



The Alaskan Wildlifer

Newsletter of the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society

Winter Issue - January 2023



Message from President Cyndi Wardlow

Greetings Fellow Wildlifers! This is my first official letter as our Chapter President and our first newsletter of 2023. I can't believe how fast time goes by! We have several new Executive Board members this year and we've all been working on getting up to speed on the business of our Chapter to keep things running smoothly.

I had the pleasure of attending the TWS National Meeting in Spokane in November. It was inspiring to see so many students and early career professionals in attendance, including a substantial group from our Chapter. I left the conference excited about being part of the community of wildlife professionals and about the work TWS members are doing across the country (and in other countries). The future of TWS is bright in Alaska and beyond.

The Conference Planning committee has been meeting weekly to discuss our upcoming meeting April 10-14, 2023 in Fairbanks. This will be our first in-person meeting since 2020, and I am looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Registration will be open soon so

keep an eye out for the call for abstracts, SPARK talks, and poster presentations. We will also have a virtual option for most presentations for those of you who may not be able to attend in person.

We are still looking for a President-Elect! We are fortunate to have dedicated and experienced Chapter members to help guide our path forward, but we need to fill one more seat. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please reach out to me or any Executive Board member for more information. As the saying goes, many hands make light work.

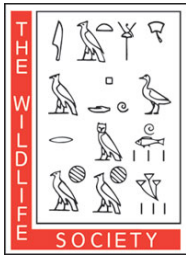
Lastly, THANK YOU for your continued support of our Chapter and keeping your membership up to date which allows us to share information with you more easily. We will have lots of messages coming to you in the next few months, with both local and national topics of interest, so stay tuned. It's going to be a great year!

Sincerely,

Cyndi Wardlow
Chapter President

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THE ALASKA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY 2023 ANNUAL MEETING AND WORKSHOPS

In-Person and Online!

April 10th - 14th, 2023



"A One Health Approach to Human Interactions with, and uses of Wildlife"

First Call for Abstracts! Abstract submission for the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society Annual Meeting will open on **January 23rd, 2023**. The meeting will be a blend of in-person and virtual (via Zoom). The in person meeting will be held at the **Morris Thompson Center** at 101 Dunkel Street in Fairbanks, Alaska.

April 10th – 14th

The theme for 2023 is a continuation from 2022: "A One Health Approach to Human Interactions with, and uses of, Wildlife."

Submissions on all topics relevant to wildlife are welcome and encouraged. Full-length presentations (15 min) can be submitted either to the **General Session** or for our **Special Session** (this year's theme). Short presentations will be considered for our **Spark Session**, a fast-paced session featuring 5-minute presentations in a unique way of connecting ideas, engaging the audience and eliciting discussion about anything and everything we're passionate about in the wildlife profession. **We will be hosting a poster session this year!**

Travel grants will also be available to students to support attendance at the in-person meeting!

If your abstract submission is accepted, you will have the option to either pre-record your talk and to be available for Q&As during your specific session, or to present live during the conference. If you plan to participate via Zoom, you will need a computer that has video and audio capabilities, and an Internet connection that allows you to live stream. We'll take care of the rest!

For more information and to submit your abstract, go to <https://www.twsalaska.org/>. Remember that you must also complete a registration form and pay the applicable fees to attend the meeting.

If you have questions or to register a group, please send us an email: twsalaska@gmail.com.

****Abstracts will be due on March 3rd, 2023****



Regional News

Southcentral

Nick Fowler, Southcentral Representative

Happenings

North American Caribou Workshop & Arctic Ungulate Conference coming to Anchorage May 2023

The joint meeting of the North American Caribou Workshop & Arctic Ungulate Conference will take place May 8-12, 2023 in Anchorage. The conference theme is Crossing Boundaries. Arctic ungulates cross landscape and management boundaries, and the knowledge and value of these species cross the boundaries of Western science and Indigenous Knowledge. The conference seeks to weave these various ways of knowing to identify creative opportunities to manage and sustain arctic ungulate populations in a changing world. See the full meeting announcement on page 11.

Caribou working group recommends decreased harvest to protect declining herd

The Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group voted at its December 2022, meeting to recommend changing state and federal hunting regulations to reduce harvest of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. The herd has been declining since the early 2000s and this year hit its lowest point since the 1980s with 164,000 caribou. Out of concern for this ongoing decline, the working group members proposed reducing harvest in northwestern Alaska, especially of cows. This includes banning out-of-state hunters and reducing the in-state limits from five caribou per day, down to four per year, only one of which may be a cow.

In a time of decreasing population, reducing pressure on cows is especially important. The working group also recommended improved collection of harvest data, especially from communities in the range of the herd. To learn more about the Working Group's recommendations and the timeframe for their consideration, see this [ADN article](#) by Alena Naiden. The Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working



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

Group is an organization of stakeholders that works to ensure conservation of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd and to maintain traditional and other uses now and into the future. The Working Group consists of subsistence users from communities within the range of the herd, other Alaska hunters, guides, transporters, conservationists, and reindeer herders. To learn more about the working group, please visit <https://westernarcticcaribou.net/>.

White House Releases First-of-a-Kind Indigenous Knowledge Guidance for Federal Agencies

The White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) jointly released [new government-wide guidance](#) and an accompanying [implementation memorandum](#) for Federal Agencies on recognizing and including Indigenous Knowledge in Federal research, policy, and decision making. This announcement coincides with the Biden-Harris Administration's 2022 Tribal Nations Summit and responds to a [2021 OSTP-CEQ memorandum](#) that called for development of the guidance with Tribal consultation and Indigenous community engagement, as well as agency, expert, and public input

Chapter Member featured in Spring Clean Up Article

Past President and 2021 recipient of the Alaska Chapter's Lifetime Achievement Award, **Jerry Hupp**, was featured along with other volunteers in a recent



Regional News - Continued

KTUU article about spring clean up in Palmer Alaska. He spoke on the importance of preventing trash from making its way into wetlands where it can further impact wildlife, particularly migratory birds. You can read the entire article [here](#) and contact the [Palmer office](#) of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) for information about volunteering for future clean ups.

