

Grass Roots

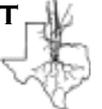
Photo by Jeff Goodwin



PUBLISHED BY THE TEXAS SECTION SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT



Providing Leadership for the Stewardship of Rangelands
Based on Sound Ecological Principles



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President's Notes



Bill Pinchak, Ph.D.
President, TSSRM

I wish to thank the membership of TSSRM for providing me the opportunity to serve as a Director, Officer and now Section President over the last 7 years. My single item agenda for TSSRM, the largest Section in SRM, is to focus on our relevance, importance and of value to Professional Natural Resource Managers in all stages of their careers. There are a tremendous number of Professional Natural Resource Managers in student, young professional, mid- and late-career phases in Agencies, Universities, NGO's, and Private Lands in Texas that are not currently members of TSSRM. Why? Before you start thinking that this is another President harping on membership numbers because we need to grow membership under their administration, let me make it clear that

by studying membership trends to estimated numbers of people in these populations of Professional Natural Resource Managers, it has become evident to me that we are not meeting the Professional needs of over 50 to 75% these Professionals. We are a Professional Society charged with meeting those needs, therefore, why and how are we not the Professional Society of choice of these individuals?

I do not propose to know the answers to these questions or the solutions to those answers. I do, however, realize we are not meeting our obligation and responsibilities to Professional Managers if we do not exercise due diligence by engaging them in discussions of what they want, need and expect of a Professional Society and TSSRM in particular. In March, I will e-mail a survey to all current members of TSSRM to solicit your opinions as to 6 to 12 core areas/functions TSSRM does or should provide to improve the relevance and value of the Section to you and your peer Professional Natural Resource Managers. Your participation will be critical to moving TSSRM forward to meet these needs. Please take the time to fill out the survey and return it promptly so we can review your responses during our April 23, 2010 BOD meeting. Thank you in advance for your contribution to this vital activity.

Plans for the 2010 Annual TSSRM Meeting in Odessa are moving forward. Steve Hartman and Ray Schimcek are Meeting Co-Chairs, and Cody Scott is Program Chair. An Odessa Meeting is always a well attended and successful one because of the great work done by this core group. Make plans now to attend!

We have an outstanding and motivated slate of Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs and members working to serve your needs. Please take the time to contact any of us with questions, thoughts or ideas on how we can better your professional career.

Regards,

Bill Pinchak

The Inside Story...

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**Jan Weidemann
Recognized for 20 Years of Service**

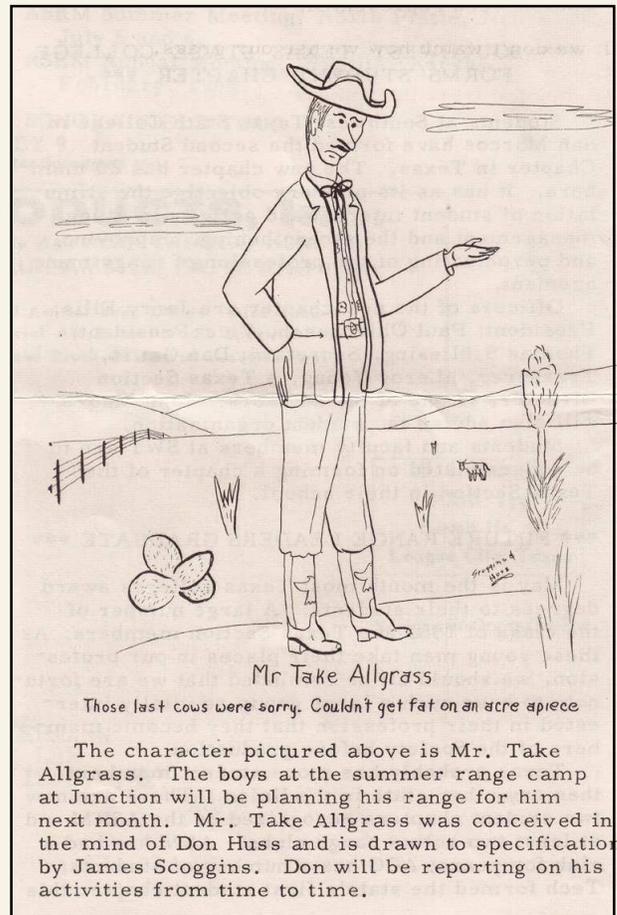
Jan Weidemann recently received a plaque from the Texas Section Society for Range Management for her 20 years of service as the Section Archivist. Jan was very appreciative of the plaque. She recently moved, and she wanted to share her new address with you:

