



# Oaks and Prairies Wildlifer

A newsletter for landowners in the Post Oak Savannah  
and Coastal Prairies Regions of Texas

TEXAS  
PARKS &  
WILDLIFE

Summer 2015

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## District Field Notes

BY DAVID FORRESTER

Hello and welcome to the new District 7 electronic newsletter! The biologists in the Oak Prairie District hope you find this new vehicle for getting information out to the public helpful and informative.

We have experienced some personnel changes in the district over the last few months. The most recent changes from earliest to latest are:

- **Laura Sherrod** was hired to replace Greg Pleasant in Lee and Fayette counties
- **Robert Trudeau** was hired to replace Meredith Longoria in Bastrop and Caldwell counties
- **Trent Teinert** has been hired to replace Brendan Witt in Gonzales and Guadalupe counties and the Neasloney Wildlife Management Area

You can find contact information for these new biologists on the district map on the last page of this newsletter, along with the contact information for each biologist and member of the district.

Currently, the district is experiencing habitat conditions that we haven't seen in years. Frankly, the last few years have been pretty good from a rainfall standpoint and wildlife populations have benefitted. Deer herds are doing well. Fawn survival is on the high end basically district wide. Antler development has been good over the last couple of years and it looks like the 2015-2016 hunting season will follow suit. Turkey populations have also been good in most of the district. We are getting reports of turkeys in areas that have historically had low populations at best.

In the southern portions of the district, we are receiving reports of bobwhite quail appearing in numbers not seen in years. We've also had reports of quail being spotted in areas where they haven't seen a quail in years. Additionally, staff have had reports of quail in Bastrop, Fayette, and Caldwell counties. A lot of this has to do with the man upstairs and mother nature giving us some much needed rainfall; however, much of this has to do with the good things the landowners in these counties are doing from a habitat management standpoint.

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District biologists have been working on conducting mourning dove and white winged dove surveys across the district. Additionally, staff are involved in trapping both mourning and white winged dove during the summer months. Once trapped, these birds are banded and released, then hunters report banding information on birds they harvest during dove season. This information is combined with our population estimates to give us an idea on the health of these two species of game birds in Texas. These surveys are important and allow us (TPWD) to put together information that can be used to combat possible changes in season lengths or bag limits that may be introduced by the Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).



*District staff banding a white-wing dove  
Photo by Mark Lange, TPWD*

Another dove-related activity we participate in during the month of August is the establishment of our dove leases in the district. These dove leases are open to those who purchase an Annual Public Hunting License (APH). Several dove hunting opportunities are available across the district and you can find more information by calling one of your local biologists or visiting our website at [www.tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/hunt/public/](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/hunt/public/).

Biologists are gearing up for deer season and collecting data on the white tailed deer herd during the month of August. We have our own regulatory data that we collect for the state, but we also work with local landowners and Wildlife Management Associations to collect good population data for our local harvest recommendations. Some of the most important information we get from our landowners is the herd composition data. Basically, we get our estimate of what the buck/doe ratio is and also fawn production. Fawn production is what tends to drive harvest recommendations, so identifying fawns accurately is something we try to stress to our cooperators.

Fall meetings for our many Wildlife Management Associations should begin in September and run through October. Although the associations are landowner-based and volunteer driven, the local TPWD biologists work closely to help facilitate speakers, presentations, etc. These meetings are a great opportunity to meet up with neighbors and other county residents to find out what's going on "across the fence".

The district will be participating in a turkey research project in the latter part of 2015 and it will run for a couple of years. Counties of focus right now look to be Lavaca, DeWitt, Gonzales, Caldwell, and Fayette. The idea is to trap some turkeys, put transmitters on them, and find out what sort of habitat they are selecting primarily during the nesting and brooding seasons. We hope to develop a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) model for wild turkeys in the Post Oak habitats. We also hope to develop some population data on the birds so we can possibly make determinations on turkey seasons in some of the one-gobbler counties versus adjacent counties that may have larger bag limits and differing seasons.

Hopefully, you find this new electronic newsletter of value. The next issue will be sent out in October of 2015. Until then, enjoy the wildlife and habitat on your piece of Texas.



*David Forrester is the District 7 Leader in La Grange. He has been with TPWD since 2001 when he started his career as the TPWD wildlife biologist for Fort Bend and Wharton counties. David has a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics and a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences both from Texas A&M University. He has a Master of Science in Range and Wildlife Management from Texas A&M University-Kingsville.*

# Restoring Our Texas Grasslands

WRITTEN BY JON HAYES

**Bird survey data collected since the mid-1960's shows that grassland birds in general have experienced a greater population decline than any other group of birds in North America.**



*A meadowlark perches on a fence post; a typical hangout for these bright and vocal birds  
Photo by Hollingsworth, USFWS*

If you have ever spent time in the Texas countryside on a spring morning you are probably familiar with the sweet, lazy, song of the Eastern Meadowlark. This distinctive melody is as much a part of Texas rangelands as cows, cattle guards, and barbed wire. In fact, it is often on a barbed wire fencepost that you'll see these chunky little yellow-breasted birds perched. Here they belt out their iconic song, allowing it to slowly drift across the landscape.

