



North Carolina  
**WILDLIFE  
FEDERATION**

# Journal

WILD LIVES □ WILD PLACES

Summer 2014

**ON THE HILL**  
Lobbying for wildlife in  
Washington, D.C.

**DEER FARMS**  
The case against captive  
white-tailed deer

**WISH YOU WERE HERE**  
Some of NCWF's  
favorite places

## Award Winners



9

## Red Wolves and Coyotes



10

## Great Outdoors University



11



# Disconnect to Connect

by Tim Gestwicki, Chief Executive Officer

**"Go outside and play,"** my parents used to tell me and my brother, and usually they didn't have to say it twice as we rushed out to play ball or climb into our tree fort. These days, I sometimes hear my wife call out to our daughter, Rose, the same refrain, usually followed by a related admonition, "And turn off that computer!" Fortunately, it's a directive I don't hear too often as Rose generally likes to muck around in our backyard creek, ride her bike, play with the dogs and chickens, and, with longer, warmer months upon us, chase fireflies, swim, and work at the horse barn. Still, she is like most of the kids these days in her technological know-how and doo-dads, so there are times she needs encouragement.

Unfortunately, national surveys show that she is not the norm as fewer and fewer kids spend much time outdoors. In fact, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation, American children now spend more than six hours a day of free time in front of some kind of electronic screen.

Obviously, we are living in an ever more technological era, and the current generation of North Carolinians is the first in which more of our state's citizens live in cities versus rural or farm areas. There are more single family households and, let's face it, people are just plain busy. But these are realities and hurdles that must be realized, factored, and overcome. There are serious ramifications to this indoor world for our kids, from skyrocketing childhood obesity to decreased social and creative development and a generation of youth who have little or no connection to nature and thus a potential vacuum of conservation ethics and conservation leaders.

Today, there are endless ways to fill a summer afternoon without ever leaving the couch or computer, and some of these entertainment options go out of their way to resemble nature. There are popular smartphone apps for bird calls, blogs about connecting to nature, video games for catching a fish. They're all fine, I suppose, but I still think the best way is to just get outdoors. There are plenty of ways to explore the world beyond the sidewalk—or the touchscreen. And I can tell you that we at the North Carolina Wildlife Federation are pouring resources—time, sweat, and passion—into helping to close the ever-widening disconnect between people, especially kids, and nature.

I can't sing enough praises about the work our local chapters are doing when it comes to making it easier to get outside. Our chapter network is growing like crazy, and I invite you to get involved locally with a wildlife chapter and bring along a child or young family member. There's a complete list of chapters on page 12, and you won't find a friendlier, more open group of folks ready to take you on a woodsy romp, backwater paddle trip, youth fishing outing or wildflower planting day.

And if ever we nailed a program to get kids outdoors we have with our Great Outdoors University or GoU. We are pleased with its successes thus far in connecting kids with nature so they can have fun, get dirty or wet, and be inspired. I hope you will enjoy reading about the program on page 11. No technology allowed! Just pure woods, fields, or streams.

While the words of Edward Abbey ring true for me when he said, "It is not enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it," I can't help but think that a reversal of the quote needs to occur. If there is to be protection of lands, waterways, coastal sounds, air quality and wildlife resources, it's up to us to make that happen. We must help our children and their children enjoy and experience the land and all that inhabits the land so they have that appreciation and awareness instilled for driving conservation actions down the line. You can start by checking out the favorite NC places by some of our leaders on pages 6–8, for sure they had an imprinting at an early age with outdoor experiences.

With GoU, family and youth programs and outings, youth scholarships and more, NCWF and our supporters are providing the foundation for future conservation.



**Go outside and play today—so your love for wildlife will fuel your conservation ethic tomorrow.**



# North Carolina WILDLIFE Federation Journal

WILD LIVES ■ WILD PLACES

Summer 2014

Official publication, North Carolina Wildlife Federation (Affiliate of National Wildlife Federation)

## STAFF

Tom Bean, *Director of Government Affairs*  
Mary Bures, *Manager, Great Outdoors University*  
Dom Canavaro, *Development & Operations Director*  
Autumn Chappell, *Membership & Volunteer Coordinator*  
Guy and Judy Gardner, *Project Managers, Farmers Manage Deer*

Tim Gestwicki, *Chief Executive Officer*  
Richard B. Hamilton, *Camouflage Coalition Coordinator*  
Dan Harris, *Marketing Manager*  
Fred Harris, *Natural Resource Specialist*  
T. Edward Nickens, *Communications Editor*  
Chris North, *Conservation Coordinator*  
Greta Salem, *Office Manager*

Jennifer Mihills, *NWF Regional Representative*

## OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Carol Buie-Jackson, *Chair, Matthews*  
John Crutchfield, *Past President, Huntersville*  
John Robbins, *1st Vice Chair, Concord*  
Kelly Darden, *2nd Vice Chair, Greenville*  
Dr. Bill Jarman, *Secretary, Gastonia*  
Susan Harris, *Treasurer, Charlotte*  
G. Richard Mode, *NWFAffiliate Representative, Morganton*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Alligood, *Pantego*  
Bob Brown PhD, *Cary*  
Pinkney Bynum, *Charlotte*  
Scott Fletcher, *Huntersville*  
Sterling Freeman, *Durham*  
John Fuller, *Hickory*  
John Hairr, *Charlotte*  
Phil Hinton, *Sunbury*  
John Hislop, *Hubert*  
Michelle Pentecost, *Charlotte*  
Joyce Shepherd, *Charlotte*  
Erin Singer McCombs, *Asheville*  
Ann B. Somers, *Greensboro*  
Lloyd 'Jock' Tate, *Southern Pines*  
Steve Turley, *Harrisburg*  
Dave Hargett, Ph.D., *NWF Region 3 Director, Greer, SC*

## PRESIDENTS EMERITUS

Dr. John Benbow, *Concord*  
C.B. Brown, *Burlington*  
Bill Kane, *Cullowhee*  
John Lentz, *Ellerbe*  
Dale Mosteller, *Lincolnton*  
Terry Pratt, *Merry Hill*  
Gary Shull, *Vale*  
Bryan Upchurch, *Raleigh*  
Harry Wilfong, *Newton*  
Nolan Yount, *Hickory*

## DIRECTOR EMERITUS

Mike Thomas, *Crouse*

## GENERAL CORPORATE COUNSEL

Robinson Bradshaw & Hinson

## ABOUT THE COVER

Cover photographs: The raw beauty of Linville Gorge, one of NCWF's favorite places. Bird banding, USFWS. All other photographs, unless otherwise noted: [www.istockphoto.com](http://www.istockphoto.com) or courtesy of NCWF.

## CREDITS

Design: Kimberly KC Schott, Red Gate Design  
Printing: Progress Printing, Lynchburg, VA

## features

### Lobby Days 2

When a pair of wide-eyed students take to Capitol Hill, wildlife wins.

### Oh, Deer! 4

North Carolina struggles with ways to protect wild deer from deadly diseases.

