

# CHESAPEAKE WILDLIFE HERITAGE

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



DESIGNING,  
RESTORING,  
AND MANAGING  
WILDLIFE HABITAT

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends and Supporters,

On behalf of the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the CWH Annual Report for 2019.

CWH has worked to create and improve habitat for wildlife for nearly 40 years, and 2019 was no exception. Last year, through the generosity of our members and supporters, CWH made



many vital contributions to the region's wildlife resource. Constructing wetlands, planting native grass and wildflower meadows, meeting with and advising

landowners, educating the public through workshops and outreach programs, planting cover crops, controlling phragmites on hundreds of acres of wetlands and monitoring nesting structures for Bluebirds, Purple Martins, Ospreys and native bees comprise just a fraction of our work.

CWH stands alone in that we practice what we preach on our own land. We steward 1,150 acres on which we test and demonstrate the efficacy of our experience and techniques every day. Through our land management and restoration work, we help to ensure the future of the region's wildlife and the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

Please join me in congratulating the CWH board and staff for a job well done in 2019. And, as always, thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ralph V. Partlow, III".

Ralph V. Partlow, III  
President, CWH Board of Directors



Cover: Common Yellowthroat photo by Donna Tolbert-Anderson

Right: Northern Pintail at Bennett Point photo by David Judd

♻️ Printed on recycled paper.

## MISSION & BACKGROUND

Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage is dedicated to designing, restoring and managing wildlife habitat and establishing a more sustainable agriculture. Since 1980, we have worked with landowners to enhance the wildlife value of their properties, benefit a wide range of wildlife species and reduce the adverse impacts of conventional farming. By increasing the amount and diversity of habitat and educating the public about the need for wildlife habitat, CWH is improving the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

## APPROACH

The health of the Bay is inextricably linked to the way the land in its watershed is managed. Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage works with the sole purpose of increasing the amount and diversity of wildlife habitat in the Bay region. CWH is the only nonprofit in the Chesapeake Bay area that takes wildlife habitat projects from start to finish and then manages them after their completion.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ralph V. Partlow, III, Esq., President  
University System of Maryland Foundation

Lawrence E. Albright, Chairman  
Albright's Gun Shop

Cleo Braver, Vice President  
Environmental Committee of the Talbot County  
Democratic Forum

Laura Hoffman, Secretary  
Healy Foundation

Stanley P. Watkins, Jr., M.D., Treasurer

## ADVISORY MEMBERS

John Murray, Esq.  
Miles & Stockbridge, P.C.

Dennis Whigham, PhD  
Smithsonian Environmental Research Center

## STAFF

Ned Gerber, Director/Wildlife Habitat Ecologist  
Michael Robin Haggie, Sustainable Agriculture  
Consultant

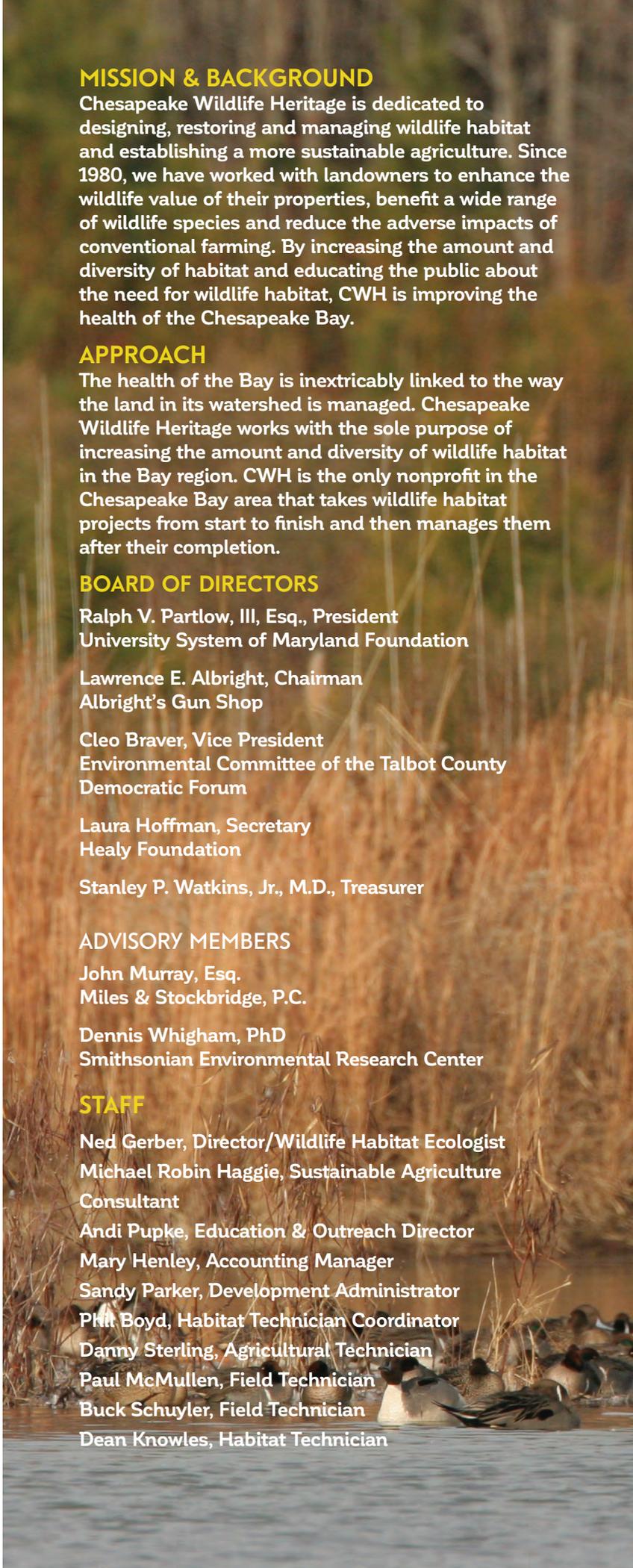
Andi Pupke, Education & Outreach Director  
Mary Henley, Accounting Manager