Texas has historically been home to large numbers of these birds throughout the breeding season. The number increases even more when their northern brethren migrate south from higher latitudes to spend their winters enjoying the relative warmth of Texas. Probably due to their past abundance, meadowlarks, like many other grassland birds are often taken for granted as common and unremarkable members of the Texas avifauna. It may be because of this perception that people are often surprised to hear that meadowlark populations have actually dropped by over 75% throughout much of their Texas breeding grounds in the last 50 years. Likewise, bird survey data collected since the mid 60's shows that grassland birds in general have experienced a greater population decline than any other group of birds in North America. The list of declining grassland associated birds includes the Northern Bobwhite quail, a popular game bird and an icon of the American south. Since 1965 the population of bobwhite in Texas has decreased by over 90%. Recent droughts have accelerated this decline, prompting various sportsmen and conservation organizations to call for immediate action to address this rapid loss of a beloved species

There are many factors that contribute to these disturbing trends, but unquestionably the primary driver is the loss of available suitable habitat needed to sustain these birds. This habitat loss is a result of changes in land use that has led to the conversion of native grasses to exotic grass pasture or cropland, improper grazing, suppression of fire, and brush encroachment; each of which has had a significant negative impact on the ability of Texas grasslands to support populations of meadowlark, bobwhite, and other grassland-dependent species.

This is not a problem that is unique to Texas. Across the tallgrass prairie of the United States less than 5% of the native grasslands remain undisturbed. The great plains of this country at one time rivalled the African Serengeti in the variety and sheer abundance of wildlife. The prairies, meadows, and savannahs of the interior United States used to be teeming with an impressive array of critters including antelope, bison, elk, deer, bears, cougars, and a dizzying variety of grassland songbirds, game birds, raptors, and others. As this habitat disappears we have lost and continue to lose many of these animals. If these historic declines continue, we risk losing some of the very species that contribute

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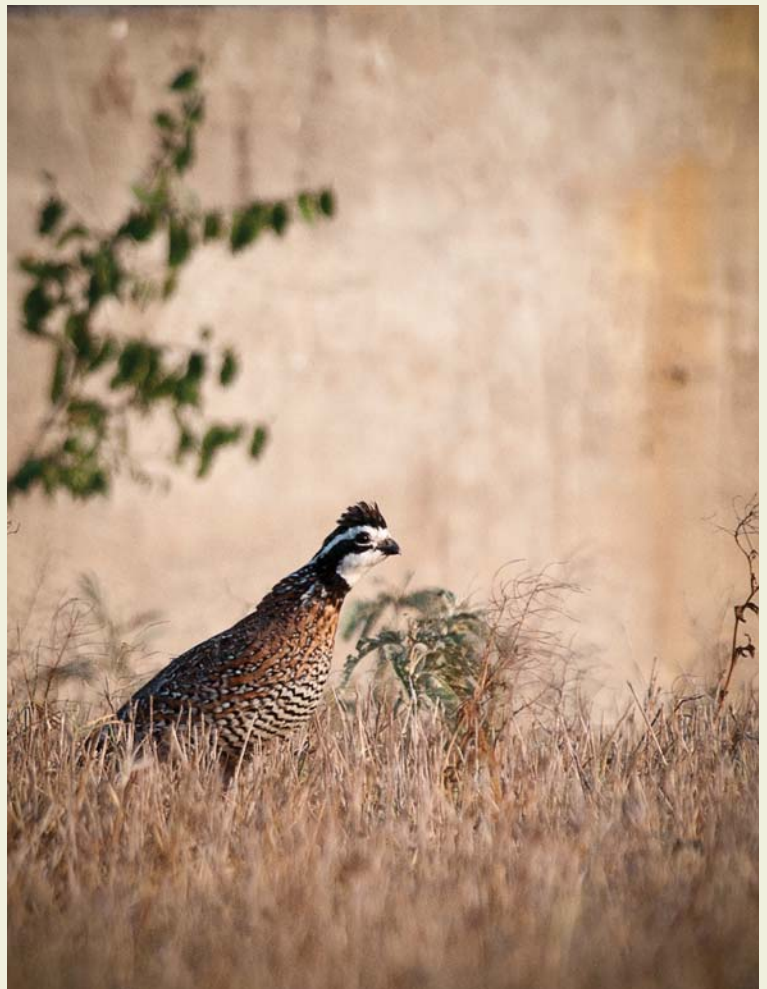
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to the character, quality, and functionality of our Texas grasslands. We need to act now to improve habitat at the landscape level in order to reverse this trend.

