The Alaskan Wildlifer

Newsletter of the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society

Fall/Winter Issue - December 2020

Message from President Kim Jochum

Fellow wildlifers - first and foremost, I hope everyone is staying healthy and is doing well. This has been a draining year, in so many ways, for every single one of us I am sure. It might be hard sometimes to see the good in all the challenges that came our way in 2020. For me personally many new challenging and exciting aspects were part of the last half year as well; our daughter was born, I started a new job, moved my whole family - all in the midst of a pandemic. My main hardships included not being allowed to have my family from Europe come visit for the first time in my life, anxieties about going to the hospital to deliver a baby with a mask on, my midwife being in quarantine on my due date, amongst others. With the goal to build community, I would like to hear about your challenges, struggles and achievements from this year - despite it all. I would like to encourage you to share your '2020 Stories' to connect on a more personal level since we will not be able to have an in-person meeting this upcoming spring. Please consider sending us your 2020 stories including possibly a photo

or two to twsalaska@gmail.com, using the header '2020 Story.' Please indicate if you would like your name to be withheld, and your story will be kept anonymous. It might only be a couple sentences or a few paragraphs, whatever you deem appropriate to share with our community. We will share these stories with each other in our next newsletter.

At some point during the next year we look forward to having an interactive webpage with member portal, job board, discussion group options and so on available to then be able to connect with everyone in real time, and exchange information more readily rather than only during annual meetings and via newsletters. Please see our job announcement for a Web Designer on page 15 of this newsletter. We are looking for a motivated skilled person to setup our new website and make this happen – please spread the word! The deadline for applications is December 15th.

Also due to this challenging year, the Conference Organizing Working Group and the Executive Board decided to move the date of our spring 2021

Issue Highlights

President's Message - Continued

meeting (and our 50th anniversary meeting!) to late March or April. The exact dates will be determined based on the short survey in this newsletter – please participate and let us know what dates and format for our online meeting would work best for you! Planned workshops and panel discussions will remain the same, but simply be conducted online. We are stoked to share more details about our meeting with you in the upcoming weeks on our website and via email, and to open up abstract submission in January.

This year we have not been as active in our working groups as we were last year; a couple of them continued their efforts, others not. Obviously, we all had other things in our lives to take care of first, and for valid reasons. I still want to encourage you all to consider picking up our efforts again where we left off. If you find yourself with a little time on your hands and an interest to help even in a small capacity, we are always very appreciative of any amount of time you can spare. We are still looking for some more help with conference organizing for example. Just let us know please and we will include you in further working group communication. As a reminder, current working groups include, the Conference Organizing Working Group (WG), the Chapter Development WG, and the Student and Early Career Development WG. Active Committees include the Conservation Affairs Committee and the Awards Committee (see page 11 for more info).

All of you, keep keeping up the good work. Thank you for all you do for wildlife and their habitats in our beautiful state and beyond, amidst all our struggles. At the same time, make sure to make time and take care of yourself and your loved ones this holiday season. Be mindful and grateful for all we do have and share, and let's all get safely into the new year.

So long…

-Kim

CHANGE THE DATE!

THE ALASKA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

2021 ANNUAL MEETING DATE IS MOVING!

"50 years of AK TWS - Remembering the Past, Preparing for the Future"

It has been a challenging year, and the organizing committee has made the decision to shift the Annual Meeting to later this Spring. The annual meeting will still be fully virtual, but we want to choose a format and schedule that works best for our membership. Please use this link to a brief survey to let us know your thoughts on the new meeting dates and schedule. Please complete the survey by December 11, 2020.

We will maintain the mid-February time frame for future Annual Meetings.

Please contact Kim King Jones (kimberlykingjones.ak@gmail.com) or Kim Jochum (KimJochum@gmail.com) for volunteer information or to submit additional questions or suggestions.

Regional News

Northern

Kaiti Ott, Northern Representative

Migrations

Jordan Pruszenski was hired on as a term wildlife biologist for Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve and Gates of the Arctic Park and Preserve. Jordan finished her MS in Wildlife Ecology and Management with a minor in GIS this past spring at the University of Minnesota studying wolf movement and management in the western Great Lakes region. In addition to her MS research, she has worked on a variety of wildlife and ecology projects including monitoring Emperor Geese on the Y-K Delta with the USGS, tracking wolves with Idaho Fish and Game, and studying white-tailed deer impacts on prairie conservation as a lab manager at her undergraduate alma mater Carleton College. Jordan grew up in Alaska, which fostered her interest in wildlife and her love of all thing outdoors.

Chris Daniels, formerly a biologist/pilot for Kanuti NWR in Fairbanks, accepted a position as an Anchorage-based Regional Pilot.

The USFWS Fairbanks Field Office welcomed **Dr. Chad Ferguson** to the Conservation Planning Assistance Branch. In his professional career, Chad has worked on large-scale watershed restoration projects, served as an aquatic ecologist for the Nature Conservancy, and held a number of positions for the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and worked for the Lake Eire commission

Holly Carroll recently accepted the position as USFWS' Subsistence Fisheries Manager. Holly will serve as the Federal Subsistence Manager for the Yukon River. Holly has many years of fisheries experience in Alaska and most recently she has been working with ADF&G as their summer season manager on the Yukon River.

Paul Leonard, Science Coordinator for the Arctic Program, was selected as the Supervisory Biologist at Arctic Refuge and will start in this new capacity in December.

TWS-Alaska Chapter Regions: Northern, Southcentral, and Southeast.

Resources

In September, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's **Dr. Kimberlee Beckman**, **Mike Taras**, and **Jen Curl** produced a new pocket field guide that describes common moose diseases and parasites. Read the full article about this great new resource on page 9.

Southcentral

Max Goldman, Southcentral Representative

Migrations

Wildlife Biologist for the Chukchi Sea Unit of Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, **Don Dragoo**, retired after 37 years of Federal service.

