



# Mid-Atlantic Chapter Newsletter

WINTER/SPRING 2018

## Greetings Chapter Members!

I hope this newsletter finds you and yours happy and healthy, and making the best out of our frigid winter season! This newsletter details some of the ongoing activities and issues across our Chapter region. Our 600 members have all sorts of experiences and skills which we could use in the next couple of years as we turn to both the SWS 2018 Annual Meeting in Denver and the SWS 2019 SWS Annual Meeting in Baltimore. Our Chapter will host the meeting in Baltimore, which will provide us the opportunity to showcase the beautiful wetlands in our regions, as well as important restoration and research projects which are ongoing. We also want to let you know about some of the other happenings within the Chapter and provide a heads-up for upcoming events. These include:

- **Chapter Happenings**

- Call for Nominations for MAC President-Elect Position
- MAC Hosting the International SWS 2019 Annual Meeting
- 2018 MAC Chapter Meeting – TBD

- **Regional Updates and Events**

- Support for a Regional Grasses Guide
- Field Trip – Great Swamp, New Jersey – Date TBD
- Planned Improvements at the Tom Ridge and Julian Wetlands

- **SWS News & Events**

- Wetlands of Distinction Update
- 2018 SWS Annual Meeting
  - MAC Student Funding for SWS Annual Meeting
  - SWS Multicultural Program Grant Funding
- SWS Webinar – The enigmatic Okavango Delta: A large wetland in a dryland – February 2018

- **Volunteer Opportunities**

- What can you do for MAC?

Best regards,

Jeff Trulick, Chapter President  
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[jefftrulick@gmail.com](mailto:jefftrulick@gmail.com)

Please visit the MAC website for updates on chapter activities: <http://www.sws.org/mid-atlantic-chapter>

Also visit us on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/3819410>

and on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/midatlanticsws/>

**Chapter Leadership:** Jeff Trulick, President; Emily Dolbin, President-Elect; Roy Messaros, Treasurer; Jason Smith, Past President; and Eil Polzer, Student Representative

**Mid-Atlantic Chapter Region:** Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and District of Columbia.

## Chapter Happenings

### **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS – SWS MID-ATLANTIC CHAPTER – PRESIDENT-ELECT**

The Mid-Atlantic Chapter is currently seeking nominations for the office of President-Elect. The elected candidate for President-Elect will serve a two-year term beginning June 2018 and will then fulfill consecutive two-year terms as President and Past-President. The Chapter officers handle the normal operations of the Chapter, including communications with members, newsletters, field trips, and an annual conference, as well as coordination of Chapter activities with the international activities of SWS. The duties and responsibilities of the offices are outlined in the [Chapter bylaws](#).

Please email nominations to [jeff.trulick@usace.army.mil](mailto:jeff.trulick@usace.army.mil) and [ebdolbin@mccormicktaylor.com](mailto:ebdolbin@mccormicktaylor.com) by **March 31, 2018**, with the subject line reading "MAC SWS Nominations." Self-nominations are acceptable. Nominees will be contacted to provide additional information needed for elections.

### **MAC HOSTING THE INTERNATIONAL SWS 2019 ANNUAL MEETING**

We are hosting the SWS 2019 Annual Meeting! We will be reaching out soon for folks to help organize field trips and other aspects of the meeting to help welcome both national and international wetland practitioners to Baltimore during May 28-31, 2019. Please stay on the lookout for upcoming emails for volunteer opportunities. It will take the support of our members to build an amazing annual meeting, and we hope you can help. We will begin posting information to our Chapter webpage at:

<http://www.sws.org/Mid-Atlantic-Chapter/mid-atlantic-chapter-events.html>

### **2018 MAC CHAPTER MEETING - TBD**

Be on the lookout for a Doodle Poll about potential locations and target months for a 2018 MAC Chapter meeting. Since the SWS 2019 Annual Meeting will be in downtown Baltimore, we may target somewhere else for a potential 2018 MAC Chapter meeting.

