



North Carolina Chapter  
The Wildlife Society

Fall 2023

Excellence in Wildlife Stewardship Through Science and Education

# NC Wildlifer



Photo of a fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*), courtesy of Jill Yelverton.

## At a glance:



### 2024 Annual Meeting

Overlooking the town of Black Mountain. Photo courtesy of Kelsey Pistner



### Summer Camp Scholarship Winner

Griffin Crisp. Photo courtesy of Lauren Riggins.



### Explore NC & Did You Know

Photo courtesy of Hanne Parks.



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## NCTWS Executive Board

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# President's Column



Gabriela Garrison in Person County.

## GABRIELA'S GREETINGS BY GABRIELA GARRISON

Happy Fall! I'm not entirely sure how the summer slipped by so quickly, but here we are in October. The mornings are starting to get chilly, and evening temperatures are hovering in the 50's – no complaints here. I used to enjoy some seasons more than others, but now, I appreciate each season for its own unique attributes. My mom grew up in southern California; the weather there is mostly mild and sunny, so the change from one season to the next is subtle. That's great for some, but I appreciate when you can see the seasonal transitions. That makes me excited for what the coming months will bring. Right now, that is cooler weather, beautiful leaves, and warm sweaters...though I could do without the shorter days!

You may have noticed that we have not published the typical number of newsletters this year. We are working through some transitions and need help

on our Communications Committee. This is a truly unique and wonderful opportunity to get involved in our Chapter. If you've been interested but have not determined where you fit, this could be fate knocking on your door. The NC Wildlifer newsletter is one of the most important avenues we have for information dissemination to our membership. In these newsletters, we give details of our annual meetings, recognize individuals who have received awards, highlight North Carolina's natural areas, and much more. The editorial team is a wonderfully creative group of individuals that work hard to produce this newsletter. I hope you will give some thought to becoming part of this crew and reach out if you have interest. Even though it seems quite distant, our Annual Meeting will be here before you know it. We will be in Black Mountain at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly from April 2nd through the 4th. Our Program Committee is working hard



# President's Column

**"I want to leave you with a word of thanks for all you do to support our many fish and wildlife resources."**



Danny Ray passing the goat to Gabriela Garrison.  
Photo courtesy of Andrea Shipley

to plan a great meeting that will be both educational and interesting. The theme is 'Partnerships in Conservation for At-risk Species'. A call for abstracts was recently emailed so I hope you will submit a proposal to discuss any work that is relevant to the theme. On that note, if you have any thoughts or activities you'd like to see happen at the annual meeting, we'd love to hear them. The Program Committee wants this meeting to reflect our membership and their needs...and the only way for that to occur is to get your feedback, so please reach out.

I want to leave you with a word of thanks for all you do to support our many fish and wildlife resources. I have friends that are 'wildlife people', and friends that would not be labeled as such. One of my non-wildlife friends recently came for a visit at my house. At this stage in the year, my yard has nice autumn bloom, but a lot of plants have passed their peak. As many of us wildlifers do, we skip yard work in the fall and keep the leaves and stems to provide habitat. I explained that to my non-wildlife friend...and even though I think I detailed it well, I'm not sure it made sense to her.

So, I want to thank this wildlife community for all you do to protect and truly appreciate the beautiful resources we have here in North Carolina. One of my favorite Rachel Carson quotes explains this sentiment: "To stand at the edge of the sea, to sense the ebb and flow of the tides, to feel the breath of a mist moving over a great salt marsh, to watch the flight of shore birds that have swept up and down the surf lines of the continents for untold thousands of years, to see the running of the old eels and the young shad to the sea, is to have knowledge of things that are as nearly eternal as any earthly life can be."





# 2024 Annual Meeting

**YMCA Blue Ridge  
Assembly  
Black Mountain, NC  
April 2-4, 2024**



Overlook of Blue Ridge,  
courtesy of YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly.

**Please join your fellow wildlife professionals at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain, April 2-4, 2024! Next year's theme is 'Partnerships in Habitat Conservation for At-risk Species'. Mark your calendars and plan for an engaging conference at a beautiful location with fun social activities and auctions!**



Main building of the YMCA,  
courtesy of YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly.



# 2024 Annual Meeting

## *Call for Abstracts*

We invite you to submit an abstract for a contributed oral or poster presentation to the 2024 North Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting. The theme this year is **Partnerships in Habitat Conservation for At-risk Species**.

