

Michigan TWS

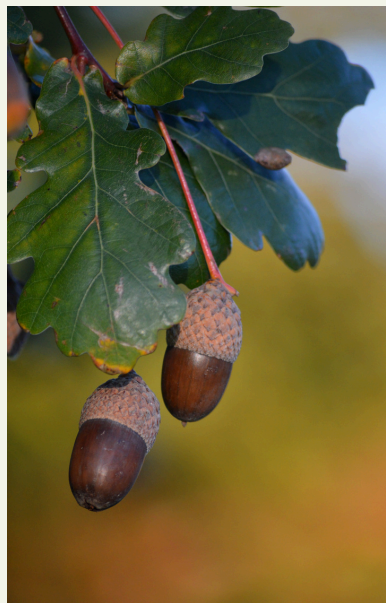


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ABOUT US

The Michigan Chapter of The Wildlife Society was founded in 1982. Chapter members include administrators of government wildlife programs, research scientists, managers, technicians, private consultants, educators, enforcement personnel, information specialists and students.



THE CHAPTER WORKS:

- To promote sound stewardship of wildlife and other environmental resources
- To increase appreciation of wildlife values
- To promote the highest standards in wildlife professional activities.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

Folks,

As we all know, pursuing a career as a wildlife professional means following a path with many hurdles and common periods of frustration and emotional challenges. This has never (at least during my career) been more the case than it is currently. Federal funding for conservation programs being cut, conservation professionals being fired or furloughed, federal regulations being gutted or ignored, continuing efforts to sell public land, and the list goes on. As I think about my upcoming term as state chapter president in this professional climate, one of my highest priorities is to facilitate all of us in helping each other get through the troubling times in which we find ourselves. Leaning on and expanding our professional relationships while we celebrate the good work we all do can go far in helping us maintain balance and momentum in these challenging times. My goal is to work with our chapter committees to develop regular opportunities around the state to meet, build our networks, and help each other keep fighting the good fight. I especially want to work to build connections between the seven student chapters in the state and with the chapter at large.

An excellent way to kick off a new year of networking and supporting each other is our upcoming joint state chapter meeting with the MI chapter of The American Fisheries Society Feb. 25-27 at U. MI Flint's Riverside Convention Center. The call for abstracts and registration will be coming soon. I also need to send thanks to and recognize the excellent work that Melissa Starking and Gael Sanchez have been putting in as our representatives on the joint program/planning committee. Another upcoming local opportunity will be at the 87th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference Feb. 7-10 2027, in Grand Rapids at The Devos Place and Convention Center. These are both great opportunities to meet with colleagues, stay current in the field, and celebrate what we do.

The year ahead will present professional challenges for us all, but most wildlife professionals chose this career because it was a part of who they were as much as because they were looking for a job. We do what we do because it makes us feel good about who we are as people. I encourage you all to pull together, check in with each other, get a coffee or a beer, vent, laugh, and keep working for what you believe in.

Keep the faith and hopefully see you all in Feb.

