

The Alberta Wildlifer

President's Message

The 2012 Annual General Meeting and Conference of the ACTWS has come and gone. Despite holding it way down in the most south-eastern corner of Alberta, Medicine Hat, we had good attendance with about 125 people. Folks seemed pleased with the line up of speakers and the field trip to the Cypress Hills to talk about the highest density cougar population in North America was a highlight. Our tour guide, Carl Morrison, even topped off the trip with a beautiful sunset. Holding the conference down in Medicine Hat allowed us to attract some very bright students from Regina to present their research along with our Albertan students. The William Rowan Distinguished Service Award, this year, went to Lorne Fitch. The Dedicated Service Award went to Lisa Wilkinson and the Publication Award went to Mark Boyce. All well deserved.

We have a new Executive and the decision on a new President-Elect came at the last moment during the

AGM. Unfortunately, we had no luck finding someone to take the task on until Dee Patriquin stepped forward at the meeting and accepted the nomination for President-Elect. We've lost some valuable members of the Executive and I'd like to thank Directors Richard Quinlan and Mark Edwards for their two years of work on the Executive. Karl Zimmer, the Secretary/Treasurer for a number of years has unfortunately also stepped down. He will be missed. Finally, the Student Director, Steve Olson is graduating and stepping down from the position that he handled so well. In their place, we have Curtis Stambaugh as Secretary/Treasurer, Melissa Thomson and Jason Fisher as the new Directors and Angela Rideout as the new Student Director. The old faces on the Executive are Directors Shevenelle Webb and John Stadt. Jim Allen remains for another year as Past-President.

During our first meeting, immediately after the conference came to an end, the

Executive agreed to focus on some issues raised during the AGM. Specifically, over the next year, we will try to address questions about the role of advocacy within the Chapter, revisit membership with a look at the new social media, and try again to find funding for a half-time Executive Director position. Speaking of the new social media, thanks to Kristie Derkson, the Alberta Chapter is now on Facebook at:

[https://
www.facebook.com/pages/
The-Alberta-Chapter-of-
The-Wildlife-Society-
ACTWS/168240439855710](https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Alberta-Chapter-of-The-Wildlife-Society-ACTWS/168240439855710)

Membership and recruitment to the Executive continues to be a difficult issue. Speaking with people from other non-profit organizations, it is an issue for everyone. We need to look at how we communicate and what benefits we can bring to our membership to ensure that we remain a strong organization well into the future. Ideas from the membership will be welcome.

**Official Newsletter of
the Alberta Chapter,
The Wildlife Society**

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April 17, 2012

Newsletter editors:

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Special points of interest:

- ☺ Changes to Fisheries Act threaten habitat protection—ACTWS lend its voice for better protection
- ☺ Citizen Science at work—nocturnal owl surveys

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'President's Message Continued...

On a bright note, we've named the Post-Graduate Student Scholarship Award. This has been the last scholarship award that remained un-named. The Technical School Scholarship was named as a memorial for Bob Goddard, the Undergraduate Scholarship was also named as a memorial for Ian Ross. However, on Margo's suggestion, we decided to name the Post-

Graduate Award for someone who could still appreciate the honour. We have named the award the William (Bill) Wishart Scholarship. Bill turned 80 years young on April 3rd and remains an active member in the Chapter that he helped create back in 1989.

Finally, Spring is coming and I for one can't wait. Enjoy it and do what you

can to get out in the field and envelope yourself in the wild lands and wildlife that is so important to us.

Dave Hobson
ACTWS
president



2012 Alberta Chapter Award Recipients



Past-president, Dave Scobie & William Wishart Post-Graduate Student Scholarship recipient & new director, Melissa Thomson.

Mark Boyce, recipient of the Alberta Wildlife Publication Award with awards chair Shevenell Webb.

Best Student Poster Presentation recipient, Andrea Morehouse with Lorne Fitch, recipient of the 2012 William Rowan Distinguished Service Award.

