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## AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

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Fall 2015 NEWSLETTER

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### President's Message

I'm going to let you in on a secret. Planning the NCAFS Annual Meeting is fun. It was one of the reasons I agreed to run for President-Elect in the first place. I participated in some of the planning activities for the Southern Division AFS meeting in 2003 when I was Secretary/Treasurer, and thought I might enjoy planning the 2015 meeting – which I did. I recently had that feeling again when I got to participate in a conference call last month about the Joint NCAFS Annual Meeting with the Virginia Chapter that Mike is planning for 2016. It was really exciting to be on a call with people that are looking forward to exchanging ideas and learning more about each other's work through the paper sessions and dinner social as much as we look forward to it. You'll read more details about the 2016 meeting later in the newsletter. It's going to be a great one. You should definitely plan to come.

If you haven't had an opportunity to plan the NCAFS Annual Meeting, I'm letting you in on this secret because we might need you to plan it next year. Or a year not too far in the future. The Nominations Committee is working to select candidates which will be presented in the winter newsletter. I hope if you are asked to run, you will seriously consider the opportunity and how important it is to sustain the Chapter.

Thanks to all of you who sent feedback about splitting the Secretary/Treasurer position. We've decided to leave the position as is for now, though will look for ways to ease the transition from one Secretary/Treasurer to the next. I look forward to your continued feedback on Chapter issues and to seeing you at the meeting in March!

*Submitted by Kim Sparks, NCAFS President*

## 2016 Meeting of the North Carolina and Virginia Chapters of the American Fisheries Society



### Announcement and Call for papers

Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
[Institute for Advanced Learning and Research](#)  
[Danville, Virginia](#)

A continuing education workshop (Conservation Genetics) will be held on Tuesday afternoon, March 15<sup>th</sup>. There will be oral and poster presentations March 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, and separate Virginia and North Carolina Chapter business meetings on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Since we will be on the Dan River, scene of a major coal ash spill in 2014, we are organizing a symposium on impacts and ongoing assessment and recovery actions.



*Institute for Advanced Learning and Research  
Conference Center*

For additional information about the meeting, including **how to submit an abstract**, visit: <http://nc.fisheries.org/2016-ncafs-meeting/>.

Important dates: Submit your abstract by January 15, 2016. Authors will be notified of abstract receipt and acceptance by January 31, 2016. Abstracts submitted after the deadline may be presented as a poster.

Program Committee: Mike Gangloff (NC Chair), Craig Roghair (VA Chair), Aaron Bunch, Andy Dolloff, Eric Hallerman, Bud LaRoche, Michael Moore, Michael Perkins, and Bryn Tracy.

*Submitted by Mike Gangloff, NCAFS President-Elect*

## **Secretary and Treasurer Reports**

Balances of NCAFS financial accounts as of September, 2015 are:

**Checking \$7097.76 (includes PayPal account)**

**Investments / Edward Jones \$40,227.13**

**Ichthus Fund \$30,701.70**

**Robust Redhorse Conservation Committee \$9,912.49**

The NCAFS Executive Committee (EXCOM, Kim Sparks, Brena Jones, Mike Gangloff, and Bryn Tracy) held a meeting via conference call on September 20, 2015. Minutes from that meeting are available from Bryn should any member so choose to read them. Most of the discussion centered around the upcoming NCAFS annual meeting to be held jointly with the Virginia Chapter (see article on Page 2, and on-line at: <http://nc.fisheries.org/2016-ncafs-meeting/>).

Another topic for discussion was the e-mail distribution lists, the AFS+NCAFS membership list, and the NCAFS membership list. The Chapter is continually striving to meet the needs of its members and those interested in North Carolina's fisheries resources and one of those ways is by disseminating information through e-mail and list serves. If your e-mail changes, please let us know. If you no longer want to receive notifications, please let us know that, too.

