

# The Washington Wildlifer

## Newsletter of the Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society

### FALL 2013

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### Amazing!! Astonishing!! Astounding!!

Have you heard about **the Joint Annual Meeting?**

This is obviously becoming one of the largest annual meetings the Washington Chapter has helped organize. We are so excited we can barely contain ourselves!

We have a number of outstanding partners with whom we are working and a wonderful venue in Pasco. We are anticipating a wonderful turnout with great sessions, workshops, and much, much more.



White-tailed deer and agriculture. Photo: Karl Vogel

This is definitely going to be the one training and networking opportunity you will not want to miss in 2014. February is a great time of the year for a conference, especially as there will be little field work for many biologists.

**So please, get your training and travel approved early and register to join us in 2014. See pages 5 and 6 for additional information.**



A badger dilemma...prey in "hand", more on the ground and hungry young to feed. Photo: Karl Vogel

### STUDENTS!

The Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society is pleased to offer assistance to students interested in attending our upcoming meeting in February 2014. To help make attendance possible for as many student members as possible, we will be covering the lodging costs for a number of students to stay at the Red Lion. Please see our website for details as they unfold —and please help spread the word.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By William O. Vogel

**Credibility and Communications: They work together.**

When I was an undergraduate at Montana State, one of my first classes defined the role of a wildlife biologist as a professional that collects and processes information and then provides information to decision-makers. This seemed so limiting to me at the time; but, over time, I failed to defeat this premise. Now, in my opinion, sticking to this definition and paying attention to what we as scientists do and say in our jobs is very important. I recently read a transcript of a keynote address by Dr. Robert T. Lackey (2013) “Scientific Assertions that Muddle Ecological Policy”. It caused me to remember a lot of these principles. He talks about the idealized world of science as

being “no political spin, no advocacy, no irrelevant details, just scientific facts and their probabilities -- Simple, straightforward, and honorable.” He notes that in today’s world, scientists are not trusted. In my opinion, we should be concerned about this erosion of our credibility.

I recently helped with bear education at Cabela’s and had a conversation with a gentleman who wanted to know where in Washington we had introduced grizzly bears and wolves. I explained that the agencies had not planted either of these species in Washington; wolves were re-introduced in Idaho and Yellowstone and had been expanding naturally from there and possibly British Columbia. He clearly explained to me that “he knew we had brought them in – especially the grizzlies” and seemed frustrated that we were not sharing information about the exact locations of such “releases”. I clearly had no credibility with that individual.

I would like to discuss a few considerations that may help all of us maintain credibility with the public as we go about our daily work and increase the way we reach the public.

Advocacy

Becoming an advocate for one direction or another is dangerous. Some of us “older” biologists enjoy the benefits that such mistakes have brought us in terms of experience and have resulted in us refining our approach. Credibility of our peers and the public is one of the most-important values we can possess as wildlife biologists and scientists. You don’t really appreciate this until you lose that credibility and trust. Playing an advocacy role jeopardizes our credibility and trust.

Our role should be to explain to decision-makers that if alternative A or B is chosen, then a certain set of responses may occur with a certain probability or likelihood. This is a different approach than saying you must follow alternative C and here are my reasons why. In some of our jobs, we implement statutes designed to protect and conserve wildlife and/or their habitats. This is different in subtle, but important, ways from believing that WE are protecting wildlife and habitats. We also

have to remember that decisions often incorporate more than biology and science, and use social, economic, and other factors. Decision-makers, on the other hand, need to learn to stand-up for their decisions and not find a scientific “scapegoat” for their decisions when they are unpopular.

It is important to remain impartial not only when reviewing papers, assessing impacts, etc., but in all

your day-to-day thinking. It is your job to provide information and implement statutes and laws. Use all science and assess it thoroughly. Don’t bury opposing views without proper consideration. And don’t misuse science as an excuse for administrative or policy decisions that are unpopular. Remember, applying value judgments (choosing between competing policy preferences) is beyond the scope of science. As Dr. Lackey pointed out, “there is a real price to pay when scientists slip into policy advocacy and overtly, or covertly, push policy preferences”.



WA-TWS President Vogel shares some insight with young wildlife enthusiasts.

### Feeling vs. Thinking

I believe falling into the trap of not being completely informed and logical in our approach is as dangerous as consciously being biased. It seems that no matter how hard we try to reason carefully and objectively, our brains are hardwired to rely on feelings as well as facts to figure out how to keep us alive. So not only do we feel first and think second—in general, we feel more and think less (Ropeik 2013). We should always ask ourselves whether we have all the facts needed to make a fully informed, analytical, reasoned decision.

According to Ropeik (2013), the way information “feels” is also powerfully influenced by the context and meaning in which it is initially presented. This is known as “framing.” Also, trust has a huge influence on our risk perceptions. Most of what we claim to know has actually only been learned from others—sources that, for various reasons, we trust. For societal cohesion, open minds are dangerous. How people see facts depends on which groups they belong to. In other words, people routinely cherry-pick the evidence that supports the opinions of the group(s) with which they most strongly identify. The instinctive, subjective way we interpret things is powerful and deeply embedded in the way our brain works; it actually operates subconsciously and beyond our free will. We can’t completely overcome it (Ropeik 2013). But as scientists, we must overcome it!

Ropeik (2013) also argues that “cultural cognition” explains why bright, educated people can see the same facts in such different ways. It also explains why we argue about them so fiercely. We are social animals, and we have come to rely on our particular group for our health and safety. By agreeing with our group, we are accepted as members in good standing.

Ropeik provides some good advice:

- Slow down. Think things through. Give yourself more time than you usually take. Don’t just go with your initial gut instinct, which is shaped by all those risk-perception factors and mental shortcuts that may get you into trouble.
- Get more information. Having more facts will give reason a bit more say in the process. Also, use your own brain; don’t just rely on somebody else’s. Do a little digging yourself.

- Expand the range of sources from which you get information. Don’t just rely on the ones from your “group” because they feel trustworthy. And be just a little more cautious about what your trusted sources say. Just because views of leaders of agencies or groups might match yours and feel good, doesn’t mean your sources aren’t spinning the facts to advance their point of view—rather than to honestly and objectively inform you.

We need to be as open minded, appropriately skeptical, and rationale as we can be. This was one of the take-home messages from Dr. Bindernagel’s February presentation regarding Sasquatch at our Annual Meeting. We need to think for ourselves. I remember my son arguing with his teacher in second or third grade – he was clearly right, but the teacher would not accept it because she simply relied on the “key” in her lesson plan. The issue was which Pacific Northwest stylized Native American painting was the bear and which was the wolf. He had tried to make the points that the bear had the heavier snout, short tail, blunter teeth, and long claws compared to the wolf. He was unsuccessful and all of the other students accepted the view of the teacher. Ever since then, I have called such blind faith in a single accepted source “the wolf-bear syndrome”.

We need to recognize that the person who questions such dogma is never as popular within their group; but, these people are necessary to our groups and our profession as a whole. I had a teacher in sixth grade, Mr. Larmour, that told us all rivers flowed from north to south – and then promptly gave a quiz with a true false question in that regard. When all the students who got it wrong said “but you told us”, he asked if they were going to believe everything they hear. He was purposely trying to instill some critical thinking. People with these critical thinking skills may be outliers in their groups, but they help our profession maintain credibility.

