

Summer 2023

THE FLORIDA WILDLIFER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,
I hope this message finds you well and excited about the upcoming season! As your new President, I am honored to lead our amazing Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Before we dive into the exciting plans we have in store for you, let me start by saying this: YOU are the heart and soul of this organization. Without your involvement and enthusiasm, we wouldn't be able to accomplish our goals. So, thank you for being here and for your commitment to wildlife conservation!

Now, let's talk about what we have planned for you. As the saying goes, membership has its privileges, and we are determined to make sure you get the most out of your membership. That's why our main focus this year is on membership services.

We want to advocate for you and for the resources you've dedicated your life to protecting. We want to provide you with more opportunities to learn and network with your fellow members. And, of course, we want to make our gatherings as memorable and fun as possible!

Speaking of fun, did you know we recently had a Spring Conference? It was a blast! We had break-out sessions where we discussed important issues such as the path of the Conservation Committee, how to get involved in FLTWS, and membership retention and recruitment. If you missed it, don't worry, we've included a summary of each session in this newsletter. Check it out!

But, here's the thing: attending conferences and events is just one way to get involved. There are so many opportunities for you to volunteer and make a difference. Plus, we have a fantastic Facebook group where you

can connect with other members and stay up-to-date with everything that's happening in our chapter. And, have you heard about our photo contest? It's a great way to showcase your photography skills and win some cool prizes. Head over to our [Facebook book group](#) for more information.

Finally, I want to share an exciting new member benefit with you. Larame and Jodi have put together an awesome series of Zoom luncheon socials called *Wildlife Connections—Conversations with Wildlife Professionals* where we can connect, learn, and have fun. At each event, a fellow FLTWS member will give a short presentation about an interesting project, and then we'll have a general discussion in an informal setting while we eat our lunches. If you're interested in helping us organize these luncheons or have a cool topic to present, please contact Larame Ferry (larame.ferry@fltws.org) or Jodi Slater (jodi.slater@fltws.org).

I am thrilled to be your President, and I look forward to working with you to make our Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society the best it can be. Let's make a difference together and have some fun while doing it!

Maria Zondervan

president@fltws.org

FLTWS President 2023-2025



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Prescribed Fire for Wildlife April 2023—Haines City, Florida

Grant Steelman (Seminole Tribe of Florida, far left in photo) and Ayounga Riddick (South Florida Water Management District, far right in photo) led Fire Class participants (from left to right) Danielle Devine, Caitlyn Crawford, David Smith, Douglas Rogers, Cade Chaney, Brian Hale, and Melanie Mancusso in a field exercise to learn about fire effects on Florida scrub-jays and their habitat during the April Prescribed Fire for Wildlife course near Haines City. Over 50 participants spent 4 days hearing classroom lectures, panel discussions and conducting field exercises to study how wildland fire improves and maintains habitat for wildlife in Florida.



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Visit the Florida Chapter website at <http://www.fltws.org>

Want to highlight a program, project, or member? Send photos and a short description to: the editor, Jen Korn at jennifer.korn@fltws.org

MEETING NEWS—SPRING MEETING

Our first in-person Spring conference since the pandemic was a great event! Over 100 wildlifers gathered for 3 days in Jacksonville, to interact and learn about climate effects (and solutions) on Florida wildlife. The first day included a symposium of case studies on natural disasters that are impacting our wildlife. This was followed by our annual member business meeting, during which some big decisions were made. Committee reports, meeting minutes, Treasurer's statement and other announcements from the meeting are found throughout this Newsletter. The evening included a Student Recruitment Fair, Big Raffle and Networking Social.

The Keynote presentations on the second day were outstanding! We learned about the landscape-scale planning efforts that led to creation of the Florida Wildlife Corridor project from Dr. Tom Hoctor (photo right), Director of the Center for Landscape Conservation Planning. Kelly O'Connor, of TWS's Conservation Affairs Network, shared the approach of our national chapter for policy engagement with issues of Climate Change. Logan Benedict, FWC's Adaptation and Landscape Specialist, discussed resiliency and FWC's approach to proposing reasonable future targets for coastal ecosystems that might not include maintaining existing conditions following sea level rise.



A series of breakout sessions discussed the future of the Conservation Committee, how to improve member recruitment and retention, and how to get more involved with the Chapter. The afternoon included a plethora of good technical talks on many different topics. Following a Poster Session and Silent Auction, the annual Banquet included presentation of many awards, including Best Student Paper and Poster, Scholarships and Chapter Awards.

The final day's events were three field trip options, including a birding trip (more on Page 6), habitat management tour and Jacksonville Zoo program. (more on Page 5).

Thanks to all the organizers, presenters, and participants for a terrific gathering!

2023 SPRING TREASURY REPORT

1/1/23-3/16/23:

GENERAL SUMMARY

Checking account balance as of 1/1/23	\$ 39,605.82
<u>Checking account balance as of 3/16/23</u>	<u>\$ 73,970.02</u>
Net Change	\$34,364.20

ALLOCATION OF ASSETS

Checking Account as of 3/16/23	\$ 73,970.02
<u>Morgan Stanley Endowment Fund as of 3/16/23</u>	<u>\$ 44,356.25</u>
TOTAL	\$ 118,326.27

All photos courtesy of Maria Zondervan.

