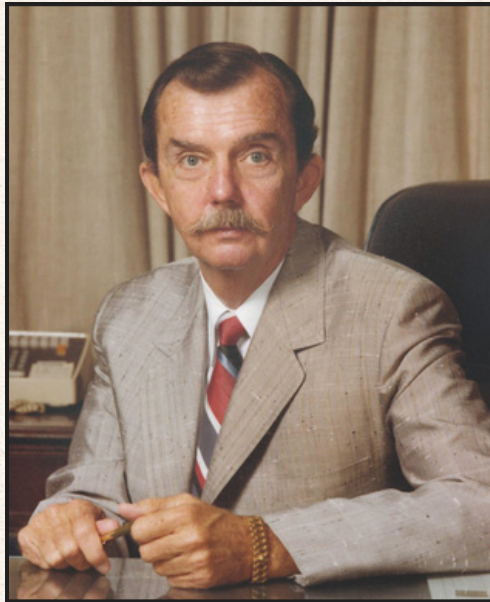


WELDER NOW

VOL. 2, ISSUE 2



| History

Patrick Welder

Patrick Hughes Welder Jr, nephew of Robert H. Welder, was one of the original trustees of the Rob and Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation. Following the passing of Rob Welder, he played an integral role in the Foundation's formation, contributing to the development of its policies and helping to establish the framework that continues to support the mission and stewardship of this remarkable place.

| Ty Higginbotham

Soil to Sky

Water Troughs

- This January, the Land Stewardship Team has been busy with new infrastructure projects on the refuge. By the time this newsletter comes out, we will have finished getting 7 new water troughs installed in 7 different pastures. Our current troughs have decayed over the 70 plus years they have been on the landscape and are a third of the size of our new troughs. Once we finish running new water lines, we will be able to start incorporating our new prescribed grazing strategy.

List of Volunteers - January

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to make the Youth Hunt successful this year.

- Amber Brown
- John Fallia
- Albert Flores
- Brock Minton
- Taylor Abshier
- Shelby Bessette
- Duston Duffie
- Emmalee Balch
- Brittany Arredondo
- Philip Woods



Events Attended/Hosted

Who have we reached this month?

- January 5-9
 - Conrad Blucher Institute of Surveying and Science Field School
- January 16-18
 - Annual Youth Hunt
- January 21
 - Project WILD Facilitator Training
- January 30
 - City of Port Aransas Tour

At Outreach Events

- 76 people

At the Foundation

- 85 people



CITY OF PORT ARANSAS TOUR

Current Projects

- Prescribe Burn at Venado Sandhill & Venado Wetland
- Installation of 7 new water troughs throughout the Refuge
- Updated Land Stewardship Page on the website.

Volunteer Opportunities



Education: Help us with field days and outreach events!



Workday: Refuge Maintenance
– Feb. 9
– Mar. 11



Collections: Herpetology
– Organizing and preserving specimen collection.

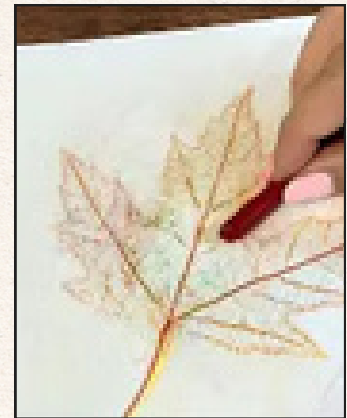
*** Join our Volunteer Team!**

Education Team

Monthly Outdoor Family Activity

LEAF RUBBING

- Collect several leaves of different shapes and sizes.
- Position a leaf vein side up on a flat surface.
- Cover the leaf with plain paper.
- Rub a crayon on its side gently over the paper.
- Continue until you see that you have covered the entire leaf.
- Try using multiple colors or multiple leaves.
- Enjoy!



WELDER INSECT FACT - FIRE ANT

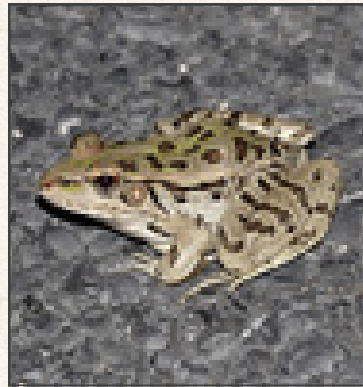
– Fire ants are not native to Texas, but they have spread widely since arriving from South America in the early 1900s. They are famous for building dome-shaped mounds, floating together in rafts during floods, and delivering painful stings that feel like fire. Despite being small, fire ants are incredibly strong and have a big impact on Texas ecosystems and wildlife.



Reptile Facts

Uno's Corner - Rio Grande Leopard Frog


The Rio Grande Leopard Frog is one of the most common frogs in Texas and is known for its loud, snore-like calls heard near ponds and streams. Its spotted green and brown skin helps it blend into grasses and wetlands, protecting it from predators. Unlike many frogs, it can be active year-round in warmer parts of Texas.



Joke of the Month

Q: Why don't bears wear shoes?

A: Because they already have bear feet!



Check out our Handouts

2026 Calendar



2025 Activity Books



Explore nature all year with our fun seasonal activity books! Each Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter issue highlights the amazing wildlife and plant life happening right outside your door—from spring pollinators and summer baby animals to fall migrations and winter survival strategies. Every book also includes a special history page about the Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation. These activity books make learning about conservation and local wildlife exciting for kids—and even grown-ups!

Research



Spotlight on a past Welder Fellow

Evonne Schroeder, M.S.

AVIAN DIVERSITY, PRODUCTIVITY, SURVIVAL, AND ECOLOGY IN THE TEXAS COASTAL BEND.

This study examined bird populations and ecology at the Welder Wildlife Refuge in coastal Texas to better understand patterns of species diversity, population trends, and factors influencing avian conservation. Using mist-netting, point counts, and long-term monitoring from 2007–2009, birds were surveyed in two habitat types—shrubland and riparian forest—to compare species richness, productivity, and survival. Overall, shrubland consistently supported higher species richness, capture rates, and numbers of young birds, although differences in productivity and adult survival between habitats were not statistically significant. Results highlight the value of combining survey methods, as vegetation type influenced which species were detected or captured. In addition to community-level patterns, the study also explored ecological interactions by comparing nestling diets of two woodpecker species, finding low dietary overlap that likely reduces competition and allows coexistence. Together, these findings emphasize both the challenges of monitoring declining bird populations and the importance of habitat diversity, intensive sampling effort, and species-specific ecology in understanding and conserving avian communities.

Project WILD Facilitator Training



Annual Youth Hunt



Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science Field School



CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Phone: (361) 364-2643

Email: tzamora@welderwildlife.org

Website: www.welderwildlife.org