



North Carolina  
**WILDLIFE  
FEDERATION**

# Journal

WILD LIVES □ WILD PLACES

Winter 2023



ANNUAL  
**2023** REPORT



## Backyards to Backcountry

BY TIM GESTWICKI, NCWF CEO

As you read this Annual Report of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation's accomplishments and endeavors for 2022, I hope you'll understand that these efforts are your efforts. I am proud, but not satisfied, of the work we undertook on your behalf for wildlife and habitat conservation. Along the year there were twists and turns facing wildlife challenges. It was a rollercoaster ride but a worthwhile trip for the goodliest and righteous cause we uphold. Our work ranges from backyards to backcountry, includes iconic and lesser-known species, and connects people with nature to increase awareness and appreciation for wildlife and wild places.

We are uniquely positioned to accomplish our mission as we work and speak on behalf of all North Carolina's wildlife species—game and nongame—and habitats from the mountains to the sea. We support the full spectrum of natural resource-based recreation, from gardening and birding to hunting and fishing. We are the only statewide wildlife organization that combines policy work at local, state and federal levels while fueled by a robust grassroots network.

I state this not as a braggart or gloater, since we carry out our work with more partners than can be listed, but because we understand our role and our niche and the critical work we must undertake.


As this *NCWF Journal* will show, there was plenty accomplished. And there will be more to do, as we build on our past successes and tackle issues as varied as emerging wildlife and human disease threats, rampant spread of both plant and animal invasive species, chemical impacts on wildlife and human consumption, and rapid growth that threatens our ecosystems and quality of life.

The Federation was built on the principle that coordinated effort and collaborative action are critical to conservation.

For NCWF at a very granular level, it is simple: Our work is for wildlife and habitat and connecting people with nature. While the challenges are complex, mainly due to greed and exploitive efforts promoted by arguments that are manifestly without merit and divorced from reality, the goal is all about wildlife conservation. We are clear-eyed to the challenges and enthusiastic for the opportunities to make changes to root cause issues facing wildlife and habitat.

As we wrap the past year and look forward, there is plenty to be excited about. We are working to secure passage of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act for nearly 500 species of greatest conservation concern in North Carolina, and secure funding for public and working lands conservation across the state. We're focusing on new renewable energy sources that are wildlife friendly and carbon neutral, and exposing those that are not, such as wood pellets. We're steadfast in efforts to end the needless killing of hundreds of millions of juvenile fish in our estuaries, protect trout streams and trout fishing in North Carolina, and minimize wildlife from being killed on our highways and roads.

The Federation was built on the principle that coordinated effort and collaborative action are critical to conservation. A key strength has always been our ability to work with diverse conservation interests and rally multiple voices toward solutions for wildlife. We are strengthening our relationships and forging partnerships that will impact wildlife and habitat. From tiny butterfly gardens on back decks to million-acre tracts such as our national forests that support bear, elk and turkey, our work will provide the mosaic of habitats that support a diversity of species.

We're proud of what we've been able to accomplish, and clear-eyed about the future. And we are especially thankful to you and all who support NCWF and the mission. May we be successful in our collective conservation efforts this year to provide big conservation returns on your investments. 



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# North Carolina WILDLIFE Federation Journal

WILD LIVES □ WILD PLACES

Winter 2023

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## NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

**MISSION** To protect, conserve and restore North Carolina wildlife and habitat.

**VISION** Our stewardship will result in a North Carolina with healthy, bountiful and diverse flora and fauna that is valued by all its people, and sustainably managed for future generations.

Our strength is derived from values driven leadership – science-based decision making; non-partisan approach to policy; stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources; inclusivity of broad wildlife interests and perspectives; and partnering with organizations and individuals who share our vision and our passion for wildlife.

**GOALS** Toward that vision, we will:

**POLICY AND PROTECTION** – Strongly influence state and federal policy that affects wildlife and habitat in North Carolina using established conservation models to guide our positions.

**NETWORK OF IMPACT AND INVOLVEMENT** – Foster a diverse, robust network of chapters, members, affiliates and partners; a network fortified by a variety of wildlife and outdoor interests.

**EXPERIENCE AND LEARN** – Enhance and expand opportunities for youth and adults that foster awareness and appreciation of wildlife and the important role healthy habitat plays in sustaining wildlife and humanity.

**SIGNATURE PROGRAMS** – Sponsor and support programs for the enjoyment and conservation of wildlife and habitat, including ethical and sustainable outdoor recreation pursuits.

From iconic species to unheralded habitats, in places ranging from backyards to backcountry, the North Carolina Wildlife Federation was hard at work throughout 2022. It was a year of progress and promises kept, and oh-so-close victories that will inspire even more focused advocacy in 2023. Historic fisheries reforms made great strides, and wins for private and public lands will help ensure healthy wildlife populations for generations to come.