**Contributed Oral Presentations:** We invite abstracts for sessions of oral presentations on topics germane to Partnerships in Habitat Conservation for At-Risk Species including, but not exclusively, regarding the following topics:

- Fire/Disturbance ecology
- Collaborative efforts of a specific species or similar group of species as it relates to habitat conservation
- Land management techniques
- On the ground habitat conservation project success highlights

**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 December 15, 2023.**

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:** [Click Here for Abstract Submission Link](#)

**Notice of Decision via email:** **no later than February 1, 2024**



# 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 2024 Professional Development Grant*

BY PETE CAMPBELL

The NC Chapter of TWS is pleased to announce the opening of this year's application period for the Chapter's Professional Development (PD) Grant. In past years, the Chapter provided a spring and fall PD grant, with each grant awarding \$500 to the recipient. Given the increase in the actual costs required to attend professional development courses and opportunities, the Executive Board approved the recommendations from the Grants and Finance Committee on the following changes to the PD grants program: **1) Increase the amount of the PD grant to \$1,000, 2) Provide one PD grant annually, and 3) Extend the time period that the recipient can use the funds from the PD grant.** The objective of this program is to provide a grant to NCTWS members to assist them in offsetting the cost of attending a professional conference, professional development workshop, training, mentoring opportunity, publication fees, research project, or other appropriate professional development program. This grant can be used through **September 1, 2024**. 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 documentation that the grant funds were used for the purpose stated in the application must be provided prior to the funds being transferred to recipient. The grant application can be found on the Chapter's website [http://nctws.org/wordpress/nctws\\_grants](http://nctws.org/wordpress/nctws_grants). **All application materials must be received by 11:59 pm on November 30th, 2023 for consideration.**



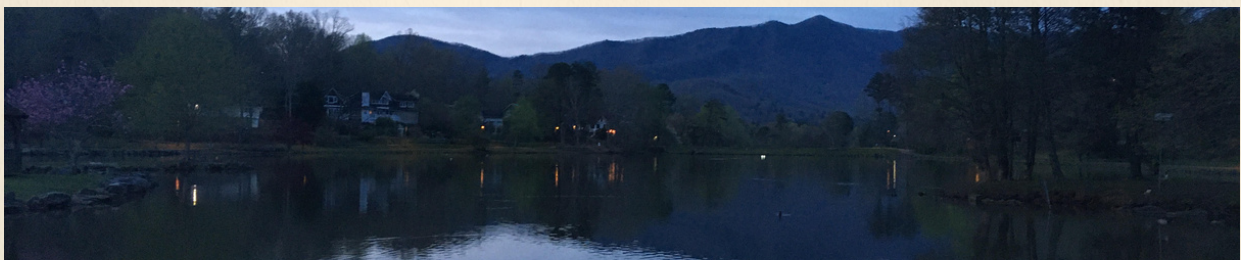
# Other Chapter News

## *North Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society Recognition Awards for 2024*

BY CHRIS DEPERNO

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** ([http://nctws.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2019NominationForm\\_ChapterAward.pdf](http://nctws.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2019NominationForm_ChapterAward.pdf)) and a **Wildlife Conservation Award** ([http://nctws.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2019NominationForm\\_WildlifeConservationAward.pdf](http://nctws.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2019NominationForm_WildlifeConservationAward.pdf)). Nominations for the awards to be presented at the annual meeting must be **received by the Awards Committee Chair no later than December 1, 2023**. 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](mailto:chris_deperno@ncsu.edu)) if you have questions, need additional information, or **to submit a nomination**. Consult the NCTWS website (<http://www.nctws.org>) for previous award winners, award descriptions, and nomination forms.



Lake Tomahawk. Photo courtesy of Kelsey Pistner.



# 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 – Rada Petric  
#022 – Lara Pacifici  
#023 – Worth McAlister IV  
#024 – Saubhagya Silwal  
#025 – James McRacken Jr.  
#026 – Brandon Sherrill  
#027 – Gabriela Garrison  
#028 – Clifford Bampton  
#029 – Steven Everhart  
#030 – Kelsey Pistner  
#031 – Rachael Urbanek  
#032 – Katie Proctor  
#033 – Nancy Adamson  
#034 – Bryon LeVan  
#035- **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](http://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](mailto:colfenbu@vt.edu)  
to get the password!



# NCTWS Member Spotlight

## Todd Menke



Todd is preparing lidocaine hydrochloride to numb the tails of the beavers prior to attaching transmitters for a research project at Fort Liberty where 100 beavers were live captured using trapping (cable restraints). Courtesy of USDA Wildlife Services.