MEETING NEWS—PAST PRESIDENT MESSAGE

This is just a quick note to say THANK YOU to all who worked so hard to make the first Spring Conference since 2019 a resounding success! It was an amazing gathering, with terrific presentations, breakout groups, field trips, substantive input from members, and best of all, FACE-TO-FACE NETWORKING! Loved it. Great way for me close out my term as President.

The Conference Theme was Climate Change Impacts on Florida Wildlife, and the topic could not be more timely. If you have not yet read TWS President Don Yasuda's Leadership Letter on page 5 of the latest Wildlife Professional, please do so if you can. He laments the bombardment of climate events with which we seem to be assailed but reminds us that we can be champions of long-term solutions, many of which are controversial, messy, expensive and slow to show results. More and more, wildlife management has a human dimensions aspect we cannot deny. It will take all of our collaboration and diversity of ideas to solve the myriad problems that threaten our native ecosystems.

Monica Folk
FLTWS Past-President
Monica.Folk@fltws.org



Past -resident, Monica Folk (left), receives a plaque for her hard work from incoming President, Maria Zondervan, at the 2023 Spring Meeting.
Photo credit: Jay Exum

MEETING NEWS—SPRING MEETING FIELD TRIPS

Jacksonville Zoo Tour



One of the excellent field trips on Friday of the Spring Meeting was a tour of the Jacksonville Zoo Conservation Programs. Much of the tour was behind-the-scenes, led by Donna Bear, Curator of Species Management. About 18 FLTWS members spent 3 hours discovering the important conservation work of the Zoo.

We started at the wood stork rookery, which was just getting underway, with lots of nest-building and carrying of sticks.



This is not only a regionally important nesting location for this federally threatened species but is also an active research project to learn more about the species' movement ecology. Chicks are banded each year by use of a scissor lift to remove the chicks directly from the nest. Radio transmitters have been fitted on a number of birds from this colony, allowing researchers to study foraging ecology of the adults during the nesting season and dispersal patterns and migration movements of the chicks after fledging.



The second project we learned about was the Manatee Rescue and Rehabilitation program, which is a huge component of the Zoo's conservation work. The Zoo is an integral part of the statewide network of manatee rescue teams, and many injured manatees end up at the Zoo for long-term recovery. We learned the stories of two of these manatees, who were in the state-of-the-art recovery tanks.

Next, we visited the newly renovated penguin area, where we learned from one of the curators that the Zoo has a big fundraising project to support the research and management of penguin colonies in their native habitats. There is even a program to send keepers to these field sites to help with research, and our guide was hoping to be on an upcoming trip to study Magellanic penguins in South America. A group of penguins is called a "waddle"!



The coolest tie-in between the Zoo conservation programs and our conference came when we got to tour the rearing tanks for striped newts, which we had heard all about from Rebecca Means in her excellent presentation on enhancing release ponds for this imperiled species in Apalachicola National Forest. The babies we got to see will probably be released later this year into the wild!

The final conservation project we learned about was the Zoo's support for native pollinator host plants. They are growing large quantities of native milkweeds and other host plant species, to use in education programs and landscaping projects throughout the Zoo. Apparently almost all plants offered in commercial nurseries for pollinators are not native to Florida, so the Zoo is filling a much-needed niche.

-Monica Folk

MEETING NEWS—SPRING MEETING FIELD TRIPS

Birding Excursion at Big Talbot Island



Calling all bird enthusiasts! A group of bird lovers from the Spring Conference embarked on an unforgettable birding tour at Big Talbot Island, led by none other than Dr. Gian Basili, a renowned ornithologist from USFWS. The weather was perfect - with a cool breeze blowing in from the water - setting the stage for a memorable excursion.

Starting at Spoonbill Pond near the bridge to Amelia Island, the group intended to spend just a short while watching wading birds and foraging shorebirds from a covered birding pavilion along the elevated boardwalk. But, as luck would have it, the

birds were so plentiful, diverse, and active that we ended up spending a considerable amount of time at the pond.

The salty seep pond at the north end of the island is tidally inundated and provides ample marine life for the birds to enjoy. The elevated boardwalk provided a great vantage point to observe the birds up close, including eagles soaring above and a wood stork hunting for prey. The wood stork entertained the group with its amazing shadow puppetry, using its wings to lure little fish to come within striking range.



The group then moved towards the beach and were treated to a spectacular show, as Space X launched a rocket just minutes after our arrival. The birds were once again plentiful. There was an immense array of shorebirds, gulls, terns, and oyster catchers. Dr. Basili expertly pointed out the subtle differences that help distinguish one species from another.



It was a terrific morning, and the excursion definitely upped the group's shorebird identification skills. We can't wait to see what adventures our next gathering brings!