The Alaska Region Migratory Bird Management Program welcomed two new Fish and Wildlife Biologist-Pilots. **Ishmael Cremer** comes with a diverse background in aviation, science, and aeronautical education. Ishmael earned a Bachelor's degree in Aeronautical Science with Flight at the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT), a Master's degree in Environmental Science and Engineering at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, and a PhD in Aviation Sciences at FIT. After completing his degrees, Ishmael moved into a faculty

position within the College of Aeronautics at FIT, and as the Associate Dean he developed the Aviation Environmental Science minor and the Aviation Sustainability and Environmental Program, among other major accomplishments. Ishmael moved with his family to Anchorage in 2019 where he most recently served as Flight Instructor for Land and Sea Aviation.

Dana Ahlin comes to the Migratory Bird Program with significant aviation experience and background in migratory bird research. Dana earned her Bachelors of Science with Honors at Hawaii Pacific University, then went on to pursue numerous aviation ratings in Hawaii, Alaska, Colorado, and Florida. Dana broadened her background in Sitka, Alaska where she served as dispatcher for the Forest Service, and in Midland, Texas where she apprenticed in an aircraft maintenance facility.

Jenipher Cate joined the Marine Mammals Management (MMM) Office as the Walrus and Sea Otter Program Lead. Jen comes from the Army Corps of Engineers' office in Anchorage where she was the Section Chief for Civil Works.

Dave Gustine joined MMM as the Polar Bear Program Lead. He comes from the National Park Service where he was a Supervisory Wildlife Biologist at Grand Teton National Park.

Amy Kirkham also joined MMM as their Proactive Conservation Coordinator in early October.

Drew Crane transitioned from Endangered Species Coordinator to the Ecological Services Deputy within the USFWS Fisheries and Ecological Services Program.

Jeremy Karchut joined the USFWS's Refuge system as the new Regional Archaeologist. Jeremy was previously, Lead Archaeologist for the National Park Service in Anchorage, he was a Forest Archaeologist and Tribal Relations Coordinator for the Chugach National Forest, and he was a Park Archaeologist in Denali National Park.

Lauren Flynn, became a new wildlife refuge specialist for Alaska Maritime NWR in Homer.

Michelle St. Martin left USFWS' MMM in late October for a position with USFWS as an Endangered Species Biologist in the Pacific Northwest.

Alaska Chapter President, **Kim Jochum**, left the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands in Delta Junction and joined the NPS Regional Office in Anchorage in their subsistence program.

Deb Kornblut joined the USFWS Alaska Region as the Regional Invasive Species Outreach Coordinator and will play a key role in the Region's efforts to raise awareness and a sense of urgency to take action around invasive species across Alaska and the Arctic

Kimberly Klein transitioned from the USFWS Marine Mammals Management Office to BOEM.

Megan Boldenow and **Sarah Markegard** joined the Anchorage Fisheries and Ecological Services (FES) office. Meanwhile, **Catherine Yeargan** departed the Anchorage FES office for the role of Assistant Field Supervisor for FES in Austin, Texas.

Christopher Putnam, Supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist for M, transitioned to the South Florida Ecolocial Services Field Office.

Finally, **Mary Colligan** will retire from her role as Assistant Regional Director of FES in the USFWS Anchorage Regional Office at the end of December.

Southeast

Roy Churchwell, Southeast Representative

Migrations

In March, **Richard Nelson** became the new Department of Wildlife Conservation, Regional Management Coordinator for Region 1 of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Richard comes out of retirement after a career with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Also, **Stephanie Bogle** moved

over from Alaska Department of Fish and Game Headquarters, Licensing, to become the Statewide Permitting Biologist for the Department.

Updates

The Center for Biological Diversity, Alaska Rainforest Defenders and Defenders of Wildlife have petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the Alexander Archipelago Wolf in Southeast Alaska as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

Also pertaining to wolves the U.S. Forest Service and Alaska Department of Fish and Game have shortened the 2020 Fall/Winter wolf season in Game Management Unit 2 (Prince of Wales) due to increased trapping pressure under the new harvest strategy based on a population objective of 150 to 200 wolves. This population objective strategy was put into regulation after the January 2019 Board of Game meeting.

On October 29th, the U.S. Department of Agriculture published new regulation exempting the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Area Conservation Rule.

Updates on Tongass NF research

It has been an interesting year with Covid-19 requiring social distancing, risk assessments, and some cancelled work, but our wildlife biologists have pulled through with great success. For additional information, contact the Tongass Wildlife Program Manager, **Bonnie Bennetsen** at bonnie.bennetsen@usda.gov.

- **Aleutian Terns**:
  - Made progress towards developing a State-wide Aleutian Tern monitoring strategy with ADF&G, OSU, USFWS, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and other partners.
  - Monitored Aleutian Tern colonies on the Yakutat Ranger District.
- **Arctic Terns**:
  - Monitored the Arctic Tern colony at the Mendenhall Glacier and Tracy Arm Fords Terror on the Juneau Ranger District.
  - Set up a new Arctic Tern Cam at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center available seasonally on YouTube from May through June until the chicks fledge.
- **Queen Charlotte Goshawks**:
  - Surveyed for goshawk and other raptor nests on Ketchikan-Misty Fjords, Prince of Wales, Petersburg, and Wrangell ranger districts.
- **Birds**:
  - Coordinated the Christmas Bird Count on the Ketchikan-Misty Fjords Ranger District and assisted CBC surveys on other districts.
  - Partnered with Audubon Alaska and Juneau Audubon to develop the virtual Southeast Alaska Birding Trail: https://ak.audubon.org/southeast-alaska-birding-trail
  - Conducted a virtual educational birding day for middle-schoolers on the Petersburg Ranger District as part of the Petersburg Marine Mammal Center Summer Camp and a virtual World Migratory Bird Day Story Time on the Juneau Ranger District.
- **Bats**:
  - Implemented Forest-wide North American Bat surveys with ADF&G.
  - Completed the Tongass bat report for fiscal years 2018-2019 with ADF&G and Bat Conservation International.
  - Provided bat interpretation and education to 30-40 homeschool students on the Ketchikan-Misty Fjords Ranger District.
  - Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center staff created 6 Facebook posts on how to make a bat craft and bat window painting and sharing info about bat species of Alaska, reaching over 5K people.
- **Beavers**:
  - Mapped, monitored, and maintained beaver dams and fish passage on the Juneau Ranger District with the Beaver Patrol.
- **Sitka Black-Tailed Deer**:
  - Analyzed camera data for pilot study of young-growth thinning effects on deer use and snow levels on the Wrangell Ranger District with ADF&G. Data analysis and writing still in

