
[EXTERNAL] Fwd: MTTWS 2021 Summer Newsletter

From Brandi Skone <brandiskone@gmail.com>

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To Skone, Brandi <BSkone@mt.gov>

Sent from my iPhone

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From: MT TWS <secretary@mttws.org>

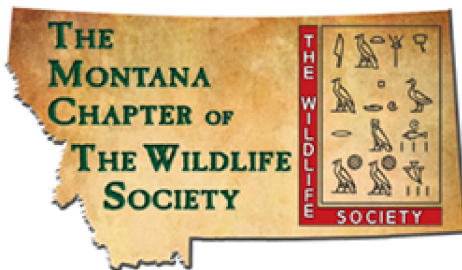
Date: August 16, 2021 at 12:09:01 PM MDT

To: Brandi Skone <brandi.skone@gmail.com>

Subject: MTTWS 2021 Summer Newsletter

Reply-To: MT TWS <secretary@mttws.org>

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**The Montana Chapter
of The Wildlife Society**

**Summer Newsletter: National TWS
news, a first look at our next annual
conference, bylaw stuff (sounds boring
but WE NEED YOUR INPUT!) and some
recappage**



Greetings from your MTTWS President

Hello Montana wildlifers! Last we interacted, we had just completed our first ever virtual conference and I'll admit that it went much better than we could have hoped for. Thanks to all who helped to put our conference together and make it a success – you know who you are! Personnel from all over the state (and beyond) were able to participate – including university students and professors, tribal members, state, federal & NGO employees, and landowners. The plenary session and workshops were well attended and we had an awesome mix of presentations, which all participants were able to view at their convenience. The awards ceremony was exceptional as we all shared those emotions of joy and gratitude with award winners – which were particularly needed as I'm sure all of us were feeling burnout from the pandemic – and the student mixer and quiz bowl gave space to meet one another and be a part of some fun. Last year's conference was unique (we hope) and it showed me how tight-knit the wildlife community is in our state.

With the spring and summer brought a return to an uptick in field work. Even with social distancing regulations in place for many employees, we were able to get back into the wide-open spaces, breathe in the air, and observe wildlife again. For myself and my duties, I was able to head back to north-central and eastern Montana to look at potential projects, meet with old colleagues and

see my first twin pronghorn fawns in over a year. I was even provided the opportunity to ride along and learn about some of our most wild and intact rivers and helped monitor some prehistoric beauties! Later on, I worked on a couple of fence removal and modification projects in western Montana – first in the Bitterroot and then in Horse Prairie. In both these instances, volunteers and wildlife supporters came out to give their time to make a tangible change for wildlife. These results were something folks could hang their hat on as evidence of a hard days work. Finally, working in partnership with state employees and NGO's, work continues on assessing wildlife-transportation issues across our state. In all three of these instances, communities and professionals have come together for the betterment of conservation and wildlife management – and it's special to be a part of something larger than oneself!

This summer, the MTTWS executive board was again able to come together to discuss last year's conference and begin to plan for our conference in 2022. We will once again be holding our conference in-person at the Copper King Hotel in Butte! However, we also have considered a hybridized approach to the upcoming conference. As such, we hope that you will share feedback on what works best and is most comfortable for you and your organizations. We also are looking at various mechanisms to engage more students from more universities and colleges across the state. We hope that with some language edits to our current bylaws will can pave the way for this to occur. In the spirit of last year's conference and beyond, we see that partnerships and inclusiveness support our overall goals in wildlife management.

With the pandemic lingering, future gatherings, opportunities and conferences remain unclear. However, with fall approaching, we know that folks are preparing for hunting season and making some epic hikes to get to those secret spots. For my part, our family has a new Vizsla pup and so I hope to be roaming the grasslands and sagebrush to see him point and (potentially) retrieve – we still have plenty of training in front of us! It is my genuine hope that each of you and your families will get out there and recreate in the manner in which you love to do so. I feel fortunate to work and recreate with many of you. Please know, if you have ideas or concerns about the upcoming conference, bylaws, or any number of issues, that the MTTWS executive board looks forward to hearing from you. Stay healthy, enjoy this time outside and, I look forward to fun and productive conference in February.

-Andrew Jakes, President



Get to know yer new president-elect and treasurer

What has Andrea been up to this summer?

Hi all! Attending our MTTWS summer board meeting re-ignited my excitement about my new role in the chapter and making plans for us to gather again in Butte. I'm looking forward to seeing and interacting with you all. My summer has included a diversity of activities – writing grant proposals and manuscripts, completing some trainings, starting to plan the annual conference, working with my graduate students, and getting out in the field. I've recently returned from a few nights of catching bats in northeastern Montana, as well as a few days collecting data on grizzly bears in the backcountry of Yellowstone National Park (see photo). I've also been enjoying recreating in the beauty of Montana – hiking, biking, camping, and spending some time on or near the water, while still trying to beat this summer's (abundant) heat and smoke.

Looking forward to seeing you all!

