



# Southern Division News

*Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society*

Winter 2013



Alabama North Carolina  
 Arkansas Oklahoma  
 Florida South Carolina  
 Georgia Tennessee  
 Kentucky Texas  
 Louisiana Virginia  
 Maryland Washington, D.C.  
 Mississippi West Indian Islands  
 West Virginia

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## A Message from the President

Brian Murphy, SDAFS President, [murphybr@vt.edu](mailto:murphybr@vt.edu)

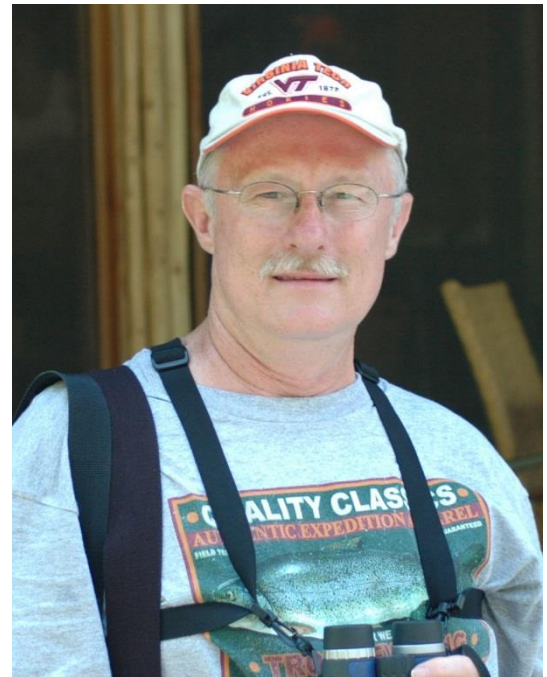
*Confessions of a fisheries cheater*

It is hard to admit to my friends and family, but I have been unfaithful.

I have hidden it for many years but, like Arnold Schwarzenegger, the time has come to own up. I have a life outside of fisheries that I have hidden. I have been wooed for many years by the siren call of a younger and prettier fauna (*less than 200 million years old, as opposed to the 500+ million years that fishes have been around*).

*I am a closet birdwatcher.*

I've tried to quit. Twelve step programs didn't work. Cold "turkey" has obvious inherent problems. Despite everything I am always on the lookout for birds, even when I am supposed to be doing other things. I've watched them while walking, running, golfing, driving, swimming, farming, hunting, boating, flying, mowing, snorkeling, teaching, dining and, yes, even fishing. I've watched birds from the ground, tree stands, ground blinds, small private planes, jetliners, military helicopters, cars, trucks, SUVs, buses, trains, jet boats, canoes, kayaks, electroshockers, flat-bottoms, v-hulls, hydrofoils, dugouts, head boats, yachts, pedal boats, ferry boats, and a Yangtze River stern-wheel paddleboat. I've identified birds in forests, deserts, grasslands, brushlands, marshes, bogs, floodplains, cities, suburbs, coastal zones, caves, rice paddies, a recent war zone (*in Nicaragua, alongside burned-out tanks*) and in Wal-Mart (*it was a Gray Catbird, being pursued by an assistant manager with a landing net*); across ponds, rivers, roads, parking lots; above, below and behind waterfalls; in cages and restaurants in China, Mexico, Central America, and South America before they become either someone's pet or their dinner. With a nod to Dr. Seuss,



*I've spied Trogons and Todies, Skuas and Noddies,  
Frogmouths and Thick-knees, Boobies and Hobbies;  
Creepers, Cotingas, and Trillers and Tattlers,  
Buzzards and Bustards; Attilas and Babblers.*

*I've stalked Hoopoes and Drongos, Warblers and Whistlers,  
Hoatzins and Limpkins, and Rollers and Dippers;  
Crossbills and Potoos, and Thornbills and Fantails,  
Wedgebills and Whimbrels, and Weavers and Wagtails.*

*I've heard Flatbills and Boatbills, Pipits and Wren-tits,  
Greenlets and Grassquits, and Hermits and Godwits;  
Thrushes and Thrashers, and through-the-brush crashers,  
Batwings and Barwings, and Nutcracker smashers.*

*I've tallied Parids and Larids, and Corvids and Turdids,  
Divers by fivers, and worldwide-moved Sturnids;  
Ringnecks and Redthroats, Bulbuls and Barbthroats,  
and an Albatross maimed by transplanted stoats.*

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I've birdwatched at -20 F in the middle of frozen Lake St. Clair (*the ice was 4 feet thick*), out the windows at church, gasping for oxygen at 21,000 feet in Tibet, standing in icy water flooding over the top of my chest waders, and through the windshield at 60+ mph ("*Stop, stop, that was a Phainopepla*"). In the British Isles I saw thrushes (like our Robin) that they call Blackbirds (as in four and twenty, in the pie), and the European Robin (as in 'Little Robin Redbreast') that is actually a flycatcher. Once I identified a Yellow-billed Cuckoo that lodged in my car's grill outside London, Ontario, based on the bill alone (the rest was pretty shredded). While sampling largemouth bass in Cuba to obtain liver samples for genetics, I saw what I was sure was the then-considered-extinct Ivory-billed Woodpecker. The American Museum of Natural History said no way, but confirmed sightings emerged from Cuba a few years later. I've watched Snowy Egrets in a ritualized territorial battle in Mexico (*see the picture*), Red-capped Manakins dancing for seduction in Belize, and Eared Grebes



dancing for joy in Iceland. I've been on actual Snipe hunts. I've stared down a 5-foot Cassowary near the Great Barrier Reef (*I came back from that trip with 250+ species for my 'life list'*), and a 7-foot Ostrich in Texas (*he kicked and dented the side of the Suburban*). I have a list of over 60 bird species that I've seen out just the kitchen window of our house (*I like to make it challenging*), and a total list of species I've seen on our small farm outside Blacksburg (*currently at 102, but I need to get serious about grassland sparrows and migrating warblers*). I've put up more than 40 Eastern Bluebird boxes on our place, and now I'm poaching onto the neighbors on both sides. I've put up Wood Duck boxes, Purple Martin houses, Screech Owl boxes and

Barn Owl boxes, but the Purple Martin condominium is claimed by Tree Swallows every year, the duck box is occupied by European Starlings, one bluebird box has flying squirrels, and the Carolina Wrens insist on nesting in the shelves in the tool shop.

Why do I do this? It is a passion that I truly enjoy. It gives me something to get excited about when the profession that we all enjoy starts to wear me down. Almost all my overseas travels have been related to fisheries. But while I've not traveled the world to birdwatch, birding has tremendously enriched my travels. I think a passion for birds gives me some 'depth' for cocktail party conversations, because I really can talk about something besides fish! At a recent dinner gathering I mentioned a new bird (*a Northern Harrier*) I've seen on our place since I converted fescue hay pastures to native grasses. A friend commented, "I'm sure there are birds in my yard, but I never notice them." Such is inconceivable to me, but I realize that the world is also full of people who see things that I never do. I like to think that having a passion outside of my work makes me more than a one-dimensional 'type.' It links me to a piece of nature that is truly astounding yet overlooked by many, and to a piece of humanity that I might miss otherwise (*birdwatchers are real characters: check out the Steve Martin movie, The Big Year*). I think doing something besides 'science' all the time stimulates other parts of the brain, and I like to think that maybe it helps me to think more creatively instead of always just analytically. Those who have suffered through my classes through the years will tell you that I think and talk a lot (*maybe too much!*) about thinking. And I think that as focused professionals we do too much of a single type of thinking (*critical*). Shifting my attention to other things such as birds makes me see and appreciate connections, both natural and social, that I never would see otherwise. And whether we are talking about science or society, it is all about connections.

