



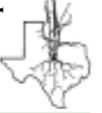
Photo by Jeff Goodwin



PUBLISHED BY THE TEXAS SECTION SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT



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



NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2010

Volume 62, Number 6

President's Notes



**Bill Pinchak, Ph.D.
President, TSSRM**

My term as President of the TSSRM has drawn to a close. Never have I been more honored to represent a group as I am to have served you an officer over the last three years. As there are too many members to thank individually in this letter, let me say each of you has contributed to my pleasurable and fulfilling year as President. The momentum we established this year focusing

on member needs must be maintained as we move forward. We must remain committed to ascertaining members' professional needs to remain relevant. Dare we lose sight of this focus and commitment; we will lose the heart and soul of our profession in general and our Section specifically. There is no greater professional good we can serve than to commit to the continued engagement of professional land managers at all stages of the careers to be their go-to professional society. Let us remain committed, focusing on professional relevance going forward.

May all of you have a safe and joyful holiday season. Let us bring in 2011 with a clear vision of our profession and our commitment to professional land managers.

Regards,

Bill Pinchak

The Inside Story...

- Final Thank You From The Editor
- Using Your Senses
- Richardson Native Plant Garden at Junction
- Outstanding Students
- Plant ID Contest Winners
- Burning - Good or Bad for Wildlife
- 12 Miscellaneous Thoughts While Waiting for It to Rain
- Lehman on Grazing and Bobwhites
- Outgoing Officer and Directors
- Thank You, Odessa

Texas Section Officers and Directors

William E. "Bill" Pinchak, *President*

3515 Beaver St
Vernon, TX 76384-6555
H: (940) 553-3880 O: (940) 552-9941 x242
F: (940) 553-4567
E: w-pinchak@tamu.edu

Matthew W. "Matt" Wagner, *First Vice President*

4200 Smith School Rd
Austin, TX 78744-3218
H: (512) 292-8285 O: (512) 389-4778
F: (512) 389-4593
E: matt.wagner@tpwd.state.tx.us

Ken Cearley, *Second Vice President*

P.O. Box 60275
301 23rd St, Room 6
Canyon, TX 7901
H: (806) 558-2472 C: (806) 670-6070
F: (806) 651-5761
E: kcearley@ag.tamu.edu

Melony C. Sikes, *Past President*

16061 Fitzgerald Drive
San Angelo, TX 76904
H: (325) 835-3025
E: melonytssrm@zipnet.us

Natalie G. Wolff, *Secretary*

Administrative Handbook, Website
107 Wyoming Blvd
Pleasanton, TX 78064-4401
C: (210) 288-6898 F: (830) 569-6140
E: tssrm_secretary@yahoo.com

Robert Moen, *Treasurer*

PO Box 43
Sonora, TX 76950-0043
H: (325) 387-2942 O: (325) 387-3168
F: (325) 387-5045
E: rmoen@sonoratr.tx.net

Scott James Petty, *Director 2008-2010*

Petty Ranch Company
1200 St Hwy 173 N
Hondo, TX 78861-6511
H: (830) 741-3969 F: (830) 537-5466
E: scottjpetty@mindspring.com

Douglas J. "Jeff" Goodwin, *Director 2008-2010*

Newsletter Editor
4321 W Hwy 22
Corsicana, TX 75110
H: (254) 968-7311
E: jeff.goodwin@yahoo.com

Diaz W. Murray, *Director 2009-2011*

F Bar Springs Ranch, LLC
2510 Beefeater Drive
Wichita Falls, TX 76308
O: (940) 696-2815 C: (940) 967-7079
E: diazmurraytx@msn.com

Kent Ferguson, *Director 2009-2011*

PO Box 478
Valley Mills, TX 76689-0478
O: (254) 742-9886
E: kdferguson2331@yahoo.com

Linda Campbell, *Director 2010-2012*

6204 Salcon Cliff Drive
Austin, TX 78749
W: (512) 389-4395 C: (512) 426-0127
E: linda.campbell@tpwd.state.tx.us

Tony Dean, *Director 2010-2012*

226 Oak Ridge St
Jacksboro, TX 76458
W: (940) 538-4681 H: (940) 567-5396
C: (940) 567-1528
E: tony.dean@tx.usda.gov

Lee A. Knox, *Archivist*

361 Foothill Rd
Abilene, TX 79602
H: (325) 692-1026
E: leeaknox@yahoo.com

Final Thank You from the Editor

TSSRM Members,

It has been an absolute honor and privilege to serve as your *GrassRoots* newsletter editor for the past 5 years; it has been a truly rewarding experience. Over the past 5 years, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with some of the best people in the state of Texas, people who have a true passion for their work and have a great respect for rangelands. I've always been told that "good things will happen when you're surrounded by good people", this is very much a case in point for my tenure as your newsletter editor. I want to personally thank each of you who submitted articles, pictures, events etc., for submission to the newsletter; it's through your efforts that our newsletter is pertinent and informative. I want to personally thank Charles Anderson for providing me the initial opportunity to become more involved. Additional thanks are to be given to Alice Westmoreland for her dedication and service to the newsletter for the past 15 years.

