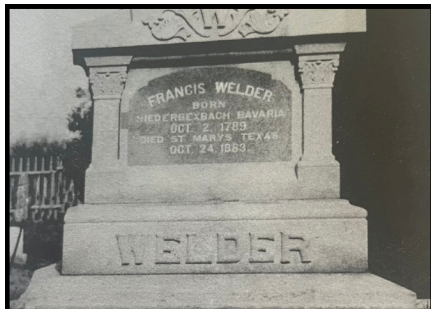


WELDER NOW MONTHLY WELDER WILDLIFE UPDATES

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 6, JUNE 2025

WELDER FUN FACT >

HISTORY



"The gravestone of the Welder patriarch at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Refugio, Texas. Despite the terrible hardships of his life, he set a family record for longevity at ninety-four years. Although his Americanized name is found in legal papers and written in stone, he never signed his name 'Francis' or 'Welder.' His was Franz Welter."

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Empresarios' Children The Welders of Texas

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES >

EDUCATION

- Victoria YMCA Tour (June 19th)
- Youth Arthropods Day Camp (June 25)
- Victoria YMCA Tour (June 26)
- Youth Land Stewardship Camp (July 23rd)

RESEARCH

- MAPS training and events begin in May.

VOLUNTEER MAINTENANCE DAYS

- Tuesday, June 24, 2025
- Wednesday, July 16, 2025

TOURS

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



Welder Team prescribed burn class led by Land Stewardship Manager Ty Higginbotham

PROJECTS >

UPCOMING

- Summer Camps
- Museum Exhibit Update
- Brush Work on Refuge
- Water Trough Replacements

IN PROGRESS

- Administration Building Outside Repairs
- Herb Garden Implementation
- Student Worksheets for PocketLab

JUST COMPLETED

- Residents 2
- All Burn Equipment Has Arrived



OUR VOLUNTEERS >

We are deeply grateful to our dedicated volunteers who played a crucial role in supporting four successful field days this month, ensuring smooth operations and engaging educational activities throughout our rotations. Their efforts also enabled us to clear two of our trails, providing clearer access and wider walking spaces for our groups. The impact of their contributions is immeasurable, and we recognize that such achievements would not have been possible without their commitment. Thank you to all our volunteers for your invaluable support this month.

THANK YOU TO OUR MAY VOLUNTEERS

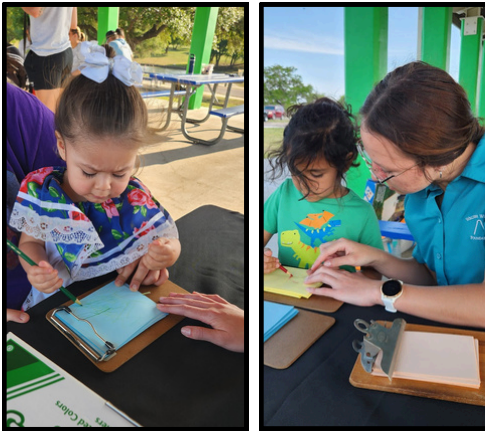
Greg Simmons
Sally Scroggs
Reuban Saage

Madison Garvin
Philip Woods

Brittany Arredondo
Jacob Copeland

NUMBERS REACHED THIS MONTH >

EVENTS ATTENDED/HOSTED IN MAY



- May 3rd
 - Mid Coast Master Naturalist Training
- May 3rd
 - Spring Fling Lake Corpus Christi
- May 6th
 - Gregory Portland ISD 5th Grade Field Day
- May 7th-8th
 - Austin Waldorf 7th Grade Overnight Trip
- May 9th
 - Goliad ISD 5th Grade Field Day
- May 13th-14th
 - Sinton ISD 3rd Grade Field Day
- May 16th
 - Kostoryz Elementary STEAM Day 3rd - 5th Grade
- May 20th
 - Volunteer Opportunity Showcase with the South Texas Master Naturalist
- May 30th
 - Farmington High School