I am by no means unique. Our little group of fisheries scientists is full of people with hidden passions that we don't know about. Walking amongst us are accomplished musicians, writers, artists, woodworkers, poets, preachers, and who knows what else. Ask your friends what they are passionate about and I promise you will get some surprising answers. I hope you have a passion besides fisheries, and I'd love to hear about it. Track me down in Nashville and tell me about your passion, tell me what excites you, tell me what I am missing. And I'll tell you more about those nasty stoats.

(Note: I'll have plenty of time to visit with you after the SDAFS Business Meeting on Friday afternoon, where I will become **Past**-President!)

***Now back to the fish world. Here is what's been happening in the Southern Division lately, and what's coming up:***

- ***A new chapter for the Southern Division!!!*** By the time we meet in Nashville, the Southern Division will have a new chapter: Puerto Rico! A dedicated contingent of fisheries professionals there has been working for several years to get an AFS chapter established, and this week their hard work came to fruition when the AFS Governing Board approved their petition. There still are a few details before the Chapter becomes official, but all that should be taken care of before Nashville. A contingent from Puerto Rico will be traveling to Nashville, so join us there in welcoming the newest Chapter of AFS formed in a number of years.
- ***AFS President Boreman to join us in Nashville:*** American Fisheries Society President and Southern Division member John Boreman will join us for the Spring Meeting in Nashville. John has graciously agreed to serve as a judge for the Student Best Paper Session on Friday afternoon, and he will be around the meeting until Sunday. Take advantage of the opportunity to interact with the President of our Society. John will welcome the opportunity to hear about your work, interests, and concerns.
- ***Remaking our web presence:*** We have a new SDAFS website! Take a look: <http://sdafs.org> Gloria Schoenholtz, who works with me at Virginia Tech, has worked hard to revamp our Southern Division webpages. Jared Flowers at NCSU has been ably covering updates on the old site (thanks, Jared!) while Gloria worked on the new one. She redesigned everything in WordPress, which is much easier to use, and we are working on plans to help Division subunits convert to WordPress and get free hosting on our server. I'll have more information on this at the Business Meeting in Nashville.

- **Future of the SDAFS Student Colloquium:** This year is the first in many that an SDAFS-sponsored Student Colloquium is not being held. Participation has declined in recent years; many say because of the great opportunity that the SDAFS Spring Meeting itself offers for students to present their research. But others still value the informal atmosphere of the Colloquium. In Nashville we will be convening student leaders for a luncheon on Sunday, where we will have a frank discussion about the future of Colloquium.
- **Electronic Communications:** We have spent considerable time investigating options for enhanced web-based communications for SDAFS subunits, particularly the Technical Committees. It has not been an easy issue to resolve. We hope to have an option available for Technical Committees to include members who cannot attend the Nashville meeting.
- **Podcasting SDAFS presentations:** SDAFS has been a leader within AFS in terms of our widely emulated effort to podcast Spring Meeting presentations for wider viewing. This groundbreaking effort has been successful due to the tireless work of Greg Summers. We offer sincere thanks to Greg, and we welcome Jessica Baumann (NC) who will work with Greg in Nashville and then take over leadership of the podcast effort for subsequent meetings.
- **Nongame Aquatics Technical Committee Revitalized:** After many years of relative inactivity, the Nongame Aquatics Technical Committee will convene informally in Nashville to discuss future plans. Mark Thurman (TN) is taking a leadership role to revitalize this important committee. Contact him for details, and join the meeting in Nashville if this is your interest area.

## Division web-conferencing update

Division President Murphy appointed Michelle Klopfer of Virginia Tech and Secretary-Treasurer Craig Bonds to investigate web-conferencing options and to develop a proposal of recommendations for the SDAFS EXCOM to consider. Various options were researched and tested, resulting in a proposal that should enable the Division and its committees and working groups to communicate, collaborate, and conduct business remotely. These tools should help remove barriers for participation, especially in light of strict travel restrictions facing our members. Final recommendations will be presented at the SDAFS meeting in Nashville.

### Can't Attend SDAFS Meetings?

Hundreds of podcasts of presentations from past meeting are available on the SDAFS website. The most recent addition includes podcasts from the 2012 meeting in Biloxi, MS, which can be found at [http://129.15.97.19/sdafs\\_2012](http://129.15.97.19/sdafs_2012).



## New SDAFS logo

If you took a close look at the top left corner of the first page of this newsletter, you probably noticed a change from years past. Patrick Cooney, a PhD student at North Carolina State, designed two potential new logos for SDAFS. In September, 290 SDAFS members weighed in on their favorite logo. The winner, with 62% of the vote, is shown below. The new logo has a more “Southern” feel, and represents freshwater, marine, and diadromous fishes native to the South. The new logo will be featured on future meeting announcements, official SDAFS letterheads, etc... SDAFS extends many thanks to Patrick for his hard work designing the logo!



# Meeting announcements

## 2013 Southern Division Spring Meeting Nashville, Tennessee



Along with the Tennessee Chapter and the Planning Committee for the 2013 Southern Division AFS Spring Meeting, I would like to invite everyone to Nashville for the Spring Meeting. The Tennessee Chapter has hosted this meeting twice before, in Chattanooga (1999), and Memphis (2007), along with what some consider the first Mid-Year meeting in 1993.

Nashville is the capital city of Tennessee with a population base of 600,000 in the Metro area, and over a million and a half in the adjacent counties. It is the home of the NFL Tennessee Titans, and the NHL Nashville Predators. It is also home to the Schermerhorn Symphony Center, the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, and the Tennessee Performing Arts Center. But even with this big city flavor, Nashville has a small town atmosphere and plenty of good old southern hospitality.

When in Nashville you can enjoy many attractions within walking distance of the host hotel. The Country Music Hall of Fame, the Wildhorse Saloon, the Ryman Auditorium, and the many honky-tonks on lower Broadway are just a few of the many famous attractions located nearby. A short drive will take you to various Civil War battle sites, the Jack Daniels Distillery, the Hermitage (Home of President Andrew Jackson) or trout fishing on the Caney Fork River.

The host hotel for the meeting is the Sheraton Hotel Downtown Nashville. Make sure to get your rooms now as there a limited number of rooms at the meeting rate. After those are gone you are on your own as far as rates go. The cutoff date for conference room rates with the hotel is January 23, 2013.

Also be sure to register for the meeting before January 15, 2013, as the registration rate increases greatly after that date.

There are so many things to do and see that you may want to come early or stay late after the meeting to see all you can see. The Planning Committee will have the usual outstanding program, exciting socials, and a great information sharing opportunity for everyone to enjoy, so come to Nashville and see how we do it TENNESSEE STYLE.

Dave Rizzuto  
General Meeting Chairman  
SDAFS Spring Meeting 2013

## Black Bass Diversity: Multidisciplinary Science for Conservation

The Southern Division American Fisheries Society (SDAFS) Black Bass Conservation Committee is hosting the 2013 Black Bass Diversity Symposium, held in conjunction with the SDAFS Annual Meeting in Nashville, TN on February 8-10, 2013. This much-anticipated symposium will emphasize the conservation needs and diversity of black basses (genus *Micropterus*) in their native habitats. Many black bass populations have conservation issues related to genetic integrity and habitat degradation, and this symposium seeks to provide a forum where all these issues can be discussed. With a slate of invited and contributed talks, this symposium will highlight the conservation of native black basses in an AFS publication that contains accounts related to:

- Biology/ecology/life history requirements
- Habitat management and restoration
- Conservation genetics
- Fish populations, fisheries, and human dimensions

The symposium will begin Friday, February 8th at 8 am and conclude at 5 pm on Sunday, February 10th. Sunday afternoon is devoted to a workshop to update the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's 10-year Business Plan for the Conservation of Native Black Bass Species in the Southeastern U.S. To attend the symposium, register for the SDAFS meeting:

<http://www.sdafs.org/meetings/2013/2013SDAFSMeetingRegisForm.pdf>

...and make sure to reserve your hotel room. The designated hotel for the meeting is the Sheraton Nashville Downtown (623 Union Street, Nashville, Tennessee 37219; 1-800-447-9825). Visit the SDAFS website in January 2013 for the latest program updates.

