

THE ARIZONA WILDLIFER

2021 Issue 3

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Summer Edition

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The President's Message



AZTWS President Ho Yi Wan at the Northern California Coastline.

The year of 2021 has reached its halfway mark, and so has my tenure as President of the Arizona Chapter of The Wildlife Society (AZTWS). I would like to share with you some exciting news about the things that our Chapter is working to accomplish. First, we have been working closely with the Arizona BioBlitz coordinators to create a formal BioBlitz hub. This hub will serve as a centralized source of information about BioBlitz events and training opportunities, as well as a stage for social exchange and support networking among BioBlitz enthusiasts. More information will become available soon on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) social media outlets. Second, many of you may be wondering what is going to happen with the next Joint Annual Meeting of the Arizona and New Mexico Chapters of the American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society (JAM). Here is a “spoiler alert”—I am pleased to announce that we are planning to hold an in-person JAM from 3–5 February 2022 in Flagstaff, Arizona! Although there is always a possibility of switching back to a virtual conference format due to unforeseen COVID-19 safety protocols and restrictions, our Chapter’s officers have been working tirelessly with unwavering determination to make this happen. Unless COVID-19 surges and causes lockdowns again—*knock on wood*—we are hopeful that we can all physically see and interact with each other at JAM next year. Third, and also related to JAM, the AZTWS has established the Reed Sanderson Memorial Award in honor of the late H. Reed Sanderson, a longtime advocate for wildlife conservation and a staple supporter of JAM. For those who didn’t know Reed, I’d like to invite you to read the beautiful article *in memoriam* written by our

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Presidents Message cont...

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phenomenal editor Brian Blais in our [Winter 2021 issue](#). This award will sponsor aspiring students to attend the annual JAM. Please consider making a donation to support this award; [contact us for details](#).



Finally, I'd like to share with you an awesome picture of a rescued seal pup, recently photographed by my wonderful wife during our family trip to one of the beaches along the breathtaking Northern California Coast. The seal pup was about six months old and was stranded at the shore. Witnessing the wildlife rescuers capturing the dangerously malnourished and underweight seal pup was an amazing and miraculous moment. We reluctantly said goodbye to the seal pup as the rescuers embarked to transport it to their marine wildlife facility for rehabilitation. Although the picture itself is nothing spectacular and certainly won't win any photography awards, it serves as a reminder of what I truly care about and why I embarked on a career in wildlife. Regardless of what background we come from, I believe we all share that same love and passion for wildlife. With that love and passion, we will be able to break down barriers, foster understanding and mutual respect, and build a diverse community that advances the cause of wildlife conservation and sustainable management.

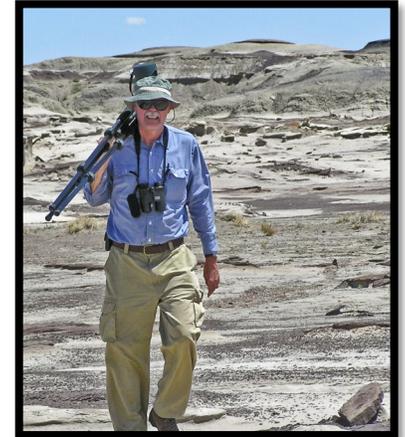
~Ho Yi Wan, AZTWS President

Regional News:

Southwest Section Tracks

By Jim Ramakka
[TWS Southwest Section Representative](#)

It looks like the start of another hazy summer on the Colorado Plateau. Smoke from forest fires in eastern Arizona is obscuring what should be blue skies and great views of the mountains in southern Colorado, eastern Arizona, and Utah. When I was a field biologist in this part of the world in the



1980s, the occurrence of large fires was so rare that we were called an "asbestos district." That is no longer the case. What used to be summer monsoons that we grew to expect back then are now only a memory as we begin what is predicted to be another year of severe drought. It is hard not to think that the effects of climate change are becoming more apparent in the Southwest and elsewhere.