TOTAL NUMBERS REACHED IN MAY

- At Outreach Events
 - 270 people
- At the Foundation
 - 367 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:

EXPLORE THE WORLD OF ARTHROPODS

JUNE 25, 2025
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
AGES 8-13
\$30/ PARTICIPANT
APPLICATIONS DUE: JUNE 19, 2025

- WHAT ARE ARTHROPODS**
We will explore the different types of Arthropods and their characteristics by looking at examples.
- TYPES OF SPIDERS**
Learn the behaviors and web types during activities. Discover where to find them during a field trip to collect spiders.
- COLLECTING AND IDENTIFICATION**
Methods for collection and

UPCOMING PUBLIC EVENTS >

MAY - JULY

- June 25th
 - Youth Arthropod Day Camp
- July 23rd
 - Youth Land Stewardship Day Camp



EDUCATION EVENTS >

A WORD FROM OUR EDUCATORS -

Get ready for an unforgettable adventure with our amazing educator, Mr. Ron Shulze, at Arthropods Camp this summer! Explore the wild and wonderful world of South Texas' native arthropods—creepy, crawly, and totally cool creatures like insects, spiders, scorpions, and even millipedes. You'll learn what makes arthropods so special, from their hard exoskeletons to how they grow and survive in our unique environment. Use real tools to go on collecting missions, then investigate your finds under microscopes like a real scientist! Plus, dive deep into the secret lives of arachnids—discover how local spiders build webs, how scorpions hunt at night, and how these tiny animals play a big role in nature. Science has never been this exciting!

JUNE - AUGUST

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 11th <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Women in the Wild Presentation (Angie) • June 17th <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Outreach at the Jone Barnhart Bee County Library • June 19th <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Victoria YMCA Tour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 25th <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Youth Day Camp - Arthropods • June 26th <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Victoria YMCA Tour • July 23rd <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Youth Day Camp - Land Stewardship |
|---|---|

GP ISD 5TH GRADE FIELD DAY >



AUSTIN WALDORF CAMPING TRIP >



GOLIAD ISD 5TH GRADE FIELD DAY >



FARMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL >



SINTON 3RD GRADE FIELD DAY >



MID-COAST MASTER NATURALIST >





JOKE OF THE MONTH

Q: What's a deer's go-to ice cream flavor?

A: **Cookie-Doe**

SUMMER INTERNS!!



EMMALEE BLACH

STEWARD Intern



JAY LE

Conservation Intern

RESEARCH : SPOTLIGHT ON A WELDER FELLOW >



**DAWN R. HOUSTON,
PH.D.**

Analysis of Upland and Riparian Habitats as Stopover Sites for Migratory Songbirds in Central Texas

Migration may be the most perilous period for migratory birds and has profound effects on breeding success and survivorship. High-quality stopover sites, with abundant food resources, allow for rapid refueling of energy stores enabling a songbird to continue the next portion of its journey. Riparian areas are recognized as important stopover habitats,

particularly in the desert Southwest, whereas upland habitats provide adequate stopover sites in other areas, such as the Midwest. Central Texas lies squarely in the Central Flyway, yet no research to date has investigated stopover habitat in this region.

I propose to assess the relative stopover habitat quality of riparian and upland habitats by comparing refueling performance, physiological condition, and chronic stress of migratory songbirds. I will also compare fine-scale habitat characteristics using remote sensing methods between habitat types in regard to migratory songbird abundance. Finally, I will evaluate arthropod abundance to identify which habitat type may be more useful as a resource to migrating songbirds. My goal is to acquire knowledge of stopover habitat ecology in Central Texas to identify priority habitat for migratory bird conservation.

