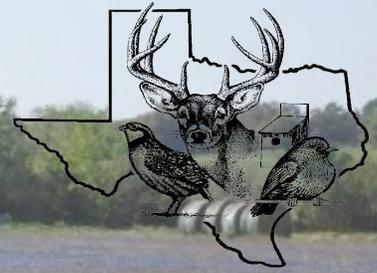


WASHINGTON COUNTY

**Wildlife Society**

1305 E. Blue Bell Rd., Brenham, Texas 77833

Telephone 979-277-6212 Fax 979-277-6223 [www.wcwildlife.org](http://www.wcwildlife.org)**WCWS ANNUAL FUNDRAISER DINNER**

Friday, August 19th, 2016

Washington County Fairground Events Center

Social begins at 5:30 pm with dinner and meeting to begin at 6:15 pm.

Program begins at 7:00 pm

**\*\*\* Free Will Donation Dinner \*\*\***

A dessert table will be available if you would like to bring your favorite dessert.

RSVP at the AgriLife Extension Office 979-277-6212 or online at [www.wcwildlife.org](http://www.wcwildlife.org)**BENEFITS OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION  
FOR YOUTH IN WASHINGTON COUNTY**

OUR FEATURED SPEAKERS:

Brian Robert – Educational Specialist – Texas Wildlife Association-L.A.N.D.S.,

Celeste Dickschat – Director and Local Liaison for Texas Brigades,

Natalie James – Outdoor Education Specialist for Brenham ISD

and Stephanie Damron - Wildlife Biologist for TPWD



Come join us and invite your family, friends and neighbors to hear about the local and state partnerships that help assist our communities within Washington County.



*You will be given the opportunity of pledging your support to these programs through giving options that suit your abilities and interests. We hope to raise \$10,000 this year through your support.*

## Contact Info:

## OFFICERS for 2016:

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**Vice-Director - OPEN**

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Mt. Vernon WMA

**Director - OPEN**

**Vice-Director - OPEN**

New Years Creek WMA

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Mark Frayser, WC Game Warden, (979) 412-3140

Ann Thames, WCWS Newsletter,  
(979) 203-3455, [newsletter@wcwildlife.org](mailto:newsletter@wcwildlife.org)

## PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Recently, I ran into **Rebecca McKeever** with the Lone Star Wildlife Rescue, right after all the heavy rains and flooding. During our conversation, I asked how she and the other rescue and rehabilitators were handling all the suspected demand from the flood. It was then that I learned that even before the bad weather there were a lot more "patients" than there were handlers and facilities in the area. Most rescue and wildlife rehabilitators are volunteer efforts with little to no funding available through the federal or state agencies. They strictly rely on donations. Rebecca stated there was a decline of facilities due to the lack of operational funds and for most that are still around, the funds come from their own pockets. So with that in mind, the WCWS board passed a motion to donate annually to those wildlife rehabilitators in need of funds, provided the money is available. Last month WCWS made a \$500 donation to Lone Star Wildlife Rescue and will review the needs of other centers for next year. Please note at the bottom of page 7 there is a short list of rescue and wildlife centers, with phone numbers and websites so you can contact them with any question or make a direct donation. Also, we have set up a separate category under the [Donate button](#) on our website, which includes the Annual Fundraiser and Scholarships categories.



Speaking of fundraisers, we look forward to the upcoming event on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August at the WC Event Center; it will be a very informative presentation revealing the interactions between state and local agencies and groups working to provide outdoor education through the classrooms and promote awareness of wildlife related issues among Texas youth.

Lastly, speaking of scholarships, WCWS was honored to award 5 scholarships in 2016, each in the amount of \$750. The monetary awards went to **Henry Kettler**, **William Corn**, **Todd Jahns** and **Shane Bentke** of Brenham High School and **Karli Seilheimer** of Burton High School. Congratulations, good luck and we hope to see you in the future and in the newsletter section, "Where Are They Now?"

*Richard Thames*

As summer heats up and grasses dry, you can quickly check our county **BURN BAN STATUS** at [www.co.washington.tx.us](http://www.co.washington.tx.us)

**ADDRESS CHANGES:** For address changes, or to be added or removed from our mailing list, please contact **Richard Thames**, (979) 278-3053, [rbthames@industryinet.com](mailto:rbthames@industryinet.com)

## Prescribed Fire for Land Stewardship – Part 2

By Dave Redden, President of South Central Texas Prescribed Burn Association

In the last newsletter we discussed several approaches to the use of prescribed fire to manage your land. The options included 1) doing it yourself the way you learned from someone else, 2) hiring it done professionally, 3) getting assistance from a state or federal agency, or 4) getting help by joining a prescribed burn association. Whichever way you choose to go, there are some basic steps to follow in making it happen.