## Habitat

Conservation of all wildlife species in North Carolina depends on, and is inextricably tied to, habitat as the solution. In 2022, increasing public land and conservation of water habitats remained a top priority for NCWF. This involves investments, protections of current public lands, and engaging more people in restoring habitat. From backyards to the backcountry, the Federation was on the front lines of habitat conservation.



JEFF HALL / PAINTED BUNTING



The **Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests** represent 1.1 million public acres of highly significant fish and wildlife habitat in western North Carolina. How those lands are managed is critical to the future of our diverse native animal and plant communities. NCWF is actively engaged in the Forest Service planning process as a member of the Nantahala Pisgah Forest Partnership, serving on its leadership team and project team which evaluates future-on-the-ground project proposals. During the summer of 2022, NCWF actively participated in the Forest Partnership's efforts to improve the Nantahala Pisgah Forest Plan's Final Record of Decision which is to be issued in early 2023.

**85%** of North Carolina land is privately owned. ★ North Carolina ranks **4th nationally** for population growth.

★ In recent years, North Carolina had the nation's **2nd highest rate** of converting farm land to commercial and residential development. ★ North Carolina loses more than **4,500 acres** of urban tree canopy every year.



North Carolina has some of the best *and* most at-risk **trout habitat** in the eastern United States. The total economic benefit of trout fishing in the state is estimated at \$383.3 million annually, but this resource is at risk due to sedimentation and pollutant discharges. Keeping water temperatures in designated trout waters below thresholds is critically important because North Carolina's three species of trout—brook trout, brown trout, and rainbow trout—require cold, clean, oxygen-rich water to survive and thrive. NCWF joined in calling for the NC Department of Environmental Quality to apply the trout waters temperature standard found the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits.



HEATHER RUSSELL / AMERICAN ALLIGATOR

While *Prey for the Pack* focuses on private lands, NCWF also made strides with the **Firebreak Project** in 2022. The project is a partnership with Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Association to improve wildlife habitat on public lands. In 2022, the project managed and maintained firebreaks on the refuge to decrease the intensity of wildfires, with the added benefit of habitat improvement to numerous wildlife species.

Implemented in partnership with US Fish and Wildlife Service, the **Prey for the Pack habitat improvement project** currently has nearly 1,000 privately-owned acres enrolled. The program is designed to provide multiple ways for landowners to get involved, including habitat work through cost-share, use of cameras to document wildlife, acceptance of canid species on private property, and zero-cost agreements allowing local landowners to show general support for red wolves. The program is currently working on multiple 10-year landowner agreements to benefit red wolves and provide access to properties necessary for red wolf management.

In September, NCWF won an important victory for **sea turtles, sturgeon, and other vulnerable marine wildlife** when a federal court in North Carolina ruled in our favor and halted plans to abandon seasonal restrictions on hopper dredging in state harbors. Hopper dredges are used to maintain the depth of a water body by essentially vacuuming up everything on the sea bottom. Unfortunately, this often includes sea turtles and other wildlife, which can easily become ensnared in the hopper dredge equipment. To minimize such impacts, the Army Corps has for decades restricted dredging to winter months when there are fewer sea turtles in state waters.



ISTOCK.COM, WRANGLER / LOGGERHEAD SEA TURTLE

**NCWF Works!** 136 Habitat Restoration Projects ★ 94,062 Pounds of Trash Removed ★ 4,971 Trees & Shrubs Planted ★ 5,015 Pollinator Plants Planted ★ 825 New Certified Wildlife Habitats ★ 880 New Butterfly Highway Sites

# Habitat for All

NCWF has been involved in **water and wetlands protection work** for many years and engaged in litigation and policy work when attacks on bedrock rules protecting these areas occurred. Fortunately, as the year wound down, new rules were issued under the Biden Administration reinstating long-standing clean water protections that were in place prior to 2015 for traditional navigable waters. As a result, the Biden Rule protects many critical waterways that have been protected by the administrations of both parties for decades. The rule also sets forth exclusions for certain waters and features that have generally been considered outside the scope of “waters of the United States.” As North Carolina develops at a rapid pace, protecting these critical water ecosystems is crucial.

NCWF advocated for **reforming the floodplain management** standards. Congress created the National Flood Insurance Program to reduce flood damages nationwide and to ease the federal government’s financial burden for providing disaster recovery. Population increases and the desire to live near rivers, sounds, beaches, and lakes contributes to more development in flood-prone areas. With a changing climate, flood damages and federal spending on flood recovery are rising, meaning that the flood insurance program is failing to achieve its primary goal.