The Wildlife Society is exploring ways to incorporate awareness of the issue of climate change as a regular part of our publications and other activities, including reducing the carbon footprint of our annual meetings. Grant Hildebrant, NW Section Representative to Council, is chairing an *ad hoc* committee charged with that mission.

Since my last column, Council has been focusing on various committee meetings and reports that were presented during a Special Council Meeting on 2 June. The meeting's main purpose was to review and discuss the Operations Plans and the TWS Budget for FY22. We also reviewed the proposed Drone Working Group Charter, the Draft DEI Strategic Plan, and two proposed Policy Position Statements (e.g., Energy Development and Wildlife, Invasive Species). After review and discussion by Council, all were unanimously approved.

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Regional News cont...

The FY22 Operations Plans outlined projected staff activities to meet TWS program annual goals for the following: Business Relations, Conferences, Communications, Finance and Administration, Government Affairs, Partnerships, Journals, Membership, Unit Services, Personal Fund Raising, and Professional Development and Certification. Progress in meeting those goals is tracked throughout the year. After discussing the plans, Ed Thompson presented an overview of the proposed FY22 TWS Budget. TWS staff is recommending an FY22 budget that generates at least \$2,020,262 in income and \$2,295,574 in expenses. This will result in a deficit spending budget of \$275,312 based on conservative estimates of projected income and expenses. Staff believes that we will be able to generate more income, especially if the 2021 annual conference attendance matches last year. A concern with the possibility of virtual event fatigue led to modeling the budget on a conference attendance of 1,500 in contrast to the 2,500 attendees that generated the success of the 2020 conference. Similar modelling for the FY21 Budget also projected a deficit, but due to reduced expenses, Payroll Protection Plan funding, and the record number of attendees at the Annual Conference, we ended the year with surplus. Although that may not be the case this year, last year's success and conservative budgeting resulted in a budget surplus sufficient to cover the projected deficit.

Our Partners Program is showing modest growth but is lower than previous due to the loss of three non-government partners. Those partners will be difficult to replace in the current economic conditions. Still, it was good to learn Membership, Personal Fundraising, and Professional Development are back to normal levels. Plans for the second "virtual" [Annual Meeting of TWS](#) in the fall are on course; planning for a return to an in-person meeting in Spokane, WA, in 2022 is well underway.

At the end of our meeting, CEO Ed Thompson asked for a few minutes during which he announced his plans to retire on 31 August. Many have probably seen his announcement in the eWildlifer or on [Facebook](#). Ed has been a key player in guiding TWS through rough financial times and development of our present budgeting strategy, so Council met his announcement with mixed feelings. We hate to see him go, but we are happy he has decided to take a break and enjoy retirement while still healthy and active. The Executive Committee is forming a Search Committee to begin the process of recruiting Ed's replacement. Ed will be missed, but he laid a solid foundation that his successor can build upon.

I hope you all have safe field seasons and that you are planning to attendee this year's virtual Annual Meeting. As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns.

~Jim

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Our Neck of The Woods...

Bobcats in Tucson—A Study of Bobcats Along the Urban/Wildlands Interface

*By Cheryl Mollohan,
Lead Investigator, Bobcats in Tucson Project*

Bobcats are an iconic wildlife species in the Southwest. They have generally adapted to utilize the urban/wildlands interface successfully. However, little is known about the specifics of the behaviors and natural history components of the adaptations. Public perceptions of bobcat presence are mostly positive and provide a foundation for support of management actions and watchable wildlife viewing opportunities of urban wildlife.

Using habitat selection and usage data from radio collared bobcats that utilize urban and adjacent wildland habitats of Tucson Mountain Park and Saguaro National Park near Tucson, we will develop strategies, educational programs, and materials to reduce the risk of conflict and increase home owner, neighborhood, and city and state-wide appreciation of bobcats as watchable wildlife. We will also add to the scientific knowledge of urban bobcats.



