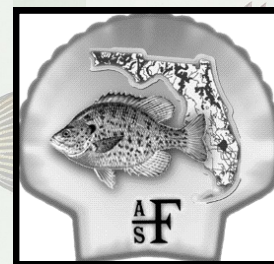


# The Shellcracker

FLORIDA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY



<https://units.fisheries.org/fl/>

## Fall 2021

Hello and happy fall Florida Chapter members!

With fall comes the wonderful cooler temperatures that I am sure everyone has been waiting for. Cool mornings and evenings turn into full days of long pants and long sleeves to stay warm. It is comfortable to be outside for extended periods of time now.

This also makes me think of how comforting it is being a part of AFS, specifically the Florida Chapter. In an odd way, I'm thankful for the extended time I have been an officer of this Chapter. Yes, I had to plan two meetings, figure out technical logistics, but it really gave me a chance to work and interact with some amazing folks. It is truly amazing how we all work together to create a better world around us. We look out for one another and push each other to be better scientists and people. I see this in so many ways within our Chapter.

Florida AFS just finished up being a co-sponsor to a Shoreline Clean-Up event for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row. This event corresponded with International Beach Clean-up Day and we have had groups get together from the farthest reaches of the Panhandle to the white sand beaches of South Florida. This event continues to grow statewide, and I am so excited to see what our members come up with next year.

Not only do our members do an awesome job giving back to the environment and communities, but they continue to promote our Chapter to make our members strive to be better scientists. I have seen how tirelessly the Continuing Education committee has worked together to provide relevant workshops to our members to keep our membership moving fisheries forward.

Finally, I have seen how committed and dedicated our members are. When something needs to get done, there are always multiple hands raised to get the job done. We continue to have a wide diversity of individuals involved in all levels of the Chapter. We continue to thrive on this diversity and step up to every new task that we are faced with, while also remaining ahead of the curve at the Chapter level.

With that said, I would like to sincerely thank Chris Anderson for his dedication and commitment to the Florida Chapter the past few years. He has dealt with the postponement of two meetings, setting up a virtual format, and is now a new father and a PhD student. Because of the latter two, Chris has decided to step down as secretary/treasurer and pass the checkbook to Steve Beck. Steve was previously the secretary/treasurer for the Louisiana Chapter for 3 years and is currently a biologist with Freshwater Fisheries Management within FWC in Gainesville. Steve looks forward to being involved with state level AFS work again, which he thinks is extremely valuable in promoting interaction between fisheries students and professionals. Thank you so much Chris and welcome Steve.

To everyone as we move into the season of feelings of thankfulness, remember those members that may have helped out along in one way or another. Beyond that pass that along to someone else and continue to make our world a better place. I am personally thankful for all of our Florida Chapter members, as well as, knowing that AFS is an organization that not only promotes great science, but also great people.

I look forward to our next times together, may it be at a work function, our next Chapter meeting, or enjoying the cooler weather on a patio somewhere with a cold drink. I hope you all have a wonderful fall.

Daniel Nelson  
Florida Chapter AFS  
President



# Getting in Touch

## American Fisheries Society Florida Chapter Officers

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cgerv002@fiu.edu

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Mackenzie Horton  
Jacksonville University  
Mackenzie.Horton@MyFWC.com