Paul

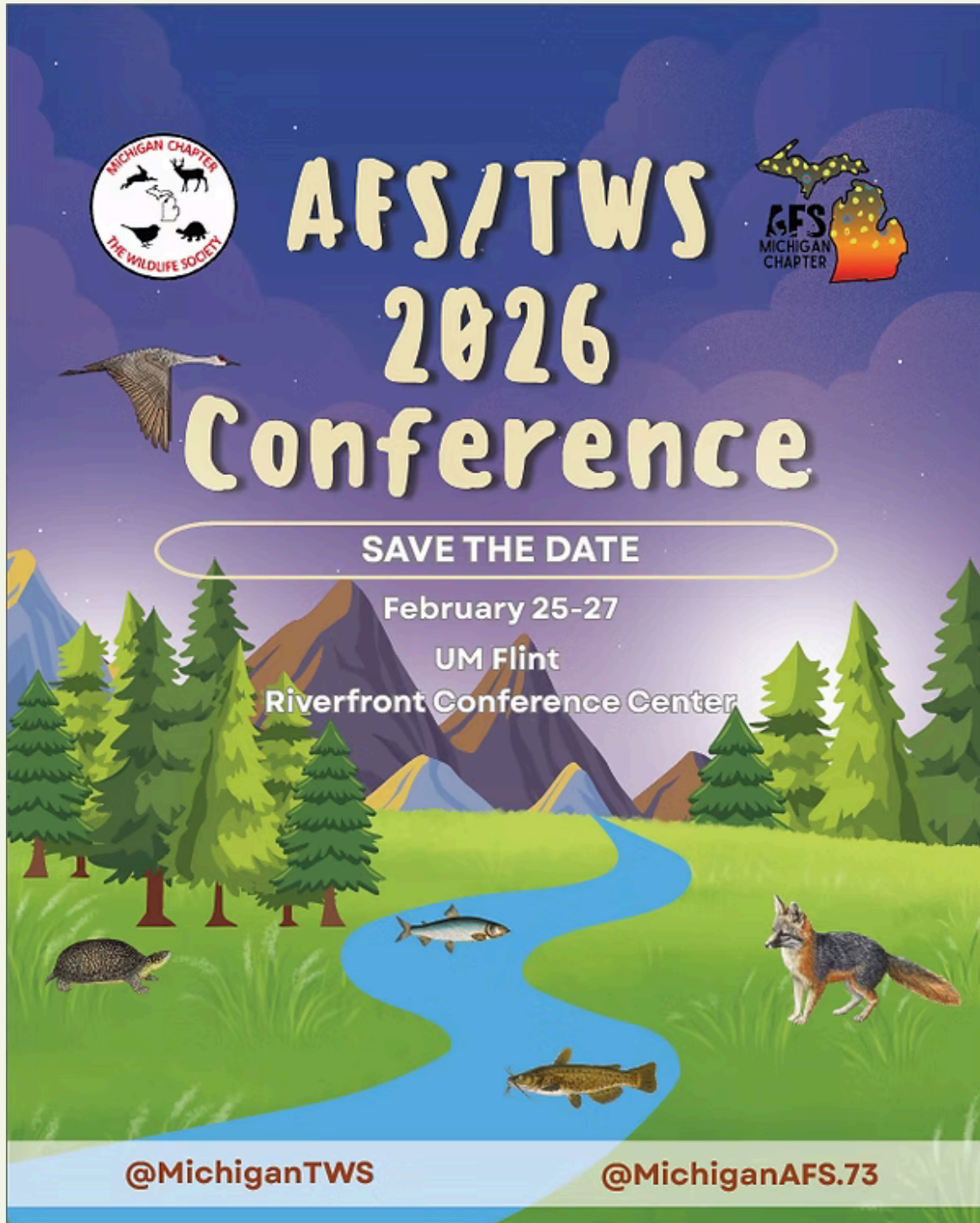
Paul Keenlance

President-Elect, Michigan Chapter of The Wildlife Society



SAVE THE DATE

American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society Joint Annual Conference



More information will be posted on our website
<https://michigantws.wixsite.com/mitws/annual-conference>

MITWS and AFS are looking for members to design a logo for our upcoming annual conference in February. Submit your designs by December 1st by using the QR code below. Winner will receive free registration!



Michigan TWS & AFS



**2026
CONFERENCE DESIGN
COMPETITION**

**THEME:
"RESILIENCE"**

**Design will feature on
shirts and other swag**

Win a FREE Registration

@MichiganTWS
@MichiganAFS.73

DUE: 12/1/2025





MITWS AWARDS

Fall
2025

The Awards Committee is accepting nominations for
the Chapter's conservation awards:
The Legacy Award and The Wildlife Conservation Award

Submit nominations to michigantws@gmail.com
by January 15, 2026

Legacy Award

Purpose: The Legacy Award for Outstanding Contribution to Wildlife Conservation in Michigan was created to acknowledge an individual who has furthered wildlife conservation, research, and/or management in Michigan.

Description: The Legacy Award was created to acknowledge an individual for their dedicated service and advancement of wildlife conservation in Michigan throughout their career. The recipient shall have made substantial contributions to Michigan's diverse natural resources by furthering understanding, enhancing management, and championing their value to Michigan's citizenry. Those desiring to nominate an individual must email the Awards Committee Chair a brief (< 1 page) account of the nominee, their merits as they relate to this award, and contact information for the nominee. This submission will serve as their nomination; however, the Awards Committee may contact those submitting the nomination for additional information or clarification. Questions regarding the award should be directed to the current chair of the Chapter's Awards Committee.

Wildlife Conservation Award

Purpose: The Wildlife Conservation Award was created to acknowledge an organization or group who has furthered wildlife conservation, research, and/or management in Michigan.