2012 Chapter Award Recipients

William Rowan Distinguished Service Award

Lorne Fitch

ACTWS Dedicated Service Award

Lisa Wilkinson

Alberta Wildlife Publication Award

Mark Boyce

2012 Student Award Recipients

William Wishart Scholarship Post- Graduate Scholarship

Melissa Thomson

Best Student Poster Presentation

Andres Morehouse

Best Student Oral Presentation

Rob Found



ACTWS 2012 Executive & Committee Chairs

Executive

President:	Dave Hobson
President Elect:	Dee Patriquin
Past President:	Jim Allen
Secretary:	Curtis Stambaugh
Directors:	Jason Fisher John Stadt Melissa Thomson Shevenell Webb
Student Director:	Angela Rideout

Committee Chairs

Awards Chair:	Shevenell Webb
Information & Education:	Lisa Wilkinson
Scholarships:	Tammy MacMillan
Newsletter:	Lisa Wilkinson Kristina Norstrom
Conservation Committee:	Blair Rippen
Website Chair:	Layla Neufield
Membership:	Robin Gutsell
Historian:	Margo Pybus

For contact information check the website: <http://joomla.wildlife.org/Alberta/>

'Baydack's Banter'—Canadian Section Representative's Report



of actions are being undertaken to celebrate this historic occasion. For

75 years and counting! The Wildlife Society has achieved that distinction this year, and you may have been noticing that a variety

every day.

Of course with increasing membership comes increasing requirements for the Society. As The Wildlife Society has grown, so has the size and breadth of its programs and services. Currently, TWS is facing challenges in generating the funding it needs to maintain or expand its current programs and explore new opportunities

the company/organization has made a financial contribution to TWS. To pursue this option, specific guidelines for the use of TWS's logo would be developed. As this is a significant new approach for TWS relative to fund-raising, TWS Council is



....TWS Council is actively seeking input from members to understand your views on this possible approach to funding....

example, each issue of *The Wildlifer* in 2012 will contain articles on the history of the Society; special features will be included in all 2012 volumes of *The Wildlife Professional*; a number of celebratory events will take place at the Annual Conference in Portland, and a new TWS Distinguished Service Award has been created to recognize deserving members of our Society. Of course all of the great work of TWS could not have been accomplished without the dedicated commitment of its members. Almost 11,000 strong and growing

for organizational growth and service. Therefore, we need additional funding to maintain the Society's programs, services, and opportunities. A possible source that Council has been investigating is to allow companies/organizations to use TWS's logo accompanied by a statement indicating that the company is a proud sponsor of TWS, or similar wording, on product packaging or websites, in exchange for a financial contribution. In such an arrangement, TWS would make it clear that no endorsement of a product was being made, only that

actively seeking input from members to understand your views on this possible approach to funding. Your input is valued and appreciated. Please contact me (Baydack@cc.umanitoba.ca) to let me know your perspectives on this important issue.

And finally, you will soon be receiving your ballot from The Wildlife Society electronically or by mail for the upcoming elections to Council. My second term as Canadian Section Representative will end at the Portland Conference, and we will then be ably represented by either Jim Allen from

'Baydack's Banter' Continued....

Alberta or Art Rodgers from Ontario who have been nominated as my replacement. You can 'Meet the Candidates' by going to The Wildlife Society website and clicking on the March 2012 edition of *The Wildlifer*. And when you do that, you will see that I hope that my days on Council will not be ending, as I have accepted the nomination for Vice-President of The

Wildlife Society. That position is a 4-year commitment that progresses to President-Elect, President, and Past-President of TWS. I of course would very much appreciate your support for election to this important position, and will strive to put forward the needs of Canadian wildlifers in future decision-making of our organization. So please be sure to cast

your ballot, since your input is what will continue to make The Wildlife Society strong. Onward!.....

*Rick Baydack,
University of Manitoba
baydack@cc.umanitoba.ca*

To see a short video of the society's history and path for the future visit: <http://vimeo.com/34917057>



**NEW
7th Edition
TECHNIQUES
MANUAL**

<http://joomla.wildlife.org/techniquesmanual/>

A standard text in a variety of courses, the Techniques Manual, as it is commonly called, covers every aspect of modern wildlife management and provides practical information for applying the hundreds of methods described in its pages. To effectively incorporate the explosion of new information in the wildlife profession, this latest edition is logically organized into a two-volume set: Volume 1 is devoted to research techniques and Volume 2 focuses on management methodologies.

Conservation Committee - Fish Habitat Under Threat

Last year was a busy year for the ACTWS Conservation Committee but the issues continue to present themselves in 2012. Most recently, the Conservation Committee added the ACTWS voice in the form of a letter to the prime minister regarding potential changes to the federal Fisheries Act concerning alterations to the habitat component of the act. This adds to a letter sent by the Canadian Section of TWS and a letter signed

by over 600 scientists led by Dr. David Schindler from the University of Alberta.

The changes to the act have been made; this announcement was made on April 24, "...the Harper government will introduce changes to protect the productivity of recreational, commercial and Aboriginal fisheries. This means focusing protection rules on real and significant threats to these fisheries and the habitat that sup-

ports them while setting clear standards and guidelines for routine projects. It also means strengthening partnerships with provinces and conservation groups as well as creating better tools to ensure compliance and enforce the rules where necessary."

