



Volume (2019), Issue 1

Summer 2019

Loess Hills Cooperative Burn Week 2019

Management Corner

Sponsored by the Loess Hills Fire Partners and held from April 29th through May 3rd, this event provided an opportunity to join with partners to achieve fire management in an area where additional skills and resources were needed to accomplish the work at a landscape scale. It was also an opportunity to build relationships with partners, share knowledge and skills, and work within a more complex organizational structure utilizing the Incident Command System. In addition, two training days were integrated into the week which incorporated both classroom presentations, an equipment maintenance exercise, a communication/size-up exercise, a burn unit site visit, a mass demobilization/mobilization exercise provided through the moving of the Incident Command Post, and a hands-on medical incident involving local Dispatch, the local sheriff's department, and the local VFD for a 3-way training scenario.

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In January, a full classroom S-290 Intermediate Fire Behavior course was offered with 18 successful students continuing their fire knowledge and building their skillset. An L-280 Followership to Leadership course is planned for later in the year. Within our landscape and organizations, the squad boss level (FFT1) is the most crucial for fire operations. Firefighters at this level possess the local knowledge that aids in their ability to control both the holding and firing within their divisions, while also controlling the tempo for the day. Focusing additional time, knowledge, and experience towards this position is a necessity for all organizations within the Loess Hills to continue to build fire capacity and efficiency.



A participant takes the time to teach other firefighter about a piece of equipment prior to the burning operation
Photo by: Pete Hildreth.

Loess Hills Cooperative Burn



**Firing operations on the Bothwell-Grimes Unit, Monday April 29, 2019.
Photo by: Thad Pothast**

The Cooperative Burn Week was based at the Loess Hills State Forest headquarters for three operational periods. On day three, we did a mass mobilization to Broken Kettle Grassland to establish our new ICP for the remaining 2 operational shifts. This year’s event had a northern Hills focal area of Harrison, Monona, Woodbury, and Plymouth Counties. Burn units at Broken Kettle Grassland, Plymouth County Conservation, an Iowa DNR WMA acquisition, and the Iowa DNR Loess Hills State Forest lands were identified as priority areas, as well as additional agency units.

Each of our three operational periods, that included weather conducive for live fire, presented opportunities to burn multiple units at three different locations simultaneously. We had participation ranging from 40-61 personnel on any given day. This allowed for pairing of trainer/mentors and trainees to facilitate a one on one working environment.

A total of 81 people from 34 agencies/ organizations, volunteers, and volunteer fire departments participated during the Cooperative Burn Week. The diverse variety of the training made available throughout the week was exceptional. Thirteen individuals received evaluations for their FFT1 (squad boss) taskbooks, one ENGB/FIRB taskbook, and several served as agency burn boss trainees. Numerous trainees were able to work in their respective trainee role during more than one operational shift. Other training opportunities included firing very pistols (flares), using fusees, learning new or different engine and UTV setups, portable pump set

Loess Hills Cooperative Burn

-up, sand table exercise, mass mobilization, live fire size-up/initial attack exercises, and working within a complex burn organization with multiple divisions organized under the Incident Command System (ICS). Ten staff from multiple agencies served on the Incident Management Team in a variety of roles.

Funding for this event was provided by The Fire Learning Network, the Audubon Society of Omaha, and the participating agencies. These funders provided financial support for course materials and supplies, evening meals, housing, and for the assistance of the Conservation Corp of Iowa (CCI) crew during the burn week. Additional project support was provided by the participants and their agencies in the form of personnel and equipment time. Other participants donated their



Carrigan-Rains unit, Monday April 29, 2019
Photo by: Lance Brisbois.

personal time and labor to support this event during unit prep, planning, and burn operations. The Loess Hills State Forest and The Nature Conservancy Broken Kettle Grassland generously donated classroom, meeting, and storage space for the week while the Harrison County Conservation Board, Monona County Conservation Board, Plymouth County Conservation Board, and Nature Conservancy provided lodging and camping space at their facilities for the week.