**Cooperation with private landowners is critical for native fish conservation** and is deserving of all the tools available to protect and restore populations. Therefore, in 2022, NCWF submitted a letter to the US Fish and Wildlife Service in support of the NC Wildlife Resources Commission’s application for *Programmatic Enhancement of Survival Permit for a Safe Harbor Agreement and Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances for Aquatic Species in North Carolina*. The Agreements provide a much needed, non-punitive approach to wildlife conservation on private and other non-Federal lands.

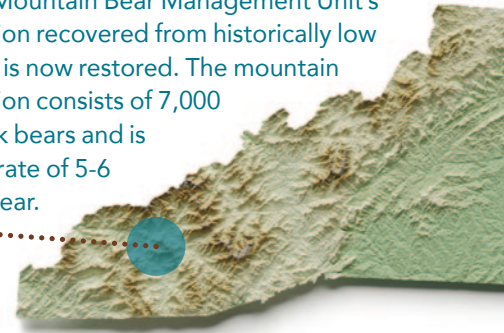
Throughout 2022, the Federation worked alongside NC Cooperative Extension, NC Urban Forest Council and NC Forest Service to implement the state’s first **Bradford Pear Bounty Program**, working to rid the state of invasive Bradford pears and replacing them with native trees.

As a major focus for NCWF and our Land for Tomorrow partners, the 2021-2022 biennium was the most successful session in recent history for **land and water conservation funding** in North Carolina. The legislature appropriated an additional \$275 million for the state’s conservation trust funds, on top of the funds they typically receive in the state budget. The North Carolina Land and Water Fund, which receives around \$14 million in an average year, received over \$62 million, and the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, which receives around \$16 million in an average year, received over \$64 million. The success from the 2021 budget continued in the 2022 budget. Both the Land and Water Fund and Parks and Recreation Trust Fund once again received additional nonrecurring funds, but more importantly, their recurring appropriations were both increased to \$25 million, which puts both funds in a much stronger position heading into 2023.

# Wildlife

Work for all wildlife, regardless of its beauty or charismatic nature was in full effect. Every species matters, all species are interconnected, so every species is considered when we work for wildlife.

NCWF supported NC Wildlife Resources Commission efforts to **properly manage black bear populations in western North Carolina**. Thanks to conservation and management efforts by NCWRC since the 1970s, in partnership with hunters, the Mountain Bear Management Unit’s bear population recovered from historically low numbers and is now restored. The mountain bear population consists of 7,000 to 8,000 black bears and is growing at a rate of 5-6 percent per year.



AUSTIN BALINKSKI / BLACK BEAR



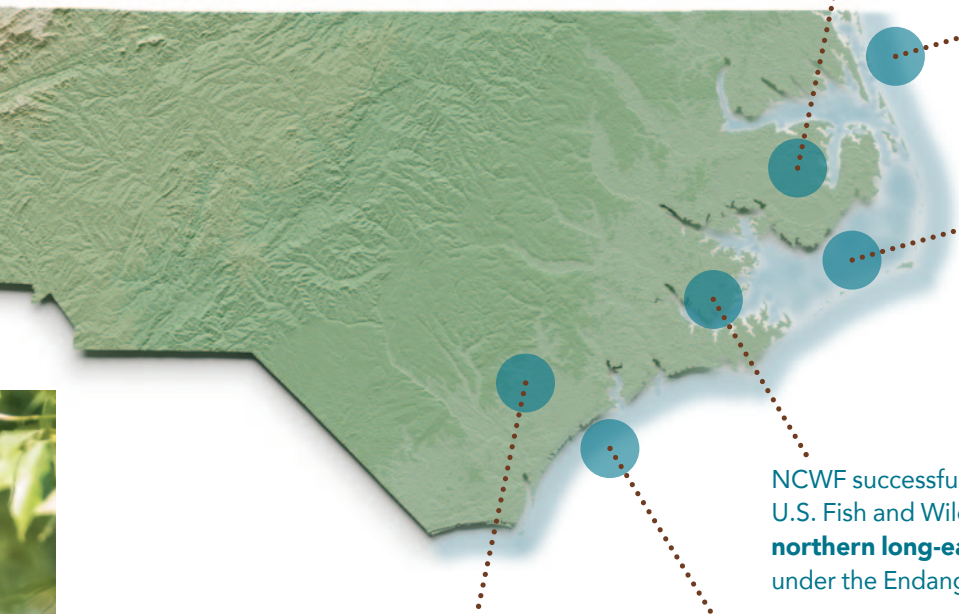
A **group of bears** is called a “sleuth” or a “sloth.” ★ The set of antlers on a mature bull elk can weigh up to **40 pounds** with a width of 5 feet. ★ Bobcats get their name from their short tails that are only about **5 inches long**. ★ Opossums are the only **native marsupials** not just in North Carolina, but in the entire United States.





