

WELDER NOW MONTHLY WELDER WILDLIFE UPDATES

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 7, JULY 2025

WELDER FUN FACT >

HISTORY



"This was the type of LeMat revolver hanging on John Welder's saddle horn when he was ambushed on the road to St. Mary's. He never had a chance to use it. The skeletonized model was found in the bank of the Aransas River. The other is rumored to have belonged to Welder. These antiques are on display at the Welder Wildlife Refuge Museum."

-Empressarios' Children The Welders of
Texas
pg. 143

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES >

EDUCATION

- Youth Land Stewardship Camp
(July 30th)

RESEARCH

- MAPS training and events begin
in May.

VOLUNTEER MAINTENANCE DAYS

- Wednesday, July 16, 2025

TOURS

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



Welder Team taking a National Archery in Schools Program (NASP) training to become Basic Archery Instructors

PROJECTS >

UPCOMING

- Land Stewardship
Camp
- August 6th H-E-B
Film Screening at
the Refuge

IN PROGRESS

- Herb Garden Implementation
- Pocket Lab Final Review
- Painting Exterior of all
Headquarter Buildings
- Updating Rotunda

JUST COMPLETED

- Administration Building
Outside Repairs
- Student Worksheets for
Pocketlab
- Arthropod Day Camp



OUR VOLUNTEERS >

“

"If all insects disappeared, all life on earth would perish. If all humans disappeared, all life on earth would flourish."

-Jonas Salk

”

THANK YOU TO OUR JUNE VOLUNTEERS

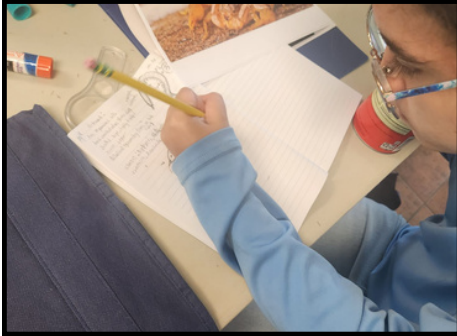
Scandra Musalem

Brittany Arredondo

Serenity Arredondo

NUMBERS REACHED THIS MONTH >

EVENTS ATTENDED/HOSTED IN JUNE



- June 3rd
 - Jurassic Jungle- Kleberg County
- June 11th
 - Under the Sea - Kleberg County
- June 12th
 - Sinton High School Bridge Up Program
- June 17th
 - Joe Barnhart Bee County Library
- June 19th
 - Victoria YMCA Tour
- June 20th
 - Cub Scout Pk 104
- June 21st
 - Gulf Hope in Action Youth Summit
- June 25th
 - Arthropod Youth Day Camp
- June 26th
 - Victoria YMCA Tour



TOTAL NUMBERS REACHED IN JUNE

- At Outreach Events
 - 229 people
- At the Foundation
 - 85 people

LAND STEWARDSHIP CAMP

GRADES 9-12

WELDER WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

JULY 30, 2025

COST: \$30 PER PERSON

Materials and lunch provided

Only 15 spots available, so register today!

ACTIVITIES:

- Refuge Tour
- Introduction to survey methods used by wildlife biologists.
- Hands on demonstrations of land management tools used today!

To apply, visit: www.welderwildlife.org Deadline to apply: July 23, 2025

UPCOMING PUBLIC EVENTS >

JULY - AUGUST

- July 23rd
 - Youth Land Stewardship Day Camp
- August 6th
 - H-E-B Film Screening on the Refuge (more details to follow)

H-E-B presents

an

Our Texas, Our Future

film series

Watch now

A five-part original docuseries celebrating Texas' beautiful State Parks, resilient wildlife, and the Texans helping conserve & protect them.



EDUCATION EVENTS >

A WORD FROM OUR EDUCATORS -

Our education team successfully delivered an engaging and memorable Arthropod Day Camp. Participants enjoyed a guided tour of the refuge and museum, followed by an introduction to the diverse world of spiders, their anatomy, and proper observation techniques. They applied this knowledge through creative activities such as drawing chalk spiders and playing educational games centered on insect concepts. Finally, the group ventured into the field to practice spider catching, identification, and observation. Both students and staff had an outstanding experience learning and exploring together on the refuge.

