

WELDER NOW

VOL. 2, ISSUE 4



History

The Little Red House

The Little Red House was among the first structures established when the Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation was created. The building originally served as a meeting space for the Foundation's early trustees, a place where ideas were shaped, and the organization's groundwork took form. The building reflected the Foundation's early beginnings and the vision that shaped its beginnings. Over time, however, continued exposure to the elements took a visible toll, and what once stood as a modest structure now remains most clearly in memory as an early symbol of growth and possibility.



List of Volunteers - March

Thank you to our volunteers for supporting our team every step of the way as we take on new projects and welcome new groups, helping our foundation grow as a whole.

— Brittany Arredondo

— Phil Woods



Farewell-Angie Arredondo

Angie has played a vital role in our education program since joining the foundation as an intern in 2014 and later becoming the Manager of Education, Outreach, and Curation. Over the past 12 years, she has dedicated countless hours to growing both our programs and our team.

Her impact on our naturalists, staff, and community has been profound. Angie has helped shape the experiences and careers of many, leaving behind a strong and lasting foundation for future growth.

From leading birding tours and educational programs to organizing field trips, overnight experiences, camps, and youth hunts, her passion for education and the outdoors has touched countless lives.

Angie's influence will continue far beyond her time with us, and we are confident she will bring the same energy and dedication to her next role. She will be deeply missed, and we wish her all the best in her next adventure.



Events Attended/Hosted

Who have we reached this month?

- March 5th
 - Mireles Elementary Science Spectacular
- March 7th
 - Mid-Coast Master Naturalist Training
- March 18th - 22nd
 - Delta Waterfowl Annual Meeting

At Outreach Events

- 330 people

At the Foundation

- 79 people

- March 25th
 - Sinton ISD Aquatic Class
- March 27th
 - Ella Barnes Elementary Science Spectacular
 - Trinity Towers Senior Living Private Tour



PUBLIC TOURS

Meet Sarah

Sarah is a Conservation Educator for the Welder Wildlife Foundation and earned a B.S. in Natural Resources Management from Texas Tech University in 2018. She began as a Conservation Educator intern at the Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation (2019–2022) and later worked as an Education Specialist at the Bay Education Center of the University of Texas Marine Science Institute.



She is excited to return to terrestrial education and promote conservation of natural resources for future generations.

Volunteer Opportunities



Education:

- Rockport Junior Master Naturalist (4/8)
- Sinton Aquatic Class (4/23)
- Welder Elementary Field Day (4/24)
- H.O.S.T. Field Trip (4/29)



Workday: Refuge Maintenance



Collections: Herpetology

- Organizing and preserving specimen collection.

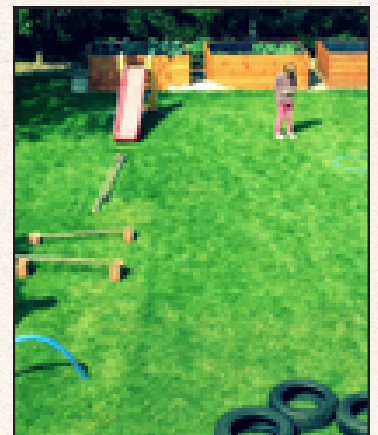
* Join our Volunteer Team!

Education Team

Monthly Outdoor Family Activity

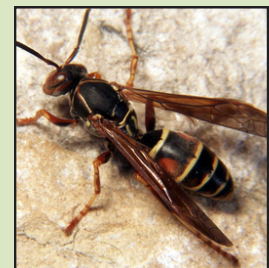
OBSTACLE COURSE

- Using materials you can find around your home, create an outdoor obstacle course to challenge the whole family.
- You may use items such as mini cones, hula hoops, slides, pool noodles, objects to jump over, chalk, and more.
- Here are a few example challenges to include in your obstacle course:
 - Balance beam
 - Weave through obstacles
 - Hopscotch
 - Jump rope
 - Slide down a path using paper plates on your feet
 - Hit a baseball
- Feel free to get creative and add your own challenges!



WELDER INSECT FACT - PAPER WASP

The Paper Wasp is a common insect known for building small, umbrella-shaped nests made from chewed wood fibers that look like paper. These wasps are usually found in warm areas, including parts of South Texas, where they often build nests under eaves, branches, or porch ceilings. Paper wasps help the environment by controlling pest insects, which they hunt and feed to their larvae. Although they can sting if disturbed, they are generally not aggressive unless their nest is threatened.



Reptile Facts

Uno's Corner - Eastern Hog-nosed Snake

The Eastern Hog-Nosed Snake is a unique snake known for its upturned, pig-like snout, which it uses to dig through soil in search of food. It is famous for its dramatic defense behavior—when threatened, it may hiss, flatten its neck like a cobra, or even play dead to scare away predators. This snake mainly eats toads and frogs and is

commonly found in sandy habitats across the southeastern United States, including areas of South Texas. Despite its dramatic behavior, the Eastern Hog-Nosed Snake is harmless to humans and helpful to the ecosystem.

*Joke of the Month*

Q: What do you call a lazy kangaroo?

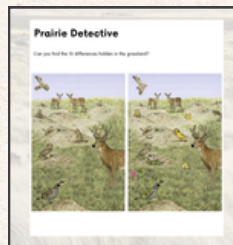
A: A pouch potato!

Check out our Handouts

2026 Calendar



2026 Spring Activity Book



This series of Nature Nook activity books explores the diverse habitats found on the Welder Wildlife Refuge. We are beginning the year with a brand-new issue focused on grasslands, highlighting their ecological importance, history in Texas, and the plants and animals that depend on them. This edition also features two engaging activities and a Welder Tales spotlight on the original land grant of the Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation.

Research



Spotlight on a Welder Fellow

Michael Stewart, Ph.D

HABITAT USE, POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS, AND MIGRATION ECOLOGY OF GRAY HAWKS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN UNITED STATES

The Gray Hawk is a neotropical raptor with poorly studied populations in the southwestern United States, where habitat loss, urbanization, and other anthropogenic pressures pose increasing conservation challenges. In Texas, Gray Hawks occur year-round in South Texas and seasonally in portions of West Texas, with this study focusing on populations in the highly modified landscapes of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, where habitat use, population trends, and responses to urbanization remain poorly understood. My research integrates habitat selection analyses, species distribution modeling, population demography, and migration tracking to address these knowledge gaps. Specifically, I am identifying environmental features selected within home ranges, estimating survival, fecundity, and population growth rates, and locating additional suitable areas to inform conservation planning. I am also tracking migratory Gray Hawks in Arizona to identify migration routes, stopover sites, and wintering areas, allowing comparisons with resident Texas populations. By combining field surveys, telemetry, and remote sensing, this project aims to provide a comprehensive foundation for targeted Gray Hawk conservation and management across the species' northern range limit.

Mireles Elementary Science Spectacular



CONTACT INFORMATION



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Upcoming Public Events



APRIL 22-26, 2026

2026 REGISTRATION OPEN

GET TICKETS BEFORE THEY FLY AWAY

Birding Field Trips
Full Day & Half Day, Mornings & Afternoons

Workshops - Presentations
Exhibitor Tent - Raptor Project
Silent Auction - Raffle Drawings
Beers & Birds Event

Southern Welcome
Texas BBQ and Live Music

Read More

Birdiest Fest '26
is going to be HUGE

2 Stunning Pre-Trips
6 Exclusive Full-Day Trips
13 Half-Day Trips
4 U-Drive Trips
1 Spectacular Post-Trip

Join us,
in beautiful
Corpus Christi
Texas