



# NEWS

## Message from the President



**Brent Lonner**

Greetings Fellow MT TWS Chapter Members! Hopefully this newsletter finds you doing well where ever you are during this busy summer season. If you're like me, it's always hard trying to balance the importance of the work we do, but also taking time to enjoy the fruits of our labor and unique recreational opportunities Montana provides. Whatever the case, realize that life is short, enjoy it.

In addition to the other updates provided in this newsletter, I wanted to take a few minutes to reiterate the importance of a specific issue pertinent to MT TWS that I sent out via email recently. As many of you are aware, in late May, Brendan

Moynehan resigned as President-Elect of MT TWS. Brendan works for the National Park Service (NPS), which has policies in place regarding employees serving on non-profit boards in their official capacity. While there is a formal process in place for NPS employees to request approval to serve on boards – it requires approval at multiple levels with the final review by the Director of the NPS. Before starting that process, an employee must have the backing and support of his/her direct supervisor. In this case, after multiple conversations on the role, function, and benefits to an agency of having an employee serve in a leadership role of a professional organization, the supervisor ultimately did not support Brendan's taking on this role. Brendan will continue to support the Chapter as the Chair of the Awards Committee.

While Brendan works for one particular branch of the federal government, I have since learned that similar policies are in place for other federal branches (perhaps other government entities and NGO's as well). Brendan did what he could to promote the importance of his professional work correlated to service as a executive board member to MT TWS. Although unfortunate, I think this was a good learning process for us. Both the process of educating our employers of the importance of what MT TWS is and who we are, as well as the process of obtaining appropriate permission to serve in such a capacity.

In following Montana TWS protocol as is defined in our Chapter by-laws under Article V, Section 5., your executive board reached out to the next most logical candidate - Mr. Mark Ruby. Mark was the runner-up for the President-Elect election at this past winter's Annual Conference in Helena. Fortunately, Mark readily accepted the challenge and we are now moving forward. Please see page 2 to learn a bit more about Mark and his personal and professional interests.

So, a big THANKS and CONGRATULATIONS once again to Mark for stepping up, much appreciated! And a big THANKS to Brendan for being willing, but just not able to at this time. If you get a chance and if you haven't already done so, please pass along a thanks and appreciation to each of these two deserving individuals for their dedication to MT TWS.

Never too early to start thinking about Executive Board Candidates/Nominees for this winter's election. Elections this year will be held for President-Elect and Treasurer. Contact Nominations and Elections Committee Chair Julie Cunningham ([jcunningham@mt.gov](mailto:jcunningham@mt.gov)) for additional information.

## **Board Reports**

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### **President-Elect**



**Mark Ruby**

Now that I'm officially the new President-Elect of MT TWS, I thought I'd take a quick opportunity to introduce myself. I was born and raised in Kalispell, MT. Growing up in the Flathead Valley I hiked, hunted and fished throughout the surrounding area including the Thompson River, Swan Valley, and Flathead River Forks. During the winter months, I spend as much time on skis as I possibly can. I received my undergraduate degree in wildlife biology from the University of Montana and completed my master's work there as well. My graduate thesis examined grizzly bear habitat use and movement in the Swan Valley. Fortunately, I have been able to stay in NW MT and have worked for the last 6 years for the US Forest Service as a wildlife biologist on the Swan Lake District of the Flathead National Forest. Working with the diverse stakeholders in the Swan Valley has been a great part of the job and has definitely influenced my interests in partnerships for more integrated monitoring and management of wildlife habitat.

The obvious first primary duty of my president-elect duties is to begin preparing for our Annual Meeting coming up in this winter (2016). Currently, Missoula and Kalispell are the top two contenders for the location, but no definitive commitments have been made as of yet. Similarly, this year's year theme has yet to be defined.....stay tuned for further details on both.