JULY - SEPTEMBER

- July 21-26
 - Wildlife Conservation Camp
- July 30th
 - Youth Day Camp - Land Stewardship

SINTON HIGH SCHOOL BRIDGE UP PROGRAM >



JURASSIC JUNGLE - KLEBURG COUNTY >



UNDER THE SEA > KLEBURG COUNTY >



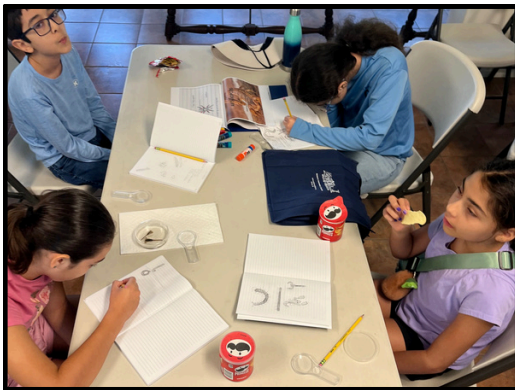
JOE BARNHART BEE COUNTY LIBRARY >

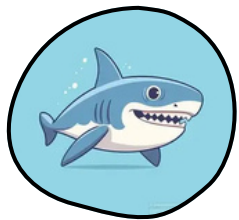


VICTORIA YMCA >



WELDER ARTHROPOD CAMP >





JOKE OF THE MONTH

Q: Why do sharks live in saltwater?

A: **Because pepper makes them sneeze!**

CUB SCOUT PK 104



RESEARCH : SPOTLIGHT ON A WELDER FELLOW >



AMARIS SHAMMAA, M.SC

Habitat Associations, Resource Partitioning, and Community Structure of Owls

As a taxonomic group, owls are some of the poorest understood avian species in North America due to their nocturnal behavior. Far less is understood for multi-species owl community structure in terms of species overlap, exclusion, or resource partitioning. My study objectives are to determine owl species-specific densities, assess nesting habitat associations, spatial distributions, and extent of overlap of owl species on the Welder Wildlife Refuge. Additionally, I will determine nesting success and compare prey use among species. I will use call playback methods to locate areas occupied by owls, then use ground searches for nest location, and subsequent productivity monitoring, nesting habitat assessments, and extent of overlap of owl species. Regurgitated pellet dissections will facilitate understanding prey use and partitioning among species. By systematically collecting these data, a clearer understanding of the owl community structure and roles within the local ecosystem can be obtained and used to assess regional population trends, and questions of fluctuations in distribution or phenology associated with a changing climate.

Texas Tech University

Major Advisor: Clint W. Boal, Ph.D.

UNO'S CORNER >

COTTONMOUTH SNAKE



The cottonmouth (or water moccasin), *Agkistrodon piscivorus*, is a venomous, semi-aquatic pit viper native to the southeastern United States, often seen floating on the water's surface with much of its body visible. When threatened, it delivers a dramatic defensive display:

coiling and gaping wide to show the stark white lining of its mouth—a striking behavior that earned it the name "cottonmouth". Despite its formidable appearance and potent cytotoxic venom used to immobilize prey. These snakes tend to avoid humans, preferring escape or bluffing over biting unless provoked. Young cottonmouths are particularly fascinating—they have bright yellow or greenish tail tips that they wiggle to lure in unsuspecting frogs, lizards, or small fish before striking.



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 >



TEXAS BROWN TARANTULA

The Texas brown tarantula (*Aphonopelma hentzi*) is a large, hairy spider native to Texas, with a dark brown body and a leg span of 4 to 6 inches. Females can live up to 30 years, while males typically survive 5 to 10 years, and they can weigh as much as 85 grams (about 3 ounces). These nocturnal predators feed on insects and small animals, using silk-lined burrows to sense vibrations from nearby prey. Although they look intimidating, they are generally shy and pose little danger to humans.



LOOK AT OUR NEW ACTIVITY BOOK >



Welder Tales

Chapter 1: Felipe Roque de la Portilla

Felipe Roque de la Portilla (1766-1841), a Spanish colonizer and military officer, de la Portilla played a key role in early Texas settlement efforts and has enduring ties to both family legacy and conservation through the Welder Wildlife Foundation. After immigrating from Spain and marrying Maria Ignacia de la Garza Montemayor in 1799, with whom he had eight children, de la Portilla led a group of settlers to Texas in 1807 at the request of the Spanish government, establishing the short-lived San Marcos de Neve colony. Despite challenges including flooding, indigenous people raids, and lack of government support, he persisted in supporting his settlers and later moved to Matamoros, where he held several civil and military positions. Eventually, he joined his son-in-law, James Power, in settling a refuge in present-day San Antonio County. Portilla's descendants, through the Patrick Hughes Welder and Robert Hughes Welder families, continue to steward his legacy by managing a ranch on his original land grant, which now includes the Rob and Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation and Redgate—a significant center for conservation and wildlife research, rooted in the land first settled by their ancestor.