-Andrea Litt, President-Elect

Treasurers gonna treasure

Hello everyone, Heather Brower here, your new Treasurer for the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society. I work as a Partner Biologist with Pheasants Forever in the Scobey NRCS office. I work mostly with private landowners to improve wildlife habitat, while keeping farmers and ranchers on the landscape. One of the projects that I have been helping on is designing a program using Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funds to plant and/or improve existing shelterbelts for winter cover around Peerless Montana. Excited to see this program funded so that we can have better winter cover on the ground for wildlife! When not finding ways to improve habitat I can be found riding my horse or hunting birds with my Brittany spaniel.

-Heather Brower, Treasurer



Andrea Litt



Heather Brower



**TWS (national) is virtual (and cheap)
again!**

Register now for only \$125 (\$100 for students)

The Wildlife Society annual conference is virtual again this year, and will take place from **November 1-5, 2021**. Members get access to all conference content, including presentations, live video chats/panel discussions, networking events, student activities and SO MUCH MORE for just \$125 (\$100 for students and early career professionals, \$325 for nonmembers).

Register and check out the conference schedule by [clicking here \[mttws.org\]](https://mttws.org). National TWS conferences are really cool and this lower price/going virtual means it's super accessible. And you don't have to pay for travel expenses. We hope to see you there!

Wildlife Trivia (answer on bottom): Which of the following is a native Montana species?

- A. Wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*)
 - B. Northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*)
 - C. California quail (*Callipepla californica*)
 - D. Gray partridge (*Perdix perdix*)
 - E. Greater prairie chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*)
-

The 2022 MTTWS Annual Conference will be in person (we think)!

February 21-25, 2022

Copper King Hotel, Butte, America

"CONFERENCE THEME COMING SOON!!"

We're looking forward to seeing you all in person again! Barring unexpected and unforeseen catastrophes, COVID variants, or meteor strikes, we are full steam ahead planning another exciting, jam-packed conference at the Copper King Hotel.

At our summer board meeting, we discussed the possibility of setting the conference up in a **hybrid format**, giving folks who can't attend in person an opportunity to a) pre-record oral presentations and show them to a live audience, b) record all presentations and upload them to a web platform for your home viewing pleasure, c) stream presentations live, or a combination of a, b, and c, or just a and c, or a and b, or b and c, or none of the above, because you're all going to be in Butte anyway, so....? To do so will likely take some logistical effort so we'd like to know how important this is to you. Please take our online SurveyMonkey survey to help us out! It should only take a couple minutes to complete, so please do it ASAP!

[Click here to take the survey! \[mttws.org\]](https://mttws.org)

Congratulations to our Award Winners!

Each year we like to recap the deserving award recipients who were honored at the previous conference. Because this past one was virtual, we didn't get any pictures, but here's a list of the 2021 award winners anyway! Congrats again!

Distinguished service award: **Dr. Bob Garrett, MSU**

Biologist of the Year: **Kate Stone, MPG Ranch**

Bob Watts Communication Award: **Montana Natural Heritage Program**

Rising Professional: **Jesse DeVoe**

Wildlife Conservation Award: **Jim and Fran Buell**

Wynn Freeman Awards: **Sarah Deaton (MSU)** and **Wyatt Nielsen (UM)**

Best Oral Presentation: **Will Rogers** and **Simon Buzzard**

Best Student Poster: **Savannah Grace** and **Olivia Jakobosky**

TWS Grant Recipients: **Vanna Boccadori** and **Dan Heffington**; **Tim Hiller et al.**

Seeking Nominations

Your MTTWS board is soliciting nominations for **President-Elect** and **Secretary**. Both are 3-year terms. You know you want to be on the board. You know you want to. Seriously, you do. THE SECRETARY GETS TO MAKE THESE NEWSLETTERS. Imagine the POWER. Like showing off all your own photographs since no one else ever sends me any. Please e-mail Andrew Jakes (jakesa@nwf.org) by October 1 to nominate yourself or someone else.



How many do you see? Mountain goats spotted during a helicopter survey in Western Montana, March 2021. THAT'S RIGHT IT'S MY PHOTO AGAIN

IMPORTANT: Changes to Bylaws

Every so often, MTTWS members are asked for their input on changes to our bylaws. That's right, we have bylaws! Who even knew that?

Anyway, right now we need to change some language and rules related to awards, specifically the new Rising Professional Award and some additional student grants. We're not asking you to officially vote on those changes yet, but we'd love if you could take a look. They're a work in progress but if you have any strong opinions or suggestions prior to the vote, please contact the President-Elect at mttws.preselect@gmail.com.

[Click here to read the proposed changes. \[mttws.org\]](#)

Answer to trivia question: (E) This was kind of a trick question, sorta, kinda. Many many game bird species have been introduced to Montana for hunting, including the wild turkey, California quail, northern bobwhite, and gray partridge. The first three are native to other parts of the United States, just not Montana. The gray partridge is native to Europe. Wild turkeys and gray

partridge are common throughout the state, while California quail scurry around mainly in the Bitterroot Valley and northern bobwhite don't seem to do very well here. (Fun fact: The little northern bobwhite has been introduced from North America to other continents! So we don't just take nonnative species, sometimes we give them away!) The only native species on the list - the Greater prairie chicken - was spotted at the Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge in far northeastern Montana a long time ago (according to the Montana National Heritage Program Database). However, northeastern Montana is considered part of its historic range. Sorry to be a downer.



***Got something for our next
newsletter? Send it to
mttws.secretary@gmail.com!***

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[mttws.org]

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