Additional information is available on the symposium website at:

<http://www.fishconserve.org/campaigns/basssymposium.html>

Questions about the symposium can be sent to the organizers at:  
BlackBassSymposium@myFWC.com

To learn more, please visit our Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/American-Fisheries-Society-Black-Bass-Conservation-Committee/468823049809990?ref=hl>

## *AFS 2013 Little Rock: Preparing for the challenges ahead*

Begin making plans to attend the AFS 143rd Annual Meeting, which is back in the Southern Division, in Little Rock, Arkansas on September 8-12, 2013. The Arkansas Chapter hopes to see a good turnout from our Southern Division colleagues. The meeting is themed “Preparing for the Challenges Ahead.” Conference attendees will have the opportunity to network with fisheries professionals and students, stay current on the latest in fisheries science, and enjoy the sights and scenes of central Arkansas.



The AFS Technical Program will be held primarily at the State House Convention Center in Little Rock’s River Market district while social events will be held at various venues in the River Market district. The River Market district is located in downtown Little Rock along President Clinton Avenue on the banks of the Arkansas River. President Clinton Avenue recently was designated one of “10 Great Streets for 2009” by the American Planning Association’s Great Places in America Program. The Convention Center is located near the Clinton Presidential Library; Heifer International, headquarters of an international non-profit humanitarian organization; and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Witt Stephens Jr. Central Arkansas Nature Center. All are accessible by

walking or trolley. There are numerous other opportunities in and adjacent to the River Market district for diners, shoppers, and history buffs. Little Rock is located near the intersection of the Arkansas Valley, the Ouachita Mountains, the Ozarks, and the Arkansas Delta and thus is a jumping-off point for visits to the diverse geography of Arkansas. Nearby national parks include Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site; Hot Springs National Park; and the nation’s first national river, Buffalo National River. Diverse fishing opportunities are offered by the state for a variety of species—stripers, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, walleye, rainbow and brown trout, and catfish.

The 2013 AFS Annual Meeting will feature a broad range of topics associated with current and future challenges facing aquatic communities, biological scientists, managers, other professionals, and the general public. Topics will include assessments of status and trends of species and communities and their habitats; management challenges and methods; and the potential effects of changing social structures and ecological stresses such as increasing human population, increasing water demands, and a changing climate. Planned symposia topics include large river floodplains, fisheries training for students, roles of fisheries in native American culture, and ancient fishes.



Please submit your symposium proposals online by January 11, 2013. Contributed paper and poster abstracts are due by March 15, 2013. Details will be found at <http://afs2013.com/call-for-papers/>. Meeting details and registration will be found at <http://afs2013.com>



## 37th Annual Larval Fish Conference *Miami, Florida. June 2013*



The University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine & Atmospheric Science and NOAA Fisheries cordially invite you to attend the 37th Annual Larval Fish Conference in Miami, Florida from 2 to 6 June, 2013.

The conference will feature five theme sessions focusing on a broad range of topics of interest to larval fish scientists worldwide. The city's proximity to the tropics offers a timely opportunity to examine current research into tropical reef fish as model species in ecology and management. We also want to contribute to the discussion of the effects of ocean acidification and environmental change on the early life history of fishes. In a third session, we plan to explore aspects of the reproduction and early life history of highly migratory species such as tunas, sharks, swordfishes, and billfishes; this session will have particular relevance to the CLIOTOP (Climate Impacts on Oceanic Top Predators) program. Our knowledge of predator-prey interactions in the ocean has continued to expand, thus a fourth session will encompass research on the state of knowledge on the structure of larval fish food webs. Finally, a fifth session will discuss recent advances in methodology applied to all aspects of the study of early life history of fishes. Presentations whose subject matter falls outside the selected conference themes will be presented at a special session for other topics.

Mark your calendars! We hope you will plan on coming to Miami and be part of this exciting event. Early registration and abstract submission end on April 1, 2013. For additional information please visit the conference website (<http://www.rsmas.miami.edu/LFC2013/index.html>) or contact Dr Su Sponaugle, Organizing Committee Chair, by phone (305-421-4069) or email ([ssponaugle@rsmas.miami.edu](mailto:ssponaugle@rsmas.miami.edu)).

## ***Diversity in Natural Resources Conference***

### **Request for Abstracts**

Diversity is the recognition and commitment to understand and appreciate that individuals and communities have a variety of characteristics that make them unique. We are pleased to put forth our first request for abstracts for *The Future of Diversity in Our Disciplines and Careers: Natural Resources and the Environment Conference* to be held June 19-21, 2013, in Blacksburg, Virginia. This conference brings together Natural Resource and Environmental (NRE) Science professionals to participate in workshops focused on diversity, share recent research advances, and learn from case-studies of successful programs of inclusive excellence in academia, agencies, industry, and other natural resource and environmental organizations.

We seek papers that address contemporary topics and have the potential to create the future foundation of diversity in natural resources and environment. We are particularly interested in processes that underlie and encourage diversity in natural resources. Abstracts might use different methodologies including analytical, empirical, and conceptual approaches. Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary abstract submission is highly encouraged. Suggestions for potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Integration of diversity in sustainable communities
- Building institutional capacity for diversity efforts
- Inclusion and diversity in the working environment for NRE professionals
- Diversity policy issues
- Measuring diversity and understand the pipeline for diversity in NRE
- Successful programs that handle diversity efforts at Universities
- Attracting diverse audiences to careers in NRE
- Other pertaining topics

Abstract submission for presentations and registration can be completed through the conference website at <http://www.cpe.vt.edu/ndc/abstracts.html>. For any additional questions, please contact Henry Quesada at [quesada@vt.edu](mailto:quesada@vt.edu) or (540) 231-0978.

Abstract submission deadline is **February 15, 2013**.

## Chapter Updates

The **Arkansas Chapter** and its members have had very industrious year in 2012 and this productivity will continue through 2013. In 2012, Hot Springs, Arkansas hosted the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual SEAFWA conference, in which 625 regional fish and wildlife personnel attended. The 2013 Arkansas Chapter meeting will be held January 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> at the Faulkner County Natural Resource Center in Conway, Arkansas. Members are still diligently working to plan and organize for the 143<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society which will be held September 8-12, 2013 at the Statehouse Convention Center in downtown Little Rock.