Participants have shared that the Cooperative Burn Week was a positive experience and was successful in achieving multiple objectives, including stewardship management goals, fireline training and experience, leadership and personal development skills, and improving collaboration between partners in the Loess Hills region. The participation of 81 people, most of who came from within the Loess Hills, speaks to the high level of interest among partners in completing priority burn units and pursuing training and networking opportunities



Bothwell-Grimes unit, Monday April 29, 2019
Photo by: Mike Weis

Loess Hills Cooperative Burn



An interior ignitor takes aim with a very pistol on the BKG McCarthy unit, Thursday May 2nd 2019. Photo by: Melanie Louis

in the region. The attendance of several individuals from other regions of Iowa, Nebraska, and even Arizona provided a strong benefit to our overall effort. Several county conservation boards from across the state sent personnel to gain fireline knowledge, learn from a professional atmosphere,



Drone photo on the Deer Creek unit Photo by: Kevin Juszyk.

and gain tips towards starting other cooperative efforts across the state. Additionally, the interest and participation of the Harrison County EMA and volunteer fire department personnel was a major success during the event.

The use of an expanded Incident Management Team as well as a more focused Incident Command System provided additional organization and smoother operations on burn days, during transitional periods, and throughout the week in its entirety. A more detailed After Action Review of the event will be conducted at the next Loess Hills Fire Partners quarterly meeting in June 2019.



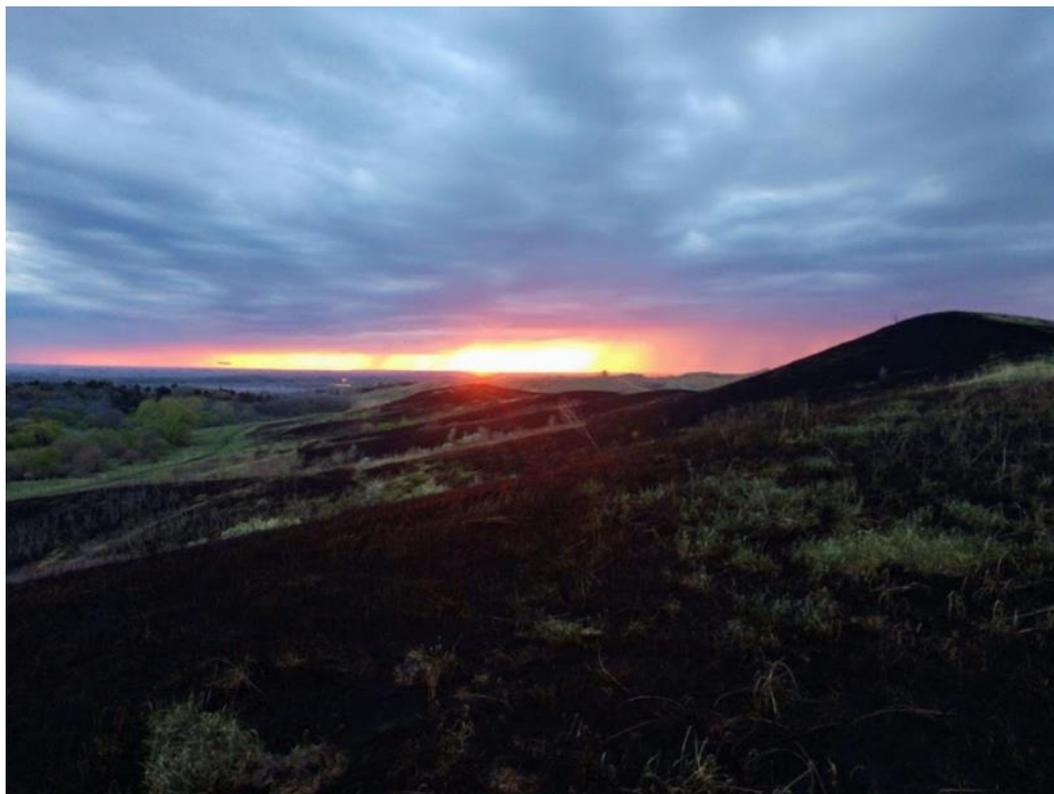
A squad boss checks the line on the Broken Kettle unit. Photo by: Graham McGaffin

Kody Wohlers is a Natural Resource Technician with the Pottawattamie County Conservation Board. He serves as an Incident Commander Type 4 (ICT4), Engine Boss (ENGB), Firing Boss (FIRB), and Faller 2 Sawyer (FAL2) under the National Wildfire Coordinating Group standards.

Loess Hills Cooperative Burn



The crew performs an AAR following initial attack and size-up exercises on the Plymouth County Conservation areas prior to burning off the units. Photo by: Pete Hildreth.