Considering that over 95 percent of Texas land is privately held such action requires the participation and cooperation of private landowners. It is crucial that private landowners are encouraged and empowered to improve habitat for these birds on their land. This doesn't mean that their land can't be grazed by livestock. Cattle grazing can be beneficial to grassland health when done in a way that mimics the grazing by bison, which these ecosystems evolved under. In fact, there are many different management practices that can be employed on grazing lands to improve the health of grassland habitat for wildlife. There are also many programs and people that can help landowners accomplish their goals. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Natural Resource Conservation Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and many other agencies and organizations have the resources available to assist landowners by providing technical expertise and sometimes even financial support for grassland restoration projects.

There are numerous consequences that can come from further loss of healthy grasslands. Whether it's decreased water quality and quantity in our rivers and aquifers, loss of carbon sequestration capacity, or even loss of livestock and farming productivity; our continued prosperity can be directly impacted by the health of these ecosystems on which we so greatly depend. Our management and use of natural resources has shaped our past and will continue to shape our future. We must recognize the value of the plants, animals, and minerals that our grasslands provide and realize that when wildlife populations suffer, we suffer. It is likely that we could survive in a world without meadowlarks and bobwhites, but when given the choice, is that the world we will choose to live in? We all need to work together to ensure future generations of Texans will continue to know the song of the meadowlark and the beauty of our native grasslands.

*Since 1965 the population of bobwhite in Texas has decreased by over ninety percent.  
Photo © 2011 Chase A. Fountain, TPWD*



*Jon Hayes is a Conservation Delivery Specialist with the Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture where he is tasked with working with partner organizations to implement programs and strategies aimed at restoring declining grassland bird populations throughout Texas and Oklahoma. Prior to this position Jon was the TPWD biologist for Lavaca and Jackson County. Jon received his Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Colorado and his Master of Science in Natural Resource Conservation from the University of Montana.*



# Spotlight Season Safety

WRITTEN BY BOBBY EICHLER

Over the next few months District 7 biologists and individuals belonging to local Wildlife Management Associations (WMAs) will be conducting deer population spotlight surveys throughout the Post Oak district. These surveys occur primarily at night and are conducted in various ways. Sometimes, when working with an individual landowner on large acreage, the survey will take place totally within that landowner's property boundary. Other surveys will take place on county roads when associated with WMAs or Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) regulatory lines.

Please be aware that these population estimates will be conducted between July 15 and September 30. During this time you may notice a vehicle spotlighting in your area at night. If TPWD is conducting the counts from public roads, we can be distinguished from possible poachers by the following:

- A TPWD marked truck
- A yellow and blue dash-mounted caution light and a tailgate mounted caution light
- At least two staff members with spotlights in the back of a truck
- A slow rate of speed between 5-10 mph
- Spotlights which are constantly on and sweeping both sides of road
- Surveys normally start one hour after sundown and take 3-4 hours

Prior to every survey, TPWD biologists notify the local Sheriff's Department so they are aware that a survey is being conducted on public roads. If you see spotlights from public roads during this time and are unsure of who it is:

- DO call the Sheriff's Department and inform them of the location
- DO NOT approach the spotlighting vehicle

Each year our biologists have encounters with citizens who believe they are encountering a poacher. In some instances we have had shots fired over trucks. This not only puts our staff in a potential unsafe situation, but also potentially puts citizens in harm's way.

Population surveys are also conducted by volunteers who are members of local WMAs. WMA volunteers are not necessarily utilizing TPWD trucks. Please be aware of their possible presence also and treat them in a safe manner. Volunteers conducting population surveys notify their local Sheriff's department and Game Wardens as well.



*Biologists and volunteers conduct a deer population spotlight survey  
Photo by Jeff Bonner, TPWD*



*Bobby Eichler is the Technical Guidance Biologist for the Oak Prairie District. He has Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in Forestry both with emphasis in Game Management, from Stephen F. Austin State University. A native of Giddings, Bobby started his TPWD career in East Texas before moving to La Grange in 2007.*

# Plant Profile: Texas Persimmon

WRITTEN BY JOSH TURNER



*Texas Persimmon*  
Photo by Eric Garza

**Texas Persimmon** (*Diospyros texana*) is a small, semi-evergreen tree that is found from northern Mexico throughout central, south, and west Texas. Texas persimmon produces small purple fruit and has a peeling bark that is white and gray. The leaves are alternate, leathery, and dark green. Texas persimmon is a valuable wildlife plant for most animals. Deer browse the leaves (see crude protein below) and most animals, including birds, small mammals, and insects eat the fruit, which usually ripens in late summer. It also provides good nest and roosting sites for birds and cover for small mammals. The fruit is also of value to people, with the most common use being jellies, jams and dyes made for art and clothing. The wood of Texas persimmons is a very hard, dense wood that is popular for use in artwork due to the hardness and ability to create a high polish on the wood. Texas persimmon is a nice plant to have on your property that can provide benefits to most species of wildlife.

