



PENNSYLVANIA
CHAPTER

PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY



Winter 2015 Newsletter



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AMERICAN
FISHERIES
SOCIETY



Joint Meeting of the Pennsylvania and Ohio Chapters of the American Fisheries Society

25–27 February 2015 ----Tom Ridge Environmental Center

Erie, Pennsylvania

Join us February 25-27 in Erie, Pennsylvania for three days of engaging professional interactions with your regional colleagues! During the Joint Meeting of the Pennsylvania and Ohio Chapters of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) you will learn what fisheries professionals from across Pennsylvania and Ohio are working on during the technical and poster sessions, be challenged to think outside-of-the-box by two highly respected professionals, Drs. John Dettmers and Doug Austen, during the plenary sessions, be engaged in AFS Chapter happenings during the Chapter business meetings, and enjoy conversations and interactions with meeting attendees at the two socials.



The meeting is graciously being hosted by the Tom Ridge Environmental Center and lodging accommodations will be at the beautiful Avalon Hotel and Conference Center in the heart of downtown Erie, in easy walking distance of many downtown attractions and nightlife. Stay for the final day and participate in one of two workshops designed to hone your fish identification skills or expose you to a wide array of technologies becoming commonplace in the fisheries fields.

Registration for this event is still open! Visit the meeting webpage for more information:

<http://pa.fisheries.org/events/2015-spring-technical-meeting/>

Chapter updates available at: www.pa.fisheries.org



Wildlife Leadership Academy

Brookies Camp

Brookies Camp Reeled Me In

By Helen Fielding

This summer, Helen Fielding attended the Wildlife Leadership Academy PA Brookies field school which focuses on brook trout and cold water conservation. The mission of the Wildlife Leadership Academy is to empower youth to become ambassadors for wildlife conservation in order to ensure a sustained wildlife legacy for future generations. The academy offers high-achieving youngsters, ages 14-17, a comprehensive study of specific wildlife species, including classroom and field-based, hands-on education. Led by experts, including biologists and educators from across the state and beyond, the program also engages participants in team work, friendly competition, and an awareness of their natural world. The Wildlife Leadership Academy will announce 2015 field school offerings and locations on their website at www.PICEweb.org. Applications are available January 1, 2015; the submission deadline is April 1, 2015. Interested students may download the 2015 application at www.PICEweb.org. For more information, contact Wildlife Leadership Academy Director Michele Kittell at mkittell@piceweb.org or (570)245-8518. Continued on page 8...



Helen Fielding

Cal U Subunit

Chelsea Gilliland

Dr. David Argent



CalU Subunit

The CalU Subunit has made tremendous progress since its inception just over a year ago. The student chapter has held several fundraising activities including a t-shirt and flyrod sale. Members from the CalU Subunit also assisted the PFBC with Steelhead collection from Trout Run in November 2014 and were also able to tour the Fairview Hatchery and later in the day the Linesville Hatchery.

Five members of the subunit will be attending the Mid-west Fish and Wildlife Conference in early February. Ms. Chelsea Gilliland (PA Chapter Student Representative) will also be presenting two posters:

"Examining genetic diversity among Rainbow Darters (*Etheostoma caeruleum*) in the Monongahela River."

"Effects of body condition on fecundity of Largemouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) in the Upper Illinois River Watershed. Illinois River Biological Station. Havana, IL" -- based on work she did in summer 2013 with the Illinois Natural History Survey.

Please contact Dr. Dave Argent at argent@calu.edu for more information about supporting the CalU Subunit



Wildlife Leadership Academy

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Brookies Camp Reeled Me In

By Helen Fielding

Continued....

The natural world fills me with a sense of awe. Its beauty, majesty and power can be breathtaking, but the outdoors can also be welcoming and relaxing—especially after a tough day when all one wants to do is get away from the responsibilities of everyday life for a while. It has always saddened me when I see parts of nature being damaged or destroyed, and I’ve often wished I could do something about helping to conserve the Earth. And so, this past spring, when I heard about a conservation field camp for teenagers, I quickly decided to apply to it.

The Wildlife Leadership Academy (WLA) is an organization whose purpose is to train and educate future leaders in conservation. It currently has three field schools: PA Bucktails, which focuses on white-tailed deer, PA Brookies, which focuses on brook trout, and PA Drummers, which focuses on ruffed grouse. I attended Brookies, since I have always loved water and streams—catching (and then releasing) crayfish and salamanders was one of my favorite outdoor activities when I was younger. I was not disappointed in the camp!

The location was lovely—we were in a long, forested valley, on both sides of which towered pine-clad mountain slopes, and through the bottom of the valley ran possibly the clearest stream I have ever seen. This brook was spanned by a bridge, which offered an excellent overhead view of the creatures that lived in the water. A water snake resided near the bridge, and sometimes we saw it sunning itself on a pile of old branches in the stream. We frequently sighted fish, too—mostly mudsuckers, dace, brown trout, and rainbow trout. Sometimes, however, we were delighted by the appearance of a brook trout—our state fish, and the primary focus of the field school.

I liked camp from the minute I arrived. Everyone was welcoming, and we wasted no time getting right into what we had come for—learning about brook trout and streams. Our schedule for the week was packed full of activities and events. Experts from such organizations as the Fish and Wildlife Service and Trout Unlimited came to teach us about trout, stream ecosystems, and threats to them; we visited three fish hatcheries in the area (one of which had paddlefish and Atlantic sturgeon) and traveled to a farm to learn about the benefits of no-till farming; we saw an electrofishing demonstration, learned to fly-fish, and identified the habitat quality of the stream by the field school. And there were many other things we were able to do!

One of my favorite activities was Trout Trivia. This was a game we played every day, in which four teams of campers competed to see who could answer the most questions about what we all learned. Every time a team got a question right, they got up, put their fists in the middle of their table, and yelled “Hyah!” as loudly as they could. It was a great and very satisfying way to reinforce facts in our minds, and the competition never got unpleasant! It was encouraging to see how much we learned. (I have to admit, it was also fun to be able to shout at the top of our lungs when we were indoors.)

Every moment of camp was filled with something to do. It was a terrific experience, and I had a *lot* of fun. When my parents came to pick me up at the end of the field school, I felt so much more empowered and confident than I had felt before I came—much more equipped to go out and teach people about nature and why it’s important. The Wildlife Leadership Academy program is a great way for nature-loving teenagers to learn more about the environment—and a great way for them to learn how to become tomorrow’s leaders in the important endeavor of conservation.