



# News Release

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**Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas) <http://fws.gov/southwest>**

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## **U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RECOGNIZES ARIZONA BIOLOGIST SCOTT RICHARDSON AS A 2016 RECOVERY CHAMPION**

### **- Career dedicated to Southwest wildlife conservation advances binational bat recovery -**

Behind every endangered species recovery success is a team of dedicated individuals, led by a visionary. The recovery of the lesser long-nosed bat, recently [proposed](#) for removal from the protections of the Endangered Species Act, is no exception and has such a proponent. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recognized Scott Richardson as a 2016 Recovery Champion for his years of dedication to science and for motivating and coalescing conservation efforts resulting in the bat's recovery. Richardson is a senior biologist at the Service's Arizona Ecological Services Office in Tucson.

For 15 years, Richardson, has worked with local and international partners, including grade schools, college students, citizens, universities, governmental and non-governmental organizations, ranchers, tribes, and the development community, to recover the lesser long-nosed bat. His efforts included training Mexican biologists to monitor the species in Mexico, implementing roost protection in Arizona and New Mexico, supporting graduate projects to investigate bat genetics and occupancy patterns, and working with Pima County to finalize a multi-species habitat conservation plan that protects forage plants for the bat.

Richardson is known locally for conceiving a citizen-scientist program to monitor lesser-long nosed bats at hummingbird feeders in the Tucson area. Under Richardson's direction, southern Arizona residents have monitored night-time bat use of hummingbird feeders for over a decade. He has trained citizen scientists ranging in ages from young children to retirees to conduct annual monitoring that has provided managers a clearer understanding of migration timing of the species.





Endangered lesser long-nosed bats are monitored at hummingbird feeders.

“Scott engages everyone equally and takes to heart that people can’t support science they don’t understand,” said Steve Spangle, Service Arizona Field Supervisor. “This and other leadership qualities, provided in his community and internationally, have proved effective at contributing to the recovery of the lesser long-nosed bat.”

Each year, the Service’s Endangered Species Program recognizes outstanding employees and partners through the Recovery Champions Awards. This annual award highlights the contributions of Service personnel and partner organizations for the recovery of endangered and threatened species. The Recovery Champion Award recognizes efforts that may prevent species’ extinction, conserve and restore habitat and resources critical to a species’ survival and recovery, scientific research, and public education and outreach.

Nominations were solicited from several Southwest Regional Programs including Ecological Services, Refuges, Fisheries and partner groups. Nominations were based on leadership competencies, length of time working on the issues, scope and significance of efforts, and measurable results.

America’s fish, wildlife and plant resources belong to all of us, and ensuring the health of imperiled species is a shared responsibility. The Service is working to actively engage conservation partners and the public in the search for improved and innovative ways to conserve and recover imperiled species.

*The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/>. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#) and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).*

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Note to editors: Photo support of Scott Richardson and lesser long-nosed bats is available by contacting [jeff\\_humphrey@fws.gov](mailto:jeff_humphrey@fws.gov) , 602-889-5946