A radio-collared bobcat finds a place for a drink in the urban/wildlands interface of Tucson. Credit Valerie Greenhill.

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Key Project Components:

Assess homeowner and neighborhood attitudes towards bobcats in areas utilized by tracked bobcats

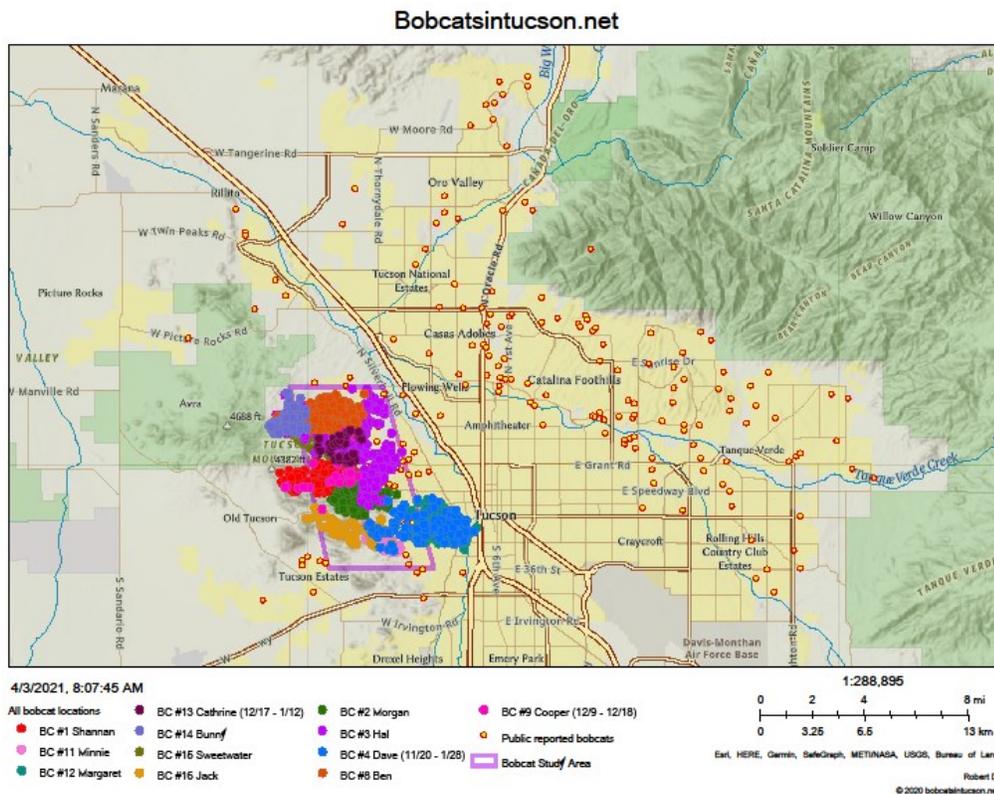
Survey citizens for their attitudes towards “living with bobcats.” Identify real or perceived conflicts or fear issues. Develop strategies to reduce conflicts and increase knowledge and appreciation of bobcats as watchable wildlife. We are using the bobcatsintucson.net website and bobcatsintucson@gmail.com as contact points for individuals wishing to report bobcat activity in their neighborhood, take the study survey on living with bobcats, and obtain study information and updates.

Progress: To date, more than 800 people living in Tucson have taken the “Living with Bobcats” survey, and we have received 400+ reports of bobcat activity in the greater Tucson area since the website went live in October of 2020. Visits to the website have averaged more than 800/month.

Determine annual survival, mortality causes, and home range size of bobcats using the urban/wildlands interface

Progress: We captured 16 individual bobcats in west Tucson along the wildlands/urban interface from November 2020–January 2021. These areas include the Marriott Starr Pass Resort area, Gates Pass area, Pima County owned conservation lands, and urban habitats ranging from dispersed to high intensity housing. Three of 12 radio collared bobcats have died.