- Maria Zondervan

MEETING NEWS—SPRING BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

FLORIDA CHAPTER of THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
 SPRING BUSINESS MEETING – MINUTES
 22 March 2023
 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Call to order (Monica)

Board Members In attendance: Monica Folk, Maria Zondervan, Robin Boughton, Jen Korn, Maria Vilchez; Committee Chairs (all); ~50 members

Fall Board Meeting Minutes (Monica for Tyler) - summary of Drone Workshop, Motion to approve: Jay Exum, Second: Robin Boughton, Results: Passed Unanimous

Treasurer's Report (Robin)

GENERAL SUMMARY (1/1/23-3/16/23)

Checking account balance as of 1/1/23 \$ 39,605.82

Checking account balance as of 3/16/23 \$ 73,970.02

Net Change \$ 34,634.20

ALLOCATION OF ASSETS

Checking Account as of 3/16/23 \$ 73,970.02

Morgan Stanley Endowment Fund as of 3/16/23 \$ 44,356.25

Petty Cash as of 3/16/23 \$474.00

TOTAL \$ 118,326.27

Income was from Membership dues, Rx Fire course and Drone workshop registrations; major expenses were Drone workshop and Scholarships. Cully questioned if there is profit from Rx Fire course. Folk indicated expenses are covered, excess is tracked for future classes. Petty cash box was located. **Motion to approve and file for audit: Jodi Slater, Second: Maria Zondervan, Results: Pass Unanimous.**

Audit Report (Sam/Robin)

Sam summarized the audit process. Discussed loss of data (one month), system updates, staff changes, and impacts of pandemic for lags in financial records/reporting. Discussed methodology for performing audit. "Books typically average out annually". Areas with room for improvement: 1) Petty cash system, 2) Categorization for expenses within Quicken software, 3) More consistent review of Morgan Stanley (MS) account, 4) More consistent entry of expenses into software. Robin presented Treasurer's addendum to audit report: addressed treasurer tracking petty cash via digital ledger, exploring Quicken's categorization options, tracking check transactions, reviewing MS account for erroneous charges, and balancing of transactions with account register quarterly. **Motion to accept audit report and Treasurer's addendum: Sierra Scauzillo, Second: Mark Ausley, Results: Approved, no opposition.**

Committee reports

Student Chapter (Maria V.) -

\$5K raised via fundraising (Beast Feast) - "Pie a Professor" was lucrative. 16 students attended Conclave conference. Members won photography and travel prizes. Chapter held 5 workshops, 5 outreach events, and revamped their website. Students are preparing for elections of next year's officers. Present at FLTWS conference: 18 members.

Membership (Lisa) -

226 current members. Membership has declined slightly in last year. 84% of members are professionals. Most members are a member for just one year. Recognition of 20+yr members.

Awards (Larame) -

Membership requirement—Two TWS awards (Early Career Professional, Influential Woman in Wildlife) require that the nominee already be a member of Florida Chapter of TWS. The original thinking was that an exemplary wildlife professional should be a member of their professional organization. However, "wildlifers" today come to the profession through many different routes, and TWS is not the only organization for wildlife professionals. Several universities without a TWS Student Chapter are training future wildlife practitioners. Removing this requirement will increase the diversity of candidates eligible for awards. The Awards Committee recommends that the membership requirement for these two awards be removed. Discussion: Robin pointed out benefit of consistency in award system (undergrad Scholarship recipients do not have to be FLTWS members) and recognition of successful women in other organizations. Mark Ausley feels it could increase membership. Monica responded to question from Cully that the change to our policy would not need to be approved by the national chapter. Aubrey Greene asked about methods of determining membership for purpose of nominations – roster not available to public. **Motion: Committee, Second: Larry Perrin, Results: Pass Unanimous.**

(continued on page 8)

MEETING NEWS—SPRING BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Include a complimentary membership as part of each award: Adding a complimentary state chapter membership to all award recipients who are not already members will increase the organization's visibility. This would also align the professional awards with that of the scholarship recipients. The Herb Kale awardee currently receives a lifetime membership in the Florida Chapter. The Awards Committee recommends that each award include a free one-year membership in FLTWS. Monica discussed that this could increase membership. **Motion: Committee, Second: Robin Boughton, Results: Pass Unanimous.**

Scholarship (*Monica*) -

Add Field Techniques Course Scholarship to annual awards: The SE Section offers a 2-week-long Wildlife and Forestry Field Techniques Course each summer in Georgia. It is aimed at students in Southeastern states at universities without solid field-based natural resource courses. Several Florida schools offer Biology curricula for potential wildlifer practitioners, but have limited fieldwork options (FGCU, FAU, Eckerd, UCF). The Scholarship Committee recommends that we add an annual tuition award to our scholarships. Monica discussed qualities of scholarship recipients and time frames; cost of \$1,500 for tuition award. Larry Perrin expressed concern for the use of these funds for scholarships vs. reducing the original fund-raising goals (i.e., using excess to generate investment income). Sam raises questions about whether that interest would actually fund an employee. Group discussions indicate no. Jay Exum proposes that scholarship is beneficial for community and that FLTWS should explore other fund-raising opportunities to contribute to endowment. **Motion: Committee, Second: Jay Exum, Results: Pass Unanimous.**

Certification (*Monica*) -

Monica discussed CWB certification process. Maria stated 10.5 CEU earned for this conference. Looking for additional members for this committee.

