet.

You can explore the forests through hiking, biking, horseback riding, driving, camping, or picnicking! All depending on how long you want to poke around in the woods. Scenic spots include Looking Glass Falls, Looking Glass Rock, Twin Falls, and Cove Creek Falls. Stop by the Pisgah Ranger District Visitor Center to find out which trails are perfect for you! If you are interested in horseback riding, Pisgah Forest Stables has guided horseback trail rides through the forest scenery.

Another interesting spot in the district is the Cradle of Forestry, around 20 minutes north via 64 from the visitor center. On forested, paved, easy walking trails, you'll

find historic pieces of the first school of forestry in the United States.

Another interesting spot in the district is the Cradle of Forestry, around 20 minutes north via 64 from the visitor center. On forested, paved, easy walking trails, you'll find historic pieces of the first school of forestry in the United States. The school was opened in 1898 by Carl Alwin Schenck, who managed the forests on the Biltmore Estate property. Forestry education programs were essential to adding reforestation and sustained-yield management strategies which increased the sustainability of all industries that use trees (lumber, pulp, paper, etc.). We would have a lot less of our beautiful forests without forest management education.

The Pisgah Ranger District is the perfect spot for a fall getaway. The autumn leaves peak in mid-October, but the forests are breathtaking throughout the season (and every other time of year!)

Did You Know?

BY HANNE PARKS

The U.S. Capitol Christmas tree is coming from Pisgah National Forest! The tree is a 78 foot red spruce and it will be moved around the state throughout November before being delivered to Washington, DC. The tree will travel from the mountains to the coast, making 16 stops across NC and some of Virginia. Check out when it will be in a town near you [HERE!](#)

Red spruce is a high elevation conifer, often associated with Fraser fir. Want to know if it's a fir or a spruce? Shake its hand! If you hold a branch and it pokes you, it's a spikey spruce. If you hold a branch and it is soft, it's a friendly fir! If you visit Pisgah National Forest this fall, try finding a red spruce!

Upcoming Events

The Wildlife Society's 29th Annual Conference | November 6-10, 2022



SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

Experience TWS live & in person this fall!

Nov. 6 - 10, 2022

The Wildlife Society will convene its 29th Annual Conference this November, live and in-person for the first time in three years! Against the backdrop of Eastern Washington's mountains, Spokane is the perfect place to gather for a week of learning, networking and engaging with peers and colleagues from across North America and beyond. Our last two conferences in the Pacific Northwest have drawn over 2,000 attendees, so we expect no shortage of educational and training opportunities through our program of symposia, contributed papers, posters, workshops and more. We hope you will consider joining us for this exciting return to our traditional format! Check back here for news, updates and other information throughout the year. We'll also be making conference announcements on wildlife.org and in our other TWS communication channels. See you in November!

For more information, visit: <https://twconference.org/>

Upcoming Events

Come Join Us for a NCTWS Executive Board Meeting in 2022!

Members are welcome to attend in person or via Zoom. Meetings usually run from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and are scheduled for the following dates:

October 19th - in person, location TBD in piedmont region and will be posted prior to meeting, virtual option will be available

December 7th - virtual TEAMS meeting, link will be posted prior to meeting

Contact Liz Hillard at liz@wildlandsnetwork.org or (217) 840-4613 for meeting details (agenda, Zoom invitation, etc.)

22nd Annual North American Association Pollinator Protection Campaign International Conference

October 18-20, 2022, Location TBA

Learn more [HERE](#)

76th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

October 23-26, 2022, Charleston, WV

Learn more [HERE](#)

14th Biennial Longleaf Conference

October 25-28, 2022, Wilmington, NC

Learn more [HERE](#)

29th The Wildlife Society Annual Conference

November 6-10, 2022, Spokane, WA

Learn more [HERE](#)

Life After Retirement



**DENNIS STEWART
RETIRED WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE
SERVICE**

Can you believe I still have to pick a Saturday to go swan hunting with my son?
Photo courtesy Dennis Stewart.

My story about life after retirement is not loaded with stories of cruises and travels to far away, exotic places. Rather, it is more of a story about the life of an ordinary person after a life of work.

Probably a story that many retirees could tell but each would have unique twists and turns in it.

As I entered into the fall of 2015 I realized I was approaching one of those crossroads in life that cannot be ignored. I was getting much older by the day, my ailing Dad was requiring higher levels of care, and I was beginning to wonder about life after retirement. What would I do? I made the decision to retire in January, 2016. I didn't retire because I hated my job or my supervisors were too difficult to work with anymore. I simply chose the path that I felt I needed to follow at that time, mostly based on family matters.

Shortly after retiring I formed a consulting business to help me stay connected to the wildlife profession. After all, I retired from a job – not the wildlife profession. The consulting work has been enjoyable and jobs come along at about the right pace. I have mostly worked with agencies and businesses regarding environmental regulations, laws, and policies but my business is set up to do anything from light tractor work to completing applications, reports, plans, and other endeavors.