### Set Clear Objectives for Your Burn.

A good place to start is by getting your TPWD biologist, NRCS agent, or AgriLife Extension agent to check out your place and offer

advice on whether a burn is likely to achieve what you want. If you are trying to improve grass growth and reduce incursion of woody species in your pasture, then fire may be a practical tool. If you have heavily wooded property with dense woody species already established, such as yaupon or cedar, and only a little grass, burning is not likely to be feasible without some mechanical clearing first. Get help deciding what you can effectively accomplish.

Prepare for a Safe Burn. Adequate fire breaks around the perimeter of the planned burn area are vital for a safe burn. Once you have identified what area you want to burn, begin as soon as you can to get the perimeter prepared to stop the fire from going outside that area. This can take months, so do not wait on anything to start. Preparation should be a year-round effort to make and maintain your firebreaks.

The first step is to shred or mow a swath around the perimeter that is at least 10 feet wide. Leave additional room on the outside of this area for the crew and any vehicles to escape from the heat of the fire if necessary. Do not put your fire breaks up against your perimeter fence or a heavily wooded areas where there is no easy path to get away from the heat. Shred or mow the area outside the firebreak but within any fence line or tree line, if feasible, to reduce the chance of an ember jumping the fire break and starting a fire.

Shred or mow around any trees, power poles, utilities, or structures in the burn area that you want to protect. Remove accumulations of limbs and dead wood from the base of trees that you want to protect.

Disk or scrape a 10 ft wide portion of the firebreak repeatedly to expose bare dirt. Remove as much of any dormant vegetation from this area as possible.

“Green” fire breaks are possible also. If you use the perimeter disked area to plant food plots such as winter peas, clover, or other cool season plants, the plot will serve as a fire break for a winter burn.

Where bare soil fire breaks are not possible along portions of the perimeter, we can use “wet line” breaks, which involve spraying water to stop fire spreading outside the planned burn area. This process is slow and is used only when necessary. Do not count on this method to allow you to have inadequate fire breaks.

Cut down any dead trees or volatile fuels (such as cedar) that are close to the fire break in the burn unit. Move the cut trees toward the center of the burn area. Then make a detailed plan for how the burn will be conducted and wait on the right weather conditions. We will discuss these steps in future articles.



## Incidental Deer Observations

By Stephanie Damron, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

We are quickly approaching the time to log deer sightings. This activity is very important especially if you use census as a practice for your 1-d-1 wildlife valuation.

Incidental observations of white-tailed deer are used to determine herd composition (percent of Bucks, Does, and Fawns in the herd) and is often viewed as the most valuable data collected on a deer herd. A good sample of incidental observations can reflect the overall health and growth of the herd.

Observations can be made at any time during daylight hours with the early morning and late evening being the most productive. Observations can start **July 15** and be recorded through **October 1**.

Observations are made by **identifying** (not guessing) the type of deer observed. White-tail deer should be identified as bucks, does, or fawns. If possible, bucks should be broken down according to antler points. If it is not possible to count the points, list in the *Bucks (other)* column on the observation form. A pair of binoculars will be required to make positive identification.

These observations can be made during routine activities within your location, but making a special effort to collect this data will be more productive. If the same group of deer is seen on different occasions they should be recorded each time they are seen as this will not affect the ratio. But if a group of deer are observed and only part of the group can be identified then none of the group should be recorded.

Be careful as to indicate within which co-op area the observations are recorded, ranch names or road names are not needed. Co-op boundaries can be found at [http://wcwildlife.org/WC\\_Wildlife/Home.html](http://wcwildlife.org/WC_Wildlife/Home.html) or you can contact Stephanie Damron for assistance.

The logging form enclosed in this newsletter can be folded and taped for mailing and returned to Stephanie Damron, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, for analysis. Any questions concerning this process should be directed to Stephanie at (979) 277-6297. Additional forms may be obtained at the TPWD office located at 1305 East Blue Bell Road.

Again, this an important activity for anyone with 1-d-1 wildlife exemption and you are encouraged to participate.