Nominating/Elections (*Monica*) -

2023-2025 officers

President-elect	Tyler Pittman	Treasurer	Tyler Mosteller
Secretary	Kimberly Tillman	Member-at-Large	Jodi Slater
Member-at-Large	Holly Ferreira	SE Section Rep	Larame Ferry

Conservation (*Jay*) -

Jay explains that FLTWS is affiliate with FL Wildlife Federation (advocacy non-profit) but has previously taken passive approach. Proposed question to group: Should FLTWS become involved in influencing policy? Most indicated agreement. Break-out session to be held tomorrow (Thur) to strategize future Conservation Committee work.

Education and Information (*Jen*) -

Requests information from members on field projects and work being done, to include in Newsletters. Encouraged social media engagement (Facebook). Plug for Path of the Panther film on wildlife corridors, in select theaters now.

Fundraising (*Mark, Larry*) -

Mark indicates \$8K in fundraising for this conference and for what funds are used.

Website (*Eric T.*) -

Monica quickly mentioned Eric's involvement in updating website and programming and requests assistance in posting content.

Program (*Maria*) -

Discussed function of committee and new lead (Tyler Pittman). Requests ideas for engaging workshop experiences (Fall meeting). Proposals: capture and handling workshop, influencing policy effecting conservation, basic wildlife monitoring techniques for land managers, working lands for wildlife (timber and ranching).

Old Business

Prescribed Fire for Wildlife course sponsorship—April 2023. FLTWS is sponsoring. Recognition of instructors.

New Business

Hiring an Executive Assistant (contractor). Maria discussed that endowment was originally intended to hire a director but that has not come to fruition. Described duties of contractor – consistent professional presence, removes administrative burdens on Board, tracking documents and memberships, preparing reports, planning conference. May aid in board recruitment. Position cost of up to \$15K annually. Need to financially support long-term – possibly grant funding. Motion to hire an executive assistant with cap of up to \$15K for annual contract, to be paid monthly over 12 months. Board will bring forward a funding plan at next Spring meeting for a vote before renewing contract. Role should be financially self-sufficient within 2 years. Job Description must be in place prior to interviewing candidates. **Motion: Jay Exum, Second: Dale Gawlik, Results: Pass Unanimous.**

Future of FLTWS—We Want your ideas and input!

Conservation Committee	Member recruitment, retention, benefits	Involvement/Volunteerism/Leadership
Merchandise, should we continue it?	Come to break out groups tomorrow!	Email Maria Zondervan your ideas!

Adjourn 5:40 pm

MEETING NEWS—COMMITTEE REPORTS

Now that we are back in action following the pandemic, there are lots of opportunities to get involved and help with the work of the Society. We had a Breakout Session at the conference on ways to engage, and a dozen or more members stepped up to volunteer on various committees. They also provided lots of ideas for future meetings and workshops.

Volunteering is not only a great way to be involved, but also an easy way to rack up ‘credits’ toward re-certification. Committees that are still in need of members include Awards (reviewers), Scholarship (reviewers), Education (social media), Membership (member communications), Merchandise (management) and Program (planning meetings). These committees all have an experienced Chairperson and you will be part of a strong team working on defined projects. Contact Maria or Monica to get involved!

Volunteer Opportunities:

Awards reviewer – 5 hours in December to review applications for Awards

Scholarship reviewer – 5-10 hours in January to review up to 10 applications for graduate research scholarship

Audit report reviewer – 2 hours in February to read and approve audit report

Website assistant – serve as backup for occasional postings to website (training provided)

Merchandise - We are looking for someone to be responsible for our merchandise. This includes holding and maintaining inventory and purchasing new items for the Chapter “store”. Our merchandise is primarily sold at our conferences, but also includes online sales. Most work occurs at annual Spring meeting.

If you are interested in any of these positions, please contact Maria at president@fltws.org

Committee Chairs

Awards—Larame Ferry, larame.ferry@gmail.com

Scholarship—Monica Folk, monica.folk@fltws.org

UF Student Chapter—Charisse Sproha, csproha@ufl.edu

Membership—Lisa Smith, lisa.smith@fltws.org

Education/Communication—Jen Korn, Jennifer.korn@fltws.org

Fundraising—Larry Perrin, yelpper7@gmail.com

Conservation—Jay Exum, jay.h.exum@gmail.com

Technology/Website—Eric Tillman, website.team@fltws.org

Audit—Sam Baraoidan, sam.baraoidan@fltws.org

Nominating/Elections—Monica Folk, monica.folk@fltws.org

Program—Tyler Pittman, president.elect@fltws.org

MEETING NEWS—COMMITTEE REPORTS

Website Committee Report—Spring 2023

Committee Membership

- In August 2022, long-standing Committee Chair and website designer Mike Milleson resigned
- As a committee member with some website experience, Eric Tillman agreed to assume the Chair position
- There are currently no other active members on the committee
- Anyone interested in joining is welcome to reach out to me via website.team@fltws.org

Recent Actions

- The committee has been working on improvements to our FLTWS Google organization account, including updating group email lists and file access for board and committee members
- The committee continues to make tweaks to our homepage to remove old content and refresh/reorder existing content, but it is a work in progress
- Maryann K. and Maria Z. have done a great job adding conference and sponsorship information to the homepage
- Eric will continue to prioritize uploads of FLTWS related news items/announcements and new job announcements as they come in.