Notable Publications

ADF&G, in cooperation with U.S. Forest Service (USFS), published a paper examining factors influencing efficiency of ground based trapping of black bears:

[Efficacy of ground-based trapping of coastal American black bears in Prince William Sound, Alaska, published in the Wildlife Society Bulletin 2022.](#)

This publication builds off the work done by ADF&G biologists, Porter and Bethune (2021), to increase trapping success.

Retired ADF&G biologists, **Sterling Miller** and David Person, and retired University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) professor, Terry Bowyer, recently published a peer-reviewed article on intensive management of wolves to increase moose harvest:

[Efficacy of killing large carnivores to enhance moose harvests: new insights from a long-term view. Published in Diversity 2022.](#)

This article builds off previous publications by Miller and others on the topic of intensive management in Alaska. More information can also be viewed in [Miller's presentation](#) to the North America Bear Expert Team of the IUCN's Bear Specialists Group [here](#)

TWS National Update

During the National Conference of The Wildlife Society, Alaska Chapter member, **Dan Thompson** (ADF&G Moose Research Center), accepted the Chair Position of the Nutritional Ecology Working Group.

Northern

Kaiti Ott, Northern Representative

Migrations

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is excited to welcome Alexandria "Alex" Michels to their National Wildlife Refuge System. Alex has a MS in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, Wildlife Specialization from South Dakota State University, and a BS in Biology and Spanish from the University of South Dakota. Alex will be stationed with Kanuti NWR in Fairbanks, providing biologist support along with fulfilling the role as the IACUC coordinator.

Happenings

Launch of Bird Migration Explorer

The [Bird Migration Explorer](#) has officially launched! This is a free, interactive digital platform that combines multiple types of migration data for bird species found in the United States and Canada and explicitly draw connections made by individual birds across the hemisphere. The Bird Migration Explorer is a living platform that will be updated with new migratory bird data as it becomes available. The platform is available in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).

We hope you will explore the site, and will be able to use these maps and resources to further bird conservation. We also invite you to communicate directly to your communities and networks about the Explorer. Here is a [press release](#) from the National Audubon Society on the Bird Migration Explorer as well as a helpful [explainer blog post](#). There is also an [explainer video](#) and a really cool bird migration [storymap](#). Lots to explore!

Alaska Chapter member Receives Alaska Conservation Foundation Award

Long-time Chapter member, John Schoen, received the ACF Lifetime Achievement Award! Throughout his 45-year career, John has made immeasurable and lasting contributions to the conservation of the Tongass National Forest and the Arctic plus many other wild lands across Alaska through his unique combination of science, advocacy, leadership, and



Regional News - Continued

integrity. His life exemplifies his strong commitment to pragmatic conservation based on science and principled advocacy. Throughout his career, John has been an outspoken and effective advocate for wildlife and wild lands in Alaska.

New Book!

Chapter member **Kerry Nicholson** co-edited [*Women in Wildlife Science*](#), the first book to address the challenges and opportunities for women, especially from underrepresented communities, in wildlife professions.

Women in Wildlife Science is dedicated to the work of promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in wildlife conservation and management. Editors Carol L. Chambers and Kerry L. Nicholson collaborate with a diverse team of authors to analyze the status and celebrate the achievements of women in wildlife science. They share proven models and propose new methods to increase the inclusion of women in wildlife professions based on an intersectional framework. Centering perspectives from LGBTQ+ people, women of color, and members of other marginalized communities, this is a groundbreaking and vitally important resource.

Covering academic and professional spheres, *Women in Wildlife Science* draws on enlightening personal stories and peer-reviewed scientific literature unavailable anywhere else to explain the challenges women face in the field of wildlife conservation and management. The contributors tackle pivotal issues, from recruitment into academic programs to hiring practices and ways to support career advancement in federal, state, local, tribal, and private sectors. Each chapter includes practical advice and original exercises constructed to help administrators, educators, managers, allies, and mentors move

intentions into action. This pragmatic guide will help to ensure a more diverse, just, and equitable future for a workforce dedicated to preserving wildlife and the whole of the natural world.

Southeast

Dave Gregovich, Southeast Representative

Migrations

Ryan Scott has been hired as Deputy Director of ADF&G Division of Wildlife Conservation, and **Kristen Romanoff** has been hired as Assistant Director of ADF&G Division of Wildlife Conservation.

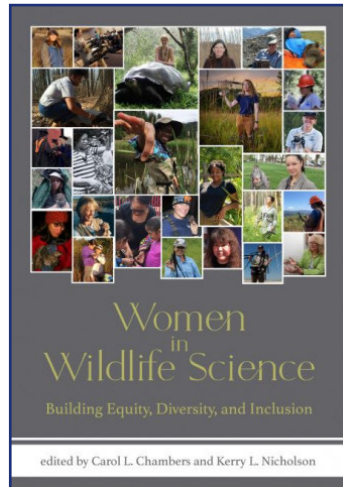
Happenings

Black Bear Cub with Avian Influenza Reported in Glacier Bay National Park

From May to early October 2022, a mother black bear with 3 cubs of the year frequented park headquarters in Bartlett Cove foraging for wild foods along the roadside and near buildings. In mid- to late- October, one of the three cubs began acting erratically and showed signs of deteriorating health. Park biologists and officials from the National Park Service (NPS) and ADF&G made the difficult decision to euthanize the animal to protect public safety and other wildlife. Lab results revealed that the bear cub tested positive for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). Read the full account, including details of the cub's symptoms and agency response on page 13.

1997 Tongass Wildlife Conservation Strategy Review

Drs. Winston Smith (retired PNW Research Station) and **Elizabeth Flaherty** (Associate Professor, Purdue University) are currently revising a manuscript that summarizes the findings of peer-reviewed journal publications of wildlife studies conducted on the Tongass National Forest. Their objective is to assess the efficacy of the 1997 Tongass Wildlife Conservation Strategy in meeting its goals of sustaining viable wildlife populations on the Tongass.