### Spin and Persuasion

There are differences between being persuasive in an agenda-driven manner and using ways of presenting information more effectively. I remember years ago, while we were talking about wetlands and their sizes, I pointed out that a 10-inch pie is 50% larger than an 8-inch pie – it effectively made my point. One can also talk about 10 percent of a population, as opposed to the other 90 percent, and get a different reaction to the same

data – similar to the proverbial half glass of water. If our presentation is done with the intent of effectively informing people of the “truth”, that is noble. If our presentation is designed to hide the truth, or only show part of it, that is wrong and is going to hurt our credibility. However, fair or not, if our presentation is done with the first “noble” intent, but perceived to be deceptive – the damage is done regardless of our intent. Therefore, as biologists, we need to recognize the value of experts in public information. They can help us! Reaching the right balance of making information interesting, relevant, and even compelling with the need to make information transparent and honest is critical.

### Social Media

We need to make information interesting and relevant to the public was another take home message from the February Annual meeting. Ken Berg (USFWS) presented a series of eye-opening facts about how the public gets its news and what it considers important. He pointed out that people ranked environmental issues as being quite unimportant during the last election. People, especially young people, do not get their information from the same sources they used to. You may remember Marlin Perkins – a trusted source for many of us in my generation; yet younger biologists may remember a guy named Steve Irwin that had a funny way of saying “that’s a-MY-zing”. Today’s audience is as likely to get their “gator fix” from reality television. The world has changed – as Ken pointed out, fewer people get their news from sources such as “the evening news with Walter Cronkite”. When I was a freshman in high school, I was required to read the Wall Street Journal each day – but back then, we also used archaic things called “encyclopedias”. Google has changed that. Younger people now access other venues –

including Stephen Colbert and John Stewart, as well as Twitter and so forth. Some of you may remember President Obama on some late-night television shows – an attempt to reach portions of the public that would not be reached through traditional outlets.

And social media has changed the way we communicate. If we do not become proficient and embrace this new technology, other people with agendas will. Agencies and others are now using these tools more and more. Our Chapter was asked by students to try to launch a Facebook page....which we are now in the process of doing, as well as exploring other social media outlets.

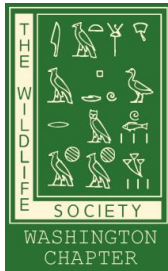
As a profession, we will need to figure out how to avail ourselves of these new and ever-evolving technologies and make information exciting and relevant – and trusted! But a few old-fashioned guidelines should still help us: In the words of Dr. Lackey, “Stick to the science – tell the truth and the whole truth”. And in the words of Sergeant Joe Friday, “just the facts ma’am”.

David Ropeik. 2012. The EcoPerception Gap: Why do we worry too much about some environmental risks and not enough about others? Conservation Magazine - September 7, 2012. <http://conservationmagazine.org/2012/09/the-ecoperception-gap/>

Robert T. Lackey. 2013. “Scientific Assertions that Muddle Ecological Policy”. Transcript of a keynote address presented at the 58th Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Montreal, Canada, May 29, 2013 by Dr. Lackey; Department of Fisheries and Wildlife; Oregon State University; Corvallis, Oregon 97331



Smiling snowy owl. Photo: Karl Vogel



Researchers Implementing Conservation Action



Join Your Colleagues and Conservation Partners  
at the Washington Chapter of the Wildlife Society  
2014 Meeting, Workshops, and Conservation Forums

## *Enhancing Conservation Program Delivery Among Agricultural and Other Natural Resources Interests*

February 3-7, 2014

Red Lion Inn - Pasco, Washington

### **A collaboration of the following partners:**

*Washington Chapter-The Wildlife Society  
Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology  
Global Owl Project  
Researchers Implementing Conservation Action  
Northwest Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation*

### **Meeting Events Include:**

Technical sessions on diverse Pacific Northwest fauna  
4<sup>th</sup> International Burrowing Owl Conference  
Raptors of the Northwest Symposium  
Workshops to build proficiency and awareness on theme topics  
7<sup>th</sup> annual NW PARC meeting and workshop.  
Multiple Plenary Sessions on Conservation Collaboration  
Conservation Cooperator Training Sessions  
Student Mentoring Forums  
Field Trips and other Entertainment  
Vendors  
Photo Contest

Call for Paper and Poster Abstracts **open through November 15, 2013** (See Partner websites)

Registration will open in October 2013, check partner websites for details

Be a Meeting Sponsor; contact Blake Murden ([bmurden@portblakely.com](mailto:bmurden@portblakely.com))

Reserve your lodging early, call 1-800-733-5466 (refer to "TWS-Raptors-SNVB")

**Watch for more details:**

**WA-TWS** <http://wildlife.org/washington/>; **SNVB** <http://www.thesnvb.org/>

**PARC** <http://www.nwparc.org/>; **Global Owl Project** <http://www.globalowlproject.com/>

## Now that we have your attention... we could use a helping hand at the 2014 Meeting

**Volunteers are needed** to assist with various aspects of planning, arranging, and conducting the Joint Meeting in February 2014. Please consider alerting us that you are willing and available to help. Volunteers are especially needed for the following Committees and work groups:

Registration (on-site)	Social/Reception	Silent Auction/Raffle
Sponsorships/Fundraising	Entertainment	Volunteer Coordination
Field Trips	Photo Contest	Vendors
Student Opportunities	Poster Session	

Also, we are looking for individuals who will consider being **Session Moderators** during technical sessions at the meeting. If you are willing to assist with any of these needs, please send your name, e-mail, phone contact info, and your interest category(ies) to **Mike Passmore, Steering Team Chair**, at [mickriver63@yahoo.com](mailto:mickriver63@yahoo.com). Your willingness to help is appreciated and is an integral part of making this an exceptional partnership effort.

### Show Your Entertainment Skills at the Joint Meeting in Pasco

Please let us know if you are willing to consider providing some improvisational entertainment during the 2014 Joint Meeting in Pasco, WA!!! Meeting planners are considering incorporating time during the meeting for some registrants to demonstrate entertainment talents for all participants. Song, dance, music, comedy, tall tales, and more are among the prospects to be considered. This will not be a talent show or competition, there won't be prizes, and it isn't paid entertainment. We are looking for just plain fun from among our ranks. If you have a talent to offer for consideration, please e-mail name, contact info, and a brief description of the talent/ability you are suggesting to [Bruce.Thompson@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Bruce.Thompson@dfw.wa.gov).

### Seeking Sponsors for the 2014 Annual Meeting!

We need your help securing sponsorships for our 2014 annual meeting. Our annual meetings would not be possible without donations from sponsors. In the past, sponsors have included outdoor products suppliers, environmental consultants, forest products companies, and natural resources agencies. There are others and we encourage the list to grow as regional benefits of the forum are recognized.

Contributions by each sponsor go toward paying direct costs of conducting the meeting and workshops, including room and space charges for the venue, technical and plenary program costs, participant interaction forums, poster displays, guest speakers, equipment rentals, capacity-building workshops, and more. In addition to donated dollars, items provided by sponsors are used in our silent auction to further support student opportunities at the meeting.