Website Analytics

- Website traffic was up 20% in 2022, after a drop off in 2021

	Total visits	Unique visitors	Total page views	Homepage views	SE Pocket Gopher!
2022	20,101	17,861	28,913	3,491	7,230
2021	16,915	15,425	22,405	2,943	5,988
2020	21,982	19,695	30,235	3,180	7,064
2019	18,316	15,804	28,367	4,091	4,129

- The “Species Spotlight” pages garner the most visits; the southeastern pocket gopher is by far the most visited page
- Most of the traffic originates in the U.S. (95%), followed by Canada (~1%), Netherlands (~0.5%), India (~0.4%), and the U.K. (~0.4%)

Future Actions

- Updates to the “Species Spotlight” and “Wildlife and Conservation News” are needed. Please feel free to send new content to website.team@fltws.org

MEETING NEWS—COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership Report—Spring/Summer 2023

- As of July 1, 2023, the Chapter had a total of 221 active members
- 60 members paid through the local FLTWS website
- 161 members paid through the national TWS website

While we are excited that so many young professionals are joining, new members are less likely to get involved in Committees or Board activities. We need more experienced members to step up to leadership positions. Or if you are a fairly new member, volunteer to join a committee—it is a great way to become engaged and network with other professionals. Please spread the word to your colleagues and friends if they would like to become a member, it is easy to visit www.fltw.org and sign up!



FLTWS members visit the Guana River Wildlife Management Area on one of three field trips offered to the 2023 Spring Meeting participants. Photo credit: Jodi Slater

MEETING NEWS—COMMITTEE REPORTS

Conservation Committee Report—Spring 2023

FLTWS Conservation Committee Co-chairs Jay Exum and Aubrey Greene led a breakout session at the spring conference to discuss how the committee could be more effective. We had about 25 participants, most of whom pledged to participate on the committee going forward.

We discussed the Conservation Affairs Network (CAN) of TWS national and the periodic newsletter that TWS publishes. Kelly O'Connor, our TWS CAN representative was at the meeting and agreed to add members of the FL TWS Conservation Committee to the e-mail list that receives the newsletter.

Some of the conclusions reached during this breakout session included:

- We should maximize the use of social media to improve effectiveness of any proposed conservation actions.
- White papers on technical issues authored by FL TWS members are a good idea, but they need to be prepared expeditiously for them to be effective.
- It was suggested that the Conservation Committee could provide information to the Florida Wildlife Federation, and they become our mouthpiece for advocacy on conservation issues.
- FLTWS should advertise ourselves as a hub of technical expertise available to speak on issues related to wildlife.
- Some believe that we should provide science and not weigh in on policy as a professional organization.
- One suggestion was that a person or people should be vetted as good communicators to speak for the organization, potentially in a dynamic situation where they would need to comment on issues that might evolve during a meeting or discussion.

We only had a brief period of time to talk about which conservation priorities should be the focus of the committee. This discussion included the following:

- We should support the Florida Wildlife Corridor and work with private landowners to protect working lands important to wildlife (the question came up as to how we work with them).
- Since wetlands and floodplains are already afforded some kind of protection, we should focus on sandhill communities, particularly old growth savannahs.
- We should make sure that we weigh in on any new road corridors that would have deleterious short- and long-term impacts on wildlife habitat.
- We should focus on the design and location of wildlife crossings.

We agreed it was essential to meet virtually soon and had a scheduled a meeting for Tuesday May 9 at 5:00 to continue the discussion about the format of the committee, and to move forward with specific conservation priorities.

MEETING NEWS—SPRING 2023 AWARDS

Paul Moler Herpetological Conservation Award 2023



We are pleased to announce that Dale Jackson is the recipient of the 2023 Paul Moler Herpetological Conservation Award, presented by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Dale earned his undergraduate degree at Eastern Illinois University (1971), and his doctorate at University of Florida (1977). Dr. Jackson is Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI)'s longest-tenured staff member. He has spent 40 years studying and conserving Florida's herpetofauna, with research focusing on freshwater turtles. At FNAI he oversees database development for amphibians, reptiles, and aquatic invertebrates and is a principal participant in FNAI's advisory role to the Florida Forever land acquisition program (involved in more than a dozen assessments).

Herbert W. Kale, II Award 2023

We are pleased to announce that Martin B. (Marty) Main is the recipient of the 2023 Herbert W. Kale, II Award, presented by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Marty' obtained degrees from Central Michigan (B.S.), FIT (M.S.), and Oregon State (Ph.D.). In 1996 he joined the University of Florida's Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation where he became Full Professor in 2008.