### Open for Wildlife 6

NCWF staff remember their favorite wild places.

### A Round of Applause 8

The 2014 Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards Programs shines a light on heroes.

## departments

Pathways in Conservation **inside front cover**

Federation News **10**

Chapters Update **12**

The Season **back cover**

**NCWF MISSION** The mission of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation is to be the leading advocate for all North Carolina wildlife and its habitat.

**GOALS** Recognizing that wildlife includes all species of wild flora and fauna, the goals of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation are:

- To advocate the conservation and enhancement of all wildlife and its habitat.
- To advocate ethical and biologically sound hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities.
- To advocate education, for children and adults, that increases public awareness of wildlife, its dependence on habitat, and the importance of both to human existence.
- In affiliation with our member organizations, to communicate, cooperate, and partner with the North Carolina General Assembly, state resource agencies, corporations, and other interested groups to advance the well being of wildlife and its habitat.
- In affiliation with the National Wildlife Federation, to support national and international issues of mutual interest.



# ROAD TRIP

North Carolina college students join with wildlife professionals to spread the Teaming With Wildlife message in Washington, D.C.

by Courtney Anderson

Standing in a line of corporate black suits and black umbrellas, I looked over to my companion. She was dressed in orange, and I was wearing bright blue, yet we stood as nonchalantly as possible in an icy February drizzle trying to hide the fact that our turquoise umbrella was broken. We were in the security line at one of the U.S. House of Representatives buildings on Capitol Hill, branded by the unmistakable I'm-a-nervous-student looks on our faces. My first instinct was to be embarrassed at how blatantly we stuck out, but then I noticed something about the looks we were receiving—people were smiling at us.

This spring, as a student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, I had the opportunity to participate in an academic think tank, called Ecologically SANE, which stands for “Stoked About Natural Environments.” In this year-long course offered through the honors college, we examined the university’s role in creating an environmentally knowledgeable and politically active population, discussed current environmental issues, and brainstormed about how to encourage positive relationships with nature within younger generations. It was a unique course, with two

professors and only twelve students whose specialties ranged from communications and music to biology and computer science. Students were offered opportunities to take trips, including bog turtle expeditions, service trips to the Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Hospital, and environmental education workshops. One such trip involved the class going to Washington, D.C., to participate in the Teaming With Wildlife Fly-In.

Our leaders in Washington were NCWF board member Ann Berry Somers, a senior lecturer in biology at UNC-G, and her co-instructor, Catherine Matthews. We joined staff with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission staff. The purpose of the annual Fly-In is to bring in spokespeople from across the country to encourage state representatives to support the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program (SWG). The North Carolina Wildlife Federation has been working for many years to secure annual and dedicated funding for the SWG program and the implementation of the North Carolina Wildlife Action Plans, which are aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. The delegates set up meetings with their federal representatives to share their



research and illustrate the importance of protecting wildlife, with a particular emphasis on the essential role of federal funding.

The event started with an all-day workshop on wildlife advocacy. Organizers gave us background on the wildlife grants program, stressing how funding for the program had plummeted in the past few years and the effects this has had on the success of implementation of state Wildlife Action Plans. They coached us on how to talk to representatives on Capitol Hill, including what information staffers find useful and what they don't.

With our group of students being fairly new to the SWG program, we were relieved to hear the recommendation to steer clear of long lists of numbers and statistics. The main advice: stick to what you know. If students know how to do anything, it's homework, so we did our research on local North Carolina SWG-funded programs and found that a lot of those programs involved animals that we had some experience with through our think tank class, such as North Carolina's mountain bog turtle. With some basic knowledge and a lot of passion in our pockets, we excitedly awaited the big trip to the Hill.

## BRIGHT LIGHTS

So, now back to those nervous students in the security line, smiling awkwardly at the suited figures around us. We had our appointments set and our information ready—and we immediately got lost. With some friendly direction, however, we made it to our first meeting, and even had a few spare minutes to practice our speeches. We were very politely received but, when the time came to deliver my spiel, something unexpected and wonderful happened. I froze. All of the weight of the Hill came down and suddenly I had forgotten all of the homework I had done, like a mind-blank on an exam but so much worse. Luckily, however, I had something to draw on that day. I might not have been able to recall the details and the data, but my passion for wild places was completely intact.

Immediately, I began talking about bog turtles and how special they are. These little turtles, as charismatic as they are, have a big role to play as an indicator of the quality of their habitat, the meadow bog, a unique wetland found in western North Carolina. Bog turtles are one of the many species on the verge of being put on the endangered species list, and the programs funded through the State Wildlife Grants are an important contributor to the effort to

keep that from happening. I knew enough facts about them to get by, but what I really talked about was how important they are to me and why they should be important to everyone. And, once again, when I looked up in embarrassment, I saw a smiling face.

So that became our tactic, and it was a darn good one. For the rest of our time, we opened meetings by saying: "We're students and we came to tell you about this amazing time we had getting muddy in a bog!" With our listeners hooked on our enthusiasm, we could just slide in the facts and numbers. By the time we left their offices, we had people on our side. On the bog turtle's side. Our representatives and their staff members knew that we were there to ask them to stabilize the funding for SWG and they knew, in theory, how the money is spent. But that day they learned what that money does in an on-the-ground way and how that money affects real people in their state. And, just as exciting, a class of students from North Carolina got to experience politics and make a difference for the wildlife of their home state. At the end of the day, we walked out of the Capitol Hill legislative buildings with our turquoise umbrella held high.

*Courtney Anderson is a student at the University of North Carolina—Greensboro, majoring in biology and environmental studies.*



Comprised of more than 6,300 state fish and wildlife agencies, wildlife biologists, hunters, anglers, birdwatchers, hikers, nature-based businesses, and other conservationists, the Teaming With Wildlife (TWW) coalition is the largest and most diverse coalition ever assembled in support of wildlife conservation funding. The TWW coalition is the leading advocate for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants (SWG) program and the implementation of the State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs), which are aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered.

Nine million North Carolinians share this state, from Mount Mitchell, the highest peak east of the Mississippi River, to the Outer Banks where sea turtles and royal terns nest, and across 1.8 million acres of the Albemarle-Pamlico estuary. The black-water streams and pocosins of the Coastal Plain blend into the rolling hills of the Piedmont where red-cockaded woodpeckers live in remnants of what was once a vast longleaf pine forest. As North Carolina grows, the North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan can help us fulfill our responsibility to conserve wildlife and the places wildlife thrives for future generations.



