



# A HISTORY OF THE **GEORGIA CHAPTER** OF THE AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY



by  
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## ABSTRACT

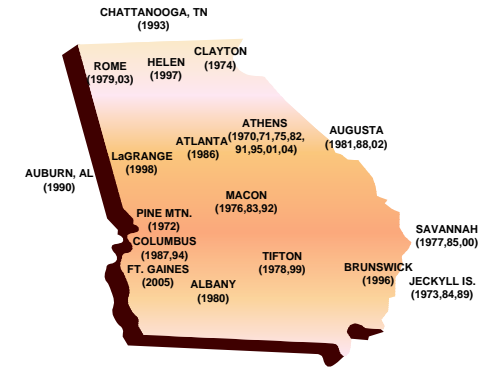
Informal meetings of the group that would eventually become the Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (GA-AFS) began in 1968 under the guidance of Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA-DNR) biologist Wayne Thomaston. The first organizational meeting, with an arranged program and formal technical presentations, was organized by Dr. Al Fox (UGA) and held at the University of Georgia (UGA), February 9-10, 1970. At an additional organizational meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, on September 28, 1970, Bylaws and the name Georgia Fisheries Workers Association (GFWA) were approved. The objective of GFWA was "...to provide a means of communication concerning fisheries and other related aquatic resources in Georgia." The Bylaws directed the Chairman to appoint an Executive Committee with representatives from at least five fisheries related groups. The Executive Committee has been the driving force of the organization. A major responsibility of the Executive Committee was planning and conducting an Annual Meeting. The First GFWA Annual Meeting was held January 25-26, 1971, at UGA.

During the 1970's and 1980's, GFWA rejected affiliation with the American Fisheries Society (AFS) because "...it would entail the loss of members, raising of fees, loss of identity, loss of informality, and expansion of the program to other states." There also was concern that many GA-DNR employees, especially technicians, who were not AFS members, could not be considered for elected offices. On February 6, 1985, Dr. Ronnie J. Gilbert (UGA) obtained 20 signatures of AFS members interested in forming a Georgia Chapter. Dr. Gilbert was elected the first President of GA-AFS at the 1986 Business Meeting. The Georgia Chapter was officially recognized by AFS in 1990. Georgia Fisheries Workers Association and GA-AFS voted to consolidate on February 11, 1992, and Spud Woodward (GA-DNR) was elected President of the expanded GA-AFS.

Since consolidation, GA-AFS has co-hosted the 1993 and 2000 Mid-year Technical Meetings of the Southern Division and supported formation of the UGA Student Subunit. The success enjoyed by GFWA and GA-AFS has been due to the hard work of their leaders. The following members have been recognized for outstanding service during the first thirty-two years: Beverly Clement, E.H. Armor, Sue Anthony, Dr. Ronnie J. Gilbert, Dr. Mike Van Den Avyle, Dr. Bob Reinert, Mike Spencer, Dr. Bruce Saul, Matt Thomas, and Tom Reinert. View the complete text of GA-AFS History at: <http://www.uga.edu/ugafish/ga-afs>

## MILESTONES IN GA-AFS HISTORY

- ❖ 1970--ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING AT UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA (UGA), FEB. 9-10. BYLAWS APPROVED AND GEORGIA FISHERIES WORKERS ASSOCIATION (GFWA) WAS ESTABLISHED SEPT. 28.
- ❖ 1971--FIRST ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN ATHENS, GA, JAN. 25-26.
- ❖ 1972--SPONSORED FIRST CONTINUING EDUCATION WORKSHOP: AQUATIC PLANTS WORKSHOP, UGA, JUNE 5-9.
- ❖ 1976--GFWA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VOTED NOT TO PURSUE AFFILIATION WITH AFS, MAY 28.
- ❖ 1981--FIRST JOINT MEETING WITH ADJACENT STATE ORGANIZATION, SOUTH CAROLINA FISHERIES WORKERS ASSOCIATION, AUGUSTA, GA.
- ❖ 1985--PETITION SIGNED BY 20 AFS MEMBERS SEEKING PERMISSION TO FORM A GEORGIA AFS CHAPTER, FEB. 6. AND "THE WINDOW INCIDENT".
- ❖ 1990--GA-AFS APPROVED BY AFS.
- ❖ 1992--GFWA AND GA-AFS APPROVED MOTION TO CONSOLIDATE AS GA-AFS, FEB. 11.
- ❖ 1993--CO-HOSTED WITH TENNESSEE CHAPTER FIRST MID-YEAR MEETING OF SOUTHERN DIVISION-AFS IN CHATTANOOGA, TN, FEB. 24-27.
- ❖ 2000--CO-HOSTED WITH SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER MID-YEAR MEETING IN SAVANNAH, GA, FEB. 3-6. STUDENT SUBUNIT, UGA FISHERIES SOCIETY, APPROVED BY AFS, MARCH 18.