Finally, an item that had been brought up in the May 2015 EXCOM meeting and which was also discussed in the Summer NCAFS newsletter (<http://nc.fisheries.org/2015/08/01/summer-2015-newsletter/>) was the notion of separating the Secretary/Treasurer position into two positions. The EXCOM received input from just two of our members voicing their concerns and/or opinions regarding the topic. For now, the two positions will stay as one.

As a reminder to existing NCAFS members and those who are reading this newsletter, but are not AFS or NCAFS members, the annual dues for both societies will expire on December 31, 2015. You may pay your 2016 state chapter dues directly to AFS when you renew your 2016 AFS membership or you can send the \$7.00 membership fee directly to the NCAFS Chapter using PayPal, check, or cash. If you are not a member of either AFS or NCAFS, please consider joining one or both of the societies. For \$7.00 you can't even purchase a 6-pack of a regular brand of beer, much less a microbrew! Think about it. I hope you will consider membership in NCAFS in the year ahead.

*Submitted by Bryn H. Tracy, NCAFS Secretary/Treasurer*

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## **Observations from the AFS Management Committee and Governing Board Meetings, Portland, OR**

The Western Division and Oregon Chapter of AFS hosted a wonderful Annual Meeting in Portland, OR. Meeting attendance was outstanding (3,284) and was only topped by the recent Seattle AFS meeting. Prior to all the really neat fisheries presentations and workshops, the AFS Management Committee (MC) and Governing Board (GB) assembled to carry on the business of the Society. For those of you who do not know, the MC is a smaller subset of the GB that meets monthly and handles general oversight of Society operations including budget approval; Executive Director activities and, through him/her, staff activities; society-wide meetings; communications with membership, external partners, and government entities; and matters related to and affecting Society Procedures. The GB is a larger collection of officers that decides Society policies, leads Society strategic planning initiatives, and reviews Society business matters that need membership approval. The minutes of both should be available from the AFS website so I'll just highlight a few items of interest.



*Members of the 2015 AFS Governing Board pose for a group photo after their meeting in Portland.*

AFS membership is a big issue, probably because membership dues are one of the few ways that non-profit organizations can maintain a steady stream of revenue. On the state chapter level, those of you paying the \$7 NCAFS dues are truly appreciated by the NC Chapter . . . but if you only pay these dues (thus being an Affiliate Chapter member) and not the AFS dues, you are technically NOT an AFS member! AFS members pay annual dues (unless you are a lifetime member) for membership in the premiere fisheries organization in the world. Membership gets you reduced registration fees at



Annual AFS Meetings, reduced prices in the AFS Bookstore, and access to a networking and organizational structure that shapes the future of fisheries research and policy. Membership in the Southern Division (SD) of AFS is conferred upon AFS members who reside within the geographical boundary of the SD - there are no SDAFS dues.

An offshoot of the membership concerns is that fisheries professionals attending, for example, Southern Division meetings but who are not AFS members get the somewhat similar benefits of AFS membership without making any financial commitment to the Society. Annual SD Meetings are high quality events that offer all the professionalism of the Annual AFS Meeting but in a more relaxed and low key setting. Currently, non AFS members get to attend Division Meetings at the same registration cost as AFS members. Something doesn't sound right here and this is starting to be realized by Divisions officers. Conversations are beginning to occur about charging an 'AFS member' and 'non-member' rate for attendance at Division meetings. The 'non-member' rate would probably be in excess of the meeting registration fee and an AFS membership – thus making AFS membership more attractive.

AFS Vice President Steve McMullin led a very effective course on 'Leadership at all levels in AFS'. Leadership information is helpful for those of you interested in Society, Division, and Chapter governance. This course has also routinely been given at SDAFS Meetings so there is no need to attend a Society Meeting to get this training. Additionally, AFS is working to develop a Unit Survival Guide (webpage) to make all aspects of starting and running a subunit proceed more effectively. One of the most anxious moments for any subunit leader is running an EXCOM or Business meeting and AFS Constitutional Consultant (and NCAFS member) John Boreman will soon unveil a document on 'Running a Meeting by Roberts Rules of Order'. John's document is designed specifically for AFS use and does not contain a lot of the extraneous information that can make Roberts Rules so daunting to comprehend. Keep an eye out for this!