DAVID HEWITT



# DEER FARMING in NORTH CAROLINA

NCWF weighs in on the link between captive deer and elk—and wildlife disease. *by Robert D. Brown, Ph.D*

NCWF's Camo Coalition Coordinator Dick Hamilton and NCWF board member Bob Brown were invited to participate in meetings of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission's Cervid Disease Task Force. The task force was to survey the safeguards and vulnerabilities in North Carolina to cervid diseases, both in captive facilities and in the wild. The primary concern is Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

CWD is classified as a Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) disease, much like Mad Cow Disease in cattle, Scrapie in sheep, and Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease in humans. It was first detected in 1967 at Colorado State University, in captive deer held in a pen next to sheep with Scrapie. In the 1980s it was found in wild mule deer and elk in Colorado and Wyoming. Through the 1990s it spread to Saskatchewan, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Montana. In the next decade CWD continued its march to a number of other states. Shipping captive deer and elk across state lines caused many of these outbreaks. The disease is fatal, there is no treatment or cure, and there is no test available for live animals. Since it involves a type of prion, or modified protein, the disease contaminates the soil and persists for long periods under extreme conditions.

In November, 2012 the NCWRC was set to vote on new rules for captive cervids in North Carolina. The proposed rules would allow for importation of cervids to captive facilities, reduction in the requirement for testing dead animals, and expansion of current facilities and licensing of new deer farms. As the vote was about to be taken, CWD was found in captive deer at a Pennsylvania deer farm, where these rules were already in place. CWD has since been found in three distinct populations of wild deer in Pennsylvania.

In addition to Hamilton and Brown, the Task Force included representatives of the North American and N.C. Deer Farmer's Associations, the N.C. Department of Agriculture, the N.C. State Veterinarian, the Quality Deer Management Association, and USDA-APHIS. Other attendees included representatives of the Southeast Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study at the University of Georgia, the N.C. Farm Bureau, other deer hunters and other deer farmers. A great deal of information was supplied in written form and via PowerPoint presentations and videos concerning CWD and the deer hunting and deer farming industries.

Some of the facts presented are startling. Forty-nine percent of the mule deer in Wyoming have tested positive for CWD, and the state herd has declined by 50 percent over 10 years. Wisconsin spent \$25 million on CWD-related activities in 2002-2006, yet hunting license sales have declined 10 percent. Virginia has spent \$180,000 per year since CWD was detected. North Carolina spent \$250,000 on a buy-out program that reduced the number of captive deer facilities from over 100 to 37. There are now 777 captive cervids in North Carolina, of which 240 are white-tailed deer and 74 are elk; the rest are exotic cervids. In 2006, North Carolina resident deer hunters spent \$187 million on retail purchases, supporting 3,408 jobs and \$20 million in state tax revenue. They also spent \$20 million on travel-related expenses. The cost of inspecting North Carolina deer farms comes from the funds generated by hunters through the Pittman-Robertson Act. The NCWRC conducts surveys for CWD every 5 years; so far in 2013-2014, it has tested 3,843 samples, mostly of hunter-killed deer and all deer that have died in pens. Final results of testing of these samples had not yet been released as of the publication of this report.

After three all-day meetings, the Task Force came to a consensus on only three issues. 1) The fines for illegally holding or importing deer are miniscule and need to be substantially increased.

- 2) The state rehabilitation program for fawn deer should be ceased.
- 3) The NCWRC should complete its 2013-2014 CWD survey before the Commission votes on the rules. Other than those issues, the proponents of keeping wild deer wild and CWD out of our state and those wanting to enhance deer farming were at odds.

The problem most of the proponents of maintaining strong requirements see is that native cervids are a public resource, owned by all of us. This is codified in the Public Trust Doctrine of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. In some states, like Texas, hunters pay for "access" to shoot a captive deer or elk, but the landowner does not actually own the animal. In Pennsylvania, landowners may fence their land, and then pay the state for the deer they have trapped. They actually "own" the deer, and the deer farms are regulated by the Department of Agriculture, not the state's wildlife agency.

Though CWD has not been shown through research to transmit from one species (i.e., cervids) to another (i.e., bovids), it is believed to have originally come from sheep with Scrapie. Since it can be transferred from one cervid to another, captive exotic cervids, such as red deer and Sika deer, could transmit the disease to white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk and moose. Currently in Texas, the state with the most captive cervids on hunting and breeding preserves, captive deer are managed with year-round feeding, vaccination, artificial insemination and even cloning (from ear cells). Breeding bucks sell for as much as \$ 400,000. And these artificially inseminated or cloned so-called "Frankendeer" sell to hunters for tens of thousands of dollars. But even Texas does not allow the importation of cervids.

Although the captive facilities in North Carolina are mostly "certified" by the USDA, they may not be disease free. Certification means CWD has not been detected in any deer that have died in 5 consecutive years. The farm in Pennsylvania with the CWD animal had been certified for 9 years, so clearly the certification program is inadequate. For those of us who have had captive deer pens for research purposes, we know that accidents happen – trees fall across fences (especially during hurricanes), workers leave gates open, etc. Wild deer often get "nose to nose" with captive deer through the fences, especially during the rut. And any facility that concentrates wild animals, for whatever reason, is subject to disease outbreaks.

Of the 37 deer farms in North Carolina, 24 have 10 or fewer

deer. Most are "mom and pop" operations with a few deer as pets. Only two farms have more than 50 deer. You can't shoot a deer behind a fence in our state, and there are no venison processing facilities for commercial sale of white-tailed deer. Thus the deer farms can only sell their deer out of state. This is not a large industry. Allowing the importation of cervids and expansion of the industry would have no significant economic, sociological or ecological benefit to our native wildlife or our citizens.

At risk, however, are our entire white-tailed deer and elk populations. By not allowing these rule changes, we help protect a multi-million dollar hunting and wildlife-watching industry, our \$9.2 billion animal agriculture industry, and we help to protect our cultural heritage of wildlife as a public resource.

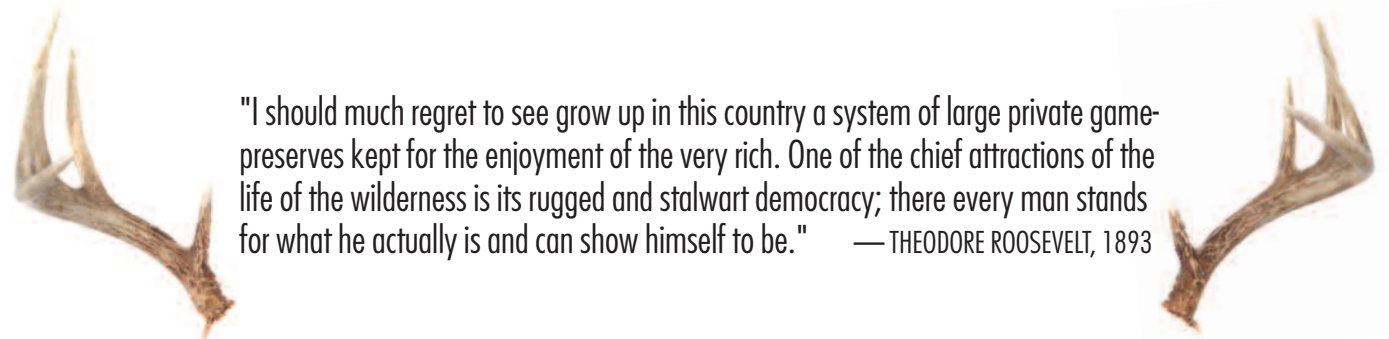
Hamilton and Brown, along with other members of the Task Force, have submitted their comments to the NCWRC as individuals. Before the Rules are amended, the NCWRC will hold public hearings on the matter, and CAMO and the NCWF will submit their official position statements. We will support maintenance of strong rules to prevent importation of deer into North Carolina.