The sun sets on Broken Kettle Grassland on Friday evening to close the week. Photo by: Scott Moats

Numerous Black Bear Sightings in Iowa Spring 2019

Statewide Updates

Numerous reports of free roaming black bears have come from northeast Iowa this spring. In April a turkey hunter in Winneshiek County made his 23 seconds of online fame by posting a video of a bear walking past his hunting spot. The bear was filmed about 6 miles north of Decorah. Also near Decorah, about 6 miles to the east, a black bear was caught on film by a trail camera in May. This is likely a different bear. Both areas have now had multiple bear reports for the past 2 to 3 years, so it's possible that they're residents.

Unconfirmed reports of bears came from southern Winneshiek County, Delaware County, and Fayette County in April. Another unconfirmed bear sighting was reported from Webster County in May.

So far, cubs have not been documented in Iowa. Many of these bears are believed to come from southeast Minnesota or southwest Wisconsin. Black bears are active and therefore visible this time of year due breeding season and short vegetation in crop fields.

Even though the black bear is not currently managed in Iowa with wildlife management laws or a regulated season, the Iowa DNR's Law Enforcement



Black bear photographed June 2016 in an Iowa corn field near Yellow River State Forest, Allamakee County. Photo by: Brian Gibbs

and Wildlife personnel will continue to play a lead role in public reports of bears. Black bears have no legal status in Iowa Code, thus they are not protected by any Iowa laws. Therefore it is legal for black bears to be harvested by any method or means possible. However, the Iowa DNR does not promote harvesting black bears if they are not exhibiting a direct threat to human safety or livestock.

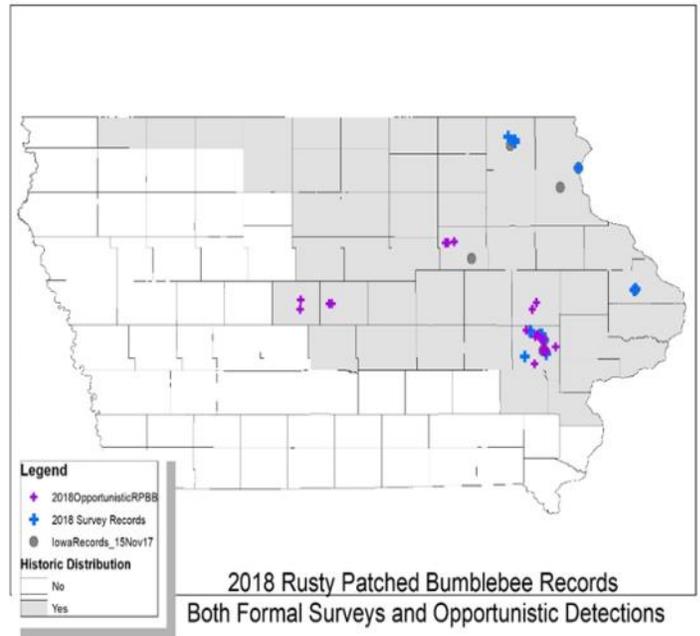
Vince Evelsizer is the Furbearer and Wetland Biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Species Spotlight

Opportunity for Natural Resource professionals to learn about the Rusty-patched Bumblebee (*Bombus affinis*)

Iowa is one of the few states remaining that is home to the Rusty-patched Bumblebee, the first bee to be listed as federally endangered in the United States. Iowa DNR and USFWS Staff have been working to determine the current status of this under-surveyed species in Iowa and in 2018, added three new counties (Linn, Story and Boone) to the list of where extant populations exist.

The Rusty-patched Bumblebee (*Bombus affinis*) was put on the U.S. Endangered Species List in March of 2017 because it has exhibited an estimated 87% decline over the last 20 years. It is currently only



present in 0.1% of its original range and Iowa along with a few other upper Midwestern states seem to be serving as the species last stronghold. Last year, these rare bees were found in 8 counties in Iowa.

Surveys are continuing in 2019, focused primarily on public land and with a goal of finding the species throughout its historic range. Opportunistic reports of these bees, which are often found in people's urban gardens as well as rural natural areas, are also welcome through www.bumblebeewatch.org.



Rusty-patched Bumblebee foraging
Photo by: USF&WS

Opportunity for Natural Resource professionals to learn about the Rusty-patched Bumblebee (*Bombus affinis*)

Species Spotlight



Rusty-patched bumblebee found by DNR Management and Private Lands staff on Falcons Springs WMA I Winneshiek County, September 2018.