USFWS, B. BARTEL / RED WOLF

NCWF provided input on the **draft revised Red Wolf Recovery Plan** released by US Fish and Wildlife Service. NCWF continued work with USFWS and NCWRC to carefully consider all aspects of red wolf recovery, available tools, and potential partnerships to improve education and outreach, relationships with stakeholders, and community engagement to better support the eastern North Carolina population of red wolves. Recovery efforts and species success hinge on private landowner cooperation. NCWF we will continue to work to develop long-term relationships with landowners in and around red wolf recovery areas and assess the potential for local communities to benefit monetarily through eco-tourism.



North Carolina will soon boast more **offshore wind power** than any other state along the East Coast, and NCWF is helping ensure that development of this unparalleled clean energy resource includes protections for the state's valuable marine resources.

The **diamondback terrapin** is the only estuarine turtle occurring in North Carolina. To help protect this species, NCWF submitted a formal comment letter in support of expanding the geographic area where turtle excluder devices are required for crab pots to prevent unnecessary deaths of diamondback terrapins and other by-catch.

NCWF successfully recommended that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reclassify the **northern long-eared bat** as endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

Once widespread across the Southeast, fewer than 10,000 **red-cockaded woodpeckers** remained when the species was added to the Endangered Species List. Red-cockaded woodpeckers have unique habitat requirements for old-growth pine forests because they nest and roost in cavities they excavate in living pines that are generally 60 to 80 years old. NCWF joined in rebutting a USFWS proposal to remove critical protections and oversight for red-cockaded woodpecker. Formal comments submitted point out the USFWS' rapid predetermined decision to reclassify the species without regard to science or legally-required analyses.

**Horseshoe crab** population declines are problematic throughout the Atlantic Coast. The animals are harvest as bait and for their blue blood, which is increasingly used in pharmaceutical testing. This ancient species' eggs provide crucial food for migrating red knots, a federally threatened shorebird. Horseshoe crab populations and the population of red knots are well below recovery thresholds, prompting NCWF to advocate against increasing harvest levels and maintaining site-specific bans on capturing egg-laying females.

ISTOCK.COM, VIKTOR2013 / HORSESHOE CRAB



ISTOCK.COM, BRIAN E. KUSHNER / RED KNOT

Turkeys can run up to 25 mph and fly at speeds of **55 mph**. ★ The Ruby-throated hummingbird beats its wings around **53 times** per second. ★ During the colder winter months, alligators enter a state of slower activity known as brumation. ★ Hellbenders are the largest species of salamander by weight in North America, reaching between **4 and 5 lbs**.

# Winning for Wildlife



KATHRYN PERRY / ELK

A crucial and monumental step forward in wildlife disease management was **the passage of the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Research and Management Act**, which supports work to slow the spread of CWD in cervids (deer, elk, and moose) throughout the United States. The bipartisan legislation is set to invest \$70 million annually in research and management techniques. Passage was particularly timely for North Carolina, which recently detected its first positive cases of CWD in white-tailed deer, prompting the designation of surveillance areas within the state and the implementation of special regulations surrounding white-tail harvest to mitigate disease transmission.

There is no live test available for deer. The only definitive way to confirm infection is through lab testing of brain tissue or through lymph node collection. In part, the CWD Research and Management Act sets out to solve testing issues. For five years, it will divide \$70 million between management and research priorities. Though the state of North Carolina has thus far seen relatively few instances of CWD in the white-tailed deer population, state agencies and officials are taking this threat seriously. "As CWD spreads across the country, including North Carolina," said Senator Thom Tillis, "we must support the collaborative work between federal, state, and tribal governments to research, manage, and respond to this fatal threat to wildlife populations. There is still much to do to address the spread of CWD, but this legislation is perhaps the first glimpse of a light at the end of the tunnel."



KAREN BRIDGES / SNOWY EGRET

So close in the last hour of Congressional budget negotiations, the most important wildlife legislation in half century, **the Recovering America's Wildlife Act**, narrowly missed inclusion in the omnibus spending bill. This remains NCWF's top federal priority as it will provide permanent funding for species of greatest concern of which there are nearly 500 in the state.

Misguided legislation was filed in Congress that would eliminate the excise tax on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment that is distributed to state fish and wildlife agencies for on-the-ground conservation efforts and programs. This funding mechanism, known as Pittman-Robertson, was supported by the hunting community 85 years ago and is still widely supported by sportsmen and sportswomen today. This user-pays, public benefits' programs, commonly referred to as the **American System of Conservation Funding**, allows the public to access and enjoy our country's greatest natural resources. NCWF opposed the legislation and will dig in for P-R program protection this year as well as funding species of greatest concern via passage of Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

One of the most significant outcomes of the past year was **the court's ruling on the lawsuit brought against the State for mismanaging its coastal resources**. This was a huge victory for public trust resources. "The upheld court decision clearly conveys that the State of North Carolina is obligated to protect and preserve our public trust resources, including marine fisheries," said NCWF's Manley Fuller, vice president for conservation policy. "And when it fails to do so—either through action or inaction—it can't hide behind sovereign immunity."