I'm passing along the torch to a young man who is very passionate about rangelands and exceedingly enthusiastic about his work. Tyson Hart is a Rangeland Management Specialist with NRCS in Nacogdoches, Texas and will be taking over the newsletter reins in January 2011. Tyson is a very dedicated and motivated individual and will do a wonderful job in his new role for the Section. A small sample of his energetic approach can be viewed in his article in this edition entitled "Using Your Senses".

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to be involved and for all the kind and encouraging words over the past 5 years. I look forward to continuing to serve the Section as your 2nd Vice President in 2011.

Respectfully,
Jeff Goodwin

Upcoming Events

2011 SRM Meeting - Billings, MT

2011 TSSRM Annual Meeting - San Angelo

2012 TSSRM Annual Meeting
Fredericksburg

2013 TSSRM Annual Meeting - Ft. Worth



Using Your Senses

By Tyson Hart



Sagewort and Ragweed Similarities

The aromas plants produce are an easy way to pick your plants. When having trouble deciding between Louisiana sagewort (*Artemisia ludoviciana*) and ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya*), crush the leaves, and have a sniff. Sagewort has an instantly recognizable odor, very different from ragweed. The crushed leaves of skunkbush sumac (*Rhus trilobata*) leave a foul fragrance, and most plants in the mint family (Lamiaceae) are refreshing.

Using taste to identify is often overlooked. A recent lick of white tridens (*Tridens albescens*) and a bite of wood sorrel (*Oxalis spp.*) left a sour taste. To cure the sourness, putting Madagascar dropseed (*Sporobolus pyramidatus*) on the tongue quickly provided a salty snack. For desert, a sip from a honey-suckle (*Lonicera sp.*) did the trick. Use caution though, a poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) popsicle was never developed for a reason.

A challenge arises when using sounds to distinguish plant species. Conjuring memories of walking past Button Eryngo (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) in the winter can present quite a scare. When the seed pods dry in the winter, carelessly brushing against a plant can cause a whipping action imitating the unmistakable rattling of a feared snake. Use all the senses. While sight will always be the most common identifier, using the other four senses will enhance your identification skills, especially in the field.

Plant identification is a passion shared by many. No greater feeling exists than keying out a plant for 30 minutes and finally confirming a new personal discovery. When using a key, most characteristics are based upon ocular observations. Common features include compound or simple leaves, yellow or red flowers, radial or bilateral symmetry, etc. Too often the others senses are left forgotten.

Touching plants ranks second for identification. A quick slide of fingers down a Texas wintergrass (*Nassella leucotricha*) leaf blade feels like sandpaper. Noseburn (*Tragia spp.*) may not burn the nose, but the leaves burn sting exposed skin when touched! Bitter sneezeweed (*Helenium amarum*) can quickly be identified from common sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*) by rubbing a portion on the forearm (bitter burns). Lime-prickly ash (*Zanthoxylum fagara*) can give rise to a tingling sensation when placed between cheek and gum.



Noseburn (*Tragia spp.*)

Richardson Native Plant Garden at Junction

By Dr. Barron S. Rector



Richardson Native Plant Garden Dedication and recognition of the Youth Range Workshop contribution to establishing 58 native grasses in the garden

Youth Range Workshop youth participants and 14 Directors were asked to bring a native grass from their area of the state for planting in the garden. On June 21, Workshop Directors and youth worked with Megan to plant 58 native grasses at the Lantana Lab located on the property of the Texas Tech University Junction Campus. Megan established a drip irrigation system and watering regime for the garden from a newly established rain water harvesting system on the Lantana Lab building. The rain water harvesting system was designed by Texas Section SRM member Billy Kniffen.

On August 28, a dedication ceremony for the Richardson Native Plant Garden was held on the site. The native plant garden was named in honor of Scott and Martha Richardson. Scott and Martha were leaders in forming the Western Edwards Plateau Texas Master Naturalist



Dedication of Richardson Native Plant Garden at the Texas Tech University Center at Junction (pictured l to r: Dr. Megan Dominguez, Martha Richardson, and Scott Richardson)

Chapter. Martha was on the TTU Junction Campus staff for 25 years and was Program Director. Scott was a school teacher in Junction for 23 years prior to retirement. Both have been actively involved in community activities but are true lovers of Texas' natural resources.