## Upcoming Events

**January 20–23, 2022:** AFS Southern Division Meeting: Charleston, SC

**February 18, 2022:** FL AFS Abstract Deadline

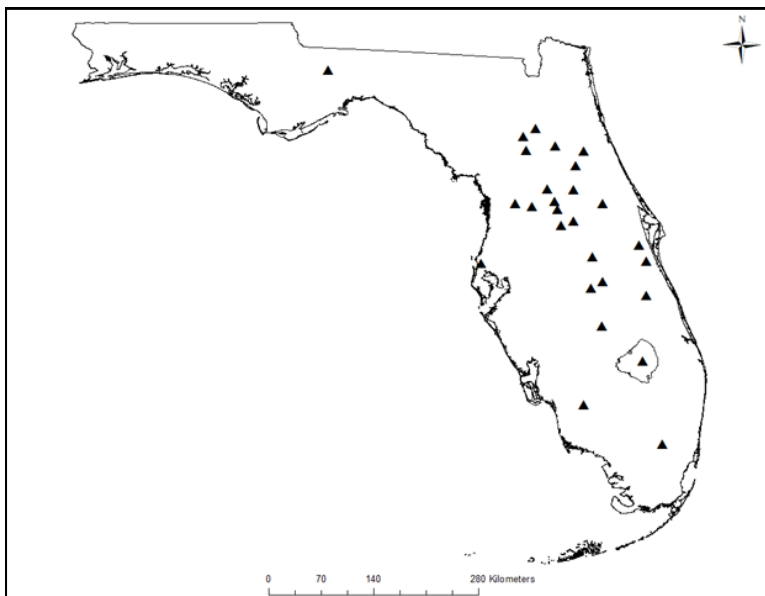
**April 5-7, 2022:** FL AFS Annual Meeting Haines City, FL

**Interested in contributing something to the Shellcracker?** Email: Scott Bisping at [Scott.Bisping@myfwc.com](mailto:Scott.Bisping@myfwc.com) with any articles or information that you would like to be included in the next issue. The deadline for the next issue is December 15th, 2021, so start fishing...

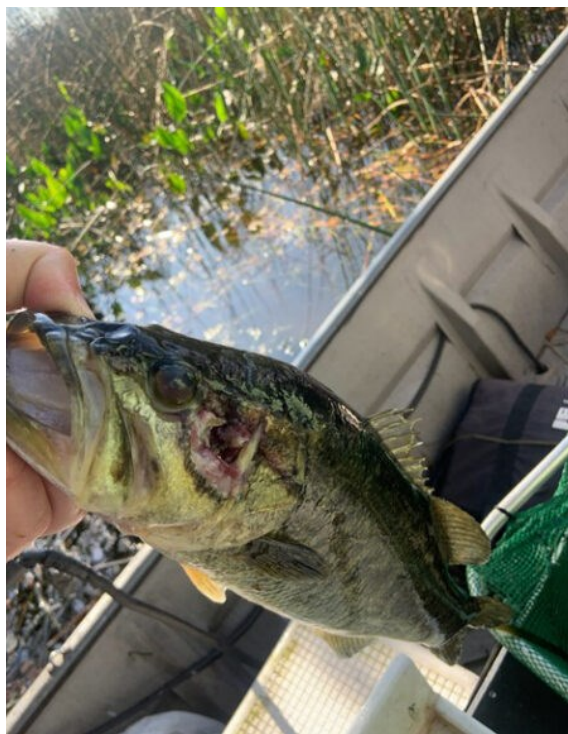
## IMPLEMENTING A STATEWIDE PROTOCOL FOR MONITORING ABNORMALITIES IN FRESHWATER FISH

*Daniel Nelson, Jason O'Connor, Shalyn Zappulla, Taylor Dluzniewski, Marcus Zokan, Josh Wilsey, John Saxton, Jennifer Moran, and Ted Lange*

The health of Florida's freshwater ecosystems and sportfishes has been catapulted into the spotlight by concerned stakeholders. These stakeholders commonly blame aquatic plant management and herbicide use on the degradation of Florida's water quality and the apparent increase in fish disease. Freshwater fisheries biologists lacked data to evaluate these concerns and determine the appropriate course of action. In response, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Freshwater Fisheries Research and Management divisions implemented a standardized field-based criteria to record fish health abnormalities into the established freshwater fish



*Figure 1: Distribution map of lakes sampled for comparisons between percent fish health abnormalities and water quality, herbicide use, watershed use and fisheries community metrics.*



*Example of a "lesion" abnormality from a Largemouth Bass sampled.*

long-term monitoring program. Abnormalities were recorded into five categories while in the field. The "FLOPS" model was developed to aid in the standardization of fish coding across the state: F = fin rot/erosion, L = lesion (including, but not limited to sores, ulcers, tumors), O = other (wounds created by anglers, natural predators, or spawning stress), P = parasitic infections, and S = skeletal malformation. To develop a standardized protocol, data were collected during routine sampling in 2020. Field observations from 2020 were used to assess consistency across biologists and refine health code protocols. The revised protocols were implemented during Largemouth Bass sampling in spring 2021. The objectives of these data are to document normal conditions and prevalence of fish abnormalities in Florida's freshwater.

