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**Achievements...**

Dr. Bridget Baker (WEC Research Assistant Professor) was awarded Best Paper of the Year in the Journal of Aquatic Animal Health at the AFS Conference for her recently published paper “Widespread Seropositivity to Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia Virus (VHSV) in Four Species of Inland Sport Fishes in Wisconsin.” To read her paper, click [here](#).

Xiaoxing Bian and Savannah Troy (SNRE PhD students) were selected to receive a Research Abroad for Doctoral Students (RADs) grant to support their research projects. Xiaoxing is co-advised by Dr. Vanessa Hull and Dr. Madan Oli. Savannah is advised by Dr. Robert Fletcher.

**About Our Cover Photos:**

Our cover photo was provided by Dr. Matt Hallett and captures white-lipped peccaries photographed by him and his team’s camera-trap research in Guyana.

Vanessa Luna Celino (SNRE/IE PhD) passed her qualifying exam on October 13th, 2022 and is now a PhD candidate. Vanessa’s dissertation title is “Fire in the Peruvian Andes: Community-Based Fire Management and Stakeholder Perceptions of Fire Governance.” Vanessa is advised by Dr. Bette Loiselle.
Achievements...

Keara Clancy (WEC BS ‘20) accepted a position with Alachua Conservation Trust as the CrEEK Program Coordinator, continuing work she started with the Natural Resources Diversity Initiative to strengthen the CrEEK Program. Her role in this position includes serving students in the 4th grade, especially from historically underserved schools. Students are brought to Little Orange Creek Nature Park for an immersive day of field sampling and hands-on learning in hopes of inspiring the next generation of conservationists. Since students are brought out weekly, the Alachua County Conservation Trust continually accepts volunteers. Keara encourages interested students to contact her (keara@alachuaconservationtrust.org) or NRDI (uf.nrdi@gmail.com) to get involved.

Patricia Dumandan (SNRE PhD Student) earned 2nd place at the Three Minute Thesis competition for her presentation on “Evaluating the effects of species’ interactions on phenology across scales and systems.” Patricia is a third year PhD student who is advised by Dr. Morgan Ernest.

Dr. Peter Frederick, Research Professor Emeritus, was awarded the Thomas Cushman Murphy Prize, which is for his lifetime achievement in avian research. This award highlights a lifetime of exceptional, published research, or a single extraordinary research accomplishment that has resulted in a major redirection of studies on waterbirds.

Aaron Grade (WEC MS ‘15) accepted a position with the US Global Change Research Program as a Staff Scientist for the National Climate Assessment. Aaron’s contractor position is through ICF, which is a firm administered by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Based in Washington D.C, Aaron enjoys the flexibility of working remotely with quarterly meetings downtown. Aaron was advised by Dr. Katie Sieving and wants to thank her for her excellent mentorship. Aaron appreciates Dr. Sieving’s continuous support ultimately leading him to a position that influences Federal climate change research and climate science outreach.

Priyanka Hari Haran (SNRE PhD student) was named one of the two CALS nominees for the Alec Courtelis Award and one of ten international students selected as the CALS International Student Outstanding Achievement Award Winners.
Matthew Richardson (SNRE/IE PhD) passed his qualifying exam on October 4th, 2022 and is now a PhD candidate. Matthew’s dissertation title is “Quantitative Approaches for Monitoring and Restoration of Sessile Species within Estuarine Systems.” Matthew is advised by Dr. Bill Pine.

Dr. Divya Vasudev (WEC PhD) won the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation Field Biology Award. This award is designed to recognize and encourage critical career stage talent and curiosity in field-based research. The award supports individual scientists, elevates their diverse perspectives and enables them to commit time to the observation and experimentation that help us better understand ourselves and the world around us.

Ke Zhang (WEC PhD student) presented at the Waterbird Society Annual Meeting on November 2, 2022 discussing “Non-breeding utilization ranges of white ibis and tricolored herons in the Gulf of Mexico region.” Ke’s co-authors were Chris Gulick and Dr. Abby Powell.

