



# CUAA Newsletter

SPRING 2020

## Message from the board

Your board has been busy this past quarter working behind the scenes representing CUAA while continuing to improve and grow our commitment to HSU students. Surprisingly, many HSU Wildlife and NR graduates do not know about CUAA or what we offer alumni and students. To address this, we are rapidly expanding our online and social media presence to engage this new audience. Our website [www.cuaahumboldt.org](http://www.cuaahumboldt.org) is up and running and is providing a constant, updated source of information for HSU Wildlife and Natural Resource Alumni. Through this website, users can now purchase/renew their CUAA membership or make donations directly to our charitable funds. Our facebook page [www.facebook.com/cuaa-humboldt](http://www.facebook.com/cuaa-humboldt) is providing a new medium for connection between our members and as a way to stay informed with our organization's most recent activities. And our email address [CUAAhumboldt@gmail.com](mailto:CUAAhumboldt@gmail.com) is always a way for alumni to contact us with information, needs, etc.

At the end of 2019, we also suffered a great loss. Dr Stan Harris (Doc) passed away. He was a mentor to many of us on the board, as well to hundreds of wildlife students and professionals throughout the world. He touched thousands of students during his career, and his memory and work will carry on. With that, CUAA is working on a tribute to memorialize Doc. You will hear more about this in the future as we complete final plans. With the approval of Doc's family, we hope to establish an internship for upper division undergraduates, that will place them into the field doing wetlands and waterfowl work. We are working on potential partnerships now with agencies and NGO groups to make this a reality. Additionally, we will be initiating a fundraising effort to support the internship.

In January, CUAA held its annual meeting in Redding Ca, in conjunction with The Wildlife Society, Western Section Conference. Over 60 Alumni, Faculty, and Friends attended the Meeting. Refreshments were provided by CUAA. We presented CUAA's mission and history, celebrated our renewed tax exempt status, identified objectives in 2020 for the group, and recognized our life members. Dr. Barbara Clucas represented the Department and gave us an update (see related article in this newsletter). She also identified some projects and supplies that CUAA might be able to provide assistance for in the upcoming year. Membership Committee Chair Doug Padley gave a report on identifying or finding over 3100 Wildlife Alumni listed in CUAA files. He also spoke of the need to identify wildlife graduates between 2012 and 2019, and asked those in attendance to reach out to friends and let them know about CUAA. We then voted on options to memorialize Doc Harris, and received initial commitments on monetary donations to "seed" the internship. Fundraising Committee Chair Scott Frazer, gave a report on planning efforts to support equipment needs within the Department, and also upcoming needs to "seed" the Harris Wetlands internship. **(continued on page 2)**

### Board of Directors

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### Our new website!

Visit us on the web: [www.cuaahumboldt.org](http://www.cuaahumboldt.org)

Here you can....

- PURCHASE OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP
- MAKE A DONATION
- LEARN ABOUT OUR HISTORY
- VIEW OUR EVENT CALENDAR
- AND MUCH MORE



(continued from page 1) The biggest board news this quarter is a change in board members. Terra Fuller, an original founding member of the current board, announced that she would step down for personal reasons. Terra was a valuable board member and brought a broad range of expertise from participation in other NGO boards. Terra served CUAA for many years in a wide range of capacities, and will be sorely missed. But, as Aristotle once postulated “horror vacui” which translates to “Nature Abhors a Vacuum”. Kristen Burgess, '17 was chosen by unanimous vote at the Annual Meeting in Redding to fill the vacant position. Kristen represents the new generation of Wildlife Students, and brings a fresh perspective, high energy, and a connection to the students, often missing in older alumni. In addition to Kristen, Megan McCormick '18 was also voted in unanimously, and will be stepping up to a board vacancy in 2021. Like Kristen, Megan brings new talents to CUAA, and we look forward to learning more about her next year. Board members serve 5 year terms and one will “time out” at the end of 2020.

Humboldt Wildlife Alumni have a special relationship to each other and to the Department. In work and social life, we seem to be drawn to each other. As employers, we recognize the qualities, knowledge, experiences and professionalism, that the HSU wildlife professors infuse into their students. And as Alumni, we value a friendship to other wildlife alumni, even if meeting for the first time. That is the strength of CUAA and our connectivity to the Alumni. I sincerely hope you join us in our group living the wildlife dream, and giving back to the culture that spawned it.

