



THE SASKATCHEWAN CHAPTER



Photo Credit: Simon Allard

The Saskatchewan Chapter of The Wildlife Society is dedicated to the conservation and protection of our wildlife and natural resources by providing the opportunity for wildlife professionals and students to exchange ideas and experience while promoting and upholding responsible wildlife stewardship.

CHAPTER NEWS

Introducing the Saskatchewan Chapter of The Wildlife Society!

Dear Colleagues:

We are pleased to bring to you the first issue of the SCTWS newsletter! As a chapter of The Wildlife Society, the mission and goals of SCTWS are very similar to TWS. We hope to represent and serve the professional and student community of scientists, wildlife managers, educators, research technicians, planners and others who work actively to study, manage, and conserve wildlife and their habitats throughout Saskatchewan. We hope the SCTWS quarterly newsletter will become a valuable method to:

- ✓ Enhance knowledge of ongoing research;
- ✓ Highlight conservation concerns;
- ✓ Increase awareness of upcoming events and job opportunities, and;
- ✓ Provide a means for fellow wildlifers to share their research, concerns, and any other information with colleagues in Saskatchewan.

We thank everyone who contributed to the first newsletter and encourage members to submit articles, job opportunities, trivia questions, and other pertinent information to future newsletters.

To date, the SCTWS has 53 members located throughout the province. Presently, 80% of our members are based out of Saskatoon or Regina, with the other 20% distributed throughout 8 other communities, and 1 member residing in Quebec (Fig. 1)! Professionals comprise 78% of the membership and graduate students comprise 18% (Fig. 2). Government employees represent 48% of the entire membership (i.e., time to begin recruiting more NGO members!)

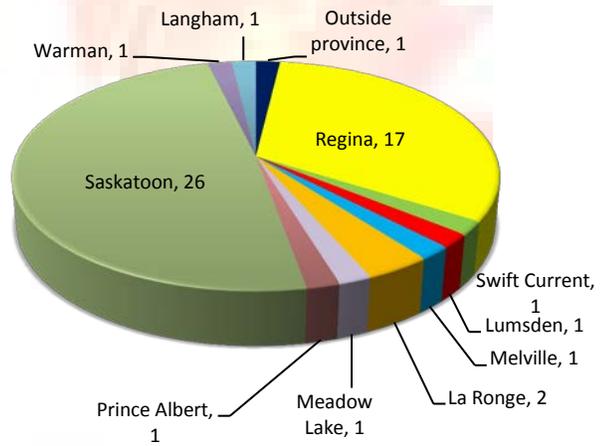


Fig. 1. SCTWS member's community residence.

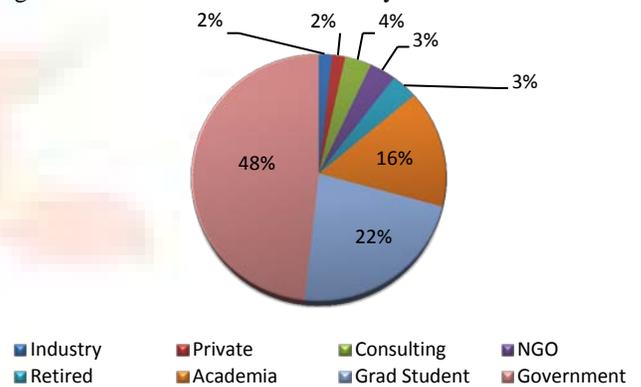


Fig. 2. SCTWS member demographics (some > 1 discipline).

There's currently no undergraduate student members but hopefully soon - if you know of any interested in wildlife management and conservation, please inform them of our Chapter. Benefits include job shadowing, mentoring, volunteer and employment opportunities, personal development, and networking. The diverse fields and geographical locations are extremely important to increase collaborative opportunities and enhance effectiveness of stewardship and conservation of Saskatchewan's native fauna and flora.