Please help your Chapter have a successful 2014 Annual Meeting by assisting the Sponsorship Committee identify and secure meeting sponsors. Please contact Blake Murden, Sponsorship Committee Chairperson, at [bmurden@portblakely.com](mailto:bmurden@portblakely.com) or by phone at (360) 956-9437 if you, your employer, or others in your network would like to become a sponsor or if you would like additional information.



Photo: Matt Marsh, OWNF.

## REGIONAL REPORTS



The regional reports help to keep members informed of the various wildlife and habitat management, habitat restoration, and research projects occurring throughout Washington. If you do not see your important work represented here please consider contributing to the next issue by contacting Betsy Howell (OLY):

[bhowell@fs.fed.us](mailto:bhowell@fs.fed.us), Steve Hall (NW):

[shall@pointconsulting.us](mailto:shall@pointconsulting.us), Annemarie Prince (NE):

[Annemarie.Prince@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Annemarie.Prince@dfw.wa.gov), Sara Gregory (SE):

[Sara.Gregory@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Sara.Gregory@dfw.wa.gov); or William Ritchie (SW):

[william\\_ritchie@fws.gov](mailto:william_ritchie@fws.gov).

### OLYMPIC REGION – *Betsy Howell, USFS*

#### *Pacific Fishers (Martes pennanti) - Betsy Howell, Olympic National Forest, Olympica*

The second phase of the Fisher Reintroduction Project began in June, with the placement of remote cameras and hair snare boxes in several locations across the Olympic Peninsula. With the radio telemetry work finished, the goal now is to evaluate the current status of reintroduced fishers on the Peninsula, an endeavor that will continue through 2015. Olympic National Park and U.S. Geological Survey staff hosted training sessions for



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Bushnell 08-10-2013 17:19:54

Fishers coming and going into hair snare boxes on the ONFS and on private land. Photo: ONF.

deployment of the cameras and boxes for National Forest, tribal, and state employees. The study design for the surveys includes designating polygons, or “hexes,” across the landscape, with each hex being 24 square kilometers in size and approximating the size of a core area used by female fishers on the Peninsula. Three stations, each containing one remote camera and one hair snare box, are placed in each hex, in the best habitat and at least 0.5-1.0 mile apart. The stations are checked every two weeks for six weeks.



Uncollared fisher at survey station in Cameron Creek, Olympic National Park. Photo ONF.

Based on a pilot study conducted during 2009-11, this arrangement, of having three stations that are checked three times, yielded a greater than 90% probability of detecting known fishers. Out of approximately 21 hexes surveyed so far (seven of which still have cameras out), five have had fisher visits in the National Park, National Forest, state land, and private land. In addition to photos, all the sites also yielded hair in the snare boxes. Another 9-11 hexes are being installed beginning September 12<sup>th</sup>. Surveys this season will continue through October 31<sup>st</sup>.

***Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly - Karen Holtrop,  
Olympic National Forest, Quilcene***

The Olympic National Forest is working with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to implement habitat restoration at ONF Taylor's checkerspot butterfly sites. Removal of encroaching vegetation will be done September - October 2013 at three sites to enhance habitat for the species and other species associated with open habitats. The Forest is working with US Fish and Wildlife to complete consultation, as the Taylor's checkerspot is expected to be listed under the Endangered Species Act this Fall. ONF conducted post-diapause larvae surveys early Spring and adult surveys May – June. ONF and WDFW cooperatively completed some pre-diapause larvae surveys in July and found several oviposition locations at the sites.

**NORTHEAST REGION – Annemarie  
Prince, WDFW**

Please welcome Annemarie Prince, the new Assistant District Wildlife Biologist for the Colville District of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. She has graciously accepted the role of Northeast Region Representative and we are all looking forward to working with her. Annemarie recently finished her master's degree at North Carolina State University studying habitat use, survival, and home range size of southeastern fox squirrels. Prior to graduate school, Annemarie worked as a biologist for WDFW in SW Washington and for the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission on Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area. You can find her contact information as well as information for all board members and reps on the last page of the newsletter. Now, onto updates for the NE region...

***Steph DeMay – University of Idaho Pygmy Rabbit Release***

During summer 2013, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists, a University of Idaho graduate student, and countless hardworking volunteers released 272 endangered pygmy rabbit kits (compared to 2012's 104 kits) from large breeding enclosures into the wild in Douglas County. All released rabbits were sampled for genetics prior to release. This coming winter, we will



Processing and sampling pygmy rabbits in the field. Photo: Steph DeMay

survey the release area for active burrows and collect fecal pellets for genetic analysis to assess the survival of the reintroduced population and reproduction in the wild. This genetic monitoring research is funded in part by a research grant from the WA Chapter of TWS and we thank you for your generous support.



Two pygmy rabbit kits in a transport bin. Photo: Steph DeMay

***Annual Butterfly Count, Mike Munts - USFWS***

On July 6 Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge hosted the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Butterfly count on the refuge. The count is a little known but interesting citizen science project similar to the Christmas Bird Count. More information can be found at [http://www.naba.org/butter\\_counts.html](http://www.naba.org/butter_counts.html). This is the second time the refuge has hosted the count. This year's count involved 9 members of public and we documented 32 species of butterflies. One species the Dun Skipper (*Euphyes vestris*) was the first county record and only



the second record for eastern WA. This brings the total butterflies documented on the refuge to 42 species.

### **Jackrabbit Project Summary, Howard Ferguson - WDFW**

Although jackrabbit populations are known to oscillate greatly in different years and in different habitat types with density estimates varying from 0.1 to 5.6 rabbit/ha, it appears that the jackrabbit population in Washington has been on a decreasing trend for at least the past 20 years. The most likely reason is loss of habitat.

An important part of a species' habitat is its connectivity;

connectivity for jackrabbit populations in the Columbia Plateau is threatened by a variety of factors including, clearing and vegetation modification and removal,

development, roads and traffic, fire, climate

change, energy development, irrigation and its infrastructure, and the presence of people and domestic animals. Loss of genetic diversity through population isolation is also a significant threat.

The Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group (WHCWG) was formed to address issues of wildlife habitat connectivity within Washington and surrounding lands. Their mission is to —promote the long-term viability of wildlife populations in Washington State through a science-based, collaborative approach that identifies opportunities to conserve and restore habitat connectivity. Their goal is to identify the most important areas for maintaining and enhancing wildlife habitat connectivity across this ecoregion. The main products are maps that depict linkage networks and the data and models used to create them. A linkage network includes areas of suitable habitat (called habitat concentration areas, or core areas) and the linkages connecting them. These maps and corridors can be found at: <http://waconnected.org/>.



Jackrabbit and pellets. Photo WDFW.



A second part of this effort is now on-going in eastern Washington. This project is the “Validation of Connectivity Models for white-tailed (*Lepus townsendii*) and black-tailed jackrabbits (*Lepus californicus*) in the Columbia Plateau Ecoregion” and is partially funded by the Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GNLCC). WDFW is using noninvasive methods to collect DNA samples in the Columbia Plateau for both species of jackrabbits to evaluate the connectivity models developed by the WHCWG. Genetic data derived from fecal pellets will be used in a landscape genetics analysis that integrates population genetics, landscape ecology, and spatial statistics techniques to

relate patterns of connectivity between populations of jackrabbits to patterns of landscape resistance. Results from our analysis will provide needed distribution and habitat occupancy

information to assess the current status of jackrabbit populations in Washington State and will be applicable to future range-wide connectivity modeling effort for both species.