### 126th Annual Meeting of the Arkansas Chapter

**January 23-25, 2013**

Faulkner County Natural Resource Center  
Conway, Arkansas

<http://sdafs.org/arkafs/AFS/>



### 2013 Mid Continent Warm Water Fish Culture Workshop

Hosted by the Arkansas Game and Fish  
Commission

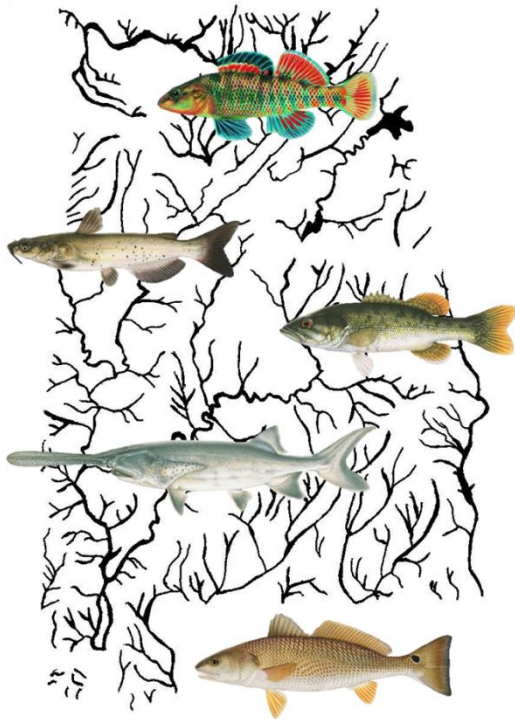
February 4-6, 2013  
Mt. Magazine State Park

### 143<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of American Fisheries Society Statehouse Convention Center Little Rock, Arkansas September 8-12, 2013



<http://www.afs2013.com>

## Auburn University Chapter



## American Fisheries Society

The **Auburn Chapter** of the American Fisheries Society has participated in several outreach, education, and public service projects since August 2012. We kicked off the fall semester with a tailgate social and shrimp boil in September, which was well attended by students and faculty. In October the chapter set up a native fish display at a local festival to educate patrons about the fish that live in their local streams. This event was a great success and we look forward to returning in 2013. At our October meeting Kathryne Christian from the local extension program detailed their urban stream restoration project which we will be assisting with in January and February of 2013. We have agreed to help supply labor and funding to plant live-stakes of native trees along eroded stream banks in the Auburn area. In November members removed trash from a 2.5 mile stretch of Saugahatchee Creek. We also volunteered to help teach kids to cast and make fish print t-shirts as well as assist with frying catfish for people to sample at Auburn's annual AG-Roundup.

A main goal of our chapter is to help student members attend professional meetings. To that end, we have allocated \$900 to cover transportation and lodging costs for up to seven students to attend the 2013 SDAFS meeting. This opportunity is for active student members who would otherwise not be able to attend the meeting.

We are looking forward to our spring events which include an international student fishing day, highway cleanup, stream cleanup, and spring social. We will be challenged this spring in implementing a new annual fundraiser for the chapter.

The **Florida Chapter** is looking forward to returning to the Ocala 4-H Camp to enjoy the company of friends and colleagues at our annual chapter meeting from February 19-21, 2013. Our meeting format will again consist of both invited and contributed oral presentations and posters, and a symposium will be held on Wednesday entitled 'Long-term monitoring: designs, problems, and results.' More information on the symposium, meeting venue, and registration can be found at <http://www.sdafs.org/flafs/> and in our most recent newsletter (<http://www.sdafs.org/flafs/PDF/Oct2012Shellcracker.pdf>).

We would also like to acknowledge two members of the Florida Chapter Student Subunit, who were award recipients at the 2012 AFS Meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota. Chelsey Campbell (University of Florida) was a recipient of the John E. Skinner Memorial Scholarship. Geoff Smith (University of Florida) won the Best Student Poster Award and also received honorable mention for the Steven Berkeley Marine Conservation Fellowship.



The **Louisiana Chapter** of the American Fisheries Society will be holding our 2013 annual meeting on May 30-31 in Baton Rouge, LA. The program committee is currently developing a theme for the upcoming meeting. Our plan is to focus our attention on bridging the gap between education and the work force. We would like to engage our members in a panel discussion during which professionals will describe the qualities they look for when hiring new employees and university staff provide insight into current curriculums and course content. We are looking forward to another successful meeting and invite anyone that may be interested to join us! More information can be found on the meeting page of our website: <http://sdafs.org/laafs/meetings/>

### Member Contributions

\*Submitted by **Dr. Martin T. O'Connell**: The Nekton Research Laboratory (NRL), located at the University of New Orleans (UNO), conducts various research projects ranging from estuarine organisms in the northern Gulf of Mexico to freshwater mussels in central Louisiana to coral reef work in Madagascar. Recently with the help of Senior Biologist and Database Manager **Meg Uzee O'Connell** from the Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Sciences (PIES) we secured a \$1.2 million cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to study crab and shrimp populations in the northern Gulf of Mexico. The five-year study will focus on tracking the abundance and distribution of blue crabs, brown shrimp, and white shrimp throughout the northern Gulf of Mexico, which will yield useful baseline data. Study partners brought in by UNO include scientists from the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory at the University of Southern Mississippi, the University of South Alabama, and the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. Simultaneous sampling will occur from Lake Borgne in Louisiana to Mobile Bay in Alabama. The key goals are to better understand the natural variability of these valuable species, and how they respond to and recover from disasters such as hurricanes on a large, multi-state, multi-year scale.

Research Manager and Senior Biologist **Chris Schieble** (PIES) continues to work on a two-year project on the impact of commercial crab traps on finfish bycatch. More recently Chris has had to deal with repairing damage caused by Hurricane Isaac to the Shea Penland Coastal Education and Research Facility located on Chef Menteur Pass in eastern New Orleans. Many pieces of research equipment were lost to the storm and Chris is spearheading rebuilding efforts. He has worked tirelessly to get out research team back up and working again. Post-doc **Tom Lorenz** continues to monitor for invasive tilapia that may have survived an eradication effort spear-headed by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) in the vicinity of Port Sulphur, Louisiana. He is also conducting research on determining how another invasive fish, the Rio Grande cichlid (*Herichthys cyanoguttatus*), uses thermal refugia to survive cold winter periods. For this latter project, Dr. Lorenz is working closely with undergraduate independent researchers from both EES and the Department of Biological Sciences.

**Scott Eustis** successfully defended his thesis in November 2011. The title of his thesis was: "Bycatch of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin inshore shrimp fishery and its effects on two sea catfish species: the gafftopsail catfish (*Bagre marinus*) and the hardhead catfish (*Ariopsis felis*)." One of the major findings of Scott's research was that these two species may have actually benefitted from increased trawling in the last half century because they feed on dead organisms discarded from shrimp trawls. After finishing his thesis, Chris successfully procured a permanent job with the Gulf Restoration Network.

**Jonathan McKenzie** (Ph.D. student) is scheduled to defend his dissertation research on lemon sharks at the Chandeleur Islands, including his investigation into the genetic relationships within the population. **Shane**

**Abear** (Ph.D. student) continues his research in the Bay of Ranobe, Madagascar, where he is applying satellite remote sensing in the study of coral reef fish spatial ecology. He is particularly interested in the spatiotemporal dynamics of fish populations and ontogenetic shifts in habitat-use. **Patrick Smith** (Ph.D. student) successfully defended his Master's degree in spring 2012 and continues working on a three year grant to study habitat choice in native red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*) that have been restored to an urban fishery in New Orleans. The title of his thesis was "Fish assemblage dynamics and red drum habitat selection in Bayou St. John and associated urban waterways located within the City of New Orleans." **Will Stein** (Ph.D. student) was the first biologist to publish a scientific paper showing evidence that tarpon (*Megalops atlanticus*) spawn off the coast of Louisiana. The title of the paper is "Evidence of spawning capable tarpon (*Megalops atlanticus*) off the Louisiana coast," and it appeared the journal *Gulf and Caribbean Research*. A new Ph.D. student, **Jonathan (JD) Davis**, has been hired to study how bull sharks (*Carcharhinus leucas*) use Lake Pontchartrain. He will be capturing and radio-tagging bull sharks in estuarine habitats and tracking their movement patterns both in and outside the Lake. **Rebecca Cope** (M.Sc. student) is analyzing important baseline data on larval fishes from the natural passes that enter Lake Pontchartrain. The purpose of Rebecca's thesis research was to better understand how the closing of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet would affect the densities of larval organisms in the Rigolets and Chef Menteur Pass. Graduate student **Angela Williamson** (M.Sc. student) has been studying the federally threatened Louisiana pearlshell mussel (*Margaritifera hembeli*) with the goal of determining its possible fish host species. New M.Sc. student **Arnaud Kerisit** will be examining how larval invertebrates use the natural and artificial passes that enter Lake Pontchartrain, building on Rebecca Cope's work on larval fishes.