Sandy Parker, Development Administrator  
Phil Boyd, Habitat Technician Coordinator

Danny Sterling, Agricultural Technician  
Paul McMullen, Field Technician

Buck Schuyler, Field Technician

Dean Knowles, Habitat Technician



## CHESAPEAKE CARE PROGRAM

The region's non-tidal wetlands support amphibians, dragonflies, turkeys, warblers and Delmarva fox squirrels along with the waterfowl we associate with these habitats. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, however, Maryland's wetlands have shrunk by more than 70% over the past 350 years. Through the Chesapeake Care Program, CWH works with landowners to restore some of these lost wetlands.

Non-tidal wetlands benefit water quality by slowing runoff. This allows plants and bacteria to interact with water-borne nutrients and results in reduced nutrient loading to the watershed. Shallow-emergent wetlands and wet meadows provide critical habitat to ducks, geese, shorebirds, dragonflies and amphibians, while woodland wetlands and shrub swamps benefit species such as warblers, woodcock, amphibians and bats.

In 2019, with funding from the Biophilia Foundation, the Campbell Foundation, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation and an anonymous donor, CWH restored a 7-acre wetland in Trappe, MD. This generous support also enabled us to restore wetlands and install water control devices and a pumping station on our Canterbury Farm in Talbot County in an initiative to increase habitat and improve water quality in the Choptank River watershed.

Through Chesapeake Care, we will continue to build and manage wetland habitat for landowners committed to conserving wildlife resources.

## SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

CWH's Sustainable Agriculture Program demonstrates the compatibility of profitable row-crop farming with natural ecosystems, all while pursuing the ultimate goal of organic no-till farming. This program entails eliminating farming practices known to harm the environment and implementing wildlife-friendly and agronomically benign practices.

These include planting cover crops and untreated corn and soybean seeds, rotating crops, monitoring nutrients, practicing integrated pest management, managing buffer strips, soft edges and hedgerows for wildlife, and planting native perennial grasses and wildflowers that provide year-round habitat in field and stream buffers for insect pollinators and other wildlife. CWH continues to demonstrate that wildlife habitat and agricultural profitability can—and indeed must—be compatible and that biologically based farming is more enduring than conventional agribusiness systems.

## EDUCATION & OUTREACH PROGRAM

Through talks and workshops centered on the region's wildlife and habitat, as well as email blasts and social media posts, CWH's Education & Outreach Program teaches landowners how to be better stewards of the Bay in their own backyards. In 2019, CWH provided presentations to garden clubs, special interest groups and homeowners' associations on topics such as meadows, backyard habitat, bluebirds, pollinator gardens and Monarch butterfly life cycle and migration. Site visits to



## NESTING STRUCTURES

Through the Nesting Structure Program, CWH installs artificial nesting boxes and platforms for species whose natural habitats have diminished or disappeared due to development, farming or deforestation. For a nominal fee, CWH installs nesting structures in suitable habitat for Eastern Bluebirds, Prothonotary Warblers, Purple Martins, Wood Ducks, Great-crested Flycatchers, Flying Squirrels, Owls and Ospreys. Every year, we place nesting structures on land around the watershed for citizens interested in encouraging wildlife on their property.