Early in his career, Dr. Main created the Florida Master Naturalist Program (www.MasterNaturalist.org), a conservation education and natural history extension program.



Influential Woman in Wildlife Award 2023

We are pleased to announce that Susan Walls is the recipient of the 2023 Influential Woman in Wildlife Award, presented by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Susan received her M.S. and Ph.D. at the University of Louisiana – Lafayette, and a post-doc in Oregon. She has held faculty positions at City College of the City University of New York, and University of Southern Mississippi, before joining the U.S. Geological Survey. There, Dr. Walls was research wildlife biologist, coordinator, and lead scientist for the southeastern region of the Amphibian Research and Monitoring Initiative (ARMI). She is currently with the USGS Wetland and Aquatic Research Center in Gainesville, FL. Susan's research group establishes and implements long-term monitoring of amphibians at key sites within the southeastern U.S. (AL, GA, FL, SC, NC and TN) and conducts research on potential causes of declines. Susan has always made an effort to mentor, promote, and encourage younger women in the field.



MEETING NEWS—SPRING 2023 SCHOLARSHIPS



2023 FLTWS Undergraduate Diversity Student Scholarship



We are pleased to announce that **Mariaguadalupe Vilchez** is the recipient of the 5th annual undergraduate diversity scholarship, administered by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society. Maria is a senior at UF, majoring in Natural Resource Conservation, with a minor in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. She expects to graduate in Spring 2023.

Maria was born and raised in the City of Miami. As a first-generation college graduate and a Nicaraguan-American in the field of natural resources, Maria is passionate about providing mentorship and immersive opportunities to other under-represented peers. She has participated in a diverse array of wildlife research projects, including shark tagging, coastal fisheries ecology in Florida Bay, python diet studies, oyster reef surveys at Cedar Key, sea turtle nesting surveys, alligator nesting surveys, water quality sampling, and aquatic turtle sampling in freshwater springs. She has served as Secretary and Treasurer of the UF TWS Student Chapter and is the current President.

Maria's long-term career goal is to become a university professor focused on interdisciplinary conservation in both the ecological and legal fields. Following graduation, she plans to attend graduate school and eventually law school, studying environmental law with an emphasis in wildlife and fisheries management.

The FLTWS Undergraduate Diversity Student Scholarship was established in 2018 to recognize and financially assist an undergraduate student from an under-represented background wishing to pursue a career in wildlife biology in Florida. Applicants for the scholarship are judged based on extracurricular activities, demonstrated leadership, professional potential, financial need, personal goals, contribution to Florida wildlife, a letter of reference from a wildlife professional and an essay reflecting on their minority status and how they will contribute to increased diversity and inclusion in the field of wildlife. As this year's recipient, Maria received a check for \$1,500. She was recognized at the FLTWS Spring Conference, March 22-24 in Jacksonville.

MEETING NEWS—SPRING 2023 SCHOLARSHIPS



2023 FLTWS Greater Everglades Memorial Scholarship



We are pleased to announce that **Hannah Henry** is the recipient of the 25th annual scholarship for undergraduate studies, administered by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Hannah is a recent graduate of UF, majoring in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, with minors in Economics and International Studies in Agricultural and Life Sciences.

Through the Avian Behavioral Ecology and Conservation Lab, Hannah worked with Dr. Kathryn Sieving to analyze vocal complexity in perching songbirds. Vocal recordings of wild Carolina chickadees and tufted titmice were processed using trained AI models to characterize the calls. As an intern in the UF Sea Turtle research program, Hannah helped complete boat surveys looking for sea turtles, recorded habitat conditions, collected biological samples, and applied satellite tracking tags. She also spent a summer working to assess the relative abundance and distribution of the St. Vincent Amazon parrot, investigating the main drivers of its decline, and identifying the most effective mitigation strategies to support population growth. For the last 2 years, she worked at the FWC Ocala Conservation Center as a part-time environmental educator.

Hannah's long-term career goal is to serve the public as a wildlife administrator with a federal government agency. She is currently a fully funded Wildlife MS student at the Auburn University College of Forestry, Wildlife and the Environment managing an externally funded scientific grant which is the first of its kind after the BP Oil Spill to study human-wildlife conflicts in the Gulf of Mexico. She is improving the lives of dolphins and sea turtles in the Gulf of Mexico by managing and implementing a large-scale survey of key wildlife stakeholders, working with federal and state regulators, to reduce human-wildlife conflict through voluntary behavior changes. Her research will go on to be the first of its kind, determining where coastal tourists and wildlife tour operators get their information from, and how willing they are to alter behaviors that may lead to protecting dolphins and turtles for the next generation.

The FLTWS Undergraduate Student Scholarship was established in 1998 to recognize and financially assist undergraduate students pursuing a career in wildlife biology at a 4-year school in Florida, during their Junior or Senior year. In 2008, the scholarship was renamed the Greater Everglades Student Memorial Scholarship in honor of 3 FAU students tragically lost during a wading bird survey. Applicants for the scholarship are judged based on extracurricular activities, demonstrated leadership, professional potential, financial need, personal goals, contribution to Florida wildlife and a letter of reference from a wildlife professional. The Florida Wildlife Federation co-sponsors the scholarship. As this year's recipient, Hannah received a check for \$1,500. She was recognized at the FLTWS Spring Conference, March 22-24 in Jacksonville.