Jan Weidemann
211 Willow Valley Square, Apt. C-321
Lancaster, PA 17602

read.books@verizon.net

Flashback

From
the
Texas Section-
American
Society
of
Range
Management
Newsletter
May-1963

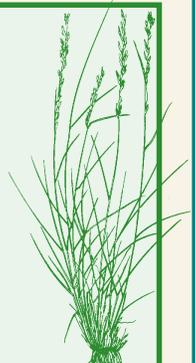


Upcoming Events

TSSRM 2010 Annual Meeting
October 13-15, 2010 - Odessa, Texas

TSSRM 2011 Annual Meeting
October - San Angelo, Texas

64th SRM Annual Meeting
February 6-10, 2011 - Billings, Montana



Moseley Named NRCS Rangeland Management Specialist of the Year



Mark Moseley, left, NRCS rangeland management specialist, is presented the NRCS Rangeland Management Specialist of the Year award by Dennis Thompson, right, NRCS national rangeland management specialist.

Mark Moseley, rangeland management specialist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), received the agency’s highest honor in his profession – rangeland management specialist of the year.

“You earned this honor with a long sustained, high quality commitment to excellence in conservation of rangeland and all its attenuate resources,” said Don Gohmert, NRCS state conservationist for Texas.

Moseley was recognized for delivering rangeland management information to many different audiences across the state; for providing training in rangeland management techniques, especially in grazing management and prescribed burning; for working as the Texas coordinator for the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative; for helping landowners apply rangeland management techniques through workshops and one-on-one assistance; for being instrumental in developing Ecological Site Descriptions for Texas; for helping write *Grazing Lands Stewardship Manual*, which connects landowners and managers with trained professionals in the

field; and for being an active member in professional societies.

A native of Rochelle, Texas, Moseley is currently based in Boerne and serves as the NRCS state coordinator for the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative. Previously he worked as a state range conservationist in Oklahoma and a San Angelo-based area range conservationist. Earlier in his career he served as a Soil Conservation Service range conservationist in Colorado City and Junction and district conservationist in Jayton.

“My work with the NRCS has been primarily to help ranchers help their land,” Moseley said. This is done primarily through direct assistance, training NRCS personnel, preparing technical guide material, providing programs and workshops, conservation education, and working with partnership agencies and organizations. Some specific areas of interest include Ecological Site Descriptions, plant ID, grazing management, wildlife management, prescribed burning, brush management, and re-vegetation projects.

Moseley received his undergraduate degree in 1973 from Texas Tech University in range and wildlife management.

Moseley is a Certified Professional in Range Management with the Society for Range Management. He also is a past president of both the Texas and Oklahoma sections of the SRM.

Congratulations...

... to our new incoming Officers and Directors.

We look forward to their leadership and support for rangeland stewardship in Texas.

Linda Campbell
Director 2010-2012
Austin, Texas

Tony Dean
Director 2010-2012
Jacksboro, Texas

Ken Cearley
Second Vice President
Canyon, Texas

TSSRM Award Winners

Sustained Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

Dr. David D. Briske

Dr. Briske has contributed to the Society and profession over a span of 37 years in the capacity of researcher, mentor, and educator to promote knowledge of rangeland plants and ecosystems. His accomplishments include teaching hundreds of undergraduate students, mentoring numerous graduate and postdoctoral students, and conducting research on multiple topics.

Dr. Briske's early work emphasized population dynamics of grasses and their responses to defoliation while his more recent research focus on resilience-based management and the influence of global change on savanna ecosystems. His work has provided an important link between science and management that has identified principles and applications to promote sustainable rangeland management. Dr. Briske has strengthened the academic foundations of the Society by contributing to its major ecological publications and technical programs, serving as Associate Editor for *Rangeland Ecology and Management* (REM) 2005-2007 and as the Editor in Chief of the Journal since October 2007.