### **CURRENT POSITION AND EMPLOYER:**

Assistant State Director/Supervisory Wildlife Biologist, USDA Wildlife Services, Raleigh, NC

**EMAIL:** [todd.a.menke@usda.gov](mailto:todd.a.menke@usda.gov)

### **EDUCATION:**

B.S. in Natural Resources, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.....go Cornhuskers!!!

### **HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WITH THIS EMPLOYER?**

31 years – so long that the agency actually changed its name from Animal Damage Control when I started to Wildlife Services.

### **WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?**

Nelson, Nebraska

### **WHAT OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?**

I have been a volunteer hunter education instructor for 36 years both in North Carolina and Nebraska. I helped start the

trapper education program in North Carolina and have been a volunteer trapper education instructor since inception.

### **WHY DID YOU GO INTO A WILDLIFE CAREER?**

Growing up I always thought I wanted to be a conservation officer until after doing some ride-a-longs, when I learned that career path dealt more with people than wildlife. I still have lots of respect for enforcement officers, as I know their job is challenging every day, especially in today's society. The more I volunteered the more I realized the paths one can take in wildlife are endless!!! I thought I would try something within fisheries and my first paying wildlife job was a summer internship with the Kansas Department Wildlife and Parks. I spent three months catching largemouth bass in private ponds and then transported them to Lake El Dorado State Park as part of their restocking efforts. That was my first experience of how effective electro fishing can be to monitor fish populations. Most farm ponds in Kansas have too many largemouth bass and grass carp!!!

### **HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN WILDLIFE?**

Yes growing up trapping, hunting, and fishing, I knew I wanted to do something outdoors. I didn't discover my wildlife career path until my second summer internship while attending college. I took the first wildlife damage management class ever being offered and as part of that class, the students reviewed the draft Prevention and Control of Wildlife Damage two volume series handbook that is still widely used in the field today. I was also actively involved with the Wildlife Club and from those two experiences I learned about USDA Wildlife Services. Those who know me, understand I am a Wildlife Biologist by profession, but I am a trapper by trade. When I learned that I could make a career out of trapping I started doing ride-a-longs with the Nebraska Wildlife Services personnel. Then I applied for the first ever summer internship program being offered by USDA Wildlife Services. They had two internships and as the top candidate,



# NCTWS Member Spotlight

I got to choose which of the two locations I wanted to work at. My choices were Mississippi or North Carolina. I chose North Carolina since I had never been to the east coast and have been here ever since.

## **WHAT SPECIES OR HABITAT DO YOU KNOW MOST ABOUT OR WORK WITH THE MOST?**

Beaver for work and all furbearer species as a hobby as I love the challenge of trapping them all.

## **WHAT WAS YOUR MOST EMBARRASSING EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD?**

I thought that first wildlife paying job would be my last! I was the crew leader and had three other young students like me collecting fish. We ran two crews and after I sent the other crew out, I finished loading the gear into the truck while my co-worker was hooking up the boat/trailer. We didn't go a mile down the road and my co-worker was driving when I asked him if he secured the trailer to the hitch. He said, "Why do you ask?" and I said, "Look at your window!" The boat/trailer was fixing to pass us.....I didn't know how much that electro fishing boat cost, but I knew it wasn't cheap and figured that boat would be flipping over in front of us. It veered off the road and ended up in the ditch with just a few minor scratches. Being the team leader, I had to call the Fisheries Biologist to explain. He appreciated my honesty so much that he used that example when I asked for a letter of reference for my next internship. I found out my co-worker had never hooked up a trailer before and didn't know to attach the pin in the hole of the hitch to secure it so the first bump we hit here comes the boat/trailer trying to pass us. To this day, I still double check trailer hitches even if I don't hook them up.

## **WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE GREATEST MISUNDERSTANDING THAT THE PUBLIC HAS ABOUT WILDLIFE?**

Unfortunately not only is trapping misunderstood by the public but many in or

going into the wildlife field don't understand that trapping is conservation in the purest form. The cruelest thing we can do to wildlife is fail to manage it and yes that means harvesting wildlife is a key component of wildlife management.