progress.
  - Assisted field logistics of UAF (Todd Brinkman lab) and Juneau Forestry Sciences Laboratory partnership to assess deer, snow, and slash relationships on the Prince of Wales Ranger District.
  - Started work with TNC, ADF&G, University, Tribal, and other partners to organize a Deer Summit in 2021 on the Prince of Wales Ranger District.
- **Moose**:
  - Enhanced 12.5 acres of moose habitat in a prime moose hunting area on the Petersburg Ranger District.
  - Continued analysis to implement up to 659 acres of moose habitat enhancement with partners on the Yakutat Ranger District in coming years.
- **Mountain Goats**:
  - Conducted mountain goat surveys on the Juneau Ranger District with ADF&G and continued to test the use of ground-based goat surveys with remote cameras.
- **Wolves**:
  - Assisted wolf hair-board and camera monitoring on Prince of Wales Island with ADF&G, Hydaburg Cooperative Association, and others.
- **Bears**:
  - Purchased 78 bear boxes for safe campsite food storage at Juneau Ranger District campgrounds with the National Forest Foundation and TrailMix.
  - Continued bear-human interaction monitoring at Fish Creek, Anan, and Pack Creek bear-viewing sites on the Ketchikan-Misty Fjords, Wrangell, and Admiralty National Monument ranger districts with recreation, wilderness, and ADF&G staff.
  - Used trail cameras to monitor changes in bear use of the Steep Creek area of the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area during low 2020 visitation.
  - Educated the public on bear and fishing safety and best practices as part of the ongoing Situk River Ranger Program on the Yakutat Ranger District in partnership with the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe funded through the USFWS.
- **Amphibians**:
  - Began a 2-year, Forest-wide distribution and status assessment of Tongass amphibians and associated diseases using visual encounter and eDNA surveys with ADF&G and others.
- **Marine/Riparian Debris**:
  - Removed marine and riparian debris from 300 acres on the Yakutat Ranger District with the help of tribal and community members and recreation staff.
- **Climate Change**:
  - Started a climate change vulnerability assessment for Tongass wildlife with a number of State, Federal, and NGO partners.
  - Continued monitoring water temperature at a suite of ponds and streams on the Yakutat Ranger District as part of a long-term climate change data set.
- **Young Growth**:
  - Contracted 113 acres of young-growth habitat restoration in areas managed for old-growth objectives on Prince of Wales Ranger District.
  - Set up an agreement with the Green River College to implement 15 acres of young-growth habitat restoration in priority wildlife areas on the Petersburg Ranger District.
  - Developed a young-growth management strategy for Tongass wildlife.
  - Implemented a regional virtual Silviculture-Wildlife Workshop in September 2020 with a number of informative wildlife presentations and over 100 staff and partner attendees.

Recent Paper

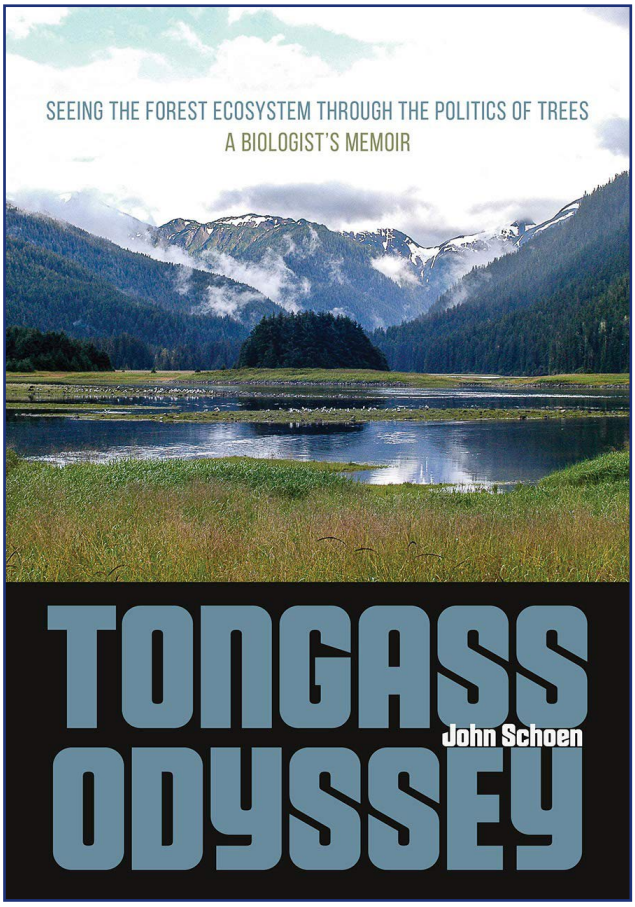
Lewis, T. M., G. Roffler, A. Crupi, R. Maraj, and N. Barton. 2020. Unraveling the mystery of the glacier bear: genetic population structure of black bears (*Ursus americanus*) within the range of a rare pelage type. Ecology and Evolution 10(14): 7654-7668.

Book Review - *Tongass Odyssey* by John Schoen

By Tom Paragi

Books can inform and inspire. Both outcomes were skillfully achieved by John Schoen, long-time member of the Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society, in his recently released *Tongass Odyssey* (University of Alaska Press, 2020).