#### CRUDE PROTEIN VALUE OF PERSIMMON LEAVES:

Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
18%	6-14%	12%	10%

Protein Source: Taylor R. B., J. Rutledge, J. G. Herrera. 1999. *A Field Guide to Common South Texas Shrubs*. Univ. Texas Press. 58pp.



*Josh Turner has been the TPWD Wildlife Biologist for DeWitt and Goliad counties since 2008. He received his Bachelor of Science in Wildlife and Fisheries Science from Tennessee Tech University in 2004 and his Master of Science in Range and Wildlife Management from Texas A&M-Kingsville in 2008. He is located in the Victoria field office.*

# Species Spotlight: Monarch Butterflies

WRITTEN BY LAURA SHERROD

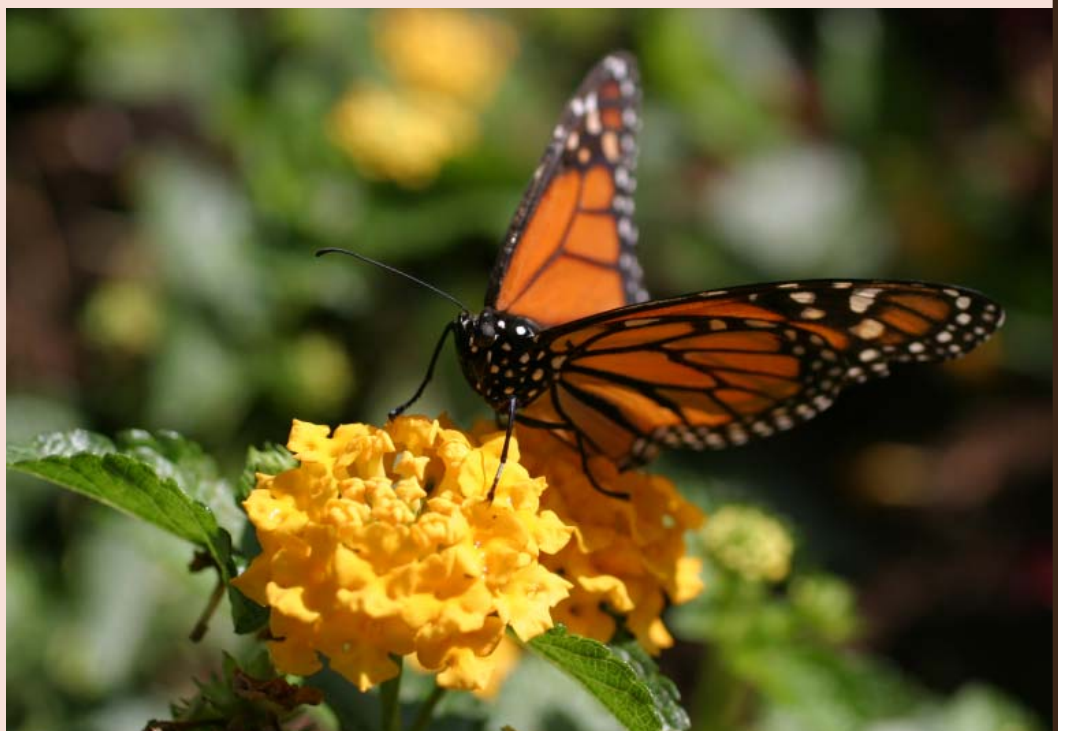
The monarch butterfly may be one of the most recognized species of butterflies with its brilliant orange and black wings.

Some call it the “king” of the butterflies. The name “monarch” stems back to early North American settlers who named the impressive orange butterfly after King William, Prince of Orange, Stadtholder of Holland.

Monarchs are also known for their remarkable migration, in which they travel up to 3000 miles each year. The most well-known migration is that which occurs east of the Rocky Mountains. This migration actually takes four generations of butterflies to complete! Monarchs overwinter in the mountains of central Mexico in oyamel fir trees, which provide the cool, moist habitat, as well as for protection the butterflies need during the winter. The monarchs begin their journey north in February/March. Once they reach Texas and other southern states, this generation of monarchs breeds to produce the next generation of butterflies.

Monarchs, like other butterflies, undergo complete metamorphosis. Monarchs lay their eggs on milkweed plants, which are the only plants the caterpillars feed on. Once the caterpillars hatch they will live on milkweed for about two weeks while they eat and grow. Caterpillars will gain about 2000 times their original mass over the course of the two weeks. As they grow they will molt their skin. The period of time between molts is called an instar. Monarch caterpillars will go through five instars before the pupal stage. After the fifth instar, the caterpillar finds a safe location and spins a silk mat. The caterpillar will molt one more time while hanging upside down from this silk mat. Once it molts it is a pupa, or chrysalis. After 10-14 days the adult butterfly emerges.

