

WELDER NOW MONTHLY WELDER WILDLIFE UPDATES

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4, APRIL 2025

WELDER FUN FACT >

HISTORY

"John J. Welder also pioneered silo building and established one of the first cotton mills in the state. His Victoria Manufacturing Company also built the first sanitary sewer, down the middle of Victoria's Main Street...and the first electric company, in 1905."

Empresarios' Children (Pg. 184. Par. 1)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES >

EDUCATION

- Wildflower Workshop (April 4)
- Beth Hudson Group (April 15th)
- Sinton ISD Aquatic Science Class (April 24, 29, 30)
- Birdiest Festival Birding Tour (April 25 & 26)
- State Wildlife Contest (FFA) (April 28)
- Austin Waldorf School (May 7-8)
- Sinton ISD 3rd Grade (May 13-14)

RESEARCH

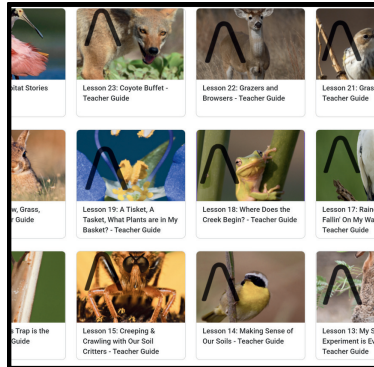
- MAPS training and events begin in May.

VOLUNTEER MAINTENANCE DAYS

- Wednesday, April 23, 2025

TOURS

- Volunteers are able to lead tours after completing tour training. Fill out an application today!



JUST COMPLETED

- 2024 Annual Report
- Uploading our Rangeland Curriculum to PocketLab with the Updated 2024 TEKS - Teacher Guide

PROJECTS >

IN PROGRESS

- Uploading our Rangeland Curriculum to PocketLab with the Updated 2024 TEKS - Student Sheets
- 2 more benches being added to the confluence in Hackberry Mott



OUR VOLUNTEERS >

Volunteer workdays play a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing our refuge. During our recent workday, we focused on reorganizing our garage to improve functionality and cleared out the area around our soil pit as well. Additionally, we constructed a dedicated fire pit near the dorms for our fellows to enjoy. In preparation for our upcoming wildflower workshops, we assembled over 20 plant presses, complete with identification papers, to provide attendees with valuable hands-on learning experiences. This day exemplified the power of teamwork and dedication in ensuring our facilities are well-maintained and our events are successful. We extend our sincere gratitude to our three exceptional volunteers for their hard work and commitment.

THANK YOU TO OUR MARCH VOLUNTEERS

Madison Garvin

Brittany Arredondo

Christopher Nieto

NUMBERS REACHED THIS MONTH >

EVENTS ATTENDED/HOSTED IN MARCH



- 03/06 - Mireles Elementary Science Spectacular
- 03/07 - City of Port Aransas Private Tour
- 03/07 - Ella Barnes Elementary S.T.E.A.M. Day
- 03/13-16 - Youth Sharpshooter Overnight Workshop
- 03/19 - Private Tour
- 03/ 25-26 Quail Forever (USFWS)
- 03/26 - Sinton Elementary Outreach



TOTAL NUMBERS REACHED IN MARCH

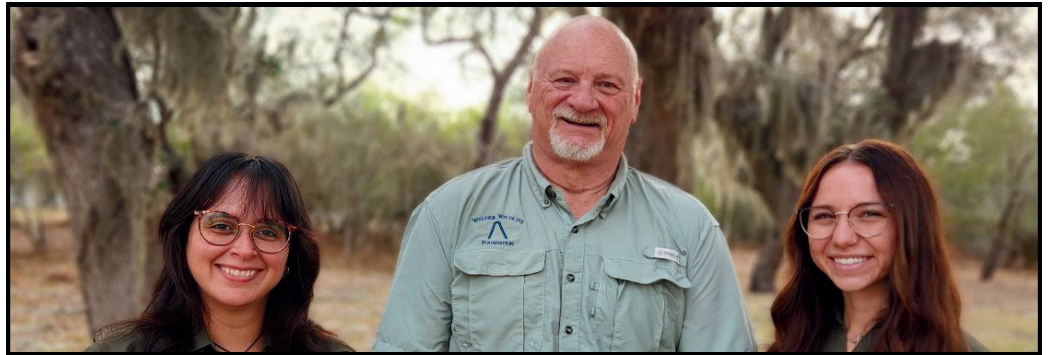
- At Outreach Events
 - 408
- At the Foundation
 - 53



UPCOMING PUBLIC EVENTS >

APRIL - JUNE

- April 4th
 - Adult Wildflower Workshop
- April 25th & 26th
 - Birdiest Festival Birding Tours through the Botanical Gardens
- June 25th
 - Youth Arthropod Day Camp



EDUCATION EVENTS >

A WORD FROM OUR EDUCATORS -

This month, our outreach events gave us the opportunity to connect with over 400 students across three different elementary schools. These events are incredibly important because they spark curiosity and inspire young minds to explore the world of wildlife. By using hands-on activities and real specimens, we help students experience nature up close. Feeling the texture of feathers, examining animal tracks, or studying plant adaptations makes learning memorable and exciting. It encourages students to ask questions and think about how animals and plants survive in their environments.