Regional News - Continued

Notable Publications

A recent paper co-authored by Chapter Member, **Tania Lewis** (NPS), investigates the affects of human recreation on wildlife in Glacier Bay:

[Low levels of outdoor recreation alter wildlife behavior. Published in People and Nature 2022.](#)

You can read more about in this recent TWS National [Wildlifer article](#).

USFS Updates

Tongass National Forest 2022 Wildlife Activities and Accomplishments

Aleutian Terns:

- Contributed to development and pilot testing of a State-wide Aleutian Tern monitoring strategy with ADF&G, OSU, USFWS, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and other partners. A 3-year statewide survey is planned for 2023-2025.
- Monitored Black Sand Spit Aleutian Tern colony (Yakutat Ranger District).
- The Yakutat Ranger District and partners implemented a Covid-mitigated, community-based Yakutat Tern Festival, featuring a visiting artist. Youth-based activities included bird watching lessons, field trips, art workshop, softball games, and creative craft and game activities with ecological messaging. Other activities included adult art workshops, a 5k race, fundraiser dinner, and a performance by the Mt. St. Elias Dancers.

Arctic Terns:

- Monitored Arctic Tern colonies at the Mendenhall Glacier and erected fencing and signage to reduce human disturbance during the nesting season.
- Monitored the Arctic Tern colony at the Baird Glacier on the Petersburg Ranger District.
- Surveyed Arctic Terns at Black Sand Spit colony (Yakutat Ranger District).
- Contributed towards a publication on paralytic shellfish toxins associated with Arctic Tern mortalities in Alaska (Hemert et al. 2022).
- Set up and maintained a live tern camera for public outreach and virtual viewing of Arctic Terns nesting in front of the Mendenhall Glacier: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16cVYV7Ggl8>

- Helped provide logistical support to an Audubon Intern and her University of Alaska Student Project to characterize tern food delivery items captured in nest camera footage.

Queen Charlotte Goshawks, Bald Eagles, and other Raptors:

- The Tongass surveys for goshawk and other raptor nests in areas where activities are likely to affect nesting habitat. In 2022, surveys were done on Juneau, Ketchikan-Misty Fjords, Petersburg, Wrangell, and Prince of Wales ranger districts.
- Developed a LiDAR-based goshawk nest model on the Prince of Wales ranger districts.
- Completed bald eagle nest surveys where activities may affect bald eagle nests on Yakutat, Hoonah, Petersburg, and Sitka ranger districts. These surveys support bald eagle conservation and regulatory requirements coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Landbirds:

- Bird-friendly, transparent window treatments were installed along with informational flyers at 1 remote cabin on the Juneau Ranger District to reduce bird strikes and improve an estimated 10 acres of habitat.
- Implementation of 8 Breeding Birds Survey routes and 4 Christmas Bird Count routes to inform Forest, regional, and national bird population trends and conservation.
- Juneau Ranger District wildlife staff provided annual training to the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center interpretive staff about locally nesting birds with focus on Arctic Terns, American Dippers, and swallows and the importance and decline of aerial insectivores.
- Implemented 2nd year of project Swallow Watch at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center. Includes identification of barn swallow nests on building facilities and recording phenology and reproduction.
- Assisted outreach with ADF&G to birders and citizen scientists to try to figure out where bank swallow colonies occur in the Juneau area to potentially add to a large Partners in Flight colony monitoring effort. None were found, though bank swallows were observed, so additional monitoring



Regional News - Continued USFS Tongass Activities

may be needed next year too.

- This year's Alaska Hummingbird Festival in Ketchikan during April included a mix of in-person field trips and bird walks, virtual presentations, and kid activities. Ketchikan-Misty Fjords wildlife biologist gave virtual presentations about birding and birdwatching and on the birds of Belize.
- The Stikine River Birding Festival is celebrated in April in Wrangell at the peak of spring migration. This year's festival was spread out over 3 weeks and included a bird walk, scavenger hunt, movies, and a virtual speaker. Assisted with community banding demonstration permitting and data management.
- Implemented World Migratory Bird Day on the Juneau Ranger District, a day to celebrate with the public the importance of birds and their conservation. Highlights included bird banding and educational materials related to this year's theme on impacts of light pollution.
- Assisted ADF&G with the Bird Genoscape Project to help clarify migratory connectivity for the conservation of Alaska bird populations. Wildlife staff at the Juneau Ranger District collected feather samples from 4-6 individuals from each of 5 priority species, a sufficient sample for meaningful comparisons when combined with other efforts throughout the breeding and wintering ranges.
- Juneau Ranger District wildlife staff provided a presentation on cool data mysteries of Alaska's hummingbirds as part of the Friday Fireside Chat Series at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center.
- Ketchikan-Misty Fjords Ranger District wildlife staff provided a presentation on hummingbirds to a class at the University of Alaska Southeast-Ketchikan.

Bats:

- Implemented Forest-wide NABat surveys with ADF&G.
- Ketchikan-Misty Fjords Ranger District wildlife staff worked with the Southeast Alaska Discovery Center to provide a virtual presentation about bats

to homeschool groups.

- Petersburg Ranger District staff provided technical support and bat survey equipment for the Petersburg Marine Mammal Center's Science Camp evening outing with middle school aged kids.

Beavers:

- Monitored and maintained beaver dams and fish passage on the Juneau Ranger District with the Beaver Patrol.

Sitka Black-Tailed Deer:

- Assisted with implementation of the Prince of Wales Deer Summit in October of 2022. This was a community-focused event to share and learn about deer declines on the island, the multitude of factors involved, and opportunities to address.
- With unprecedented Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding, the Tongass implemented nearly 2,200 acres of young-growth forest restoration to benefit short- and long-term habitat for deer. Work spanned 5 ranger districts and included new agreements with The Nature Conservancy and the Hoonah Indian Association that will contribute to local workforce development.
- Established a Good Neighbor Authority agreement with the Hoonah Indian Association as part of the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy investments program to use local workforce to collect community and biological information about deer on the north end of Chichagof Island and integrate local knowledge and community efforts to inform deer management. This work, led by the Hoonah Indian Association, includes community surveys on deer harvest, setting up a network of camera traps in winter range, and installing snow stations to collect data on snow accumulation which is thought to be the strongest variable that influences deer on the island. These efforts will also include community meetings to discuss needs around deer harvest and increase community understanding of how harvest is reported and used to inform management.
- Petersburg Ranger District staff conducted a beach mortality survey on the east shore of Kupreanof Island, found 6 deer carcasses at the high tide line and one moose carcass within the forest fringe



Regional News - Continued USFWS Tongass Activities

along approximately 3 miles of shoreline, and provided the data to ADF&G.