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*Monarch Butterfly on  
a Lantana blossom  
Photo by Mary Ann Urban, TPWD*



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This first generation of offspring continues the journey north in late April and May. They will continue to feed and breed, with each summer generation living 2 to 6 weeks as adults. The second and third generations will populate the summer breeding grounds throughout the northeastern United States and Canada. The fourth generation that hatches will then start the migration south in late summer through central and southern states back to their wintering grounds in Mexico. They will find stopover sites along the way to feed on nectar and to obtain shelter from harsh weather. This generation of butterflies will congregate in the oyamel fir trees, where they will wait out winter and begin the journey north the next spring.

Coinciding with the migration that occurs in the eastern parts of the United States, there is also a migration west of the Rockies. Less is known about this migration, but colonies of monarchs will overwinter along the California coastline in climates similar to those used by monarchs in Mexico. These monarchs migrate east to the Rocky Mountains and north into Canada before returning back to the California coastline.

You may have noticed that monarch butterflies have been gaining more media coverage recently. This is due to the fact that the monarch population has declined by approximately 90% over the past 20 years. While multiple factors have played a role in the monarchs' declining population, the main factor for decline is habitat loss. Not only have overwintering sites been lost due to logging of the oyamel forests in Mexico, but we are quickly losing crucial habitat in the summer breeding grounds as well. Land fragmentation, use of herbicides, and the conversion to agricultural lands have led to declining native species, in particular milkweed species on which the monarchs depend for survival.

Texas is unique in that it is located between the summer breeding grounds and overwintering areas in Mexico. Monarchs migrate through Texas in both the spring and summer, where it is important they find nectar-bearing plants to feed on throughout their journey, as well as milkweed to lay their eggs. If you are interested in helping the monarchs, try planting a variety of both spring and fall blooming nectar plants for the butterflies. Planting certain milkweed species will also greatly help them so they can produce more generations to carry on their amazing journey. Obviously, limiting the amount of herbicides used to control weeds could be a helpful strategy. Most of the annual weeds we spray for are actually beneficial flowering plants for native pollinators. It might be possible to eliminate the costs in spraying weeds altogether or reduce the areas that are being sprayed?

For more information on how you can help monarchs, please visit the Texas Monarch Watch page at Texas Parks and Wildlife: [www.tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife\\_diversity/texas\\_nature\\_trackers/monarch](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/texas_nature_trackers/monarch). You may also visit the Texas Milkweeds and Monarchs project page at iNaturalist: [www.inaturalist.org/projects/texas-milkweeds-and-monarchs](http://www.inaturalist.org/projects/texas-milkweeds-and-monarchs).



*Laura Sherrod is the Wildlife Biologist for Lee and Fayette counties. She grew up in Dripping Springs and graduated from Texas State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Wildlife Biology. Laura was hired by Texas Parks & Wildlife in 2008, where she worked with the Big Game Program until accepting her current biologist position in April 2014. Laura offices in Giddings, and she enjoys helping landowners and wildlife management associations achieve their habitat and wildlife management goals throughout Lee and Fayette counties.*



*Antelope Horn Milkweed, one of many varieties of Milkweed beneficial to Monarch Butterflies*  
*Photo by Jon Hayes, TPWD*



# An Alternative To Hunting Near the Feeder

WRITTEN BY DOUG JOBES

According to Texas A&M Agrilife approximately 300 million pounds of corn are fed to deer every year in Texas (Billy Higginbotham, Overton, Texas 2015). With the exception of the occasional traditionalist this staggering amount of supplemental food has become a mainstay for hunters I've been working with hunters and landowners in Lavaca and Jackson counties for the past three deer seasons and a seemingly ever-increasing complaint is that deer are not coming to feeders. For the most part we understand the notion that adequate and timely rainfalls have given us ample supplies of native browse and mast for the last couple of seasons. These abundant supplies have been easily available for deer to consume. Given a choice, deer will most certainly choose native over supplemental most of the time. So, unless we slip into a severe drought this summer, our 2015-16 hunting season seems to be shaping up for another possible "no show" at your local deer feeder. The question now is: How do we as hunters out-think the wily deer in South-central Texas? The answer can be summoned by thinking back to a time when bagged corn was not so readily available and when hunters scouted for sign prior to the hunting season. A hunter might identify the best producing mast tree to gain the upper hand, or locate a scrape along a fence line. Here are three strategies not associated with supplemental feeding that may give you as a hunter more opportunity this coming deer season:

1. **Identify bedding areas.** These are areas where deer usually go to rest and ruminate. They are most commonly associated with heavy brush cover while still allowing deer to notice oncoming danger. This would be a good location to establish a hunting spot, but remember wind direction and take into consideration the most common wind direction during deer season in your neck of the woods.
2. **Locate game trails.** Deer are similar to most other critters, including ourselves, in that they tend chose the path of least resistance while traveling. Trails provide this ease of travel and are therefore a very reliable location to consider hunting. Often a trail connects feeding and bedding areas, so take a walk and find out where the path leads. Is it to a large water oak, or maybe a stand of beautyberry?
3. **Be flexible.** This is the most important strategy for hunting that permanent blinds simply can't supply. The fact is that as the season progresses deer behavior changes. These changes can be food-based or pressure-based and will certainly change their travel patterns and locations. So, once you've found the perfect spot consider using a pop-up blind or constructing cover from yaupon limbs. These can be easily moved to a fresh trail or a late-producing acorn tree. Climbing stands are also a good option that provide flexibility and will allow you to move around as the deer respond to late season changes.



*Open corridors and roads within woodlands can be excellent trails for all wildlife. Photo by Doug Jobes, TPWD*



*Look for sign such as this rub to identify areas where deer travel. Photo © 2013 Lee Smith, TPWD*



*Doug Jobes is the Wildlife Biologist for Jackson and Lavaca counties. After a three-year enlistment with the US Army as an Airborne Ranger with the 75th Ranger Regiment he graduated from the Daniel B. Warnell School of Forest Resources, University of Georgia. He then received his Masters of Science in Wildlife Ecology and Management from Oklahoma State University. His professional interests include working with small acreage landowners and wildlife management associations.*

# Collecting Incidental Observations

WRITTEN BY DOUG JOBES

Incidental observations, also called herd composition counts, may be the most valuable data collected on a deer herd. When properly collected, herd composition data can reflect the overall health of a herd and help guide the manager in making proper harvest recommendations. The herd composition counts give insight into what proportion of the population are bucks, does and fawns. These numbers not only aid harvest recommendations for each year, but also provide feedback from the previous season and the current years fawn crop. It is important to note that these are only used for ratios and not for density estimates.

## **Herd composition data should be collected annually between July 15 and September 1.**

By this time fawns have become a part of the herd, yet they are small enough to be easily distinguished from adult deer. Observations outside this period may result in inaccurate data. Observations may be collected any time during the day. However, the first and last hours of daylight are often the most productive for deer seen per hour of effort. Observations should not be collected at night because it is too difficult to correctly identify sex and size.

## **Deer recorded should be viewed through binoculars or a spotting scope.**

Small antlers are easily overlooked without optical aids. Fawns whose spots have started to fade are also hard to distinguish when they are observed alone. Be sure to look at the hips of deer that you think could possibly be fawns because the hips are the last place to lose spots. It is critical to properly distinguish does from fawns; inaccurately identifying either can drastically change buck:doe ratios and fawn recruitment.

## **When observing deer in herds, it is important that each deer be identified.**

If a herd of six deer is seen but only four are positively identified, do not record any of the deer. When a herd is seen, quickly get a total head count and then go back to positively identify bucks first because they are easiest, then identify fawns, and finally, identify the does making sure not to miss small antlered bucks.

## **Collect as many samples as you can.**

If possible, a larger sample size is desirable to strengthen the data and increase the confidence in the harvest recommendations. Observations can be made during routine ranch operations or as a special effort. Observing the same deer recorded on a previous survey is a concern if surveys are conducted too close together (less than 2-3 hours apart). If a conscientious effort is made to record accurate data, a small amount of duplicate recording should not affect the ratio. All deer should be recorded as a buck, doe or fawn.

## **Lastly, when observing a group of deer, take your time.**

If you are driving through your pasture and observe a group of deer it is important to stop and observe for a few minutes. Often a fawn may be easily overlooked if you do not take the time to look into the deep cover where the fawn may be hiding near a doe. As stated previously, fawn recruitment is one of the most critical pieces of information we obtain from incidental observations.



*Use binoculars and take your time in identifying individual deer. At first glance you would likely record this adult deer as a doe.*

*Photo © TPWD*

# Fall Hummingbird Migration

WRITTEN BY BRENT ORTEGO

I saw a hummingbird buzzing near where I normally hang a feeder today. It must be time for the fall migration of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds.

This is the normal signal for many landowners to hang out their feeders. Hummingbirds probably pass through for several days or weeks before people notice them. Hummers start migrating across coastal Texas in mid July with multiple major surges of birds throughout September and migration finally winding down in early November.

Millions of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds migrate south each year and pass around the Texas Coast in spectacular numbers. The passage is so fascinating and large that several celebrations, like the one at Rockport in September, are put on to view the spectacle with the touring public. Sugar and feeder manufacturers look forward to fall sales with many of their customers stocking up to satisfy the hoards of birds. Hummers use feeders and flower gardens during migration in large numbers, particularly along the coast, lakes, and rivers where they concentrate by the thousands.