**Partners:** Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group (WHCWG)—Production of map layers and products for landscape analysis and GIS support. Support for the WHCWG is provided by the GNLCC (Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative); Spokane Community College (SCC) —Volunteer support; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) —Project funding, support, GIS support, design, implementation, analysis, report writing, and presentations; Yakima Training Center (YTC) and US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) —assistance on all phases of field project; and, Northern Arizona University (NAU) — project support, guidance, and DNA processing.

**Project Coordinator:** Howard L. Ferguson, District Wildlife Biologist, WA Dept. Fish & Wildlife, Spokane, WA.

**Status:** 2013 Field surveys are going well, as of 9 August 2013, over 250 randomly selected points were sampled resulting in over 60 pellet samples collected for DNA analysis.

### *Washington's Wolves*

*Annemarie Prince, Scott Becker, & Jay Shepherd - WDFW*

Gray wolf management continues in Washington and currently, WDFW is conducting wolf management and monitoring activities throughout the state. Activities include surveying new areas potentially inhabited by wolves, trapping and radio-collaring wolves to monitor their movements, investigating suspected livestock depredations, and responding to public sightings and concerns about wolves.

Since 2008, WDFW and tribal biologists have captured a total of 36 different wolves on 39 occasions (3 recaptures). In 2013, 12 wolves representing 6 packs were captured and fitted with collars (9 by WDFW, 2 by Spokane Tribal biologists, and 1 by Colville Tribal biologists). These collars help WDFW identify pack territories, determine pack size, monitor reproductive status, and mitigate conflicts with livestock.

The most recent WDFW capture was featured in the outdoor blog of the Spokesman-Review (<http://spokanevortex.com/blogs/outdoors/2013/jul/16/wolf-captured-pend-oreille-county/>).

Washington's wolf population continues to grow and at the end of 2012, there were at least 5 breeding pairs (for more information on the current status and history of wolves in Washington, please view the Washington Gray Wolf Conservation and Management 2012 Annual Report at <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01502/>). At present, there are at least 6 packs that have produced pups this spring. However, based on the definition of a

breeding pair (at least one adult male and one adult female that raised at least 2 pups that survived until December 31), we cannot confirm 2013 breeding pair status until the end of the calendar year. Currently, WDFW continues to follow-up on public reports and leads posted to the on-line reporting tool ([http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/gray\\_wolf/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/gray_wolf/)) by deploying self-activated cameras and searching for sign in areas with a high concentration of sightings but where pack activity has yet to be confirmed.

In addition to wolf monitoring activities, WDFW is working closely with local livestock producers who graze on federal grazing allotments and/or private property to minimize potential wolf-livestock interactions through the implementation of a cost sharing

program that encourages the use of pro-active measures. WDFW is currently funding a handful of range riders -- people on horseback or ATVs that are out among cattle and sheep, providing a human presence and potentially deterring wolf-livestock interactions. In the late winter of this year, WDFW fenced calving pastures with flagged fencing called



Gray wolf captured on self-activated camera by WDFW personnel. Photo WDFW.

fladry enhanced with electricity which may deter wolves from entering pastures where vulnerable livestock are present. WDFW is also developing a carcass-management program that is intended to reduce potential attractants on the landscape and discourage wolves from staying in areas close to livestock and people for extended periods of time.

On July 18, 2013, WDFW hosted experts from Idaho, Montana, and Washington to discuss the effects of wolves on hunting opportunities in these three western states. Jon Rachael, Idaho Department of Fish and Game's state wildlife manager and Jim Williams, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' northwest wildlife

program manager discussed the impacts of wolves on deer, elk and other big game populations in their states. They also discussed strategies that successful big game hunters have adopted while hunting in the presence of wolves. In addition, Dave Ware, WDFW statewide game program manager, described the status of wolves and big game hunting in Washington. Video of the forum is available on the web at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=aJH\\_bX9h0w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=aJH_bX9h0w)

### ***Riparian Habitat Enhancement, Mike Borysewicz – Colville National Forest***

In 2012, the Colville National Forest re-located a 2.6 mile long segment of the Middle Branch LeClerc Creek Road (Forest Road 1935) out of the Riparian Habitat Conservation Area on the creek, and onto an upland alignment. The project reconnected several micro-wetlands that were severed from the creek by the old road. Several culverts that were barriers to fish passage were removed. The new road segment is located up to 0.25 mile away from the creek and is essentially unseen from the creek due to intervening topography and forest stands. The actual road re-location was a Salmon Recovery Funding Board funded project.



Planting trees within the riparian zone. Photo: Colville NF

In October of 2012, the ranger district's wildlife crew installed willow and cottonwood cuttings at the stream crossings on the obliterated road segment. We planted several hundred western white pines in the upland portions of the road. These trees were leftovers from our annual tree planting contract, so were acquired at no

cost. We planted alder and Douglas hawthorn trees on the road. These hardwoods were grown at the nursery from locally collected seed, and purchased with a grant from Conservation Northwest. In June of 2013, we utilized six volunteers with Conservation Northwest to plant additional white pine and ponderosa pine trees in the old roadbed. The road has also been seeded with a native seed mix of lupines, yarrow, pearly everlasting, birchleaf spirea, and others.



Stream flow restored. Photo: Colville NF

Big game and other wildlife can now access the creek and associated riparian habitats with a much reduced risk of human disturbance. The project is located in the Selkirk Mountains Grizzly Bear Recovery Area and within a bull trout watershed.



Road obliteration on the Colville NF. Photo: Colville NF

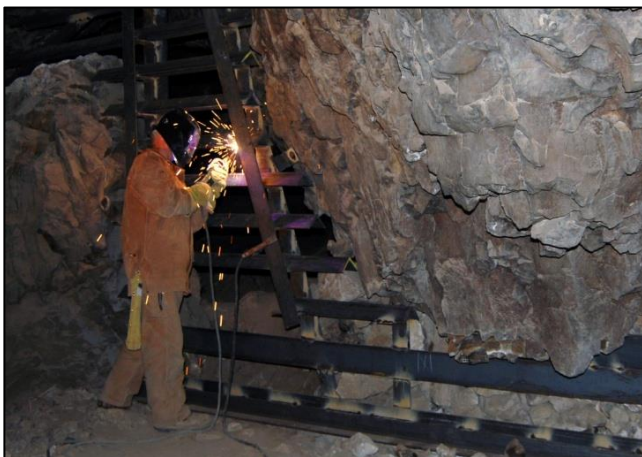
***Townsend's big-eared bats on the Naches Ranger District, Joan St.Hilaire - Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest***

Boulder Cave provides a winter roost site to one of the largest known Townsend's big-eared bat populations in eastern Washington. The cave presents wildlife management challenges, since it is a developed recreation site, receiving over 30,000 summertime visitors each year.

