



Wilderness Fellowship Program

The Natural Resources and Conservation Planning Division of the National Wildlife Refuge System, in cooperation with 19 refuges across 6 regions, has established a Wilderness Fellowship Program to provide opportunities for students to gain valuable career experience while helping advance stewardship of wilderness resources. Each Wilderness Fellow will spend up to six months in a wilderness refuge to support the development of wilderness character monitoring and associated tasks. Fellows will have the opportunity to take part in training courses, develop an inventory and monitoring strategy, produce baseline wilderness character data and assessments, and gain a better understanding of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service culture.

Meet the 2011 Wilderness Fellows!



Corey Anco
Duke University '11

Corey graduated from the Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University in May 2011, where he earned his Master of Environmental Management degree in ecosystem science and conservation, and a certificate of geospatial analysis. He also earned his B.S. in Environmental Science from Lewis University in 2009. Last summer, Corey worked as a Wildlife Conservationist for Wild South conducting mammal, reptile, bird and fish surveys as part of a cooperative assessment throughout the state of North Carolina. In addition, he worked as a big cats analyst for the National Geographic Society's Big Cats Initiative (BCI) identifying conservation objectives of lions and cheetahs in Africa. Corey's graduate thesis utilized GIS to conduct a habitat suitability analysis and assess the reintroduction potential of *Puma concolour* in the state of Georgia. He enjoys backpacking, fishing, playing instruments and writing songs, and is a recreational animal tracker and photographer. Corey will be working in **Izembek and Becharof National Wildlife Refuges** in Alaska.

Rachael graduated from Duke University's Nicholas School for the Environment with a Master's degree in Environmental Management and a certificate in GIS, where she focused on ecosystem science and conservation. She obtained her undergraduate degree from Hendrix College in 2004 with a major in Environmental Science and a minor in Economics. Rachael spent a semester in Rennes, France, and during her time at Hendrix, she completed a comparative study of the political and biological issues relating to wolf reintroductions in the United States. For her Master's project, Rachael conducted a geospatial analysis of favorable wolf habitat and potential corridors throughout four southwestern states. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, playing intramural sports, and hanging out with friends. Rachael will spend the next six months with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service monitoring wilderness character at **Agassiz and Seney National Wildlife Refuges**.



Rachael Carnes
Duke University '11



Erin Clark
Yale University '11

A devotee of the study of fire ecology, forest disturbance processes, and invasive plants, Erin is coming to the Wilderness Fellows program as a Master of Forest Science graduate from the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies. Before committing to a conservation career, Erin spent seven years in the magazine industry--first at Sports Illustrated and eventually handling digital content for over 30 Time Inc. magazines. Before that she studied history and computer science as an undergraduate at Colby College, and spent a semester in London dabbling in mathematics and exploring what the British thought about America's history. Her Master's research investigated the impacts of prescribed fire on understory plant community diversity in Oregon's dry ponderosa pine forests, while also conducting an invasive plant survey in the Deschutes National Forest's Pringle Falls Experimental Forest. The Yale program provided opportunities to explore silviculture and ecology in the field from Alabama to Newfoundland to Slovenia. She'll soon be moving to Montana to advance wilderness stewardship at **Charles M. Russell and Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuges**. In her spare time Erin enjoys night running, soccer, rock climbing, skiing, reading, photography, and tea with scones and clotted cream.

Wilderness Fellows, continued:

Ben graduated from the University of North Carolina in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences, where he cultivated his interest in natural resource management, particularly in aquatic resources. He has spent time studying invasive lionfish in North Carolina at the NOAA Center for Coastal Fisheries and Marine Habitat Research, analyzing oceanographic data from a cold water coral reef in the Gulf of Mexico, and evaluating wind energy potential off the coast of North Carolina. Ben also spent a summer tagging dogfish sharks in the Gulf of Alaska with the National Marine Fisheries Service. More recently, he helped coordinate field activities for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill damage assessment, and reviews and creates science questions for North Carolina End-of-Grade testing. Ben is now spending six months at **Ft. Niobrara and Valentine National Wildlife Refuges**. In his spare time, Ben enjoys canoeing, hiking, and scuba diving.



