



# SOUTH CENTRAL CHAPTER



Winter 2004-2005

Volume 1, Issue 2

## A Letter from the President...

Greetings South Central Chapter Members,

I just returned from the Mid-year Board meeting in San Francisco where we discussed future objectives and goals of our Society. We also discussed some of the details of our future International meetings which appear to be getting better every year; Cairns, Australia in 2006 and Sacramento, California in 2007. We have a very solid and diverse Executive Board which is leading this Chapter along the road of success. My term as President of your Chapter is half complete. I have enjoyed the benefits and challenges along the way; and look forward to more changes in the coming months. Our Chapter has a very bright future.

I am pleased to provide you with the Chapter's second electronic quarterly newsletter – The Wetland Messenger. I am also very excited about our **recently updated website** <http://www.sws.org/regional/southcentral/>. Please visit the site and let us know what you think. The quarterly newsletter and the website are two tools we are using to provide valuable information to our communities and members. We believe the electronic newsletter and an ever-changing website are necessary to keep up with society and the desire for electronic information and interaction. Our Chapter is becoming the first rate organization it is destined to be. If you have any suggestions or want to become involved in website management or the newsletter, please let me know.

We are very pleased with our newly established training courses. Please make sure you follow the schedule on the website and newsletters for courses near you. We are providing wetland related training courses throughout our Chapter and are always looking for locations, hosts, instructors, and new ideas.

The South Central Chapter is comprised of eight states (Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Oklahoma) and is the largest SWS Chapter in the United States. We are a dynamic Chapter which continues to grow, promote wetland research and education, and search for new ways to serve the communities and universities. As we continue to grow and expand chapter activities, I would like to encourage you to become involved in the Chapter. Participation and interaction by researchers and practitioners is important for a viable and growing chapter.

There are many ways to become involved in the Chapter, including: writing an article for the newsletter; organizing a 1-day training course for the Chapter; or serving as a Chapter officer, board member, committee member, or student mentor. I'd like to know your suggestions and/or thoughts about the Chapter and its future. Hope to see and meet you in Pensacola!

Scott W. Jecker CWB, PWS

### This issue:

<i>A Letter from the President</i>	1
<i>Call for Nominations</i>	1
<i>2004 Meeting Rescheduled</i>	2
<i>Student Grant Awards</i>	2
<i>Education and Outreach</i>	2
<i>Featured Wetland</i>	3

Editor—Gary R. Pritts [gpritts@ensafe.com](mailto:gpritts@ensafe.com)

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR 2005 CHAPTER PRESIDENT-ELECT AND EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTIONS

The South Central Chapter is soliciting nominations for the 2005 elections for President-elect and two (2) Executive Board members. The complete duties of each individual are spelled out in the **Chapter Bylaws** (<http://www.sws.org/regional/southcentral/chapbus.htm>); the President-elect assumes the duties of President after a one-year term (and subsequently becomes Past-President), and Executive Board members serve for two years. Elected officials begin their terms at the summer business meeting, held in conjunction with the SWS International Conference in Charleston, SC. If you would like to become involved in one of the largest and more dynamic SWS chapters, please consider nominating yourself or someone else. Nominations should be sent by 15 March 2005 to

Paul DuBowy  
([paul.j.dubowy@usace.army.mil](mailto:paul.j.dubowy@usace.army.mil)).

Elections will be held electronically during the spring; an announcement will be made when members can vote online.

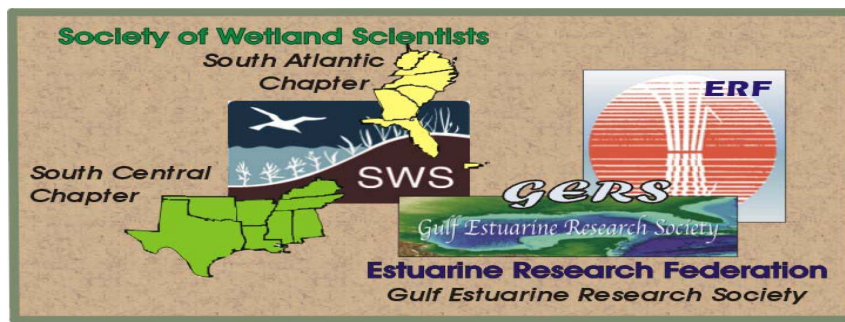
## The 2004 Pensacola Meeting Rescheduled

The 2004 Fall Joint Society Meeting in Pensacola Beach, Florida was postponed due to Hurricane Ivan. However the Chapter meeting has now been rescheduled! Although many area hotels were either destroyed or heavily damaged during this storm, Darrin Dantin, our meeting coordinator, has secured the **Hilton Garden Inn and Conference Center** on Pensacola Beach to hold the meeting **March 30 - April 2, 2005**. Darrin is working on getting all the details finalized and expects the costs to be close to or remain the same as the earlier scheduled meeting.