There will be an opportunity later this summer for interested resource professionals to learn a little more about bumblebees, particularly the Rusty-patched. The Iowa DNR, Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and Linn County Conservation Board are teaming up to hold a workshop from 9:30 to 3:30 at the Wickiup Hill Learning Center (near Toddville) on August 1st. In the morning speakers from the DNR, Xerces Society and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will provide information on biology and ecology, identification, habitat and habitat

management and finally the rules and regulations. In the afternoon, participants will get some time in the field learning how to i.d. and handle the bumblebee species found and surveying for the Rusty-patched in the prairies at Wickiup Hill.



**Rusty-patched Bumblebee foraging .
Photo by: Xerces Society**

The workshop is free but [pre-registration is required at this link](#) which will also provide some additional information about the event. Deadline for registering is July 26th. Hope to see some of you there!

Stephanie Shepherd is Wildlife Diversity Biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Most Downloaded Journal Articles in 2018

In 2018, there were over 240,000 downloads of articles from TWS' three premier wildlife journals—*The Journal of Wildlife Management*, *Wildlife Monographs*, and the *Wildlife Society Bulletin*. That's an average of 20,000 downloads per month! More than ever before, wildlife professionals from around the globe are turning to TWS journals as their source for the latest research findings in wildlife science and management. Here's what they're reading:

Most Downloaded Articles in 2018

- JWM – [Population growth and status of California sea lions](#)
- WSB – [From climate to caribou: How manufactured uncertainty is affecting wildlife management](#)
- JWM – [Predicting the evolutionary consequences of trophy hunting on quantitative trait](#)
- JWM – [Pneumonia in bighorn sheep: Risk and resilience](#)
- JWM – [Chronic wasting disease influences activity and behavior in white tailed deer](#)
- JWM – [Inefficiency of evolutionarily relevant selection in ungulate trophy hunting](#)
- JWM – [Special section: Controversies in mountain sheep management](#)
- JWM – [Effects of rotational grazing management on nesting greater sage-grouse](#)
- JWM – [Review and synthesis of research investigating golden eagle electrocutions](#)
- JWM – [Applying a random encounter model to estimate lion density from camera traps in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania](#)

As a quick reminder, online access to all TWS journal articles is a benefit of TWS membership. To access, simply login to your TWS account through [Your Membership](#) or directly through the [TWS Journal Hub](#). In addition to catching up on your 2018 reading, be sure to check out some of the most popular articles so far in 2019, like this recent [study](#), which suggests that the expanded range of coyotes has not curtailed deer populations in eastern US states...or this [paper](#), which explores the application of smartphone LIDAR in wildlife studies.



Iowa DNR Hires State Wildlife Veterinarian



Hi there! Thank you for offering me this platform to introduce myself to the membership of the Iowa Chapter of The Wildlife Society. My name is Rachel Ruden, and I am a doctoral candidate within the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Iowa State University. I am also a new-hire to the Iowa DNR. In July I will start as the first state wildlife veterinarian for Iowa, a position I feel privileged to occupy.

I moved to Iowa in 2016 shortly after I graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine. Being from New Jersey, the Midwest was foreign terrain. However, I found my advisor Jim Adelman's research on disease tolerance so compel-

ling that I took the leap. For those interested, disease tolerance describes a specific type of host response that minimizes the per-pathogen cost of infection. My particular interest is in how disease tolerance can create carrier states and potentiate super-spreaders, both of which can compromise the health of wild populations.

While at ISU my research has centered on understanding the causes and consequences of disease tolerance using house finch eye disease as a model. More recently, I started collaborating with fellow grad student Matt Stephenson on a Snake Fungal Disease surveillance project of herptiles using prairie strips. I have worked the bison round-up at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge since 2016 and joined the Friends board just this year. I have made annual trips to Voas Nature Area in Minburn to see the tiger salamanders on their fall migration, and I rode my first RAGBRAI. Slowly, Iowa has woven into the fabric of my life, and I am thrilled to begin my professional career here.

As wildlife around the globe face myriad challenges, in Iowa we are in the unique position to actually see species rebound on this altered landscape. The DNR position was established as a proactive measure to ensure healthy wildlife continue to thrive in our state. For that reason, I believe my background in wildlife disease ecology will be of greatest service to this agency and the residents of Iowa at large. Let's get to work!

