



ALBERTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY 2017 Conference

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 27th annual Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society Conference and AGM in Lac La Biche. We thank Portage College for partnering with us this year. Fire has shaped our landscape and provided homes for our diverse wildlife. This past year fire has also brought tragedy to Fort McMurray and Lac La Biche played an important role in sheltering its victims. It is only fitting that the theme for this year's conference be on fire. Ensure you absorb new information to shape new ideas and more importantly make sure you enjoy networking with your peers.



ALBERTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Box 4990, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 5G8 www.actws.ca

“Positive energy brings good feelings, and dark energy often means harm. But the destruction in dark energy is also a subtle aspect of construction, like how even forest fires have their benefits. Sometimes enemies are our best teachers, people can learn from their mistakes, destruction sometimes means rebirth.”

- KEANU REEVES

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Conference Chair: Larry Roy, Delinda Ryerson
Communications: Alina Fisher, Layla Neufeld, Nick Parayko, Kristie Derkson, Lisa Wilkinson, Dave Hobson
Field Trip: Lisa Takats Priestley, Elston Dzus
Workshops: Everett Hanna, Dee Patriquin
Plenary Session: Larry Roy, Jason Fisher, Michelle Fournier
Open Paper Program: Delinda Ryerson, Larry Roy, Jason Fisher
Student Conclave: Nicholas Parayko, Dee Patriquin

Entertainment: Louise Hahn
Professional Awards: Glynnis Hood
Student Awards: Michelle Fournier, Lisa Takats Priestley
Scholarships, Travel Grants: Brian Kopach
Auction: Elston Dzus, Matt Besko
Sponsorship: Elston Dzus
Registration: Samantha Morris Yasinski, Delinda Ryerson, Student Volunteers
Printing and Art Work: Alina Fisher, Delinda Ryerson



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION:
March 17, 12:00-14:00 (PORTAGE COLLEGE)
March 17, 16:00-17:00 (BOLD CENTRE)
March 18, 8:00-12:00 (BOLD CENTRE)

FRIDAY, MARCH 17

FIELD TRIPS
09:00 – 16:00 HARVEST CUTBLOCK TOUR
(lunch provided)
Pickup at the Ramada Inn at **09:00** sharp.

09:00 – 16:00 OWL BANDING
(lunch provided)
Pickup at the Ramada Inn at **09:00** sharp.
NRT Bldg, Rm 2, Portage College (down hill W main bldg)

WORKSHOPS
13:00 – 16:00 TRACKING WORKSHOP
Rm 105, Portage College (SE end of college, lower level)

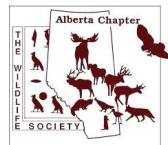
13:00-16:00 NATIVE ARTS WORKSHOP
Rm 237, NAC studio, Portage College (NE end of college, upper level)

FRIDAY, MARCH 17

16:00-1730 DINNER ON YOUR OWN

17:30- 19:30 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Viewpoint Room, Bold Centre

19:30-23:00 STUDENT CONCLAVE AND MIXER/CASH BAR
Devon Room, Bold Centre



Saturday, March 18, Morning

BOLD CENTRE, DEVON ROOM

CONFERENCE WELCOME

8:30 – 9:00

Omer Moghrabi, Mayor of Lac La Biche
Larry Roy, President ACTWS
Trent Keough, President & CEO, Portage College
Opening prayer by Walter Quinn, Traditional Elder

SESSION 1 PLENARY

9:00 – 12:00

Moderator: Lorne Fitch
AV Volunteer: TJ Gooliaff

THE EFFECTS OF FIRE ON OUR LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

1. How has fire shaped Alberta's landscape and wildlife?
2. How are wildlife species adapted to fire?
3. How well is forest management emulating fire?

4. How might climate change influence fire and wildlife in the future?

9:00-9:10 Introduction

Lorne Fitch, Professional Biologist, Retired Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Provincial Riparian Specialist with the Alberta Cows and Fish Program and Adjunct Professor University of Calgary.