According to the opinion, the State has an obligation "to preserve the people's right to fish and harvest fish." This includes a "duty to preserve fisheries for the benefit of the public" and a "duty to keep fisheries safe from injury, harm, or destruction for all time."

"Trying to hold the State accountable for mismanaging our marine fisheries has been a long journey," Fuller said. "We're happy this important case can finally move forward in the courts."

NCWF supported USFWS proposed changes to **experimental populations** to allow species' reintroductions beyond a species' historic range.

Through its membership in the Safe Passage Coalition, NCWF continued to bring the issue of **wildlife mortality on roadways** to the forefront of the public's minds while forging ahead with agreements to solidify agency relationships to confront the issue.



# Connecting with Nature

ANNUAL  
2023  
REPORT

Fostering awareness and appreciation for wildlife conservation is critical for actions which is why from elk viewing trips, in the west to tundra swan and snow geese watching in the east, and online presentations to live feed wildlife cameras, NCWF used many ways to bring the wonder of nature to as many folks as possible.



NCWF's Gaston PAWS chapter partnered with NC Wildlife Resources Commission and Wood Duck Farms to host its annual **Getting Started Outdoors Deer Hunting** workshop in Gastonia, which included mentored deer hunts. With 44 participants, the 2022 group was the largest ever.

Since Charlotte Wildlife Stewards helped host habitat steward training in Matthews in 2022, 30 new **Certified Habitat Stewards** are actively making a difference for wildlife and habitat. The chapter hosted numerous habitat restoration events including a cleanup at Irwin Creek where volunteers removed 800 pounds of trash.

South Wake Conservationist's Eco Kids Program hosted six special events for kids, including activities focused on black bears, pollinators, moths, pond critters, chimney swifts, and endangered species. **The Garden for Wildlife Program** now includes three local schools and four parks.

Neuse River Hawks **formed valuable partnerships** with the Corps of Engineers at Falls Lake Dam, the North Carolina Native Plant Society, the Boys and Girls Club and the Wake Forest Garden Club as a way to exponentially increase their impact.

**NCWF Works!** 114 Educational & Outreach Programs ★ 48 Nature Outings ★ 2,276 Volunteers Engaged ★ 57 Wildlife Webinars Hosted ★ 3,000,000 Views of NCWF's Cameras Streaming Osprey, Heron, and Red Wolves



# Making Connections

The Federation's primary vehicle to get more people outside, **Great Outdoors University**, posted a banner year. Nineteen events tallied 4,742 participants. Nearly 3,400 people signed up for 115 day trips. That totals more than 8,000 people who connected with nature through this North Carolina Wildlife Federation program.

In 2022, NCWF South Wake Conservationist chapter members Guy and Judy Gardner and others partnered with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission to host virtual **Deer Hunting 101 and deer processing webinars**. In addition, it was relayed to viewers that harvested deer could be donated to feed the hungry through NC Hunters for the Hungry. In 2022, NCWF had four chapters dedicated to helping hunters donate deer for the hungry and raising funds to offset deer processing expenses. NC Hunters for the Hungry typically processes 1,000 to 1,200 deer each year, with 300 to 400 of those deer donated through NCWF chapters and affiliated groups.

In 2022 the Federation **welcomed four new affiliates**: Davidson Lands Conservancy, Piedmont Wildlife Center, Women Hunters of NC, and Yadkin Valley Wildlife Club.

NCWF's **Academics Afield** program had a very successful year teaching NCSU students hunting skills and ethics, and firearm and tree stand safety, as well as offering mentored dove and deer hunts. Program partners include Wake County Wildlife Club, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, NC State University, NC Central University, and other conservation groups. Our 2022 student participants were primarily women and represented diverse majors ranging from Agricultural Science to Humanities and Social Science. Notably, most students reported being from urban childhood locations.

Project staff and mentors increase student knowledge of wild game preparation and consumption, and consistently discussed hunting ethics as it relates to the harvest of public trust resources and how management techniques play a role in the conservation of wildlife species.



GoU is a conservation-based experiential education program designed to bring outdoor adventures to kids of all ages who have limited opportunities to explore the natural world. NCWF provides "Day Trip Adventures" in the Greater Charlotte Region serving kids ages 4-18 and "Kids in Nature Day" events statewide.



NC State students with Academics Afield mentors after a dove hunt.





