



The Manitoba Chapter Wildlife Society Newsletter



**Winter
2004**

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Excellence in Wildlife Stewardship Through Science and Education

**February
2004**



Presidents Corner

Riewe's Rant

I hope you have all had an enjoyable holiday and that you took some time to appreciate Manitoba's outstanding weather and wildlife. I spent much of December on Vancouver Island enjoying the ever changing weather systems of the West Coast. When I returned to Winnipeg I realized that my bird feeder was being ignored by the dickie birds because there was 15 cm of snow covering the seeds. I dutifully scraped off the snow and put on a fresh supply of sunflower seeds and deer fat. To my chagrin the first visitor to the feeder was the neighbour's cat looking for easy prey. I am probably feeding more cats than birds. I have a friend whose bird feeder has been commandeered by an enterprising red squirrel and another friend who is feeding more deer and raccoons than birds at his feeder. I admit, I do have my biases; I love seeing meadow voles (I guess I should, since they got me my PhD) and squirrels, but I can't tolerate house mice or Norway rats! Being a mammalogist I can understand my neighbour's appreciation of mammalian wildlife at their bird feeders, but such interlopers may not be appreciated by ardent birders. Interesting how wildlife to some persons are considered blessings and pests to others.

On the weekend of February 20 - 22 the Manitoba Chapter of TWS will be hosting its annual *Delta Get Away* at the beautiful University of Manitoba Field Station on Lake Manitoba. On Saturday morning we will be examining this love - hate relationship in an Urban Wildlife Seminar. There will be 7 speakers tackling the positive and negative aspects of urban wildlife. Patrick Bergen will address the problems associated with 140,000 Canada geese invading Winnipeg in the spring and fall, and their impact upon the home owners surrounding the catchment ponds, as well as the danger of midair collisions with aircraft. Ashley Wruth will discuss the problems associated with feral house cats in urban areas and on island communities around the world. Other speakers, who have not yet finalized their attendance, will be discussing the pleasures of birding from the kitchen window; raccoons in the attic; beavers in the backyard; and bats in the belfries.

Inside This Issue:

<u>President's Corner</u>	1
<u>New Zealand</u>	2
<u>Are Fish Wildlife?</u>	4
<u>Chapter News</u>	5
<u>Announcements</u>	7

In addition to the Urban Wildlife Seminar there will be plenty of opportunity to meet old friends and to make new friends. Friday evening there will be an informal mixer, Saturday afternoon Don Sexton, the intrepid fisherman, will guide us to the best fishing holes on Lake Manitoba. For those of you who are not turned on by cold scaly critters there is always snowshoeing and skiing along the beach and across the marsh. Heidi tells me that there are snow drifts four meters high to enjoy! Saturday night the wildlifers will be serenaded by folk musician Ken Hodges. *Hope to see you there! Rick Riewe*

**3rd International Wildlife Management
Congress
Christchurch, New Zealand
December 1-5, 2003**

It's November 29th and myself along with a plane full of other wildlifers have just landed in Christchurch, New Zealand -- it's 20°C and sunny! You couldn't ask for a better place to hold a conference.

The 3rd International Wildlife Management Congress was held at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand from December 1-5, 2003. The Congress attracted over 1000 delegates from 51 different countries, contributing 530 oral presentations and 300 posters over the 5 days. By far, the largest contingents were from New Zealand, Australia and the USA. However, Canada was also very well represented, including a handful of presentations from University of Manitoba students. Anne Kendrick presented a paper entitled "Using traditional and local knowledge in monitoring and managing barren-ground caribou: a case study from northern Canada", Arvind Vasudevan presented a poster entitled "Biodiversity indicators for the ecosite decision support

system in Manitoba, Canada", and I presented a poster entitled "Using habitat availability of northern prairie skinks to track environmental change in prairie Canada". Overall, the presentations ranged in topic from reintroduction of Przewalski's horses in Mongolia to the interplay between parental investment, ontogenetic niche, and life history in reptiles to managing fire and koala populations in Australia, and everything in between.

A Powhiri (traditional welcome) and welcome address from the New Zealand Minister of Conservation, Hon. Chris Carter, and the Congress hosts during the plenary session at the Christchurch Convention Centre promised an exciting next couple of days. Throughout the week, the Congress organizers kept us well fed and the welcome barbeque and other mixers provided a great opportunity to meet people from other countries.