Description: The Wildlife Conservation Award was created to acknowledge an organization for their dedicated service and advancement of wildlife conservation in Michigan. The receiving organization shall have made substantial contributions to Michigan's diverse natural resources by furthering understanding, enhancing management, and championing their value to Michigan's citizenry. Those desiring to nominate an organization must email the Awards Committee Chair a brief (< 1 page) account of their nominee organization, its merits as they relate to this award, and contact information for the organization. This submission will serve as their nomination; however, the Awards Committee may contact those submitting the nomination for additional information or clarification. Questions regarding the award should be directed to the current chair of the Chapter's Awards Committee.

Additional information about these awards are available on our website:
michigantws.wixsite.com/mitws/awards



Jamie Lee Fenske Memorial Award for Outstanding Students

Fall
2025

Submit nominations to gulottye@michigan.gov
by November 28th, 2025

We are pleased to accept applications for the Janice Lee Fenske Memorial Award from fisheries and wildlife undergraduate and graduate students who are planning to attend the 2026 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Up to 25 students will be selected and formally recognized for their achievements during the Tuesday, January 27, 2026, morning plenary session. Two students, one focusing on fisheries management and one focusing on wildlife management, will be presented with the Fenske Memorial Award that includes a scholarship of \$750.

The winners of the Fenske Memorial Award will be selected based on the characteristics that made Jan Fenske a remarkable fisheries biologist. For more information on Jan Fenske and the history of the award, please visit <https://michigan.fisheries.org/awards-and-grants/fenske-award/>.

To apply, please submit:

- * A resume that includes your GPA.
- * A one-page cover letter that discusses your future career goals and reasons for attending the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference.
- * A photo of yourself that may be used in the award ceremony presentation.
- * One letter of recommendation submitted directly from either an academic advisor or a professional in fisheries or wildlife management.

Application materials should be sent by email to Elle Gulotty at gulottye@michigan.gov. Please indicate in the email subject line either “Fenske Award- fisheries” or “Fenske Award- wildlife” (depending on your focus area).

The deadline for submission is Friday, November 28, 2025, and all applicants will be notified of their selection by Monday, January 12, 2026.

Questions regarding the award should be sent to Jessica Mistak, Fenske Award Committee Chair, at mistakj@michigan.gov.

Sponsored by: North Central Division of the American Fisheries Society, Indiana and Michigan Chapters of the American Fisheries Society, Indiana and Michigan Chapters of The Wildlife Society, Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference Steering Committee



MITWS ELECTIONS

Looking to become more involved in the MITWS Chapter? We are looking for nominees for positions for the 2026-2027 MI Executive Board. Please consider nominating yourself or a colleague by sending a brief (≤ 200 words) biography and photo.

The following positions on the Michigan TWS Executive Board are open for nomination:

President- Elect

1 position, 3-year term [President-Elect, President, Past-President]

Treasurer

1 position, 2-year term

Board Member

2 positions, 1-year term

Please email **michigantws@gmail.com** with the position you are interested in or are nominating for, a short nominee biography, and a photo of the nominee by **December 31st, 2025**. This is an excellent opportunity to become more involved in TWS, shape activities of the Michigan Chapter, and enhance your professional network!

Workshops

These events are created and run by the Information and Education Committee to offer continuing education and career development for our membership. If you are interested in helping to develop these resources, please reach out to Rachel Kanaziz (michigantws@gmail.com).

Past Event Photos



John Ball Zoo Tour

Michigan TWS hosted a behind the scenes tour of John Ball Zoo on June 20th, 2025. The tour included learning about active projects such as rare butterfly conservation, community conservation and more! There were around 20 participants and a great time was had by all.

Telemetry Workshop

Stay tuned for a student workshop on the basics of telemetry at Lake Superior State University in the spring of 2026. The workshop will include a classroom portion to learn about telemetry projects happening in Michigan from multiple agencies and end with a demonstration and practice of telemetry in the field.



See our calendar of events:

<https://michigantws.wixsite.com/mitws/copy-of-member-events>

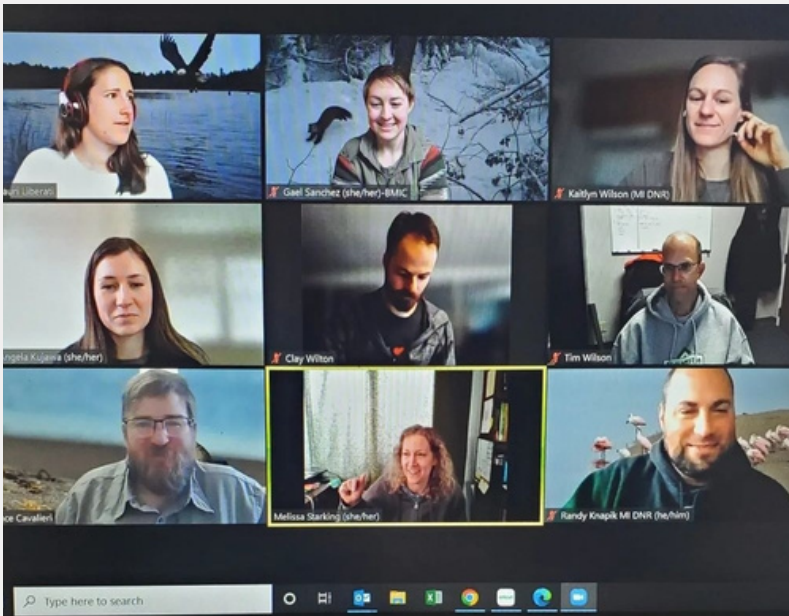
Take Action



Committees

Become involved in
Michigan TWS!

Any Michigan TWS member can join a committee. This is your chance to become involved in the chapter, develop important skills, network with biologists from across the state, and make a real difference for wildlife. Committees meet around once a month in a virtual format.



Information and Education Committee

This committee is tasked with employing methods to inform and educate the public on basic wildlife management concepts and on Chapter and Society activities and interests.

Awards Committee

This committee shall consist of a chairperson and at least 2 additional members. It shall review student travel grant awards, President's award recipient, and the Legacy award nominations.

@MichiganTWS

Michigan TWS

Fall 2025

Program Committee

This committee is tasked with arranging programs and planning our annual conference.

Nomination and Elections Committee

This committee is selected annually by the Executive Board to prepare a slate of candidates for each of the elective positions, namely: President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and two additional Executive Board members from the membership of the chapter.



Conservation Committee

This committee is tasked with reviewing legislative proposals, administrative regulations, environmental assessments and impact statements, and other subjects or issues affecting wildlife or wildlife habitat within the organization area of the Chapter and make recommendations to the Executive Board for any action that should be taken by the Michigan Chapter. The Chairperson may ask any Chapter member to assist with review.

WETLAND HABITAT SPECIALIST DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

RANDY KNAPIK



WHAT DO YOU DO?

I work statewide with state/federal/tribal agencies and non-governmental organizations to advance conservation for wetlands and wetland-associated wildlife in Michigan. This happens through guiding management actions, assisting with restoration projects, policy development and implementation, directing funding, and strategic planning. I also work closely with staff within the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy on the regulatory side of wetland restoration projects through our [Voluntary Wetland Restoration program](#). Additionally, I get to serve on regional groups centered around habitat delivery, wetland and waterfowl research, and nutrient retention and reduction by way of nature-based infrastructure.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR POSITION?

The variety of places, people, tasks, and organizations that I get to work with every day brings enjoyment. Each task seems to operate at different levels of decision making or influence and with a different group of partners. I am thankful that I get to swat mosquitoes with boots on the ground across Michigan through my review of wetland restoration projects while also being able to influence state policy, help partners implement wetland projects, and assist with setting priorities for wetland restoration, protection, and management.

HOW HAS BEING A MEMBER OF MITWS BENEFITED YOU AND/OR YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Being an active member of the Michigan Chapter of The Wildlife Society has allowed me to stay involved and current in many aspects of wildlife conservation, research, and management that are beyond the duties of my current job. This has come from interactions with other members, through official channels like emails and newsletters, and by serving in leadership roles within the Chapter. The relationships and overall professional network built through Michigan TWS have helped me in my current job which has statewide responsibility. People matter and are the movers of conservation. Michigan TWS has allowed me to work with those moving conservation forward the fastest and taking it the furthest.

HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR TIME OUTSIDE OF WORK?

Exploring the outdoors through hunting, fishing, camping, and hiking with friends and family is something that occurs weekly. Turning rocks, pointing at plants, looking through binoculars, and listening for birds with my daughter are some of the most rewarding activities of late!





KIP REIZ

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

WHAT ARE YOU STUDYING & WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO PURSUE THIS FIELD?

I'm currently a senior at Michigan State University studying Wildlife Ecology and Management, focusing much of my studies on data analysis and computational modeling. I chose the field of wildlife ecology, like many others, because of my appreciation for wildlife. I grew up in suburbia, and most of my family did not spend a large amount of time doing outdoor recreation like fishing or hunting, so I did not have many of the experiences that other wildlife professionals do. Ultimately, I embraced my inner child and pursued a career in wildlife, as it brings me joy.

EXPLAIN YOUR CURRENT JOB POSITION AND WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ?