*Casey Grieshaber and Dave Coughlan at the AFS Grand Social. Thanks to Julie Harris for taking the photo; however you failed to exclude photobomber Patrick Cooney.*

The Portland AFS Meeting was well run, the large Oregon Convention Center was an ideal meeting venue, and Portland was a beautiful location. On a lighter note, it seemed that all of the presentations I wanted to attend were in different sessions at opposite ends of the convention center. I met my daily 'FitBit' step goal every day of the conference! The Wednesday night social was a blast and I ran into NCAFS stalwart Casey Grieshaber and several other NCAFS chapter members, past and present.

*Submitted by Dave Coughlan, SDAFS President-Elect, NCAFS member, and Senior Fishery Scientist with Normandeau Associates.*

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## **Spotlight on Students and Young Professionals**



*Matt Stillwell, Environmental Technician with the North Carolina Division of Water Resources' Biological Assessment Branch*

### **Matt Stillwell**

Matt grew up in eastern North Carolina in Kinston, where hunting and fishing is not only a recreational activity, but often a major contributor to the food put on the table. When he was young his family would take him randomly through the years camping, hunting, and fishing. Matt did not start hunting and fishing regularly until he was in high school and when he obtained his driver's license, which provided him with the means to get out and enjoy these activities.

As he got closer to graduation from high school, his sister who was attending NC State University, mentioned their College of Natural Resources' Fisheries and Wildlife Science Bachelor of Science Degree. Upon heading off to college, Matt knew very little about the fisheries field and the jobs in it. Upon transferring from Lenoir Community College to NC State University, he became involved with the Student Fisheries Society

subunit of AFS where he served as Undergraduate Vice President in 2011. After volunteering with graduate students and SFS opportunities for a little less than a year, Matt acquired a contract job at Progress Energy as an Environmental Technician working with their fisheries scientists while still attending NCSU as a full-time student.

As an undergrad, Matt gave a presentation at NCAFS' 2012 annual meeting on: "Undergraduate Work Experience Provides Quality Fisheries Training". Two years later,

Matt graduated from NC State University and continued working for another year and a half for the power company which had subsequently merged with Duke Energy. Since then, he acquired a full-time Environmental Technician position with the North Carolina Division of Water Resources' Biological Assessment Branch. Today, Matt can be found evaluating the water quality of streams and rivers using fish and benthic macroinvertebrate communities as part of North Carolina's basin wide monitoring program. In July, Matt completed the two-week course on Southern Appalachian Mayflies, Stoneflies, and Caddisflies offered at the Highlands Biological Station in Macon County, NC. Matt's love for fisheries led him to explore educational and employment opportunities in this field. Every opportunity he has had has been presented to him through the American Fisheries Society, and with patience and perseverance, he has found himself in the field of fisheries - where he wanted to be all along.

### **Alex Dornburg**

Most NCAFS members are aware of the role of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Science's research collection in preserving records, specimens, and genetic samples of our freshwater biodiversity. As the new research curator of ichthyology at the Museum, Alex Dornburg is tasked with overseeing this responsibility. Alex has an A.S. from the Community College of Philadelphia and B.S. in



*Alex Dornburg, North Carolina Museum of Natural Science's research curator of ichthyology*

zoology from Washington State University. He became obsessed with fish after diving the frigid waters of Washington's Puget Sound, and went on to earn his M.S. and Ph.D. at Yale University, where he also did his postdoctoral research. Throughout his time in Connecticut, he continued to dive with other local enthusiasts who didn't mind the murky waters of Long Island Sound and became increasingly amazed at how fishes manage to thrive virtually anywhere there is water. This amazement led him to develop a research program that integrates aspects of molecular biology, ecology, paleontology, and morphology to better understand just how and why fishes are so successful.