*Dr. Brown is the former Dean of the College of Natural Resources (2006-2012) at NC State University and former President of The Wildlife Society. He is currently a Board Member of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation and a Professional Member of the Boone & Crockett Club.*

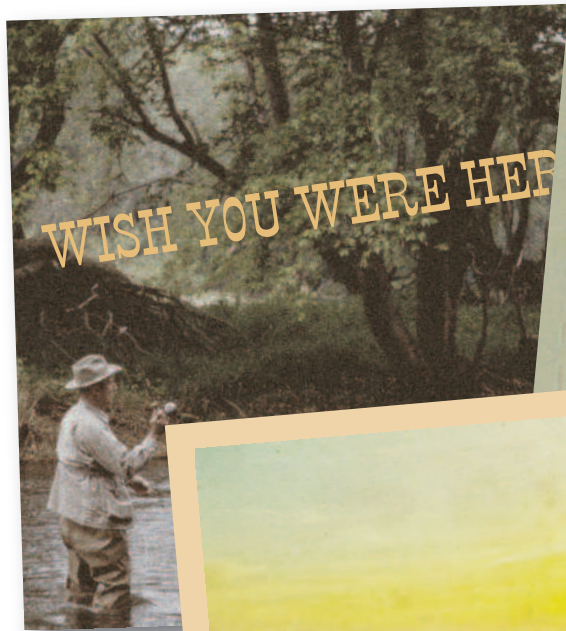
**UPDATE:** As this Journal goes to press the Legislature is still in budget conference. The House version of the 2014-15 budget would transfer control over captive deer farms from Wildlife Resources Commission to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

**Transfer of control of captive deer farms from Wildlife to Agriculture as proposed in the House budget is a poorly conceived idea that needs closer evaluation.**

The Senate version of the budget does not contain the transfer provision; it wisely calls for further evaluation of the current situation, the risks from CWD, and the best way to manage the captive deer farms with a report to the next session of the General Assembly.



"I should much regret to see grow up in this country a system of large private game-preserves kept for the enjoyment of the very rich. One of the chief attractions of the life of the wilderness is its rugged and stalwart democracy; there every man stands for what he actually is and can show himself to be." — THEODORE ROOSEVELT, 1893



**STRONG TIES TO NORTH CAROLINA'S WILD LANDS INSPIRE  
NCWF BOARD MEMBERS TO FIGHT FOR THEIR FUTURE.**

*We* asked a few of our North Carolina Wildlife Federation board members—past and present—to think of their favorite places. Just as we hoped, they spanned the range from the mountains to the sea. What they have in common is a love of wildlife that drives NCWF to fight for wild places so the next generation of North Carolina conservationists can be similarly inspired. Enjoy.

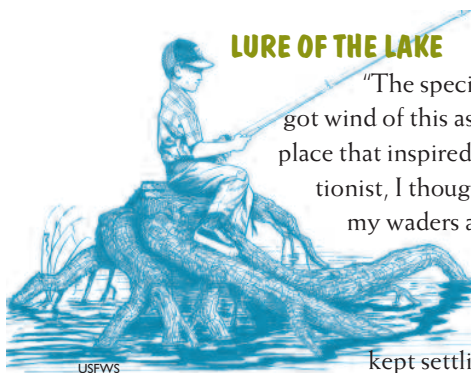


## THE WONDER OF SMALL WATERS

Steels Creek is a tributary of Warrior Fork, a stream that flows into the Catawba River just north of Morganton. Most of Steels Creek and particularly its headwaters is a beautiful, well-preserved natural area in Pisgah National Forest, open to the public for hunting, fishing, hiking, picnicking and camping. Access to the watershed and this cascading beauty is from three forest service roads off the west side of NC Highway 181. Even if the gates are closed during the winter, the hike to and from the stream is filled with natural beauty. During the spring and summer, wildflowers abound and carrying a good identification book is essential. I have observed animals ranging from salamanders to bears during my hikes to and from the trout stream. As a fly fisherman, I have enjoyed catching all three species of trout in Steels Creek—rainbow trout, brown trout, and our native brook trout. On a few occasions, catching all three species on the same day has given me bragging rights of a North Carolina Grand Slam!

There is a number of rock outcropping that are homes for bats and various bird species as well as numerous waterfalls. I have used a rock outcropping on a number of occasions as a refuge from a summer downpour. I can't think of a better place to be stranded in the rain than on Steels Creek. A hike and a picnic to the upper waterfall is nature at its best and a photographer's dream place. Many may consider this a downside, but Steels Creek is one of the few streams I fly fish alone on a regular basis because my cell phone works and I can call out in an emergency.

—Alen Baker



## LURE OF THE LAKE

"The special places." When I first got wind of this assignment, to think of a place that inspired my passion as a conservationist, I thought of many of the places my waders and boots have been.

Although I'm a mountain boy and an insane trout fisherman, my mind still

kept settling on a place far from the

hills: Phelps Lake in far eastern North Carolina.

Thirty years ago I was selling furniture on the road, and I became friends with one of my dealers. Joe Taft at Taft Furniture in Greenville and I talked about our shared love for fly fishing. One day he asked me if I would take a day off and go to one of his special places. He took me to Phelps Lake. Now for those of us use to the big impoundments in the state, this lake is nothing like what you picture a lake to be. Phelps is one of two large natural lakes in the state. It is undammed and unsoiled by sediment. It owes its water to four small springs and rain. Because little sediment is washed in, much of the bottom is firm and the water is clear as an aquarium. It's 25 miles around and bordered

by grass beds that can be waded. A small boat to get to the grass beds, a handful of small popping bugs, a few cans of Beanie Weenies, and some Sun Drops on ice and you can lose yourself for days. I have, many times.

Nothing fires me up like a bass blowing up on a popping bug 15 feet from me, especially if I've stalked him carefully. There's one beautiful little state Park campground with a hot shower, one handicap fishing pier with a canoe drop built onto it, and Conman's Hunting Guide Service and its three little cottages—those are the only facilities on the lake. Let the rest of the world blow by Roper and Creswell on the way to the Banks.

I am reluctant to give this special place up, but it was given up to me by a friend so I share it now with my NCWF friends. I will always value the energy Lake Phelps lent me to help fight the Navy off this special place during the Outlying Landing Field fight. I will forever treasure the pictures of my children wading the grass beds as they grew taller each year. Now I will watch my Grand Girls fish the same grass beds, and know in my heart that special places such as this are too precious to lose.

—G. Richard Mode



## LOCAL TREASURE

My favorite birding spot? If I had to pick just one place, it would have to be Squirrel Lake Park in Matthews. The park is about 30 acres, mostly wooded,

nestled in between typical suburban neighborhoods with a small man-made lake fed by a small stream.