MEETING NEWS—SPRING 2023 SCHOLARSHIPS



2023 FLTWS Courtney A. Tye Memorial Graduate Student Scholarship



We are pleased to announce that Meghan Beatty is the 2023 recipient of the annual scholarship for graduate studies, administered by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society. Meghan is expected to graduate with her PhD in Wildlife Ecology & Conservation from the University of Florida in 2024.

Meghan's research interests are focused on at-risk species in need of management guidelines. During undergrad research at the University of Rhode Island, she worked on diamondback terrapins. Following graduation, she conducted field work on the Concho water snake, piping plovers, and saltmarsh sparrows. Her MS research (at UF) was on the state-threatened southeastern American kestrel in Ocala National Forest. Her PhD research involves population dynamics of the endangered Everglade snail kite, an indicator species of wetland restoration success in Florida.

Meghan has a special interest in population ecology and research that increases understanding of populations dynamics across time and space. Her long-term goal is to become a professor with a research lab focused on imperiled species conservation. She enjoys teaching and empowering others to learn at their fullest potential. Meghan has mentored 5 undergraduate students through the Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program and is currently mentoring an undergraduate student working on an honors thesis on snail kites.

Meghan plans to use the scholarship award to conduct a field experiment related to her dissertation on snail kites. She plans to study how social information explains movement of snail kites between wetlands. This will involve 3D printing snail kite decoys and snail egg clusters and purchasing weatherproof equipment for playback to see if snail kites are attracted to wetlands by the presence of conspecifics, conspecific reproductive success, or by the presence of snail egg clusters (indicator of prey availability).

The FLTWS Graduate Student Scholarship was established in 2012 to recognize and financially assist graduate students pursuing a career in wildlife biology at a 4-year school in Florida. In 2014, the scholarship was renamed the Courtney A. Tye Memorial Graduate Student Scholarship in honor of a respected FFWCC employee and graduate student scholarship applicant, who was tragically lost to the conservation community. Applicants for the scholarship are judged based on career interest, research relevance, contribution to Florida wildlife, demonstrated leadership, professional potential, TWS involvement, financial need, and recommendation from a professor. The Florida Wildlife Federation co-sponsors the scholarship.

As this year's recipient, Meghan received a check for \$2,000. She was recognized at the FLTWS Spring Conference, March 22-24 in Jacksonville.

MEETING NEWS— SPRING 2023 SCHOLARSHIPS



2023 FLTWS SE Section Field Course Tuition Scholarship



We are pleased to announce that **Raina Meyers** is the recipient of the 3rd annual Field Course Tuition scholarship offered by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS). The course is administered by the Southeastern Section of TWS. Raina is a senior at FSU, majoring in Environmental Science and Policy.

Raina's long-term career goal is to work with endangered species as a wildlife biologist. She is also very interested in education and outreach about wildlife. As a Humane Society volunteer, she has educated many about the proper care for and protection of animals.

The FLTWS SE Section Field Course Tuition Scholarship was established in 2020 to sponsor a student in Florida wildlife to attend the 2-week intensive Wildlife and Forestry Techniques Course, held each year in June at the Jones Ecological Research Center in Georgia. Postponed for several years by the pandemic, the Field Course was first implemented in June 2022. Topics covered in the course include wildlife surveys, animal capture and handling, vegetation monitoring, forestry measurements, prescribed fire, firearms safety, animal tracking, heavy equipment operation, orienteering/map reading, invertebrate sampling, radiotelemetry, necropsy, bird identification/surveys, mist netting, acoustic recorders, camera traps, scent stations, herp arrays, predator exclosures, wildlife diseases, and game management, among other topics.

The award provides tuition and travel expenses to an undergraduate student majoring in Biology or Wildlife in Florida who has not had sufficient opportunity for field-based experiential learning about wildlife techniques. Applicants are assessed based on professional potential, personal goals, and explanation of obstacles to gaining field experience, and initiative to overcome them. As this year's recipient, Raina will attend the SE Section Wildlife & Forestry Field Techniques Course during 12-25 June 2023 and receive a complimentary membership to FLTWS and TWS.

Check out Raina's article detailing her experience on the following pages!

SE SECTION FIELD COURSE 2023



My two weeks at The Jones Center apart of the SETWS field course were some of the most memorable days I have ever had. The Jones Center is absolutely amazing and everyone I met was so kind. The instructors are extremely knowledgeable, and Dr. Greene made every activity educational and fun. There were so many things we learned such as small mammal trapping, dart guns, necropsies (photo, right), and controlled burns (photo, above)! Being able to participate in a controlled burn was definitely one of the coolest things we did. We also caught mice and did powder tracking with them which was so fun to see these little mice covered in glow-in-the-dark powder.