As the title suggests, the main theme is an adventurous journey with rich detail about the ecology of the archipelago and coastal rainforest in southeast Alaska. It is focused on scientific research starting in the 1970s that began to illustrate the dramatic effects on wildlife habitat caused by extensive logging of large old trees. Much of this area falls within the Tongass National Forest, named after the Tlingit people who lived near the mouth of Portland Canal. This largest unit of the national forest system was established in 1902 as a forest reserve and expanded to a national forest in 1907 (both actions by President Theodore Roosevelt), not long after visits by John Muir and the Harriman Expedition. Timber cutting for 50-year pulp contracts and saw log export occurred in some of the most productive lowland forest with high timber volume that is used by a range of species important to humans, including Sitka black-tailed deer, five species of Pacific salmon, and brown bears.



After an introduction to his early life and academic career, in the second section, Dr. Schoen uses factual narrative interspersed with references to field notes to describe his research projects with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and colleagues from other agencies on deer, mountain goats, and brown bears. He conveys a sense of accomplishment and pride in piloting vessels and aircraft, skills that he learned as a young adult from his father, in pursuit of his research objectives in remote areas. In translating the findings to the public to enable engagement in forest management policy, he begins to experience the challenge of retaining scientific credibility when factual recommendations for habitat and species conservation generate substantial push back from the timber industry and state government administrations that supervised his agency. During this era, he noted the importance of agency supervisors and appointed officials who worked to mentor and insulate scientists from political retribution for their diligence in public outreach to enable informed debate on policy.

Of interest to Alaska Chapter members is John's service as Chapter president in 1986 and his other substantial contributions to TWS in the late 1980s. He contributed to developing a position statement on "Old growth forest management in coastal Alaska," served on a national technical committee for grizzly bear conservation, and was invited to serve on an ad hoc national committee to develop a white paper on "Management and conservation of old growth forests in the United States" that was published in 1988 in the Wildlife Society Bulletin. In fall 1987 he took leave from work to testify on behalf of TWS before a U.S. Senate Subcommittee on a bill for annual appropriations to support timber management and resource conservation on the Tongass National Forest. His professional efforts undoubtedly contributed to passage of the Tongass Timber Reform Act in 1990 that revised habitat conservation standards.

Tongass Odyssey Review - Continued

The third section focuses on his career following retirement from Fish and Game, when John became the executive director and eventually senior scientist for Audubon Alaska. In this role he fulfills the transition from a species biologist in an agency to a conservation ecologist in a non-governmental organization, developing policy and advocacy strategies. He and the new director initiated a conservation assessment of the western arctic that included the expansive National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska on the western North Slope and northern foothills of the Brooks Range. This strategy was then applied to Southeast Alaska in a partnership with The Nature Conservancy. He further describes scientific partnerships as well as the accomplishments and frustrations of planning efforts and stakeholder engagement. John notes with a hint of regret that Audubon had recognized the growing concerns over climate change in northern Alaska, where ecological effects are more dramatic, but at the time had not brought it directly into its research or conservation work on the Tongass.

Tongass Odyssey can serve as a historic context for ecologists and wildlife biologists working in contemporary Southeast Alaska, where vigorous societal debate continues over concerns that logging, mining, and associated road building can impact future potential of nature tourism, fishing, and hunting, all reliant on productive habitats. Its 338 pages include appendices on geographic facts, historic benchmarks, technical terms, and end notes. It is also an instructive example to scientists on how to walk the fine line between professional and personal advocacy in the policy arena, where trial and error without a mentor can be detrimental to scientific reputations and agency careers. The fourth section (personal reflections) contains Dr. Schoen's collective wisdom on conservation strategies, government resource agencies, environmental organizations, science, and balancing resource management in southeast Alaska.

John shows his prowess as a photographer of both wildlife and scenery. Narrative throughout the book makes it evident that working in a rainforest means a wet climate, yet in contrast to many books about Southeast, he chose to provide a majority of images showing the wonderful range of sunlight hues as it illuminates rugged forested topography, alpine meadows, and the intertidal zone in all the seasons.

Aside from the factual journey in *Tongass Odyssey*, John inspires readers with a parallel theme by weaving through the book personal details on the evolution of his career from a wildlife biologist focused on game species to a conservation ecologist seeking to maintain the temperate rainforest ecosystem of coastal Southeast Alaska for future generations. He frequently speaks of a need to have a balanced life to avoid professional burn out when involved in contentious issues, citing outdoor activities as rejuvenating distractions and the satisfaction of having his wife and young children sometimes accompany him during boat-based field research. His lifelong love of nature is evident from his descriptions of growing up on Orcas Island, Washington, to his ending dream of taking his grandchildren on a walk through his former wildlife research area in the Kadashan watershed of Chichagof Island in 2028. He uses this imagined future to share his discovery, as a young man, of the ancient trees, wildlife, and breathtaking scenery in the largest remaining areas of intact temperate rainforest in the world.

Find us on Facebook!

You can "like" us on Facebook! On our Facebook page, we are posting information on scientific publications relevant to Alaska's wildlife, announcements of upcoming meetings, and job openings. If you have ideas on how we can most effectively use our Facebook page, contact the Executive Board through Chapter email: twsalaska@gmail.com.

A new field guide for moose health in Alaska

By Jen Curl - ADF&G

Fall is a greatly anticipated time of the year in Alaska for many reasons, and moose hunting season is one of them. The fall season is also a busy time for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Wildlife Health Program, as an influx of hunters in the field means more people out observing and interacting with wildlife. As a result, the ADF&G Wildlife Health Program receives a lot of calls and questions about moose flies, tapeworm cysts, and other common moose conditions.

To help address common questions and streamline reporting procedures, ADF&G created a new field guide that describes common moose diseases and parasites. The main objectives of the guide are to help hunters identify conditions they may observe in moose in the field and learn about steps to take for the safety of humans or pets. The guide also lists what samples and reports are requested from the Wildlife Health Program.

The guide is divided into types of conditions: external conditions, internal conditions, conditions that are not easily visible, human-caused conditions, and finally some diseases that ADF&G is watching out for that have not yet been detected in Alaska. For each condition, there are identical subsections that include a description, a list of the signs to look for, safety information for people and pets, prevention (i.e., how to keep a parasite from spreading or what to do to avoid any contamination of meat), and how to report or sample conditions that ADF&G might be seeking information about.