Abnormalities were noted in spring 2020 and spring 2021 at 28 lakes across the state of Florida. In 2020, 8.5% of sampled bass were coded with some abnormality, while in 2021 only 4.7% were coded.

The decline in coded abnormalities was likely due to meetings designed to improve the definitions of each abnormality group code so that coding was more standardized statewide and individual subjectivity would be minimized. Lesions were the most recorded abnormality in 2021 (2.3%), likely due to the definition expanding to encompass a variety of abnormalities that are difficult to distinguish without laboratory analysis.

The percent of abnormalities was then compared to 39 metrics that covered four metric categories including herbicide use, water quality metrics, watershed land use, and fish community composition (Figure 2). Some of the notable metrics were: Total pounds of herbicide applied, trophic state index, and percent urban land use in the watershed. We found no evidence to support a link between any metrics and the prevalence of gross abnormalities in bass. Future research efforts should focus on further improving standardization of abnormality coding, understanding the biotic and abiotic factors influencing the variability between waterbodies, providing baseline information on prevalence, and prompting further diagnostic work in the case of an increase or mortality event. Future management efforts should focus on providing current, relevant information to stakeholders on different abnormalities and their effects on the status of Florida's freshwater.

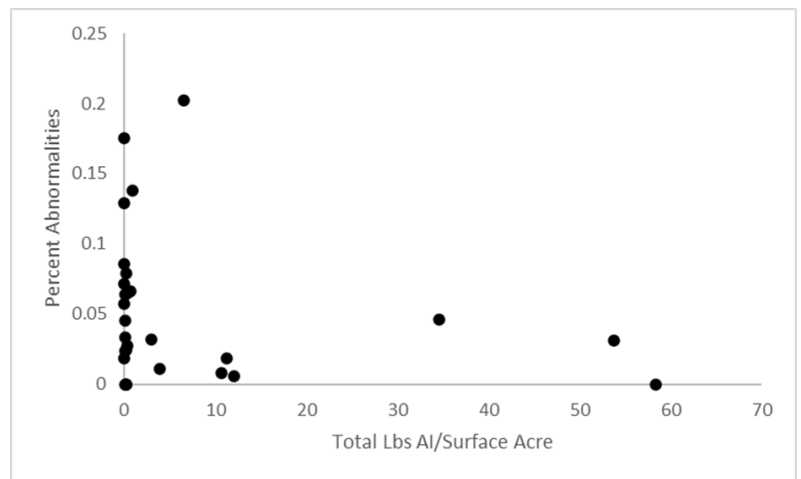


Figure 2: Example of scatterplot of metric (total pounds of active ingredient standardized by lake acres) and proportion of observed abnormalities of largemouth bass by waterbody.



# 42nd Annual Meeting of the Florida Chapter American Fisheries Society

**April 5-7, 2022**

**Florida FFA Leadership Training Center**

We invite you to submit abstracts for the 42nd annual meeting of the Florida Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. The meeting will take place April 5-7, 2022 at the Florida FFA Leadership Training Center, located in Haines City, on the shore of Lake Pierce. We hope you can join us!

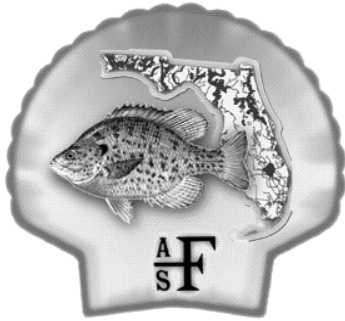
Thank you to everyone who participated in our symposium topics survey and to those who contributed topic ideas! Survey results are in, and it looks like our 2022 symposium will be: **“Fisheries in a Changing Climate”**.

This symposium invites submissions on all topics related to climate change and fisheries. Climate change impacts fisheries in a diversity of ways, and submissions could include topics centered on fish species, habitats, communities, economies, or more. Submissions focused in Florida are encouraged, though other submissions are also welcome.