## **WHAT WAS YOUR MOST THRILLING TRAPPING, HUNTING, OR FISHING EXPERIENCE**

Every day trapping is like Christmas morning as you never know what surprise will be waiting for you! When I first started trapping as a youngster, it was all about having adult responsibilities, being on my own, and doing grown-up things!!! The pride one feels when accomplishing something on your own is a great reward. Now I enjoy mentoring others and seeing the excitement with their first catch. Hard work will help you achieve unthinkable personal goals like when I caught over 200 river otters in one trapping season or my personal daily best catch of 13 coyotes, 21 fox, and 6 bobcats!

## **WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE JUST STARTING OUT IN WILDLIFE?**

When you find that career path that you are passionate about you will never work a day in your life! I am an eternal optimist always trying to maintain a positive attitude. We should all try to learn to appreciate all of our differences. Remember, when you are frustrated your anger goes up and your listening goes down. No one can have everything just be happy with what you do have. Make up your mind to be happy and learn to find pleasure in simple things:

**"Work like you don't need money,  
Love like you've never been hurt,  
And dance like no one's watching,  
Happiness is a journey, Not a destination."**







Photo courtesy of Mike Pinder.

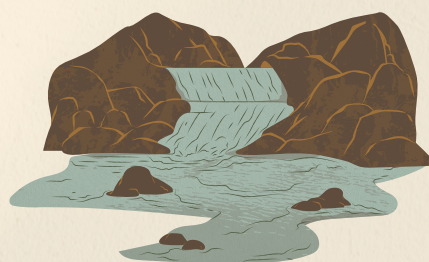
## *Species Spotlight: Roanoke Logperch*

**BY SEIRRA BENFIELD & THOMAS RUSS**

The Roanoke Logperch is a small but spunky fish; they grow to a maximum of only 8 inches in length, and have a beautiful stripes and an orange dorsal fin. Still, it's a fish most people would overlook. This little river critter is a unique treasure, and has become an underdog champion for other little river critters like it. Roanoke Logperch are a federally endangered fish species native to the Dan and Mayo river basins of North Carolina. These water bodies between North Carolina and Virginia are the only places in the world where they exist in the wild.

These little guys are members of the darter family, and actually grow to be much larger than many of their cousins. They use their long noses to roll around pebbles on the riverbed in search of food. This behavior is not only an impressive show of strength and smarts for such a little animal, but it is also incredibly entertaining to observe.

Habitat loss and degradation, largely due to pollution, sedimentation, and impoundments, have led to the near total loss of this unique animal. Preservation efforts undertaken by North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) biologists and their partners have led to some great victories in protecting this fish. One such project involved the removal of a municipal dam and construction of a fish ladder. In 2020, Lindsey Bridge Dam near Madison was lowered, and multiple fish weirs were installed, which slows water flow to allow fish to travel and decreases bank erosion. This has opened 50 river miles for natural recolonization throughout the upper Dan River in Stokes County.





# Article

Another victory is the successful propagation and stocking of hundreds of individuals with the help of Conservation Fisheries Inc. (CFI). This organization has supported restoration efforts by effectively spawning juvenile logperch and sending them to a NCWRC hatchery, the Conservation Aquaculture Center, to continue growing to stocking size. Several hundred of these individuals have been released to help bolster wild populations and increase the likelihood of spawning success.

Recently, the NCWRC was able to acquire a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to reintroduce this species to the upper Mayo River. There is adequate habitat for the fish there, but dams have prevented their return to this section of their historic range. A private landowner, The Piedmont Land Conservancy, agreed to allow NCWRC access to its property. The Mayo River State Park assisted in today's restocking effort, filling in one more puzzle piece to this restoration process. About 100 individuals were stocked into this area only a few weeks ago, with the hope that they will become established and help add a new extension to the population.



Photo courtesy of NCWRC.

Biologists have identified sedimentation, channel modification and instream barriers such as dams for limiting the species' ability to recolonize. Increased sediment affects the species' ability to forage for food. Dams prevent migration back to their natural habitats in the upper Mayo River. So, the fish were stocked upstream of the Washington Mill and Avalon dams in the Mayo River. Biologists say the location has the highest quality habitat in the upper Mayo River.



Photo courtesy of NCWRC.

Roanoke Logperch is one of the first species being reintroduced through a 50-year Safe Harbor Agreement between the USFWS and NCWRC that includes 21 imperiled aquatic species. The NCWRC can extend the assurances of the Safe Harbor Agreement to enrolled non-federal property owners for species reintroduction. This project is one example of the vital support of private landowners and dam owners on species conservation efforts.