\*Submitted by the **Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries**: The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is now accepting public comment on largemouth bass management in the Atchafalaya Basin. A recent LDWF evaluation determined that the 14" minimum size limit for bass in the Atchafalaya Basin, Lake Verret, Lake Palourde, and Fausse Pointe Lake is not effective in increasing the abundance of large size bass.

The Atchafalaya Basin is one of the most popular fisheries in Louisiana. Therefore, any regulation change will directly impact thousands of anglers. Your comments and opinions will provide valuable insight into angler preferences toward bass management in the Atchafalaya Basin.

Comments can be submitted on the Department's website by visiting [www.wlf.la.gov](http://www.wlf.la.gov) and clicking on the "Largemouth Bass in the Atchafalaya Basin" banner or visiting <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/webform/basin>.

\*Submitted by **Robby Maxwell, Chair of the Instream Flow Committee**: The LA chapter AFS formed the Instream Flow Committee this summer. The committee is made up of representatives from LDWF, The Nature Conservancy, LSU, and Tulane. At the first committee meeting, water availability and flow issues in the state were discussed. The committee was also brought up to speed on the Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GCPLCC) instream flow project, which includes the inland waters of Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma. Members were also asked to take an active role in the GCPLCC project. The committee plans on drafting a resolution on instream flow protection.

Robby Maxwell recently defended his master's thesis at Texas State University. The title of his completed thesis is Patterns of endemism and species richness of fishes of the Western Gulf Slope and can be viewed at the following link: <https://digital.library.txstate.edu/handle/10877/4372>

#### Chapter Website

The Louisiana Chapter is making an effort to acknowledge the hard work of our members! We developed a "[Featured Professional](#)" and "[Featured Student](#)" section on our website. Periodically, a new professional and

student will be asked to submit a biography and photo to be displayed on the chapter website. We hope this will provide another avenue for professionals and students to share their work and to promote networking among members.

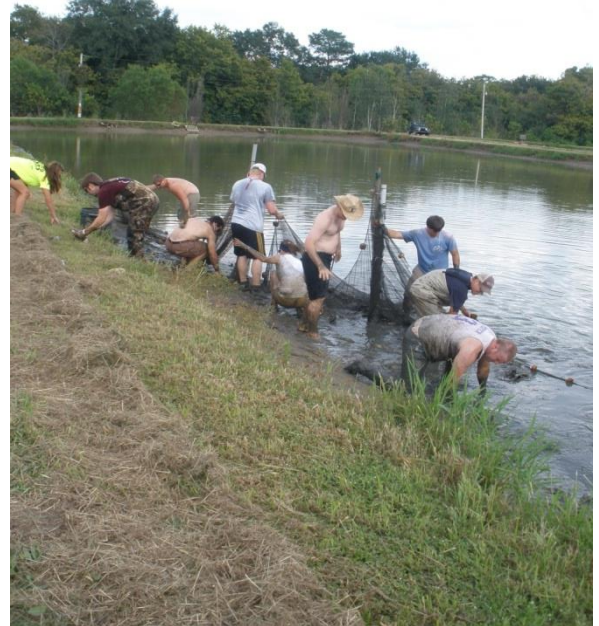
The **Mississippi Chapter** of AFS has been busy this summer and fall with outreach and “housekeeping issues”. Chapter members assisted with three Campfish events for youth this summer. These 4 day events were held at Leroy Percy and Paul B. Johnson State Parks and the Turcotte Education Center during June and July. Over 40 youth (ages 8 to 15) were instructed in fishing techniques during these camps, and had ample opportunities to practice their new skills fishing in lakes at the camp sites.



*MSAFS members Larry Pugh and Jerry Brown teach knot tying at Campfish*

individual MSAFS member for meritorious service and for exceptional commitment to the programs, objectives, and long-term goals of the Chapter throughout the years, and the Mississippi Chapter Fisheries Conservation Award, presented to a non-MSAFS individual or entity for singular accomplishments or long-term contributions that advance aquatic resource conservation in Mississippi. The Awards Committee has been soliciting nominations for these awards this fall, and they will be presented at the annual Chapter meeting in February 2013. The Chapter has also initiated 10 one-time Travel Awards of \$500 each to assist Chapter professionals and students attend the 2013 annual AFS meeting in our neighboring state of Arkansas; the new Travel Awards ad hoc Committee, chaired by Wes Neal, has defined award requirements and will review applications this spring. Finally, Program Chair Stephen Brown is busy making arrangements for the 2013 Chapter meeting to be held 20-22 February in Percy Quinn State Park.

The Chapter has revised and updated their bylaws, and the revisions will be voted on by the membership at the 2013 Chapter meeting. Many thanks to past President Jason Olive for spearheading this task! The Chapter has also instituted three new awards, in addition to the existing C.A. Shultz Award which is presented to a MSAFS member instrumental in conservation of Mississippi’s aquatic resources during their career. The new awards include a Distinguished Service Award, presented to Chapter Members who demonstrate outstanding contributions of time and energy for special projects or activities, the Meritorious Service Award, presented to an



*Mississippi State University subunit members get muddy wrangling catfish at the annual seine of a production pond on the MSU campus.*

The **Mississippi State University student subunit** has been highly productive in recruiting undergraduates at the University's club fair, and then at the College of Forest Resources' freshman orientation in August. Along with four business meetings, there have been multiple opportunities for subunit members to experience sampling techniques this fall. Members got down and dirty at the annual fall catfish seine and filleting which took up the better part of an afternoon (see photo). The fish captured were served as fillets at the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture's fall family picnic. Additionally, subunit members have sampled two lakes, first partnering with a private community and then working with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks to provide valuable fish stock data. The subunit held its second annual Halloween bake sale, and are using the proceeds to start a new undergraduate travel award, to be awarded in January. Other activities this fall have included roadside cleanup, aquatic paper discussion, a fly tying workshop, and several members volunteering at a local afterschool program. The subunit is proud of all their members and their involvement with the subunit.

The **University of Southern Mississippi student subunit** held their first Gunter Lecture Series in July with Dr. Bjorn Steinarsson, the head of fisheries advisory at the Marine Research Institute in Reykjavik, Iceland (see photo). The subunit continued their involvement with the local Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) this summer and fall through participation in a local banquet, a Casting for Conservation event and organization meetings to increase association. The subunit is planning to help CCA in the future with a Warrior Fishing Trip which takes veterans and currently enlisted soldiers on fishing trips along the coast. Currently, the sub-unit is helping the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) student association in raising money for this year's Graduate Student Symposium which will be held in April 2013 at GCRL. For subunit fundraising, students are currently developing pint glasses to sell at the symposium and local festivals. The subunit participated in events in conjunction with GCRL this fall, such as Discovery Quest, Coastal Cleanup, and the Peter Anderson Festival booth. Finally, the subunit sent donations to labs that were damaged in Hurricane Sandy.



*University of Southern Mississippi subunit member Mike Lowe (right) presents Dr. Bjorn Steinarsson, the Gunter Distinguished Lecturer, with mementos from Gulf Coast Research Laboratory.*



The **Oklahoma Chapter** held its annual meeting in Stillwater, OK October 23-25. Thanks to global warming, we had above-average fall temperatures that allowed us to hold a softball game and other outdoor games at a local area lake. Thanks to the generosity of the City of Stillwater and the Sanborn Chapter Izaak Walton League



who let us use their facilities. The technical session was well attended and we had 16 presentations from a good mix of students and professionals. At the business meeting, several awards were handed out to much-deserving recipients: Outstanding Fisheries Worker to Jason Schooley (Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation), James Schooley Best Paper Award to Reid Morehouse (Oklahoma State University), and the Jimmie Pigg Travel Scholarship to Chris Musselman (Oklahoma State University) and Kris Stahr (Oklahoma State University). An award not often given, the Lifetime Achievement Award was given to John Stahl (Oklahoma Department

of Wildlife Conservation) for his life-long dedication to the profession and to the chapter. The Chapter then recognized the leadership of outgoing president Dan Shoup. The meeting ended with a workshop on Electrofishing theory and power standardization conducted by Dr. Dan Shoup of Oklahoma State University.