With the assistance of wildlife and recreation experts, a long-term management strategy was started in 1995 to protect and enhance bat use while maintaining recreational access. The cave offers a special opportunity for public education. The Naches Ranger District has developed a program to educate the public on the ethics of caving; bat ecology and white-nose syndrome. The program includes on-site interpretive programs for schools and visitors to the cave. Interpretive signs at the trailhead describe the importance of bats and threats they face.

Boulder Cave was once used by a large Townsend's big-eared bat maternity colony. Dalquest documented seeing hundreds of pregnant Townsend's big-eared bats in Boulder Cave. After an access trail was constructed to the cave by the CCC in the mid 30's, numbers dropped to less than 75 females. Presently Boulder Cave is not used as maternity roost.

Management actions attempt to protect hibernating bats from human disturbance and provide a protected area for maternity use if the bats are so inclined to use it. Winter hibernation surveys have shown a steady increase in bat numbers. A little over 100 bats were counted during the 2012 winter bat survey.



Bat gate installation. Photo: Jim Nieland.

Thanks to the help of numerous Naches District employees, volunteers, WDFW employees and the expertise of Jim Nieland, we were able to install a long awaited bat gate at Boulder Cave. This gate provides much needed protection to hibernating Townsend's big-eared bats through the elimination of winter disturbance.

After several years of searching we were finally successful this summer in locating the Townsend's big-eared bat maternity roost. Over 70 Townsend's big-eared bats were recorded at an exit count late July. Townsend's were using the attic of a FS storage building. It is great to know this local Townsend's big-eared bat population has been provided protection (hibernaculum as well as maternity roost). This protection was made possible through funding provided by Pacific Northwest Regional Office of the U.S. Forest Service and Oregon/Washington State Office of the Bureau of Land Management Interagency Species Status/Sensitive Species Program (ISSSSP).



Townsend's big eared bats in maternity roost inside abandoned building. Photo Okanogan Wenatchee NF.

**Management highlights:**

- In 1993 a road gate was installed on the Boulder Cave access road, ½ mile east of the cave. The gate is closed summer nights and full time during the bat hibernation season.
- In 1995 an area closure order was instituted closing the cave and trail between November 1 and April 1. In 2011 this closure period was increased from October 1 through April 31.
- In September 1997 two bat friendly gates were installed to close off the suspected maternity roost site.

- January bat surveys have taken place at Boulder Cave yearly since 1990 and Townsend's numbers have gradually increased. During the late 1980's numbers were in the lower 40's; by the mid 1990's they had increased to 70. In 2005 they had increased to 85 and in 2012 over 100 Townsend's big-eared bats were counted. Even though closures were in place, people continued to access the caver during the winter months.
- By 2009 winter surveys identify a small side chamber where 60% of bats hibernate.
- 2010 bat experts meet to review management. Protection of the hibernation chamber was identified.
- September 2012 a new bat gate is installed to protect the hibernation chamber.



Harlequin duck pair on the Olympic Peninsula. Photo: Shelly Ament, WDFW.

We found more ducks than many expected and had good luck timing the 3-visit survey to harlequin duck phenology. An early-May heat wave caused us to change plans from two spring "breeding pair" visits and one summer "duckling" visit to one spring visit and two summer visits. High water levels required the crew to survey from the bank on occasion, one difficult 500m stretch required one hour to traverse. Highlights included many ducklings (super cute) and a moose in the Twisp River. Hundreds of river kilometers were surveyed



Harlequin chick. Photo: Kristen Richardson, USFS.

without injury by a stellar crew pieced together from various ranger districts and cooperating agencies. The survey greatly benefitted from WDFW and USFWS personnel.

### ***Harlequin ducks - The duck so nice they named it twice. Aja Woodrow, Okanogan Wenatchee NF***

Harlequin ducks (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) overwinter off the rocky coast and fly inland to breed along rushing creeks and rivers. Males fly back to the ocean shortly after the 30-day incubation begins. Ducks of the year gain flight at about two months and migrate to the ocean with their mother.

The last major effort to survey breeding harlequin duck in Washington was carried out in 1993 by WDFW. Lately, there has been concern that breeding harlequin duck numbers in the State are declining; it is a Forest Service sensitive species in Washington. This spring and summer the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest coordinated a large harlequin duck survey that also included the Olympic, Gifford Pinchot, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie, and Colville National Forests offering a comprehensive assessment of the duck's status across five National Forests. The results from this survey will be compared to the earlier WDFW survey and serve as a benchmark from which to measure the harlequin duck breeding population on Forest Service land in the future.

### ***We can bear-ly believe this project has ended..... Kristen Richardson, Okanogan Wenatchee NF***

In October, 2012, a team of researchers pulled the last survey sites out of the mountains after five seasons of collecting bear DNA in the North Cascades Ecosystem. Led by Dr. Bill Gaines and Dr. Robert Long, the project was a joint collaboration between the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Western Transportation

Institute, the North Cascades National Park Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service and WDFW. Since 2008 the team deployed over 600 barbed-wire, hair-snag corrals in the North Cascades, collecting bear hair for genetic analysis. Each corral consisted of a single strand of barbed wire nailed in a circle around trees, in the middle of which they poured a liquid scent lure to attract the bears: a caustic crimson concoction of emulsified fish heads and rotten cattle blood, called “the goo”. While the bear crew declares that the lure really does not smell that bad (one researcher once exclaimed “that bait is making me hungry!”), everyone else will avow that one whiff of an empty goo bottle was pungent enough to curl nose hairs and send one bolting for escape. Yet these scientists loaded the goo, and all their gear, on their backs and trekked into the vast, remote, and rugged terrain that characterizes the North Cascades. When recently asked about his experience on the bear project, wildlife biologist Aja Woodrow simply stated, “It was a once in a lifetime opportunity”.



Black bear visiting a corral. Photo: K.Richardson, OWNF.

From the bear hair collected through 2011 (genetic analyses of 2012 samples not yet complete), the team genotyped 498 individual black bears, yielding the most extensive genetic dataset of a large carnivore in Washington State. Little is known regarding the status of most of our black bear populations in the North Cascades, and this project provides the region’s first broad, landscape-scale analysis of a species with such wide-ranging movements and solitary and cryptic behavior. One result of this project has been a habitat analysis of black bears across the entire ecosystem by Kristen Richardson, a member of the bear crew, and the project’s PIs. Richardson recently completed her Master of Science at the University of Washington (UW) by

using the genetic data to examine the habitat and human activity associations of black bears from approximately 30 km south of I-90 to the Canadian border, and on both the east and west slopes of the Cascades. If you want to hear more about the outcome of this research, Richardson, along with Gaines, Long, and Dr. Aaron Wirsing from the UW, will be presenting their results at the 22<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Bear Research and Management this September (they also plan to share their work at the upcoming WA TWS conference).



Bear hair on the corral wire. Photo: K.Richardson, OWNF.