When asked what she wants people to know about moose diseases and parasites, ADF&G Wildlife Health Veterinarian Dr. Kimberlee Beckmen says many parasites, bacteria and viruses are part of the normal internal biology of wildlife, and she stresses that she almost never sees a moose without any parasites such as tapeworm cysts – and that most do little harm to the moose or the safety of harvested moose meat. Moose in poor health can have unusually high numbers of parasites and/or complicating factors that led to an actual disease from “normal” parasites or bacteria.

Some abnormalities, diseases or parasites are easily seen on the skin, hooves, or antlers of moose in the field, often from a distance. Dr. Beckmen says one of the most common external conditions that she hears about or sees in the lab include papillomas (or warts). These occur most commonly on the chest, head, or legs of moose. The other external condition ADF&G gets a lot of questions about is the bites of moose flies, which attach onto the hind thighs of moose during the summer, but generally drop off in fall and do not usually have a lasting negative effect.

Sores caused by the bites of moose flies. Photo by Kevin White.

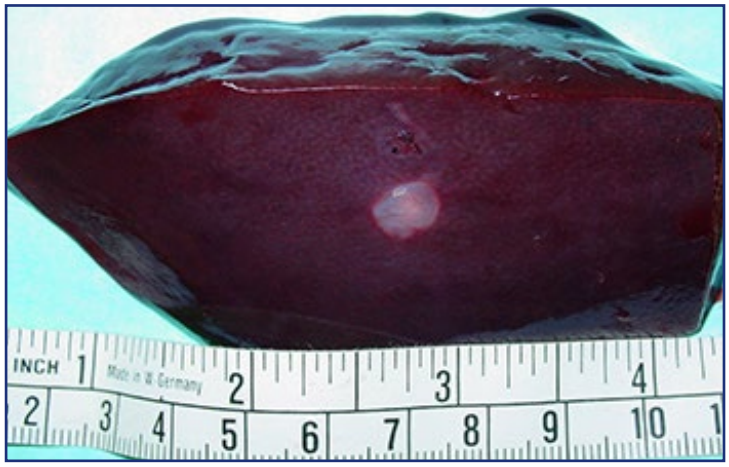
ADF&G receives the highest number of calls about internal conditions found during meat processing. Most commonly, about cysts in the muscle, heart, and lungs made by tapeworms; and almost as often

about abscesses, or soft swellings containing pus usually caused by wounds, that become walled off in a capsule. Tapeworm cysts and abscesses are very common, and moose meat with them or other internal conditions can generally be consumed safely with some basic guidelines: cut around infections, remove any contaminated sections, and cook meat thoroughly. Each condition listed in the guide has more specific information about what to look for and what may warrant extra precautions, to help hunters feel more confident in how to safely process and consume any moose they harvest.

The guide also describes observable signs for some parasites that are microscopic and not easily visible. In addition, there is a section describing some common conditions caused by the interactions between people, pets, and moose. For instance, some plant species that people use in home landscaping can sicken or kill a moose, which a lot of people do not realize are harmful – Japanese yew, and bird cherry/chokecherry bushes, for example.

Finally, the guide mentions pathogens that the Wildlife Health Program is watching for that are most likely to be introduced to Alaska by moose, elk or deer crossing the border from Canada (for more information about range expansions of mule and white-tailed deer and harvest regulations, (see the Alaska Fish and Wildlife News article from July 2019). Beckmen asks hunters and outdoor enthusiasts to watch for the characteristic triangular pattern of hair loss across the chest, shoulders and back that may indicate winter moose tick, specifically between the months of October and March - moose have other sources of broken hairs or hair damage in later spring and summer - especially if you live and hunt near the Canadian border.

Pattern of hair loss on a moose affected by winter tick in British Columbia, Canada. Photo ©TJ Gooliaff.



An obvious tapeworm cyst on a moose liver.

Pick up a copy of the guide in any local ADF&G office or find it online here – Moose Health and Disease: A Pocket Guide – to save and view it on any mobile device. ADF&G appreciates all the people out in the field each year that help keep an eye on wildlife health and that are willing to call, email, or submit samples – one objective of this guide is to make it easier to know what ADF&G is monitoring and the reports that are most helpful. You can find many other resources on the ADF&G wildlife parasites and diseases main page such as sample submission forms and wildlife health news. Check this website often – we are working on updating the library of disease and parasite pages, and a complementary caribou health guide is due out later this fall.

Jen Curl works for ADF&G in the Fairbanks office in the Division of Wildlife Conservation and as part of the Wildlife Education and Outreach program.

Get Involved in *Your* Alaska Chapter!

There are many opportunities to get involved with the Alaska Chapter! We have many active members helping out across various Working Groups and Committees, and we are always looking for enthusiastic people that would like to help shape the future of the Alaska TWS Chapter. Let us know what you are interested in any time, by sending an email to our President Kim Jochum, kimjochum@gmail.com, or to our Alaska TWS Chapter email twsalaska@gmail.com.

Working Groups (WGs)
Each WG within the Chapter focuses on achieving specific tasks and goals. Participating in a WG is a short-term time commitment (regular ~ bi-monthly conference calls with occasional emails and specific tasks assigned, maximum one to two-year).

- **Student/Early Career Professionals Development WG**
  This group of motivated students and early career professionals revised the Student Chapter bylaws to join students across the whole UA system (UAA-UAS-UAF) and allow them all to become members and officers in the Alaska Student Chapter! This group is also busy identifying interests and possible activities to be taken on by Students and Early Career Professionals within our Chapter

- **Chapter Development WG**
  This group is tackling official document edits, currently completing a complete revamp of our bylaws. New bylaws should be available for members to vote on this winter. Next steps include reviewing our current Strategic Plan and developing financial short- and long-term strategies for our Chapter.