The 2013 **Texas Chapter** annual meeting will be held at LaToretta Lake Resort and Spa on Lake Conroe in Montgomery on January 17-19, 2013. The theme of the Plenary Session is "Large Rivers and Reservoirs: Concepts & Challenges." The meeting will consist of two continuing education courses, an evening social on Thursday, plenary and contributed sessions, our banquet/auction on Friday evening, and the TCAFS business meeting on Saturday. For additional information, contact Richard Ott ([richard.ott@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:richard.ott@tpwd.state.tx.us)). See information below on program overview, registration, and lodging to help plan your trip. For those who are unable to attend, a podcast of the meeting proceedings will be made available (<http://www.sdafs.org/tcafs/meetings/meethome.htm>).

### **Preliminary Program Overview:**

**Registration (Thursday, 1:00 – 5:30 PM and Friday 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM)**  
**Continuing Education Workshops (Thursday, 2:00 – 5:00 PM)**

- 1) Fish Pathology, by Greg Southard, 2:00 – 3:20 pm
- 2) Processing images from Recreation-grade side scan sonar with Dr Depth software for use in a GIS., Dan Bennett, 3:40 – 5:00 pm

**Student/Professional Mixer (Thursday, 5:30 – 7:30 PM)** Just across the parking lot from the convention hotel at the adjacent convention center in Versailles Room 2. There will be plenty of fun, networking opportunities for students. Beverages will be provided.

**Plenary Session (Friday, 8:00 – 10:00 AM)** Three invited speakers will discuss issues and challenges to river and reservoir operation from the controlling authority perspective. A question and answer session will follow for the speaker panel.

**Lunch (Friday, time period TBD)** Friday's lunch will be on your own, including the Student-Mentor Lunch. To sign up for the student-mentor lunch, check the appropriate spot on the meeting registration form or contact Mandy Scott ([mandy.scott@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:mandy.scott@tpwd.state.tx.us); 325-651-5556).

**Contributed Papers and Presentations (Friday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM and Saturday, 8:00 – 10:00 AM)**

**Banquet and Auction (Friday, 6:30 – 10:00 PM)** Supper and beverages will be provided as part of the registration price along with the famously entertaining TCAFS auction and raffle.

**Past-presidents Breakfast (Saturday, 7:00 am)** Past Presidents and current Chapter Officers will meet for a complimentary breakfast in the convention center's Prime Restaurant in the private dining room adjacent to the restaurant.

**TCAFS Business Meeting (Saturday, 10:20 AM – 12:00 PM)**

### Resort Information

LaToretta Lake Resort and Spa is located in Montgomery Texas on the banks of Lake Conroe. **From Houston** take I-45 North toward Dallas, Exit 87A TX-105 W, and travel 12 miles on TX-105 to Walden Road and turn right. Travel 2 miles on Walden Road and Turn right on La Torretta Boulevard. **From Dallas** take I-45 South toward Houston, take exit 88 and turn right on Loop 336 W, turn right again on TX-105 W and travel 10 miles to Walden Road. Turn right on Walden Road and travel 2 miles to La Torretta Boulevard.

More information on the hotel and convention center can be found at:

<http://www.latorrettalakeresort.com/>. Check-in time: 4:00 pm; Check-out time: 12:00 Noon.

I encourage all those needing commercial lodging to stay at the conference hotel to ensure we meet our room block obligations. Room rates are \$77 single king and \$135 for double queen suites. *A \$10 resort fee will apply per room per night. Resort fee includes 24 hr internet access, unlimited phone calls, all incoming faxes, in-room coffee and tea, and access to all of the resort activities (refer to the resort web site for details)* <http://www.latorrettalakeresort.com/>. **Please also note that in order to get the reduced rate at the resort the first nights lodging will be charged to your credit card at the time the reservation is made.** The number to call to make your reservation is 877-286-9590. Please identify yourselves as being with the "Texas Chapter, American Fisheries Society" in order to secure the group rate. You can also [book your reservation online](#). If you book online, make sure to click the box in the lower left corner of the reservation page and enter the code **TCAFS** for a single suite, and **TCAFS2** for a double suite.

### Call for Papers

Information for individuals interested in presenting a paper or poster is provided below.

[Click here to view Guidelines for Oral Presentations](#)

[Click here to view Guidelines for Poster Presentations](#)

**Exhibitors interested in obtaining space for their product should contact:**

Brad Littrell  
213 Hyltin St.  
Hutto, TX 78634  
512-557-0752  
[blittrell@bio-west.com](mailto:blittrell@bio-west.com)

and/or

Greg Conley  
11810 FM 848  
Tyler, TX 75707  
903-566-2581  
[greg.conley@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:greg.conley@tpwd.state.tx.us)

Since the last newsletter, **Tennessee Tech** SFA sent four undergraduates and three graduate students to the Student Colloquium in Charleston, West Virginia. Additionally, our sub unit sent two undergraduates and several graduate students to the Tennessee State Chapter meeting in mid-March.

This summer we continued a tradition and hosted the 24th annual Kid's Fishing Derby at Cane Creek Park in Cookeville, Tennessee. We gave away thousands of dollars in donated prizes and equipment to the 129 children in attendance at the post-derby cookout and raffle. Members presented sampling techniques to local students at the Army Corps of Engineers' Cordell Hull Education Days. We assisted the local chapter of National Wild Turkey Federation with their annual youth outreach Jake's Day event. Our association filled trash bags at the Army Corps' Center Hill Lakeshore cleanup. Members taught local kids how to fish with the Great Outdoors University and the Boy Scouts of America.

We have several social outings lined up including: cookouts, night fishing, and a cabin trip. Our subunit has seen an increase in undergraduate interest this year as many of our committee chairs and officer positions are held by undergraduates. This spring the SFA will begin a community pond management service in cooperation with the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency. We look forward to the Nashville SDAFS meeting in February where members will present their research and sell merchandise.

In the past year members of our sub unit have accepted full time fisheries positions: Aaron Cole, Fisheries Biologist, Wisconsin DNR; Chase Ehlo, Fisheries/Aquatic Biologist, Marsh & Associates Native Fish Lab; Tomas Ivasauaskas, PhD Graduate Assistant, North Carolina State University; Matthew Mork, Fisheries Biologist, Minnesota DNR; Matthew Peterson, Fisheries Biologist, Indiana DNR.

--Justin Spaulding

The **Tidewater Chapter** annual meeting will be held March 21-23 2013 in Solomons, Maryland. The opening social on Thursday night will be held in conjunction with a poster session. Talks will be held on Friday and Saturday. And back by popular demand will be a professional development workshop provided by Laura Lee of North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries. Stay tuned to the Tidewater Chapter web site for details about location and registration: <http://www.sdafs.org/tidewater/AFSTidewater/Home.html>

The **Virginia Tech Chapter** of AFS has been active this fall with outreach events and monthly meetings. Education and Outreach committee co-chair Steve Watkins organized members to participate in several events which focused on educating elementary school children on the importance and identification of native stream fishes and insects. Steve and his volunteers mostly visited classrooms to educate students, but they were also able to set up education booths at a local trout stream during a large field trip for young students.