The abstract submission and registration process has been re-opened. Those wishing to submit an abstract or update their previously submitted abstract will be allowed to do so at this time.

If you previously registered for the Chapter meeting in October and are now unable to attend on the rescheduled dates please contact Darrin ([ddantin@bellsouth.net](mailto:ddantin@bellsouth.net)) for a full refund.

Please check for updates on the meeting website:  
<http://www.sws.org/regional/southcentral/2004PcolaBch.htm>



## Student Research Grant Awards

It has been one of the standing objectives of the Society of Wetland Scientists to "develop and encourage wetland science as a distinct discipline by supporting student education, curriculum development, and research."

Each year the Scholarship Committee provides partial support of wetland-related research conducted by qualified undergraduate and graduate students from any accredited college or university. The South Central Chapter would like to recognize Mr. David Hoeinghaus and Mr. Jason Bried whom were both award recipients of SWS Student Research Grants for 2004.

David Hoeinghaus from Bryan, Texas is a doctoral student in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology under the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at Texas A&M University. His research interests are focused on aquatic community and landscape ecology, especially river-floodplain and marsh ecosystems. For the last two years, David has received support for his dissertation research from the Society of Wetland Scientists Student

Research Grants program. His dissertation research topic is food web architecture in natural and impounded rivers of the upper Paraná River basin of Brazil. He is comparing food chain length (maximum food web height) and the relative importance of allochthonous vs. autochthonous carbon sources supporting consumers among sites using stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen as well as, comparing the relative trophic position and carbon sources supporting various species of commercial and social importance in the region. David's work will allow researchers to draw inferences regarding the effects of river impoundment on aquatic food webs.

Jason T. Bried from upstate New York received his B.S. in Natural Resources in 2001 from Paul Smith's College, New York and is currently working toward his graduate degree at Mississippi State University. Jason anticipates completion of the M.S. in Biological Sciences in May 2005. His research focus is "A spatiotemporal assessment of length-mass allometry using adult Odonata,"

based on literature advocating estimation of odonate biomass and production by morphometric correlations with length and other body measurements. The premise to his research was strong correlations are found between length and mass, indirect measurement of mass is more desirable because length is obtained quickly, mortality is avoided, and measures are easily standardized (i.e., preservation techniques vary, limiting mass comparisons), all without compromising scientific reliability. These advantages are well known, with numerous papers using previously published length-mass equations (regression coefficients) for aquatic insects. However, minimal research projects have explicitly tested the robustness of length-mass relationships over any spatial or temporal scale. Because of this, the initial research plan was expanded to investigate allometric relationships and the spatial and temporal variability in those relationships. Length-mass study of several insect taxa over multiple scales will determine credibility of broad applications. Jason's work has shown that length-mass allometry is accessible to wetlands functional assessment (i.e., rapid productivity estimation) and the advantages over direct mass measurement may override possible accuracy limitations.

The South Central Chapter - SWS Student Research Grant program is a valuable resource and encourages all students to apply.

## Education and Outreach

On October 26, 2004, the program held its first training course, a wetland plant identification course in Houston, Texas. In fact, within a day and a half of the course's announcement, the course was filled. The one-day course was held at the Harris County Flood Control District's Greens Bayou Wetlands Mitigation Bank (GBWMB) north-east of Houston. The weather was a little warm, but rain free. Our instructor, Dr. Stanley Jones, identified over 100 wetland plant species located at the GBWMB for participants, but also discussed tricks and tips for identifying these plants for those that are not a Ph.D. botanist. All of the comments received from participants were positive

*(Continued on page 3)*

(Continued from page 2)

with most stating that the course was very beneficial and that they would recommend it to other colleagues and friends.

An introduction to hydric soils and wetland hydrology course will be held on March 10 and 11, 2005 in Houston, Texas. In addition, we hope to announce two more wetland plant identification courses (winter-time focused) for the Austin, Texas and Little Rock, Arkansas areas shortly. These courses are intended to occur by the end of February or beginning of March. An official announcement for the course will occur once final details are worked out.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions regarding the Education and Outreach Program, please contact Michael Souliere [msouliere@swca.com](mailto:msouliere@swca.com).

## Featured Wetland

### Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge

Noxubee (pronounced Nox' u bee) National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1940 from lands formerly controlled by the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act,



**The new Noxubee NWR visitor center, opened October 2004.** Photo by G. Ervin

is located within three counties of east-central Mississippi (Noxubee, Oktibbeha and Winston), and consists of approximately 48,000 acres. Around 15,000 acres of the refuge is seasonal wetland habitat, including 13,000 acres of bottomland forest (700 of which are managed as greentree reservoirs) and 150 acres of moist-soil managed herbaceous wetlands. Noxubee NWR is located about 30km (20mi) south of Starkville, MS and Mississippi State University. Observation decks, boardwalks, and numerous hiking trails provide opportunities for viewing plants and other wildlife typical of bottomlands



**Bluff Lake (reservoir), the site of the new visitor center, two observation decks, a summer egret rookery, bald eagles, alligators, extensive bald cypress stands, and other southern wetland flora and fauna.** Photo by G. Ervin

and other ecosystems within the region. The Morgan Hill Overlook, Goose Overlook, Bluff Lake Boardwalk, and Refuge Headquarters are wheelchair accessible, and visitors are encouraged to drive the refuge roadways, the primary of which was recently paved to provide easier access to the refuge's core areas.

