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Northern California Author's Book Named "Best First Novel" Finalist for 2022

REDDING, Calif.—May 17, 2022—Award-winning author [Steven T. Callan](#)'s latest book, [The Case of the Missing Game Warden](#), has been selected as a "[Best First Novel](#)" award finalist in [The Next Generation Indie Book Awards](#) for 2022. [The Next Generation Indie Book Awards](#) is the largest international awards program for independent publishers and authors. Callan's book is published by Coffeetown Press of Seattle, an imprint of Epicenter Press.

Callan, who was raised in Orland and retired in Shasta County after thirty years as a wildlife protection officer for the California Department of Fish and Game, has received numerous awards for his writing. His first two books, both nonfiction and published by Coffeetown Press, earned [excellent reviews](#) and captured awards. His debut book, *Badges, Bears, and Eagles*, was a 2013 "Book of the Year" award finalist (*ForeWord Reviews*). His second book, *The Game Warden's Son*, was named "Best Outdoor Book of 2016" by the Outdoor Writers Association of California. Callan has also received the 2014, 2015, and 2016 "Best Outdoor Magazine Column" awards from the Outdoor Writers Association of California.

[The Case of the Missing Game Warden](#), Callan's third book and first novel, is garnering high praise from readers, who tell Callan they are eagerly awaiting the second novel in his Henry Glance series. Callan says, "My love of nature is what drives my writing. I include a conservation message in everything I write." He describes [The Case of the Missing Game Warden](#) as "a mystery, an adventure, a love story, a coming-of-age tale, and a celebration of nature." Callan says most of the action in his novel takes place in Northern California.

A book signing at [Redding's Fly Shop](#) will kick off the author's 2022 book tour; he'll be signing copies of his latest book there on Friday, May 27, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and will also have copies of his other books on hand. [Gridley Friends of the Library](#) will host the author for a presentation and book signing at the Gridley Public Library on Thursday, June 23, at 7:00 p.m. On Saturday and Sunday, July 16 and 17, the [Pacific Flyway Decoy Association](#) will host the author for a book signing during its annual Wildfowl Art Festival at the DoubleTree Motel in Sacramento.

Publisher's Synopsis of *The Case of the Missing Game Warden*

Veteran Northern California game warden Norman Bettis and his wife, Martha, lived an idyllic life in the small Sacramento Valley farm town of Gridley. On the morning of December 13, 1956, Norman kissed Martha on the forehead and drove off to work. He had no way of knowing he was destined to stumble into a rat's nest of commercial duck poachers and disappear—patrol car and all.

Three years later, a gifted eleven-year-old named Henry Glance confronts two goose poachers near the Southern California town of Temecula, preventing them from leaving before game warden Ned McCullough arrives. Impressed with the brave young man and his compassion for wildlife, McCullough suggests he become a game warden when he grows up. He also shares the story of Warden Bettis's strange disappearance.

McCullough's mournful tale leaves a lasting impression on Henry as he grows up, suffers disappointment, works his way through Chico State College, falls hopelessly in love, and eventually becomes a game warden himself. Unexpectedly, he's assigned to Warden Bettis's old patrol district.

While conducting a number of classic wildlife investigations and honing his skills, Glance remains obsessed with his predecessor's untimely demise. Unfazed by a mountain of obstacles and determined to succeed where so many others had failed, Henry sets out on an adventure-filled quest to find the missing game warden and solve the thirteen-year-old mystery of his disappearance.

**Complete bio and media kit, reviews, and news available at steventcallan.com.
Review copies of Steve's books available [upon request](#).**

PRAISE FOR STEVEN T. CALLAN

THE CASE OF THE MISSING GAME WARDEN

"Best First Novel" Award Finalist (Over 90,000 Pages)
— **Next Generation Indie Book Awards, 2022**

"A first-rate 'whodunit' . . . Written with great detail in forming the primary characters, the first book in this series is well worth your time and money. I am looking forward to the next book!"
—**International Game Warden Magazine**

"There is much nonfiction to be learned from this book, and it is grandly entertaining as well. . . . The book is a delight."
—**Ron Anderson, Sacramento Valley Mirror**

"Callan's story is a fascinating blend of detective work and chance encounters, and the kind of intuition needed to turn those encounters into actionable evidence."
—**Dan Barnett, Chico Enterprise-Record**

THE GAME WARDEN'S SON

"Best Outdoor Book of 2016" Award Winner
—**Outdoor Writers Association of California**

"A witty and enlightening memoir, *The Game Warden's Son* brims over with tales of stake-outs using disguises and subterfuge to trap transgressors. . . . The book's slang or jargon related to wildlife is a fun bonus and makes the timely account of environmental protection even more enjoyable."
—**Jane Manaster for the Manhattan Book Review ([Five-Star Review](#))**

