Are you interested in becoming more involved with your Fisheries and Wildlife Graduate Student Organization? Do you know someone who would excel in one or more of the positions?

If so, please send your name, or the name of the person you are nominating, and the position(s) to Noelle Thompson at thomp996@msu.edu.

If you have questions about a specific role, contact the person currently occupying that position.
Welcoming new students

This year, our department grew by 10 students in the fall and 5 in the spring. The department turned out in force to welcome them all!

Outreach Activities

Feb 29 2020 – GWIS Middle School Girls’ Math and Science Day
This is an opportunity for middle school girls to try science demos and games while working with enthusiastic and knowledgeable science students and researchers at MSU. Past activities included practice with GIS mapping, learning fire ecology, building a vertical growing system, and many others! Girls choose which sessions they would like to attend and rotate every half hour to a new session.

April 13 2020 – Fenner Nature Center Earth Day Extravaganza
Fenner Nature center celebrates Earth Day each year and visitors of all ages are welcome to join in the search for salamanders, planting trees, and restoring habitat in the park. The “Garlic Mustard Pull Challenge” is one of the event’s highlights and is a way to remove the invasive mustard from the park. Volunteers are needed to help clear brush to prepare the land for the planting of native Michigan grasses and wildflower species.

May 2, 9, 16 2020 – Dr. Bill Earl Youth Fishing Program
This is a free program for youth ages 5-16. Participants get to learn basic fishing skills such as casting, knot tying, rigging for different types of fishing, regulations, and ethics. Participants then get to apply those skills and knowledge at a local fishing site in the Lansing area with the assistance of trained volunteers. Fishing experience is not necessary.

Contact Claire Hoffmann at hoffm523@msu.edu for more information.
Diverse graduate students?

COGS Alert!

Have you heard of the Council of Graduate Students (COGS)? With an $11 membership fee, COGS may fund professional development and social activities for you to partake in! Additionally, COGS advocates for graduate students to the university administration.

To learn more, go to [http://cogs.msu.edu/](http://cogs.msu.edu/) or contact our COGS rep: Veronica Frans, fransver@msu.edu

Check out where our students are coming from!

GIS images provided by: Noelle Thompson
Data provided by: Jill Cruth

For more information on the GSO and events

Visit our website at: [http://msufwgso.wix.com/fwgso](http://msufwgso.wix.com/fwgso)
Fall semester 2019, the Fisheries and Wildlife GSO Seminar Series focused on emphasizing work within academia. Speakers represented a wide variety of fisheries, wildlife, and human dimensions research. These included Dr. Vikram Vakharia, a fish virologist with the Institute of Marine & Environmental Technology at the University of Maryland discussing viruses within Salmonid species, and Dr. Marta Jarzyna who received her PhD in the Fisheries and Wildlife Dept. at MSU and spoke about the research she is conducting regarding critical scales and dimensions of biodiversity change as a professor in the Department of Evolution, Ecology and Organismal Biology at the Ohio State University.

The spring semester starts off with FW faculty and staff, Dr. John Robinson and Dr. Jared Homola, discussing their research with population and conservation genetics. Other exciting topics to come include the understanding public perceptions about invasive species by Greg Norwood with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, environmental consulting with Dr. Leslie TeWinkle, and a video conference with Dr. Burnham Curtis, Forensic Scientist with Unites States Fish and Wildlife Service discussing wildlife forensic genetics.

Field and lab work? Teaching? Avoid the worry!
Get training in first aid and CPR this semester!

Date: March 5th 2020
Time: 8 am — 4 pm
Price: $67.50 (before 2/21)

Contact Leslie Skora, skorale1@msu.edu for location
**GSO Newsletter (Continued)**

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**FW Spring Picnic**

**Who:** You and your loved ones  
**When:** Thursday, April 16, 2020 from 5 pm-Sunset  
**Where:** Patriarche Park, 950 Alton Street, East Lansing, MI 48823  
**Why:** Well, because... solidarity and celebration!  
**Food/drink:** Hot dogs, hamburgers, veggie burgers, buns, toppings, condiments, and assorted alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks will be provided!  
**Activities:** We'll host another ticketed raffle as well as the popular pie-in-the-face contests!