9:10-9:50

Wildlife management under a changing climate.

Richard Schneider, Research Associate, University of Alberta.

9:50-10:10 BREAK
(DEVON ROOM)

Saturday, March 18, Morning

BOLD CENTRE, DEVON ROOM

10:10-10:30

Fire dynamics of boreal Alberta post, present, and future: Implications for forest birds.

Erin Bayne, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Alberta.

10:30-10:50

Ecology of woodland caribou in an area characterized by high-fire but low-anthropogenic disturbance: new research from the Saskatchewan Boreal Shield.

Philip D. McLoughlin, Associate Professor, Department of Biology, University of Saskatchewan.

10:50-11:10

A few observations of ungulate and vegetation responses to a wildfire in the Middle Fork, Salmon River, Idaho.

James M. Peek, Emeritus Professor, Wildlife Resources,

Fish and Wildlife Sciences, University of Idaho.

11:10-11:30

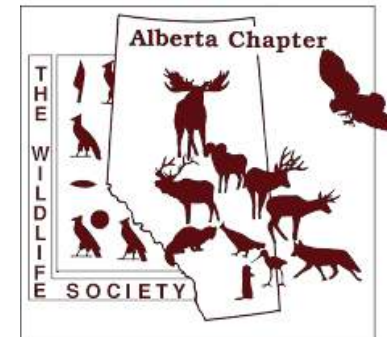
How important are burned forests to wildlife: Who uses what?

Jim Schieck, Research Scientist, InnoTech Alberta, Adjunct Professor, University of Alberta, and Science Director for the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute.

11:30-12:00

Panel Discussion

12:00 - 13:00 LUNCH BREAK
(DEVON ROOM)



Saturday, March 18, Concurrent Afternoon Sessions

SESSION 2A
(DEVON ROOM)**SONGBIRD ECOLOGY**

Moderator: Erin Henderson
AV Volunteer: Michael Kelly

13:00 – 13:15

Boreal songbird response to seismic lines and the impact of observational scale.

Jocelyn Gregoire, University of Alberta

13:15 – 13:30

Boreal songbird community of understory protection harvested areas.

Connor Charchuk, University of Alberta

13:30 – 13:45

Canada Warbler (*Cardellina canadensis*) distribution, breeding habitat, and singing phenology in Alberta's Foothills.

Chuck Priestley, STRIX Ecological Consulting

13:45 – 14:00

Effect of wildfire on passerines in the northern boreal forest.

Michelle Knaggs, University of Alberta

14:00 – 14:15

Can song rate be used to predict breeding status in the Olive-sided Flycatcher?

Emily Upham-Mills, University of Alberta

14:15 – 14:30

Distance sampling using acoustic recordings of birds.

Daniel Yip, University of Alberta

14:30-15:00 BREAK
(DEVON ROOM)SESSION 2B
(SKYVIEW ROOM)**WILDLIFE TECHNIQUES**

Moderator: Kara MacAulay
AV Volunteer: Maria Santa

13:00 – 13:15

Use of a smartphone application to collect animal carcass data along Highway 63 in Alberta, Canada.

Sandra MacDougall, Red Deer College

13:15 – 13:30

Assessment and optimization of automated acoustic species recognition for practitioners.

Elly Knight, University of Alberta

13:30 – 13:45

Who gives two hoots? Surveying owls using autonomous recorders and automated species identification.

Julia Shonfield, University of Alberta

13:45 – 14:00

Changing data? A comparison of blue-winged teal habitat suitability using historic analog and current GIS approaches.

Glynnis Hood, University of Alberta, Augustana

14:00 – 14:15

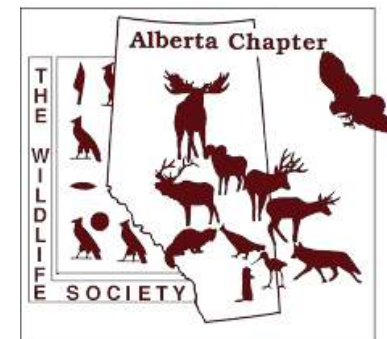
Black bear density estimation in Southwestern Alberta: using ancillary data from a grizzly bear study.