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### **Past President Strategic Planning Success!**



**Kris Boyd**

On the unseasonably balmy evening of Friday, June 5th, the executive board and other members of the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society began trickling into the bunkhouse facilities of the Beartooth Wildlife Management Area. By Saturday mid-morning, all twelve team members had arrived and we were sufficiently caffeinated to begin. It was a motley crew by design: current, past, and hopefully future board members; undergrad and grad students, early, mid, and late career professionals; long-time members and newly minted ones; academics, hands-on managers, and policy experts; federal, state, and NGO representatives. The mission of these twelve intrepid souls: to produce a new, honed, and time-bound strategic plan.

The work leading up to this weekend retreat had been months in the making after a 15 year strategic planning hiatus for the chapter, and many more people than these final twelve helped to set the foundations for the Beartooth session. In large part the architect of this planning was our facilitator, Terra Rentz, who was hired through a generous grant to the chapter from the Brainerd Foundation. Terra is a graduate student and Program Coordinator at the SUNY-ESF Roosevelt Wild Life Station, Vice-President of the Northeast Section of TWS, and former Deputy Director of Government Affairs at The Wildlife Society. Over the next day-and-a-half of brainstorming on the shady banks of Cottonwood Creek, she escorted us through the evaluation of our chapter's vision, mission, core values, main strategies, goals, objectives, and priority activities for the next 3 years. Thanks to the dedication of everyone who participated in all stages of this process, a draft strategic plan was crafted by Sunday early afternoon. We were all about 5 pounds heavier thanks to Kris Boyd's generous menu planning, but parted on light feet knowing we had accomplished a formidable task in record time (and we might have even had a little fun while doing so.) Finishing touches will be made to the plan over the next month, and a final draft will be distributed to chapter membership for review and comment by the end of summer.



## **Board Reports (continued...)**

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### **Treasurer**



**Sonja Smith**

The 2015 MT TWS Annual Conference was attended by approximately 300 people. Profits from the silent auction and raffle lead to a \$2,014 deposit into the Wynn Freeman Account for student scholarships. In addition, thanks to a strong attendance and sponsorships at the 2015 conference along with the aid of the increase in dues, our Chapter has profited over \$10,600 thus far this year, which will significantly help our Chapters ability to finance current annual operations, provide technical guidance and input, and further TWS's mission. Montana TWS currently has 241 active dues-paying members, although we have not received an updated membership roster from National TWS so this number will go up once this is received.

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### **Secretary**



**John Waller**

#### **MONTANA TWS OFFICIALLY HAS A NEW WEBSITE:**

**<http://wildlife.org/montana-chapter/>**

The majority of all state TWS chapter websites have migrated to the National TWS website platform and as of June 15 we have done the same. The main benefit of utilizing National TWS to be our official website platform is that it saves our chapter the time and trouble of completing website changes, updates and other routine

maintenance. Our chapter may/may not have a very tech savvy person that can complete these tasks and due to the routine transition of officers over the years, individuals may not always be able or available to help with particular details. With National TWS providing website management as a service to our chapters, it creates consistency and lessens the burden on our shoulders. As with any new website, we will still be resolving a few details over the coming months to get the content and functionality finalized. If anyone has any questions regarding the new site or finds any errors/updates please contact me at [mttws.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:mttws.secretary@gmail.com)

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### **Education Committee**

During this year's business meeting, it was decided to have education committee members apply to give a presentation at this year's MEA/MFT meeting instead of having a booth in the exhibit room as was done in 2012 and 2014. The conference will be on October 15-16 at the Billings Skyview High School. This annual conference provides an excellent opportunity to introduce and educate Montana educators to what MT TWS is all about. Those that submitted an application to present on behalf of the chapter are Terry Lonner, Bryce Maxell, Kate Stone, Megan O'Reilly and Jim Bailey. We have not heard word as of yet from the MEA/MFT folks as to whether or not any of the above individuals have been accepted to present. A big thanks to these folks for providing their time and willing to share their expertise with others. goal of gaining exposure for the Chapter and Montana wildlife among educators was well received. About 2,000 Montana educators from many of the 385 public junior high and high schools, as well as representatives from numerous private schools, attended.