Minutes of the Iowa TWS Business Meeting February 12, 2019

Iowa TWS Business Meeting

February 12, 2019

Honey Creek Resort, Moravia

Meeting Attendance - 65

Start Time - 4:48 pm

End Time - 5:56 pm

Call to Order - 4:48 pm – Nick Baumgarten, President

Election Results and Welcome of New Officers – Nick Baumgarten

Nick announced the election results as follows:

President-Elect: Kelsey Flemming (def. Matt Dollison)

Secretary/Treasurer- Nathan Schmitz (def. Sarah Nizzi/Alex Fosado)

Member at Large: Jared Elbert (def. Jeremy French)

Newly elected Officers will begin their terms immediately, with a short transition period.

OFFICER REPORTS

Secretary: Dusten Paulus

Reminded the membership that the minutes had been sent out to current members via email

Read a condensed version of the business meeting minutes from the 2018 Fall Meeting held at Lewis and Clark State park.

Pete Hildreth motioned to approve the business meeting minutes from the 2018 Fall Meeting. Matt Dollison second. Motion carried.

Treasurer: Dusten Paulus

Reminded the membership that the treasurer's report had been made available during the day in hopes that everyone has had a chance to see it. Told anyone with questions to contact him.

Gave a condensed version of the treasurer's report from 2 February 2018 through 6 February 2019 (see attached). Balance was \$6,166.60

Katy Reeder motioned to approve the treasurer's report as read. Todd Bogenschutz second. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit Committee: Travis Russell-Chair

Travis was not present. Nothing to report.

Awards Committee: Stephanie Shepherd-Chair

Stephanie discussed the need for nominations, must have by January.

Continue to work to get last years' award recipient his award.

Conservation Review Committee: Katy Reeder-Chair

Katy reported that the committee was not very active this year.

Katy stated that she receives a conservation review newsletter that she is willing to send out to anyone who is interested.

Education and Information Committee: Pete Eyheralde-Chair

Pete E. asked folks to give input for the next newsletter to go out in the spring.

Pete received a round of applause for his work as the newsletter editor.

Membership Committee: Dusten Paulus-Chair

Dusten reported that the committee had done nothing this year. He would like to vacate the chair position to have some 'new blood' step in. (Note- Matt Dollison has offered to take over duties as chair of the Membership Committee.)

Resolutions and Public Statements: Brain Sauer-Chair

Nothing to report.

Nominations and Elections: Pete Hildreth.-Chair

Pete is working on finding nominations, and encouraged folks to run for TWS office positions, reminding folks that it is a great leadership opportunity and looks great on a resume.

OLD BUSINESS

Fall Workshop Overview

Pete H. /Dusten Paulus discussed the 2018 Fall Workshop that was held at Lewis & Clark State Park in late September that focused on restoring royalty to the prairie. Nearly 70 in attendance at the workshop, 48 at business meeting, very well received workshop.

They gave a brief overview of the workshop, presenters and discussions. Special thanks to Doug Chafa, Steph S., Bill Johnson, Jeff Sego, Matt Dollison, Matt Molls, and Brian Hickman.

Minutes of the Iowa TWS Business Meeting February 12, 2019

NEW BUSINESS

New Technical Committee/Working Doc. Formation

- Discussion was brought up to get some relief for Tyler Harms who currently is the technical guru for the membership. Suggested that a technical committee be developed to try and keep a working document going to keep up with registration, website maintenance, etc.
- Committee volunteers will be made up of Todd Bogenschutz, Steph S., Katy R., Tyler Harms, Jared Elbert and Nathan Schimtz to work on a document to cover all TWS IT needs. The working document will then transfer to the new executive TWS officers.
- Decided that the Member at Large will be responsible for email list maintenance, rather than paying for the APRICOT software that would annually cost around \$1,000.00
- Decided that Sec. /Treasurer will handle registration and voting responsibilities.
Nathan Schmitz announced that if you are not currently receiving emails, please contact him.

Letter of support for canine tracking legislation

- Dave Hoffman announced that he would like to see a letter of support from the chapter regarding new legislation that would allow leashed dogs to track/blood trail deer.
- Dave stated that the legislation would require landowner permission a 50 foot leash and allow the tracker to carry a weapon.
- It was decided that the membership would like to see more information on the bill before committing to any support. Moreover, Todd Bogenschutz, Greg S. and Steph S. said it may be more appropriate to go through ICA.
- Todd Bogenschutz is working with Nick B. and Nathan S. to get the most up to date info on that particular bill, concerns one way or another need to go through the TWS Executive officers.