*Ben Edwards
University of North
Carolina '10*



*Kelly Lockman
University of
Pennsylvania '11*

Kelly earned her B.S. in Landscape Architecture at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ. While completing her degree, she studied abroad in Germany as part of a studio that focused on public spaces and architecture in Munich and Berlin. After graduating from Rutgers, Kelly began working at Clarke Caton Hintz, a landscape architecture, architecture and planning firm in Trenton, NJ. As part of a design team, she worked on landscape architecture projects such as: Macombs Dam Park at NY Yankees Stadium in Bronx, NY and the Hudson River Waterfront Walkway in Bayonne, NJ. During her professional career, Kelly became interested in learning more about human use and interaction with the natural environment, particularly land and resource management. To gain more knowledge in this arena, Kelly enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania where she is currently a Master's candidate in Environmental Studies. She also volunteered at a land conservancy outside of Philadelphia. In her free time, Kelly enjoys gardening, Phillies games, golfing, laughing with friends and family, travelling, and continuing to live the dream. She is looking forward to her next adventure as a Wilderness Fellow at **Kofa, Imperial, and Havasu National Wildlife Refuges**.

Molly is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and minor in Geography. While at UNC, Molly attended the Albemarle Ecological Field Site in the Outer Banks of North Carolina where she co-authored a stormwater education and mitigation plan for the coastal town of Manteo. During her time in the Outer Banks, she also served as an intern to Manteo's town planner where she accomplished several projects, including proposing environmentally conscious amendments to several ordinances and creating and proposing a curbside recycling program for the entire town. Later Molly returned to the Outer Banks to study renewable energy options for coastal communities. Most recently, Molly has worked as a science educator at the Morehead Planetarium and Science Center. In her free time Molly enjoys all outdoor activities, experimenting with new recipes, reading, and making pottery. She'll be working in Arizona for the next six months at **Imperial, Kofa, and Cabeza National Wildlife Refuges**.



*Molly McCarter
University of North
Carolina '11*



*Monica Patel
Duke University '10*

Monica graduated in May 2010 with a Master's Degree in Environmental Management from the Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke University. Immediately following graduation, she worked with Fire Island National Seashore personnel to develop a coastal adaptation strategy. She spent the next six months as a Wilderness Fellow, assisting Buffalo National River staff with the development of the Wilderness Stewardship Plan for the park's 36,000 acres of designated wilderness. Monica has volunteered for tsunami-relief efforts in Thailand and worked as a Montessori School educator in the States. Her educational interests include conservation, natural resource management, and climate change mitigation. She has worked with The Nature Conservancy to identify North Carolina estuarine shorelines vulnerable to erosion using geospatial analysis. Aside from her interest in all things nature and conservation, she enjoys reading and photography. Monica is spending the next six months monitoring wilderness character at **Great Swamp, Edwin B. Forsythe, and Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuges**.

Wilderness Fellows, continued:

Matthew Strausser is a Master of Environmental Management candidate at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. After leaving his home state of Texas, Matthew earned undergraduate degrees in Forestry and Biology from Cal Berkeley. While at Berkeley, he became interested in the conservation of endangered wildlife species and their ecosystems. He has worked with a number of endangered species recovery efforts including Attwater's prairie chickens and Houston toads in Texas, tule elk in California, sea turtles in Florida, and migrating whooping cranes throughout the eastern US. He spends his free time hiking and photographing the landscapes and animals he works with. Matthew hopes to continue using wildlife and habitat conservation methods to rebuild ecosystems and reestablish stable populations of some of the world's most endangered animals. He is now spending six months at **Kenai National Wildlife Refuge**.



*Matthew Strausser
Yale University '11*



*Ben Weiss
University of
Vermont '10*

Ben was born and raised in Wayne, New Jersey and graduated in May 2010 from the University of Vermont. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Biology and Natural Resource Ecology. During his time at Vermont, Ben spent a summer in Arad, Israel studying desert ecology and sustainable development in an arid ecosystem. After graduating, he worked for a conservation center in the White Mountain region of New Hampshire conducting a study to determine habitat preference of black-throated blue warblers. In October of 2010, Ben moved to Crystal River, Florida to intern at Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge, where he was responsible for managing juvenile whooping cranes as a part of the reintroduction and recovery of whooping cranes to the eastern United States. He'll be returning to **Chassahowitzka** as a Wilderness Fellow, and will also be working at **Okefenokee and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuges**. In his free time he enjoys snorkeling, scuba diving, traveling, playing ultimate frisbee, and anything active or mentally stimulating.

For additional information, please contact:

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