Service to the profession includes short course presentations to 400 NRCS personnel during the past 20 years to incorporate contemporary science into land management recommendations. More recently Dr. Briske has served as academic coordinator to the USDA Conservation Effects Assessment Program to evaluate the ecological benefits of rangeland conservation practices and to inform policy makers of alternative conservation planning and assessment procedures. Collectively, these accomplishments represent a lifetime of commitment and dedication to rangeland stewardship.



Fellow Award Recipient

Paul V. Loeffler

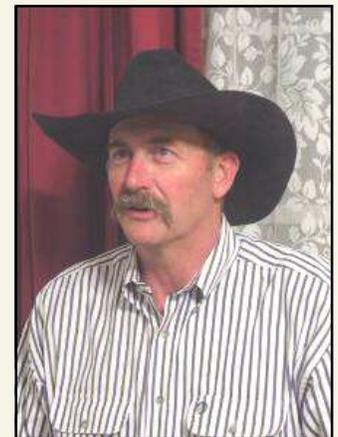
Paul Loeffler has been active in rangeland management with his job and in the community, and his service to the Society and the Texas Section has been exemplary.

At the Society level, he is extensively involved in the Student Activities Committee, tirelessly working with Masonic Range Science Scholarship, Plant ID contest, and High School Youth Forum. He has also served as chair of SRM Advisory Council.

At the Section level, he has served on or chaired a number of committees, been a Section director and officer (President in 2007), has served on the Student Activities Committee and been an instructor at the Texas Youth Range Workshop for over 20 years. Over 750 youth have been positively impacted by his work at this workshop. He is a co-chair of the Section's Youth Activities Endowment Fund, raising funds to establish a permanent endowment fund.

Paul has been a man of action in SRM. As an example, during the 2007 Sunday Advisory Council meeting, it was announced that the SRM Denver office did not have a sign for their building. During the Member's Mixer that night, Paul showed a photo of the missing sign to members and asked for personal donations to have a sign installed. In one night, Paul raised nearly \$900 to purchase a sign.

It should be noted that a large number of his SRM activities have been conducted with essentially no financial support from his employer. It takes a special type of member who is willing to give not only of their time, but commit their own personal financial resources to conduct these activities.



Outstanding Achievement Award Recipient **Research/Academia**

Dr. Jose Alfonso “Poncho” Ortega-Santos



Dr. “Poncho” Ortega’s achievements in rangeland management research and education have been truly outstanding. His work spans two countries. Dr. Ortega made significant contributions to the management of rangelands in Mexico before coming to Texas A&M University-Kingsville in 2001. He served as National Leader of the Range and Forage Program in Livestock Division, National Research Institute of Forestry, Crops and Livestock (INIFAP) in Northern Mexico. He had a major influence over the direction and development of range management research in Mexico during his tenure as director. He worked closely with producers in Mexico and brought about significant improvements in grazing management on numerous ranches in Mexico.

In his role as an assistant and associate professor at Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Dr. Ortega has made contributions to rangeland management working as a liaison with universities in Mexico; teaching and research; service to the Texas Section, Society for Range Management and International Society for

Range Management; and authoring of significant publications including one published book and one book in preparation.

He has been strongly involved in Plant Identification Contests at Texas Section and Society for Range Management meetings, and he coaches the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Plant Identification team.

In addition to academic achievements, Dr. Ortega is also a range management practitioner. He owns a working ranch in Mexico and trains horses in his ‘spare time.’ There are few people in the range profession who have both the academic and practical expertise in rangeland management possessed by Dr. Ortega.

First Call for ORM/ORS Award Nominations

TSSRM Members,

The Outstanding Rangeland Management Committee would like at this time to announce the “First Call” for Nominations the Outstanding Rangeland Management (ORM) and the Outstanding Rangeland Stewardship (ORS) Awards.

The purpose of the ORM award is to recognize those who have demonstrated outstanding skill and knowledge in practicing sound management and care of rangeland resources. ***This is a competitive award, and only one will be given each year.*** This award is linked to the ranch. Once a ranch has received the award, it is not eligible to receive it again. If more than one ranch is owned and/or operated by the same person, each ranch is eligible. Nominations shall be made by persons who are well acquainted with the ranching and range management practices of the nominee. Nominations may be made by members of TSSRM or by non-members. All nominations must have concurrence by two members of TSSRM who agree that the nominee is truly deserving of this recognition.