Did the government really make positive changes for fish habitat? For the full article, see <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/npress-communique/2012/hq-ac12-eng.htm>

Conservation Committee—Letter Submitted to Prime Minister regarding proposed changes to the Federal Fisheries Act

Right Honourable Stephen Harper Prime Minister
Langevin Block
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3 Canada

Right Honourable Stephen Harper,
As reported in the March 17th edition of the
The Globe and Mail, the Honourable Keith Ash-

The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society does not support removal of the fish habitat provisions so much as a robust strengthening of the regulatory mechanisms to address their misdirected application.

field, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, confirmed the intent of the Government to consider significant changes to the habitat provisions of the Fisheries Act. Unconfirmed reports have indicated the changes will result in the removal of the habitat provisions of the Fisheries Act and possible amendments to the law list of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

Comments attributed to Minister Ashfield indicate a strong desire of the Government to address perceived shortcomings of the present legislation. However, to remove the fish habitat provisions from the Fisheries Act and instead focus on "fisheries of economic, cultural and ecological value" will not address the underlying concerns and, presents a clear and present risk to environmental oversight and responsible business development. In our view, it is the shortcomings of existing regulatory guidance and review, which demand equal response to all development proposals regardless of severity of impact that require change. The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society does not support removal of the fish habitat provisions so much as a robust strengthening of the regulatory mechanisms to address their misdirected application. It is critical that Canada retain its internationally recognized suite of environmental legislation and practice as a basis for business development, instead of abandoning those standards and risking the diminishment of economic opportunity.

The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society is committed to a world where humans and wildlife co-exist. It has direct linkages with the international parent body of The Wildlife Society whose mission is to represent and serve the professional community of scientists, managers, educators, technicians, planners, and others who work actively to study, manage, and conserve wildlife and its habitats worldwide.

The members of The Wildlife Society manage, conserve, and study wildlife populations and habitats. They actively manage forests, conserve wetlands, restore endangered species, conserve wildlife on private and public lands, resolve wildlife damage and disease problems, and enhance biological diversity.

We remain hopeful the Government will reconsider its intent to modify legislation and instead focus on addressing the shortcomings of existing regulatory direction and oversight associated with implementation of the fish habitat provisions of the Fisheries Act. As a society dedicated to improving and promoting professional environmental practice, we would be pleased to provide comment and advice on potential improvements to regulatory mechanisms that would better sustain Canada's fish resources.

Respectively yours:

Dave Hobson, President

cc: Keith Ashfield, Minister Fisheries and Oceans Canada 200 Kent Street Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6 Canada
Peter Kent Minister Environment Canada 10 Wellington Street Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0H3 Canada

Citizen Science

Preliminary Results of the Alberta Nocturnal Owl Survey Program 2003-2011 Beaverhill Bird Observatory

In 2011, the Alberta Nocturnal Owl Survey celebrated its 10th year of monitoring with a record 100 routes being surveyed. There were 190 volunteers surveying for owls across Alberta, and nine species of owls were found. No Short-eared Owls or Burrowing Owls were observed. Owl abundance was low this year, and the breeding season was quite late, possibly due to near record snowfalls during the winter. Being out at night our volunteers see many animals you don't see during the day. Volunteers observed wolves, coyotes, lynx, cougar, and northern flying squirrels. In February, March, and April, we presented owl talks to groups in Olds,

Lethbridge, Calgary, Red Deer, Tofield, Edmonton, Peace River, Dicksonville, and Holden. There continues to be so much interest in owls, we anticipate the owl survey program will continue to run for many years to come. The volunteer data was also provided to Alberta Innovates and the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Initiative to help inform survey designs for work they are hoping to do in 2012. Our 10 year report will be ready in March!! Look for it on our website www.beaverhillbirds.com. Funding from Shell Environmental Fund, TD Friends of the Environment, Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Sport Recreation Parks and Wildlife Foundation, and the

Nature Canada/Charles Labatiuk Endowment is greatly appreciated. We look forward to 2012 results! If you are interested in getting involved in the program we have day time and night time survey routes available. Surveys are done between March 20 and May 5. Please contact Lisa Priestley,(see below), provide your name, address, and where in you would like to survey. Although routes are randomly set, we can assign you one near to where you live