- **Conference Planning WG (2021 Virtual Meeting)**
  A diverse team of professionals and students is busy planning an unforgettable and relevant 50th anniversary virtual meeting! Our theme has been identified: "50 years of AK TWS – Remembering the past, preparing for the future." We are planning to include a panel discussion on "Challenges and perspectives for Alaska wildlife and habitat conservation, 1971-2021," and workshops on "Communicating Science" and "Diversity in the Wildlife Profession." More details and updates will become available at: twsalaskameeting.com.

Committees
The Chapter currently has two Committees, the Awards Committee and the Conservation Affairs Committee.

- **Awards Committee**
  The Award committee advertises and evaluates award submissions for our various Chapter awards available to wildlife professionals and students and nominates members for National awards. The Awards Committee is currently looking for 1 new recruit and we are looking to diversify our member base. Please consider joining.

- **Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC)**
  This committee is involved in identifying needs and drafting letters regarding conservation affairs that are relevant to the Alaska TWS Chapter.

Executive Board (EB)
With a new EB we are in the process of planning our goals for our 2-year term. We have a motivated and diverse team of professionals working together on these tasks and we always are happy for input in helping us guide our efforts (see page 18 for contact details of all EB members). Please share your opinions and visions about the Chapter with us any time. The EB itself meets by-monthly to discuss relevant topics and all EB members are participating across various Working Groups and Committees.

We are **still looking for a Web Designer (non-voting member)**. Please see the advertisement on page 15, and consider helping out!

Update from Norway

by Scott Brainerd - Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences

Well, it has been exactly a year since my family and I left Alaska and the USA for a new life back here in Norway. I started my new position as Associate Professor of Wildlife Management at the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences here at Evenstad. The Department of Forestry and Wildlife is based here on this small campus of approximately 150 undergraduate and graduate students. It is very international, and English and Norwegian are the primary languages for lectures and course work. The campus is situated in scenic Stor-Elvdal municipality, which is relatively large (2,166 km^2) with a population of only 2500 inhabitants. My wife Julia, son Nikolai and I live in Koppang, which is about 30 km north of Evenstad, with rail and road connections.

Scott in his office with his favorite study species, the European pine martin. Photo by Jon Iver Grue/Østlendingen newspaper.

After retiring from Fish and Game on the 15th of October, I started my new position here on the 1st of November last year. So, it was quite the rapid transition! I immediately started preparing for the two classes I am responsible for. The first course I taught was Wildlife Management, a 4 semester credit class in English for ERASMUS program students. The Erasmus Program (EuRopean community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) is a European Union (EU) student exchange program. There were 17 students from Spain, Germany, The Netherlands, France, Belgium and even one from South Korea! It was an introductory course on the topic, with perspectives from Scandinavia, North America and elsewhere. It was an enthusiastic bunch, and quite fun to teach. Since we are nestled in a rural mountain valley, we conducted several activities outdoors, including a day visit to the Norwegian Wild Reindeer Center in Hjerkinn (see picture), a red deer farm, and other outdoor activities. Winter here is quite like interior Alaska, with a continental climate that is cold and relatively dry. Our library supplies students with skis and snowshoes for winter activities! The English language wildlife management course was held during February and March. The last couple of weeks were at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, so we had to transition from the classroom to ZOOM. It went remarkably well, as did the digital take home exam.

The next course was a whopping 8 credit course for Norwegian undergraduates in Wildlife Management. I taught that course in Norwegian to a class of 18 seniors during April, May and June. The entire course was online, which was a real challenge, with 9 hours of lectures each week. But it went very well, even though our plans for excursions and field work were nixed. I brought in several guest lectures with practical experience in Norwegian wildlife management which gave the students a broad perspective on current issues in this country. We covered a lot of topics, including management of wild reindeer, moose, red deer, arctic fox, geese, ptarmigan, and other species, as well as challenges to habitat and population management due to anthropogenic factors such as climate change and development. Having spent 20 years here in Norway working in research and management, I have a large network of good colleagues that were more than happy to provide lectures in addition to my own. By all accounts, both classes have been quite successful. I must say I have really enjoyed teaching and mentoring students, given my background in management from Alaska and Norway. So much enthusiasm and energy! They are the next generation of wildlifers here in Europe.

Norway has had a science-based approach to the pandemic and was able to quell the outbreak through several measures that aimed to reduce contact between

people. Our campus was locked down from the 13th of March through the summer, and to date no one has been infected at our campus. In the municipality, only two people so far have been diagnosed, with no fatalities. We have adapted quickly and well to the new challenges imposed by the pandemic and teaching and research have continued unabated. I wish only that such an approach had been done at an early stage in Alaska and the USA.

In early January I applied for a large grant to start pine marten research here in our study area, a forested, hilly area adjacent campus. In late June I was awarded NOK 500,000 for the first year of the study! We are in the process now of preparing for winter trapping starting in the new year and will place small GPS collars on pine martens to study their habitat use and movements. I have also been awarded a PhD stipend position and am in the process of hiring the candidate now (there were 69 applicants!). The successful candidate will be granted a generous three-year scholarship to study pine martens, and will use data from the SCANDCAM project, along with our GPS telemetry, camera, and hair trap data in our study area. We hope to devise a method for estimating pine marten abundance based on camera and hair trapping, and to build an occupancy model from the larger SCANDCAM data set. SCANDCAM is a Swedish-Norwegian collaboration with a large network of game cameras spread throughout both countries. It is a huge data set with lots of observations on martens and other wildlife species. Our Swedish partners are based at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Umeå and Grimsö Wildlife Research Station. Basically, I hope to pick up where I left off with martens nearly thirty years ago, when I did my PhD on the species. No telemetry-based research has been done on the species since then, so there is still much to learn about this interesting and somewhat cryptic species. My colleague, professor Morten Odden, and I are also recruiting bachelor's and master's students to work on the project, which we hope to conduct over the next three years, and hopefully beyond.