In all three cases, mortality was likely human caused. Preliminary home range sizes for females are 1–3 square miles whereas male home ranges have varied from 2–14 square miles.



Radio-tracked bobcat locations (solid dots, colored by individual bobcat), citizen-reported location (hollow orange dots), and study area in western Tucson (purple polygon). Credit Bobcats in Tucson Project.

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Identify bobcat natal dens and kitten rearing habitat

Many of the urban bobcat sightings and concerns are focused on females who raise kittens in urban situations. Little is known about where bobcat females den in urban habitats or how successful they are in raising kittens in an urban environment. We are determining reproductive timing, natal den selection, and kitten rearing habitat via monitoring radioed female bobcats living on the urban/wildlands interface.

Progress: As of late May, four of five females have continued to return to the same area repeatedly—indicating they are caring for kittens. One female has not yet exhibited denning behavior. Of the denning females, all four apparently had kittens sometime between 14–17 April. Natal dens have been located in unaltered wildlands, specifically in steep, rocky/cliffy habitat areas in the females' home ranges.

Evaluate habitat use and selection of bobcats along the urban/wildlands interface

Landscape-level habitat variables will be assessed by using GIS capabilities. This includes overlaying bobcat locations over existing information layers such as vegetation type; level of urban development; distances to roads and water; rabbit densities of urban, altered, and wildlands habitats; and other variables to determine habitat use versus availability.

Progress: We have collected more than 3,000 GPS locations from 12 different radio collared bobcats in west Tucson since mid-November 2020. All radioed bobcats have shown extensive use of urban areas that have dispersed to moderate housing densities. Bobcats have also used unaltered wildlands, primarily Tucson Mountain Park and other Pima County Conservation Lands. Three bobcats have utilized the Starr Pass Resort and Golf Course grounds. One female has been living almost exclusively on the golf course and is currently raising kittens.



Two bobcat kittens, with a third to follow, catch a curious glimpse of some Gambel's quail in a natural resources area in western Tucson. Credit Ian Adrian Nature Photography.