I live less than one mile from Squirrel Lake Park and have seen many of the same 70-plus species of birds at the park that I've seen in my own backyard. Among my favorites are indigo buntings and rose-breasted grosbeaks in the spring and fall, and goldfinch, cardinals, and red-shouldered hawks year-round. So why go to the park? Because over seven years ago, the park was adopted by a small band of committed individuals who installed feeders, nesting boxes, and wildlife gardens for the wildlife and the citizens of Matthews to enjoy. Now I can go to the park and sit and watch not only migrating songbirds eat at one of the 16 feeders, or the waterfowl swimming in the lake, but I can also see neighborhood kids becoming aware of the birds with which they share the park. I can see families enjoying the trails and stopping to watch a bird feed its young in one of the nesting boxes. I can hear the sounds of people enjoying the outdoors and the calls of the barred owls living in the park at the same time.

Why Squirrel Lake Park? It's a great example of how people and wildlife can coexist, and a great example of why we need to preserve habitat in a metropolitan area. And it's also great example of the impact a small group of wildlife enthusiasts can have when they turn their love of a place into action.

—Carol Buie-Jackson



# FAVORITE PLACES



## HOME WATERS

My favorite place is Durham's Creek, a small tributary off Pamlico Sound located in my home of eastern North Carolina. Majestic cypress trees draped in shrouds of Spanish moss.

Water the color of well-brewed coffee and the sweet pungent aromas that permeate this environment make up this most beautiful of places I've seen. Having been fortunate to have caught king salmon in Alaska, blue marlin in Hawaii, tarpon in Costa Rica, as well as giant bluefin tuna off the North Carolina coast, I'll stay say that this minute spot brings back a million memories of my past and the birth of my love for the outdoors.

I remember an early morning rising, far preceding the alarm clock's beckoning, as my mother would find me fully dressed and waiting for my uncle to pick me up. An excitement beyond words, combined with a breakfast of biscuits and juice and conversations aimed at what we hoped to catch. A leaky wooden rental boat that required bailing from rain and small leaks, combined with the necessary check and evacuation of the occasional water snake or moccasin from beneath the forward and aft decks. The excited loading of "my tackle"—a cane pole with bobber—along with coolers, life vests, and bag lunches. The chuckles brought about of my uncle's occasional expletives regarding the starting of his cantankerous outboard and the wind in my face and the slap of the water as we meandered to our "secret spot."

"This is a good spot," my uncle would shout, as I hurriedly baited my pole with the fattest earthworm I could find and plopped it beneath an overhanging limb next to a large cypress knee. The intensity of my staring at the cork and imagining what lunkers were swimming inches from my bait. The sudden plunge of the cork, the slicing of line and tug from my quarry swinging aboard a mixed bag of yellow perch, bluegill, crappie, and an occasional largemouth bass, which my uncle referred to as "chubs." A healthy lunch of bologna sandwiches, Pepsi Colas, and that Southern delicacy, "a pack of nabs." Each mouthful went down with the faint aroma of fish. Such memories bring back yearnings for a simpler time and place. There truly is "no place like home."

—Kelly Darden



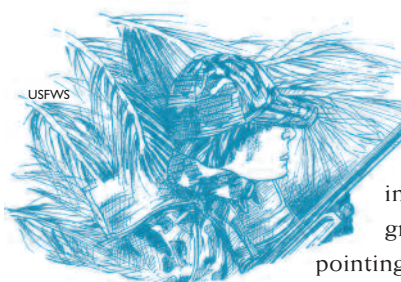
## GOOD BALD

One of my favorite North Carolina views is on an interesting four-mile round-trip hike on a great segment of the Appalachian Trail. To

get there, you access the A.T. at Wayah Crest picnic area, off Highway 64, west of Franklin. Take Wayah Road to the Wayah Gap. Turn left into the picnic area and park.

The first two miles is uphill, but not too bad, to where the trail opens into a meadow. From the meadow you can see the top of Siler Bald which you must now climb. Unless you are a fifth-grader with the legs and lungs of youth, climb slowly and catch your breath when necessary. There is almost a 360-degree view from the top, an uncommon treat on this portion of the Appalachian Trail. On a clear day you can see mountains, lakes, and get a sense of the terrain early settlers had to contend with, without our modern conveniences. It is a good place to sit a while, hang out, eat lunch, and marvel at the scenery and the quiet. Be sure to bring your own water. About a half-mile from the meadow, down a blue-blazed trail, there's an A.T. shelter and a spring. This is a great place for a family hike and will be sure to make the kids early to bed.

—Bill Kane



## GOOD MORNING, SPRING

It is 2:30 a.m. on the first day of wild turkey season in North Carolina, and I am rolling into my camouflage clothing, grabbing a quick breakfast, and pointing myself north on I-77 to the Wilkes/Alleghany County line. My destination is a small mountain ridge clearing within the 6,276-acre Thurmond Chatham Game Land along Longbottom Road, a.k.a. DeHart Road. It's a two-hour drive to where I park my truck, and another hour of strenuous hiking up the ridge, but it is worth it.

As I reach the clearing, the first hints of dawn are breaking through behind me and the whip-poor-wills are calling incessantly all around. I set out my hen and jake decoys to my left and move into my cover in the mountain laurel. At about 6:30 a.m., I hear the crows call over the ridge and I know the gobblers are not far behind. Another 10 minutes, I hear the first gobble below me, then another and then another. In 2005, I counted a total of twenty-two different gobblers either above me near the Blue Ridge Parkway or below me in the numerous saddles and hollows.

I give several quick yelps on my diaphragm call and sit back for action. As I wait, the mature oak-hickory forest and clearing edge comes alive with neotropical migrants—red-eyed vireos, chestnut-sided warblers, Canada warblers, and black-throated green warblers. I almost forget what I am here for as the gobbler and two hens approach my decoys. It is 8:10 a.m. I give a quick putt call and the gobbler drops with a flap near the hen decoy. It is my fifth turkey in seven years from this place. I know no better place to experience the nature of North Carolina and the joys of spring turkey hunting.

—Scott T. Fletcher

# Congratulations



## 2014 Governor's Conservation Achievement Award Winners!

### CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

#### Jean Beasley (Topsail Island)

Beasley's work on behalf of sea turtle conservation has reshaped North Carolina coastal policy.

### WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

#### Robert Curry (Raleigh)

The chief of Inland Fisheries for the Wildlife Commission has a passion for conservation and education.

### SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR

#### Bryan Perry (Zebulon)

Wild turkeys might be Perry's conservation focus, but inspiring new generations of hunters isn't far behind.

### LAND CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

#### Jamin Simmons (Fairfield)

From supporting red wolf restoration to carbon sequestration programs, the Mattamuskeet area farmer embraces innovation.

### WATER CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

#### Roger Dick (Albemarle)

The Uwharrie region banker is an eloquent defender of rivers, lakes, and public access.

### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

#### Dr. Shaefny Grays (Morrisville)

Associate director of the community for diversity for NCSU's College of Natural Resources, Shaefny directs a lauded mentoring program.