### **NORTHWEST (PUGET SOUND) REGION - Steve Hall, Point Environmental Consulting, Inc.**

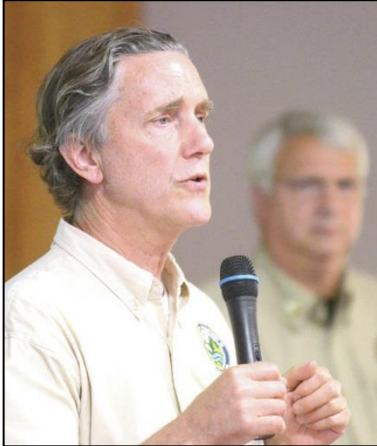
#### ***WDFW to form Working Group to Tackle Whatcom/Skagit Elk Issues***

More elk and more people are leading to more elk-people conflicts in Skagit/Whatcom Counties, and the WDFW is forming stakeholder group to address these conflicts. The North Cascades elk herd, which numbered only 300 animals in 2002, is now at 1,200. Add to this more people and uses within the historic range, and you have an elk management situation that has become common throughout the US West.

About 180 people attended a WDFW-sponsored meeting in late June to discuss the situation and what can and should be done about it. Major concerns voiced at the meeting included elk damage to agricultural crops and elk-vehicle collisions on SR 20 between Sedro-Woolley and Concrete.

The problem is particularly challenging, as many diverse interests are involved, including tribal subsistence

hunters, recreational hunters, and an increasing number of small farms and agro-tourism businesses spouting up on former timberlands along Highways 9 and 20. Many areas of lowland commercial forests that traditionally supported elk have been converted to pasture, row and hay crops, orchards, and berries, and elk are taking advantage of these new food sources, much to the chagrin of the farmers.



WDFW Wildlife Program Manager Russell Link talked with residents about the upriver elk problem. Photo: Scott Terrell / Skagit Valley Herald.

The stakeholder group will help WDFW refine and update the herd's management plan prepared in 2002. The department used a similar stakeholder approach to successfully address management issues of the Upper Snoqualmie Valley herd.

#### ONLINE

##### **Go Skagit: Residents say elk herd wreaking havoc**

[http://www.goskagit.com/news/local\\_news/residents-elk-herds-wreaking-havoc/article\\_aea2c30b-843c-5760-ab08-88ba2324f8cb.html](http://www.goskagit.com/news/local_news/residents-elk-herds-wreaking-havoc/article_aea2c30b-843c-5760-ab08-88ba2324f8cb.html)

##### ***\$30 Million for Puget Sound in 2014***

The office of Senator Patty Murray is reporting nearly \$30 million in funding for Puget Sound in Fiscal Year 2014. Much of this funding will go toward salmon habitat projects and other focus areas of the Puget Sound Action Agenda, but wildlife and wildlife habitat should benefit as well. Based on past spending, estuary and other important marine habitats will be protected and restored, benefiting much of Washington's inland marine wildlife that has suffered the most from heavy human development.

#### ONLINE

##### **Press Release from Senator Murray's Office**

[http://www.murray.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/newsreleases?ContentRecord\\_id=cd5e3587-7d55-4217-9e77-3ec1d867f602](http://www.murray.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/newsreleases?ContentRecord_id=cd5e3587-7d55-4217-9e77-3ec1d867f602)

##### **Puget Sound Action Agenda Website**

[http://psp.wa.gov/action\\_agenda\\_center.php](http://psp.wa.gov/action_agenda_center.php)

##### ***Western Pond Turtles Released in Pierce County***

Woodland Park Zoo and WDFW recently released 31 endangered juvenile western pond turtles in Lakewood. The 10-month-old turtles were hatched and raised at the Woodland Park Zoo.

The releases were part of a collaborative effort between WDFW, Woodland Park Zoo, Oregon Zoo, Washington State Parks, and the FWS. Through their efforts, Washington's turtle population has grown from 150 in 1991 to as many as 1,500 today.

#### ONLINE

##### **Graduation day for endangered turtles (lots of great photos)**

<http://woodlandparkzblog.blogspot.com/2013/08/graduation-day-for-endangered-turtles.html>



A western pond turtle being released. Photo: Kirsten Pisto/Woodland Park Zoo.

##### ***Southern Resident Population Continues Slump, While Harbor Porpoise Increase***

The Center for Whale Research is reporting the presumed death of two female Southern Resident killer

whales that have not been seen since last December, including a 52 year old matriarch called “Grace,” whose death brings the end to her matrilineal family.

As of July 1, 2013, the Southern Resident Killer Whale (Orca) population was 82 (J Pod - 26, K Pod - 19, and L Pod - 37), down from 89 in 2005 and approaching the low point of 79 in 2001.

The Orca Network reported that on August 11, the entire 82-member population gathered off San Juan Island, and then headed north up Haro Strait, then up boundary Pass into Georgia Strait, the route taken by most of the Chinook salmon heading for the Fraser River.



Harbor Porpoises in Puget Sound. Photo: The Seattle Times/Mark Harrison.

And as if to counter declines in our orca population, Cascadia Research has announced that, after nearly disappearing from local waters for decades, harbor porpoises have greatly increased in Puget Sound, Harbor porpoises occur only in inland marine waters of Washington and British Columbia. The population was believed to be greatly reduced from historic levels.

#### ONLINE

#### **Kitsap Sun: Two older female orcas die, affecting L pod**

<http://pugetsoundblogs.com/waterways/2013/06/20/two-older-female-orcas-die-lowering-census-count/#ixzz2baZegtxu>

#### **Orca Network report on Super Pod (includes audio recording)**

<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs183/1101447505873/archive/1114490204486.html>

#### **Seattle Times: Harbor porpoises now a common sight in Puget Sound**

[http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2021356534\\_harborporpoisxml.html](http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2021356534_harborporpoisxml.html)

#### **News from the Field**

Below is a sampling of field work efforts underway in Puget Sound country, as reported by the WDFW Weekly Activity Reports.

**Bears.** UW Graduate Student Lindsay Welfelt and WDFW biologists have been collecting bear hair samples from barbed-wire “corrals” located in the Snoqualmie area. Bear hair samples were collected at



Bear hair snag corral used during the second round of the Snoqualmie Bear Project. Photo: WDFW

about 75% of the 40 corrals, with several corrals produced multiple samples.

**Loons.** WDFW biologist checked on the active loon territory at Calligan Lake on the Snoqualmie Tree Farm and while no chick was seen, the adult pair is acting as if chicks are present. Attempts to confirm the suspected chick will continue as opportunities arise.



Photo: Karl Vogel



**Bats.** Volunteers with Bats Northwest have been surveying bats at Puget Sound area WDFW properties this August, including the Stillwater Wildlife Management Unit near Carnation. Bats were recorded and data will be compiled and analyzed.

**Pikas.** WDFW's Tom Cyra is conducting surveys for American pika after the Navy reported sightings in a section of rip-rap used to stabilize a stream. Given the unusual location and elevation for this usually alpine species, the U.S. Navy contracted with WDFW to perform follow-up surveys to confirm occupancy. So far, pika have not been confirmed.