## Pastures for Upland Birds 2016 Updates

ARLENE KALMBACH, TPWD – LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM COORDINATOR



Photo ©TPWD

Historically, native tallgrass prairies and prairie-oak savannahs dominated over 24 million acres in east-central Texas. These ecosystems provided essential habitats for many forms of wildlife, including for grassland birds. Grassland birds that were part of the native prairie ecosystem included: eastern meadowlark, northern harrier, Le Conte's sparrow, short-eared owl, dickcissel, scissor-tailed flycatcher, mourning dove, northern bobwhite, eastern wild turkey, and others.

Over the last century and a half, the region's native prairies and savannah grasslands were converted to agricultural land uses and have virtually disappeared. One of the obvious consequences of this massive prairie conversion was the loss of millions of acres of natural biological diversity and wildlife habitat.

In partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, the Pastures for Upland Birds program (PUB) provides cost-share incentives and technical guidance to private landowners to restore native grass and forb vegetation on pastures and hayfields dominated by exotic grasses such as bermudagrass, bahiagrass, and old world bluestems.

At this time the PUB program has 18 active PUB projects underway restoring nearly 1,000 acres in east-central Texas coinciding with portions of Blackland Prairie and Post Oak Savannah. Want to learn more about the PUB program? Go to [www.tpwd.texas.gov/pub](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/pub).

## Wildlife Rehabilitation

By Stephanie Damron, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

As biologists, we often receive calls about injured or orphaned animals. Most often we end up recommending a specific rehabilitator in the area, as we are not equipped to care for injured or orphaned animals under our job description. Currently, there are not any rehabbers located in Washington County. If you are interested in becoming a rehabilitator this article will help answer any questions you may have.

Caring for injured, sick or orphaned wildlife is an incredibly time consuming job. If you have not yet participated in hands-on rehabilitation work, you may wish to volunteer with a licensed rehabilitator in your area. By doing so, you will gain valuable experience with wildlife while providing an equally valuable service to the rehabilitator. The experience may help you to decide whether or not you wish to become involved in wildlife rehabilitation on your own. For a list of Texas wildlife rehabilitators (organized by county), please visit: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/research/rehab/index.htm>. Various wildlife rehabilitation organizations offer training courses to educate prospective rehabilitators in both emergency and long-term wildlife care. For more information on classes that are being offered throughout the year, you should contact a local or national rehabilitation group. You can learn more about the NWRA (National Wildlife Rehabilitator's Association) online at [www.nwrawildlife.org](http://www.nwrawildlife.org), or by calling (320) 259-4086. The IWRC (International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council) can be reached online at [www.iwrc-online.org](http://www.iwrc-online.org), or by calling (707) 864-1761.

In addition to a completed application and two verifiable letters of recommendation, the department requires evidence that the applicant has a basic knowledge of wildlife rehabilitation. No wildlife rehabilitation permit will be issued without one of the following four items: 1. A certificate of completion from a training course offered by the IWRC or the NWRA within the past three years. 2. Proof of attendance at a department sponsored wildlife rehabilitation conference or a national wildlife rehabilitation conference within the past three years. 3. Proof of membership in a state or national wildlife rehabilitation organization, such as IWRC or NWRA. 4. A score of 80% or better on a department-administered wildlife rehabilitation examination. There is no fee associated with the issuance or renewal of a state wildlife rehabilitation permit.

Rehabilitators are authorized to care for different types of wildlife based on their knowledge and experience as well as the facilities they have available to them. When applying for the permit, applicants list the types of animals they wish to care for (i.e. small mammals, deer, reptiles, amphibians, songbirds and raptors). Before a permit is issued, the applicant's facilities will be inspected by a game warden to determine whether or not they are suitable for the type(s) of wildlife requested. Applicants must also remember that, in order to rehabilitate birds of any type (excluding starlings, English sparrows and feral pigeons), they must hold a federal migratory bird permit in addition to a valid state permit. Information and applications for a federal permit may be obtained by contacting: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 709, Albuquerque, NM 87103-0709; (505) 248-7882 or by e-mail at [FW2\\_Birdpermits@fws.gov](mailto:FW2_Birdpermits@fws.gov). Web page address: <http://www.permits.fws.gov/>.