### CONSERVATION COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR

#### Joe Albea (Winterville)

From public television to working a wealth of media contacts, Joe Albea is a voice for wildlife.

### YOUTH CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

#### Rachel Hopkins (Raleigh)

The young Raleigh student speaks forcefully and successfully for nongame species conservation.

### LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR

#### Representative Chuck McGrady (Hendersonville)

In a difficult environment, McGrady continues to keep conservation top of mind.

### MUNICIPAL CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

#### City of Jacksonville

Under the direction of assistant city manager Glenn Hargett, Jacksonville showcases its New River treasures.

### WILDLIFE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

#### John R. Spruill (Hampstead)

Jack Spruill is a fighter for eastern North Carolina wildlife, farms, and wild lands.

Register now for the North Carolina Wildlife Federation Annual Meeting and Awards Gala  
September 6, 2014, Research Triangle Park  
[www.ncwf.org](http://www.ncwf.org) or (919) 833-1923

### HUNTER SAFETY EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

#### Stony Rushing (Wingate)

Rushing recognized an underserved group of hunters, and stepped up to solve the problem.

### NCWF CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

#### Habitat and Wildlife Keepers (Matthews)

The group's work around the Matthews community has turned the town green.

### NCWF AFFILIATE OF THE YEAR

#### North Carolina Hunters for the Hungry

It takes hundreds of volunteer hours to process and donate thousands of pounds of venison for needy families statewide.

### NATURAL RESOURCES SCIENTIST OF THE YEAR

#### Dr. Christopher Moorman (Raleigh)

When it comes to the science behind wildlife-friendly forestry, Moorman leads the pack.

### CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR

#### North Carolina Quality Deer Management Association

For NCQDMA, a passion for hunting is matched with a passion for conservation.

### BUSINESS CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

#### The Webb Farm (Ellerbe)

Bill Webb has turned North Carolina's quail hunting heritage into a family farm success story.

### WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR

#### Master Officer Robert Newsome (Marion)

For 14 years the McDowell County officer has merged law enforcement with public outreach.

### MARINE FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR

#### Sgt. Carter Witten (Havelock)

Based in Havelock, Witten has led special enforcement projects throughout eastern North Carolina.

### NORTH CAROLINA CONSERVATION HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

#### Fred Stanback (Salisbury)

One of North Carolina's leading philanthropists, Stanback quietly supports land and wildlife conservation efforts that benefit every North Carolinian.



## Federal Judge Halts Coyote Hunting in Red Wolf Lawsuit

A federal district court judge on May 13, 2014 ordered a halt to coyote hunting near the world's only wild population of endangered red wolves because the animals look so similar and are easily confused by hunters. Judge Terrence Boyle's ruling pulled the plug on coyote hunting in five northeastern North Carolina counties and is designed to reduce red wolf deaths from mistaken identity that violate the Endangered Species Act. Boyle said he'd review his ruling in six months.

The preliminary injunction blocks coyote hunting in Dare, Hyde, Beaufort, Tyrrell, and Washington counties until a trial can be held in a lawsuit that aims to permanently end coyote hunting near the red wolf's territory. The Southern Environmental Law Center sued North Carolina's Wildlife Resources Commission on behalf of three other groups in an effort to put an end to red wolf killings.

Red wolves were believed to be extinct in the wild except for the North Carolina population. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service bred them in captivity for seven years before reintroducing about 100 of them into the region's wildest places in 1987. Since that time, some have been mistaken for coyotes and killed. The two species sometimes interbreed, creating hybrid animals that appear similar to both. Adult red wolves weigh an average of about 20 pounds heavier than coyotes, but both stand about 2 feet tall at the shoulder and are about 4 feet long with their tail. Both species have similar coloration.

The commission voted last July to allow coyote hunting at any time of day or night with no bag limit on private land and on public land even at night with lights if the hunter has a permit. Coyote hunting was previously limited to daylight hours.

"By authorizing coyote hunting in the five-county red wolf recovery area, and in particular by authorizing coyote hunting during all seasons and at any time day or night, the commission has increased the likelihood that a red wolf will be shot," Boyle wrote in his order.

COYOTE



RED WOLF



STEVE HILLEBRAND, USFWS

*Federal Judge Terrence Boyle ordered a halt to coyote hunting near the world's only wild population of endangered red wolves because the animals look so similar and are easily confused by hunters.*

The Wildlife Resources Commission has notified the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by letter of June 2, 2014 that the capture, sterilization and release of coyotes in the red wolf zone will no longer be allowed. The USFWS had been placing sterilized coyotes into the red wolf zone in the hope that they would reduce the influx of new coyotes and not contribute to the coyote or red wolf/coyote hybrid population through reproduction. This experimental management technique has not shown any measureable positive results and the sterilized coyotes tend to go to private lands where they cause damage

and cannot now be controlled by hunting.

The Wildlife Commission also urgently requested the USFWS in this recent letter to conduct an immediate programmatic evaluation using the abundance of currently available data and information to determine the feasibility of achieving a stable, self-sustaining population of red wolves on federal lands as set forth in the red wolf recovery plan. Such an evaluation is consistent with the Endangered Species Act requirement specifying that recovery plans include estimates of the time required and costs to carry out the methods necessary to meet the plan's goal.



# Go U!

by Mary Bures, Great Outdoors University manager

Many of us remember playing outside until being called in for dinner. Always looking for the next chance to get outside and have fun was the norm, and it was hard to imagine missing out on all the fun, discoveries, and wonders of nature by simply not playing or being outside. Over the last two decades, however, childhood has moved indoors. The average American boy or girl spends just four to seven minutes in unstructured play each day and more than seven hours a day in front of an electronic screen. This shift inside is profoundly impacting the overall wellness of our nation's kids.

The North Carolina Wildlife Federation's Great Outdoors University (GoU) is working to reduce this nature deficit and restore the bonds to nature for the mental, physical and spiritual well-being of our children and the health of the earth. Since the inception of NCWF's initiative last summer, more than 1,800 children have had a unique outdoor experience through GoU. And more are enjoying the outdoors this year.

Kids have fished, explored streams, walked in the woods, taken boat rides, pulled a bow, and simply eaten a sandwich in a field. These were every-day activities for most of us growing up, yet kids today too rarely have these opportunities.

As we celebrate our anniversary and a year of successes, we invite you to support GoU as a volunteer and share your passion for the outdoors with the children and/or fund a day trip for a child or a group of children. For more information, contact Mary Bures at [mary@ncwf.org](mailto:mary@ncwf.org).



Since last summer, more than 1,800 children have had a unique outdoor experience through GoU.