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird breeds in forested areas from southern Canada throughout eastern North America, including Texas, and they mostly winter in southern Mexico and Central America. How a tiny bird which weighs roughly the same as two pennies migrates from Canada to Costa Rica is one of the “miracles” of bird migration. This hummingbird fattens up by feeding on abundant insects and nectar from flowers in the forests after the breeding season. It almost doubles its body weight by adding fat and uses the fat as fuel for its long flights. The Ruby-throats primarily migrate during day in the fall, occasionally stopping to

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*A young male Ruby-throated Hummingbird feeds on Turk's Cap  
Photo by Brent Ortego, TPWD*



## CONTINUED

feed during late afternoons and early mornings, and then continue their migration. They take advantage of feeders and flower gardens at homes along the way. They have the capability to fly long distances non-stop with heavy fat loads, but it is not known if they do this on a regular basis in the fall. Researchers are studying migration of hummingbirds, but it is very difficult to monitor a bird that is less than four inches long as it migrates thousands of miles. One Ruby-throated hummingbird banded in Canada during fall 2007 was recaptured seventeen days later in Brazoria County by local researcher Charlie Brower for an average daily movement of sixty miles per day. This bird likely foraged as it migrated. Others might fly several hundred miles non-stop in one day.

Landowners can attract hummers by putting out hummingbird feeders and growing plants with flowers attractive to the birds. Popular fall hummingbird plants are Turk's-cap, red sage, trumpet creeper, coral honeysuckle, lantana, cardinal flower, hibiscus, penstemon and petunia. These plants produce abundant tubular shaped red flowers which are very attractive to hummers.

Almost any style hummingbird feeder will work. Remember to use a solution of 4 parts water to 1 part sugar. No food coloring is needed because the colorful feeder is attractive enough to catch the eye of the birds, and food coloring might be harmful. Keep feeders clean by examining them at least twice per week. Feeders can be kept in clusters near windows or scattered across the property to attract birds. Hanging feeders under eaves is popular because it protects the feeders from being diluted by fall showers.

I recommend managing hummingbird gardens and feeders year-round. Coastal Texas regularly has breeding hummers and over-winters at least 8 species annually. The peaks of migration are in September during the fall and April during spring.



*Hummingbirds gather around a feeder in Victoria County  
Photo by Josh Turner, TPWD*



*Dr. Brent Ortego is the Wildlife Diversity Biologist for TPWD Region 4, based out of Victoria. Brent has thirty-three years of experience with TPWD having worked in East Texas and along the coast on diverse topics such as red-cockaded woodpeckers, endangered species recovery teams, and migratory birds.*

# Upcoming Events

## AUGUST

- 4 Lost Prong WMA Meeting**  
6:00 p.m. at Mikeska's Bar-B-Q on Highway 59 in El Campo. Contact Linda Joy Stovall at 979-543-3812.
- 21 Feral Hog Management Workshop**  
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the Goliad County Fairgrounds. Five CEUs will be given for TDA Commercial, Non-Commercial & Private Applicators. Pre-registration is required. Contact Brian Yanta at [b-yanta@tamu.edu](mailto:b-yanta@tamu.edu) or 361-645-8204.
- 21 South Lee County WMA Meeting**  
6:00 p.m. at Serbin Picnic Grounds. Contact Allen Kaiser at 979-716-9731.
- 22 Emerging Technologies in Feral Hog Control**  
8:00 to 11:30 a.m. at Weid Hall in Hallettsville. There will be demonstrations, discussions and research findings of the BoarBuster™ and JagerPro™ trap systems, and a presentation by the Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force. Contact Doug Jobes at 361-798-2625.