The first thing I learned about wildlife management in New Zealand is the huge problem the country has with introduced pests, including everything from rats, brushtail possums and numerous deer species. At one point I asked myself -- "are there any species native to New Zealand"? On Wednesday afternoon we had a free afternoon and I got a great taste of what New Zealand has to offer. A wildlife cruise in Lyttleton Harbour, which was phenomenal (although a little chilly!), showed us many seabirds, as well as Hector's Dolphins -- one of the world's rarest and smallest dolphins! This 1.4 metre dolphin is also known as the "down under dolphin" because it is found only in New Zealand waters.

Of course, the trip wasn't all about work; we had plenty of time for fun after the

conference including a trip to the southern alps in Arthur's Pass National Park, where the waterfalls and rivers run through beautiful mountain beech and rainforests. During the hikes to the waterfalls, tree ferns dotted the paths and we saw New Zealand's mountain parrot, the Kea, enjoying itself posing for photos and snacking out of the dumpster (go figure!). Our first objective upon getting to the park was seeing the Devil's Punchbowl falls, wondering if it was going to be as beautiful as the Devil's Punchbowl in Spruce Woods. Well, I'm sorry to say, it's even more beautiful, the water was clear and the falls were so secluded it felt like a new discovery. We then proceeded to the Bridal Veil Falls and attempted to hike up Avalanche Peak, where a quarter of the way we took in a view of the township and surrounding scenery, which was far enough for us! After an adventurous day of discovery and wildlife viewing, the rain had lifted and we boarded the train, able to fully appreciate the change in landscape as we chugged from the Southern Alps, through the Canterbury Plains and back into Christchurch.



Christchurch, New Zealand



Lyttleton Harbour



Opening Ceremonies



Registration Booth



Marquee



Southern Alps



Hectors Dolphin



Kea

After spending 10 days in 20°C heat we returned home to snow and -20°C, glad to be back and lots of pictures to be developed, so all of you coming to the Delta Getaway be prepared for a slide show!

See you there --Jacey

The Wildlife Society - Manitoba Chapter

Are Fish Wildlife?

By Derek Kroeker – Student Representative.

Are fins and scales a preclusion to inclusion in the world of wildlife? How is it that fish can be wild and alive - but not wildlife?

The first issue of *The Journal of Wildlife Management* (1937) defines wildlife as: “the practical ecology of all vertebrates and their plant and animal associates.” How then did fish become non-wildlife? Believe it or not, there was no debate amongst intellectuals or philosophers. There was no physiological or behavioral reasoning behind the distinction. No – the decision was political. In 1940, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt combined the Bureau of Biological survey with the Bureau of Fisheries. The new agency was to be named the U.S. Wildlife Service. Apparently, fisheries scientists felt that they may be neglected under this name, so Roosevelt added the words *Fish and* to the title and from then on fish have been regarded as a separate category from wildlife.

In Canada, marine mammals and fish are the jurisdiction of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. To date, there has been no rush to establish the Department of Reptiles or the Canadian Amphibian Service, so these groups and any other inland non-fish vertebrates are the responsibility of the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Have there been consequences? You bet! This past summer I witnessed an eagle eating a fish and a northern pike eating a duckling!

Derek is completing post-graduate research on fish resources in the Saskatchewan River Delta.

Polar Bear Program Strategy and Action Plan

Canada has a significant national and international responsibility for research and management of polar bears. In 1973, Canada signed the *Agreement for the Conservation of Polar Bears* in Oslo, Norway. The Polar Bear Agreement, which came into effect in May 1976, was the first agreement of any kind, relating to the Arctic, signed by all five polar nations (Canada, Denmark, Norway, USA, and USSR).

Internationally, polar bears are on Appendix II of CITES (*Convention on international Trade in Endangered Species*), where they are classified as "Lower Risk: Conservation Dependent" in the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Red Book. Within Canada, they are classified as Special Concern under the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

In Canada, the management authority for polar bears lies with the Provinces and Territories. However, as a signatory to the Agreement for the Conservation of Polar Bears, Canada has a formal obligation to maintain a national research program. To that end, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) conducts research on polar bears, with particular reference to internationally shared populations. In addition, CWS conducts research on managing problems that could affect the conservation of polar bears throughout the polar basin.