We encourage submissions for the symposium but also welcome and accept submissions outside the scope of the symposium topic. With this in mind please specify in your abstract submission if you would like your presentation to be part of this symposium.

Deadline for abstract submission and early registration:

**Friday, February 18, 2022.**



## AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY FLORIDA CHAPTER

### **ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION** **APRIL 5–7, 2022** **HAINES CITY, FLORIDA**

## Meeting Information

#### **Meeting Details**

The 2022 meeting will be held at the Florida FFA Leadership Training Center, 5000 Firetower Road, Haines City. Maps and directions will be available in the next issue of the Shellcracker or can be found on the Florida FFA Leadership Training Website at [www.flaltc.org](http://www.flaltc.org).

The meeting's schedule of events will be similar to past meetings. We will begin in the afternoon on Tuesday, April 5th with the presentation of contributed papers. The poster session will take place following dinner on Wednesday evening. The **'Fisheries in Climate Change'** symposium will start on Wednesday morning. The business meeting and raffle will follow dinner on Wednesday night. We will hear more contributed papers on Thursday morning, followed by lunch and the presentation of awards immediately following lunch.

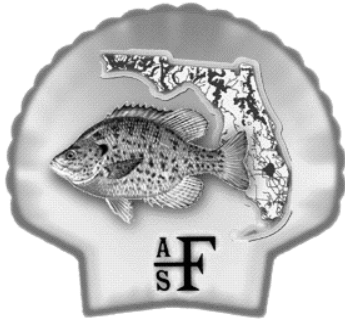
#### **Registration, Lodging, Meals, and Chapter Dues**

Early registration deadline is **Friday, February 18, 2022**. The cost for early full registration is \$70.00. The cost for full registration after Friday, February 19, 2021 is \$90.00. **If you are staying at the FFA Leadership Training Center for this year's meeting, the cost for full meals and lodging in a Villa Room lodging is \$302.00. The cost for full meals and lodging in a Lodge Room is \$352.00 (Please see page 8 for more details).** Please Note: there are 11 Lodge Rooms available and they will be reserved on a first come, first serve basis. Linens will be provided including pillows, towels, and sheets. **We ask that everyone has a roommate. Everyone must pay for lodging each night regardless of whether they have a roommate. Rooms and roommates will be chosen at the meeting's registration desk.**

For your convenience, **all registrations will be made online, to register please visit here**

This link to the registration website will also be made available on our chapter's website at <https://units.fisheries.org/fl/home/2022-annual-meeting/>. **There will be no mail-in registration forms this year, however, you can still mail a check for your meeting costs.**

If you can't attend the meeting, we have a link on the chapter's website (<https://units.fisheries.org/fl/chapter-dues/>) where you can pay your \$10 annual dues electronically, or you can still mail a check for \$10 to the Secretary/Treasurer made payable to Florida Chapter AFS.



## AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY FLORIDA CHAPTER

### **ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION** **APRIL 5–7, 2022** **HAINES CITY, FLORIDA**

# Meeting Information

## 1st Call for Oral & Poster Presentations!

### **\*New\* Abstract Submission Process**

New for 2022, presenters are encouraged to submit your abstract online [here](#).

### **Presentation details**

*Speakers will be given 20 minutes* for talks (15 minutes for presentations and 5 minutes for questions and/or discussion). We will have PowerPoint on a laptop capable of accepting your presentation on a flash drive or other device.

*Important note:* Please use **widescreen PowerPoint slide format** for all presentations.

**All posters will be presented on Tuesday evening, April 6,** and can be left up for the entire meeting. Posters should be no larger than 150 X 100 cm (60" X 40"), but they can be set up either as portrait or landscape format on an easel.

### **Opportunities for student support**

As in previous years, student travel awards will be available for the annual meeting. Master's and doctoral students are also eligible for the Roger Rottmann Memorial Scholarship, for which the recipient(s) will be announced at the annual meeting. More information and the application materials are available on the chapter's website at <https://units.fisheries.org/fl/awards-and-scholarships/>.