**I am pleased to serve on the Advisory Council for the North Carolina Wildlife Federation's Great Outdoors University program. This program makes possible a much-needed chance for our youth to experience the wonders of the natural world in ways that can have a profound effect for years to come. It offers a unique opportunity to learn "outdoors" using an interesting experiential approach for teaching many valuable lessons: a "hands-on" way of studying the physical and life sciences, the joy of nature exploration and discovery, the mastery of outdoor skills, self-confidence, physical fitness, and mentoring with admirable role models.**

**I value a program like this to empower youth to discover our natural world in ways that invite them to explore, engage their senses, follow their curiosity and express their sense of wonder about nature. Through an experience with Great Outdoors University, participants become young scientists for a day, and hopefully in the process, foster a love for learning in the great outdoors that can have a lasting positive impact—psychologically and physically to live happier and healthier lives and be the best North Carolinians possible."**

**—former Governor James B. Martin**

## Clean Water Act Ruling Proposal Good for NC

The President's Administration proposed a landmark rule in March that will clarify which types of water bodies are protected by the Clean Water Act. Two Supreme Court decisions over the past decade have left about 20 million wetland acres and 2 million miles of streams at increased risk of pollution or destruction. NCWF has been coordinating North Carolina support for the rules via action alerts, public comments, and conservation group sign-on letters all spring and summer.

The proposal clarifies which waters are—and which are not—protected by the Clean Water Act. It will protect many streams and wetlands that are currently in legal limbo. The rule also specifically excludes many man-made ditches, ponds, and irrigation systems and honors the law's current exemptions for normal farming, ranching, and forestry practices.

Over half of North Carolina's 242,500 stream miles flow intermittently or are headwater streams that are now at risk of pollution and degradation. Supreme Court decisions in 2001 and 2006 and related agency guidance have confused and limited the scope of the Clean Water Act and made it much more difficult to maintain and restore North Carolina's intermittently flowing streams, headwaters, and freshwater wetlands.

Weakened stream and wetland protections at the federal level leave these waters more vulnerable to adverse impacts from development and discharges of pollutants which ultimately could result in changing water temperatures, increasing erosion and sedimentation, changing nutrient levels, lowering water quality, and degrading critical and unique fish and wildlife habitats. The dredging and filling of these waters reduces their storage capacity and increases flooding and flood damage downstream.

The rulemaking process will clarify and strengthen the Army Corps of Engineers and Environmental Protection Agency regulatory definitions of "waters of the United States."

## CHECK OUT OUR CHAPTERS!

Our wildlife chapter activities are endless and provide something for everyone.

For more information on how you can participate, contact Christopher North at [chris@ncwf.org](mailto:chris@ncwf.org).



Capital Chapter



Concord Wildlife Alliance



CROWN (Charlotte Reconnecting Ourselves With Nature)



F.I.S.H. (Fayetteville Increasing Sustainable Habitat)



PAWS (Gaston County Piedmont Area Wildlife Stewards)



HAWK (Habitat and Wildlife Keepers)



Lake James Area Wildlife and Nature Society



Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists



Mountain Island Lake Wildlife Stewards



Mountain WILD



PACT (Protecting, Advocating and Conserving)



South Wake Conservationists



The Albemarle Conservation and Wildlife Chapter

The nexus of passion and action combined in a collective local effort is what makes NCWF chapters such a powerful voice for wildlife. And just as passion springs from various sources, it is exhibited in different ways. Passion prompts our volunteers in their efforts to plant 700 Atlantic white cedar saplings in the Great Dismal State Park. Passion fuels work on Saturdays building nest boxes and drives our chapter volunteers to attend public hearings on wind power siting, tree ordinances, and marine resources management. A driving passion for wildlife and wild places is to be both nurtured and celebrated. Meet a few chapter leaders and hear their stories.

**Billy Wilson**, president of the Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists, always seems to have his hands dirty. Billy believes that wildlife conservation is a perfect fit with the unique culture of the Lake Norman community. Billy is an avid sailor and fisherman, and during his first lake outings, he observed that the lake was teeming with wildlife and noticed that many of the habitats were constructed by LNWC. As a philanthropist with experience in nonprofit management, LNWC's grassroots-based mission appealed to Billy. His favorite part of the organization's work involves engaging conservation veterans and newcomers alike, including people of all ages, to take part in hands-on "down in the trenches" conservation projects.

**Dawn Anderson** has been a leader in the HAWK chapter but when the CROWN chapter emerged she "jumped at the opportunity" to get involved. She is currently the vice president of CROWN and she says it's "not just about saving wildlife. I want to help humans, people, young and old, to connect or reconnect with nature for their own well-being. I consider it part of my responsibility, that's why I stay involved and encourage others to get involved."




**Ben Colvin**, current president of Mountain WILD!, has been working for wildlife conservation for years. "With over a decade of environmental education in my background, I was drawn to the possibility of bringing other audiences into the group to act and learn together." Living in the mountains provides a unique experience. "We live in an incredibly unique place, and wildlife lives here for some of the same reasons people live here. We are obligated to protect and conserve these places for

future generations. It is exciting to recruit new supporters that are already involved somehow in the community but offer a new way to act and support North Carolina's wildlife."

Thanks to these volunteers and the hundreds of folks in our local wildlife chapters who are "thinking globally and acting locally."

## WELCOME NEW CHAPTERS!

**South Wake Conservationists.** Bass Lake Park is a beautiful oasis in Holly Springs and now hosts a new NCWF wildlife chapter. Initial project goals for the chapter include removal of exotic invasive plants, building and maintaining avian nesting boxes, enhancing the lake habitat for fish, and supporting student research projects. Although the chapter will first concentrate activities on Bass Lake Park there are many more projects in the works for the surrounding area. South Wake Conservationists is poised and ready to conserve and improve wildlife habitat and diversity through local conservation projects and public outreach. Visit the new website at [www.basslakeparkncwf.org](http://www.basslakeparkncwf.org).

**Concord Wildlife Alliance.** Concord is proud of its parks and lakes and now a core group has formed a chapter to focus on involving the entire city as a certified Community Wildlife Habitat. Certification will include managing homes, businesses, workplaces, schools, and places of worship for local wildlife. The town's mayor and city council have endorsed the certification effort and rallied around the chapter. If you are one of the nearly 80,000 residents of Concord, the chapter invites you to join them on their wildlife habitat efforts. For more information, contact Chris North at [chris@ncwf.org](mailto:chris@ncwf.org). 

# Where There's a Will, There's a Way...



## For Wildlife

John Fuller, board member of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, has been backpacking and fishing in the North Carolina mountains since he was a young boy. "My family and I enjoy spending time in the North Carolina outdoors and as a father, I am proud to be able to take my sons to some of the most beautiful mountains in the country. I want the natural habitats of North Carolina preserved for future generations." Whether it's protecting a stretch of trout stream or guarding the Cape Fear River, John knows that NCWF is constantly

pursuing ways to keep the environment healthy. He included NCWF in his will. "I want to make sure that my sons, and their children, can experience the same North Carolina that I know and love."

A gift to NCWF in your will or revocable trust proclaims your confidence that we will continue to serve our mission and make a difference for North Carolina's wildlife, wild places and future generations.

**A bequest** {

- Is easy to arrange.
- Will not alter your current lifestyle in any way.
- Can be easily modified to address your changing needs.

