

January 2026



# Women of Fisheries

## Reflecting on 2025: A letter from the Board to our Women of Fisheries Community



As we approach the end of another year, we enter a time of reflection. This has been a turbulent and uncertain time for fisheries professionals and the environmental field in general. Regardless, we are

continuing to do the work of conservation and are so glad you are part of our Women of Fisheries community working to connect, support, and amplify the experiences of women in fisheries science.

Read the [full letter](#) highlighting all we accomplished in 2025!

## Now Accepting Applications for the 2026 Women of Fisheries Gives Back! Award

With the help of extra funds available from the Fish Sisters Unite Campaign last year, we will be able to offer THREE \$250 awards this year to early career professionals.

Deadline for submissions: February 23, 2026

Winner announcement: March 2026

Submission: Only applications received using the [application form](#) will be accepted.

[Apply Today!](#)

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[www.womenoffisheries.org](http://www.womenoffisheries.org)



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Contact us anonymously using the [WoF Anonymous Communication Form](#)

## Research Highlight

### A Detour to Discovery: Fish Morphology in an Arkansas Stream



As a graduate student at Arkansas Tech University, Risa McCollough conducted nearly a year of fish sampling in Dare Creek in northwest Arkansas to assess movement upstream over a waterfall. Only problem was there was no movement, therefore no data and no study. Although disappointing at first, this would ultimately lead Risa down an exciting new path.

Read all about Risa's research journey [here](#).

## Introducing the Women of Fisheries Strategic Plan (2025-2030)

We are excited to announce that the Women of Fisheries Board has recently completed our first [5-year Strategic Plan](#). Over the past two years, we engaged in a collaborative process with numerous discussions to develop a framework that will guide our priorities and better support our members. Our primary goal is to ensure our activities closely align with our mission while we continue to grow and support the needs of our community.

We began with a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to reflect on where we excel, where we could improve, and what external factors may shape our future. Several recurring themes emerged that resonate with our purpose and values, including connection, support, empowerment, visibility, leadership, and financial sustainability.

As we evaluated the initiatives most meaningful to our members, we recognized that we cannot pursue every great idea simultaneously. Therefore, we focused on the efforts that align best with our mission and identified five priority areas that now form the backbone of our strategic plan: Governance, Leadership, Membership Support and Engagement, Visibility and Amplification, and Financial Sustainability.

The image shows the cover of the Women of Fisheries Strategic Plan for 2025-2030. The cover features a circular logo with a blue background, showing a silhouette of a person surrounded by fish. The text "WOMEN OF FISHERIES, INC." is at the top, followed by "STRATEGIC PLAN" and "2025-2030". Below the logo, the "MISSION" is defined as "To connect, support, and amplify the experiences of women in fisheries science." The "VISION" is "To provide a thriving, inclusive community where women in fisheries science are empowered to excel, connect with peers, and lead meaningful change. Women of Fisheries is committed to amplifying women's voices, celebrating their accomplishments, and supporting them at every career stage—ensuring that diverse perspectives contribute to the advancement of fisheries science." The "STRATEGIC PRIORITIES" are listed as: Governance (Maintain an effective governance structure that supports operations), Leadership (Cultivate a diverse and well-supported leadership team), Membership Support and Engagement (Provide a supportive and connected community for women in fisheries science), Visibility and Amplification (Elevate the voices and achievements of women in fisheries science), and Financial Sustainability (Ensure long-term financial health to support the organization and its initiatives). At the bottom, there is a QR code, the website "womenoffisheries.org", and the email "womenoffisheries@gmail.com".

## To our 2025 Sponsors: Thank you!



As we begin the new year, we reflect on the generosity and kindness of our members and allies. Because of your contributions of time, talent, and financial resources, Women of Fisheries is able to continue working towards its mission of connecting, supporting, and amplifying the experiences of women in fisheries science. In 2025, we were blessed to receive \$2,538 in donations. We extend our heartfelt thanks to each of you, especially our Lobster- and Squid-level sponsors.

If you or your group is interested in becoming a Women of Fisheries sponsor, information can be found on our [sponsorship page](#).

## 2025 Underwater Waters

### A monthly series of fun facts about aquatic organisms!

During a meeting of the Outreach Committee in the fall of 2024, as we were penciling out content ideas for 2025, one committee member mentioned seeing a “bird of the month” post from another organization. That simple observation sparked a conversation that quickly took on a life of its own—and spawned (pun intended) what would become our monthly Underwater Wonder feature.