- With our research branch at the Juneau Forestry Sciences Lab, the Tongass helped fund a post doc to analyze over the next couple of years the 20 years of Tongass-Wide Young-Growth Survey data related to slash, deer pellet counts, and browse within experimentally treated young growth and untreated controls.

Moose:

- We enhanced 10 acres of moose habitat in a prime moose hunting area on the Petersburg Ranger District.
- The Yakutat Ranger District established an agreement with the City of Yakutat to implement 20 acres of moose habitat enhancement over the next few years. We also initiated field marking of units for treatment.

Wolves:

- Assisted wolf population monitoring using a non-invasive, hair DNA, mark-recapture method on Prince of Wales ranger districts with ADF&G and others.
- The Prince of Wales ranger districts established an agreement with Shaan Seet to assist with future wolf population monitoring and habitat improvement work.
- The Juneau Ranger District's VetWorks Intern assisted with an ADF&G wolf predation study.

Bears:

- Inventoried new bear-resistant food boxes at campgrounds to identify problems with their locations or use, to inform relocation needs and public outreach messaging.
- Continued bear-human interaction monitoring at bear viewing sites, including the Anan Wildlife Observatory on the Wrangell Ranger District and Pack Creek Brown Bear Viewing Area on the Admiralty Island National Monument with recreation, wilderness, and ADF&G staff.
- Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center staff used trail cameras to monitor bear use of the Steep Creek area of the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area.
- 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 and with funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- Modeled after the very first workshop for bear viewing areas held in Juneau in 1995, a 1-day workshop for bear viewing managers was organized in March and brought together 41 attendees representing 20 bear viewing areas across Alaska and British Columbia. In addition to virtual tours and presentations on current research, the group discussed topics such as bear behavior, human dimensions, infrastructure, and partnerships.
- Staff in Ketchikan partnered with ADF&G to provide a bear safety program to the public, including a radio interview. They also provided a bear safety program to the local Scout group.
- Wrangell Ranger District implemented their annual Wrangell Bear Festival. This year's Bearfest highlights included a Read with a Ranger and Smokey Bear event at the library, where Smokey greeted kids and a Ranger read books about bears, as well as a "Good Camp, Bad Camp" station during the community market, where kids were taught about safe camping in bear country.
- In-stream watershed restoration projects were completed on East Ohmer Creek and at Manmade Hole on the Petersburg Ranger District; the work on both of these anadromous stream sites will improve bear foraging habitat. Similar work was also completed on the Hoonah, Ketchikan-Misty Fjords, Prince of Wales, and Sitka ranger districts.

Amphibians:

- Continued eDNA lab analyses of water samples from our forest-wide amphibian and disease assessment collected during 2020-2021. We expect most lab results to be in soon and then will work with ADF&G and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service partners on analysis and reporting.
- Six sites were monitored for chytrid on the Stikine River in the Stikine-LeConte Wilderness on the Wrangell Ranger District. Two sites were monitored for chytrid on the Petersburg Ranger District.



Regional News - Cont. USFS Tongass

Pollinators:

- In coordination with broad scale pollinator and bee monitoring with the Alaska Center for Conservation Science and Bureau of Land Management, pollinator surveys were completed at 2 sites each on the Yakutat, Wrangell, and Ketchikan ranger districts. While most sites were negative, lots of bees were collected at one of the sites on Wrangell Island.
- Pollinator education activities were done on the Petersburg Ranger District with the Petersburg Marine Mammal Center Science Camp and the Tongass Tuesday Skog preschool kids.

Marine/Riparian Debris Removal:

- Removed marine and riparian debris from 759 acres on the Yakutat Ranger District as part of a collaborative project with the Yakutat City and Borough and Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, with additional funding by NOAA, to reduce the potential for wildlife entanglement, ingestion, and toxin exposure.

Outhouse Vent Caps:

- In 2022, Prince of Wales ranger district wildlife staff capped 8 outhouse vents and Wrangell Ranger District wildlife staff capped 9 outhouse vents. The caps prevent cavity-dwelling birds and other wildlife from getting trapped in vertical ventilation pipes, and improved an estimated total of 749 acres of habitat.

Climate Change:

- Continued progress on a climate change vulnerability assessment for Tongass wildlife with 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.

Invasive Plants:

- Implemented 106 acres of invasive plant treatments across the forest to reduce spread and benefit native ecosystems.

For additional information, contact the Tongass Wildlife Program Manager, Bonnie Bennetsen at bonnie.bennetsen@usda.gov.



CHAPTER AWARDS!



The Awards Committee for the Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society strives to meet one of our purposes in recognizing professional excellence and conservation achievement. Here is the structure of award categories with criteria suggesting appropriate recognition:

• **Student Wildlife Conservation Award**

- Individual or team achievement in research or management
- Distinguished service to the Alaska Chapter or UAF Student Chapter

• **Wildlife Conservation Award**

- Outstanding professional achievement during the preceding five years by individual or team in research or management
- Lifetime achievement for excellence in professional accomplishments over at least 20 years (may be received only once)
- Distinguished service to Alaska Chapter
- Distinguished service to students or young professionals

• **Humorous award**

- Good natured roasting for an embarrassing event presented at the banquet as capstone event following invited speaker; recipient name and year are added to object that is re-awarded each year
- Award name suggestions? (e.g., Colorado Chapter has a "blown blunderbuss" award)
- Please think of colleagues you consider deserving, and consider a nomination for one or more of the three categories (student wildlife conservation, wildlife conservation, humorous).