CWH also monitors and collects data on Purple Martin nesting systems on the Mid-Shore. Active management of Martin housing provides better control of invasive non-native European Starling and English House Sparrows, resulting in more successful Martin production. In 2019, 765 chicks were fledged from 35 CWH-monitored houses/gourds, with an average of 22 chicks per house.



Turtles sun themselves on a turtle platform built by Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage. Photo courtesy of Tucker Moorshead.



Monarch tagging workshop

private properties offered one-on-one opportunities for a wildlife habitat specialist to discuss options for suitable habitat improvements with landowners.

Guided tours show landowners how and why CWH restoration projects work. Seeing Northern Pintail on a restored wetland or ground-nesting birds in a warm-season grass meadow brings home the critical benefits of habitat improvements. Our streaming cameras bring view of birds in restored wetlands to anyone with an internet connection. Arrangements may be made to tour CWH's Bennett Point Farm in Queenstown, Barnstable Hill Farm on Kent Island, Canterbury Farm in Easton and other significant restoration sites.

### HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Maintenance is critical for keeping new or restored wildlife habitat functioning properly. Newly created wetlands can easily be colonized by phragmites or dense stands of cattails, and an unmanaged meadow can quickly turn to forest. CWH staff regularly work to keep meadows, wetlands and scrub-shrub areas in an early successional stage through spot spraying, discing, controlled burning, hand cutting, frilling, frost seeding, delayed drawdown and carefully timed dormant-season mowing. We are especially careful to protect nesting and brooding wildlife during spring and summer.

Having a diversity of wildlife means creating and maintaining a diversity of habitat. Much of the summer and fall of 2019 were spent managing and maintaining habitat on CWH and client properties. It's hot and tiring work, but the positive results for the wildlife resource are well worth the effort.

### PHRAGMITES CONTROL

*Phragmites australis* continues to invade the Eastern Shore and other parts of Maryland at an alarming rate. This invasive species grows so thickly that it can choke out beneficial and native wetland plants, destroy the wetland's fragile ecosystem and create a monoculture with little to no habitat value for wildlife.

CWH's Phragmites Control Program slows the rapid spread of this noxious plant with the goal of restoring diverse wetland ecosystems. A five-year study by CWH documented the presence of 65 beneficial species of plants from the existing wetland seedbed once a stand of phragmites was eliminated. In 2019, CWH sprayed 219 properties in Anne Arundel, Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties to eliminate phragmites and improve the biodiversity of hundreds of acres of wetlands.

### LANDOWNER SERVICES

CWH works in partnership with private landowners to permanently protect land for wildlife habitat. Our conservation easements have dedicated more than 2,500 acres of habitat for wildlife in Dorchester, Kent, Prince George's, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties, including warm-season grass meadows, wetland, mature woodlands and riparian buffers along Chesapeake Bay tributaries.

In 2019, our Landowner Services Program provided advice and services to landowners who strive to protect locally significant resource lands. This critical work ensures that the land will stay forever wild.



## CWH'S WILDLIFE REFUGES

CWH owns six properties comprising 1,150 acres on Maryland's Eastern Shore. In 2019, CWH managed these wildlife sanctuaries with the aim of achieving diverse wildlife habitat and improved water quality for the Bay.

**Piney Creek Wetland Preserve**—These 13 acres of tidal wetlands on the east side of Piney Creek in Queen Anne's County are frequented by varied species of waterfowl.

**Bennett Point Farm**—CWH has restored 107 acres of wetlands, planted 25 acres of forested buffer and created 13 acres of meadow on this 284-acre farm along the Wye River.

**Barnstable Hill Farm**—Donated to CWH in 2000 by the White and Bennett families, Barnstable is the Eastern Shore's largest private wildlife sanctuary that is actively managed specifically for wildlife. CWH has restored more than 155 acres of habitat on the 540-acre waterfront farm.

**Bailey's Neck Farm**—This 135-acre farm near Easton comprises 100 acres of wet woodlands, 30 acres of restored wetlands and five acres of scrub-shrub meadows.

**Bozman Field**—This 29-acre field just west of St. Michaels includes 12 acres of mature woodland and 17 acres of early successional woodlands.

**Canterbury Farm**—Donated by the Healy family in 2008, this 150-acre wildlife refuge near Easton includes 121 acres of wetlands restored by CWH.