Alex has published numerous scientific research papers on a variety of fish groups that include triggerfishes, squirrelfishes, and Antarctic icefishes. His love of scuba also has resulted in field expeditions to the islands of Guam and Curaçao, where he forces other



scientists to reverse their normal sleeping schedules to join him for seemingly endless nights of diving. Since coming to North Carolina, he has temporarily hung up his wetsuit and has been having a blast going out and exploring the rivers of the state. With field help from members of the NCWRC, Alex has begun developing a long-term project studying the population genetics of Longnose Gar. He is also very excited to see more of our fish species, and looks forward to meeting and working with other enthusiastic fish and nature lovers around the state.

Away from the water, Alex enjoys spending time with his wife Rachel, their one-year old son Ivan, and their dog Sunbear. Alex and Rachel are avid hikers that try to get out to hike and see animals as much as possible, and both also enjoy nature photography as a hobby. To learn more about Alex's research, visit his website at:

<http://naturalsciences.org/staff/alex-dornburg>.

### **Shane Miller**



*Shane Miller, Laboratory manager of the Fisheries, Ecology and Aquatic Sciences laboratory at North Carolina State University*

Shane spent the first 22 years of his life landlocked in the Sunflower State. Luckily for him, his family spent the majority of their summers vacationing at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. From a young age Shane grew fond of the coastal waters off the Carolinas, spending many restless winter nights dreaming of the salty air. After high school, Shane decided to remain close to home and attended the University of Kansas (Go Jayhawks!), majoring in Environmental Studies. Being eager to get his feet wet in research, Shane jumped at the opportunity to examine the spatial ecology of juvenile lemon sharks across Cape Eleuthera, Bahamas. After Graduation Shane had enough of the long commute to his first love, the ocean, and began applying to graduate school to follow his passion for the sea and its inhabitants.

Shane finished his M.S. in December of 2014 at James Cook University, Australia.

He conducted research on: "The Effects of Reserve Protection and Benthic Habitat on the Abundance of *Zanclus cornutus*", under the supervision of Garry Russ. When Shane found downtime from laboratory experiments, scavenging through large datasets and working with statistical programs, he was volunteering for the National Environmental Research Program. Through NERP Shane helped plan tagging activities in advance,



deployed fishing gear (nets and long-line), and tagged sharks and other pelagic species. Though Shane fell in love with Australia, the Great Barrier Reef and the amazing people down under, something was still pulling him towards the coastal waters of the Carolinas.

Several months after completing his M.S. Shane began working as a laboratory manager for Drs. Jim Rice and Derek Aday in the Fisheries, Ecology and Aquatic Sciences laboratory at NC State University. Shane hopes to be able to conduct innovative research for sustainable fisheries and to collect and analyze data for the management of fishes and their habitats and ecosystems, while also widening his knowledge of coastal/estuarine ecology and fisheries biology, assessment and management.

*Submitted by Bryn H. Tracy, NCAFS Secretary/Treasurer, and Jim Rice, NC State University*

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## **North Carolina State University Student Fisheries Society Report**

After receiving the prestigious “Most Outstanding Student Chapter” annual award at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society (the club’s 4th parent society award), newly appointed President Ron Essig asked us, “How do you keep earning these?” Our answer was obvious: “Every year, the club’s members try to do more than they did the previous year.” North Carolina State University Student Fisheries Society



*AFS Past-President Donna Parrish presents NCSU SFS members with the award for “Outstanding Student Subunit” at the 2015 Annual Meeting of The American Fisheries Society. (Pictured, left-to-right: Gus Engman, Casey Grieshaber, Caitlyn Bradley, Donna Parrish, Dylan Owensby, Mary Henson, Jared Flowers, Crystal Lee Pow, Tomas Ivasauskas, Tiffany Penland). Photo Credit: AFS, Rich Grost*

(SFS) members participate in events related to aquatic community outreach, conservation, education and professional development, and socializing with peers and professionals. So far this year, members have participated in events that address all of these categories—always with great enthusiasm.