The ORS award is a joint award given by TSSRM and Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association. The purpose of this award is similar to the ORM award; however, this award recipient **must be a member of TSCRA**. Membership in the TSSRM is desirable but not specifically required. **The ORS Award Winner** will be recognized during the Texas Section Society for Range Management’s Awards Luncheon during its annual meeting. Award nominations forms can be found at the Texas Section SRM website under the “Section Awards” tab or can be found at:

ORM Award: http://texas.rangelands.org/awards/TSSRM_ORM_Nomination.pdf

ORS Award: http://texas.rangelands.org/awards/TSSRM_TSCRA_ORS%20Award%20Nomination.pdf

Please send complete nominations in by June 1, 2010 to:

Jeff Goodwin
1511 Wordsworth Dr.
Cleburne, Texas 76033

Appreciating Juniper

By Steve Nelle

Few plants evoke as much emotion as juniper, aka “cedar”. There are seven different species of juniper in Texas, but two of have gained the most notoriety – blueberry juniper and redberry juniper. The main characteristic of these plants that draws so much attention is their unparalleled success and tenacity. Like the coyote, juniper not only survives, but even thrives, no matter what we do to keep it under control. This article will highlight why these two species of juniper have become so widespread and will describe some of their seldom mentioned attributes.



Photo courtesy of Jeff Goodwin

First, a few facts about these two types of juniper: There are separate male and female trees. The male trees produce pollen, and approximately one year later the ripe berries appear on female trees. Juniper is an evergreen, with leaves that persist for three to seven years before they fall off. Junipers produce various kinds and amounts of aromatic chemical compounds that give the leaves, berries and wood their distinctive cedar smell. The berries are readily eaten by a variety of birds and mammals and the seed are usually eliminated intact. This is the primary way that juniper spreads. The viability of the juniper seed is relatively short-lived, but there are always enough live seed around

for the next generation. The great natural enemy of juniper is fire.

Blueberry juniper, also called Ashe juniper or mountain cedar is the most widespread kind of juniper in Texas. It is primarily native to the Edwards Plateau, but also occurs in parts of north Texas and west Texas as well as Oklahoma, Arkansas and Mexico. The tree was considered an extremely valuable commodity by early settlers who depended upon the durable wood for building material. Even today, there is no better fence post than a heartwood blueberry post, which will last 50 to 100 years. As these early settlers quickly learned, blueberry is a non-sprouter. Once the tree is cut, it dies, roots and all.

Blueberry juniper, contrary to popular belief, was always common across large parts of the Edwards Plateau. The vast canyon-lands and steep hillsides of the Hill Country have supported dense woodlands of juniper and oak for thousands of years. It is an unfortunate myth which says that blueberry juniper is an “invader” species which does not belong in central Texas. The journals of the early explorers are replete with concise accounts of the widespread historical extent of juniper. At the same time, it must be understood that there were also large areas of savanna and grassland in the region, especially on the more level and rolling terrain.

Redberry juniper was also historically common across parts of its range which includes the western Edwards Plateau, Rolling Plains, Trans Pecos and the caprock and canyons of the panhandle. It also grows in adjacent New Mexico and Oklahoma. Redberry juniper was formerly restricted to shallow or steep sites, but was not

common in the deeper soils or rolling terrain. Unlike its cousin, redberry juniper is a prolific stump sprouter. This makes it more difficult to control.

Despite the significant historical extent of juniper, it is clear that both species have greatly increased in density in the last 100 years. Their original habitat was mostly the shallow, rocky and steep canyons and hillsides, where they were somewhat protected from natural fires. In the last 100 years, the predominant grazing practices greatly reduced the amount of grass available to fuel these fires. As a result, fire, the natural enemy of juniper was largely eliminated. It has been this decrease in the grass and the corresponding lack of fire that has allowed both species of juniper to migrate out of the canyons and away from the hillsides and spread into areas that were formerly open grasslands.



Photo courtesy of Jeff Goodwin

Anytime one species of animal or plant un-naturally dominates an area at the expense of other native species, it poses problems. This increase in juniper density has caused significant

problems to livestock producers as well as wildlife managers. Even urban dwellers have become aware of the juniper problem, especially as it relates to the availability of water. While there are currently as many questions as answers to the juniper dilemma, it is clear that there is too much juniper in Texas.