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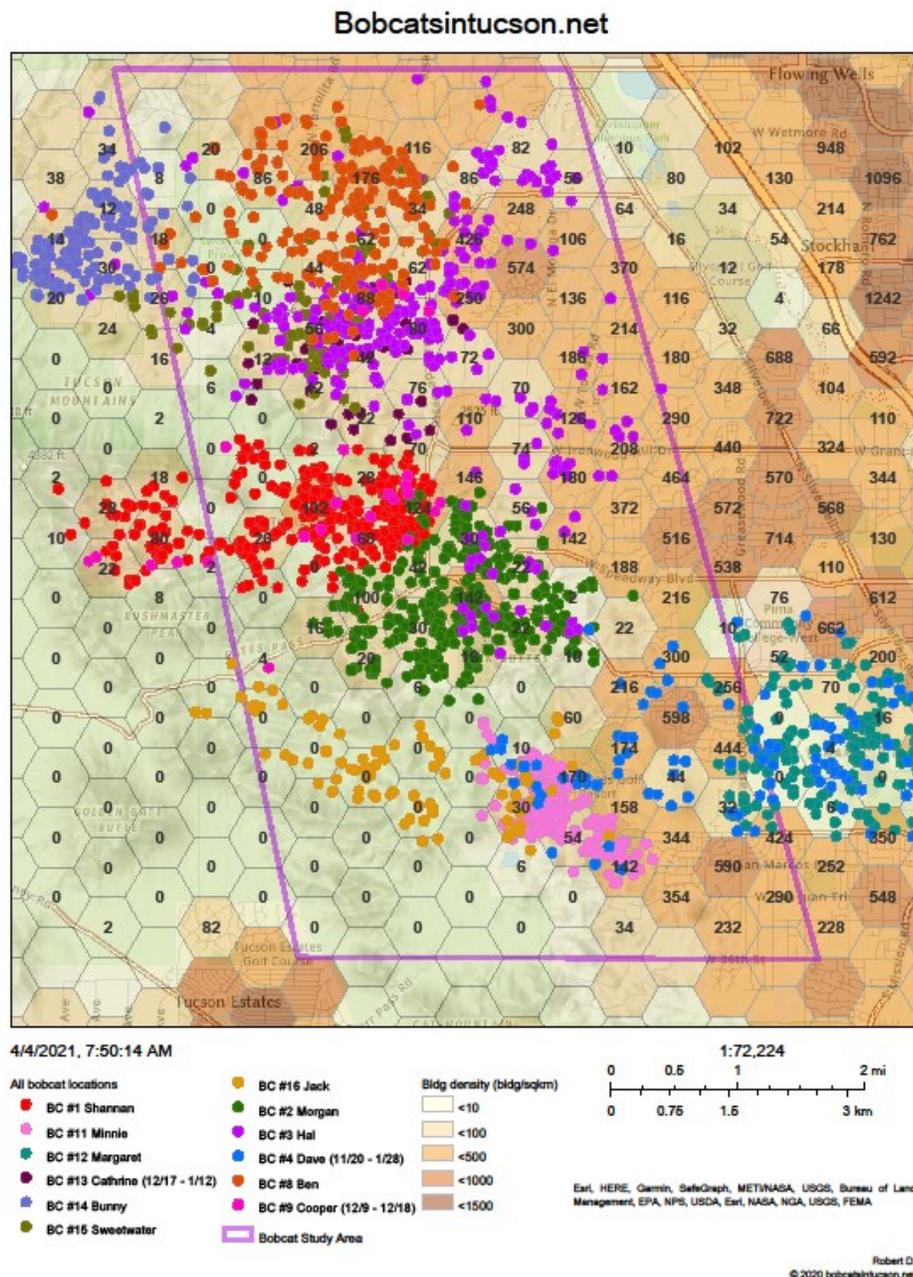
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The Bobcats in Tucson study personnel are retired AZGFD wildlife biologists, veterinarians from the Arizona Exotic Animal Hospital, and others sharing their time and expertise. Partners include the Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center, Pima County Natural Resources, the University of Arizona, and many others. Partial funding is provided by an AZGFD Heritage Grant (Lottery Dollars for Wildlife).

This is the first year of a three year study.

HOW CAN YOU HELP? The success of this work depends on Tucson individuals and community involvement in addition to the information gained from radio collared bobcats.

Spread the word about the Bobcats in Tucson Study by directing people to the following website: bobcatsintucson.net



Individual bobcat locations (color dots) along the gridded study area (purple polygon) of the urban/wildlands interface of Tucson. Credit Bobcats in Tucson Project.

Candid Critters of the Catalinas: Mountain Lion Attack on a Javelina

By David Dean,
DVM, PhD, Ret.

[Editors note: David has shared other fascinating stories and clips of wildlife captured via wildlife cameras stationed around the Santa Catalina Mountains (e.g., 2020 issues 3 & 4). As a hobby, David presents his videos in a series entitled *Candid Critters of the Catalinas*, which he presents to interested groups around Tucson. David has provided another exceptional example of a natural, yet rarely captured, encounter. **Please note that both the audio and visuals of the video express a graphic observation of a natural wildlife encounter and may not be suitable for all viewers.**]

In mid-April, one of my cameras captured a video of a mountain lion (*Puma concolor*) attacking a javelina (*Pecari tajacu*) [<https://vimeo.com/536962821>]. As you may know, videos of mountain lions attacking prey are quite rare, and (after confirming with several others including wildlife managers) I believe this to be the first video capture of a lion attacking a javelina, a known prey species.