REAP Alliance Membership

- Steph S. for Karen K. REAP is scheduled to sunset in 2021 and asked for continued support at \$150 annually. Karen will send out info on Capitol day for IWILL and REAP.
- Motion was made by Steph S. to renew TWS' REAP Alliance membership, second by Greg A. Schmidt, motion carried.

ICA Membership Renewal

- Dusten asked if we wanted to support ICA at the same level as last year (\$2,500)
- Matt Dollison stressed that this year it needs support more than ever regarding bills.
- Steph S. pointed out that the chapter only has \$6,166.60 and that \$2,500 would be a significant portion of our financial reserves. Dusten mentioned that the TWS rarely has a large budget that often gets replenished at the winter meetings. Moreover, since the ISU student chapter was not hosting a conclave this year, there would be an additional \$1,000 in the coffers.
- Todd Bogenschutz pointed out that the lobbyist for ICA costs nearly \$25K, and is mainly funded by NGO's. So the support is very much needed and appreciated.
- Motion was made by Matt Dollison to renew the membership at \$2,500, second by Kelly Smith. Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Iowa TWS 2019 Fall Workshop

- Nick B. mentioned that the location for the Fall Workshop is TBA; please look at emails for more info to come regarding the 2019 fall workshop.

Paulus to step down from Fundraising/Raffle duties

- Dusten stated it was time for someone else to run the fundraiser/raffle for the chapter. (Alex Fosado has stepped up and is now the lead for the annual fundraiser)

T-Shirts for next year?

- Pete E. asked if anyone would be interested in getting t-shirts made up for meetings in the future. Membership showed interest, Pete E. will send out info when relevant.

TWS North Central Section

- TWS is looking for folks to join the NCS Membership team in 2019
- Offers training and leadership skills. If anyone is interested, please talk with Katy R. and/or TWS executive officers.

Midwest Fish and Wildlife Meeting 2022

- Steph S. for Karen K. stated that the meeting would be held in D.M. in 2022 and is looking for volunteers to help plan and put on the conference. Volunteers appreciated.

- Todd Bogenschutz made a motion to adjourn. Shannon Hansel second. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned – 5:56 p.m.

Upcoming Events

- **17th Annual Project A.W.A.R.E.**
July 7-12, Boone River—Goldfield to Boone Forks
Wildlife Area, 61.4 miles
www.iowaprojectaware.org
- **Iowa Prairie Conference**
Aug 8-10, Central College Pella, Iowa
<https://tallgrassprairiecenter.org>
- **Grass ID & Ecology Workshop**
Aug 13-15, Kent Park, Johnson Co. Iowa
www.iowaprairienetwork.org
- **5th Biennial America's Grasslands Conference**
Aug 20-22, Bismarck North Dakota
www.nwf.org/grasslandsconference
- **Grassland Restoration Network Workshop**
Aug 20-22, U of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum
<https://grasslandrestorationnetwork.org>
- **Iowa TWS Fall Workshop**
Wednesday September 4, 2019,
Whiterock Conservancy Visitor Center
- **National TWS Conference**
Sept 29-Oct 3, 2019. Reno Nevada
www.twsconference.org

2019 Iowa Chapter The Wildlife Society Committee Chairs

Audit: Travis Russell
Awards: Stephanie Shepard
Conservation Review: Katy Reeder
Education and Information: Pete Eyheralde
Membership: Matt Dollison
Resolutions and Public Statements: Brain Sauer
Nominations and Elections: Pete Hildreth

Research Opportunity



Sarah Wilson is a PhD student at Auburn University (working with Dr. Todd Steury and Dr. Steve Dobson) and would like to invite you to share this easy research opportunity.

They are recruiting volunteers to help collect data around the United States to answer questions about geographic variation of food hoarding behavior in squirrels. To do this, volunteers will be asked to observe eastern gray squirrels for a minimum of just 50 minutes/week (5 10-minute observation periods) and record data based on predefined behavior categories.

This study will be conducted August 2019-December 2019. They currently have 68 volunteers from 14 different states and are looking to expand that number. More information can be found at:

auburnsquirrelproject.weebly.com

Pete Eyheralde
Newsletter Editor
(eyheraldep@wmpenn.edu)

2019 Iowa Chapter The Wildlife Society Executive Committee

President: Nick Baumgarten
President-Elect: Kelsey Flemming
Past President: Pete Hildreth
Secretary-Treasurer: Nathan Schmitz
Member at Large: Jared Elbert