For more information on nominations visit our [website](#). Send nominations to cwardlowak@gmail.com.

****Nominations are due March 1, 2023****

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 Cynthia Wardlow, cwardlowak@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 (2023 Annual Meeting)**

A diverse team of professionals are busy planning an unforgettable hybrid in-person and virtual meeting for 2023! Let us know if you'd like to be involved in the planning effort. More details and updates are available at: twsalaska.org.

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 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.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion WG

Following the 2021 virtual meeting, a new working group formed with the initial objectives of promoting diversity, equity and inclusion within the Alaska Chapter, and providing support, resources, and actionable items that move beyond simply acknowledging the importance of diversity, to taking action to identify and break down barriers to under-represented groups in the wildlife profession, with a focus on working parents, POC, and LGBTQ members.

DEI Working Group calls are held monthly. Please email us (twsalaska@gmail.com) if you're interested in joining and see the peer-networking group announcements on the next page!

Newsletter Editor

After many rewarding years as your newsletter editor, Kaiti is ready to pass the baton. Experience with graphic design and publishing software is a plus, but not required. We currently use Adobe InDesign to develop both the newsletter and Annual Meeting Program. If interested, contact Kaiti at ottersocks520@gmail.com.



Get Involved - DEI Peer Mentoring Groups

Research that is performed by diverse teams results in better science (Hofstra et al. 2020). However, there are many barriers to inclusion for some pursuing a career in science. Increasing connectedness and developing peer support networks may help overcome these barriers (Anthony-Stevens et al. 2022, Minnett et al. 2019, and Murry et al. 2022).

At our last statewide meeting, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) working group conducted a survey to determine whether members were interested in participating in peer-networking opportunities. The response was overwhelming with 83% of respondents saying they were interested!

Peer networking opportunities exist within the national chapter. However, these groups are so large it might be difficult to achieve a lasting personal connection. Smaller, more accessible groups may lead to more personal connections. To meet this need, the DEI working group will facilitate peer-networking groups within the Alaska TWS Chapter. Based on survey feedback, groups will meet once every month until May. We will assign groups and coordinate the first meeting, and then the groups will be self-directed (deciding their own meeting days/times, whether they will have a structured or informal format, and whether they will pick a leader or rotate leadership each meeting).

The goal of these groups is to provide opportunities to support each other, provide mentoring opportunities and advice for navigating challenges. We are starting with the following groups:

- WOW (women of wildlife) – Focuses on women in wildlife and those that support them.
- BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) - Focuses on people of color in wildlife, and those that support them.
- OiTF (out in the field) - Focuses on LGBTQ+ people in wildlife, and those that support them.
- Brooding with wildlife (BWW) - Focuses on those that are blending parenting with a career in wildlife and those that support them.

If you are interested in joining a peer-network group this year, please click the survey link below to sign up for a group.

<https://s.surveypal.com/16geg11q>

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2023 NORTH AMERICAN CARIBOU WORKSHOP & ARCTIC UNGULATE CONFERENCE

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

We are pleased to announce a joint meeting of the North American Caribou Workshop (NACW) and Arctic Ungulate Conference (AUC) scheduled for **May 8-12, 2023 in Anchorage, Alaska, USA**. We are planning for an in-person meeting and hope to see you there!

The meeting will bring together an international group of managers, researchers, Indigenous and Local Knowledge holders, and other stakeholders who want to share their knowledge of caribou, muskoxen, Dall's sheep, moose, and reindeer. In addition to sharing research findings, the meeting seeks to bring people together to provide opportunities for exchanging viewpoints, concerns, and recommendations regarding the health, management, use, and study of these vital species.

The theme for the meeting is **Crossing Boundaries**. Arctic ungulates regularly cross landscape boundaries, connecting ecological processes between different systems. This mobile behavior necessitates partnerships and collaboration across management and national boundaries. An increasingly critical component of such partnerships involves crossing the boundaries of Western science and Indigenous knowledge to identify creative opportunities to manage and sustain arctic ungulate populations in a changing world.

If you are interested in suggesting symposia topics, plenary speakers, or other ideas, please send them to us (info@nacw-auc-2023.org).

You can visit our webpage (www.nacw-auc-2023.org) for more information and updates.

Also, follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nacw.auc.2023>



Report of Black Bear Cub with Avian Influenza in Glacier Bay National Park

By Tania Lewis- NPS



From May to early October 2022, a mother black bear with 3 cubs of the year frequented the park headquarters in Bartlett Cove foraging for wild foods along the roadside and near buildings. In mid to late October, one of the three bear cubs began acting erratically and showed signs of deteriorating health. Park biologists and officials from NPS and the State of Alaska made the difficult decision to euthanize the animal to protect public safety and other wildlife. Lab results revealed that the bear cub tested positive for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). The following account details the bear cub's symptoms and agency response.

On October 11 the family group spent 2-3 hours near park offices. All cubs appeared active, healthy and were feeding on ground cone (*Boschniakia rossica*). The next day the family was seen near park housing where a park staff member noticed one of the cubs was often at a distance from the rest and not feeding like the others. On October 14th the mother passed by park offices around 1 pm with only two cubs. At 3:30 the third cub walked by moaning and sniffing, presumably looking for the rest of the family. The cub looked healthy and eventually moved off in the direction of the other bears.

Black bear family near Glacier Bay National Park offices on October 11th, 2022. Photo by Tania Lewis, NPS.

On October 15th a single black bear cub was seen along the park road near the driveway to the park's maintenance building stumbling, moaning, and approaching and trying to get under cars. The bear appeared to have trouble placing its paws on the ground and sometimes ended up falling on its head. There were no signs of trauma or discharge from mouth or eyes and the bear looked healthy except for its movements. A park biologist was able to coax the bear to the road shoulder, but the bear remained in the area throughout the rest of the day. The next morning (October 16th) park staff observed the cub in the same area having seizures and foaming at the mouth. After the seizures ended the cub slept in the same location all morning and afternoon until nightfall.