## Regional Updates and Events

### **SUPPORT FOR A REGIONAL GRASSES GUIDE**

Please consider supporting a Kickstarter campaign for an easy-to-use guide to identifying grasses in the Mid-Atlantic region. Perfect for the plant enthusiast or professional botanist! Sarah Chamberlain is the Curator of the PAC Herbarium, and an Assistant Research Professor/Botanist Riparia at Penn State, and has just launched her Kickstarter to raise the remaining funds needed to publish her new Guide to Mid-Atlantic Grasses. Please consider lending your support. Additional information may be found at: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/sjcbotany/field-guide-to-grasses-of-the-mid-atlantic?ref=email>

### **FIELD TRIP – GREAT SWAMP, NEW JERSEY – DATE TBD**

Our 2015 and 2016 field trips to the Great Swamp were so successful that we have decided to hold another one in 2018! The date is to be determined, but it will be a full day field trip at the Great Swamp. Regular members, students, and guests are invited to attend. Events will start at 9AM at the Somerset County Environmental Education Center, with sessions on vegetation identification, hydrology for mitigation/constructed wetlands, and hydric soils. Activities will then move to the field to see some of the special places within the 15-square mile Great Swamp. Attendees will have the opportunity to share their knowledge of wetland plants, along with more formal discussions on wetland conditions at various wetland types found along the network of trails within the Great Swamp. The group will conduct wetland determinations at problem areas near the Somerset County Environmental Education Center. The event will wrap-up with an optional social and early dinner at Casa Maya, an authentic Mexican restaurant along

the southern edge of the Great Swamp. For more information, including registration, agenda, and directions, will be posted to the SWS Mid-Atlantic Chapter website once the date has been set. Registration will be limited to the first 25 that sign-up, as facility space is limited. Attendance of this event will provide credit towards PWS recertification.

## **PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS AT THE TOM RIDGE AND JULIAN WETLANDS**

*Port Matilda, Pennsylvania - excerpt from the PA DEP website*

The PA DEP, with support of the Governor's Office, is currently working with representatives from the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation on planned environmental recreation improvements at the Tom Ridge and Julian Wetlands in Port Matilda, Pennsylvania.

The wetlands were created by PennDOT to mitigate environmental impacts of the Interstate 99 highway project. Once completed, the 135-acre site, including 55 acres of wetlands, was gifted to the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation, which was selected to provide long-term stewardship of the property.

"This wetland mitigation project has been very successful and now hosts a variety of birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and plant species," said PA DEP Secretary McDonnell. "Wetlands are often underappreciated, but they are some of our most important and multi-functional landscapes. In addition to providing crucial habitat, wetlands also deliver ecosystem services, such as stormwater interception, water purification, groundwater recharge, flood protection, and carbon storage."

The Wildlife for Everyone Foundation is working to create a fully-accessible outdoor learning space and nature observatory to provide the public with an opportunity to connect with nature. Plans for the site include a wildlife center and a mile-long, handicapped-accessible trail with wildlife observation and fishing areas.

"I look forward to returning to this site when this vision is fully realized and one more vital service is provided here—a place where everyone can connect with and learn about nature," said McDonnell.

The mission of the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation is to promote wildlife conservation and education in Pennsylvania. Upon acquisition of the property, the foundation dedicated the land to former Pennsylvania governor and honorary board member Tom Ridge.

## **[SWS News & Events](#)**

### **WETLANDS OF DISTINCTION UPDATE**

The Society of Wetland Scientists launched its Wetlands of Distinction initiative to showcase high quality wetlands, those with exemplary ecosystem services, across the United States (and in the future around the world). We are currently in a reference collection phase and are seeking applications for wetlands that have already been deemed as special, rare, and/or unique by state agencies or organizations.



Wetlands of Distinction goals include:

- Increasing public awareness and appreciation of wetlands and their many human and environmental benefits.

- Identifying and cataloging high-quality wetlands, wetlands of high human-environmental importance, and unique wetlands.
- Engaging the public including academics, educators, outdoor enthusiasts, and others in wetland science and geography, using the interactive Wetlands of Distinction website: [www.wetlandsofdistinction.org](http://www.wetlandsofdistinction.org).
- Creating a national, high quality, wetland database that includes site-specific information about wetland ecosystem services, ecology, biology, soils, conservation status, and accessibility.
- Increasing protection of our most important and distinctive wetlands, and in turn protection of common wetlands.

In addition to collecting a reference set of high-quality wetlands, the current phase of the initiative is also being used as a learning opportunity to refine the application process. Therefore, if you have comments or suggestions about the application form or process, please feel free to provide feedback to us at: [swswetlandsofdistinction@gmail.com](mailto:swswetlandsofdistinction@gmail.com).