For more information, visit the CWS Polar Bear Program website at <http://www.pnr-rpn.ec.gc.ca/nature/endspecies/polarbear/index.en.html>, or contact:

Chief, Northern Conservation Division
[Canadian Wildlife Service](#)
#310, 5204-50th Avenue
Yellowknife, NT X1A 1E2
Phone (867) 669-4760

CHAPTER NEWS

The Wildlife Society Manitoba Chapter 2004 Student Award

The Manitoba Chapter of The Wildlife Society would like to recognize graduate students whose research contributes to the overall knowledge of wildlife and/or their habitats in Manitoba. One \$500 award will be offered to the graduate student who is:

1. enrolled full-time in the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Manitoba in a Masters or Ph.D. program.
2. conducting research or has proposed to conduct research on wildlife and/or their habitats in Manitoba.
3. deemed by the selection committee to have submitted the top research proposal among the award applicants.

Eligible students will be required to submit an application and a copy of their graduate research proposal by **February 28, 2004**. The successful applicant will be announced during the Manitoba Chapter Annual General Meeting, to be held **March 26, 2004** at Oak Hammock Marsh. The Award recipient will be requested to make a presentation on her/his research at the Wildlife Society, Manitoba Chapter Annual General Meeting in the year following receipt of the award.

Please return completed applications (found on the Chapter website) to:

*Dr. Dave Howerter, Chair
TWS MB Chapter Student Award Committee
Box 1160, Stonewall, Manitoba R0C 2Z0
Phone: (204) 467-3292
E-mail: d_howerter@ducks.ca*

Nominations for the Chapter's "Conservationist Award"

Nominees can be wildlife biologists, members of other professions, or anyone who has significantly advanced the cause of wildlife and their management in Manitoba. This action for example could include many years of dedicated service to the profession of wildlife management or consist of one outstanding example of an action that substantially affected wildlife or their management in Manitoba.

Nominations should be forwarded to Don Sexton at d_sexton@ducks.ca by March 1st, 2004. Nominations should consist of a short biography of the individual and outline the aspects of the person's actions that merit the "Conservationist Award". This award is presented at the Annual General Meeting, but not necessarily presented every year.

Meet your Executive

The last in a series of Bios from the 2003/04 Executive, there will be Bios of the new 2004/05 executive in the next newsletter - Ed.

President Elect – Alex Miller

As a native Manitoban, I graduated from the University of Manitoba with a Bachelors degree in environmental science with major in Geography and am currently finishing my masters degree in Natural Resource Management at the Natural Resources Institute. My graduate work included developing and implementing a recovery strategy for piping plover populations in Manitoba and, with funding, I hope to continue coordinating piping plover recovery work, in cooperation with MB Conservation and CWS, this coming season. Previous experience includes working for MB Parks as an interpreter and CWS as a Guardian Coordinator. One day I hope to combine my passion for environmental education with wildlife management as a career. Other passions include home renovation, backcountry canoeing with my husband Sean and traveling (though I

do not get to do the last two nearly as much as I would like). As your upcoming president, I encourage members to lead by example and become involved, the organization will only be as strong as its members within. I look forward to seeing you at the Delta Getaway!

Secretary/Treasurer – Jacey Scott

Hi everyone, I hope you're all enjoying the snow out there! Most of you probably know me as the person you give money too. I'm in my third (and final!) year of my Master's program at the University of Manitoba, studying northern prairie skinks in Spruce Woods. This past summer I completed my second field season and as I enter and start analyzing my data, these creatures continually amaze me. I'm originally from southern Ontario, having completed my B.Sc. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Guelph. But, I decided it was time for a change of scenery and moved out to Winnipeg and love it here. My research interests include herptile conservation and management, native prairie communities and evolution. In my free time I like to go canoeing, horseback riding and tobogganing. Recently I've been trying my hand at a couple of new sports including running and curling, both of which are a lot harder than they look!!! I'm excited about the coming year and look forward to seeing all of you out for this year's Delta Getaway and AGM!

Missing - COWCH Materials

The COWCH (Celebrating Our Wildlife Conservation Heritage) project materials, which includes a video tape and background materials, was lent out to someone a few years ago and has subsequently gone 'missing'. Anyone who may have borrowed these materials from either Corey Lindgren or Don Sexton, or may know any information on their whereabouts, can you please contact the executive. Thank You.

Prizes for Silent Auction

The executive is looking for prizes/donations for our annual silent auction event which occurs during the AGM. We are asking members to look in their closets, storage rooms or attics for items that are wildlife related (new or used in good condition) which you are no longer utilizing and may provide someone else years of enjoyment. Items can include a beautiful landscape picture which no longer goes with your decor, a usable duck decoy or the hunting vest which you bought on sale that is two sizes too small. If you have anything to contribute, please contact anyone on the executive to make arrangements.