Brian Barton, Board Chairman  
March 2020

## HSU Wildlife Department Highlights

Wildlife Undergraduate Program- There are approximately 356 undergraduate students enrolled in Wildlife and the program is rapidly diversifying, with the percentage of students from underrepresented groups rising from 26% in fall 2014 to 34% in fall 2018, and the percentage of females holding steady at 64-65%. In 2018-19, Wildlife awarded 105 BS degrees, 65% of which went to women and 21% to students from underrepresented groups.

The HSU Wildlife Conclave team came in 4th place at the National TWS Quiz Bowl in Reno in Fall 2019! They were narrowly defeated and did a great job with some very challenging questions! The Conclave team will not be attending the national TWS meeting in Fall 2020 due to the meeting taking place in a no-travel state for California.

We had another successful undergraduate summer intern program, employing 4 students in projects. These projects also supported giving volunteers field research experience. Thank you to all the Alumni that helped support this program!



HSU Conclave Team

Wildlife Graduate Program- The Wildlife program has 26 Master's student enrolled, 12 graduate students finished in 2018-19. Graduate students are working on a variety of projects and taxa ranging from elk, bears, mountain lions, coyotes, martens, flying squirrels, bats, shorebirds, seabirds, songbirds, snakes and frogs.

Wildlife Faculty and Research- Dan Barton received tenure in Spring 2019 and is currently on sabbatical for the 2019/2020 academic year. As mentioned last year: Mark Colwell is retiring (currently FERPing) and Tim Bean moved to SLO. The Wildlife faculty publish at the highest rate in the College of Natural Resources & Sciences at HSU, averaging 1.9 publications per faculty per year.

Dr. Barbara Clucas, HSU Wildlife  
February 2020

## Membership Committee Report

Our membership currently stands at 52 members. Conservation Unlimited Alumni Association is building its ability to contact and inform members and non-members electronically. Wherever possible the business of the Association is being conducted online and via phone contacts.

The Membership Committee has taken a couple of months off but will begin again trying to identify, locate, and contact graduates from the HSU Wildlife Department. We have discontinued trying to recruit members using the US Postal Service.

Currently we have 3166 names on our list. We have reached out to 1656 of these by email, hard copy mail or personal contact. There are 1475 alumni we have been unable to contact at this time. In the coming months we will try to verify existing addresses, emails, and phone numbers of these 1475 individuals. Where possible we will attempt to contact these members through email, personal phone calls or text messages.



### Membership Categories

**Regular Member:** Any person who has been enrolled and graduated from the Wildlife or related programs in the College of Natural Resources and Sciences at Humboldt State University, or a present or past member of the faculty.

**Honorary Member:** Any person who has given a significant amount of time and energy in service to the Association may become a lifetime Honorary Member upon an affirmative vote by the membership; and any person donating real estate, royalties, and other such gifts or cash shall be recognized by the association and may become an Honorary Member upon an affirmative vote by the membership. Honorary Members are Richard Laursen, Richard Ridenhour, Fred Galbreath and Stan Harris (deceased)

**Lifetime Member:** Any individual who qualifies as a Regular or Associate Member and who has been granted a lifetime membership by a vote of the membership, or paid lifetime membership dues. Lifetime members are: Chet Ogan, Sandra Hunt von Arb, and Bruce Garlinger.

### Membership Dues

Membership dues are based on a calendar year. Regular Memberships are \$25.00; Lifetime Memberships are \$500.00. The Board of Directors establishes the membership rates. Early career professionals (1-3 years post-graduation) can join Conservation Unlimited Alumni Association for a reduced annual rate of \$15.00. To facilitate joining Conservation Unlimited Alumni Association we now accept membership applications and dues electronically. Please visit the web page [www.cuaahumboldt.org/membership](http://www.cuaahumboldt.org/membership).

W. Douglas Padley  
Spring 2020

## CUAA Scholarship

**Congratulations to HSU Wildlife student Chris Collier, this years recipient of the CUAA Undergraduate Scholarship. This annual award of \$1000 goes to the student who best demonstrates professional promise, are active in extracurricular activities, and have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better. Read below to learn more about Chris.**

~Hello CUAA!