In addition to my teaching and research duties, I am also coauthoring a textbook on wildlife management

Scott (top left) and his students during a snowshoe excursion to the Norwegian Wild Reindeer Center in Dovrefjell National Park last February. They spotted several muskox and an immature whitetailed sea eagle. Photo by Wessel Veenbrink.

Update from Norway - Continued

Scott in front of his campus office building with the symbol of Stor-Elvdal Municipality – the moose! Moose are important culturally and are also the focus of much research at Evenstad. Photo: Jon Iver Grue/Østlendingen newspaper.

in Norwegian (Nynorsk) with Dr- Torstein Storaas, who previously held my position as professor of wildlife management. He and I are also involved in a critical review of Norwegian cervid management. So, plenty to do! I also hope to start research on other species soon, including Hazel grouse and other tetraonids, as well as new research on different aspects of lead vs. non-lead ammunition used in hunting big and small game. Our campus has a strong wildlife component, with ongoing studies on moose, wolves, wolverines, red foxes and other species. We also have a strong wildlife veterinary unit, headed by Professor Jon M. Arnemo, a close collaborator and moose hunting partner. Dr. Alina Evans, from Fairbanks, is also part of this wildlife health unit. The campus is growing rapidly with new professors being hired and, in some cases, "head hunted." We may need to start building new office space soon to accommodate faculty and students.

The transition to Norway has been relatively easy, despite some bureaucratic hurdles. It made a big difference that my wife and I were permanent residents here earlier, spoke the language and were already in the system. It would have been much more daunting otherwise. Our son, Nikolai (8), has quickly learned Norwegian and is enjoying the new school and friends. For Julia and I, it has been a homecoming, since we were both well-established here before we moved to Alaska. We are both fluent in Norwegian and have many good friends and colleagues from our previous time here. Alaska will always be in our blood, however, and we hope to return to visit in the future. Once this pandemic is over!

I wish to congratulate the Alaska Chapter on its 50th anniversary in 2021! I wish I could attend the annual meeting in person and may try to attend remotely if possible. If any chapter member is planning to visit Norway as a tourist, student or researcher, please drop me a line. You can reach me at scott.brainerd@inn.no.

Is it time to renew your membership?

New memberships and renewals to The Wildlife Society and the Alaska Chapter are available on-line at The Wildlife Society website.

Click **Join** or **Renew** to obtain membership forms. On The Alaska Chapter website click on **Membership**.

Help Wanted! TWS Alaska Chapter Website Design

The Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society is looking to improve our online presence and help Chapter members connect with each other. We are currently soliciting proposals from Web Designers and Web Developers that can help us achieve these goals.

Who We Are

The Alaska Chapter is a non-profit organization founded in 1971. Its members are professional wildlife biologists dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. We have over 200 active members in state and federal agencies, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and private industry. We actively promote the conservation of wildlife and their habitats through educational outreach and the production of technical reviews and position papers.

Job Duties

- Redesign WordPress website to improve user experience. Ensure content is clear and easy-to-find for members. General content includes: membership status and renewal, information about our annual meeting, learn more about the Chapter, its working groups, and opportunities to get involved.
- Create features that will make it easier for members to connect with each other, including but not limited to job/volunteer board, member portal, member directory, simple e-commerce front to sell merchandise.
- Create features to highlight multimedia: video interviews, online posters, previously recorded presentations.
- Transfer content from one website to another
- Working with content writers to ensure the content is engaging and formatted for website readability
- Possibly other tasks as identified by Web Designer/Developer in conjunction with the Executive Board
- Required Technical Skills
- Experience designing and managing websites on WordPress, including creating custom themes and plugins
- Ability to create websites that work well on different platforms (mobile, desktop) and browsers
- Understanding of CSS, PHP, FTP, and HTML
- Understanding of what is required to create a safe online platform for receiving payments and transmitting private information

Required Personal Skills

- Self-motivated and goal oriented
- Creative eye for design
- Strong attention to detail
- Great communication skills via phone and email
- Willingness to teach skills so that basic updates can be done without assistance
- Additional Preferred Skills
- Custom graphic design
- Passion for wildlife and the environment

If interested, please email a copy of your resume and portfolio to twsalaska@gmail.com with the Subject Line: Application for Web Designer.
Application deadline: **December 15, 2020**

Current conference website: http://twsalaskameeting.com/

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
ALASKA CHAPTER

The Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society strives to enhance the ability of wildlife professionals to conserve biological diversity, sustain productivity, and ensure responsible use of wildlife.

29 October 2020

Animal Health: Notice of Proposed Revisions to Animal Importation, Animal Testing, and Disease Reporting (18 AAC 36)

The Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS) offers the following comments on the Notice of Proposed Revisions to Animal Importation, Animal Testing, and Disease Reporting (18 AAC 36).

The Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society has about 200 members representing wildlife scientists and resource managers, including those working for state and federal agencies, Native organizations, universities, non-profit groups, and consulting biologists. As current president of the Alaska Chapter representing all of these professionals, I would like to comment on the proposed regulation change requiring that domestic sheep and goats be tested for, and be clear of, *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae (Movi)* prior to import.

Our group has long been concerned about the possibility of this disease and others affecting wild populations of sheep and goats in Alaska. The *Movi* pathogen, like others, could quickly move through an immunologically naïve population and has the potential to result in catastrophic mortality. Since healthy wildlife populations available for both hunting and non-consumptive uses are integral to the spirit and economy of Alaska, we strongly support this proposed regulation.

In particular, we urge you to require *Movi* testing of all domestic sheep and goats, regardless of age, prior to import into Alaska, and that the testing be conducted through accredited diagnostic laboratories. Further, we request that *Movi* be added to the Reportable Disease List, requiring same-day reporting of positive test results.

