



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

NWRS Wilderness Fellowship Program

The Natural Resources and Conservation Planning Division of the National Wildlife Refuge System established the Wilderness Fellowship Program in 2011. The program commences its second year in cooperation with 12 refuges across six regions, providing opportunities for students or recent graduates to gain valuable career experience while advancing 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 focus on wilderness character by producing baseline assessments, entering data into the interagency database, recording observations of wilderness experiences, and advancing the inventory and monitoring strategy. They will also assist on a variety of other refuge projects and gain a better understanding of Refuge System culture.

Meet the 2012 Wilderness Fellows



Thomas Jablonowski graduated from Ursinus College near Philadelphia, in May of 2012, where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in environmental studies with a minor in biology. Tom also studied ecology, biodiversity and coastal management at James Cook University in Queensland, Australia. Last summer, he assisted with the Live Animal Center at the Academy of Natural Sciences. He has worked on developing an interdisciplinary management plan for Hunsberger Woods, PA. He also started a long-term ecological study of avian diversity and abundance through the Ursinus College Biology Department. He conducted species composition and territory mapping surveys in this inaugural installment of the study. In his spare time, Tom enjoys rock climbing, biking, bird watching, tennis, scuba diving, and cars and auto racing. Tom will be working at **Bitterlake and Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuges**, in New Mexico.



Molly McCarter is a 2011 graduate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, earning a Bachelor of Arts in environmental studies with a minor in geography. While at UNC, Molly attended the Albemarle Ecological Field Site in the Outer Banks of North Carolina where she proposed environmentally conscious amendments to several town ordinances. As the intern for Manteo's town planner, she developed a stormwater mitigation plan for the town and proposed a cost-effective curbside recycling program. She also studied renewable energy options for the Outer Banks coastal communities. Molly served as a USFWS 2011 Wilderness Fellow at Imperial and Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuges in southwest Arizona. In addition to her career interests, Molly enjoys hiking, fishing, canoeing and kayaking, traveling, and nature photography. Molly will be working in Florida for the next six months at **National Key Deer and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuges**.



Kelly Pippins graduated from the University of Maryland in May 2012, where she earned her Master's degree in sustainable development and conservation biology. She earned her Bachelor's degree in quantitative biology from the University of Delaware in 2010. Kelly has studied tropical biodiversity and conservation biology issues while in Costa Rica. She further spurred her interest in international environmental affairs in graduate school, where she studied environmental policy and socio-ecological systems in Indonesia. Kelly developed a watershed management plan for the Columbia Association of Columbia, MD and created an economic tool for the conservation of the Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta, Biosphere Reserve in Colombia. Kelly's academic interests include environmental restoration as it relates to human welfare and ecosystem services. In addition to all things outdoors, Kelly always enjoys a competitive game of ultimate Frisbee. She looks forward to the next six months serving as a Wilderness Fellow in the **Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge**.

Meet the 2012 Wilderness Fellows, continued



Taryn Sudol graduated from the College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences, University of Maryland, in May 2012, where she earned her Master's of Science in sustainable development and conservation biology. As a "CONSer", she worked on projects that included adaptive management of invasive aquatic flora in Kings Bay, FL, strategic planning for land trusts in the Chesapeake Bay, and woodland patch connectivity in Prince George's County, MD. Prior to her time in Maryland, Taryn received her Bachelor of Science in environmental science with minors in sustainable development and English from the School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Florida. She has also monitored the population of the Karner blue butterflies at the Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park, NY. In her free time, Taryn enjoys reading, spending time outdoors, and drinking iced coffee –preferably all at once. Taryn will serve as a Wilderness Fellow at **Monomoy and Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuges**, as well as **Assateague Island National Seashore** for the National Park Service.



Mark Swenson graduated from the Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management, University of Oregon, in December 2011 where he earned his Master of Community and Regional Planning. He also earned his B.S. in resource management with an emphasis on Land Use Planning from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point in December, 2006. While at the University of Oregon, Mark worked for the Oregon Partnership for Disaster Resilience, developing Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans for cities and counties throughout Oregon. In addition, Mark worked with the City of Lebanon, Oregon for two years in the development of a community-wide trail system through the University of Oregon's Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) program. Mark's graduate Exit Project focused on Environmental Impact Statements within the mining industry. In his free time Mark enjoys, biking, fishing, jogging, books, movies, and basketball. Mark will serve as a Wilderness Fellow at **Fort Niobrara, Valentine, and Chase Lake National Wildlife Refuges**.



Steve Zweber graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Stout in May 2012 with a Bachelor of Science in environmental sciences. While at UW-Stout he concentrated on land management and plant sciences. Steve worked as an undergraduate researcher for two summers conducting water quality measurements on a local stream in Menomonie, WI. The result of this research was the creation of a pollution reduction plan for the City of Menomonie. Last summer, Steve assisted University of Minnesota graduate students with invasive species research, assessing the health of invaded oak forests throughout the state of Minnesota. Along with his interests in natural resource management and conservation, Steve enjoys camping, rock climbing, snowboarding, disc golfing, and spending time with friends and family. For the next six months, Steve will serve as a Wilderness Fellow at **Crab Orchard and Mingo National Wildlife Refuges**.

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The Wilderness Fellow Program is funded by the Natural Resources and Conservation Planning Division of NWRS