Mountain lions use their body weight during initial attack to knock prey off their feet. Simultaneously, they wrap their legs around prey for grasp and attempt to inflict a fatal bite either at the throat or the back of the neck. In the video, you can see that the javelina is strong, has a low center of gravity, and is uncooperative. With such, the adult male lion uses his hind legs and body weight to reposition and, though he initially was close to making a fatal bite to the throat, instead has a bite grip near the top of the skull. Nonetheless, I found the remains of the javelina nearby a few days later.

In previous footage, I have captured this male making territorial scrapes in the vicinity of this attack. Also near the end of the video clip, the cloud of sandy dust in the foreground is the first javelina that came into camera. He was near the camera during the initial attack, and when it occurred that he could be next, he exploded out of there leaving a trail of dust in its wake.



[Editor's note: David welcomes anyone to [contact him](#) about this or his other videos on Vimeo.]

Stills from video capture of a mountain lion attacking a javelina. Credit David Dean.

A Record Number of Mexican Wolf Pups Cross-Fostered into the Wild

*By Sarah E. Rinkevich,
Endangered Species Biologist, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*

After another successful cross-foster season, a record 22 captive-born Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*) pups were placed in wild dens to be raised in the wild by their surrogate parents. For six years, wild Mexican wolves have raised captive-born pups as their own, helping to boost the genetic diversity of this endangered subspecies and move the wild population towards recovery. During April and May, nine pups were fostered into three different packs in eastern Arizona and 13 were fostered into five packs in western New Mexico.



Mexican Wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*) pups. Credit USFWS.

Cross-fostering is a proven method used by the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team (IFT) to increase genetic diversity in the wild Mexican wolf population. It involves placing genetically diverse pups—14 days old or younger—from the captive breeding population into wild dens with similarly aged pups to be wild raised by experienced wolves. The IFT has documented that cross-fostered pups have the same survival rate as wild-born pups in their first year of life (about 50%). “The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) remains committed to improving the health of the wild population of Mexican wolves, and cross-fostering is one of the many tools we are using to assist with recovery of the species,” said Dr. Brady McGee, Fish and Wildlife Service’s Mexican Wolf Recovery Program Coordinator.

Cross-fostering is a coordinated effort of the USFWS, Arizona Game and Fish Department, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico State Lands Office, U.S. Forest Service, and the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan. Aerial support for this year’s operations was provided by following three private organizations: LightHawk Conservation Flying, APLux, and Aero Charter.

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Since the beginning of the cross-fostering program, the IFT has documented a minimum of 12 cross-fostered wolves currently alive and surviving in the wild. Seven of these wolves have reached breeding age (two years old) and count toward the Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan criterion for genetic recovery of the population. Four of the cross-fostered wolves have subsequently produced pups in the wild. Pups are too young to mark when fostered; therefore only those that are recaptured can be confirmed as being alive. It is likely that other fostered pups are alive and contributing to improve the genetic diversity of the wild population and help meet recovery criteria within the 2017 revised Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan.

The IFT will continue to monitor the cross-fostering packs through GPS and radio telemetry signals from collared older wolves within the pack to avoid further disturbance. Later, through remote camera observations and efforts to capture the young of the year, the IFT plans to document additional survival of cross-fostered pups.

The end-of-year census for 2020 showed a minimum of 186 wild Mexican wolves in the Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area (72 in Arizona and 114 in New Mexico). This marked a 14% increase in the population from a minimum of 163 wolves counted at the end of 2019. The IFT documented a 24% growth in the Mexican wolf population in 2019, which has nearly doubled in size over the last five years.



Processing and collecting data on Mexican wolf pups. Credit USFWS.

Summer Reading—Top Article Downloads of TWS Journals in 2020

By *Mariah Beyers, AWB,*
TWS Unit Services Manager

For more than 80 years, The Wildlife Society (TWS) has helped develop, contextualize, and advance the scientific foundation of wildlife management through publication of peer-reviewed studies in the *Journal of Wildlife Management* (1937), *Wildlife Monographs* (1958), and *Wildlife Society Bulletin* (1973). As a leading resource for wildlife managers in the field and a central component of the Society's mission, regularly assessing engagement with TWS journal content helps provide valuable insights about the future of wildlife management in North America and beyond.