Since 2019, NCWRC, USFWS, CFI, and Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources have been working toward saving Roanoke Logperch from extinction and have made significant progress. Targeted surveys, dam removals and propagation and augmentations have greatly improved the status of this rare fish. These rare gems are fascinating little fish making an inspiring recovery, bringing together many hands for the purpose of preserving an underdog.





Black Racer in Nags Head Woods



Boardwalk over a Brackish Marsh



Jockey's Ridge Sunset

## Nags Head Woods

**BY HANNE PARKS**

Did you know one of the largest remaining maritime forests on the East Coast lies in Kill Devil Hills, NC? In the Nags Head Woods Preserve, live oaks, hickories, and loblolly pines (some over 300 years old!) provide relief from the fierce sun in the Outer Banks. Rocking chairs on the deck of the visitor center invite you to slow down and enjoy the sounds, smells, and sites of the forest. On a hot summer day, Nags Head Woods Preserve is an excellent spot for a walk or a picnic in the cool shade, away from the noise of the beach traffic. You can explore the Preserve on over 8 miles of walking trails of mostly short loops. An ADA accessible trail hosts a butterfly garden, maritime swamp forest, freshwater pond, and marsh overlook. Between the short trails and variety of sites, the Preserve is a great place for a family nature walk. Pets are welcome on a few of the trails. You can also fish at 2 designated fishing piers with a license. Nags Head Woods Preserve hosts seven total plant communities, including the globally rare maritime deciduous forest. The Preserve is home to a plethora of plant, bird, reptile, amphibian, fish, and mammal species, providing ample opportunity for birding or “herping” or “botanizing”. When I visited the Preserve, I saw a bald eagle fishing, a pair of ruby-crowned kinglets foraging in a wax myrtle, a black racer curled in pine litter, elderly hickories, and some very impressive sassafras trees. The Preserve is just north of many iconic Outer Banks stops, such as Jockey’s Ridge State Park, the Wright Brothers National Memorial, Jennette’s Pier, and Coquina Beach. Directly inland lies Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, home of some of the largest black bears in North America. The Outer Banks is packed with activity options, and Nags Head Woods Preserve is a lesser known spot well worth the visit.



# Did You Know?

BY HANNE PARKS

The towering dunes of Jockey's Ridge shield Nags Head Woods from extreme ocean winds, allowing the forest to thrive. Jockey's Ridge State Park hosts the tallest migratory dune remaining on the Atlantic Coast. The dunes, believed to have formed 3,000 to 4,000 years ago, are an example of a Medaño, which describes shifting sands lacking vegetation. As the winds shift from northeast during the winter and southwest during the summer, the sand shifts back and forth, never blowing away entirely. If you visit the Outer Banks, climb the mighty dunes for stellar views of both the sound and the ocean, but be prepared to get sandy!



# Upcoming Events



The Wildlife Society will convene its Annual Conference this November in person! **Enjoy your Waterfront stay at The Galt House Hotel in Louisville, KY!** is the perfect place to gather for a week of learning, networking and engaging with peers and colleagues from across North America and beyond. 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 amazing Conference! Check back here for news, updates and other information throughout the year. We'll also be making conference announcements on [wildlife.org](https://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:

**December 6th** virtual TEAMS meeting, link will be posted prior to meeting.

Contact Gabriela Garrison at [gabriela.garrison@ncwildlife.org](mailto:gabriela.garrison@ncwildlife.org) or (910) 409-7350 for meeting details (agenda, Zoom invitation, etc.)

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### 45th Annual Gopher Tortoise Council Meeting

November 16-19, 2023, Tifton, GA

Learn more [HERE](#)

### 47th Annual SEDSG Meeting

February 11-14, 2024, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

Learn more [HERE](#)

### 29th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network and 34th Annual Colloquium on the Conservation of Mammals in the Southeastern U.S.

February 14-16, 2024, Hilton Head, SC

Learn more [HERE](#)

### 2024 Annual SEPARC Meeting

N February 29-March 3, 2024, Camp McDowell, Nauvoo, AL

Learn more [HERE](#)

### TWS Southeastern Student Conclave

March 14-16, 2024

Host: Murray State University Student Chapter



# Life After Retirement



**DR. STEVEN EVERHART  
RETIRED MAJ USA MEDICAL  
SERVICE CORPS**

Paragliding outfitters we used in Zermatt, Switzerland in October 2022. Photo Credit GoPro camera by FlyZermatt.