During my time in Ichauway, I experienced so much joy and met so many people within the environmental field. The connections I made have only strengthened my passion for the environment and made me eager for a future in conservation. The professors were amazing, but so were my fellow classmates. It was invigorating to be around students with the same passion. We all were able to connect so easily, and it just made our two weeks together that much better. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this amazing field course and it made leaving The Jones Center so hard!

Thank you to Monica Folk and The Wildlife Society for providing me with the chance to learn more about conservation. And a huge thank you to Dr. Greene, Dr. Conner, and the rest of the instructors who made those two weeks so memorable!

- Raina Meyers



Learning radio telemetry (left), herp/amphiuma monitoring (center), and mist netting bats (right) at the SETWS Field Course Summer of 2023.

STUDENT CHAPTER NEWS



Eighteen (18) students from the University of Florida either attended or presented posters or oral presentations at the Spring Meeting in Jacksonville. Check out the Scholarship section to see the recipients of various FLTWS Scholarships from UF and other colleges and universities.



SAVE THE DATE—FALL WORKSHOP 2023

SAVE THE DATE!

FLTWS 2023 Fall Workshop
October 12-13, 2023
The Plantation on Crystal River



9301 W. Fort Island Trail, Crystal River, FL 34429

[Click here for hotel information.](#)

The agenda is currently being prepared. Stay tuned!

Room-rate will be \$129 a night plus \$28 resort fee. Room block cutoff is September 18, 2023. Additional details will be available soon and posted on our website (<https://www.fltws.org>).

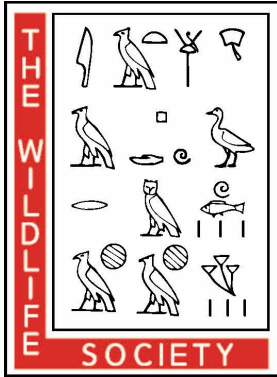
Mark your calendar today and start making plans to join us at the FLTWS 2023 Fall Workshop!

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Visit the Florida Chapter website at <http://www.fltws.org>

NATIONAL CHAPTER NEWS



Greetings,

The Wildlife Society recently developed a banner ad for the Associate Member edition of the eWildlifer. Associate members are individuals that are a member of a Section or Chapter but not of The Wildlife Society at the main. If interested in receiving the free monthly eWildlifer, you can sign up clicking on the banner below.

A banner advertisement with a background image of a person in a field. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box. On the right side of the banner is a smaller version of the Wildlife Society logo.

Interested in hearing more from TWS...

Sign up [here](#) for our free, monthly edition of the *eWildlifer* — your one-stop shop for the latest wildlife news, Section and Chapter updates, TWS announcements, and more.

If you are interested in volunteering for a committee with the National Chapter of the Wildlife Society for 2023-2024, please visit the form linked [HERE](#).



MEETINGS, EVENTS, OTHER “OF INTEREST”

Corridor Connect

Ecology+Economy for a better Florida

Orlando, Florida

September 26-28, 2023

Waterbird Society Annual Meeting

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

October 9-13, 2023

30th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society

Louisville, Kentucky

November 5-9, 2023

Nutritional Ecology Working Group of TWS—Skills Workshop “Measuring Forage Quantity and Quality for Herbivores”

Kingsville, Texas

November 15-17, 2023

Live Wildly

The Florida Wildlife Corridor Needs You. Join the Movement

Path of the Panther

A project of Florida Wild with National Geographic

Follow the adventure, and watch for the groundbreaking film on Disney+ or Hulu now!

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PHOTO CALL

FLTWS PHOTO CONTEST

We have officially kicked off a photo contest within the FLTWS Facebook Group, so if you are not a member, join today at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/fltws> so you can view and submit your great shots!

Every 2 weeks will have a different category that you can enter as many photos as you like. At the end of the 2-week period the post with the most LIKES will be the winner and the submitter will be the recipient of a FLTWS T-Shirt.

Once all the categories have been voted on, we'll repost all the winning photos and let you choose the overall winner, who will receive a 1-Hour massage at the Massage Envy location closest to them! But the BIGGEST PRIZE of course, is the bragging rights!

We start it off with BABY ANIMALS...and the winner was....(drum roll please)....**Jay Exum!** Here is his winning photo  Check out the FLTWS Facebook group for other entries.

Get ready for the next segments of this contest. The upcoming categories will be:

- Remote camera images (Trailcam photos)
- Fieldwork Fails / Most embarrassing field moments
- Unusual animal interactions
- Florida flora
- Most iconic Florida picture
- Non-Florida landscapes - Awesome pictures from lands outside of FL
- Non-Florida flora/fauna - Not talking about invasive species. We mean flora or fauna you photographed in another state or country
- Conservation in action/Teamwork
- Fire photos – wildfires and prescribed burns
-

Again, if you aren't a member of the Facebook group – [join now!](#)



Do you have a really awesome photo from the field or from a game camera? We want to see it! Each newsletter we will feature one of our member's photos here and on the FLTWS website. Please e-mail photos with a short description to the editor, Jen Korn, at jennifer.korn@fltws.org Please indicate your permission for usage in both the newsletter and the website or newsletter only. We can't wait to see everyone's adventures!