APRIL - MAY

- April 1st
 - Region III Wildlife Contest
- April 8th
 - Junior Master Naturalist
- April 11th
 - Kostoryz Elementary Science Spectacular
 - Kelberg County Earth Day
- April 15th
 - Beth Hudson Group
- April 25th
 - Sinton ISD Aquatic Class
- April 28th
 - State Wildlife Contest
- April 29-30th
 - Sinton ISD Aquatic Class
- May 3rd
 - Spring Fling - Lake Corpus Christi
- May 7-8th
 - Austin Waldorf School
- May 13 - 14th
 - Sinton ISD - 3rd
- May 16th
 - Kostoryz Elementary Science Spectacular



JOKE OF THE MONTH

Q: What do you call a bear with no teeth?

A: **A GUMMY BEAR**

HARVEY WEIL CONSERVATION AWARD DINNER >



RESEARCH : SPOTLIGHT ON A WELDER FELLOW >



MIRANDA R. PETERSON

Modeling Woody Plant Encroachment in a South Texas Grassland

Grasslands cover about 40% of the Earth's land and are vital for wildlife, livestock, carbon and water storage, plant genetic conservation, and other ecosystem services. Despite their importance, grasslands are the most threatened and least protected biome. For over a century, woody plant encroachment (WPE) has increasingly threatened grasslands worldwide, leading to significant impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Woody plant encroachment (WPE) has increasingly endangered grasslands for over a century, impacting biodiversity and ecosystem services. Factors driving WPE include fire suppression, overgrazing, elevated CO₂ levels, climate change, and altered hydrology. These factors often interact in complex ways to influence encroachment, and their relative importance remains debated. Simulation modeling is a valuable tool for understanding and addressing WPE, as it allows for the separation, identification, and exploration of influencing factors. Given the global threat of WPE in grassland ecosystems, our goal was to simulate potential future WPE dynamics on the WWR in response to different grazing and prescribed fire schemes under different projected climate change scenarios. To explore WPE dynamics on the WWR, we simulated various grazing and prescribed fire strategies under baseline and future climate scenarios, accounting for moderate and worst-case CO₂ emissions. Preliminary results show that heavy stocking rates and summer burns consistently reduce grass biomass. However, heavy stocking rates with winter burns decrease biomass only in current climates, while future climates maintain biomass. This model provides a tool to evaluate grassland management practices in the face of WPE.

Texas A&M University

Co-advisor: Hsiao-Hsuan 'Rose' Wang, Ph.D.

Co-advisor: William E. Grant, Ph.D.

UNOS CORNER >

Horned Lizards (*Phrynosoma cornutum*)



These lizards are masters of camouflage and have a very distinct and unique self-defense mechanisms. When these animals feel threatened, they will puff up their bodies, so they seem more intimidating to their predators. They will also start to shoot blood from their eyes to deter their potential predators.



WELDER CALENDAR >



OFFERED INSIDE

We are now featuring our NEW Rob and Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation Calendar. All images inside were taken on the Refuge by Bill and Sharon Draker. Contact us at aarredondo@welderwildlife.org to get ahold of our limited supply!



RON'S INSECT FACT >



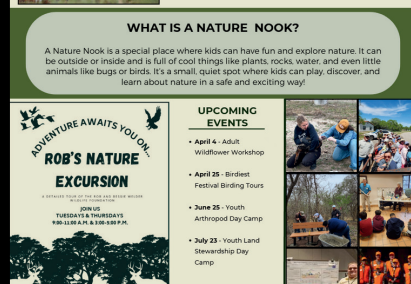
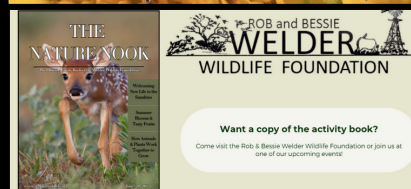
BLACK FIELD CRICKET

Every year, as late summer transitions into fall, crickets emerge in droves, filling the air with their distinctive sounds. These incredible insects come together to mate and lay their eggs before completing their life cycle in just 3 to 4 months. While they may not always be seen, their melodic chirps are a signature of this season, creating a symphony that marks the passage of time.



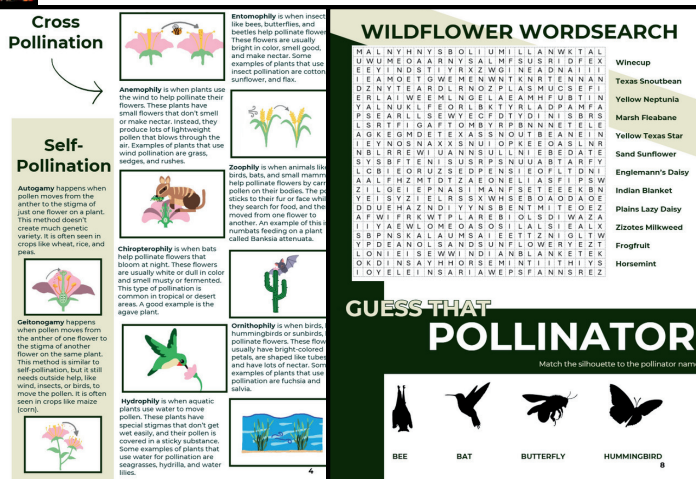
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LOOK AT OUR NEW ACTIVITY BOOK >



THE NATURE NOOK

Get ready for something exciting! Join us as we unveil the very first issue of our brand-new activity book! This spring edition is all about the fascinating world of pollination and the incredible pollinators found in South Texas and beyond. Inside, you'll discover fun and engaging activities that make learning about nature a blast! Want to find out about our upcoming public events? Be sure to check out the back cover for all the details. This book is a must-have for South Texas kids to explore and learn about the amazing nature right in their own backyard! We will be passing these out at different events held at the refuge as well as outreach events!



CONTACT INFORMATION >

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