What is retirement? Really? My life has been blessed with a wonderful wife and son who have supported my varied interests and vocational detours. These have included electronics technician (US Air Force), computer programmer and systems analyst, biological research technician, teaching assistant, environmental consultant, university professor and administrator, preventive medicine officer/environmental science officer (US Army National Guard), real estate agent and educator, environmental permit reviewer (NC Wildlife Resources Commission), and environmental regulator (NC Division of Coastal Management). A few of these occurred at the same time!

Although still employed in higher education at the time, my first

“retirement” came in 2001 when I transferred from the NC Army National Guard to the US Army Re\*red Reserve. My official retirement from Campbell

University and from the state of NC was in 2011. However, I had been and continue to teach in the Campbell Adult and On-Line Education program since leaving fulltime higher education in 2003. I teach two introductory environmental science courses for them. So... am I really retired?

My wife, Barbara, and I love to travel and that has been our primary endeavor since 2011. Teaching on-line fits well with our travels since it can be done from anywhere in the world if my computer and a hotspot are available.



# Life After Retirement

Also, my military retirement allows us free flights just about anywhere in the world on military aircraft, facilitating more travel opportunities. Although some of these are chartered commercial aircraft, we are partial to flying on the military cargo planes, like the C-17, which allow us to move around and even sleep on the floor. A sleeping mat, along with a small backpack and carry-on bag make for exciting and comfortable travel.

We have enjoyed traveling throughout the southeastern US and to a few western states. Our road trip from Albuquerque to Las Vegas and back on Route 66 was a dream come true. Two nice vacations in Hawaii were warm and wonderful. The couple of nights in Alaska on two separate occasions, when our space-available flights took us there coming back from overseas, were frigid. More US destinations are on our “to visit” list.

International travel has become our passion. Since 2014, we have tried to spend 3-4 weeks in early fall traveling outside the US. From then through 2019 we enjoyed time in: Germany, France, Italy, Czech Republic, England, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam.

The pandemic of 2020 was a hinderance but in late 2021 our travels overseas resumed with a visit to Germany and England to research some of our ancestral home villages and churches. This was an especially rewarding trip because we found lots of church records and meaningful information about our families.

Switzerland in 2022 was a first for us. What a great country it is with some of the most beautiful scenery we have seen. As an ornithologist, I have always dreamed of what it was like to fly, and we both got the chance to do just that at the foot of the Matterhorn, paragliding (in tandem with a pilot of course) above the village of Zermatt. What an exhilarating experience! It was the most exciting, fun thing I have ever done. The 2022 trip concluded with visits to Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Belgium, The Netherlands, and Germany.

Running has been a part of my life on and off since high school, so it is no wonder that I continue to use it as a primary means of staying somewhat fit. Strength training two days per week complements my four days of run training. I run 8 to 10 races per year, mostly 5k with occasional 5 mi trail races. As we are septuagenarians, fitness is necessary for the kind of traveling we like to do.

Faith is an important part of my life. I continue to serve in various lay positions in my church and have volunteered with NC Baptists on Missions for hurricane recovery and re-build projects.

Retirement??? If it was any more fun, I couldn't stand it.



Field trip to Mattmuskeet banding ducks in February 1977. On the right is Dr. Everhart.



# Scholarship Winner

## 2023 NCTWS Summer Camp Scholarship Winner:

Summer Camp was such a great opportunity to gain hands-on experience with a variety of skills that will help me in my future career. I learned a lot of technical skills, such as becoming trapper certified through working with Todd Menke from the USDA, setting up mist nests for bird banding, or PIT tagging fish and reptiles. I also expanded my identification skills of various plants and songbirds and improved my communication skills with my colleagues and learned to be more flexible in the field.

Summer Camp also expanded my interests because before Summer Camp I wanted to focus my career on terrestrial animals, but after working with Drs. Buckel and Cope during coastal and freshwater fish week, I have a new interest and appreciation for fish and would love to work on a fish project in the future. Overall, Summer Camp expanded my knowledge of what kinds of opportunities are available for me in this field and helped me prepare for them by teaching me new skills and allowing me to create relationships with professors and other professionals.



Griffin Crisp holding a juvenile red-tailed hawk that was trapped at the Charlotte Douglas International Airport. The individual who trapped the juvenile brought it to our camp at Hill Forest to release it and share with us what they do as an Airport Wildlife Biologist.  
Photo Courtesy of Lauren Riggins.





## Chapter Vision Statement

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

Fall colors on Appalachian river

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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

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