

ROLL CALL OF HONOR

Wildlifer Memorial Garden

William (Bill) Edwin Smith. Bill was a new wildlife technician for the Arizona Game & Fish Department. He had recently moved to Arizona only a month earlier from California, where the 28-yr old had completed a wildlife management course. He moved to Cottonwood from Ventura, California, where just two months prior his wife had accidentally fatally shot herself. Bill died along with pilot Ross Moores on February 19, 1949 in a small plane crash between Williams and Perkinsville. They were attempting to feed wild turkeys trapped in the area by snow after a series of major storms blanketed northern Arizona.

Ross Moores. The 39-yr old pilot and wildlife technician for the Arizona Game & Fish Department died in a small plane on February 19, 1949, along with wildlife technician Bill Smith. Ross had moved to Phoenix from his birthplace of Okmulgee, Oklahoma in 1936. He was survived by his wife and five children. The recovery party had to use army weasels (snowcats) to get into the rugged, snow covered area south of Williams.

Donald Miller. Don was a contract pilot with Anderson Aviation Company assisting the Arizona Game & Fish Department and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service conduct waterfowl surveys. The 31-yr pilot and 30-yr old state waterfowl biologist Wes Fleming hit a steel cable spanning Apache Lake on January 4, 1954. The left wing was knocked off and the plane spun down 150 ft and hit the water surface, then plunging into 40 ft of water. Fleming struggled free and escaped the plane. Don perished with his plane.

Allen (Al) Severson. Al was a 11-yr veteran of the Arizona Game & Fish Department at the his time of death. The 34-yr Wildlife Manager for the Pinetop District started with the Department in 1969. On February 7, 1980 Al died in a helicopter crash during an elk survey flight near Alpine. The pilot and another observer, Steve Thompson, escaped death after the aircraft hit a power line. In Al' s memory, The Commission and Department dedicated the Allen Severson Memorial Wildlife Area at Pintail Lake, a prime waterfowl nesting area, on September 18, 1982. It was befitting that such an area was dedicated to a man who gave his life for the betterment of Arizona's wildlife.

Richard (Rick) F. Seegmiller. Rick was a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Arizona's School of Renewable Natural Resources, studying desert bighorn sheep in the Harquahala Mountains near Salome. He was born in Salt Lake City, Utah and lived in Arizona since 1959. The 31-yr old had previously completed his Bachelor of Science degree in wildlife management and a Masters of Science in Zoology at Arizona State University. He was already well published and respected on the ecology of desert ungulates, particularly bighorn sheep. Rick died on February 6, 1983 in a small plane crash in the Harquahala Mountains when he was radiotracking the collared sheep. The pilot and another observer, from Ratliff Aviation, Tucson, flight escaped fatal injury in the crash. The observer had to walk out 5½ hours to U.S. 60 to seek help.

Estevan Ortiz Escobedo. The 34-yr old Wildlife Manager for the Arizona Game & Fish Department was a 10-yr veteran, joining the Department in 1984 after graduating from the law enforcement academy. Estevan died on January 4, 1994 during a deer and javelina survey flight near Winkelman. The helicopter, out of Southwest Helicopter in Tucson, hit a power line in the rugged mountains between Winkelman and Coolidge Dam. The pilot and two Department observers, 46-yr old Wildlife Manager Leonard Cooper and 31-yr old Game Specialist Jeff Gould, escaped fatal injury. One of a set of identical twins, Estevan was the Wildlife Manager in Globe for six years, and previously in Bullhead City and Casa Grande. Born in Mesa, Estevan's early interest in falconry resulted in a chance encounter with an old game ranger, and fueled his desire to work for wildlife. In Estevan's name, an award was created in 1994. The Estevan Ortiz Escobedo Citation of Honor is awarded to dedicated professionals of the Arizona Game & Fish Department in recognition of acts of heroism, bravery, or valor in support of the Agency mission.

Presented by Bill Werner, President-Elect of the Arizona Chapter of The
Wildlife Society
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