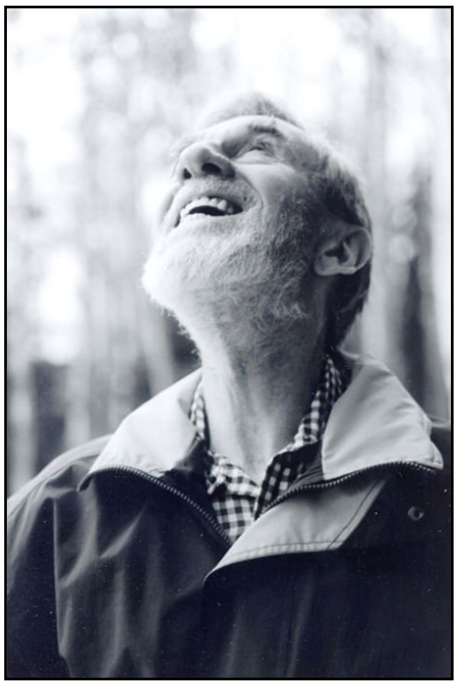
Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

In Memorium - Dave Klein 1927-2020

By Merav Ben David - University of Wyoming

The tall, lanky man was standing in the doorway long enough to catch my attention. I quickly realized all other dinner tables were full. After my 2 tablemates agreed to converse in English (instead of our native Hebrew), I got up and invited the stranger to join us. The lively conversation that evening, which was followed by miles of hiking looking for illusive Abruzzo wolves, led to a complete change of the course of my life. On the bus ride back to Rome, Dave Klein offered me a PhD position with him in Alaska.



It will not be an exaggeration to say that Dave was more than a fantastic academic advisor and teacher. He quickly became a friend and a role model. As many of his nearly 100 graduate students can attest, Dave took personal interest in our research projects and made sure to spend time in the field with us. His vast knowledge from geology, climate, to vegetation and animal ecology was a source of inspiration. It didn't matter whether we were trying to trap mink in the Tongass National Forest or watching snowshoe hares south of Denali, Dave always knew how to put our observations in a broad evolutionary and ecological context, how to highlight the most pertinent questions, and how to infect us with his enthusiasm for the natural world. I still cannot believe his breadth of knowledge; from the oxygen dynamics of skunk cabbage to the social behavior of muskoxen, or the patterns of glacier retreat on the Alaska Peninsula, to the nutritional physiology of Sitka black-tailed deer. Those numerous field trips he guided are solidly etched in my memory.

As contagious as Dave's passion for the natural world, so was his dedication to conservation. His work to identify critical habitats for muskoxen and caribou across the coastal Plains of the Arctic Ocean informed the designations of protection for various parts of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He often spoke about the difficulty of remaining an objective scientist during the many Congressional hearings he was asked to testify in. I think hearing of his efforts to balance scientific objectivity with conservation advocacy helped shape my views and led me to embark on a race for the U.S. Senate representing Wyoming this year.

But Dave wasn't just an academic mentor. He was a true friend. I will never forget his patience when he tried to teach me how to ski. In those early attempts, I could only ski backwards. Skiing is now the passion of my life, and the reason I chose the University of Wyoming over other opportunities. We all fondly remember the social gatherings at his house, where he always fired up the sauna and led arguments about various topics from conservation to politics. He was especially sensitive to those of us, international students, who were often separated from our families for extended periods. We knew he would be there ready to talk if we felt overwhelmed by our isolation. His greatest gift to me was endorsing my application for permanent residency in the United States. He did not hesitate to reach out to the governor and both Alaska's senators at the time to ask their support. Thanks to Dave's efforts, and 10 years later, I became a U.S. citizen. Again, a critical step in my recent political quest.

For all his contributions to us, his students, to the University of Alaska, to the State of Alaska, and to conservation of our environment in the north and elsewhere, I will always remember him with love and admiration.

Merav Ben-David is a professor of Wildlife Ecology at the University of Wyoming. She was Dave Klein's PhD student from 1990 to 1996, and she was the 2020 Democratic nominee for the U.S. Senate in Wyoming.

TWS Alaska Chapter Leadership

Your 2020-2021 Executive Board

President: Kim Jochum, Subsistence Program, National Park Service Regional Office, Anchorage, AK, Kim.Jochum@gmail.com, phone (907) 873-1616.

President-Elect: Kim King Jones, Anchorage, Alaska, kimberlykingjones.ak@gmail.com, phone (405) 612-7695.

Past-President: Nathan Svoboda, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Kodiak Archipelago, nathan.svoboda@alaska.gov, phone (907) 486-1863.

Secretary-Treasurer: Amanda Droghini, Alaska Center for Conservation Science, Anchorage, AK, adroghini@alaska.edu, phone (907) 786-6388.

Northern Representative: Kaiti Ott, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 101 12th Ave. Room 110, Fairbanks, AK, 99701, kaithryn_ott@fws.gov, phone (907) 456-0277.

Southcentral Representative: Max Goldman, Anchorage, Alaska, max.goldman@reddishegretecology.org phone (907) 355-1943.

Southeast Representative: Roy Churchwell, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Douglass, AK, roychurchwell@hotmail.com phone (907) 456-4266.

Newsletter Editor (non-voting): Kaiti Ott, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 101 12th Ave. Room 110, Fairbanks, AK, 99701, kaithryn_ott@fws.gov, phone (907) 456-0277.

UAF Student Chapter TWS Representative (non-voting): Aidan Hunter, President, UAF Student Chapter of TWS, Department of Biology and Wildlife, 412 Irving 1, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK 99775, uafwildlife@gmail.com.

Interim Webmaster (non-voting): Amanda Droghini, Alaska Center for Conservation Science, Anchorage, AK, adroghini@alaska.edu, phone (907) 786-6388.

You can contribute. We need your story ideas. Help keep AK-TWS members connected.

Are you working on an interesting project you'd like to share with other Alaska TWS members? Do you have news to share with colleagues? Please make note of upcoming events, projects, personnel changes, issues, or anything else of interest to other Alaska TWS members, and pass them on to your regional representative for inclusion in our next quarterly newsletter. If you know of something that would make an interesting newsletter article and can't write it up yourself, please contact newsletter editor Kaiti Ott at kaithryn_ott@fws.gov or 907-456-0277.

Help us keep this newsletter interesting and informative!