Avery Beatty (6 yr old), winner of lifetime license from NCWF at National Hunting Fishing Day event in Fayetteville N.C.



COURTESY OF NC WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION



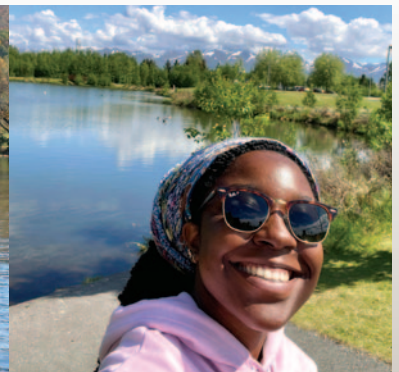
# ANNUAL 2023 REPORT

Taking aim at hunter education.

NCWF sponsored Ocean Advocacy Workshop for over a hundred students from NCSU, UNC-G, UNC-W at Haw River State Park. This weekend included plastics, marine fisheries, renewable energy for students to engage in policy solutions



NCWF's grizzled, time-tested conservation lions were joined this year with youthful, exuberant newcomers, helping to form arguably the best collective highly experienced, trained, and resilient staff in the nation of its size. Meet the new staff (top, left to right): **Laura Frazier** Refuge Community Organizer, **Ben Burrows** Philanthropy Associate, **Seana Finn** Community Organizer Durham; (bottom, left to right): **Luke Bennett** Conservation Coordinator, **Lacy Kegley** Director of Finance & Operations, **Bates Whitaker** Communications & Marketing Manager





## Little Moments of Wonder

Daniel and Megan Shank share similar memories of camping with family as kids. Both their parents fostered a love of the outdoors at an early age, and they are passing it on to their boys, ages 1½ and 4.

A community of barred owls in their Raleigh neighborhood provides entertainment and connects them to nature. Megan wants to make their yard a space where the boys can experience wildlife. Her dad did the same with her.

“He tried to show us little moments of wonder—where bunnies were nesting or how much it had snowed,” Megan said. She recalls his stories of being a child in the Illinois fields near his home, collecting butterflies. “He said there were so many that he couldn’t catch enough,” Megan said. “That is a rare occurrence these days.”

Daniel and Megan joined NCWF’s Shaw Society in 2019 because it is “the perfect marriage of our two interests.” Daniel likes how NCWF supports causes that sportsman care about and causes that intersect with general interests in the outdoors. “Not everyone has parents that know how to go camping or hunting. It can be a little intimidating,” Daniel said. “It is meaningful that NCWF connects people with nature in all sorts of ways, especially right here in North Carolina. We both live here and the fact that we know that the money we give is going to support programs that impact our community is a big deal.”

Daniel didn’t grow up hunting but friends in adulthood introduced him. It connects him to nature in a way that hiking and camping haven’t. “There is something about getting out there and seeing a wetland wake up. Seeing the real, raw beauty of nature that I wouldn’t necessarily experience hiking or camping because those experiences don’t force you into places where wildlife is most active,” Daniel said. They both recognize that getting outside isn’t accessible or welcoming for all. “NCWF levels the playing field so everyone can get outside,” Megan said. “Being outside is a key component of overall well-being. Not just your physical health but mental health as well. Everyone should have access to connect with nature and spend time outside, especially kids. Technology really competes with that.”

However, it is also hard to compete with echoing barred owls, especially when your dad joins in. Participating in the outdoor experience, no matter how near or far from home, is a tradition they will continue to pass on to their children and maybe one day, to their children’s children.



You can join Daniel, Megan, and other NCWF donors in the Shaw Society by donating \$1,000 or more in a calendar year. Some people prefer to give a single gift in a year, others like to give monthly. To learn about all the ways you can join the Shaw Society and support wildlife and habitat in North Carolina today and for future generations, contact NCWF VP of Philanthropy Kate Greiner at [kate@ncwf.org](mailto:kate@ncwf.org).

AARON MURRAY / EASTERN COTTONTAIL RABBIT



CREATE A BETTER FUTURE FOR WILDLIFE.  
*It's easier than you think.*

**Make a gift that lasts longer.** Many people like to leave a gift to charity in their will because they care about causes that are important to their lives.

A gift to NCWF in your will, retirement funds or life insurance ensures future generations can enjoy the wildlife and habitat that you care about in North Carolina.

*Interested?*

Kate Greiner, CFRE  
VP of Philanthropy  
P: 704/332-5696  
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[ncwf.org/membership-giving/leave-a-wildlife-legacy/](https://ncwf.org/membership-giving/leave-a-wildlife-legacy/)



# HOW TO Help



MICHAEL BURKHARD / RED FOX

Wildlife and their habitats are faced with many threats to survival but together with NCWF, you can give them a fighting chance. There are many ways to help. Below are just a few examples.