My name is Chris Collier and I am currently a Junior at Humboldt State University. Wildlife Biology is my major, specifically I am in the Wildlife Conservation Biology/Applied Vertebrate Ecology concentration, and I am minoring in Geospatial Science. My quest to explore the natural world began with a summer I spent near Lake Tahoe constructing trails for AmeriCorps. This was a centering experience for me, and I'm still proud of my crew for completing a four-mile section of the Tahoe Rim Trail. I moved to Santa Rosa in 2013 and soon began working an internship with Sonoma County Regional Parks, where I helped manage a trail camera project. I had the unique experience of assisting with a mountain lion capture by local biologists. We used my trail camera footage to locate the lion, and collared her as part of a larger study on urban wildlife conflict. This was my first taste of wildlife work, and I was hooked. I soon decided I would dedicate my life to wildlife research and conservation.

HSU was an easy choice because I had read about the spectacular wildlife program, and fell in love with the area while visiting a friend. The vast open space coupled with mountains reminded me of the Sierras, and the ocean and redwoods were new vistas waiting to be explored. Humboldt State has been a fulfilling place for me thus far, as it has opened many doors. For example, I serve a position as Chapter Liaison for Conservation Unlimited, and I was recently elected as Student Representative to the California North Coast Chapter of The Wildlife Society. My proudest accomplishment last year was helping produce a short film on diversity that was screened at the 2019 TWS Western Section Annual Conference. In the film we highlight issues in representation and accessibility within the field of wildlife biology for minorities and LGBTQ communities. We plan to screen the film at the 2020 TWS National Conference in Kentucky. It can be viewed here - [https://youtu.be/6I\\_SoTFRjZ0](https://youtu.be/6I_SoTFRjZ0)



Once I complete my bachelor's degree in May 2021, I plan to pursue a graduate degree in wildlife. Specifically, I wish to study birds or mammals and plant interactions. Ecology as a whole is fascinating to me, and I believe focusing on all parts of the puzzle is the key to effective conservation. My long term-goal is to complete a PhD and perhaps become a professor or lead researcher for a nonprofit or government agency. Acutely aware of the perilous state of our planet, I believe it is imperative to have scientists helping with conservation efforts and measuring the effects of anthropogenic climate change.

I am thrilled to receive this scholarship because CU has helped me discover my passion for helping other students. This award has eased financial stress, allowing me time to study, continue participating in extracurricular activities, and gain further experience through volunteer work. Thank you to the generous donors that have helped me pursue my dreams.

Sincerely,  
Chris Collier  
March 2020



## Tracking Wildlifers

**Have you ever wondered what your classmates have been up to since graduation? Probably a lot! Graduates of HSU's Wildlife program have spread around the word and are putting their passion and expertise to good use. In this column, we track down a different wildlifer to find out how they used their education to lead a wild life.**

Wildlife artist Cynthia Fisher is nuts about animals. Everything in her world revolves around her love and admiration for all wildlife, which is aided by her college studies in zoology and wildlife management. She chooses to share this love via her vibrant colorful paintings and scratchboards of species from all corners of the world, most of which she has traveled to, including 19 trips to Africa. Cynthia has been a professional artist for over 30 years, and has added sculpture, glass mosaics and mixed media sculpting to her repertoire.

My education at Humboldt and my involvement with CU and the wildlife department formed the foundation of my career; the support and critiques I received from the staff and students was instrumental in helping me form the skills to become a professional wildlife artist. Dr. Harris in particular was an amazing mentor and influence; joining the conclave team and spending all that time in the wildlife coffee room and museum taught me so much that helped my career as an artist and a biologist. Not to mention, I learned taxidermy in museum technique class, which I still do to this day!

Cynthia's list of artistic accomplishments includes 18 duck stamp awards, many times featured artist for the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and Ducks Unlimited, cover artist for SCI, and many others. She shows her work every year at the Safari Club conventions in Nevada and Texas. She is a board member of the Society of Animal Artists, and currently makes her home in Hamilton, Montana. See more of Cynthia's work at [www.cynthiefisher.com](http://www.cynthiefisher.com).



### 2020 Reunion Postponed

Due to the continued uncertainty posed by COVID-19 we have decided to postpone our 2020 reunion. We apologize for the inconvenience and will keep you updated regarding a new reunion date.

### Stay In touch!

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