Texas State University

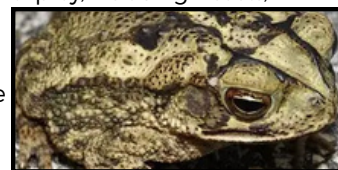
Major Advisor: Joseph A. Veech, Ph.D

UNO'S CORNER >

GULF COAST TOAD



The **Gulf Coast Toad** (*Incilius nebulifer*) is a medium-sized amphibian native to Texas and other Gulf Coast states, thriving in diverse habitats such as coastal marshes, grasslands, forests, and suburban areas. Recognizable by its dark brown to gray back adorned with a light-colored stripe and small bumps, it also features a cream-colored underside. As an opportunistic carnivore, this toad consumes a wide range of prey, including insects, spiders, worms, and even small vertebrates like other frogs and lizards, playing a crucial role in controlling insect populations. Notably, when threatened, it can secrete toxins from glands behind its eyes and inflate its body to appear larger, serving as effective defense mechanisms against 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 >

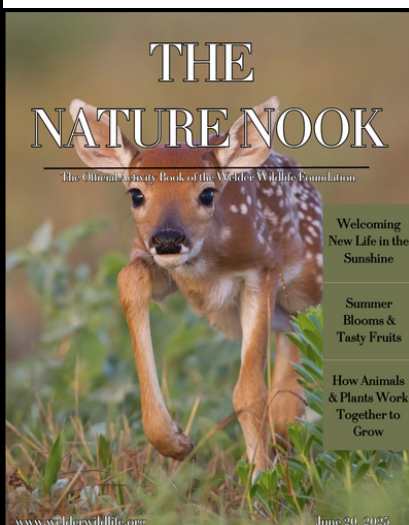


GREEN SCARAB BEETLE

The **green scarab beetle** (*Cotinis nitida*) is a shiny, emerald-colored insect that buzzes loudly as it flies during the summer months. Found in gardens and fields across the eastern United States, including Texas, these beetles feed on ripe fruits like peaches and grapes. Their larvae, called grubs, live underground and help break down decaying plants, which enriches the soil. While they might seem a bit clumsy in flight, green scarab beetles play an important role in nature by recycling nutrients and supporting healthy ecosystems.



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 Nueva 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 civic and military positions. Eventually, he joined his son-in-law, James Power, in settling Refugio in present-day San Patricio 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 Refugio—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 Nueva. After the colony was established, the river grew larger and carried away buildings and lands. This weakened their chance of survival.



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

www.welderwildlife.org

How Animals & Plants Work Together to Grow

The different kinds of mutualism:

Obligate mutualism is when two species completely depend on each other to survive. In South Texas, the Spanish dagger plant and the *Asclepias tuberosa* are a great example. The moth pollinates the plant while laying eggs in its flowers. The larvae eat caterpillars but feed enough for new plants to grow. Without the moths, the plant can't make seeds, and without the plant, the moths can't reproduce. They rely on each other to live.



Facultative mutualism is when two species help each other but aren't completely dependent on each other to survive. In South Texas, *Asclepias tuberosa*, *Asclepias speciosa*, and *Asclepias syriaca* have this kind of relationship. Caterpillars eat the leaves and roots and use special enzymes through their waste. This helps the tree grow in new places, while the caterpillars gain a body mass. They benefit from the partnership, but each can survive on its own.



Trophic mutualism is when two species exchange nutrient energy to help each other. A good example is the relationship between mycorrhizal fungi and plant roots. The fungi absorb water and nutrients from the soil and pass them to the plant. In return, the plant provides the fungi with sugars through photosynthesis. This nutrient exchange supports both partners and helps them thrive.



Defensive mutualism is when one species protects another for food or shelter. A good example is the relationship between acacia trees and ants. The tree provides shelter in its hollow thorns and food through nectar and special food structures, in return, the ants defend the tree by attacking animals that try to eat it and by using waste to plant. This protection helps the tree grow better, and the ants benefit from the partnership.



Feral Phrases

Use the images and scrambled letters to figure out what the key word is!



CONTACT INFORMATION >

- Office Phone: (361) 364-2643
- Email: aarredondo@welderwildlife.org
- Website: www.welderwildlife.org
- Physical Address: P.O. Box 1400 Sinton, TX 78387

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.