**Pie-in-the-face contest matchups:**
1. Symposium co-chair v. co-chair: Clara Graucob v. Kelly Kapsar
4. Principle Investigator v. Student: **NEEDED**

*Please note that the contest jars will be placed in the main office (NR 13) with Jamie from February 25 through April 16. The person with the most money in his/her jar per matchup will receive a pie in the face delivered by his/her opponent at the picnic.*

*All donations to the contest will support FW GSO Fundraising!*

*2 - 4 volunteers are needed to visit local businesses and solicit donations for the picnic's raffle. Please email Emily Liljestrand, liljest@msu.edu, to sign-up and volunteer ASAP!*

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**FW GSO Research Symposium**

**Dr. John Virdin**

The 15th Annual Fisheries and Wildlife Graduate Student Organization Research Symposium will take place **Friday, February 21, 2020 beginning at 8:00 AM in the MSU Union Ballroom.** Throughout the day there will be oral and poster presentations from graduate and undergraduate students. This year the plenary address will be given by Dr. John Virdin from Duke University Marine Laboratory. Following the student presentations, there will be an awards ceremony and reception with food and beverages provided. Please come out to support and learn about the diversity of research being conducted in FW. **Don’t forget to register as an attendee!**

To register for the event or view the programs from previous years, please go to the FWGSO website at:  
[http://msufwgso.wixsite.com/fwgso/symposium](http://msufwgso.wixsite.com/fwgso/symposium)

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"Lost at sea: twenty years of trying to solve ocean problems with science and money"
To keep up on GSO accounting for Spring 2020, view our budget here: https://tinyurl.com/gsotreasureryreport or contact our treasurer Emily Liljestrand (liljest3@msu.edu)!

Travel Grant Award Recipients

Nicole Watson  Claire Hoffmann

SYMPOSIUM

Clara Graucob
Kelly Kapsar
Dr. Thomas Loch
Aimee Baier
Sam Betances
Connor Buckley
Sophia Chau
Ibrahim Dertli
Courtney Harrison
Chris Henderson
Amber Johnston
Jacob Kimmel
Trey McClinton
Rachel Menale
Emily Mensch
Samantha Strandmark
Noelle Thompson
Alex Walrus
Yuqian Zhang

SPRING PICNIC

Emily Liljestrand
Volunteers NEEDED!

SPOTLIGHT

Mimi Gong
Sam Betances
Emily Dean
Trey McClinton
Trazy Melvin
Emil Mensch
Nan Nourn

TRAVEL GRANT

Sophia Chau
Janice Albers
Katelyn King
Trey McClinton
Nan Nourn
Joe Stachelek

SEMINAR

Courtney Harrison
Rachel Menale

FUNDRAISING

Mikaela Hanson
Nan Nourn

*Individuals in GREEN are the Chairs/Coordinators of the committee
*Individuals in PINK are faculty advisers on the committee
FW Strategic Planning

During the 2019-2020 academic year, the Fisheries and Wildlife Department developed a Strategic Planning (SP) Initiative and a corresponding SP Committee with the primary goal being to update its strategic plan by evaluating where the department is, where it has been, and where it wants to be. In addition to the main SP committee, 10 additional subcommittees have been formed or have joined the initiative to assist with this process: four committees corresponding to the research themes encompassing the FW department (fisheries, wildlife, water sciences, and conservation social science); communications; curriculum and academic programs; extension, outreach, and engagement; diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI); and the graduate program committees. The graduate students are serving an active role in this undertaking, with one or more graduate student representatives serving on every subcommittee involved in this process.

To better understand the governance within the FW department and the committees that are contributing to this strategic planning initiative, please see the conceptual diagram, developed by our SP committee grad student representative Jackie Beck, below.

