

WELDER NOW

VOL. 2, ISSUE 8



Fun Facts from the Welder Wildlife Foundation Scrapbooks Assistant Director

Our first assistant director was Caleb Glazener. Before becoming the first Assistant Director of Welder Wildlife Foundation, Caleb Glazener was with the State Game and Fish Commission as Director of Wildlife Restoration. A Caller Times article 5/29/55 noted Glazener had accumulated a lot of titles over the years but was particularly pleased that a South Texas vaquero called him “the best Coyotero ever,” meaning coyote trapper.

Soil to Sky

Sideoats Grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*) is a native perennial warm-season grass that is proudly represented as the state grass of Texas. It is a short to medium bunch grass that grows 2-3 feet tall with erect stems and wiry, curly clumps at the base. One of the primary defining features of Sideoats Grama is the oat-like spikelets that are all on the side, hence the name Sideoats. Sideoats grama grows in well-drained soils but can be found growing in any soil type, is drought-tolerant, and requires little to no maintenance. Its deep and extensive root system makes it great for erosion control and groundwater recharge, making it a vital rangeland grass. It provides critical nesting habitat for upland birds like Bobwhite-quail, a good food source for the fall and winter season, and is used as a host for Skipper Butterflies.



List of Volunteers - July

Thank you to our volunteers for lending a helping hand with our summer camps!

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| — Sally Scroggs | — Hannah Chandler |
| — Greg Simmons | — Kylie Day |
| — Sara Rock | — May Lugo |
| — Dawn Bissell | — Randy Bissell |



Events Attended/Hosted

Who have we reached this month?

At Outreach Events

- 0 people

At the Foundation

- 92 people

- July 8th
 - Archery Camp
- July 10th
 - Scouts of America Troop Visit
- July 15th
 - Fossil Camp
- July 16th
 - Trustee Dinner
- July 24th
 - Summer Movie Night
- July 28th
 - Gregory Portland High School FFA Tour



ARCHERY CAMP

Projects

Upcoming

- Herbicide Spraying
- Intern Projects
- Bus Barn



Education Team

Monthly Outdoor Family Activity

BECOME A BACKYARD WEATHER WATCHER

- Grab a notebook and become your neighborhood's weather scientist! Each day, step outside and record the weather. Draw a symbol for the sky (☀ ☁ ☔ ☕), write down the temperature, and jot down anything you notice—Are the clouds fluffy or dark? Is it windy? Did it rain?
- After a week, compare your observations. Which day was the hottest? Did rainy days have more clouds? Can you spot any weather patterns? Keep watching all month and see if you can predict tomorrow's weather like a real meteorologist!



Volunteer Opportunities



Education:

- Outreach
- Intern Field Work



Workday: Refuge Maintenance

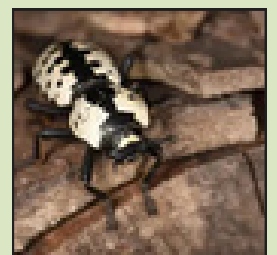


Collections: Organizing

* Join our Volunteer Team!

WELDER INSECT FACT - TEXAS IRONCLAD BEETLE

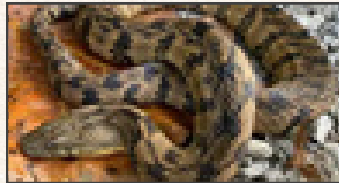
The Texas ironclad beetle is a tough insect found in dry forests and woodlands of Texas and nearby states. Its extra-hard shell helps protect it from predators, and it spends most of its life under loose bark or inside decaying wood. Even though it cannot fly, this beetle plays an important role in nature by helping break down dead trees and recycle nutrients back into the soil.



Reptile Facts

Uno's Corner - Diamondback Watersnake

The diamondback watersnake is a nonvenomous snake that lives in rivers, lakes, marshes, and wetlands across Texas and the southeastern United States. It is an excellent swimmer and uses its strong body to catch fish, frogs, and other small aquatic animals. Although it may look similar to a venomous cottonmouth, the diamondback watersnake is harmless to people and plays an important role in keeping wetland ecosystems healthy.



Joke of the Month

Q: What kind of birds work at a construction site?

A: A Crane!

Check out our Handouts

2026 Calendar



2026 Summer Activity Book



Explore the amazing world of wetlands in this summer's Nature Nook Activity Book! Journey through the wetlands of the Welder Wildlife Refuge and discover fascinating wetland habitats from around the globe. Meet incredible animals and plants that call these watery ecosystems home, challenge yourself with fun games and activities, and test your knowledge with a wetland quiz. Don't miss this issue's Welder Tales story, where you'll dive into the history of the Welder family and learn how ranching first became part of their legacy. Adventure, discovery, and learning await on every page!

Research



Spotlight on a Welder Fellow

Leah Spoofstra, Ph.D.

SEASONAL ACTIVITY, RESOURCE UTILIZATION AND SPATIAL USE PATTERNS OF THE TEXAS TORTOISE IN SAN PATRICIO COUNTY

The Texas tortoise (*Gopherus berlandieri*) is a state protected species with densities declining throughout their limited range, constricted to South Texas, due to increased habitat fragmentation and displacement by development, agriculture, illegal capture as pets, and oil and gas exploration. Texas is a top producer and exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the United States. Development of LNG export terminals, wind turbines, and processing facilities are increasing through the core distribution of Texas tortoises. Translocation of Texas tortoises to the outermost portion of their home range has been proposed to mitigate the effects of oil and gas exploration. In addition, the release of reptiles originating from pet trade imposes socioeconomic and ecological costs. The extent of illegal Texas tortoise pet trade is not currently well understood and therefore remains underregulated. Confiscated tortoises cannot typically be released back into their native habitats (rewilded) as source populations are unknown, leading to a high risk for disease transmission that is amplified by homing behaviors. This study aims to establish long-term monitoring of seasonal activity, resource utilization, and spatial use patterns of Texas tortoises in San Patricio county, which is an understudied portion of their distribution. Additionally, I will monitor behavioral adaptation, survival, resource selection, and course movement of previously captive tortoises. This study aims to evaluate habitat use and success of rewilding captive Texas tortoises through a combination of disease screening and phased relocation to guide translocation and release efforts.

Trustee Dinner



Intern Quizbowl



Archery Camp



Fossil Camp



CONTACT INFORMATION



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