During my time at MSU I have worked as an undergraduate research assistant with the Applied Forest and Wildlife Ecology Laboratory, but more recently with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Co-operative Unit within the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. My favorite part of being a technician on research projects is seeing the way that data collected is transformed into digestible information that helps us further understand our species studied.

ARE YOU WORKING ON ANY RESEARCH PROJECTS?

I recently concluded work on a project with the USGS Co-operative unit at MSU and members of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In this project, I used radiotelemetry, emergence counts, and presence-absence surveys to evaluate bat presence in and around Tippy Dam and Manistee National Forest in the Northern Lower Peninsula.

HOW ARE YOU INVOLVED IN MITWS/STUDENT CHAPTERS?

I currently serve as the president of the Michigan State University Fisheries and Wildlife Club, the joint student chapter of The Wildlife Society and the American Fisheries Society at MSU. In this role I have the chance to mentor students, foster a closely knit community, create a space where undergraduates of all disciplines can gain valuable, hands-on experience learning and practicing their ecological skills and techniques, and connect students with career professionals.

HOW HAS MITWS BENEFITED YOU?

TWS, MITWS, and MSU's student chapter have provided me countless opportunities to gain hands-on skills, meet professionals, and locate groups within the wildlife community. I fondly remember my first TWS annual conference in Louisville, KY. MSU's student chapter sponsored my, and four other students', attendance. In Louisville I was able to bond with MSU faculty, meet members of OiTf, and secure my first technician job! Now, as the president of the MSU student chapter, I find myself working alongside career professionals and faculty members to provide these same experiences to new students, building professional and personal relationships along the way.



STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

FALL 2025



STUDENT CHAPTERS

Central Michigan University

Lake Superior State University

Michigan State University

Michigan Tech University

Northern Michigan University

Grand Valley State University

Calvin University

U of M Flint

**Interested in starting a
student chapter at
your school?**

Contact us to learn how!



The Wildlife Society's 147 student chapters are composed of student and professional members of the Society. Based at college campuses across North America, these chapters establish their own locally-focused objectives and have their own bylaws, officers, committees, and dues structure.



HIGHLIGHT

Student Chapter

Calvin University



BOARD MEMBERS

President: Fiona Moll

Vice President: Maia Peterson
and Asa Harvey

Board Members:

Seth Cooper
Evan Spronk

OUR NEWEST STUDENT CHAPTER

MITWS is excited to announce the official creation of the Calvin University student chapter! This chapter is already making waves and supporting early career professionals. We cannot wait to see what the future brings for this group!

Events in 2025

- Partnership with the John Ball Zoo and the Calvin Biology Department to conduct data collection on spotted turtle restoration
- Wildlife Creek Walk with the Plaster Creek Stewards

Events in 2026

- Birding with Bio Professors
- Seminar with Researchers
- Macroinvertebrate survey



To contact the club email Fiona at fgm3@calvin.edu or Maia at mrp36@calvin.edu

Fall
2025

Looking **FORWARD**



Annual Conference 2026

We are actively planning our 2026 conference! If you would like to have a voice in conference planning, please consider joining our Program Planning Committee (michigantws@gmail.com). Conference updates and announcements will be shared on our website and through the MITWS listserv

Workshops

Stay tuned for more details regarding the annual conference workshop that we are planning for February. Updates and announcements will be shared on our website and through the MITWS listserv.

Social/Field Trips

Watch for updates regarding a telemetry workshop in the U.P. this spring. Updates and announcements will be shared on our website and through the MITWS listserv.

Follow Us



@MichiganTWS



<https://www.facebook.com/Michigan-Chapter-of-The-Wildlife-Society>



michigantws@googlegroups.com



michigantws@gmail.com

Are you a Michigan TWS Member?

Here's how to become one!

- When signing up to become a TWS member or renewing your membership:
 - Choose to add "Michigan Chapter" under the "Chapter" drop down.
- At any other time:
 - Under the "Membership" tab of your TWS profile, select "Add Organizational Unit Membership". Then under the "Chapter" drop down, select "Michigan Chapter".

OR

- Sign up to become a Michigan TWS member without a national TWS membership. This can be done on our website under the "Membership" tab.

Becoming a member of Michigan Chapter of TWS provides unique opportunities to connect with other wildlife professionals and build important networks. Membership includes regular information updates for upcoming events and opportunities and helps you to grow as a leader in the field of wildlife.

Membership is \$10/yr

Both professionals and students can benefit from becoming a part of this chapter!