Analyzing article and journal download trends provides a quick and easy way to show active engagement and use of journal content over time. In 2020, downloads of articles published in TWS journals increased by 15% compared to 2019—the fifth consecutive year of increasing downloads.

Wondering what your fellow wildlifera are reading? The table below includes the top 15 downloaded papers published in TWS Journals in 2020 (as of March 2021). Members of TWS receive free access to all TWS publications. To take advantage of this exclusive member benefit, simply log in to [Your Membership](#) and go to the “Publications” tab. “Open Access” titles are freely available.

For more information on journal publishing metrics in the digital age and their relevance to TWS, check out the article **A Measure of Influence**, which appears on pages 39–43 of the [May/June 2020 issue of *The Wildlife Professional*](#).

Table. Top 15 papers published in TWS Journals in 2020 based on the number of downloads.

Title (hyperlinked) / Author(s) / Journal

[Assessing Nutritional Condition of Mule Deer Using a Photographic Index](#)

Smiley, R.A., Rittenhouse, C.D., Mong, T.W. and Monteith, K.L.
Wildlife Society Bulletin

[Best Management Practices for Trapping Furbearers in the United States](#) (*open access*)

White, H.B., Batcheller, G.R., Boggess, E.K., Brown, C.L., Butfiloski, J.W., Decker, T.A., Erb, J.D., Fall, M.W., Hamilton, D.A., Hiller, T.L., Hubert, G.F., Jr., Lovallo, M.J., Olson, J.F. and Roberts, N.M.
Wildlife Monographs

[Effects of Wind Turbine Curtailment on Bird and Bat Fatalities](#) (*open access*)

Smallwood, K.S. and Bell, D.A.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

[Dogs Detect Larger Wind Energy Effects on Bats and Birds](#) (*open access*)

Smallwood, K.S., Bell, D.A. and Standish, S.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

[Anthropogenic Disturbance and Population Viability of Woodland Caribou in Ontario](#) (*open access*)

Fryxell, J.M., Avgar, T., Liu, B., Baker, J.A., Rodgers, A.R., Shuter, J., Thompson, I.D., Reid, D.E.B., Kittle, A.M., Mosser, A., Newmaster, S.G., Nudds, T.D., Street, G.M., Brown, G.S. and Patterson, B.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

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Wolverine Occupancy, Spatial Distribution, and Monitoring Design (open access)

Lukacs, P.M., Evans Mack, D., Inman, R., Gude, J.A., Ivan, J.S., Lanka, R.P., Lewis, J.C., Long, R.A., Sallabanks, R., Walker, Z., Courville, S., Jackson, S., Kahn, R., Schwartz, M.K., Torbit, S.C., Waller, J.S. and Carroll, K.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

Ratcheting up Rigor in Wildlife Management Decision Making (open access)

Fuller, A.K., Decker, D.J., Schiavone, M.V. and Forstchen, A.B.
Wildlife Society Bulletin

Boreal Caribou Can Coexist with Natural but Not Industrial Disturbances (open access)

Stewart, F.E.C., Nowak, J.J., Micheletti, T., McIntire, E.J.B., Schmiegelow, F.K.A. and Cumming, S.G.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

Are Sage-Grouse Fine-Scale Specialists or Shrub-Steppe Generalists? (open access)

Smith, J.T., Allred, B.W., Boyd, C.S., Carlson, J.C., Davies, K.W., Hagen, C.A., Naugle, D.E., Olsen, A.C. and Tack, J.D.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

Preparing Wildlife for Climate Change: How Far Have We Come? (free to read)

LeDee, O.E., Handler, S.D., Hoving, C.L., Swanston, C.W. and Zuckerberg, B.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