The following morning (October 17th) the cub was gone from its previous location. Park staff found the cub later in the day ambling clumsily back and forth across the road in the same area. At this point the cub seemed to be blind and deaf with no response to sights or sounds. The bear moved constantly, often walking in circles and running into buildings and objects. Park staff herded the cub into a temporary enclosure for public safety. The bear circled the enclosure, mostly



Bear HPAI Report - Continued

clockwise, bumping into the walls. For the next three days (Oct. 18-20) the cub alternately slept or walked in circles. Occasionally the bear investigated the enclosure but made no efforts to climb out or escape the enclosure. The bear did not respond to sight or sounds, showed no interest in water, and responded only slightly to smells of people.

The park biologist consulted with federal and state biologists and veterinarians and all agreed that the cub should be euthanized to protect people and other wildlife in case the bear had rabies or Avian Influenza or another communicable disease. On October 20th a state biologist euthanized the animal with a .22 caliber rifle. A quick assessment found the cub to be a male with no broken bones or obvious signs of trauma. The enclosure had no signs of vomit, feces, or any other discharge from the bear during his 3 days there. The carcass was sent to the state veterinarian for necropsy.

The approximately eight-month-old, 32-pound cub was found to be generally in good body condition but had hemorrhaging along the left side of the skull and a swollen brain. Laboratory analysis results found the bear to be negative for rabies and canine distemper but positive for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in brain tissue as well as nasal and rectal swabs. HPAI has been detected in only one other black bear, in Quebec in June 2022. In Alaska the virus has previously been detected in only two mammals, both red foxes, but has been detected in numerous wild and domestic birds throughout the summer and fall. The bear cub was likely exposed to the virus by consuming an infected bird. For more details see [Black bear cub in Alaska diagnosed with Avian Influenza](#).

Avian Influenza has not been detected in any other animals in Glacier Bay National Park, but



Black bear cub near Glacier Bay National Park offices in August 2022. Photo by Tania Lewis, NPS.

park biologists will continue to monitor wildlife populations and send deceased animals in for laboratory testing. If you see sick birds or mammals behaving strangely, please report immediately to park staff, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Hotline: 866-527-3358.

Glacier Bay National Park contact: Tania Lewis, 907-697-2668

[Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and Migratory Birds in Alaska | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#)

[Avian Influenza \(Bird Flu\) \(alaska.gov\)](#)



Treeline: the last forest and the future of life on Earth - Book Review

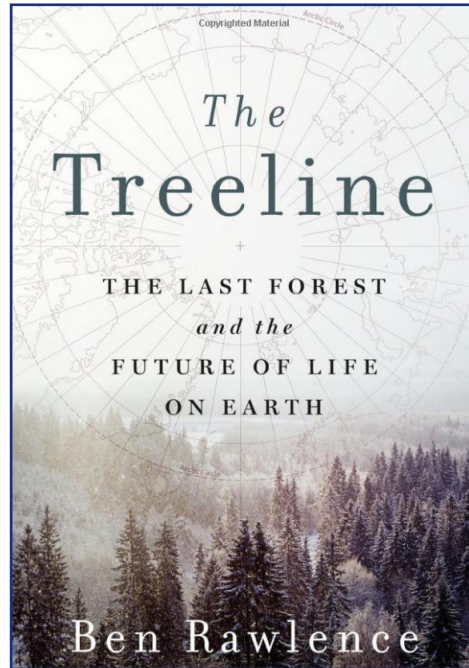
By Tom Paragi - ADF&G

Alaskan ecologists are familiar with research findings and, if old enough, personal observations of trees shifting further into coastal and alpine tundra with the warming climate in our state. *Treeline* (2022, St. Martin's Press, 307 p.) is an engaging tale of forests past, present, and potential future. The author, Ben Rawlence, spent 3 years traveling from his home in Wales to speak with scientists and local residents in Alaska, Manitoba, Ontario, Siberia, southern Greenland, Scotland, and Norway.

Early in the prologue he notes how the term “treeline” (partly reflective of isotherms) reflects the narrow time horizon of humans and how the transition distance from forest to tundra can vary widely depending on local environment. Across 6 chapters he details the dispersal traits of species, situations of extirpation from overuse, the different roles of grazing and browsing herbivores, and migration assisted by humans. The book includes interviews with scientists on the importance of mycorrhizal fungi, flushing of freshwater organic nutrients from forest litter into rich intertidal zones, tree adaptations for extreme cold, and range shifts with various geographic adaptations over glacial epochs.

Outliers to the range shift of boreal trees occur for larch, where in some areas the distribution is stable or even retreating coincident with the distribution of permafrost. A uniquely deciduous conifer that dominates the forests of Canada and Siberia, species of larch have evolved a competitive advantage over other boreal trees on colder and wetter soils that is now disadvantageous in a warming climate.

A strong undercurrent of the book is how changing tree distributions are affecting human uses and cultures. Rawlence describes how Indigenous



people from both continents held a communal relationship with forests as a source of food, medicine, fuel, and spiritual needs before colonizing nations brought capitalism and the concepts of private ownership and resource management to supply desires for a rapidly growing human population. Although wildlife species are not a main theme, each chapter includes discussion of how birds and mammals are affected by (or affecting) changes in the tallest vegetation of each ecosystem.

Treeline includes 6 pages of endnote citations from primary literature and media and a 17-page glossary

of interesting facts on the main genera of the boreal and hemiboreal regions of North America and Eurasia. Rawlence is generally careful to qualify his interpretations of scientific information and interviews about existing situations and potential futures. However, at times he goes a bit far attributing observations to conscious thought, such as about stunted larch persisting at 72 degrees north in Russia (p. 128): “The forest here took very long to form, adapting in unique ways to this extreme environment. It seems entirely reasonable that this intelligent distributed organism should be cautious about making any sudden moves.”

His writing craft makes the story a compelling interpretation of current trends, rates of ecological change, and plausible outcomes of human adaptation in the Anthropocene, with a sobering possibility in the epilogue (p. 265): “Before the end of the twenty-first century there will be a wave of extinctions, trees will leap north, steppes will expand, the tundra will disappear along with the Arctic sea ice, the oceans will be reconfigured and cities will flood. The last generation to know a stable climate with seasonal cycles and familiar species—and all the human culture and traditions that rest on that foundation—has already been born.”