Any chapter members interested in helping out with the education committee please contact Terry Lonner at [tlonner@mediaworksvideomt.com](mailto:tlonner@mediaworksvideomt.com) or Steve Gniadek at [grayjaybro@yahoo.com](mailto:grayjaybro@yahoo.com)



## **Awards and Recognition – Annual Conference Awards**

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**Distinguished Service – Gary Matson** (pictured with new owner of Matson’s Laboratory Carolyn Nistler)  
- For Lifetime Achievements in Wildlife Conservation -



**Bob Watt’s Communication Award – Dr. Mike Mitchell**  
(pictured with award committee chair Brendan Moynahan)  
- For significant communication in media that has a relatively wide audience -



**Wildlife Conservation Award - Conrad Veterinary Clinic  
Dr. Dick Kenyon (wife Mary Jane) and Dr. Wade Spears**  
(pictured with wildlife biologist Ryan Rauscher)  
- For past or current outstanding contributions to the conservation of Montana wildlife and/or habitat -



**Wynn Freeman Scholarship - Cody Deane** (MSU, pictured with Dr. Bob Garrott) and **Jenah Mead** (UMT, pictured with awards committee chair Brendan Moynahan)  
- For exemplary participation in and commitment to the wildlife profession and academics -



## **Awards and Recognition – Annual Conference Awards (continued...)**

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**Best Student Paper – Charles Henderson Jr.**

(pictured with awards committee chair Brendan Moynahan)  
- Habitat Quality Influences Migratory Strategy  
of Female White-Tailed Deer -



**Best Student Poster – Ellen Whittle**

(pictured with awards committee chair Brendan Moynahan)  
- Bat Use of Bridges in Missoula, Ravalli,  
and Mineral Counties in Western Montana -



**Montana TWS Small Grant Award – Jenah Mead** (pictured from  
left to right are UMT Student Chapter members  
Carrie Voss, Ellen Whittle, Sophie Patton, Jenah Mead,  
Claire Gower (MT FWP), Taylor Chenette, and Sarah Zielke )

**Never too early to start thinking about 2016 Annual Award Nominations.** Contact Awards Committee Chair Brendan Moynahan ([brendan\\_moynahan@nps.gov](mailto:brendan_moynahan@nps.gov)) for additional information. Awards are presented for the following:

- 1) Distinguished Service Award: For cumulative achievements in wildlife conservation.
- 2) Biologist of the Year Award: For achievements in wildlife conservation during the last five calendar years.
- 3) Bob Watts Communication Award: For significant communication in Montana on Montana wildlife.
- 4) Wildlife Conservation Award: For past or current outstanding contributions to the conservation of Montana wildlife habitat or populations demonstrated by a Montana-based individual, group, or organization.



## Other Subunit News

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### University of Montana Student Chapter Wildlife Extravaganza

As wildlife students and professionals, we are charged with protecting wild things and wild places for future generations, but who will we pass our torch to? With children spending most of their days indoors, they're missing out on the connections to nature that shaped each of our lives. In order to create future stewards, we must teach children the value of animals and plants by facilitating those connections. It was in this spirit that The University of Montana student chapter of The Wildlife Society held their third annual 'Wildlife Extravaganza,' a free, family friendly event they created to inspire wildlife stewardship in the Missoula community.



UM student chapter volunteers

Photo by Bill Mead



Animal Wonders introduced children to a variety of wild animals, including this Chinese water dragon.  
Photo by Carly Muench

On May 9th, the UM student chapter partnered with 15 local nonprofits to teach children about the importance of wildlife and their ecosystems through hands-on activities and interactive presentations. The event was held at the Montana Natural History Museum. A few highlights from the day included children meeting live animal ambassadors like Gaia the armadillo, Vesper the red-tailed hawk, and Akela the Karelian bear dog. Additionally, they witnessed Camo the gopher snake devour his lunch. They squeezed through a "bat cave."