Annual meeting sites of GFWA and GA-AFS, 1970-2005.

GFWA CHAIRS/GA-AFS PRESIDENTS	EMPLOYER	YEAR
DR. AL FOX	UGA	1970
DANIEL HOLDER	GA-DNR	1971
MONTE SEEHORN	U.S. Forest Service	1972
BEVERLY CLEMENT	GA-DNR	1973
EUGENE BRASCHLER	USFWS	1974
DR. MAC RAWSON	UGA	1975
ROBERT REES	GA-DNR	1976
RUSS ENGLAND	GA-DNR	1977
JOHN ADAMS	GA POWER	1978
DON JOHNSON	GA-DNR	1979
JERRY GERMAN	GA-DNR	1980
DR. RONNIE GILBERT	UGA	1981
TIM HESS	GA-DNR	1982
CHUCK COOMER	GA-DNR	1983
SUSAN SHIPMAN	GA-DNR	1984
FRANK RICHARDSON	USFWS	1985
DR. RONNIE GILBERT	UGA	1986
JERRY GERMAN / DR. GEORGE LEWIS	GA-DNR/UGA	1987
DR. VICKI BLAZER	UGA	1988
DOUG POWELL / AMY McCOLLUM	TVA/GA-DNR	1989
DR. BOB REINERT / SPUD WOODWARD	UGA/ GA-DNR	1990
AMY McCOLLUM/CHRIS MARTIN	GA-DNR/GA-DNR	1991
SPUD WOODWARD	GA-DNR	1992
MICHAEL SPENCER	GA-DNR	1993
HENRY MEALING	Normandeau Assoc.	1994
MIKE ALEXANDER	U.S. ARMY COE	1995
LEE KEEFER	GA-DNR	1996
CECIL JENNINGS	UGA	1997
BUBBA MAULDIN	GA-DNR	1998
MATT THOMAS	GA-DNR	1999
SCOTT HENDRICKS	GA POWER	2000
ROB WELLER	GA-DNR	2001
DAVID HIGGINBOTHAM	UGA	2002
ANTHONY RABERN	GA-DNR	2003
BILL DAVIN	Berry College	2004
STEVEN PATRICK	UGA Extension	2005
TED WILL	GA-DNR	2006

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...and visit our Student Subunit at:  
[www.uga.edu/ugafish](http://www.uga.edu/ugafish)



1984 Distinguished Service Award  
Sue Anthony (l) with Ronnie Gilbert



2001 Fishery Worker of the Year  
Dennis Young



2001 Career Contribution Award  
Bob Rees



2001 Past President's Plaque  
Scott Hendricks (r) with 2001 President Rob Weller



1999 Best Student Paper  
Erik Dilts (l) with Bubba Mauldin

## GEORGIA CHAPTER AWARDS

- ❖ DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD – Awarded to an individual or organization in recognition of outstanding contributions of time and energy for special projects or activities in service to the Chapter.
- ❖ FISHERY WORKER OF THE YEAR AWARD – Awarded to an individual in recognition of recent, exceptional accomplishment(s) in fisheries science and/or management.
- ❖ CAREER CONTRIBUTIONS TO FISHERIES IN GEORGIA AWARD - Awarded to an individual in recognition of significant, long-term, professional contributions to fisheries science and/or management in the State of Georgia.
- ❖ BEST STUDENT PAPER - Selected GA-AFS members judge the student papers at the Annual Meeting and the top three receive awards.
- ❖ PAST PRESIDENT'S PLAQUE - Awarded by the incoming President of the Georgia Chapter to the out-going President of the Georgia Chapter.



Chowing down at the 2001 Annual Meeting Banquet



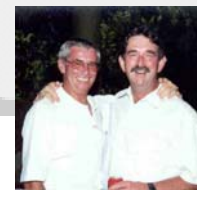
Awesome raffle prizes at the 2001 Annual Meeting Banquet



Enjoying a drink on the veranda at the 1999 Annual Meeting



Dr. Bob Reinert enjoys a final fling as Door Prize Chairman, while Dr. Cecil Jennings tries to pilfer goodies prior to legal distribution at the 2001 Annual Meeting



Former officers Drs. Ronnie Gilbert (l) and Mike Van Den Avyle. Ronnie was GFWA Chairman in 1981 and initiated GA-AFS formation, serving as the first Chapter President in 1986.



Some Past-Presidents and Chairmen include (l to r): Lee Keefer, Bubba Mauldin, Jerry German, Mac Rawson, Scott Hendricks, Bob Reinert, Dan Holder, Ronnie Gilbert, Spud Woodward, Rob Weller, and 2002 President David Higginbotham.