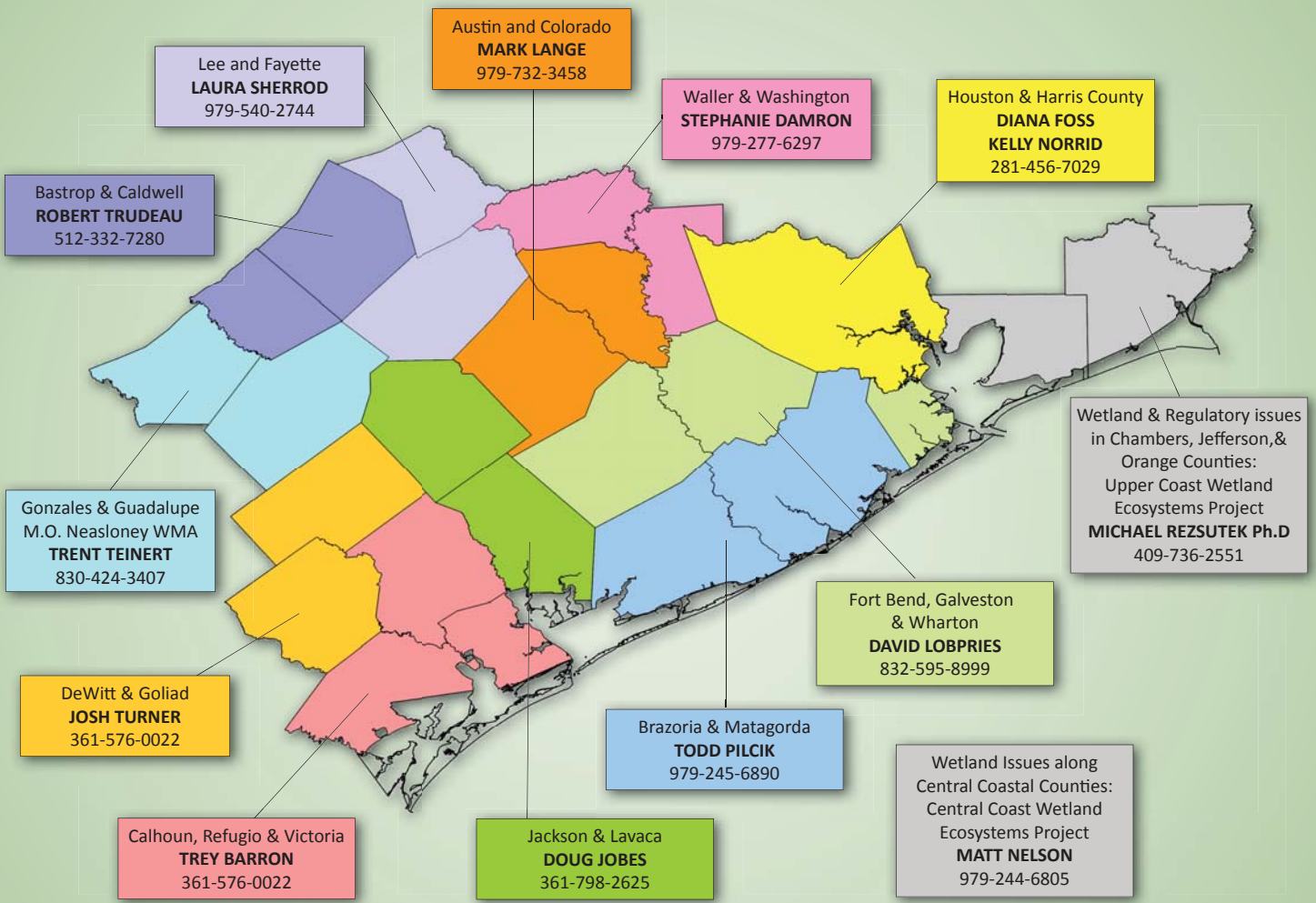
## SEPTEMBER

- 12 Jackson County WMA Pre-Harvest Meeting**  
10:00 a.m. at Jackson County Services Building. Catered meal by Mustang Creek BBQ
- 12 Northeast Colorado County WMA Meeting**  
6:00 p.m. at St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Frelsburg
- 12 West Navidad WMA Fall Meeting**  
6:00 p.m. at Rockin' W Ranch in Schulenburg. Contact Jessica Rodriguez at 979-743-1903.
- 13 Buckners Creek WMA Fall Meeting**  
St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Plum (time TBD). Contact Paula Thompson at 979-549-5828.
- 15 Egypt WMA Meeting**  
6:00 p.m. at Tim Krenek's barn. Contact Brian Gordon at 281-797-4647
- 17-20 27th Annual Hummer Bird Celebration**  
Rockport-Fulton.  
[www.rockporthummingbird.com](http://www.rockporthummingbird.com)
- 19 Sandy Creek WMA Meeting**  
10:00 a.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Columbus.
- 19 Harvey Creek WMA Meeting**  
6:00 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Columbus.
- 26 Meyersville WMA Meeting**  
6:00 p.m. at Wasko Place, 13052 S. U.S. Hwy 183 in Meyersville.
- 26 Western DeWitt WMA Meeting**  
12:00 p.m. at Garfield Hall.

## OCTOBER

- 10 Goliad County WMA Meeting**  
7:30 a.m. at the the ICC Parish Hall, 235 N Commercial Street, Goliad
- 10 North Central Fayette County WMA Fall Meeting**  
4:00 p.m. at SPJST Education and Nature Center at Cooper Farm in Ledbetter. Contact Norman Schultz at 979-249-7159.
- 20-21 Lee-Washington County Youth Shooting Event**  
All day event at Nails Creek State Park. Contact Laura Sherrod at 979-540-2744.

# Our Wildlife Biologists



District 7 Leader <b>DAVID FORRESTER</b> 979-968-3501	Technical Guidance Biologist <b>BOBBY EICHLER</b> 979-968-9942	Wildlife Diversity Biologist <b>BRENT ORTEGO Ph.D</b> 361-576-0022
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*"To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations."*

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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