The type of facilities a rehabilitator is required to maintain are entirely dependent on the type(s) of wildlife he/she plans to care for. To rehabilitate small mammals, for example, an assortment of wire and/or glass cages is often appropriate. Other supplies, such as heating pads, food and water dishes and medical supplies should also be readily available. Caging requirements for the rehabilitation of raptors are more stringent and can be found under "Facilities Standards for Rehabilitation and Holding of Raptors" in your application packet. In general, facilities may be indoors or outdoors, as long as the wildlife is protected at all times from undue stress caused by human activity, domestic animals, predators (both wild and domestic) and weather. Wildlife may not be placed in an area where it is subject to public viewing, display or exhibit, and wildlife should not come into contact with anyone other than the licensed rehabilitator and his/her sub-permittees (if any). A game warden must inspect and approve your facilities before a permit will be issued.

All applicants should realize that a wildlife rehabilitation permit is by no means a license to keep native wildlife as pets. Rehabilitators who have been licensed by the state for at least three years may request to retain non-releasable wildlife either for fostering or educational purposes. These requests are reviewed and approved (or denied) on a case by- case basis. Without express written permission from the department, rehabilitators may not hold wildlife for indefinite periods of time, and non-releasable wildlife must be euthanized or found a permanent, legal home.

The prospective rehabilitator must also understand the Statewide Rabies Quarantine Restrictions, as defined by the Texas Department of Health. The current restrictions state: "It is illegal for a person to transport certain animals that are high-risk for transmitting rabies, including coyotes, species of fox indigenous to North America, and raccoons, to, from, or within the state. A violation of this law is a Class C misdemeanor."

Continued on PAGE 7

## Where are they now?

Catching up with scholarship recipients



Through your generous donations to the Washington County Wildlife Society, worthy graduates from Brenham High School and Burton High School receive a little help with their college tuition. Since 2009, WCWS has awarded 22 scholarships totaling \$15,750 helping students with their dreams of a college education in the field of natural resource conservation and/or wildlife management.

### Joseph Dickschat

DeWitt County 4-H Extension Agent

4-H has had a huge impact on my life. I've been involved in 4-H since I was a kid growing up in Washington County. I showed market hogs, Brangus heifers, and was a member of the Washington County 4-H Livestock Judging Team during my 4-H career. I also had the privilege of attending Bass Brigade in Marble Falls. That was such a great experience that I really learned a lot from. I graduated from Brenham High School in 2011.

One of the Scholarships that I received was from the Washington County Wildlife Society. That scholarship meant a great deal to me and helped me in being able to fulfill my dream of graduating from Texas A&M and becoming a County Extension Agent. I started at Texas A&M that fall. My first semester, I began as a Civil Engineering Major. Almost midway into the fall semester, I realized engineering wasn't right for me. I changed my major to Animal Science at the beginning of the spring semester. That was one of the best moves I ever made.

I have been involved with animals and agriculture since I was little and I realized that was my passion. By attending cattle shows, hog shows, livestock judging, meeting so many people, and taking classes at Texas A&M, I realized that a degree in Animal Science is what I wanted to achieve. I wanted to be able to give back to others, the way I was given the opportunity. In May of 2013, I had the privilege of being accepted for a week long trip to the Panhandle to visit feedlots and ranches. That was an amazing trip I will never forget. I also was a member of the 2014 Texas A&M Livestock Judging Team. That was such a great experience for me.

I graduated from Texas A&M in May 2015 with a degree in Animal Science. I am currently the DeWitt County 4-H Extension Agent in Cuero. I am truly blessed to be able to work with such great people. I really enjoy working with kids. My favorite part of my job is being an influence and educator to the youth. I really enjoy my job and hope I can be a great influence on the youth in DeWitt County.

*Joseph Dickschat*

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(361)275-0816, (361)275-5070 (Fax)

### 2016 Brenham High School Scholarship Recipients



From Brenham High School: (L-R) Henry Kettler, William Corn, John Wellmann (WCWS Scholarship Chair), Todd Jahns, Shane Bentke.

From Burton High School: Karli Seilheimer (no picture available)

## Wildlife Rehabilitation (Continued from Page 5)

These restrictions are waived for peace officers, individuals hired or contracted by state or federal agencies or local governments and employees of zoos or other institutions accredited by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (AZA) when those individuals are carrying out their official duties. Special provisions have been added for raccoons: "In addition to the list of exempt persons cited above, the following individuals can also transport raccoons: rehabilitators and educators permitted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and pest control operators licensed by the Structural Pest Control Board." (Except for educators, transport by these individuals is restricted to within a 10-mile radius or within 10 miles of the city limits where the animal was originally captured.) For more information on the rabies quarantine, please contact the Texas Department of Health office in your region or the Zoonosis Control Division of the Texas Department of Health at (512) 458-7255.