They investigated bear scat. They got their hands wet checking the health of our watershed using macro-invertebrates from the Clark Fork river.

The 16 UM student chapter volunteers running the event also provided telemetry lessons, face painting, a scavenger hunt, and a build-your-own native pollinator planter activity.

A whopping 400 Missoulians turned out for the event, making it the UM student chapter's most successful year yet. It was a hit with families, with many spending most of the afternoon there. TWS member Paul Lukacs raved that his son spent two hours enthralled with the activities, a huge amount of time by six year old standards. KPAX also made an appearance and featured 'Wildlife Extravaganza' on the news that evening.

<http://www.kpax.com/story/29025482/wildlife-extravaganza-comes-to-um>



The Watershed Education Network brought tubs full of macroinvertebrates for families to explore.  
Photo by Carly Muench

## **Other Subunit News - University of Montana Student Chapter Wildlife Extravaganza (continued...)**

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This success would not have been possible without the Montana State Chapter of The Wildlife Society. Not only did chapter representatives Terry and Martha Lonner teach conservation history to families at the event, but 'Wildlife Extravaganza' was almost entirely funded through a Montana State Chapter grant. Special thanks should also be extended to the UM student chapter members responsible for pulling everything off. 'Wildlife Extravaganza' was organized by education outreach officer Jenah Mead and planned by her and a committee of 6 members: Taylor Hanson, Carly Muench, Kaitlyn Reintsma, Leanne Schuh, Erika Swanson, and Kristie Weeks.



Terry and Martha Lonner represented the Education Committee for MT TWS.  
Photo by Carly Muench

Aldo Leopold wrote, "The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant, 'What good is it?'" The UM student chapter created 'Wildlife Extravaganza' to give the Missoula community an answer to that question. In doing so, they hope to also create a new generation to pass our torch to.

## **TWS Northwest Section**

The Northwest Section (NWS) of The Wildlife Society is a regional network providing communication between its 5 member states: Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. The NWS serves in bottom-up and top-down capacities: to enhance information exchange between the states on regional wildlife issues, and between the states and our parent society.

To serve our component chapters, NWS rotates between state chapter meetings and facilitates speakers, awards, special sessions, and symposia. In 2012, we celebrated with the Montana Chapter at their 50th anniversary meeting. In 2016 the NWS will meet in conjunction with the Oregon Chapter. Montana is set to co-host with the NWS in 2017.

Montana TWS is fortunate to currently be well represented within the NWS with Julie Cunningham serving as President and Kurt Alt recently elected as President-Elect. A big thanks to both of these MT members for stepping up! If you are interested in learning more about the NW Section or if you would like to volunteer please contact one of the board members listed below. You can also visit the NWS website at

<http://drupal.wildlife.org/NW/>

Julie Cunningham (MT)	President
Kurt Alt (MT)	President-Elect
Dave Kennedy (OR)	Past-President
Betsy Glenn (OR)	Vice-President
Michelle Kemner (ID)	Secretary/Treasurer
Leslie Bliss-Ketchum (OR)	CAN representative
Harriet Allen (WA)	Section Rep. to council

<a href="mailto:jcunningham@mt.gov">jcunningham@mt.gov</a>
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<a href="mailto:dave.kennedy@live.com">dave.kennedy@live.com</a>
<a href="mailto:betsy_glenn@fws.gov">betsy_glenn@fws.gov</a>
<a href="mailto:michelle.common@idfg.idaho.gov">michelle.common@idfg.idaho.gov</a>
<a href="mailto:bliss.ketchum@gmail.com">bliss.ketchum@gmail.com</a>
<a href="mailto:hallen2009@comcast.net">hallen2009@comcast.net</a>



## **National TWS Meeting**

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**The 2015 National TWS meeting is set for October 17-21 in Winnipeg, Manitoba.** Achieving effective results as a wildlife professional requires exposure to new thoughts and best practices. It requires an effective network of professionals and suppliers who have information and solutions you need.