The primary management objective of the refuge is to provide resting and feeding habitat for migrating waterfowl. During the fall and winter months, up to 15,000 ducks and 1,200 geese are present, with common species including mallard, pintail, American wigeon, green-winged teal, wood duck, and Canada geese. Noxubee NWR also manages other game and non-game species. For example, the refuge manages intensively for the federally listed red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW), and the number of RCW clusters has doubled over the past 10 years. The 1/4-mile Woodpecker Trail



**A cypress slough in one of the refuge's greentree reservoir areas.** Photo by G. Ervin

goes through an active RCW cluster and offers an excellent opportunity to view this endangered species. The refuge also has hosted nesting bald eagles in recent years, after an absence of about a half century. The pair of eagles nested successfully in

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

2003, but a 2004 attempt was unsuccessful.

The refuge dedicated a new visitor center in October, 2004 that offers interactive exhibits on refuge history, management, and wildlife, as well as video presentations of refuge activities and history. A large observation deck at the center overlooks adjacent Bluff Lake with opportunities to view wildlife such as bald eagles, alligators, and various waterfowl and wading birds. Visitor center hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. The center also hosts the Noxubee Nature Store operated by the Friends of Noxubee Refuge, which is open upon request and on weekends with an assortment of field guides, educational gifts, and natural items, many of which are crafted by local artisans. You can check out Noubee at <http://noxubee.fws.gov/>.

## PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

The Society would like to encourage each of you to research and pursue the *Professional Wetland Scientist* (PWS) or *Wetland Professional In Training* certification. Our Chapter covers a large area with multiple wetland types and sizes and some of our Chapter States are under going heavy development. State and City departments, as well as industry and developers, are looking for qualified wetland scientists to provide them with the most reliable information regarding wetlands and potential impacts to these wetlands. As a PWS and private consultant, I believe it is only a matter of time before it is required that individuals submitting wetland data (to regulating agencies) possess a PWS certification, much like a Professional Engineer does for engineering projects. The Society of Wetland Scientists is currently working on a plan to promote PWS certification to federal/state/local government as the highest level of certification that wetland professionals can possess.  
- Scott W. Jecker



The South Atlantic Chapter of the **Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS)** invites you to join them 5-10 June 2005 in Charleston, South Carolina for the **26<sup>th</sup> Annual International Wetlands Meeting**. The Conference will focus on **ecological, landscape, and regulatory transformations** using the wetlands typified by the Southeastern U.S. Coastal Plain as a model. This physiographic province contains by far the largest extent of wetlands in conterminous United States. Hope to see you there.

## SOUTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas

**Chapter President** - Scott Jecker  
[swjecker@whitentongroup.com](mailto:swjecker@whitentongroup.com)

**President Elect** - Jeff Raasch  
[jeff.raasch@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:jeff.raasch@tpwd.state.tx.us)

**Past President** - Paul DuBowy  
[Paul.J.DuBowy@saj02.usace.army.mil](mailto:Paul.J.DuBowy@saj02.usace.army.mil)

**Secretary/ Treasurer** - Matt Stahman  
[mstahman@swca.com](mailto:mstahman@swca.com)

### Executive Board Members

- Gary Ervin  
[gervin@biology.msstate.edu](mailto:gervin@biology.msstate.edu)
- Ed Buckner  
[buckner\\_e@uapb.edu](mailto:buckner_e@uapb.edu)
- Carol Thompson  
[cthompson@tarleton.edu](mailto:cthompson@tarleton.edu)
- Robert Nairn  
[nairn@ou.edu](mailto:nairn@ou.edu)

[http://sws.org/  
regional/southcentral/](http://sws.org/regional/southcentral/)

The Society of Wetland Scientists is a nonprofit organization founded in 1980 to promote wetland science and the exchange of information related to wetlands.

### Objectives :

- to operate solely and exclusively as a charitable and educational organization to foster conservation and understanding of wetlands.
- to advance public education and enlightenment concerning the Nation's wetland resources.
- to provide an independent forum for an interchange of ideas and data developed within wetland science.
- to develop and encourage wetland science as a distinct discipline by supporting student education, curriculum development, and research.
- to encourage and evaluate the educational, scientific, and technological development and advancement of all branches of wetland science and practice.
- to encourage the knowledgeable management of wetland resources.

The Society continues to grow and has over 4000 members from the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and many other countries.