Dr. Steve Johnson (WEC Professor) was awarded the 2022 Regional Award for Excellence in Teaching from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture.
In 2016, **WEC Professors McCleery, Fletcher, Wisely and Austin** started the WEC International Research Experience for Students (IRES), an NSF funded program aimed to develop globally engaged and inter-culturally competent science. This was achieved through the creation of intensive research experience for US student studying the ecology of African Savannah in Eswatini and South Africa. Working side by side with African peers and more than 20 African mentors, the first three years of this endeavor produced 19 peer-reviewed publications, 15 participants enrolled in graduate school, and participation from notable UF WEC alumni (i.e., Dr. Gumbi, Dr. Ledger, Dr. Mtsetfwa and Dr. Sibiya. Recently returned from southern Africa this year’s participants in IRES 2.0 - **Maggie Jones, Amanda O’Brien, Cory McKinstry, Janessa Keller and Kayla Ehrlich** shared their research findings and experiences from their time in the IRES program.

**UF’s Wildlife Society (TWS) and Wildlife Graduate Student Association (WGSA)** co-hosted a mentoring mixer in September open to students and faculty. These events are held throughout the year so keep an eye out!

Photos courtesy of Katie Sieving.
WEC Professor, **Dr. Mark Hostetler**, lead the Madera Neighborhood Natural Area Network Restoration project where students and community members came together to learn about local plants and animals and how they can implement sustainable landscaping practices in their neighborhood. At this informal gathering, the participants utilized iNaturalist to identify and remove invasive plants.

Dr. Hostetler hosts these events throughout the year to raise awareness about the value of these natural areas and important connections between nearby yards and neighborhoods. If you are interested in learning more and getting involved, please visit the [Neighborhood Natural Area Network website](#).

Photos courtesy of Dr. Mark Hostetler.
The WEC Jennings Scholarship Fund provides financial awards to new undergraduate students and graduate students in the Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation.

Students who are interested in applying should email required application materials as a single Word or .pdf document to Kelley Graff at (kelleygraff@ufl.edu) by the deadline of Friday, Dec 2nd at 5:00 PM.

Application materials must include:

1. A letter of application, addressed to the WEC Scholarship and Awards Committee, stating your professional goals and philosophies, as well as your interest in wildlife ecology and conservation.

2. Copy of your transcript from previously attended colleges or universities. A copy is OK, you do not need to provide an original transcript.

3. A completed WEC Scholarship Profile Form, which is attached.

Applications will be reviewed by the Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Scholarship and Awards Committee. Selection is based on the following criteria: academic performance; professional potential; financial need; extracurricular activities; demonstrated leadership; and your professional goals and philosophies, as stated in your letter of application. So, be sure your application letter is well-crafted.

Eligibility to Apply - Undergraduate: WEC undergraduate students who entered the WEC major in Spring 2022, Summer 2022 or Fall 2022 are eligible to apply. This is your only opportunity to apply. Previous undergraduate recipients may not reapply unless they advance into a WEC graduate program.

Eligibility to Apply – Graduate: WEC graduate students admitted to their current WEC degree program in Spring 2022, Summer 2022 or Fall 2022 are eligible to apply. Previous graduate recipients are not eligible to re-apply unless they advanced into a new WEC degree program in 2022 (i.e. WEC MS students who advanced into a WEC doctoral program in 2022 are eligible to re-apply). Please Note: SNRE graduate students advised by WEC faculty are not eligible to apply for this donor-restricted scholarship.
The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society is sponsoring two undergraduate scholarship opportunities for wildlife-interested students. The Greater Everglades Student Memorial Scholarship and the Diversity Wildlife Student Scholarship will award $1,500 each to a Junior or Senior in wildlife or biology. The diversity award is for a student who identifies with minority status, including but not limited to, a racial, ethnic or gender identification. Students enrolled in programs at HBUs, private, community colleges, Native American programs or alternative institutions are encouraged to apply for the diversity award.

To be eligible for one of these scholarships, students must be pursuing a career in wildlife management or ecology and be supportive of the mission of The Wildlife Society. Students must also be currently enrolled in a college or university in Florida and have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or greater. Recipients will be selected based on financial need, extracurricular activities, demonstrated leadership, professional potential, personal challenges and achievements, and career goals, as stated in the student’s letter.