Anne Loosen, University of Alberta

14:15 – 14:30

Predator avoidance and seasonal resource selection by white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) in Northern Alberta, Canada.

Siobhan Darlington, University of Victoria

14:30-15:00 BREAK
(DEVON ROOM)

Saturday, March 18, Concurrent Afternoon Sessions

SESSION 3A
(DEVON ROOM)**CONSERVATION AND URBAN
CONDUCTIVITY**

Moderator: Matthew Scrafford
AV Volunteer: Emily Blythe

15:00 – 15:15

Mitigating wildlife impacts from in situ oil sands development: creating wildlife value and business value.

Amit Saxena, Devon Energy Corporation

15:15 – 15:30

Yellowstone to Yukon: Vision, progress, and challenges for large landscape conservation.

Aerin Jacob, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative

15:30-15:45

The Alberta Wildlife Watch Program.

Sandra MacDougall, Alberta Transportation

15:45-16:00

Testing and expanding umbrella species — how large carnivore occupancy correlates with species diversity and food-web structure.

Robin Steenweg, Alberta Environment and Parks

16:00 – 16:15

Big buck seeking pretty doe: Finding ecological connections in an urban landscape.

Shantel Koenig, Fiera Biological Consulting Ltd.

16:15 – 16:30

How did the chick(adee) cross the road? Mapping arboreal connectivity in urban landscapes.

D.L. Patriquin, Solstice Canada Corp. / University of Alberta

**16:30-17:00 Move to PORTAGE
COLLEGE GYMNASIUM**SESSION 3B
(VIEWPOINT ROOM)**WILDLIFE ECOLOGY**

Moderator: Justin Shave
AV Volunteer: Jocelyn Gregoire

15:00-15:15

Biological interpretation, accuracy, and precision of species occurrence data.

Frances Stewart, University of Victoria

15:15-15:30

Using camera trap surveys to estimate mammal densities in the northern boreal: trials and tribulations of a Bayesian modeller.

Joanna Bugar, University of Victoria

15:30 – 15:45

Changing migration in the Ya Ha Tinda elk population: when, where and why to migrate.

Evelyn Merrill, University of Alberta

15:45 – 16:00

Managing the move: Factors affecting the success of grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*) translocations in Alberta, Canada.

Sarah Milligan, FRI Research

16:00 – 16:15

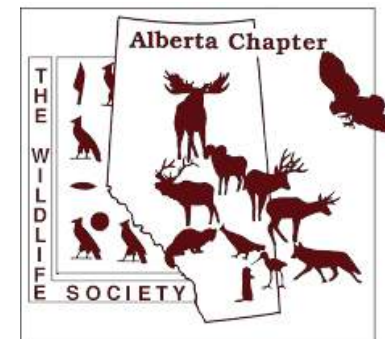
Grain spilled from moving trains creates a substantial wildlife attractant in protected areas.

Aditya Gangadharan, University of Alberta

16:15 – 16:30

Relationships between highway mitigation and railway mortality.

Patrick Gilhooly, University of Alberta

**16:30-17:00 Move to PORTAGE
COLLEGE GYMNASIUM**

Saturday, March 18, Evening Events

17:00-17:30

Cash Bar Mixer

17:30-18:30

Banquet

18:30-18:45

Scholarships - Brian Kopach

18:45-19:00

Awards – Glynnis Hood

19:00-20:00

Live Auction – Matt Besko

20:00-24:00

Dancing and jamming to the music of DJ Luke England

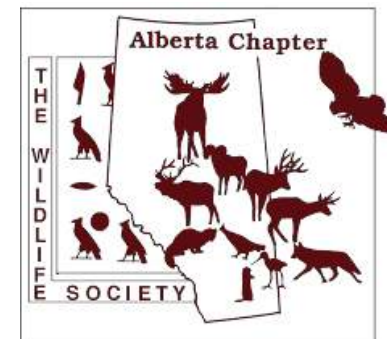
POSTERS

1. North American bat monitoring program in Alberta. ~ **Joanna Burgar**
2. Ice-period migration dynamics of polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) in the western Hudson Bay. ~ **Alyssa Bohart**

