**Texas’ Flora and Fauna:**

Pronghorn Antelope

Pronghorn are unique, highly specialized, icons of the prairie. Being the only remnant species of a family that evolved millions of years ago, pronghorn are the ultimate symbol of perseverance and adaptation. In more recent time, pronghorn inhabited much of Texas, west of the 97th meridian, and numbered in excess of a million animals. At the turn of the 20th century, dramatic land use changes and unregulated hunting caused a marked decline in numbers. The increase in density of woody plants throughout the southwest also transformed much of the state’s grasslands to woodlands or savanna type vegetative communities, which were less desirable for pronghorn. By the 1920’s the statewide population had reached a record low of only 2,500 animals.

Because of successful translocations and regulated hunting, the Texas population burgeoned to an all-time high of 25,000 in 1987 with about 70% of the state’s herd residing in the Trans-Pecos. Research indicates that Trans-Pecos populations have a significant positive correlation with precipitation. For example, as annual precipitation increases populations grow and vice versa. During the drought of the late 90’s Trans-Pecos populations decreased to about 5,000. However, populations rebounded to about 10,000 in 2007 when normal range conditions returned. The following spring and summer would start a “perfect storm” that brought pronghorn numbers spiraling downward. Dry conditions and a late freeze in 2008 sparked a drastic decline in the Marfa Plateau. This loss was coupled with virtually no fawn recruitment in 2009 and 2010. Now the Trans-Pecos population has reached an all-time record low since the 1940’s and the region’s herd only comprises about 30% of the state’s total estimate.

Numerous factors, such as precipitation, habitat quantity and quality, barriers to movements, and predation influence pronghorn populations. Although, in 2009 and 2010 when abundant rainfall replenished the range, pronghorn numbers in the Marfa Plateau did not respond. In fact, fawn crops during summer surveys estimated only 9 fawns per 100 does in 2009 and 5

Continued on Page 3
A Message from the President

I am always impressed with the quality of our annual conferences: from the thought-provoking plenary sessions, to the phenomenal number of presentations and posters, to everything else that happens during those 4 days. This year was no exception as Past President Louis Harveson and his team of committee chairs hosted an OUTSTANDING meeting in San Antonio. Last report I heard there were over 525 folks registered, a true testament to the value of the Texas Chapter. Louis and his team are to be commended for such a fine effort.

This commitment and effort does not go unnoticed outside of Texas. Carol Chambers, our SW section representative, and Shannon Pederson from TWS headquarters, were in awe...OK, maybe I’m bragging a little, but both had many positive comments. They were most impressed by the number of students in attendance. Shannon pointed out that we have the largest membership of a state chapter and host one of the largest annual state chapter meetings in the nation. I hope we keep it that way.

I am truly honored to take over as president of such a fine organization. However, no person could lead this organization alone and I am blessed to have an exceptional Executive Board to help us through the next year. I welcome several new faces to the board, including Tyler Campbell, Board-Member-At-Large; Tim Fulbright, Secretary; and Matt Wagner as Vice President. Louis Harveson moves on to join the ranks of a distinguished group wearing a Past President name tag. Well, Louis you deserve it after all your dedicated service to the chapter. Wear that badge with honor.

It has been said that good things come to those who wait. The Texas Chapter has been without an Executive Director for 10 years and now the wait is finally over. I would like to welcome Doug Slack as The Texas Chapter’s new Executive Director. He has already been busy testifying during the legislative session regarding several breeder deer-related bills that could have significant impacts on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Doug has been involved with the chapter for many years and has a deep knowledge of the mission of this organization and its principles. With Doug’s knowledge and expertise he will be an excellent Executive Director giving the Texas Chapter a strong voice on issues facing wildlife conservation in Texas.

Finally, I would like to remind the students and young wildlife professionals early in their careers that the Texas Chapter is your professional organization. What it becomes and where it goes depends on you. I have faith that there are many leaders emerging among you that will soon take the reins not only in the Texas Chapter, but also in the numerous professional organizations and agencies that are responsible for natural resource conservation in the Texas. I would encourage you to become involved in a committee, help out with the Conservation Camp, or any other opportunity you see to continue the Texas Chapter’s excellence in conservation. Don’t pass up an opportunity you may regret later in life. Who knows, these opportunities may open a door with a potential employer, an opportunity to develop your leadership skills, be a part of a team, or just develop professionally. As inventor Thomas Edison once said “Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.” The Texas Chapter is full of opportunities and rewards. I hope you take advantage of them.

Alan Cain, President
fawns per 100 does in 2010. Several necropsies during the spring and summer of 2009 revealed high levels of \textit{Haemonchus} or barber pole worms, which are blood-sucking stomach worms. Adult barber pole worms can draw 0.1 cc of blood/worm/day by attaching to the abomasal wall. Finding these worms in pronghorn is not surprising. Most pronghorn herds have these parasites associated with them, but in much lower numbers. In the late 1960’s, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) biologists documented \textit{Haemonchus} in Trans-Pecos pronghorn at relatively low levels and biologists concluded that the herd was relatively clean of parasites. However, the levels discovered in the necropsied pronghorn were disturbing. Because of this dilemma the Trans-Pecos Pronghorn Working Group was formed. This group, who is composed of landowners, researchers, outfitters, hunters, wildlife veterinarians, and TPWD personnel, first met in September of 2009. Plausible causes for recent declines were discussed and the working group quickly developed a plan to sample hunter-harvested pronghorn for disease surveillance.