At the conference, individuals have opportunities to learn, connect and engage in ways that will help propel their career forward and inspire you to strive for even better results in the areas of wildlife science and management that are important to them.

**Registration is currently open. To register online or found out more information about the conference visit <http://www.twsconference.org/>**



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## **Member Stories**

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### **Matson's**

#### **Makes It's Move!**

After 46 years of cementum age analysis and tetracycline biomarker screening in Milltown, Montana, Matson's Laboratory is moving to Manhattan, Montana. Matson's Laboratory was pioneered in 1969 by Gary and Judy Matson after Gary received his Masters in Science studying Zoology at the University of Montana. There he was trained in histology and histological microtechnique. Ready for retirement, the Matson's sold the lab to Carolyn and Matt Nistler in 2014. Both Carolyn and Gary have been active in The Wildlife Society community throughout their careers and at the 2015 annual MT TWS annual meeting in Helena, Gary was presented with the Distinguished Service Award to commemorate his enormous contribution to the wildlife community.



The new Matson's Laboratory located in Manhattan, Montana.

**A grand opening celebration will be held July 3<sup>rd</sup> from 12pm to 6pm at the new lab, located at 135 Wooden Shoe Lane, Manhattan, Montana.** Please join us for lab tours, barbeque and giveaways. We hope to see you there!



## Member Stories (continued...)



### MONTANA AUDUBON Monofilament Project

**Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup> 2015**

**9:30 AM-12:30 PM**

**At**

**Missouri Headwaters State Park  
and Fishing Access Site**

Monofilament is clear, single-stranded nylon line, preferred by anglers and used with most reels and nets. In 2011, over 267,000 people fished state waters, spending over 10 million dollars on lines, leaders, and tackle. Some line and tackle inevitably enters the environment, through breakage on snags, a weighty catch, or improper disposal. Any time loose line finds its way off the reel and into riparian habitat, exposed wildlife—fish, turtles, waterfowl, Osprey, songbirds, and Bald Eagles—are threatened by entanglement or ingestion.

Join us in making a difference at Missouri Headwaters state park and Important bird area on Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup> to learn about our wetland dependent bird species and other wildlife that are susceptible to entanglement with monofilament fishing line!

Help us celebrate the installation of a monofilament recycling tube to reduce the presence of this threat in our important riparian areas. There will be guest speakers, a chance to meet with Montana Audubon director Steve Hoffman, a chance to explore Missouri Headwaters productive wetland areas, share summer snacks, and enjoy this Important Bird Area with experts!



***For more information please contact:***

**Amy Seaman, [aseaman@mtaudubon.org](mailto:aseaman@mtaudubon.org)**

## **Member Stories (continued...)**

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### **Moving On...**



Governor Steve Bullock, Gael Bissell and Rick Mace.

Past President of MT TWS (1996) Gael Bissell and her husband and TWS member, Dr. Rick Mace, were each recently recognized by MT FWP and Governor Steve Bullock for each of their 30 year's of service to Montana. And, as of the end of June, both have retired from FWP. Am sure we're not alone in saying that Montana, especially Northwest Montana, has been fortunate to have had such an outstanding pair of biologists.

Gael received her Master's degree from the University of Montana and after a short period working as a lobbyist for Montana Audubon and as an environmental consultant, she landed her first position with FWP writing mitigation plans for hydropower dams in northwestern Montana. Gael then moved on to being one of the natural resource pioneers in MT using something called 'GIS' to help catalog and summarize fish and wildlife data that ultimately led to identification of 2,000 miles of important rivers that would be precluded from future

hydroelectric development to protect vital fish and wildlife resources. Gael's significant accomplishments at FWP continued in her most recent position as a lead habitat conservation biologist, which combined duties under both mitigation and management programs.