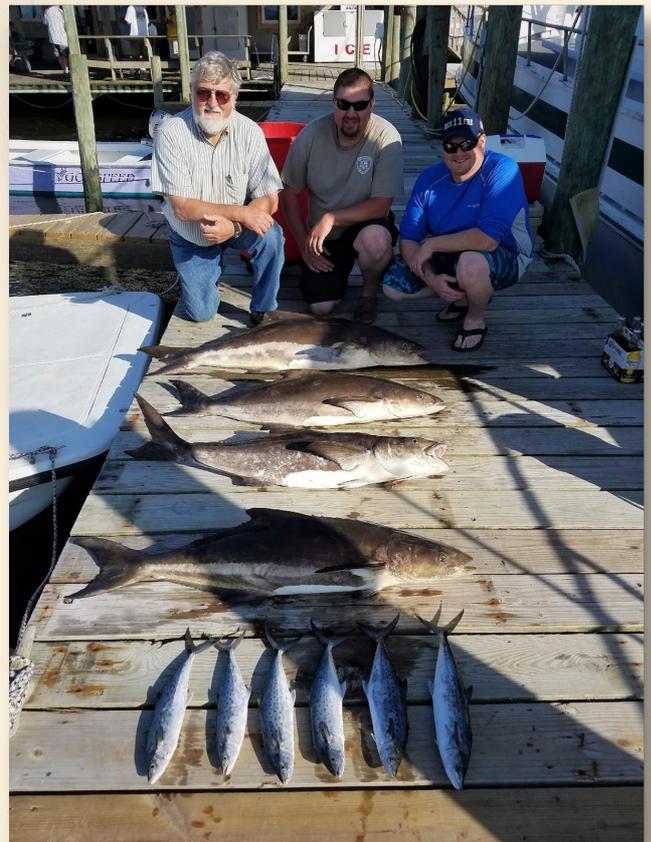
Another thing I did shortly after retirement was purchase a tractor to use on my farm and on my leased land. I ended up with a 55 horsepower, 4-wheel drive tractor with a front end loader, box blade, and 6 ft bush hog to go along with my old 641 Ford tractor and farm equipment. That addition has really helped make the work more efficient.

Life After Retirement

My sister and I cared for our father until his passing in July 2017. I ended up buying the home place and started making plans to remodel the house. The house was remodeled and my plan was to use it for my “hunt lodge” when I traveled to work on my farm, hunt, fish and trap. However, about the time I was finishing the remodeling, my son and his family moved into the house. Needless to say it hasn't been my hunt lodge but it has been a home to them (and I have a bunk room). And, I try to go there often to hunt, fish, trap, and work on the land.

In the fall of 2018, I had my first encounter with a body beginning to wear out (aka: old age). My shoulders started me on the “downhill slope”. After many weeks of physical therapy and for the first time in my life, I entered a hospital for shoulder repair surgery. After 6 months of therapy, that side of my body was almost normal but then the right shoulder quit working. Slightly under a year from the first surgery that shoulder had to be replaced. So, nearly 3 of my 6.5 years since retirement

Even my deer hunting has improved since retiring.
Photo courtesy William Stewart.



A good day fishing is better than a bad day at the office. Did I get that right?
Photo courtesy William Stewart.

have been dealing with two rounds of shoulder surgery and all of the before and after therapy. My main question before any surgery was whether or not I would be able to shoot a gun or draw my bow again. The answer is, with lots of physical therapy – yes. The pictures shown illustrate some of the successes I have had since retirement. All but one of these trips occurred after surgery! Over the years, one of my passions has been assisting with scout programs at the local, district, and council levels. I have served in our local scout troop for nearly 28 years and as Scoutmaster of the troop most of that time. I stay pretty busy with troop activities and assisting with other scout training and events. Due to the “infirmities of age” camping and doing all of the fun, outdoor things have become more difficult so I may have to consider an “office volunteer” position soon.

Life After Retirement

Speaking of volunteering, I thought I would be volunteering to help on refuges, game lands or wherever doing whatever I could. I can't seem to find enough time to volunteer even a day per week. In fact, I have been so busy with various projects I don't know how I ever had time to work. I plan to do better with volunteering within the next year.

One of the really great things about retirement is that I have spent more time with my kids and grandkids. My wife and I have three granddaughters ranging in age from 6 - 14 and three grandsons ranging in age from 1 - 8. It has been a really great experience to watch them grow and develop, attend school events, dance recitals, kindergarten graduations, and birthdays. Each one is special and totally unique.

That sums up my life since retirement. Although far less active in the profession than I thought I would be, I still consider myself to be a wildlife biologist but now I think I am supposed to put retired in parentheses. Not. Part of me wishes that this could have been a more exciting, dashing, daring story but the other part says no - a nice ordinary retirement is OK.



Few things are better than a cold morning on a slough in duck season. Photo courtesy William Stewart.

“

"I still consider myself to be a wildlife biologist but now I think I am supposed to put retired in parentheses. Not."



I can't imagine getting too old to go turkey hunting. Photo courtesy William Stewart.



Chapter Vision Statement

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

Fall colors on Appalachian river

Steven Ball
Copy Editor

Dr. Rada Petric
Associate Editor

Kelsey Pistner
Associate Editor

Christine Fox
Assistant Editor

Holly Ferreira
Assistant Editor



Do you have a research or management project you think your fellow NCTWS members would enjoy hearing about? Do you have an idea for a new item in the newsletter? Or perhaps you would like to submit an article for publication? If so, please let us know! Thanks for reading!

- The NCTWS Editing Team

Connect with us!

www.nctws.org

Follow us on Twitter: @NCTWS