Northwest Section Awards Two Alaska Chapter Members!

To: Eddie Grasser
Director, Division of Wildlife Conservation
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

The Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society is honored to congratulate two Alaska Department of Fish and Game employees as the recipients of our Wildlife Administrator Award and our Einarsen Lifetime Career Achievement Award.

Maria Gladziszewski is the recipient of The Wildlife Administrator Award which recognizes excellence in areas of wildlife program development, administration, budgeting, planning, and personnel management. Her peers and co-workers recognized that she has been clearly and directly responsible for improved wildlife conservation by enabling others, facilitating positive management actions, developing new programs and cooperative efforts that bring benefits to the wildlife resource, and by developing policy, law, or direction which benefited wildlife resources.

Respected department-wide, Ms. Gladziszewski is a leader dedicated to ensuring a respectful workplace, is someone who removes barriers to allow others to perform their jobs well and is a manager working the levers behind-the-scenes to ensure that critical operations continually meet the department's mission.

Richard 'Dick' Shideler is the recipient of the Einarsen Award. The Einarsen Award was established in 1966 in honor of Arthur Einarsen (1897-1965) whose work extended across the Northwest Section in reach and in application. The Einarsen Award is meant to honor wildlife professionals who work and/or reside within the Northwest Section and who have left a legacy across the Section.

Mr. Shidler embodies the spirit, depth, and intent of this award. While primarily known for his work in grizzly bear research, management and conservation, he is also recognized for conservation efforts and expertise in polar bear management, human-bear interactions and the mitigation of industrial impacts. Over the 44 years of working for ADF&G, Dick has mentored and inspired many young technicians and biologists - offering advice, "teaching by doing," being an example of a professional and even enabling them to become more confident in their decision-making process. Many of the current ADF&G employees can trace their career paths back to him as a mentor.

Congratulations,

On behalf of the NWS,

Wendy Wentz President NWS



In Memoriam - Vic Barnes 1942-2022

By Larry Van Daele (ADF&G wildlife biologist, Kodiak, 1981-2015)

Victor Glee Barnes Jr., an unparalleled researcher and advocate for Kodiak brown bears, and the best professional partner and friend anyone could ever have, passed away after a short illness in July 2022 at his home in Westcliffe, Colorado. He was 80 years old.

Vic was born and raised in Colorado Springs. He graduated from Colorado State University with a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Management and a Master of Science in Wildlife Biology. His graduate work on black bear activity in Yellowstone National Park, supported by the Colorado Cooperative Research Unit, was completed in 1967. During that time, he worked alongside the pioneering grizzly researchers Frank and John Craighead and had his first peer-reviewed article accepted in what would be a prolific 50-year run of publications.

Soon after graduation Vic was hired by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, first in Olympia, Washington and later in Bend, Oregon where he worked with Animal Damage Control, focusing his research on interactions between pocket gophers and conifer reforestation efforts. While this was important and satisfying work, life as a “gopher-choker” could not compete with the Call of the North and the opportunity to return to bear research on Kodiak Island, Alaska.

In 1982, he and his young family moved to Kodiak where he began his research on brown bears on Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. For the next 25 years he participated in cooperative bear research and management programs with the Refuge and Alaska Department of Fish and Game, revealing important aspects of population dynamics, management techniques, and methods of reducing adverse bear/

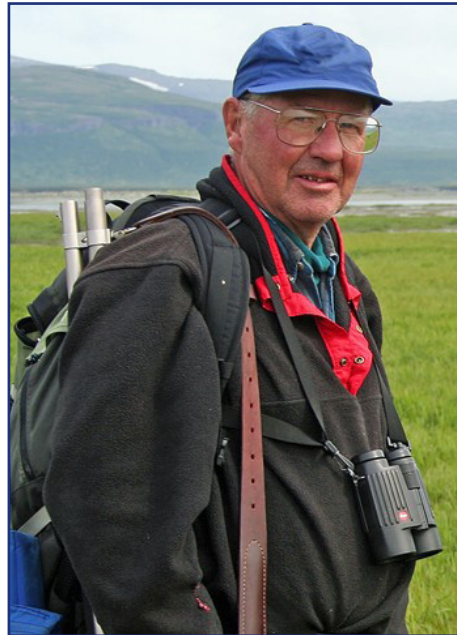
human interactions. He also had opportunities to make two trips to the Soviet Union to work on polar bears, as well as assisting colleagues working on grizzlies in Denali National Park and in southwestern Alaska. Equally important to his biological expertise and prowess, was his ability to cooperatively work with a wide range of people, regardless of their agency affiliation or political proclivities, and ally them to strive for what was “good for the bears.”

In 1997, Vic retired and moved back to his deep roots and family ranch in southcentral Colorado. He continued his involvement with bears by returning to Kodiak each year for various research projects and to work as a bear viewing guide at McNeil River and on Kodiak.

He was also recruited to be the Executive Director of the non-profit Kodiak Brown Bear Trust. While

in Colorado, Vic put his legendary radio-tracking skills to good use as a Wildlife Technician with the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Community service was also paramount in Vic’s life, and after his retirement he spent 25 years serving on the San Isabel Land Protection Trust, Custer County Planning Commission, High Mountain Hay Fever Festival Association, and Wet Mountain Valley Community Foundation, among others.

Vic touched the lives of innumerable people in a positive way and made significant contributions to the conservation of bears on Kodiak. Even as his long and productive life drew to a close, he was thinking of those bruins and requested that any contributions made in his memory be sent to the Kodiak Brown Bear Trust, P.O. Box 1740 Kodiak, AK 99615 (www.KodiakBrownBearTrust.org). I sincerely hope that as he begins his next journey on the other side, he finally gets to know what is really going on in a bear’s mind and that he can share his thoughts with them.