As part of the dedication ceremony, Dr. Dominguez recognized the effort of the Texas Section Society for Range Management Youth Range Workshop with a permanent plaque. TSSRM Past President and Youth Range Workshop Co-coordinator Barron Rector participated in the dedication activities and preached on the value of native grasses and their relationship to a healthy water cycle and range resource. Participants took a tour of the grasses and learned about plant naming. Youth Range Workshop participants will continue to be involved with this unique project and bring native plants from various areas of the state for planting in a garden which will be used to teach visitors about native range plants. When you get a chance and you are in the Junction area, please come by and see the fruits of this effort. As a final note, Dr. Megan Dominguez will begin a new job on September 1 as the Extension Range Specialist for District 11 at the TAMU AgriLIFE Research and Extension Center at Corpus Christi.

For the past year, Dr. Megan Dominguez has served as a research Post Doc at the Texas Tech University Center at Junction. Her post doc is in the area of Environmental/Natural Resource Education. Early on Megan noted that the TTU Junction property did not have any demonstration areas for encouraging on-site educational opportunities. She developed a plan for creating a native plant garden and acquired grants from The Hal and Charlie Peterson Foundation, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, and the Llano River Field Station. The native plant garden will ultimately have plants from all of the Texas vegetation areas and include grasses, forbs, shrubs and trees.

Although Texas Master Naturalist volunteers with the Good Water Chapter are helping with the building and maintenance of the garden, Megan invited the TSSRM Youth Activities Committee 2010 Youth Range Workshop to be involved in this project. The 45



Richardson Native Plant Garden Dedication and recognition of contribution by the Texas Section Society for Range Management Youth Range Workshop (pictured l to r: Dr. Barron Rector, Dr. Megan Dominguez)



2010 Youth Range Workshop participants planting native grasses in the Richardson Native Plant Garden at Junction, Texas.

Outstanding Students



**Bill Wyche
Scholarship
Recipient
Chase Taylor
of Texas Tech**

Jorge Molina
Texas A&M Kingsville

Bradly Dietert and Laura Stapper
Texas A&M

Zach Borroum and Jake Halfmann
Angelo State

Josh Britt and Jimmy Wilcox
Texas Tech

**Chris Jackson
and William Greenwood**
Sul Ross

Plant ID Contest Winners



**FIRST PLACE TEAM -
Texas A&M**

**Bradly Dietert, Kenna
Brooks, Beth McMahon,
Bryan Tarbox**
Coach - Bob Knight



**SECOND PLACE TEAM -
Texas A&M - Kingsville**

**Travis Muckleroy, Jorge
Molina, Josh Pearson,
Carlos Gonzales**
Coach - Chase Currie



**THIRD PLACE TEAM -
Texas Tech**

**Josh Britt, Chase Taylor,
Braden Johns**
Coach - Robert Cox

Individual Plant ID Winners

First Place - **Kenna Brooks**
Second Place - **Beth McMahon**
Third Place - **Bradly Dietert**

Burning — Good or Bad for Wildlife?

By Steve Nelle

HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Quail

- Small home range; 20 to 40 acres
- Nest Cover – basketball size clumps of grass left from previous year; 300 per acre
- Loafing Cover – dense low brush such as lotebush, sumac, algerita, elbowbush; 10% canopy
- Food – weed seed and insects

Turkey

- Very large home range; 10,000 + acres
- Roost areas – groves of large mature hardwoods, often in bottomlands
- Nest cover – patches of tall dense cover of grass, weeds and brush;
- Food – greens, fruits, berries, seeds, insects

Deer

- Medium size home range; 500 to 2000 acres
- Cover – deer prefer large areas of moderate to dense brush interspersed with small openings; especially important for mature bucks. Fawning cover consists of areas of tall grass
- Food – forbs, browse, mast (acorns, mesquite beans, pricklypear apples)

IMPACTS, CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Quail

- Large complete burns decrease nest cover in short term
- Hot burns generally decrease loafing cover for 3 to 5 years
- Burning can increase or decrease quail food depending on rainfall and season of burn
- Burn small plots to create weed patches
- Disk internal fireguards to protect loafing cover areas and stimulate weeds
- Avoid very hot large scale burning
- Grazing management is critical

Turkey

- Turkey can easily move off site even if nesting cover is removed
- Turkey food production is increased following burn, especially if normal rainfall
- Avoid very hot fires in bottomland roost areas
- Avoid very hot large scale burning