Felipe Roque de la Portilla (1766-1841)



Only traces of broken pottery remain of a town established to protect the frontier but unable to defend itself.

This image of the San Marcos River was the site of San Marcos de Neve. After the colony was established, the river grew larger and carried away buildings and lands. This weakened the colony's position.

The settlement was moved to the hilltop, safe from the floods, but more exposed to attack from the Comanche Indians.

www.welderwildlife.org

How Animals & Plants Work Together to Grow

What is Mutualism?

Mutualism is a type of relationship in nature where two or more different species help each other and both benefit. It's a kind of partnership, which means being close together, where each one gets something useful from the partnership.

The different kinds of mutualism:

Deceptive mutualism: is when two species completely depend on each other to survive. In South Texas, the scarlet devil plant and the scarlet devil beetle are a great example. The beetle pollinates the plant while laying eggs in its flowers. The scarlet devil plant has been around for millions of years. Without the beetle, the plant can't make seeds, and without the plant, the beetle can't reproduce. They rely on each other to live.

Facilitative mutualism: is when two species help each other but aren't completely dependent on each other to survive. In South Texas, the Texas bluegrass and the Texas bluegrass beetle are a great example. The beetle eats the grass and the grass provides shelter for the beetle. The beetle's waste helps the grass grow, and the grass provides shelter for the beetle. They rely on each other to live.

Defensive mutualism: is when one species protects another from predators or parasites. A great example is the relationship between the Texas bluegrass and the Texas bluegrass beetle. The beetle eats the grass and the grass provides shelter for the beetle. The beetle's waste helps the grass grow, and the grass provides shelter for the beetle. They rely on each other to live.

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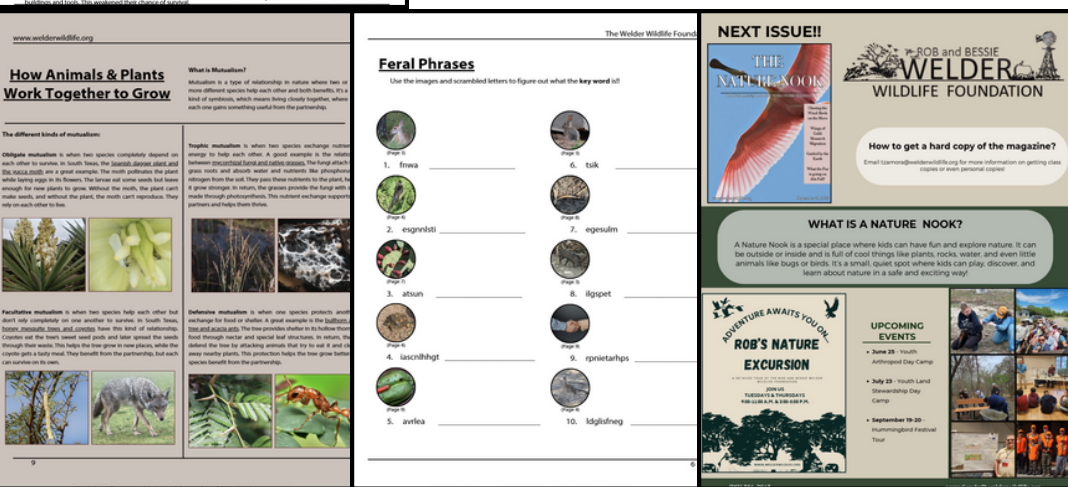
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THE NATURE NOOK

This summer, the Welder Wildlife Foundation proudly presents our activity book themed "Welcoming New Life" focusing on the wonders of reproduction and the emergence of new life during the summer season. Dive into engaging lessons on plants, animals, and mutualism, complemented by interactive activities designed to inspire young minds. Explore the inaugural chapter of "The Welder Tales," highlighting one of the first men who laid the foundation for the Welder legacy and the location for the Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation. Don't miss the sneak peek of our upcoming fall issue on the back cover, offering a glimpse into the exciting content ahead. For inquiries or to obtain your copy of this enriching activity book, please contact tzamora@welderwildlife.org.



CONTACT INFORMATION >

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