Potential Research Projects

The Piping Plover Stewardship Program and MB Conservation is looking for two students to conduct needed piping plover recovery work. One outlined project would be to identify potential habitat using aerial photos, GIS, and possibly HSI modeling. The second project would have someone coordinating recovery work in the Grand Rapids region. In cooperation with the Stewardship Program and MB Conservation, students would be required to develop and submit project proposals to potential funding sources. Interested students should contact Ken DeSmet, Species at Risk Biologist at kdsmet@gov.mb.ca or Alex Miller, program coordinator at alex_miller@shaw.ca.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Manitoba Chapter of the Wildlife Society Delta Getaway Weekend February 20-22, 2004

The Manitoba Chapter invites you to attend this event packed weekend at the U of M Delta Marsh field station featuring speakers on urban wildlife issues. Visit the chapter website at http://twsmmb.tripod.com/2004_Delta_Getaway.htm for more information.

2nd Wildlife Management in Manitoba Research Session and MB Chapter TWS AGM

March 26, 2004

Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre

Sponsors:

Manitoba Conservation

Faculty of Environment – U of M

Ducks Unlimited

MB TWS

8:30am to 5:00pm: MB Wildlife Research Session

12:00pm – 1:00pm: MB TWS AGM & Sponsored Luncheon

5:00pm – 6:00pm MB TWS Mixer and Silent Auction

6:00pm TWS MB Chapter AGM.

More information will be posted on the chapter website soon.

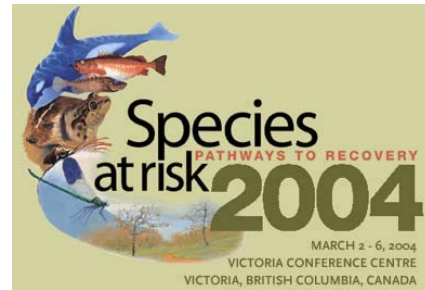
2nd Annual Photo Contest

Calling all members, dust off your albums and get those prize winning snapshots ready for the 2nd Annual MB Chapter TWS Photo Contest. The categories are: Manitoba Landscapes, Wildlife, The Outdoor Experience, and Flora and Fauna. Entry fee is \$2 per photo entered. Please see the Manitoba chapter website at <http://twsmmb.tripod.com/Photo03.htm> for contest rules and submission requirements. Viewing and peer judging will be conducted at the 2nd Wildlife Management Research Session and the MB Chapter of TWS AGM being held Friday March 26, 2004 at Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre.



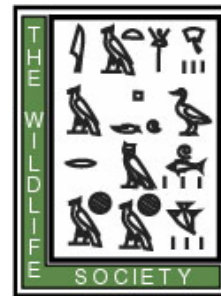
7th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference *Keeping the Wild in the West*

The 7th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference is coming to the Calgary February 26-29, 2004. This conference has a tradition of excellence due to strong support and attendance from a broad cross-section of society including conservation groups, industry, government, and academics. More than 600 people are expected to attend. *Keeping the Wild in the West* will focus on sharing information and ideas on conserving prairie ecosystems, both big & small. The conference will be of interest to a wide range of participants. For more information visit the conference website at <http://www.PCESC.ca>.



Species at Risk 2004: Pathways to Recovery *Victoria March 2-6, 2004*

For more information, visit the conference website at www.speciesatrisk2004.ca



11th Annual Conference of the Wildlife Society Calgary, Alberta September 18-22, 2004 *Preliminary Program*

Plenary

- Energy, Wildlife, and People

Workshops

- Performance Measures For Ecosystem Management And Ecological Sustainability
- Establishing Educational Competencies For Undergraduate Wildlife Students
- Using MCMC in Winbugs and Python to Fit Random Effects and Hierarchical Models

- Linear and Non-Linear Mixed Models for Correlated Data: Concepts and Applications
- Habitat Conservation in the Upper Bow Corridor, Alberta
- Use of GPS Collars for Monitoring Wildlife
- Using Aerial and Ground Based Infrared Sensors for Wildlife Monitoring