3. Assessing ecosystem dynamics in the Beaufort Sea using stable isotopes in polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) and ringed seals (*Pusa hispida*). ~ **Nicole Boucher**
4. Using bioacoustics to develop monitoring practices for Alberta anurans. ~ **Jillian Cameron**
5. Photomonitoring of a wildlife underpass and fencing in the Red Deer River Valley prior to final construction of the North Highway Connector around the City of Red Deer. ~ **Thomas Corsiatto**
6. Do migrant and resident elk trade-off vigilance and space-use to avoid different predators? ~ **Mitchell Flowers**
7. How human footprint influences energetic trade-offs across multiple trophic levels. ~ **Gillian Fraser**
8. Surveying Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*) in winter: easy

Sunday, March 19, Poster Session

- and cheap. ~ **Manuel González**
9. Spatial and temporal patterns of bobcat and lynx distributions in British Columbia. ~ **T.J. Gooliaf**
10. Assessing polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) use of the Western Hudson Bay and Beaufort Sea flow lead polynyas. ~ **Erin Henderson**
11. The influence of design on internal temperatures of bat houses. ~ **Michael Kelly S**
12. New advances in the use of citizen science for the monitoring and study of Alberta's building roosting bats. ~ **Erin Low**
13. Vigilance is about more than just watching for predators: Social mimicry of vigilance behaviour contributes to group cohesion. ~ **Petra McDougall**
14. Stable isotopes and fatty acids reveal freshwater aquatic prey in the diet of wolves. ~ **Sean O'Donovan**
15. Space use of Ferruginous Hawks in response to the presence of transmission lines. ~ **Nicholas Parayko**
16. New invader or old unknown? The European strain of *Echinococcus multilocularis* in coyotes and foxes in Alberta. ~ **Maria Alejandra Santa**
17. Diet composition and prey selectivity of gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) in Prince Albert National Park, Saskatchewan. ~ **Justin Shave**
18. Using scat DNA and citizen science to determine grizzly bear distribution and abundance in West-Central, Alberta. ~ **Anja Sorensen**
19. Fifteen years of volunteer nocturnal owl surveys in Alberta. ~ **Lisa Takats Priestley**
20. Large mammal responses to seismic line restoration. ~ **Erin Tattersall**



Sunday, March 19, Morning Session

SESSION 4 (DEVON ROOM)

PREDATOR CONTROL SYMPOSIUM

Moderator: Evelyn Merrill
AV Volunteer: Thomas Corsiatto

8:50 - 9:00 Introduction
Evelyn Merrill, Professor,
Department of Biological
Sciences, University of Alberta

9:00-10:00 Keynote Speaker

Predator Control and Foodweb
Dynamics.

Tom Nudds, Emeritus Professor,
Department of Integrative
Biology, University of Guelph.

10:00-10:20 BREAK
(DEVON ROOM)

10:20-10:45

A quick review of large carnivore
control efforts in Western North
America.

Paul Frame, Provincial
Carnivore Specialist, Alberta
Environment and Parks.

10:45-11:10

Predator Control in Alberta for
the 21st Century and the role of
trappers in modern predator
management.

Bill Abercrombie, President and
CEO Bushman Inc.

11:10-11:25

Trappings of success: Upland
duck nest survival in Alberta
parklands.