### **2022 Student Raffle**

We need your help to make this meeting's raffle a great one. If you are interested in helping or donating items, please email Amanda Croteau ([amanda.croteau@gmail.com](mailto:amanda.croteau@gmail.com)) or Chelsea Crandall ([kicksea@ufl.edu](mailto:kicksea@ufl.edu)). Remember all proceeds fund our student travel grants for the following year's meeting. Please contact us to get involved!

We look forward to seeing everyone in Haines City for our 2022 annual meeting!

Thanks,  
Chelsey Crandall

# 1st Call for Oral & Poster Presentations!

## **Abstract Submission**

Please submit your abstract as a MS Word document to Chelsey Crandall. Please follow these instructions for submission:

In the email subject line, please enter FLAFS 2022: followed by the author names in your abstract (e.g., FLAFS2022 SmithTaylorRosen)

Use the same name for the abstract file, e.g., FLAFS2022 SmithTaylorRosen.doc

Please include the associated information requested above with the abstract

**NEW: Please submit 1-3 “action shots”/pictures (jpg format <500 KB in size) associated with your research for the FL Chapter website with your abstract. Non-presenters may also submit photos to Steve Beck or Chelsey Crandall if they would like to contribute.**

## **Abstract format**

Abstract *word limit is 300 words* and should include the following information:

Presenter: Williams, Brian

Email: BrianWilliams@FloridaFish.net

Author(s): Williams, B.<sup>1</sup>, K. Rowley<sup>1</sup>, and P. George<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Affiliation with address.

<sup>2</sup>Affiliation with address.

Title: Recommendations for New Limits on Some of Florida’s Most Targeted Fish Species

Abstract: 300 word maximum

Student Presentation: No or Yes (work presented was completed while a student)

Presentation type: Oral or Poster

Would you like to be considered for the symposium? Yes or No

Are you willing to be a moderator? Yes or No

Are you willing to be a judge? Yes or No If so, oral presentation or poster?

## **Presentation details**

*Speakers will be given 20 minutes* for talks (15 minutes for presentations and 5 minutes for questions and/or discussion). We will have PowerPoint on a laptop capable of accepting your presentation on a flash drive or other device.

*Important note:* Please use **widescreen PowerPoint slide format** for all presentations.

**All posters will be presented on Wednesday evening, April 6th**, and can be left up for the entire meeting. Posters should be no larger than 150 X 100 cm (60” X 40”), but they can be set up either as portrait or landscape format on an easel.

If you require other options for projection or poster formats, please contact the annual meeting’s Program Chair, Chelsey Crandall, Chelsey.Crandall@myfwc.com.





## Florida Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

### 2022 Annual Meeting Registration Information

Florida FFA Leadership Training Center  
April 5–7, 2022

All registrations will be made online:

<https://FLAFS.regfox.com/florida-chapter-of-the-american-fisheries-society-2022-annual-meeting>

Payments for registration, meals, lodging, and chapter dues prior to the meeting will be made online via credit card or by mailing a check to the address listed on the registration website.

**EARLY-REGISTRATION:** registration paid online or check postmarked by **Friday, February 18, 2022**

\$60.00 One-day Registration      \$70.00 Full Registration

**LATE-REGISTRATION:** registration paid online or check postmarked after **Friday, February 18, 2022**

\$70.00 One-day Registration      \$90.00 Full Registration

#### Meals and Lodging

(lodging price based on double occupancy Villa Rooms, Lodge rooms are \$140.00 per night)

##### Tuesday, April 5, 2022

*\*No Lunch This Year*

\$19.00 Dinner

\$115.00 Lodging

##### Wednesday, April 6, 2022

\$6.00 Breakfast

\$11.00 Lunch

\$19.00 Dinner

\$115.00 Lodging

##### Thursday April 7, 2022

\$6.00 Breakfast

\$11.00 Lunch

#### **Full Meals and Lodging (Villa Rooms)**

\$302.00

Linens (provided)

#### **\*\*Full Meals and Lodging (Lodge Rooms)**

\$352.00

Linens (provided)

**Registrations will still be accepted at the meeting, but with a late registration fee.  
We can accept VISA, MASTERCARD, AMEX, DISCOVER, cash, or check at the meeting\*\*.**

**Note:** This is a buffet-style service and food must be ordered two weeks in advance.  
Since meals are pre-paid, **please** submit your registration online as soon as possible.