Deer

- Large, hot fires can decrease cover for several years and decrease resident deer numbers
- Fire will usually greatly increase the

availability of browse

- Fire will improve the nutritional quality of browse
- Fire is Nature's Food Plot for deer
- Fire will attract deer; concentrated deer browsing can be a severe problem
- Burn large areas, to minimize concentration, but be careful about loss of cover.
- Burning of dead cedar piles will damage large desirable nearby trees
- Manage deer numbers and livestock grazing very carefully for several years following burn

SUMMARY

1. Plan a burn ahead of time with a specific and intentional purpose in mind.
2. Understand both the positive and negative impacts of the fire.
3. Consider how burning can be done to maximize the positive effects and minimize the negative effects.
4. Evaluate whether or not you can afford the loss in grazing.
5. Be aware that a hot fire followed by poor rainfall can kill grass, cause soil erosion and damage a pasture for several years.
6. Don't burn according to a date on a calendar. Wait for the right conditions to achieve your stated purpose.
7. Be realistic in your expectations.
8. Is burning good or bad for wildlife??

Answer: ***It depends***

- a. Species of wildlife
- b. Type and size and intensity of burn and how it is conducted
- c. Rainfall after fire
- d. Grazing management after fire



12 Miscellaneous Thoughts While Waiting for It to Rain

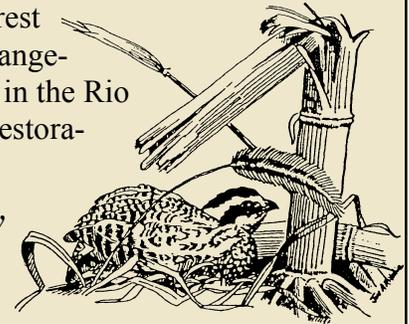
By Dr. Jake Landers

1. Walking upright, harnessing fire and a written language were consequential achievements in human evolution and history, and we seem to be ignoring all three at the present time.
2. Do you think a pollen grain should give up when its chance of making a kernel of corn is 1 in 10 million; or is that why you play the lottery?
3. Think of the mixed emotion of a red ant in the mouth of a horned toad, wet and cool for the first time all day.
4. How long must a rock wait until it's turned over by an armadillo?
5. Don't you know it's hard to be humble when your mind soars on the wings of a buzzard!
6. Grass grows for its own benefit, but not according to the cow.
7. Grass comes in many colors, green is my favorite, but the most common in west Texas is a dry yellow brown.
8. The humiliating thing about controlling Mesquite on rangeland is the success it has in avoiding it.
9. I wonder what goes through a hungry buzzard's mind circling over a 5-day old sheep carcass.
10. You need to be smart and persistent to control Pricklypear on rangeland; is that why we still see so much of it?
11. Ashe juniper smells delightful only when it's a Christmas tree or when it's burning.
12. Rain falls on everyone, eventually, unless you stay indoors.

Lehman on Grazing and Bobwhites

The late Val Lehman was Wildlife Manager for the King Ranch from 1945 through 1972. Lehman was the most astute bobwhite authority of his time and is still regarded as one of the very finest quail managers Texas has ever seen. His major professional interest was the development of superior resource husbandry in southwestern rangelands. Here is a short excerpt from Chapter 40 of his book "Bobwhites in the Rio Grande Plain of Texas". Chapter 40 is subtitled: Providing for Grass Restoration:

"Little if any southwestern rangeland will support a desirable canopy of tallgrass with satisfying regularity unless it is periodically rested from grazing."



Outgoing Officer and Directors

**"Thank you to our outgoing Officer and Directors
for your 2008-2010 service to TSSRM"**



BILL PINCHAK, Outgoing President



JEFF GOODWIN, Outgoing Director



SCOTT PETTY, Outgoing Director

Thank You, Odessa

Melony Sikes

Thanks to the Odessa Annual Meeting Team for putting on an outstanding meeting! It was very refreshing to see so many young people there. This annual meeting team has a long-running track record for hosting very successful annual meetings. They were part of the plan when Nacogdoches and Beaumont were selected back to back, as the Board of Directors knew they would bring us back up that next year.

We are a very educated group, so I want to make sure you have the facts. Beaumont was never slated to be a moneymaking meeting. Some predicted we would lose money; my goal was to have a first class meeting and break even. We did make a profit thanks to those of you who attended the meeting and contributed in different ways. The board and officers were aware of the plans for Beaumont well in advance. It was an extreme challenge to put on a meeting in a location where we did not have any members.

I am personally at peace now that we have come full circle thanks to the Odessa Team, and we are back in a comfort zone on our day-to-day finances. It takes quite a bit of money to run the Section each year, and we have come to rely on our Annual Meetings for our fund raising. Thank you so much for all of the effort you put into making the Odessa Meeting a success in every way!

Merry.
Christmas



Texas Section
Society for
Range Management