**Education and Outreach committee co-chair Steve Watkins educates elementary students about fish found in local streams.**

Our chapter hosted Dr. Eric Hilton from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Dr. Reuben Goforth from Purdue University, and Scott Smith from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries as speakers throughout the fall of 2012. All three speakers were able to meet with members, particularly student members, before and after the meetings to network. To promote faculty and student attendance, meeting times and dates were varied throughout the semester to accommodate different schedules.

Several members attended the 2012 Twin Cities Annual Meeting in August, and most of the students who attended this meeting presented either a poster or presentation. Our stream concerns committee continued to monitor Stroubles Creek and assist with a local restoration project. Inexperienced members in particular were able to hone crucial sampling skills during these events. A fall tailgate was held to encourage social interaction among members. Undergraduate student attendees were able to network with local biologists and graduate students and enjoy themselves.

Communication to members through our Facebook page and an open-access listserv has increased. In addition to job opportunities and regular announcements, members also receive follow-up meeting summaries. Additionally, Secretary Caitlin Carey and active member Jason Emmel have created a new, more user-friendly website to increase communication among chapter members.

We have many exciting upcoming events that active members are currently planning. Science and Conservation committee co-chairs Britney Kreiner and Kaylie Fitzgerald plan to update and modernize our bulletin board to improve communication among members and to recruit new students. This duo is also planning to bring in 1-2 members of Virginia's legislature and educate them on the importance of native fishes in Stroubles Creek and the need for future conservation. Vice-President Brendan Runde and active member Derek Wheaton have headed an effort to place a large aquarium in Cheatham Hall to educate visitors and students about native stream fish. Their plans will soon be submitted for approval. Education Outreach committee co-chairs Steve Watkins and Dale Davis have several elementary and middle school outreach events planned over the next few months. Additionally, this duo is planning to take a local high school class sampling in Stroubles Creek. Mudbass committee co-chairs Sean Lusk and Ashley Weston have started planning and collecting donations for the annual fishing tournament which is our biggest outreach event of the year. Finally, fundraising committee co-chairs John Woodward and Travis Ashby have a football signed by Frank Beamer ready to be auctioned off in the coming weeks. Part of the proceeds will be donated to a charity voted on by chapter members.

Last winter, the **Virginia Chapter** and VTAFS cohosted the 2012 Annual meeting at Virginia Tech. This meeting was a huge success thanks to the work of so many people. Shannon White (Virginia Tech) handled many of the arrangements on campus. The two socials provided great opportunities for folks to network while enjoying great food and spirits. Presentations and posters once again showed the diversity of fisheries research going on in the state and display the quality of folks we have here in Virginia. Shannon White and Dr. Robert Humston (Washington and Lee University) each led a continuing education class on GIS and statistics, respectively. The workshop fees that were collected went 100% toward the Chapters as both Shannon and Robert donated their time!

The EXCOM is making our website a short term priority and that will continue into 2013. This entails a complete overhaul of the content of the web page so that it highlights Chapter accomplishments and keeps members informed of relevant information. The Outreach Committee, led by Paul Bugas, continues working on the Virginia Fish ID Guide and we look for that to be completed in the not too distant future. Finally, at the 2012 business meeting, the EXCOM formed an ad hoc committee designed to match students looking for volunteer experience with professionals needing help (in the field, lab or office).

## **Contributed Articles**

### **Fish Conservation Opportunity in Texas Drought**

*By Stephan Magnelia, Fisheries Biologist, TPWD River Studies Program*

Despite their high ecological value, public funding for protection and restoration of southeastern US streams has lagged behind other regions of the US. In the summer of 2011, the record drought and heat that gripped Texas raised public awareness about the value of rivers and streams. It also provided a rare opportunity on the Blanco River near Blanco, Texas for fish conservation, which has the potential to reintroduce the state fish, the Guadalupe bass, back into a river where it no longer exists. This project, undertaken by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, is part of a Southeastern Native Black Bass Keystone Initiative. In 2010, TPWD, SARP, and a variety of other organizations, agencies, and universities from around the region came together in partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in an effort to gain public interest and support for the conservation of southeastern US streams by focusing on the preservation of native black bass species. The Initiative aims to guide more than \$30M over the next 10 years toward stream protection and restoration projects that address conservation issues affecting the long-term sustainability of regionally endemic species of black bass.



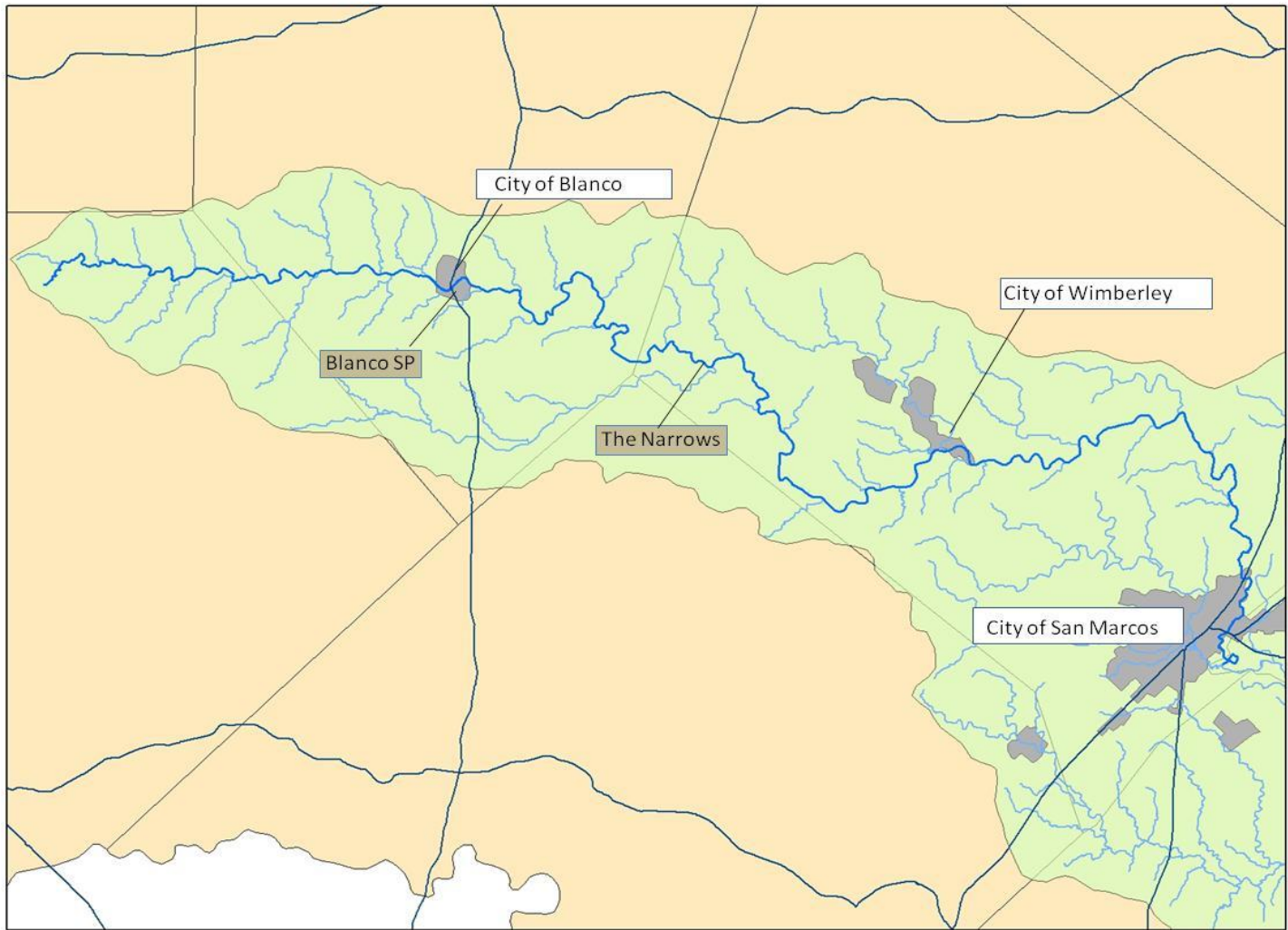
***TPWD River Studies Program staff backpack electrofish a small pool remaining in the almost dry riverbed of the Blanco River in summer 2011. Photo credit: TPWD.***