**\*\***We ask that everyone has a roommate. Everyone must pay for lodging each night regardless of whether they have a roommate. Rooms and roommates will be chosen at the meeting's registration desk. There will be 7 total lodge rooms available (\$15 extra per night) and they will be offered on a first come, first serve basis.

**\*\*\***FWC employees may only use a state-issued P-Card to pay for the cost of registration and lodging. However, it is recommended to pay for all meeting costs with personal funds and seek reimbursement.



## **Award Nominations**

The Florida Chapter American Fisheries Society is seeking nominations for the Outstanding Achievement and Rich Cailteux Awards. Our membership is full of dedicated professionals, and it's time to recognize their efforts. Please review the award criteria below and send nominations to Eric Nagid (eric.nagid@myfwc.com) by **March 1st, 2022**. Applications should be limited to one page, but descriptive enough to convey why the individual is deserving of the award.

### **Outstanding Achievement Award**

The purpose of the Outstanding Achievement Award is to recognize individuals for singular accomplishments and contributions to fisheries, aquatic sciences, and the Florida Chapter. The award aims to honor individuals for distinct contributions to the fisheries profession and enhancing the visibility of the Chapter. The Outstanding Achievement Award is the highest honor Florida AFS may bestow upon an individual member or collaborating group.

Candidates will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Original techniques or research methodology
- Original ideas, viewpoints, or data which contributed to fisheries management or our understanding of aquatic resources
- Important ecological discoveries
- An original fishery research or management program of statewide importance
- Activities in public education and outreach that have statewide impacts

### **Rich Cailteux Award**

The purpose of the Rich Cailteux Award is to recognize individuals who have maintained a long-term commitment to research, management, and/or conservation of Florida fisheries and aquatic resources. This award aims to honor individuals for their career contributions to the fisheries profession and enhancing the visibility of the Florida Chapter.

Candidates will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- A minimum of 20 years spent in a fisheries related field in Florida
- Substantial career contributions to Florida aquatic resources and the fisheries profession
- An imaginative and successful program in fisheries and aquatic sciences education
- A history of mentoring young fisheries professionals, and involvement and leadership with the Florida Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

# **Student Subunit Update**

By: Casey Murray

The FL AFS student subunit has been busy brainstorming ideas to increase student involvement and interaction. We have over 80 student members from 13 institutions across the state of Florida, and the distance (in addition to a pandemic) makes it difficult to plan in-person events to meet and interact with fellow members. We are currently planning a student symposium for early 2022 to showcase student research, allow for students to get practice presenting, and create opportunities to socialize and collaborate! Our symposium will consist of oral presentations, poster presentations, and social hours. See below if you want to be involved!

## **Get Involved**

Our new and ~shiny~ FL AFS stickers have arrived! To grab one, just submit a blog and/or social media post to our [email](#) and we will send you one as a thank-you for your participation! We love to see what our members are up to in the lab and in the field.

Want to help plan the upcoming student symposium? We could use 1-2 student volunteers to help schedule, organize, and prepare for our student symposium planned for early 2022. Shoot us an [email](#) if you are interested in joining the planning committee, it looks great on a



Are you a student interested in promoting your research or developing your science communication skills? Become a contributor to our blog Reefs to Rivers (<https://flafsstudentsubunit.wordpress.com>) or send us pictures and have your research featured on our Instagram ([www.instagram.com/flafsstudent](http://www.instagram.com/flafsstudent))

Contact us at [flafsstudent@gmail.com](mailto:flafsstudent@gmail.com) for information on how you can get involved. Don't forget to follow our blog, Instagram, and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/AmericanFisheriesSocietyFLStudentChapter](http://www.facebook.com/AmericanFisheriesSocietyFLStudentChapter)).

Do you use Amazon? By shopping with our Amazon Smile account, <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-1208319>, Amazon donates to FLAFS. Funds go to support student travel awards. Sign up today!