RESEARCH

King of The Forest to Conquer Canada's Agricultural Landscape *by Floris M. van Beest*

Moose (*Alces alces*) are normally considered animals of the northern boreal forest, well adapted to cold temperatures and deep snow. Hot sunny summers are not really their cup of tea as high temperatures cause too much stress to the largest member of the deer family. A good illustration of this can be found in Minnesota's moose population, which has steadily declined in numbers over the last 6 years. Climate change has been identified as a contributor to this situation, and the moose, as a species, is expected to shift its distribution northwards in search of cooler places with lots of thermal cover. However, on the Canadian prairies, moose are not following this logic and instead decided it's time to come out of the northern Boreal forest and move onto the agricultural fields of southern and central Saskatchewan. Every year, more and more farmers report seeing moose on their land.

Drs. Ryan Brook, Floris van Beest and Eric Vander Wal together with MSc students Cherie Dugal, Molly Patterson, Anja Sorensen and Caitlin Labach from the Wildlife Ecology Community Resilience Lab at the Department of Animal & Poultry Science, University of Saskatchewan have recently started a multispecies study at the agriculture-wildlife interface using motion detection trail-cameras. They confirm that large numbers of moose are present in Saskatchewan's agricultural landscape. As this project continues, the researchers hope to answer why and what factors are permitting this solitary giant, the King of the Forest, to move south. In addition they hope to determine if the increased abundance of moose has an effect on the abundance and distribution of other species that also call the agricultural landscape their home.



CONSERVATION CONCERNS

Sharp-tailed Grouse Field Study *by Lynn Oliphant*

North American grouse species (*Phasianidae*), especially those in prairie and sage communities, have experienced serious population declines over the last 50 years. The Heath Hen, the coastal subspecies of the Greater Prairie Chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido cupido*), was extirpated in the 1930's and other populations of Greater and Lesser Prairie Chickens (*T. pallidicinctus*) have undergone range contractions and intensive management has been initiated to combat their decline. Data suggest that within 10 years most prairie grouse could be endangered. In Canada, the Greater Prairie Chicken has been extirpated from the prairie provinces and current prospects for the survival of Sage Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) do not look favorable. Grouse species act as primary indicators or "sentinel species" for the health of their particular habitats and they are held in high esteem by sportspersons, birders, biologists and land managers alike. Protection of critical habitat for grouse offers protection for other prairie species which are also on the decline.

The Sharp-tailed Grouse (*T. phasianellus*) has its primary population centered on the southern Canadian Plains of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Although it has suffered population declines in recent times and habitat is lost yearly, populations are still relatively healthy. We believe that a major focus on conservation of Sharp-tailed Grouse habitat at this time might prevent further losses of Grouse and the thousands of organisms which share their ecosystems. Proactive initiatives at this stage will be far easier than waiting until populations have declined to lower levels.

Efforts are underway to establish a NAGP presence to undertake conservation action in the prairies (see www.grousepartners.org). Actions range from resurveying known leks to determining the extent of habitat loss. Special interest is in historical accounts of any kind relating to Prairie Chickens, Sage or Sharp-tailed Grouse. A great opportunity is available for anyone interested in grouse or just getting out for a day or two this spring. The North American Grouse Partnership (NAGP) is planning to re-survey a 36 square mile block that was intensively studied by Wayne Pepper over 40 years ago a little west of Saskatoon. Call or e-mail Lynn (lynn.oliphant@yourlink.ca) or (306) 374-1068, regarding the study or for NAGP info as well.



NOT TRIVIAL!

Birds of a Feather_by Dan Routhier

Pied-billed grebes (*Podilymbus podiceps*) are commonly found in wetlands throughout Saskatchewan during the breeding season. Which of the following items do pied-billed grebes in Saskatchewan not feed their chicks?



1. Feathers?
2. Fish?
3. Beetles?
4. Seeds?

Photo: Dan Routhier

Generally, grebes eat mostly invertebrates, some plant material, tadpoles, salamanders, and when present in the same pond, fish. Pied-billed grebes, like many other grebe species, eat their own feathers and feed them to their young to aide in digestion of difficult-to-pass items.

An Uncommon Thread by Chet Neufeld

Plant fact:

Western spiderwort (*Tradescantia occidentalis*) is a threatened species in Canada under the Species at Risk Act. In Saskatchewan, it occurs in only one sand dune complex. The name spiderwort



Photo: Candace Neufeld

is from a sticky juice in its stems and leaves that dry to form cobweb-like threads.