“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality”
Warren Bennis
Are you looking forward to reading the new issue of MSU Fisheries and Wildlife’s Spotlight? This year, we have six authors, three editors, and three designers working diligently on the magazine. The 2020 edition features articles on student experiences working with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, experiences with being awarded the Fenske Fellowship, the use of science to protect indigenous people and animals, research on how deforestation is facilitating the use of pesticides for fisheries, and so much more. In addition, this issue will catch up you up with an alumnus from our department, Chris Jordan, and will provide you with an inside look into the Jianguo (Jack) Liu lab. Please be sure to check out the wide array of articles published in the spring edition of Spotlight!

Looking ahead, the Spotlight committee is looking for volunteers to assist with editing and design next year and to assist with distribution of the 2020 magazine. Participating in Spotlight is a great way to practice your science communication and outreach skills! If you are interested in learning more about Spotlight, editing future editions, or contributing an article next year, please contact me (gongmimi@msu.edu). It is only with eager and willing graduate students that Spotlight can continue to be successful!

- Mimi Gong, Editor
Professional Development Workshops

Feb 26 2020, 3-5 PM – Project Management
Topics: Goal setting, project life cycles, identifying and validating requirements, tasks, risks, and adaption strategies.  
Hosted by: FW GSO Professional Development Committee
Location: TBD

March 18 2020, 3-5 PM – Conflict Resolution in Natural Resources
Topics: Conflict scenarios, dialogue concepts, active listening, positions vs. interests  
Hosted by: Dr. Georgia Peterson
Location: TBD

April 8 2020, 3-5 PM – Online Presence
Topics: How to create, develop, and maintain online personas using social media, keywords, and personal websites  
Hosted by: Dr. Jo Latimore
Location: TBD

A Note from Your GSO President

As our spring semester begins to fly by, looking through the great newsletter put together by VP Noelle Thompson serves as a perfect reminder to stop and look back through all we’ve accomplished so far this year. We kicked off the fall semester with a welcome barbeque, where we had a chance to catch up with old friends and establish new friendships with the amazing crop of student who joined us this year. In October, the annual Tour of Terror Halloween bar crawl was well-represented and filled with creative costumes (as always!). A few of the stand outs this year were Nick Jaffe’s “Fat Thor” and Katie Kierczynski and Nathaniel Yost’s eerily accurate Cards Against Humanity set. Thank you to this year’s social chair Courtney Harrison for making events like this come together! Another big thank you is in order for the fundraising super duo of Nan Nourn and Mikaela Hanson who have done an amazing job raising money for the GSO through the fall sale, photo contest, and many other efforts that often go uncelebrated but never unappreciated! The photo contest was particularly fun this year, with winning photos all the way from Antarctica and India (see some of the photos on the next page!). There was also wonderful representation of the beauty of our own state of Michigan. The department’s strategic planning effort also kicked off in the fall semester, and we are grateful for the administration’s inclusion of graduate students in this process. (Continued)
A Note from Your GSO President

I am also incredibly proud of all of the graduate students who seized the opportunity to be involved in all of the stages of this process. Your time and efforts do not go unnoticed, and we are all so grateful to you for helping to ensure that our department continues to grow and become a more supportive and inclusive place for the graduate students who will come after us. It is that kind of selfless leadership that makes me so proud to call this department my home.

In the spring semester we have many more exciting events coming up, including the spring picnic, a series of professional development events, and outreach opportunities like the Fenner Nature Center Earth Day Extravaganza. We are also looking forward to the 2020 Symposium to help us all get more insight into the varied academic efforts we are all working away on in our different corners of campus. Last, but not least, we will be continuing to build the opportunities for discussion and graduate student participation in the department through GSO meetings and town hall meetings with the department administration. Your voices are so important, and I am very grateful for your unending participation and investment in those meetings. As always, I am blown away by the work ethic and determination of the graduate students in FW. I’m so proud to be part of this community and I can’t wait to see what you all accomplish for the rest of the year!

Sincerely,

Claire Hoffmann

Just a few of our 2020 FW GSO Photo Contest Winners

1. Grizzly bear family in Katmai NP by Nick Jaffe
2. Camera trap image of a wolf in the Upper Peninsula by Melissa Starking
3. Costa’s Hummingbird in the Arizona Desert by Amber Goguen
4. Saguaro NP in Arizona by Parker Banas