What began as a tentative idea for a “fish of the month” soon evolved into something broader and more inclusive. We wanted to create space not just for finfish, but also for shellfish, invertebrates, marine mammals, aquatic vegetation, and the many other organisms that collectively, and appropriately, fall under the wide umbrella of “fisheries.” The underwater world is far richer and more diverse than any single category can capture, and our content should reflect that.

**July's Underwater Wonder**  
**Gray Snapper**  
(*Lutjanus griseus*)

Gray snapper spawn in summer in offshore waters around reefs, wrecks, and other structured habitats.



They are estuarine dependent reef fish that use a variety of habitats types through their life history, seagrasses and tidal rivers as juveniles, mangrove shorelines and deeper channels as sub-adults, offshore reef habitat as adults.

They leave estuaries at 2-3 years of age for coastal reefs.

Measuring a gray snapper in Florida Bay where they can be more abundant along mangrove shorelines than on nearby coral reefs.

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**May's Underwater Wonder**  
**Whiteleg Shrimp**  
(*Litopenaeus vannamei*)

Whiteleg shrimp is the most produced seafood species in the world and the most consumed seafood species in the U.S.!



The species adapts to varying salinity and temperature conditions, allowing it to succeed under diverse farming conditions.

Unlike some shrimp species, whiteleg shrimp are not hermaphrodites; they are gonochoristic, meaning individuals are either male or female throughout their lives.

The species' short production cycle, sometimes as little as 4 to 6 months, makes it an economically attractive option for aquaculture.

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**September's Underwater Wonder**  
**Sea Lamprey**  
(*Petromyzon marinus*)

Sea lamprey bring marine nutrients to freshwater habitats, and provide food for birds, mammals, and other fish.



Their nest building also creates ideal breeding grounds for other species to spawn, and improves the overall stream health.

Damming and pollution reduce or eliminate populations by eliminating accessible spawning habitat, similar to other diadromous species.

Photos courtesy of Dr. Mark Turner

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**That, ultimately, is what the Underwater Wonder series is all about: celebrating the diversity beneath the surface, and the people who care deeply about it.**

Check out all of the [2025 Underwater Wonders!](#)

## Fishing for Opportunities: January



### Graduate Opportunities

Position: [MS - Fisheries Ecology Rocky Reef MPAs](#)

Organization: Cal Poly Humboldt

Deadline: 02/03/26

Position: [PhD - Fisheries Human Dimensions and Governance](#)

Organization: University of Florida

Deadline: 02/15/26

Position: [PhD - Quantitative Fisheries](#)

Organization: University of Florida

Deadline: 03/15/26

### Job Opportunities

Position: [Fish & Wildlife Scientist II](#)

Organization: Vermont Fish & Wildlife Dept.

Deadline: 02/01/26

Position: [Nongame Fisheries Technician](#)

Organization: NC Wildlife Resources

Deadline: 02/08/26

Position: [Fisheries Resource Biologist](#)

Organization: ME Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

Deadline: 02/20/26

Position: [Port Sampler](#) (multiple positions)

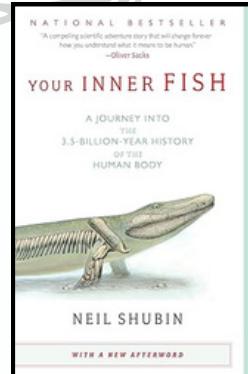
Organization: Oregon Fish & Wildlife

Deadline: 04/23/26

**Do you know someone who should be featured in a Fish Sister Profile or Research Highlight?**

Nominate them now! Self nominations are also encouraged

[Nominate Today!](#)



**Have you checked out the [WoF Book Club](#)?**

Join us as we read and discuss "Your Inner Fish"



### Help Support our Mission

Click the button below to make a quick one-time or monthly contribution to the Women of Fisheries, Inc. Funds will be used solely to fund our many initiatives for supporting women in fisheries. We are a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, so your contribution is tax deductible. Thank you!



Shop our webshop for all your Women of Fisheries merchandise! Proceeds from the sale of these items go to support our mission to provide opportunities and services for women in the fisheries profession.

[Donate!](#)



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