The headwaters of the Blanco River bubble up from springs in the hills roughly 16 miles west of the city of Blanco, eventually flowing into the San Marcos River, just east of the City of San Marcos. Historically this classic Hill Country river was home to a good population of the Texas state fish, the Guadalupe bass. This endemic black bass species occurs nowhere else in the world except in Central Texas, with most of the populations located in small Hill Country streams within the Edwards Plateau ecoregion. This species evolved in small streams and is popular with anglers who often refer to them as “Texas trout”. Unfortunately, the stocking of smallmouth bass in the 1970s and 1980s in the Blanco River and other Hill Country streams had

unintended consequences. While stocked smallmouth bass were well suited to the rocky stream habitat

of the Texas Hill Country they also hybridized with endemic Guadalupe bass. Soon it was difficult to tell one species from the other and extinction of Guadalupe bass became a real possibility. Smallmouth bass stockings were discontinued, but in many streams, restoration of genetically pure Guadalupe bass populations was thought to be nearly impossible. A recent study by Texas State University looked at the genetic integrity of Guadalupe bass throughout their range and found no pure Guadalupe bass in the Blanco River. It was thought that removing smallmouth bass and hybrids would likely be impossible and the Guadalupe bass population in the Blanco River would be lost forever. With the drought of 2011, opportunity knocked, and a plan came together which provided some hope for reintroduction of the species in at least a portion of the river.

The drought of 2011 was so severe that much of the Blanco River was dry, with only a limited number of small pools existing in a 15-mile reach of river between Blanco State Park and The Narrows (a natural physical barrier limiting upstream movement of fishes). Fish which had survived the drought were confined to these pools and it was thought smallmouth bass and hybridized Guadalupe bass might be effectively removed. If these were removed, pure Guadalupe bass could be reintroduced and a population might be reestablished in at least a portion of the river. One unknown, which threatened initiation of the project, was that the 16-mile reach of river upstream of Blanco State Park to the headwaters harbored a series of small impoundments. These impoundments retained large amounts of water even during the severe drought. If these impoundments contained smallmouth or hybridized Guadalupe bass it was thought reintroduction efforts would be futile as these fish could easily move downstream into the restoration area below the park.



In summer 2011, Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) and Texas Nature Conservancy staff contacted landowners in the river above Blanco State Park and began the process of sampling upstream impoundments to look specifically for smallmouth and hybridized Guadalupe bass. A genetic analysis of individuals captured in the impoundments by the A.E. Wood State Fish Hatchery Analytical Lab found neither. Work then began on removing smallmouth bass in the isolated pools downstream of Blanco State Park to The Narrows. Georeferenced aerial imagery of the remaining pools was first collected using the Texas State River Systems Institute unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). The imagery was extremely useful as it ensured all remaining water could be accounted for, and plans for efficiently accessing the pools from private property or road crossings could be made. Crews from the Texas State University Aquatic Biology Department, Texas Tech University Department of Natural Resources Management, TPWD River Studies Program, TPWD Watershed Conservation Program, TPWD San Marcos Fisheries Management Office, and the Texas Nature Conservancy then used a combination of seining and electrofishing gear to remove smallmouth bass and Guadalupe bass hybrids. Approximately 40 pools identified by the UAV were sampled and a relatively small number ( $N = 26$ ) of smallmouth bass and hybrids were identified and removed. Large numbers of other species of fish taking refuge in the pools were collected and released, which likely meant seining and electrofishing were effective removal techniques.

Rains returned to most of Texas in the spring of 2012 and the Blanco River is once again flowing. The isolated pools of summer 2011 are once again connected. In May 2012, 103,000 pure Guadalupe bass produced by the

TPWD A.E. Wood State Fish Hatchery in San Marcos were stocked into the Blanco River at sites within the restoration area. Monitoring the success of those stockings and additional stockings of pure Guadalupe bass are planned with the long-term goal of establishing a self-sustaining, pure Guadalupe bass population in the upper 31 miles of the river. TPWD biologists and project collaborators are optimistic that their efforts will be successful in bringing the state fish of Texas back to at least a portion of the Blanco River.

To learn more about the Blanco River project and conserving native Guadalupe bass, contact Stephan Magnelia at [Stephan.Magnelia@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:Stephan.Magnelia@tpwd.state.tx.us). For more information about the Southeastern Native Black Bass Initiative, contact Scott Robinson, SARP Coordinator, at [scottr@southeastaquatics.net](mailto:scottr@southeastaquatics.net). SARP is a sponsor of a symposium hosted by the AFS Black Bass Conservation Committee titled "Black Bass Diversity: Multidisciplinary Science for Conservation" at the upcoming SD AFS meeting in Nashville, Tennessee in February. Refer to the SD AFS meeting program and website for more information, or contact Wes Porak, Black Bass Conservation Committee Chair, at [wes.porak@myfwc.com](mailto:wes.porak@myfwc.com).

## Announcements

### *Something to blog about*

Why are fish listed as an ingredient in my peanut butter?

How old is the oldest fishing hook?

What are the five most common mistakes when electrofishing?

For answers to these fish questions and more, check out *The Fisheries Blog* ([www.TheFisheriesBlog.blogspot.com](http://www.TheFisheriesBlog.blogspot.com)) every Monday morning. For more than a year, three fisheries professionals, along with a wide variety of guests, have written short weekly posts about pertinent and forward thinking fisheries science topics. *The Fisheries Blog* promotes communication and discussion amongst fisheries professionals as well as with non-fisheries individuals across the globe. *The Fisheries Blog* can also be found on Facebook and Twitter (@FisheriesBlog).





**Winter Fisheries Training for Acoustic Tag & Hydroacoustic Assessments**

*Co-Hosted by HTI and the University of Washington (UW) Student Chapter of the American Fisheries Society at the UW School of Aquatic and Fishery Science*

**1. Using Acoustic Tags to Track Fish**

**7-8 February 2013 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm**

**At University of Washington, Seattle, WA**

[http://www.HTIsonar.com/at\\_short\\_course.htm](http://www.HTIsonar.com/at_short_course.htm)

This short course addresses all aspects of tracking fish movement with acoustic tags, including three-dimensional tracking with sub-meter resolution. The course includes hands-on-operation and a variety of applications are covered. Lunch is provided. For more info or to save a seat, email [support@HTIsonar.com](mailto:support@HTIsonar.com).

**Special Tuition Offer** for Students, Non-Profits and Tribal Organizations at

[http://www.htisonar.com/Training\\_Special\\_Offer.htm](http://www.htisonar.com/Training_Special_Offer.htm).

**2. Using Hydroacoustics for Fisheries Assessment**

**14-15 February 2013 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm**

**At University of Washington, Seattle, WA**

[http://www.HTIsonar.com/ha\\_short\\_course.htm](http://www.HTIsonar.com/ha_short_course.htm)

The hydroacoustic short course covers mobile and fixed-location survey techniques, and subjects include basic hydroacoustic theory, deployment logistics, data collection and processing, as well as typical results. Split-beam, single-beam, and multi-beam frequency techniques are discussed in detail. Lunch is provided. For more info or to save a seat, email [support@HTIsonar.com](mailto:support@HTIsonar.com).

**Special Tuition Offer** for Students, Non-Profits and Tribal Organizations at

[http://www.htisonar.com/Training\\_Special\\_Offer.htm](http://www.htisonar.com/Training_Special_Offer.htm).