## SWS 2018 ANNUAL MEETING



Join us May 29 – June 1, 2018, in Denver, CO, USA, for the SWS 2018 Annual Meeting – Wetland Science: Integrating Research, Practice, and Policy – An Exchange of Expertise.

The meeting will focus on the intercommunication of the most recent developments in wetland science, practice, and policy between the different sectors of SWS. It will encourage collaboration and partnerships among wetland researchers, practitioners, managers, and policymakers, with the overall goal of improving wetland science.

The SWS 2018 Annual Meeting website is now live! Visit <https://www.swsannualmeeting.org/> to stay up-to-date on all meeting developments.

## MAC STUDENT FUNDING FOR SWS ANNUAL MEETING

**Attention Students:** Our Chapter is pleased to announce limited funding for Student Travel Grants for student presenters and attendees at the SWS 2018 Annual Meeting. This funding is on a “first come, first served” basis, with priority given to student presenters (oral or poster). The meeting website is: <http://swsannualmeeting.org/>. These student grants will cover travel costs up to \$500/student through a reimbursement process, with up to three (3) grants available. Students must be enrolled as either part- or full-time at an accredited college or university within the Mid-Atlantic Region (e.g. Delaware, Washington D.C., Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania) and be a member of SWS in good standing to be eligible.

Students who are interested in applying for these grant funds should contact Emily Dolbin at [ebdolbin@mccormicktaylor.com](mailto:ebdolbin@mccormicktaylor.com), and include "MAC SWS Student Funding" in the subject line for the email. Requests must include an estimate of funds needed for transportation, as well as the "start point" (e.g. home or school) from which travel will begin and end. Additional required information includes the name of the school and program that the student attends and documentation of student status, such as a copy of a valid student I.D. card, as well as a brief statement (short paragraph) as to why the student would like to attend the SWS 2018 Annual Meeting.

Inquiries will be accepted up to the date of the meeting. The Chapter reserves the right to reject any and all inquiries, based on information submitted, priority assignment of funding, and inquiries in excess of funding available.

## **MULTICULTURAL PROGRAM GRANT FUNDING**

Our Chapter has once again pledged support to the SWS Diversity Program in the amount of \$1,000 for the upcoming SWS 2018 Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado. This SWS Diversity Program aims at increasing diversity and involvement for under-represented groups. Students interested in attending the SWS 2018 Annual Meeting should review program details and eligibility found at <http://sws.org/Awards-and-Grants/sws-undergraduate-mentoring-program-swamp.html>. All necessary information about applying for funding is also found on this webpage.

## **SWS WEBINAR – THE ENIGMATIC OKAVANGO DELTA: A LARGE WETLAND IN A DRYLAND**

February 15, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. EST

Fred Ellery, Ph.D., Rhodes University

The Okavango Delta in the semi-arid Kalahari, is southern Africa's largest wetland. It forms an integral part of an internal basin that drains the highlands in Angola such that runoff that enters rivers never reaches the ocean. This means that the clastic and dissolved sediment loads that enter the ecosystem accumulate within it. It is therefore surprising that the Okavango Delta is characterized by fresh surface waters and is not saline. The webinar will describe research that has shed light on this remarkable African ecosystem. Please visit the [SWS webinar webpage](#) for future webinars.

## **[Volunteer Opportunities](#)**

### **WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR MAC?**

In the past, individual members have organized happy hours; canoe and kayak trips through some of our region's finest wetlands; tours of wetland restoration and research sites; and other sorts of opportunities to meet, network, and exchange ideas and information about wetlands and wetland science. We strongly encourage anyone with an idea to step-up and select a date, time, and location, and we'll get the word out to chapter members so they can participate. All of us, to one extent or another, bird, botanize, kayak, canoe, hike, bike, eat, and drink. The MAC offers a ready-made community of like-minded individuals with similar interests across a large and important portion of the eastern United States. We understand that while these events will typically be attended by local members, you never know who might be on vacation or travelling near you and may be looking for opportunities to meet other wetland scientists and see interesting new places. If and when you do get together, send us a picture and blurb to be included in future newsletters, and perhaps on the Chapter website.

Also, if you have an interest in volunteering with the MAC, whether you already know what you want to do or just want to help with existing tasks, please contact Emily Dolbin at [ebdolbin@mccormicktaylor.com](mailto:ebdolbin@mccormicktaylor.com).