If you or your attorney have questions, or would like NCWF to provide you with sample customized language for your will that is specific to your goal and interest, please contact NCWF's Development Director, Dom Canavaro at 919-833-1923, or 1024 Washington St., Raleigh NC 27605. All inquiries are strictly confidential

## Charlie Shaw Society



NCWRC

John Robbins, owner of Greathorn Properties in Concord, and a long-time philanthropist and sportsman is the current chair of the Charlie Shaw Society. He encourages others to join him in support of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation.



### Current Members

Members in the Charlie Shaw Society are our most dedicated supporters—generous members who have made a commitment to the work and programs of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation through an annual contribution of \$1,000 or more. Gifts can be made in one lump sum or in any number of smaller contributions within a calendar year, and can be directed to any Federation program that is of interest to the donor.

To learn more about the Charlie Shaw Society and benefits of membership, please visit our website at [www.ncwf.org](http://www.ncwf.org), or Dom Canavaro, Development and Operations Director, at (919) 833-1923; [dom@ncwf.org](mailto:dom@ncwf.org).

Joe Albea  
Jennifer Alligood  
Alen Baker  
Robert Bass  
John Benbow  
Robert Brown  
Mollie Brugh  
Sid Burton  
Pinkney Bynum  
Susan Cameron  
Maurice and Addria Capps  
John Crutchfield  
Jerry Davis  
Roger and Sally Dick  
James Doyle  
Helen Eggers  
Ray Felton

Manley Fuller  
Carol Gestwicki  
Tim and Karen Gestwicki  
Joan Gillings  
John Hairr  
Fred Harris  
Susan Harris  
Carole Hart  
Phil and Bessie Hinton  
John Hislop  
Diane Honeycutt  
Carol Buie and Jay Jackson  
William and Deborah Jarman  
Lawrence Kimbrough  
Jeffrey Martin  
Richard and Julia Mode

Scott Morris  
Stacey and Wanda Ohm  
Perry Patterson  
Greg Pechmann  
Michelle Pentecost  
Mark & Jane Ritchie  
John and Holly Robbins  
Tom Schmitt  
Tonda Schmunk  
Rick Smith  
Jack and Jenny Spruill  
Fred and Alice Stanback  
Bill Staton  
Victoria Sutton  
Joye Thomas and Karen Redfern  
Patti Wheeler

# THE Season

Jeff Beane's GUIDE TO  
NATURAL NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina Wildlife Federation  
1024 Washington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27605

insert  
progress  
indicia

## AUGUST

**August 16:** Peak migration for many shorebird species along the coast.

**August 20:** Timber rattlesnakes give birth.

**August 20:** Late summer wildflowers in bloom in the mountains include Blue Ridge catchfly, mountain angelica, virgin's bower, and obedient plant.

**August 22:** Peak hatching for loggerhead sea turtle nests.

**August 28:** Gray squirrels are bearing their fall litters.

**August 29:** Most deer have completed their antler growth, though many bucks are still in velvet.

## SEPTEMBER

**September 1:** Peak hurricane season begins. Watch for unusual seabirds driven inland by storms.

**September 4:** Peak birth time for copperheads, our most common and widely distributed venomous snake.

**September 6:** Hellbenders are spawning in our mountain rivers. Unlike most salamanders, these Appalachian giants spawn like fish.

**September 10:** Wild muscadine grapes are ripe.

**September 12:** Whip-poor-wills and chuck-will's widows are leaving.

**September 14:** Butterfly watching is good during September. Migrating monarchs can be particularly spectacular this time of year. The Blue Ridge Parkway is a good place for monarch watching, and Tunnel Gap at milepost 415.6 is an especially good spot.

**September 21:** Thousands of broad-winged hawks and other species may be seen in migration at this time of year. Mahogany Rock in Doughton Park along the Blue Ridge Parkway is an especially good spot to witness this phenomenon.

**September 23:** Autumnal equinox at 10:29 p.m. EDT.

**September 24:** Bog turtle nests are hatching.

**September 26-28:** Carolina Bird Club will hold its fall meeting at the Charleston Plaza Hotel in Charleston, SC. For more information, visit [www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org).

**September 27:** National Hunting and Fishing Day and National Public Lands Day.

**September 28:** Expect the first frosts in the mountains. Carolina mantids are depositing their egg clusters, known as oothecae.

**September 30:** Marbled salamanders begin moving to their breeding sites on rainy nights. Males usually move first. This handsome salamander was adopted as North Carolina's State Salamander in 2013. Females lay eggs under sheltering objects on land in or along dry woodland pools and guard them until winter rains flood the pool and hatch the eggs.

## OCTOBER

**October 3:** Peak surface activity for both our hognose snake species—the rare southern hognose and the more common and widely distributed eastern hognose.

**October 5:** Good surf fishing, especially for bluefish and red drum.

**October 7-8:** Draconid meteor shower.

**October 8:** Peak sea duck migration.

**October 10:** Tail end of migration peak for many shorebird species.

**October 11:** Ruby-throated hummingbirds are leaving for Central and South America. Hummingbird feeders may be taken down.

**October 12:** Based on our very limited knowledge of them, this time of year appears to be surface activity peak for the mimic glass lizard, a rare legless lizard associated with large tracts of pine flatwoods in our southeastern Coastal Plain.

**October 14:** Orionid meteor shower.

**October 14-20:** National Wildlife Refuge Week. Contact your favorite National Wildlife Refuge for listings of special activities.

**October 15:** Eastern mud turtles and chicken turtles begin hibernating. Unlike most aquatic turtles, these species usually leave their ponds to hibernate on land.

**October 18:** Fall hardwood foliage colors peak in the mountains.

**October 19:** Expect the first frosts in the Piedmont.

**October 21-26:** Annual Wings Over Water Festival, a celebration of wildlife and wild lands in eastern North Carolina. For information, call 252-441-8144 or 1-800-446-6262, or visit [www.wingsoverwater.org](http://www.wingsoverwater.org).

**October 22:** Yellow-bellied sapsuckers are returning to the Piedmont and Coastal Plain.

**October 26:** Expect the first frosts in the Coastal Plain. Persimmons are ripe.

## NOVEMBER

**November 1:** The North Carolina Herpetological Society will hold its 37th annual Fall Meeting on NCSU campus in Raleigh. The theme will be "Year of the Salamander." Public is welcome. For more information, call 919-707-8861 or -8864, or visit [www.ncherps.org](http://www.ncherps.org).

**November 2:** Female marbled salamanders are guarding their nests. Spotted seatrout fishing is good.

**November 9:** Wood duck migration peaks.

**November 12:** Migration peaks for some puddle ducks, including northern pintail, American widgeon, and green-winged teal.

**November 14:** This is a good month to see a variety of waterfowl and other birds at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. To check on waterfowl arrivals, call 252-987-2394.

**November 15:** A "Red Wolf Full Moon Howl" will be held at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, 5:00-6:30 p.m. at Creef Cut Wildlife Trail parking lot. For more information, call 252-473-1131, ext. 243.