Despite the significant problems caused by excessive juniper, its beneficial attributes are sometimes overlooked. Juniper serves admirably as cover and protection for a large number of wildlife species. No doubt, the distribution of white-tailed deer is at least somewhat tied to the abundance of juniper cover. Deer and livestock also eat moderate amounts of juniper. While it may be properly argued that juniper is not a preferred browse, it is evergreen and therefore available yearlong, even in the harshest years. In a study conducted in the western Edwards Plateau, redberry juniper made up 11% of the annual goat diet, 13% of the sheep diet and 26% of the deer diet in 1992. Overall, it was the number 2 plant in the combined diet of these animals. In the limestone soils of Llano and Mason Counties, blueberry juniper comprised 12% and 17% of the annual deer diet respectively and as high as 40 to 60% during parts of the winter. In the Trans Pecos region, redberry juniper was one of the top 10 plants eaten by mule deer both in the Guadalupe Mountains and the Glass Mountains.

No native plant is either all good or all bad. We need to seek to understand, and even *appreciate*, all parts of the ecosystem, their function, and why they may increase or decrease. In the case of juniper, we know why it has increased. It is also pretty well understood that the re-introduction of fire must be an important part of any successful juniper management program. Proper grazing and stewardship practices on rangeland must likewise be an essential part of a long term solution.

Texas Section SRM Awards

One of the functions of a professional society is to properly recognize members who make significant contributions to the profession. The TSSRM Awards Committee is now accepting nominations for the following five awards:

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Outstanding Contribution to Rangeland Management | Fellow Award |
| Outstanding Achievement | Outstanding Young Range Professional |
| Special Recognition Awards | |

Award categories, criteria and nomination format can be found on the website:

<http://www.rangelands.org/texas/awards.htm>

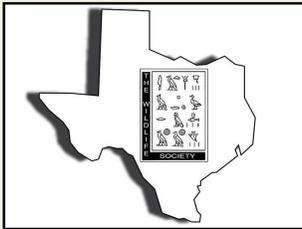
The deadline to have nominations into the Awards Committee is:

June 1, 2010 for the Outstanding Contribution to Rangeland Management and the Fellow awards, and August 15, 2010 for the Outstanding Achievement, Outstanding Young Range Professional and the Special Recognition Awards.

If you know of any deserving folks for these categories submit completed nominations to Tim Reinke, Chairman, at:

Tim W. Reinke
312 S. Main Rm. 308
Victoria, Texas 77901 or
tim.reinke@hotmail.com

The Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society Invites You to the Best Week of Your Summer



**July 11-17, 2010
Welder Wildlife Refuge
Sinton, Texas**

The Wildlife Conservation Camp focuses on exciting hands-on activities with presentations led by wildlife professionals from across Texas. The camp is open to high school students who have completed the 9th grade or higher. Subject matter will

include wildlife and plant identification, wetland and coastal habitats, hunting as a management tool, species diversity, conservation ethics, wildlife capture and census techniques, wildlife tracking, predator-prey dynamics, white-tailed deer management, fishing, hunter safety, shooting skills and much more. Campers especially enjoy the opportunity to interact with wildlife professionals and college students majoring in a variety of wildlife and conservation fields. Students considering careers in the natural sciences are strongly encouraged to attend!

Now in its 16th year, the Camp will be held July 11-17, 2010 at the Welder Wildlife Foundation Refuge located near Sinton, Texas. The Welder Refuge is a 7,800-acre privately owned and operated wildlife refuge and research facility with on-site lodging and dining facilities. The Refuge is home to coastal wetlands and south Texas vegetation which boasts a plethora of wildlife including waterfowl, white-tailed deer, lizards and snakes, coyotes and bobcats, hawks and owls, and hundreds of species of songbirds. Campers will have the opportunity to view and study these animals on the Refuge.

The camp is sponsored by the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society. The Texas Chapter, a nonprofit, scientific and educational organization, represents professionals and students dedicated to sustainable management of wildlife resources and their habitats. Founded in 1937, the Chapter's parent organization, The Wildlife Society, has 9,600 members in 60 countries www.wildlife.org.

To learn more about the Texas Chapter and the Wildlife Conservation Camp, or to download an application, visit the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society's website www.tctws.org or click [Conservation Camp](#).