HONING YOUR SKILLS

TWS Annual Conference - Portland, Oregon



Upcoming—
TWS' annual conference will be held in Portland, Oregon on October 13-17, 2012. It includes workshops, symposia, panel discussions, breakfast roundtables, special poster sessions,

contributed papers (oral presentations) posters. We invite submission of contributed papers and posters on topics of wildlife ecology, management, conservation, education, or policy. Presentations will not be published, so we encourage reports from the author's most recent scientific investigations and management experiences. Presentations will be audio recorded and made available to conference attendee at the conclusion of the conference. Deadline (contributed papers/posters) is April 13th and the link for submission can be found [here](#). Registration for the conference will open in June.

JOB HUNTERS

TWS Career Centre: [Wildlife Jobs](#)

FROM THE FIELD...

This section of the newsletter will include field reports, methodologies, reviews, etc. Ideally, we need to keep it to 500 words or less. Please consider submitting an article for the next newsletter!

FYI - [TWS Technical Reviews](#)

CANADIAN SECTION NEWS

[March 2012 Canadian Section Newsletter](#)



WHAT ABOUT US?

Chapter Logo Contest

The SCTWS is in need of a logo that reflects the tenets of the SCTWS while reflecting the elements of this great province. The winner of the SCTWS Logo Contest will win a Sporting Goods Gift Certificate and TWS t-shirt.



Upcoming Events

Because of an early unexpected field season, we unfortunately have to postpone our First Annual Mixer until this fall.

Current Executive

Jennifer Sheppard

President

Jennifer.Sheppard@EC.GC.CA

Dave Messmer, MSc

Vice-president

Dave.Messmer@EC.GC.CA

Al Arsenault, MSc, CWB, P.Biol.

Treasurer

al.arsenault@amec.com

Gillian Treen

Student Representative

gillian.treen@usask.ca

Ed Beveridge

Board Member

ed.beveridge@gov.sk.ca

(SCTWS Newsletter Editor; article submissions)

Dr. Yeen Ten Hwang

Board Member

yeenten.hwang@gov.sk.ca

Chapter Website

We are currently working with TWS headquarters to establish a chapter website. We look to have the website up and running this spring.

SCTWS Mailing Address

Saskatchewan Chapter The Wildlife Society

c/o Al Arsenault

423 Carr Cove

Saskatoon, SK S7S 1M2

Issue 1, Volume 1

JOIN THE SCTWS!

Membership Has Its Advantages:



The members of The Wildlife Society manage, conserve, and study wildlife populations and habitats. They actively manage forests, restore wetlands, restore endangered species, conserve wildlife on private and public lands, resolve wildlife damage and disease problems, and enhance biological

diversity. As a SCTWS member, you can bring your experience and passion for wildlife management to the fore – join today!

You can join the SCTWS by completing the attached application form and submitting per the following:

1. Online:
Through <http://store.wildlife.org> (i.e., only applicable for full members of TWS)
2. In person:
 - a. In Saskatoon: Contact Jennifer Sheppard (phone 306-975-4791)
 - b. In Regina: Contact Yeen Ten Hwang (phone 306-787-5079)
3. Mail In:
Complete the attached application and mail cheque (payable to: "Saskatchewan Chapter of TWS") or money order to:

SCTWS, c/o Al Arsenault
423 Carr Cove
Saskatoon, SK
S7S 1M2

New TWS Members

If you are not a Wildlife Society member yet:

1. Click [here](#)
2. Enter your information. Click "Submit"
3. Select membership type. Click "Continue"
4. Select working group (if applicable)
5. Select section/journal (if applicable)
6. Select Chapter Membership
7. Continue and add to basket
8. Proceed to check out

If you reside in Saskatchewan, consider purchasing a SCTWS membership for only \$5 (good through Dec. 31, 2012!) Any questions, concerns, or comments can be directed to the executive of SCTWS at: saktws@gmail.com.





Saskatchewan Chapter of The Wildlife Society Membership Form

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

PROVINCE: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

TWS MEMBERSHIP # (if applicable): _____

Membership costs are \$5 annually, and are applicable from date of purchase until December 31 of the same calendar year.

Memberships can be purchased:

4. Online:
Through <http://store.wildlife.org> (i.e., only applicable for full members of TWS)
5. In person:
 - a. In Saskatoon: Contact Jennifer Sheppard (phone 306-975-4791)
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