Computational Reproducibility in The Wildlife Society's Flagship Journals (open access)

Archmiller, A.A., Johnson, A.D., Nolan, J., Edwards, M., Elliott, L.H., Ferguson, J.M., Iannarilli, F., Vélez, J., Vitense, K., Johnson, D.H. and Fieberg, J.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

Identifying Birds' Collision Risk with Wind Turbines Using a Multidimensional Utilization Distribution

Method (open access)

Khosravifard, S., Skidmore, A.K., Naimi, B., Venus, V., Muñoz, A.R. and Toxopeus, A.G.
Wildlife Society Bulletin

Pandemics and the Need for Automated Systems for Biodiversity Monitoring (free to read)

Sugai, L.S.M.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

Widespread Lead Exposure in Golden Eagles Captured in Montana (open access)

Domenech, R., Shreading, A., Ramsey, P. and McTee, M.
The Journal of Wildlife Management

Overabundance of Black-Tailed Deer in Urbanized Coastal California

Furnas, B.J., Landers, R.H., Paiste, R.G. and Sacks, B.N.
The Journal of Wildlife Management



SHARE YOUR AZ WILDLIFE STORIES

Want to share your Arizona wildlife stories and perspectives? Please consider submitting **articles, stories, project updates, events, and pictures** for upcoming newsletters! AZTWS welcomes all contributors.

The Arizona Wildlifer Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Fall 2021	Sep 17, 2021
Winter 2022	Dec 17, 2021

Email submissions at any time to aztwseeditor@gmail.com.

Continuing Education Grants

AZTWS offers \$2,500 annually in Continuing Education Grants to its members (including professionals, graduate and undergraduate students) to support education and career advancement opportunities. Grant requests should not exceed \$500 per application and only one grant is awarded per person, per year. Grants are limited to current Chapter members only; membership dues are \$6/year. Join or renew [here](#).



Applications can be submitted at any time and will be reviewed quarterly by the Continuing Education Committee. Applicants will be notified within 30 days of the Committee's review. The Committee evaluates applications based on your explanation of how the activity will enhance your career development, your financial need, your efforts to obtain supplemental funding, and your involvement in Chapter activities. AZTWS encourages applicants from under-represented individuals and groups.

Submit Your Application [Online](#)



AZTWS News & Resources

The [Arizona Chapter of The Wildlife Society](#) is dedicated to promoting sound management and conservation of Arizona’s wildlife resources and strives to be the preeminent resource for Arizona’s community of scientists, managers, educators, students, technicians, planners, and others working to manage and conserve wildlife and habitats in the state. To help you keep up with AZTWS’s resources, opportunities, and happenings, we hope that you find the following hotlinks useful:

- **Members** gain access to numerous opportunities; if you are not yet a member, sign up [here](#). Annual dues are only \$6!
- **AZTWS’s Web Store** is live! Show your support by gifting cool AZTWS swag to others (or splurging for yourself). Proceeds support AZTWS resources, including conference events and our Continuing Education Grant. [Shop now!](#) [You can also support AZTWS’s Mission by [donating](#) discretely or in monthly recurrences.]
- Support others and help increase representation in Arizona’s natural resource fields by **gifting a AZTWS membership** (1-year)—[details here](#).
- Looking for that older issue of *The Arizona Wildlifer*? **All issues** are freely accessible [here!](#)
- Our parent society, TWS, emphasizes important resources for **[diversity, equity, and inclusion](#)** throughout the wildlife profession. AZTWS also strives to uphold these values.
- Information about 2021 TWS “virtual” Annual Meeting, including registration, is [here](#).
- Want to get more involved with your Chapter? Check out the information available on our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [website](#) for opportunities.
- Have questions for us? Contact us [here](#).



A nocturnal native of the Sonoran Desert, a Western Banded Gecko (*Coleonyx variegatus*) explores roadside habitat after sunset in eastern Phoenix. Credit C. Shaw.