To speak with a staff member about your interests, contact Kate Greiner, vice president of philanthropy, at (704) 332-5696 or [kate@ncwf.org](mailto:kate@ncwf.org). Thank you for your partnership in the cause!

**Join Charlie Shaw Society** Charlie Shaw Society is made up of individuals who give cumulative annual gifts of \$1,000 or more. Their level of investment gives them special access and invitations to participate in unique wildlife experiences in North Carolina as well as access to timely and tailored conservation news and updates that they care about.

**Leave a Wildlife Legacy** Many people like to leave a gift to charity in their will because they care about causes that are important to their lives. A gift to NCWF in your will or estate plans ensures future generations can enjoy the wildlife and habitat that you care about in North Carolina. If you have left NCWF in your will let us know, we'd love to thank you and celebrate your commitment. Don't have a will and need one? NCWF has partnered with FreeWill to give you a free, online tool to help you write your will in 20 minutes or less. Get started at [FreeWill.Com/NCWF](http://FreeWill.Com/NCWF) or contact us and we'll walk you through the process and answer your questions.

**Become a monthly donor** Monthly giving is the easiest and most efficient way to support NCWF and protect the wildlife and wild places you love. Your monthly donation means you are automatically eligible to enjoy all of the membership benefits! You can easily start, change or stop your gift any time.

**Become a member or renew** With a gift of \$25 or more, you can become a NCWF member and join the thousands of others who care about conserving wildlife and habitat in North Carolina. NCWF members are the backbone of our vision, mission, and work and receive special benefits to celebrate their commitment to the cause, become involved, and stay up to date on conservation news and events.

**Give through stock, donor advised fund, family foundation, or IRA** There are many ways to invest in NCWF. Doing so by stock, donor advised fund, family foundation, or IRA are some unique ways that may best suit you given your particular financial situation.

**Garden for Wildlife** Certifying your yard or garden, big or small, is a great way to help wildlife and their habitats. NCWF offers many programs to do so—Butterfly Highway and Certified Wildlife Habitat are just two examples. Visit our website at [ncwf.org](http://ncwf.org) to learn more.

**Plant native seeds** Over the last 20 years, monarch butterflies have declined by 90 percent. Their habitat is being developed at a tremendous rate, leaving only a few places for them to emerge from their chrysalis and fuel up for the journey south to Mexico. Planting native seeds helps these and other pollinators survive.

**Join a Wildlife Community Chapter** NCWF Community Wildlife Chapters empower members to take action on behalf of wildlife and habitat in their own backyard and across the state through educational events, volunteer projects, and advocacy. There are 18 chapters statewide in which more than 1,500 North Carolinians are engaged. To find a chapter near you or how to start one in your own community, visit [ncwf.org/community-wildlife-chapter](http://ncwf.org/community-wildlife-chapter).

**Get email and take action** Staying informed and up to date on conservation news and events is important to ensure we're holding our elected officials accountable and our communities embrace our shared conservation ethic. Sign up for NCWF's Wildlife Wire, a monthly newsletter sent to your inbox, and take action on behalf of wildlife and habitat by receiving timely alerts inviting you to write and call your elected officials. Visit [www.ncwf.org](http://www.ncwf.org) to stay informed!

## IN NEED OF WHEELS

It's a 545-mile drive from Murphy to Manteo, and our mountains-to-the-sea work depends upon travel. We meet with policy makers, conservation project planners, and volunteers throughout our conservation network.

We are proudly responsible with our financial resources. (In fact, our CEO is a bit of a crazy man when it comes to cutting off lights, lowering utility costs, and negotiating contracts.) And occasionally, we reach out directly to our supporters for a need that can help save us valuable resources. This is one of those times.

Reimbursing staff for mileage driven in their personal cars, and renting cars when we must, adds up. We have always relied on the generosity of our supporters for vehicles that don't need lots of repairs and get good gas mileage. And now we need two reliable vehicles.

If you have a low-mileage, fairly fuel efficient vehicle you'd like to donate to help wildlife and habitat conservation, please contact us at [info@ncwf.org](mailto:info@ncwf.org). As a 501c3 charitable organization, your donation is eligible for a tax deduction.



# THE Season

Jeff Beane's GUIDE TO  
NATURAL NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina Wildlife Federation  
1024 Washington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27605

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## FEBRUARY

**February 23-26:** Southeast Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (SEPARC) is holding its annual meeting in Black Mountain, NC. Visit: <http://separc.org/separc2023>.