Indigo Bunting photo by Donna Tolbert-Anderson  
Purple Martin house installed by CWH



## STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the years ending December 31, 2019 and 2018

| ASSETS                                    | 2019               | 2018               |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>                     |                    |                    |
| Cash and cash equivalents                 | \$32,257           | \$5,662            |
| Cash and cash equivalents—restricted      | 25,322             | 16,436             |
| Accounts receivable                       | 10,211             | 19,509             |
| Employee advances                         | 2,910              | 1,463              |
| Prepaid expenses and other Current Assets | 2,583              | 6,060              |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>               | <b>73,283</b>      | <b>49,130</b>      |
| <b>FIXED ASSETS (at cost)</b>             |                    |                    |
| Office equipment                          | 44,654             | 44,654             |
| Machinery and equipment                   | 339,512            | 349,915            |
| Automotive equipment                      | 106,039            | 106,039            |
| Buildings                                 | 1,198,667          | 1,198,667          |
| Land                                      | 3,853,932          | 3,853,932          |
|   | 5,542,804          | 5,553,207          |
| Less accumulated depreciation             | 1,184,705          | 1,133,079          |
| <b>Total Fixed Assets</b>                 | <b>4,358,099</b>   | <b>4,420,128</b>   |
| <b>OTHER ASSETS</b>                       |                    |                    |
| Investment in Endowment                   | 482,069            | 409,995            |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>                       | <b>4,913,451</b>   | <b>4,879,253</b>   |
| <b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>         |                    |                    |
| <b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>                |                    |                    |
| Accounts payable and accrued expenses     | 12,553             | 5,787              |
| Line of credit                            | –                  | 39,943             |
| Current maturities of long-term debt      | 6,276              | 5,941              |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b>          | <b>18,829</b>      | <b>51,671</b>      |
| <b>LONG-TERM DEBT</b>                     |                    |                    |
| Notes payable                             | 8,796              | 15,111             |
| <b>Total Long-Term Debt</b>               | <b>8,796</b>       | <b>15,111</b>      |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>                  | <b>27,625</b>      | <b>66,782</b>      |
| <b>NET ASSETS</b>                         |                    |                    |
| Without Donor Restrictions                | 4,675,207          | 4,638,139          |
| With Donor Restrictions                   | 210,619            | 174,332            |
| <b>Total Net Assets</b>                   | <b>4,885,826</b>   | <b>4,812,471</b>   |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>   | <b>\$4,913,451</b> | <b>\$4,879,253</b> |

See Independent Auditors' Report

The Notes to Financial Statements are an integral part of these statements.

## STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

For the years ending December 31, 2019 and 2018

|   | Without Donor Restrictions | With Donor Restrictions | 2019               | 2018               |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>CONTRIBUTIONS, REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>         |                            |                         |                    |                    |
| Grants—Other  | \$164,474                  | •                       | \$164,474          | \$257,172          |
| Contributions and dues                                  | 289,643                    | 9,000                   | 298,643            | 301,663            |
| Landowner project fees                                  | 214,601                    | •                       | 214,601            | 186,728            |
| Investment income                                       | 10,467                     | 6,206                   | 16,673             | 21,567             |
| Other income  | 43                         | •                       | 43                 | 18                 |
| Rental income   | 39,050                     | •                       | 39,050             | 48,533             |
| In-Kind contributions                                   | 80                         | •                       | 80                 | 130                |
| Gain (loss) on sale of assets                           | 4,784                      | •                       | 4,784              | (33,270)           |
| Realized/unrealized gain (loss) on investments          | 34,394                     | 21,081                  | 55,475             | (58,058)           |
| <b>TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS, REVENUE &amp; OTHER SUPPORT</b> | <b>757,536</b>             | <b>36,287</b>           | <b>793,823</b>     | <b>724,483</b>     |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>   |                            |                         |                    |                    |
| Program services  | 588,383                    | •                       | 588,383            | 687,866            |
| General and administrative                              | 75,040                     | •                       | 75,040             | 83,121             |
| Fundraising   | 57,045                     | •                       | 57,045             | 57,480             |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>                                   | <b>720,468</b>             | <b>•</b>                | <b>720,468</b>     | <b>828,467</b>     |
| Net assets released from restrictions                   | •                          | •                       | •                  | •                  |
| <b>Change in net assets</b>                             | <b>37,068</b>              | <b>36,287</b>           | <b>73,355</b>      | <b>(103,984)</b>   |
| Net assets, beginning of the year                       | 4,638,139                  | 174,332                 | 4,812,471          | 4,916,455          |
| <b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>                          | <b>\$4,675,207</b>         | <b>\$210,619</b>        | <b>\$4,885,826</b> | <b>\$4,812,471</b> |

For more Annual Report information, visit [cheswildlife.org](http://cheswildlife.org).