Members of the SFS enjoy sharing their knowledge with the community through outreach. During the spring of 2015, the SFS volunteered with the Shad in the Classroom Program. SFS members interacted with 18 elementary-, middle-, and high-school classes—a total of 823 students. Using Rainbow Trout and American Shad specimens, SFS members taught hands-on, dissection-based lectures about the internal and external anatomy of fish. In all classes, the students' excitement was palpable and some even managed to sneak a few 'selfies' with their specimens before teachers enforced schools' cell phone policies. This is the second year that SFS assisted with dissections, and we look forward to continuing our contribution to this program on an annual basis.



*SFS Co-President Casey Grieshaber dissects a shad with 8<sup>th</sup> grade students as a part of the Shad in the Classroom program. Photo credit: Michelle Amato*



*Students prepare to clean up Rocky Branch Creek, an urban stream flowing through NCSU's campus. Photo credit: Tomas Ivaskauskas.*

Conservation is also a very important goal for the SFS. The SFS officially adopted Rocky Branch, a headwater stream that runs through NC State University campus, and removes trash from the basin twice annually. As with most urban aquatic systems, Rocky Branch receives a lot of discarded fast food containers, plastic wrappers, and drink bottles. Therefore, our role as stewards for this system is exceptionally important. We are excited to be part of a campus-wide bioblitz that is taking place this fall. We will be surveying the fish and invertebrate species that inhabit Rocky Branch, and this information will be displayed on educational signage across campus.

The SFS also provides its members with unique opportunities for education and professional development. We had a very large turnout for a fish identification workshop that was hosted at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences fish collection. Two of the

area's most knowledgeable ichthyologists, Gabriela Hogue and Bryn Tracy, led an exciting lecture and workshop that imparted participants with an understanding of local biodiversity. Students were also able to practice looking for identifying characters and the use of keys to identify species, skills helpful for identifying fish anywhere in the world. These abilities are absolutely invaluable for young professionals, and we had a strong undergraduate presence at this workshop.

In June, SFS members spent an exceptionally relaxing and educational weekend together, snorkeling, camping, and fishing on the South Toe and Cane Rivers. These



*Bryn Tracy gives a lecture on the fishes of North Carolina as part of an identification workshop. Photo credit: Casey Greishaber.*

two beautiful rivers, nestled in the North Carolina Blue Ridge Mountains, provided the perfect venue for getting to know one-another and some of the state's native fauna. The seventeen people who participated in this trip spent the majority of the weekend wearing wetsuits while watching colorful darters making their living in the riffles or large redhorse suckers swimming sluggishly in the deep pools—there was even an Eastern Hellbender sighting! Students were also able to practice backpack electrofishing, seining, and fish ID skills. The remainder of the time was

devoted to making s'mores! Prior to donning their wetsuits, some members had the opportunity to tour the Conservation Aquaculture Center in Marion, NC, learning about the diversity and unique life history of freshwater mussels and their conservation needs. Before trekking back to Raleigh, everyone made a short pilgrimage to the top of Linville Gorge to gaze out upon one of North Carolina's most scenic overlooks.

The SFS is a strong and active club that is thankful for the recognition it has received. The enthusiasm of its members, active support from the NCAFS, and contributions from local professionals and fish enthusiasts have allowed the club to flourish. Meetings, which usually feature a guest speaker, are held monthly in David Clark Labs on NC State University campus, at 5:30 on the first Tuesday of every month. Everyone is invited to attend! Also, check out our Facebook page for up-to-date



*SFS members electrofish along the Cane River. Photo credit: Meiko Camp*



information about our activities and upcoming events (search “North Carolina State University Student Fisheries Society”).