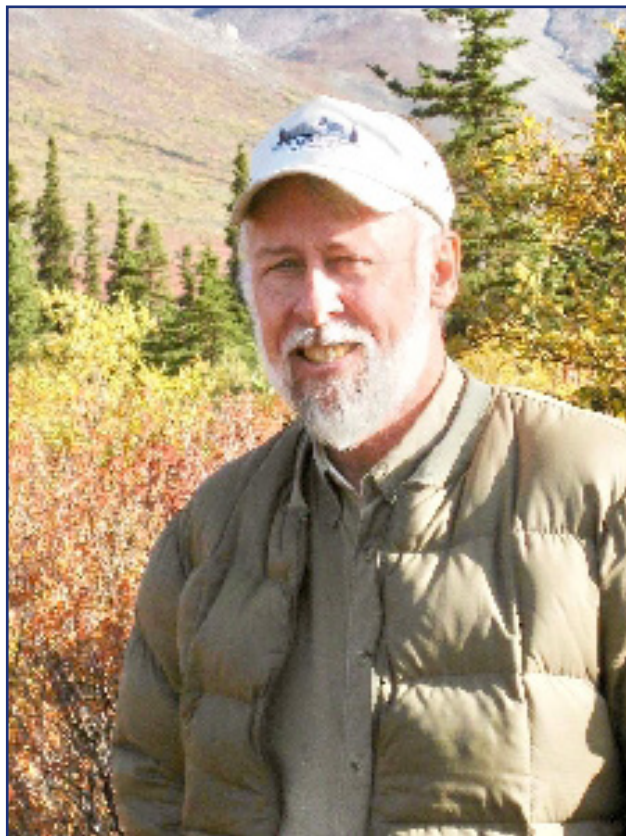
In Memoriam - Victor Van Ballenberghe 1943-2022

Victor “Vic” Van Ballenberghe passed away on Sept. 22, 2022, at the age of 78, after battling numerous health issues. Vic was well-known and highly respected in the wildlife conservation community for his tireless efforts in advocating for sound science to be applied in decisions regarding wildlife management. Because of his four decades extensive study of moose and their behavior in Denali National Park, Vic was affectionately known as “Alaska’s Moose Man” as well as the “Maestro of Moose.”

Vic was born on Nov. 12, 1943, in Bayshore, Long Island, New York. At the age of 5, his family moved to a dairy farm in upstate New York, where his love of wildlife and nature was nurtured. After graduating high school, he received a degree in biology from SUNY at Oneonta. In 1967, he entered graduate school at the University of Minnesota and went on to earn a Ph.D. in wildlife management in 1972.

After two years on the faculty at South Dakota State University, Vic accepted a wildlife research position with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to determine the impact the trans-Alaska pipeline had on moose. He was stationed in Anchorage, Glennallen and Fairbanks. In 1980, he joined the research branch of the U.S. Forest Service and conducted moose and wolf research in Denali National Park and on the Copper River Delta while based in Fairbanks and Anchorage. He retired in 2000, but continued his Denali moose study for many years thereafter.

Throughout his career as a wildlife biologist, Vic authored and co-authored over one hundred technical journal articles, book chapters and symposium papers. Several of these publications received awards of merit from professional societies. In addition, he published many popular articles, including one on moose in the August 1987 edition of National Geographic magazine. He also authored numerous newspaper opinion pieces on controversial wildlife management issues. His knowledge and experience



about “all things moose” were sought-after by film crews including the BBC, National Geographic, Animal Planet as well as other filmmakers, photographers, park rangers and park bus drivers.

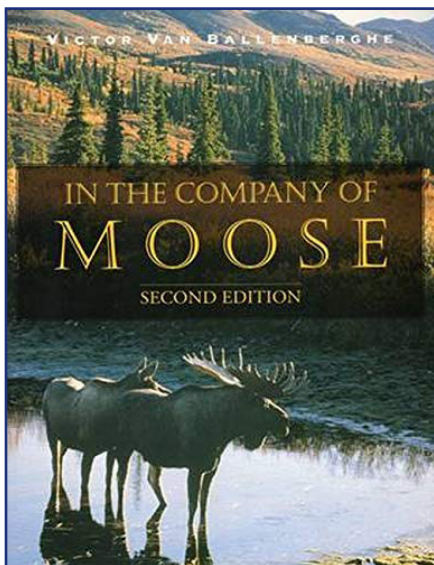
In 2004, Vic’s book, “In the Company of Moose” was published. It contained over 120 of his color photographs accompanied by a text describing his experiences with moose as a field biologist. The final chapter, “Death of a Warrior,” previously won awards for creative nonfiction and was widely acclaimed by many who read it.

Vic was a “boots on the ground” field biologist and believed that in order to properly research wild animal behavior, one had to spend time in the field and patiently observe the animal in its natural habitat and he spent hundreds of hours doing so, always fascinated and prepared to learn something new.

In 1985, Vic was appointed to the Alaska Board of Game by Governor Bill Sheffield. He served one full



Van Ballenberghe - Cont.



term on the board and two subsequent partial terms in 1996 and 2002. Vic was a strong advocate of scientific evidence-based wildlife management and he fought hard for sound conservation of predators including bears and wolves.

Although serious and reserved, Vic had a great sense of humor and an incredibly dry wit. Spending time talking with Vic was educational, enlightening and absolutely delightful. He was intelligent, well-read, very thoughtful and interested in a variety of topics. He was an avid nature photographer and his wildlife photographs were published in numerous magazines, books and calendars. He was happiest in the out of doors and seldom missed his daily walk.

Vic was a man of great integrity and followed a strict code of ethics and was authentic to the core. He followed his true internal compass and remained resolute and unwavering on his principles. Vic touched many lives both personally and professionally and will be deeply missed.

Vic is survived by his wife, Linda Masterson; daughter, Andrea Bradford (Craig); son, Jonathan Van Ballenberghe (Sharon Wahl); grandchildren, Kaia and Cameron Bradford; and several nieces and nephews. His ashes will be scattered amongst those of his late mother, father and older brother, on a hill overlooking the former family farm near West Fulton, N.Y., a place he loved, returning him from whence he came.

If you would like to make a contribution in Vic's name, please do so to one of the Parkinson's disease or wildlife conservation groups of your choice.



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**.



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