## ONLINE

### WDFW Weekly Activity Reports

[http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/wildlife\\_weekly/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/wildlife_weekly/)

### Bats Northwest Website

<http://www.batsnorthwest.org/index.html>

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## SOUTHWEST REGION – *William Ritchie, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

Beginning in late January 2013 and ending well before fawning time, Columbia white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus leucurus*) were translocated from the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for Columbia White-tailed Deer to Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. The deer were

being moved to save them from an impending failure of a dike between the refuge and the Columbia River. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service captured and moved the deer in partnership with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and numerous volunteers. A total of 37 deer were translocated to Ridgefield NWR and 12 were moved to Cottonwood Island. You can read more about the capture operation and view pictures in our last newsletter (WA-TWS Spring 2013). As we reported in that newsletter, several (10) deer had died as of late May. Four of these mortalities were capture related: two occurred during transport and two occurred shortly after release. To date, there has been about 31% total mortality in the relocated deer, compared to a normal mortality rate of about 21% annually. Most mortality was due to predation or vehicle collision. The condition of the translocated deer seems to be very good, suggesting good habitat quality, and while some deer have crossed the Columbia River into Oregon, most have remained within 2 km of their release site. Currently there are nascent breeding populations on both Ridgefield NWR and Cottonwood Island due to the translocation effort. It often takes several translocation efforts to establish a permanent population. For instance, three translocations were needed to establish a stable population on Tenasillahe Island.

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Moon over the Palouse. Photo: Karl Vogel

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **SUCCESS! Status Update: Search for Northeast Regional Representative and Social Media Contact**

The plaintive cries for help in our last newsletter worked! Annemarie Prince of WDFW (Colville) volunteered to be our Northeast Regional Representative and Joshua Benton, also of WDFW (Puyallup), stepped forward with an offer to help as our social media contact. What's more, Josh has also agreed (after only a tiny bit of gentle pressure) to help us keep our website up-to-date. In other words, he's a twofer!

Josh has a B.S. in Fish and Wildlife Management from Montana State University and an M.S. in Geographic Information Science and Technology from the University of Southern California. He currently works for the WDFW Hatcheries Division (which he enjoys, but he's very, very interested in finding a position working with wildlife!). Josh lives in Puyallup, he has a wife and daughter, and he enjoys hiking/camping and home brewing. From Josh: "As the new Social Media Manager I would just like to say that I am excited to get started and to be a working member of TWS-WA Chapter. I would also like to ask chapter members to submit any photos, videos, links, etc. related to their lives working/playing in wildlife at any point now and in the future to be posted and shared via the upcoming Facebook page. Through member participation I believe we can make our new social media efforts fun and informative. Thank you and I am looking forward to working with everyone! Please feel free to contact me and send submissions to [joshuabenton3@gmail.com](mailto:joshuabenton3@gmail.com)."

The Executive Board is immensely grateful to both Annemarie and Josh for stepping forward and offering to help.

**Chapter Finances** - The Chapter continues to manage its funds in a responsible manner that allows us to provide scholarships, grants, workshops, and an annual meeting. For instance, we provide an undergraduate student with \$2,500 annually under the Richard Fitzner Memorial Scholarship. As of the end of last fiscal year, we had a balance of over \$40,000. Detailed financial reports are completed periodically with a full report at our annual business meeting which is open to all members. Finances are reviewed and discussed by the Board aiding in quality control. If you have any concerns or questions about our Chapter finances management, please attend our annual business meeting or contact Craig Hansen, Treasurer.

**2014 Elections** – It is time to start thinking about who you want to run your Chapter next year. There are several positions (two Board Positions, the Secretary, and President-elect) anticipated to be open and we need nominations from you. You can nominate yourself –it's OK, it's called volunteering...and we actually like that! Board Positions are a great way to learn about what we do and test the waters. The amount of time needed is minimal unless you choose to volunteer for specific tasks. Our meetings are almost completely done via conference call and we are a friendly group – nobody has bitten anybody lately. The Secretary position is a very important position and Mike has said that he would help the new Secretary by helping them understand what they do – the rest of the Board would help too. President-elect for 2014 would become the 2015 President and the 2016 Past President, so it is a 3-year commitment; while all others are only for 2 years – you could handle that! Please submit nominations or volunteers to [mhall@parametrix.com](mailto:mhall@parametrix.com).

**Awards** -The Board of WA-TWS believes it is appropriate to clarify existing awards and to institute additional categories of awards to help recognize accomplishments in our field. Not all awards will be given every year; it will depend on nominations from

our members. Our goal is to provide additional opportunities to encourage and recognize such achievement.

For the purposes of these awards by WA-TWS, *Wildlife Conservation* is defined as: Conservation of wildlife populations, wildlife habitats, and natural-resource values that support wildlife and their habitats. “*Wildlife*” includes all mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, and plants that compose the native biodiversity of the region. It can also include management of introduced species when the result is beneficial to native wildlife and habitats. “*Conservation*” includes research; science-based evaluation, assessment, and planning; inventory; monitoring; management; law enforcement; furthering the understanding of the principles of ecology and wildlife management; and advocating sound wildlife stewardship. “*Management*” includes actions to maintain or enhance habitats, populations, or natural processes affecting populations and habitats, as well as the responsible control of individuals or populations of wildlife or addressing invasive species.

### **Existing WA-TWS Awards**

**Special Achievement Award:** The Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society recognizes an outstanding accomplishment by a professional wildlife biologist for a specific task or project that has contributed significantly to wildlife conservation in Washington.

**Leadership in Conservation Award:** The Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society recognizes a long-term contribution to the field of wildlife conservation. This award honors a person or organization that has made sustained and significant contributions over many years to wildlife conservation.

### **New WA-TWS Awards**

**Conservation Award:** The Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society recognizes an outstanding accomplishment (program or project) by an organization, municipality, county, company, and/or individuals for significant contributions to wildlife

conservation, including efforts involving outstanding initiative, innovation, and personal risk of failure.

**Stewardship Award:** The Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society recognizes an outstanding accomplishment (program or project) by a landowner or group of landowners for significant management of their property for the conservation of wildlife.

**Partnership Award:** The Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society recognizes an outstanding accomplishment by one of its members for working with and establishing partnerships that otherwise would not have existed or functioned as well without their initiative, and which has resulted in significant advancement of wildlife conservation.

**Outreach Award:** The Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society recognizes an outstanding accomplishment by one of its members for outstanding efforts in providing educational opportunity to school children, user groups, or the general public related to wildlife conservation, including wildlife biology, habitat, threats, and wildlife-management principles.

**Foresight Award:** The Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society recognizes an outstanding contribution by a professional biologist for outstanding foresight and efforts to address conservation of species and/or habitat in a timely manner. For instance, endangered or threatened species listing decisions and conservation can be aided by information collected and efforts initiated prior to the when the urgency is well understood or publicized. This includes initiating monitoring, research, or enhancement projects prior to a species reaching levels or legal status where such actions are necessary.

**Chapter Award:** Awarded to individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to the support and growth of the Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

If you want to nominate an entity for any of these awards – **ITS EASY!** – Just send us a short note ([bill\\_vogel@fws.gov](mailto:bill_vogel@fws.gov)) and have another member do the same or second your nomination. If you want you can further strengthen your nomination by

statements of support. If the nomination is successful we may ask for more information.

**Title of Award:**

**Nominee:**

**Submitted by:**

**Seconded by:**

**Contact Information for persons submitting nomination:**

**Date Submitted:**

**Rationale:**

## 2013 SCHOLARSHIP & GRANT RECIPIENTS

### Richard E. Fitzner Memorial Scholarship

Dick Fitzner was a biologist, educator, artist, naturalist, hunter and fisherman. He also served as President of the Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society. Dick always offered enthusiasm, inspiration and encouragement to the many wildlife biologists that knew him. Through an annual memorial scholarship fund, established in Dick Fitzner's honor, the Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society hopes to help encourage and inspire future wildlife biologists.