Candidates should submit the following items before December 1, 2022:

1. A letter expressing professional goals and financial need;
2. A resume or CV;
3. Copies of transcripts from each college or university attended (unofficial copies are acceptable);
4. One letter of recommendation submitted directly from a faculty member or wildlife professional.

Students applying to the diversity scholarship should submit a separate essay on the topic of the applicant’s minority status (can take the form of a reflection), which should express how selection of the candidate would increase equality and inclusivity in the field of wildlife study.

Send to: Monica Folk, Chair
FLTWS Scholarship Committee
E-mail: monicafolk@embarqmail.com
The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society is sponsoring the **Courtney A. Tye Memorial Graduate Student Scholarship**. This scholarship is for **graduate** students during the 2022-2023 academic year. One $2,000 scholarship will be awarded. This scholarship is intended to assist a graduate student who has demonstrated potential for making a future professional contribution in wildlife science or management through research, management, education, or outreach.

To be eligible for this scholarship, the applicant must be a full-time graduate student at a college or university in Florida and have an interest in a career in wildlife ecology or management. The recipient will be selected based on contribution of their graduate research to wildlife in Florida, their demonstrated leadership, professional preparations, and need for the funding.

Each candidate must submit the following 5 items to apply:

1. A letter describing your professional career goals in wildlife ecology or management, your preparations for a career in this field, your previous or current involvement with TWS, and an explanation of how the funding would be used if awarded;

2. A resume or CV;

3. A one-page document describing the nature of your graduate research, your role in developing the project, what stage the research is in, and an indication of how the project is funded;

4. A completed assessment submitted directly by your major advisor;

5. A letter of recommendation submitted directly by your major advisor. This letter should specifically address how the student and their research will advance wildlife research in Florida, the potential of the student to contribute to the wildlife profession, communication skills, competence, motivation, leadership potential, involvement and work ethic.

To be considered for this scholarship, all application materials must be emailed (preference) or sent through postal mail post-marked on or before December 1, 2022.

Send to: Monica Folk, Chair
FLTWS Scholarship Committee
E-mail: monicafolk@embarqmail.com
The African Safari Club of Florida has set aside the sum of $5,000 to be given in scholarship money to be given to students in the Wildlife Ecology and Conservation department. They view the continued education of students in WEC as essential to the future of wildlife management and hope that this money will provide students with the opportunity to finish their graduate degree programs.

More consideration will be given to those applications that answer each question and submit evidence of their compliance with the criteria requirements. It is their hope to award these funds to the most deserving student(s) meeting the following criteria:

1. The students must be involved in a master’s degree program or a PhD program in WEC and have a cumulative GPA of a 3.0 or higher. Each student must submit a transcript with the application (unofficial transcript acceptable).

2. The students must be currently studying North American Wildlife or African Wildlife in an African Country that allows hunting.

3. The students must include a one-page written history of their hunting experience and what hunting means to them. Please include any thoughts about the importance of hunting to wildlife conservation. Please submit these along with any pictures of animals harvested with the application.

4. The students must also include with their application, a two-page article concerning their current study program and permit the African Safari Club of Florida to publish this information in their club magazine. Please include any pictures that would help describe your studies.

5. The students must also include proof of a hunting license for the year of 2022-2023 or past years’ licenses. They deem this criterion to be significant in evaluating the applicants’ interest in hunting, because they expect the licenses to have been obtained for the purpose of enjoying the sport of hunting and not for the purpose of applying for a scholarship.

6. Please submit a statement of financial need. They attach a form to be completed by the student and submitted with the application for compliance of this criteria.

This application is requested to be submitted before November 30th, 2022.

Send to: Jerry Gillman
Chairman Scholarship Committee
African Safari Club of Florida, Inc.
Email: jerry@innovapanel.com
This issue of the WEC Spotlight was edited and produced by Maddie Magrino and Kelley Graff.

The next issue will be produced and released in February. Please send entries by January 15th to kelleygraff@ufl.edu

Want to promote your new research, field work, internship, or alumni news on WEC’s social media platforms? Please send submissions to mmagrino@ufl.edu

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