"Callan's writing is dynamic and authoritative, with an episodic structure that will keep experts and novice readers turning the pages. The dialogue, sharp and resourceful, helps to move the story forward without bogging down the narrative structure."
—**Dan Good, NY Daily News**

"I am happy to report that I have read *The Game Warden's Son* and that I enjoyed it very much. *The Game Warden's Son* holds the reader's attention with interesting narration of a variety of hunting and fishing violations in the deserts, valleys, mountains, and coastal areas of California. It has lively character portrayal and good insight into human nature, especially the crass disregard that many people have toward wildlife. Even more, this book is a wonderful tribute to the legacy of a father, a son, and many other wildlife professionals dedicated to protecting all of California's natural resources."
—**John D. Nesbitt, award-winning author of *Field Work* and *Dark Prairie***

“Filled with true-life stories, they are all written in an exciting manner that puts you in the middle of the action. And action there is! Game wardens seldom have nearby backup, and they need to be resourceful and self-confident when enforcing game laws. After all, almost everyone they come in contact with is armed! Fascinating book, and a must-read.”

—**Bill Karr, *Western Outdoor News***

“An exciting series of easy-to-read and gripping detective stories . . . It was extremely hard to put down. Callan is a fine storyteller. Each chapter stands on its own and is a fun read.”

—**Frank Galusha, founder and former editor and publisher of *MyOutdoorBuddy.com***

“What a great book! *The Game Warden’s Son* not only captures the essence of the adventures of being a game warden, it sets the groundwork on how the passion to protect the wildlife resources can be inspired in a young person’s upbringing.”

—**Michael P. Carion, retired Deputy Director/Chief of the Law Enforcement Division of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

“*The Game Warden’s Son* is a stellar follow-up to Callan’s first book.”

—**Gerry Lister for *International Game Warden Magazine***

“These are stories of wardens’ dogged determination, long stakeouts and creative stings, all for the love of nature. As a tribute to Wally Callan, his son could do no better.”

—**Dan Barnett, *Chico Enterprise-Record***

BADGES, BEARS, AND EAGLES

“Book of the Year” Award Finalist for 2013

—***ForeWord Magazine***

“This engrossing memoir by debut author Callan lets readers in on highlights of his 30-year career as a California wildlife officer. With a healthy dose of bravado, he always gets his perps, though he credits his fellow officers, like long-time partner Dave Szody, and the roles they’ve played in cases brought against poachers and other law-breakers. He recalls stories from back into the 1970’s, his memory matched by a knack for pacing and recognition of how much information readers need to understand the dynamics of the cases. From beer-swilling poacher flunkies to “entrepreneurs” dealing in black bear gall bladder for use in Chinese medicine, Callan and his partner sent a lot of wild characters to jail. The vignettes are jaw-dropping, funny, tragic, enraging, exciting, and hopeful—sometimes all at once. An avid outdoorsman with respect for the land and its inhabitants, Callan shares some of the ecological and social history of each California region he’s worked; while those without knowledge of hunting will soon learn the intricacies of California’s byzantine regulations. Never wavering from his ideals, Callan demonstrates an enviable love of his life’s work and has plenty of adventure stories to share.”

—***Publishers Weekly***

“Exceptionally well written. . . . The writing style is almost flawless, and reading this gem is pure effortless joy. The variety of tales that are told keeps the book fresh throughout. . . .”

—**Gerry Lister, *International Game Warden magazine***

“A thrilling ride into the heart of bad guy country. Which is pretty much anywhere in the state, any place that people can abuse wildlife and habitats for a profit. . . . The author has reconstructed his and other cases from memory, interviews and court documents. The result is a series of suspenseful, well-written procedurals in which good triumphs, but not without a lot of foot work and tense dealings with well armed scofflaws. . . . It’s compelling reading about true public service.”

—**Dan Barnett, *Chico Enterprise Record***

“Steve Callan has written an honest and compelling memoir of his career as a warden for the California Department of Fish & Game. Game wardens usually work alone, rarely with back-up, and often must deal with men carrying loaded firearms. It’s not a calling for the faint at heart, but one requiring high intelligence, tact, and insight into human nature. Californians are fortunate to have wardens of Callan’s distinguished character protecting their wildlife.”

—**Boyd Gibbons, former Director of the California Department of Fish & Game, retired President of The Johnson Foundation and former U.S. Deputy Under Secretary of Interior**

“Callan is John Grisham for the Outdoorsman. Conservationists will applaud his sometimes ‘unique’ efforts to protect our natural resources from those who would abuse them. Whoever knew there was so much intrigue in Fish and Game cases?”

—**McGregor Scott, former Shasta County District Attorney and former United States Attorney-Sacramento**

“Callan’s chronicle of the life of a California Fish and Game warden stands out because in addition to the typical illegal hunting and fishing cases, he provides the reader with real life examples of wardens protecting wildlife habitat and conducting exhaustive undercover operations. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book.”

—**Donald Koch, retired Director of the California Department of Fish and Game**