Each year a wildlife-oriented biology student, who is a junior or senior at a Washington State college or university, applies for the \$2,500 tuition scholarship. Applicants provide college transcripts and two letters of reference from instructors or past employers.

For the 2013-2014 academic year, the Board of Trustees of the scholarship reviewed about a dozen applications. John Grettenberger, who chairs the Scholarship Committee, coordinated the review. Our applicants generally provided outstanding letters of reference, had good experience in wildlife management or science, and demonstrate high academic achievement. For the first time, our applicant pool was composed exclusively of young ladies – perhaps a sign that times have changed?

**Tia Monzingo**, a junior at Washington State University, was selected as this year's recipient of the Fitzner Memorial Scholarship. Tia is the secretary of the WSU student chapter of The Wildlife Society, works at the WSU orchard, and has volunteered at

the bear center on campus and for other causes. She has been described as a conscientious student who takes her studies very seriously and enjoys getting good grades and is grounded in reality. She looks for challenges instead of asking what is the minimum required.

Applications for the 2014-2015 school year will be due on May 31, 2014. The application form may be found at our [website](#) and may provide some guidance to 2014-2015 applicants.

### Stephanie DeMay – Research Grant Winner

Stephanie DeMay, a PhD student at University of Idaho was selected as this year's recipient of the TWS-WA Chapter's wildlife Research Grant. Stephanie was awarded \$2,500 to support her work in Washington State on "**Noninvasive genetic monitoring of the endangered Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit**". See her update on page 8.

The pygmy rabbit (*Brachylagus idahoensis*) is a geographically and genetically distinct population in the Columbia Basin of central Washington (WA) has been isolated from the rest of the species' range for >10,000 years (Lyman 1991). Many factors including habitat loss and fragmentation contributed to the decline of this population, and by 2001, their range had shrunk from many populations in five counties to one remnant population, leading to an emergency listing as an Endangered.

Reintroduction efforts are currently underway at the site of the last known population in the state. Founders for the reintroduction include captive-bred rabbits with mixed Columbia Basin ancestry. Including rabbits with non-WA ancestry was necessary to 1) offset negative effects of inbreeding apparent in purebred WA rabbits and 2) increase the number of individuals for release to overcome the low annual survival rates typical for this species.

Developing accurate and efficient monitoring methods is critical for monitoring the success of reintroductions and for informing adaptive-management strategies. Estimating survival, dispersal, and reproduction of released individuals is

of particular importance when evaluating reintroduction success. Another conservation strategy that requires detailed monitoring is genetic rescue, a management approach for reversing inbreeding depression in small populations by introducing new individuals from other populations. The recovery efforts for the endangered Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit involve both reintroduction and genetic rescue, and require intensive field-based and molecular monitoring methods.

The proposal involves telemetry and genetic sampling; but also involves the collection of fecal pellets. DNA analysis from fecal pellets will allow discrimination by species of lagomorph and yield additional information about others species and their habitat use and movements. Most importantly, the fecal analysis will allow the gathering of information about pygmy rabbits including their survival and reproduction, dispersal by sex and age, and perhaps additional information about regular movements and habitat use.

We had 10 proposals for the 2013 Research Grants for projects or studies conducted in Washington. John Lehmkuhl and Bill Gaines serve on the Grant Committee. Applicants for the 2014 grants may contact John Lehmkuhl ([jlehmkuhl@nwi.net](mailto:jlehmkuhl@nwi.net)). The application form may be found at our [website](#) and may provide some guidance to 2014 applicants. Due date for 2014 grants is April 1st.

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### The Wildlife Society National Conference

In these critical times, achieving effective results demands a paradigm shift that can only be realized with exposure to new thoughts and ideas. The Wildlife Society Annual Conference will help you discover and implement ideas that deliver results. It will train your mind to search for innovative

solutions. It will provide opportunities to make valuable connections with other association professionals and suppliers who have solutions you need. And, it will prepare



you for the long road ahead.

The annual conference will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, October 5 to 10, 2013. For more information check out the website, <http://wildlifesociety.org/>.

You will even find a link to a letter template in case you need help convincing your supervisor that this is a good idea.

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### More on Bats

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife recently completed its first state conservation plan for bats. The plan, which was written by Gerry Hayes and Gary Wiles, gives an overview of bat biology, habitat requirements, legal and conservation status, known or potential threats to bats, and relationships to public health. It also includes brief accounts for each of the 15 bat species found in Washington, with summary information on historical and current distribution and abundance, identification, taxonomy, habitat, biology, threats, and conservation measures for each species. The plan also outlines strategies and tasks needed to implement conservation and protection of bats in Washington. Copies of the plan are available on WDFW's webpage at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01504/>

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### Raptors of the Northwest Symposium

February 5-7, 2014; Pasco, WA

#### The Raptors of the Northwest

**Symposium (RNWS)** will be part of a Joint Meeting with several other meetings and symposia, including the annual meeting of the TWS



Snowy owl flying. Photo: Karl Vogel

Washington Chapter and the 4th International Burrowing Owl Symposium. The specific dates for the Raptor Symposium are February 5-7, 2014; other meetings/symposia will overlap and/or extend past these dates. The venue will be the Red Lion, in Pasco, WA, which is ¼ mile from the Pasco Airport.

The geographic areas to be focused on during the raptor symposium are the NW U.S. states, including Alaska, and the Western Canadian Provinces. Both diurnal and nocturnal raptors will be addressed. The theme is “**Linking Raptor Research to Critical Conservation and Management Needs.**”

We want there to be widespread and diverse geographical and organizational involvement and support from as many agency, academic, NGO, and other land management stakeholder groups as possible; so if you have suggested contacts, we would welcome them.

For more information on the Joint Meeting, or to submit an abstract (for all meetings), please see our [website](#). Please specify that you are interested in the RNWS.

For additional information contact Jeffrey L. Lincer, Raptor Symposium Organizer, SoCal Chapter Rep. to TWS WS at [Jeff Lincer@gmail.com](mailto:Jeff.Lincer@gmail.com); (619) 668-0032.

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### **Join the Washington Chapter of the Wildlife Society!**

For more information on the Chapter, including membership forms, please visit our website: <http://wildlife.org/Washington/>.

If you have questions regarding your membership status, please contact Mike Hall at 425-458-6244 or [mhall@parametrix.com](mailto:mhall@parametrix.com). He will be happy to help you out. And if you are ready to renew your membership you can use our [website](#). Folks who are members at the National level can also check by logging in as members at <http://store.wildlife.org>. Remember chapter membership dues are only \$10 (\$5 if you are a student). It's an inexpensive way to stay connected and support wildlife!

If you need to continue receiving hardcopies of newsletters, please contact Bill Vogel. Our intent is to minimize distribution of hardcopies to save costs and reduce our carbon footprint.



Sunset near Yakima. Photo: Karl Vogel

# The Wildlife Society

## Washington Chapter

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