**February 25:** Eastern gray squirrels are beginning to bear their spring litters.

**February 26:** American toads have begun calling in the Piedmont.

**February 27:** Brook trout eggs are hatching in the Mountains.

**February 28:** Pickerel frogs have begun breeding.

**March 1:** Herring and shad spawning runs are beginning. Crappie fishing begins to peak. Chain pickerel are spawning.

## MARCH

**March 2:** "Read Across America Day" is celebrated; learn a little more about your world by reading something about wild things and wild places. If it's warm tonight, and you find yourself in the southwestern corner of our state, listen for Collins's mountain chorus frog. Its rarely-heard "curruck, curruck, curruck" call is known in North Carolina only from portions of Cherokee and Clay counties.

**March 3:** World Wildlife Day. Do something wild in your world.

**March 3-5:** The nation's oldest white-tailed deer hunting expo, the Dixie Deer Classic, will be held at the NC State Fairgrounds in Raleigh. Visit: <https://www.dixiedeerclassic.org/>

**March 4:** Mink kits are being born. Yellow jessamine and Carolina ipecac are bloom.

**April 5-9:** National Wildlife Week.

**March 5:** Falcate orangetip butterflies are flying.

**March 6:** Several sucker species are beginning their spring spawning runs. Hepatica is in bloom.

**March 7:** Hardwood trees begin to acquire foliage in the Coastal Plain.

**March 8:** The year's first broods of the eastern tiger swallowtail, our official state butterfly, are flying.

**March 10:** Purple martins and rough-winged swallows are returning.

**March 11:** Reptile and Amphibian Day will be held at the North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences in downtown Raleigh. This huge educational event is free to the public. This year's theme is "Vipers." For more information, contact [miranda.dowdy@naturalsciences.org](mailto:miranda.dowdy@naturalsciences.org).

**March 12:** Many reptiles are emerging from hibernation. Southern toads and carpenter frogs have begun calling in the Coastal Plain.

**March 13:** Eastern fox squirrels are bearing their spring litters. Young females may produce only this one litter, but older ones usually have a second litter in summer.

**March 14:** Peak fishing for hickory shad on the Roanoke and Tar rivers. Common and Sandhills pyxie-moss and woolly sunbonnets are in bloom in the Sandhills and Coastal Plain.

**March 15:** Eastern cottontails are bearing their spring litters. Skunk cabbage is in bloom. Red-tailed hawks begin nesting.

**March 16:** American woodcock are nesting. Walleye fishing peaks in some of our western reservoirs.

**March 17:** Rue anemone is in bloom. Carolina Sandhills salamanders are nesting.

**March 18:** Hardwood trees have begun to develop leaves in the Piedmont.

**March 19:** Bachman's sparrows have begun singing in the longleaf pine savannas of the Sandhills and Coastal Plain.

**March 20:** Spring has sprung; the vernal equinox is at 5:24 p.m. EDT (21:24 Coordinated Universal Time). Trout lilies, bloodroot, and several other early spring wildflowers are in bloom.

**March 21:** Fox pups are being born.

**March 22:** The first luna moth broods are emerging (this beautiful and familiar moth typically has three broods per year in our state). Red-shouldered hawks are nesting.

**March 23:** Chimney swifts and common night-hawks are returning.

**March 24:** Oconee bells are blooming.

**March 25:** Yellow-throated warblers and other early spring migrant songbirds are arriving. Large floating bladderwort is in bloom.

**March 26:** Blue toadflax is in bloom.

**March 27:** Louisiana waterthrushes are returning. Oblique-lined tiger beetles are mating.

**March 28:** Peak shorebird migration along the coast. Pea Island, Ocracoke, Lake Mattamuskeet, and Portsmouth Island provide good shorebird viewing.

**March 29:** Brown-headed nuthatches are nesting.

**March 30:** Bluets and several violet species are in bloom. Southern cricket frogs begin calling in the Coastal Plain.

**March 31:** Whip-poor-wills and chuck-will's-widows begin calling. Several baskettail dragonfly species are flying.

## APRIL

**April 1:** Palamedes swallowtails are flying. White-eyed vireos are returning.

**April 2:** Ruby-throated hummingbirds are returning.

**April 3:** Hessel's hairstreaks are flying. Look for these hard-to-find butterflies near stands of Atlantic white cedar.

**April 4:** Dwarf violet iris is in bloom.

**April 5:** Eastern bluebirds begin laying eggs. Spicebush swallowtails are flying. Southern twayblade orchid is in bloom.

**April 6:** White bass fishing peaks on some western lakes and rivers. Fowler's toads begin calling.

**April 7:** Muskrat kits are being born.

**April 8:** Loggerhead shrikes are nesting.

**April 9:** Beaver kits are being born.

**April 10:** Green frogs and northern cricket frogs begin calling.

**April 11:** Cooper's and sharp-shinned hawks begin nesting. Mercury reaches its greatest eastern elongation from the Sun. This is the best time to view the Swift Planet; look for it low in the western sky just after sunset.