Similarly, Rick received his Master's degree from the University of Montana and his Ph.D. from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. Rick has worked in the Research and Technical Services Section for FWP since 1984 and has served as one of Montana FWP's lead bear research biologists for portions of the last 4 decades. Never reluctant to challenge an assumption or pose a difficult question, Rick represented well the heart and soul of a state agency wildlife program and of science-based wildlife conservation and management as a whole. In all of his work, Rick displayed a superior ability to remain objective and reach conclusions supported by data. Despite the political nature, public controversy, and sensitivity of the issues your work focused on, Rick was able to stick to the science.

In addition and similar to one of MT TWS's missions, Rick and Gael's mentoring of staff also proved to be exceptional in their careers. The number of people they have supervised and coached throughout their career is large, but it is also noteworthy how many of their temporary staff have subsequently gone on to pursue successful careers. While their successes are their own, the fact that many of these people now serve as professional biologists in other agencies and organizations is testament to their successful mentorship. Hard to state it any better than Gael did in a recent goodbye email to her coworkers....."Please continue to foster and instill the love of this great state and our fish, wildlife and recreation resources to all the newbies who are ready, willing, and able to fill in behind all those of us who go out that door. It is important to carry this value, this need, this passion or whatever you want to call it, forward."

Gael and Rick, these are just a few of your accomplishments over the past 30 years of service for Montana. Thanks again for all you've done for wildlife and wild places and we wish you all the best in your next adventures in life.....relax and enjoy!!

## **Member Stories – Moving On... (continued)**

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Arnie Dood working with Spiny softshell turtles.

After a career spanning 5 decades, Past-President of MT TWS Arnie Dood has decided to hang up his boots. Arnie (A. Dood) acquired his bachelors degree in Fish and Wildlife Management from Montana State University (MSU) in 1976. Arnie then received his master's degree in Fish and Wildlife Management from MSU in 1978 conducting surveys of the impacts of coyote predation on mule deer fawns in the Missouri River Breaks region of Montana for his thesis.

Arnie's MT natural resources career began in 1975 as a fisheries field worker with MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) based out of Red Lodge. Upon completion of graduate school in 1978, Arnie worked as a non game biologist, fisheries field worker, wildlife research biologist and game management biologist

with FWP until 1984, when he became the endangered species coordinator for FWP until 2009. During this 25 year period, Arnie had the fortune and effective impact in working on recovery programs for species such as grizzly bear, wolf, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, piping plover, interior least tern, black-footed ferret, and whooping crane. In 2009, Arnie became the Native Species Biologist for FWP with an emphasis on working on bison restoration in MT. As many of you can likely attest to, Arnie had the unique ability to bring together diverse interest groups and to facilitate effective dialogue around highly contentious topics. Building support to implement a program in ways that help result in species recovery while still recognizing and meeting the legitimate needs of citizens and protecting their livelihoods is obviously no easy task.

Also not to be overlooked, Arnie served as President-Elect and President for MT TWS in 1983 and 1984, respectively. Arnie, you will be missed, but definitely not forgotten. We hope to see you from time to time and good luck and enjoy your next chapter in life!



Kent Laudon on a horseback wolf trapping effort in the N. Fork Sun River, July, 2008.

Congratulations and a fond farewell to our long-time Quiz Bowl Emcee, Kent Laudon. Kent has migrated south for the summers, falls, winters, and springs of his near (and possibly far) future in order to take up a new position managing the field component of the US Fish and Wildlife Service Mexican Wolf Recovery Program. Not one to waste away behind a desk, Kent plans to spend only a thin majority of his time pushing paper - and his office mates may thank him for that before long. Your colleagues in Montana will miss your humor, your verve, and your dedication, Kent. Quiz Bowl will never be the same...





## **Now Available on the Internet**

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MT Chapter of the American Fisheries Society  
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### **What is Published in IJS?**

- *Any regional submissions of manuscripts dealing with the sciences are welcome.*
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