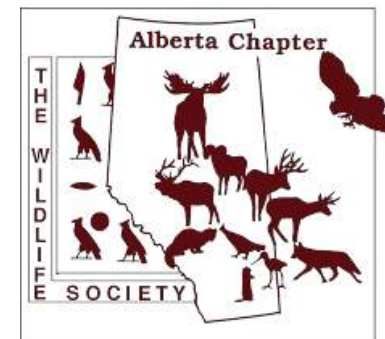
Emily Blythe, MSc Candidate,
University of Alberta

**11:25 - 12:00 POSTER
SESSION** (DEVON ROOM)

12:00 - 13:00 LUNCH BREAK
(provided in DEVON ROOM)



Photos from: www.instagram.com/theactws/



Sunday, March 19, Concurrent Afternoon Sessions

Sunday, March 19, Concurrent Afternoon Sessions

SESSION 5A
(DEVON ROOM)**CARNIVORE ACTIVITY AND PREDATION RISK**

Moderator: Erin Tattersall
AV Volunteer: Siobhan Darlington

13:00-13:15

Carnivore activity patterns in relation to landscape development and competitor co-occurrence across the Rocky Mountains of Alberta.

Sandra Frey, University of Victoria

13:15-13:30

Human disturbance alters predation risk to moose in the Athabasca oil sands.

Eric Neilson, University of Alberta

13:30-13:45

Do spatial differences in carnivore diet reflect predation risk for Ya Ha Tinda elk?

Kara MacAulay, University of Alberta

13:45-14:00

Assessing relative abundance and resource selection function for predicting predation risk in a multi-species predator community.

Eric Spilker, University of Alberta

SESSION 5B
(VIEWPOINT ROOM)
PARASITES, DISEASE, AND WOLVERINE HABITAT SELECTION

Moderator: Elly Knight
AV Volunteer: Sandra Frey

13:00-13:15

Intra- and Inter- litter variation in parasite intensity and diversity in Columbian Ground Squirrels (*Urocitellus columbianus*).

Tracy Hammer, University of Calgary

13:15-13:30

Parasites of urban coyote in Edmonton: A community ecology approach.

Michael Stock, Grant MacEwan University

13:30-13:45

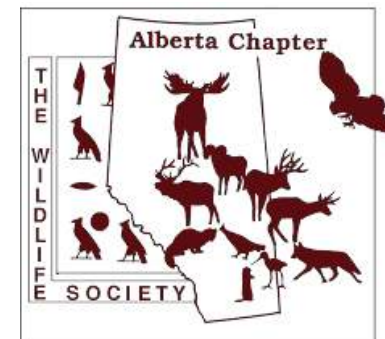
Characterizing orf infection in muskoxen from Victoria Island.

Chimone Dalton, University of Calgary

13:45-14:00

Wolverine habitat selection in response to anthropogenic disturbance in the western Canadian boreal forest.

Matthew Scrafford, University of Alberta



Sunday, March 19, Afternoon Session

SESSION 6 (DEVON ROOM)

WILDLIFE MONITORING AND CARIBOU ECOLOGY

Moderator: Anne Loosen
AV Volunteer: Eric Neilson

14:15-14:30

Monitoring wildlife in alpine habitats, using motion triggered and time-lapse wildlife cameras near Mount Allan, Alberta.

John Paczkowski, Alberta Environment and Parks

14:30-14:45

Regional collaboration for caribou recovery in the Oil Sands Region of Alberta.

Amit Saxena, Devon Energy Corporation

14:45-15:00

Seismic line restoration in woodland caribou habitat, how a provincial framework can get us to where we need to go.

Mathew Pyper, Fuse Consulting Ltd.

15:00-15:15

Living in a burned landscape: Woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*) use of post-fire residual patches for calving in a high fire/low anthropogenic Boreal Shield Ecozone.

Hans Skatter, Omnia Ecological Services

15:15 – 15:30

Student Presentations and Poster Awards

Election Results

Closing Remarks

Past President: Larry Roy
ACTWS President: TBA