*Lisa Priestley,
Beaverhill Bird Observatory
lisa@beaverhillbirds.com*

780-918-4804



	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q
2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011			
Boreal Owl	0.58	0.52	0.43	0.38	0.42	0.45	0.46	0.50	0.35		
Great Gray Owl	0.13	0.22	0.10	0.10	0.12	0.10	0.11	0.19	0.08		
Barred Owl	0.35	0.31	0.20	0.14	0.17	0.20	0.16	0.18	0.21		
Great Horned Owl	2.21	3.17	1.96	1.65	1.70	2.06	1.51	3.10	2.15		
Long-eared Owl	0.15	0.33	0.16	0.20	0.20	0.23	0.30	0.32	0.15		
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1.79	3.13	1.51	1.72	1.85	2.16	2.31	2.99	1.78		
Short-eared Owl	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01		
Number of Routes	62	86	90	92	93	96	97	98	100		
Number of Volunteers	116	163	177	180	184	185	187	187	190		

Bill Wishart Turns 80!

Bill Wishart recently celebrated his 80th birthday. Many friends and colleagues were on hand to celebrate. Bill submitted the following letter of thanks.

On April 3rd, Margo Pybus invited me to the OS Longman Bldg to celebrate my 80th birthday with a few of the staff. Well, the few turned into a bunch of my past significant staff, students and associates. Overwhelming to say the least. Margo presented me with many of your e-mail greetings on both sides of a computer designed card which I plan to frame. Bob Stevenson was in his realm of our history taking a raft of photos of the old-timers that were there.

A huge surprise was when Jim Allen on behalf of the ACTWS executive presented me with the Announcement of the William (Bill) Wishart Scholarship for wildlife students. I want ACTWS to know how much I appreciate this honour because every year I look forward to hearing and seeing the excellent presentations from our modern day fish and wildlife students.

When I pop off, in lieu of flowers, please send your donation to the above ACTWS scholarship fund!



Photo credits: top-Bill Wishart, left—Bob Stevenson

Mystery tracks

Can you identify the species the made these tracks? Answer on last page.



Photos taken in Mt. Robson Prov. Park by Dave Hobson.

Did you know the Canadian Section now has more than 300 members. For their most recent newsletter and other news check out their website: <http://joomla.wildlife.org/Canada/>

FootNotes from the Editor

I am happy to welcome Kristina Norstrom as a co-editor of the newsletter. I also want to thank the volunteers who have offered to help with the newsletter, and look forward to their involvement in future issues. The newsletter will continue to be a vital communication tool—so don't forget to send in articles!

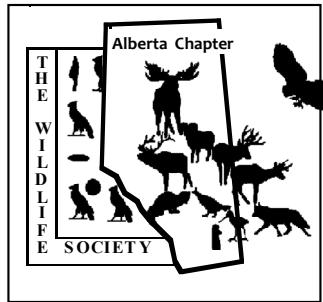
On a personal note, I would like to thank the ACTWS for honouring me with the Dedicated Service Award. Being a part of the ACTWS has been important to both my personal and professional development as a biologist, and it continues to be a privilege to work with such dedicated individuals. Thank you!



Dave Hobson presenting award to Lisa Wilkinson at the FWD office in Edson.

The Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife
Society
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Call for Articles!

Do you have some new research or updates that you would like to share? Please send them to me for posting in the newsletter and get the word out. Photos are welcome.

Do you have any outreach suggestions or success stories?

Do you have any events or jobs to advertise?

Anything in particular that you would like to see in your ACTWS newsletter?

Lisa.wilkinson@gov.ab.ca

Answer to Mystery Tracks, pg 7:
Wolverine

Upcoming Events

2012

51st Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society of Zoologists
Sackville, NB—May 7-11, 2012
<http://csz2012.com/en/>

11th Annual International Society of Applied Ethology North American Regional Meeting
Banff, AB—May 11-12, 2012
<http://www.applied-ethology.org/event10.html>

National Fish & Wildlife Conservation Congress
Ottawa, ON—May 27-31, 2012
<http://www.nfwcc.com/>

IVth International Wildlife Management Congress
Durban, South Africa—July 9-12, 2012
<http://iwmc2012.org/>

7th International Moose Symposium
Bialowieza, Poland—August 6-10, 2012
<http://www.moose2012.pl/>

Northeastern Transportation & Wildlife Conference
Newry, ME, USA—September 9-12, 2012
<http://www.maine.gov/mdot/ntwc/index.htm>

The Wildlife Society 2012 Conference
Portland, OR, USA - October 13-17, 2012
<http://wildlifesociety.org/>

2013

Prairie Conservation Forum Conference
Red Deer, Alberta - February 19-22, 2013
<http://www.albertapcf.org/home>