Symposia

- Opportunities and Challenges of the International Wildlife Community: Views of the Global Involvement Task Force
- Grassland Birds in North America: Current and Future Currencies
- Synthesizing Recent Advances in Predator-Prey and Ungulate-Plant Dynamics
- Survival Estimation and Analysis in Wildlife Ecology and Management
- Professional Certification: Competency Assurance for Agencies Engaging Third-Party Providers
- Effects of Scale on Existence and Measurement of Biological Diversity
- Collaboration of Biometricians and Researchers in Large-Scale Research: Lessons from Case Studies
- Managing Wolf Depredation on Livestock across North America
- Key Components of Conservation-Hunting Programs: Relationships between Wildlife Populations, Ecosystems, and People
- Implications of Baiting and Feeding Game Wildlife Species

- White-Tailed Deer, Hunters, and Hunting in North America
- Effectively Managing Meso-Carnivores: Conservation, Conflicts, and Disease Impacts
- Wildlife Impacts of Energy Projects: Renewable and Conventional
- Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*) Research and Management: Progress, Tools, and Techniques

Special Poster Session

- Ecological Restoration: Current Issues and Projects in Western North America

Contributed Papers and Posters

- Ecology and Conservation of Birds
- Ecology and Conservation of Mammals
- Ecology and Conservation of Reptiles and Amphibians
- Conservation of Communities, Ecosystems, and Landscapes
- Wildlife-Habitat Relationships
- Wildlife Population Dynamics and Management
- Wildlife Damage Management
- Human Dimensions, Conservation Education, and Conservation Policy
- Wildlife Diseases and Toxicology
- Biometrics in Wildlife Management
- New Technology in Wildlife Management

Call for Volunteer Positions

The Manitoba Chapter of The Wildlife Society believes that it is critical for biology students to have field experience in order to become competent wildlife biologists. With that in mind the Chapter is compiling a list of potential volunteer positions for its membership (many of whom are students).

Do you have any field studies involving wildlife which could incorporate a volunteer for a few days or longer? If so please send me a short description of the position and I'll post it in our Newsletter. If you have any questions please drop me an e-mail or give me a call 204-474-9768. *Best regards, Rick Riewe*

Volunteer Opportunities

- Volunteer opportunities are available throughout the year on an elk research project in and around Riding Mountain National Park. Applicants should be able to perform tasks in adverse weather conditions, operate 4-wheel drive vehicles in snow and work independently in field locations. Opportunities are also available for those not able to come up to the Park area to work on computer mapping and data entry at the University of Manitoba. For more information contact Ryan Brook at umbrook1@cc.umanitoba.ca.
 - Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Center
Box 1160, Stonewall, MB R0C2Z0
(204) 467-3000
Volunteer staff for natural history interpretation/ education year round.
 - Ducks Unlimited Canada
Box 1160, Stonewall, MB
R0C2Z0
(204) 467-3279 (Duane Hudd)
Volunteers for youth Greenwing events (variable dates, throughout MB), and field volunteers May-Oct.
 - Fort Whyte Center
1961 McCreary Rd., Winnipeg MB
(204) 989-8355
Volunteers for natural history interpretation and education throughout year
 - City of Winnipeg, Parks and Recreation
2000 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB
(204) 986-2036 (Cheryl Hemming)
Volunteers, Living Prairie Museum, various Natural History Interpretation
 - Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Organization
1191 Research Stn. Rd
Ste Adolph, MB
(204) 883-2122
 - Tim Sallows, Graduate Student
Natural Resources Institute
University of Manitoba
tim.sallows@pc.gc.ca
Volunteer needed to analyze wolf scats from Riding Mountain National Park
 - Dave Roberts
Manitoba Conservation, Interlake Region
daroberts@gov.mb.ca
Volunteers needed on a broad spectrum of wildlife and resource management topics.
 - Marc Schuster
Canadian Wildlife Service
Environment Canada
Suite 150-123 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB. R3C 4W2
(204) 983-5265
marc.schuster@ec.gc.ca
Volunteers needed for duck banding in late summer.
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LINKS OF INTEREST

- Species at Risk Act Public Registry.
http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/default_e.cfm
- Arctic Habitats Threatened by Snow Geese.
<http://www.pnr-rpn.ec.gc.ca/nature/migratorybirds/dc00s10.en.html>
- Current issue of EnviroZine.
http://www.ec.gc.ca/envirozine/english/home_e.cfm
- USFWS Conservation Library.
<http://library.fws.gov/>
- Facts about West Nile Virus.
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/wnv>
- *New!* Renew your TWS membership online.
<http://www.wildlife.org/cart/index.cfm>

2003/2004 MANITOBA CHAPTER EXECUTIVE

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d_sexton@ducks.ca

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Student Representative: Derek Kroeker
dlkro@mts.net