*Submitted by Tomas Ivasauskas & Ani Popp, NC State University SFS*

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## **Jolly Good (AFS) Fellows!**

Most NC Chapter members understand that our Chapter is always a major presence at the AFS parent society annual meeting. This year in Portland, Oregon (August 16–20), the Chapter was active with presentations and leadership roles and was recognized with awards to several individuals and the NC State University Student Subunit. And we can all be especially proud to be represented by nine Chapter members that were inducted as the first cohort of American Fisheries Society Fellows!

This new formal recognition in our Society honors members who have made outstanding or meritorious contributions to the diversity of fields that are included in the American Fisheries Society. Contributions may include efforts in leadership, research, teaching and mentoring, resource management or conservation, and outreach/interaction with the public. Fellows retain the honor and title for life.

2015 Inaugural AFS Fellows include John Boreman, Fred Harris, Joe Hightower, Chris Kohler, Larry Nielsen, Rich Noble, Larry Olmsted, Roger Rulifson, and Fred Scharf.

Click on the link below to see a poster honoring the 2015 inaugural cohort of American Fisheries Society Fellows, nine of which are NC Chapter members. *Poster by Christine Moffitt, ID Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, University of Idaho.*

<http://nc.fisheries.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/SocietyFellows2015Poster.pdf>

Their formal induction was a special feature at the plenary session at the Portland meeting, and we look forward to more NC Chapter members receiving this high honor in the future. Congratulations to these distinguished Chapter members — *for they are Jolly Good Fellows!*

*Submitted by Tom Kwak, Unit Leader, Professor, NC Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, NC State University*

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## News from the North Carolina Chapter American Fisheries Society Awards Committee

### 2015 Student Travel Award Presented

The NCAFS Chapter established a Student Travel Award Program in 2005 for the specific purpose of encouraging professional growth of students and maximal participation of undergraduate and graduate students at the annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society. Monetary support is provided to qualifying students via a travel award of \$200 to \$400 to help defer the cost of meeting travel, registration, and accommodations. The 2015 award was presented to one student for the 145<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society held August 16-20 in Portland, Oregon.

The 2015 award winner was a Crystal Lee Pow, a Ph.D. student from NC State University. Crystal received a cash award of \$400 from the Chapter's Ichthus Fund account, which was established specifically to foster student involvement. Crystal was selected to give her oral presentation entitled *"Estrogenic Contaminant Concentrations and the Incidence of Intersex in Centrarchid Fishes: Landscape-Level Relationships in North Carolina"* in the Best Student Paper Symposium.

Crystal represented the Chapter admirably at the meeting and expressed her sincere gratitude to the Chapter for helping to make her attendance and participation possible.

*Submitted by Greg Cope and John Crutchfield, NCAFS Awards Committee*



*The 2015 NCAFS Student Travel Award winner, Crystal Lee Pow pictured at the meeting in Portland. Photo Credit: Tom Kwak*

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### Call to Action!

If you want to contribute, have a story idea or would like us to include something in next quarter's newsletter, email Kevin Hining [kevin.hining@ncwildlife.org](mailto:kevin.hining@ncwildlife.org) or give him a call at 336-877-1087. Also, if you want to become more involved with one of the many great

NCAFS committees then please check the link below for information about each one, contacts, etc., <http://nc.fisheries.org/who-we-are/committees/>

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### Valuable Links

The [American Fisheries Society Home Page](#) offers a wealth of links to assist you in your fishy endeavors. Information on ordering AFS books, annual meetings, chapter links and joining the AFS can be found there.

This and [archived NCAFS newsletters](#), along with links, [chapter information](#), and [upcoming meetings](#), can be found on the [NCAFS website](#).

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[Click to view dates & deadlines](#)

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**  
In Fisheries & Ecology