All medical treatment provided to wildlife is to be done in consultation with a veterinarian. However, a vet is not required to hold a state wildlife rehabilitation permit to hold, possess or transport protected wildlife to provide emergency medical care or stabilization care for periods up to 48 hours. Many veterinarians in the state of Texas hold wildlife rehabilitation permits. This allows them to hold and treat wildlife in their facilities for longer periods of time.

Unfortunately, the department cannot provide funding or compensation to wildlife rehabilitators at this time. Most wildlife rehabilitators pay for their supplies entirely out of their own pockets. However, an increasing number of local rehabilitators' organizations are providing grants and other donations to their members to help offset the cost of a number of needs, including food, medical supplies, treatment and caging. For further information, contact a wildlife rehabilitation group in your area.

## Nearest Wildlife Rehabilitators

### **LONE STAR WILDLIFE RESCUE**

Rebecca McKeever, Director; [director@lonestarwildlife.org](mailto:director@lonestarwildlife.org); Bellville, Texas and surrounding counties

LSWR is an all-volunteer organization that rehabilitates injured and orphaned wildlife in south central Texas.

Determine if the animal really needs help. Do not kidnap a healthy baby! Please call LSWR at (832) 444-6996 for advice.

### **Brazos Valley Fawn Rescue**

*Rescue - Rehabilitate - Release*

LOUIS AND KAY GASTON; 979-255-7206; [info@BrazosValleyFawnRescue.com](mailto:info@BrazosValleyFawnRescue.com)

Brazos Valley Fawn Rescue is a non-profit organization dedicated to rescuing abandoned fawns in the Brazos Valley and surrounding counties. We are committed to providing the care they need in order to be rehabilitated and eventually released back into their natural environment.

### **Texas Wildlife Rehabilitation Coalition, Inc. (TWRC Wildlife Center)**

Houston's first urban wildlife emergency and rehabilitative care facility.

10801 Hammerly Blvd., #200, Houston, TX 77043; 713-468-8972; [info@twrcwildlifecenter.org](mailto:info@twrcwildlifecenter.org)

**Texas Wildlife Rehabilitators;** [Wildlife.RescueShelter.com/Texas](http://Wildlife.RescueShelter.com/Texas); Animal Rescue Shelter Directory

If you are aware of any additional wildlife rehabilitators not on any of the lists above, please contact [www.wcwildlife.org](http://www.wcwildlife.org)

## Barred Owl (*Strix varia*)

The Barred Owl is the "Hoot Owl" of forested areas, well-known for its hooting call "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you-all". However, it is also the most vocal of North American owls and has the widest range of calls including weird shrieks, screams, cries, trillings, grumbles, and squeaks. It is associated with large trees in old-growth forests where it relies on tree cavities for nests. Therefore, it is often used as one of the species in habitat suitability index models to determine the status of forests and their management.

**DISTRIBUTION:** Barred Owls are uncommon to common residents in the eastern forested areas of Texas in the Pineywoods, Post Oak Savannah and Blackland Prairies, and Coastal Prairies regions. TBBA observers did not find breeding evidence west of the 100th meridian with most records east of the 99th. Comparison of the TBBA map with the summer and breeding symbols on the map in Oberholser (1974) suggests breeding of the Barred Owl in Texas no longer extends as far west or northwest as in historic times.

**SEASONAL OCCURRENCE:** Barred Owls are year-round residents of Texas. They breed from late January to late June.

**BREEDING HABITAT:** In Texas, Barred Owls require mature, old-growth forests in which to nest. Habitats include bottomland forests, borders of streams, swamps, marshes, low meadows and isolated upland woodlots if they contain numerous large trees (Mazur and James 2000). These habitats coincide very closely with those of the Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) with which Barred Owls often nest in close proximity without apparent conflict. They often use the same nest in alternate years or occasionally use the same nest successively in the same season.

Nest sites are often in deciduous trees, primarily in cavities formed by disease, broken branches, or cavities in the tops of broken trees (snags), but, these owls will use open platform stick-style nests built by hawks, crows, or squirrels. In east Texas, there is a report of a nest in a natural hole in an earthen bank. In cavity nests, there are no nest materials. Barred Owls are monogamous and hold territories within which cavity nests may be reused for many years. Only one brood is produced per year unless the first set of eggs is destroyed, and rarely, a third set will be laid to replace a second set.