After the 2009 season closed, 102 samples were amassed for analysis from across 50 ranches representing 1.8 million acres. Prevalence of \textit{Haemonchus} was high with 95% of the samples analyzed having barber pole worms. The average number per pronghorn was 510 and ranged from 0-4,080 with the highest average being from the Marfa Plateau (777 worms/pronghorn). Blood and liver samples were tested for selenium and copper levels, both of which are important to reproduction. Selenium and copper levels seemed low, in fact, copper averaged 8 ppm (normal levels for deer are 25 to 100 ppm). The results from the initial sampling year were puzzling to say the least. Since more information on the \textit{Haemonchus}-pronghorn relationship and fawn survivability was needed, a collaborative research project with TPWD, the Border Lands Research Institute at Sul Ross State University (BRI-SRSU) and West Texas Chapter of SCI (WTX-SCI) was initiated. In 2010, a total of 95 samples were collected throughout much of the same range that was sampled in 2009. Barber pole worm loads decreased by about 50% compared to 2009. In contrast, mineral levels increased in 2010.

Still unclear as to the reason behind population declines and because of historically low numbers in the Marfa Plateau, a significant restoration project began in early 2011. This project became a reality with significant financial support from the Trans-Pecos Pronghorn Working Group, the Dixon Water and Horizon Foundations, and the WTX-SCI. Using these private dollars, TPWD was able to match with Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds to partner with BRI-SRSU for a 2-year project, which will relocate and monitor 400 pronghorn (200 each year) from the Panhandle to the Trans-Pecos. The project objectives are to reduce Panhandle surpluses, supplement decreasing Trans-Pecos herds, monitor and evaluate success of translocations, study movements and habitat selection of relocated animals, and investigate \textit{Haemonchus}-pronghorn interactions. A sample will be radio-collared and all animals will be screened for diseases, ear-tagged, and given injections. In addition, does will be tested for pregnancy. Researchers are hopeful this project will shed light on reasons for pronghorn declines in the Marfa Plateau and provide management strategies to help these populations recover.

During February 23-26th 194 (18 bucks and 176 does) pronghorn were relocated from the northwest Panhandle to the Marfa Plateau. Preliminary results from the lab indicate transplanted Panhandle pronghorn are mostly clean of barber poles worms. In fact, previous sampling of these herds showed an average worm load that was 6x less than Trans-Pecos pronghorn. Translocated pronghorn are being monitored 3-4 times a week and in the near future will be used to compare barber pole worm concentrations in different seasons (summer and fall) and between resident pronghorn. This May we will also collar 20 fawns from translocated does and compare survivability to resident fawns collared.

Thanks to tremendous support and teamwork from landowners, Trans-Pecos Pronghorn Working Group, TPWD Leadership, BRI-SRSU, wildlife veterinarians, local communities, Dixon Water and Horizon Foundations, and West Texas Chapter of SCI, we continue to learn how to conserve our Trans-Pecos pronghorn resource in the midst of baffling declines. Pronghorn are resilient survivors and have been able to persevere through time; however, modern man has dealt them many obstacles, some of which they have not been able to overcome. I am hopeful with our partnerships we can minimize these obstacles and have the icon of our desert grasslands roaming in healthy numbers again.
After seven long years, the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society found someone to attempt to fill the boots of John Jefferson and serve as Executive Director. That someone is me, Doug Slack. I want to thank the Executive Committee of the Chapter and you the membership for giving me the honor of serving you. I have discovered that I will be quite busy serving the Chapter. John warned me!

My role is to promote a positive image of the Texas Chapter, serve as a spokesperson for the Chapter at wildlife-related events, and promote and carry out the mission of the Chapter. I’ll use this space to let you know what I have been doing during the last quarter, and I may even provide you a few notes and musings regarding my views on conservation and issues confronting us. So here goes.

Since assuming my role at the Texas Chapter meeting in San Antonio, the following are some highlights of my activities: (1) facilitated contacts between family representatives of a deceased former Chapter member and Terry Blankenship, our treasurer, to set up a competitive undergraduate scholarship for Texas Chapter members; (2) met with Katy Smith, Chapter Conservation Review chairperson regarding issues of interest to her committee; (3) attended my first (via telephone) meeting of the Texas Outdoor Partners group; and (4) prepared and provided testimony against legislation that would hamper Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s role in monitoring and managing deer breeder permits (see comments below).

**Transects from the wild**

During my initial communication with you, I want to highlight my first testimony before the legislature in Austin. We are fortunate in Texas to have a wide diversity of habitats and, as a result, a diversity of biota unparalleled in North America. And of course the recreational pursuit of many important game animals has not only made a significant impact on the Texas economy, but has been the engine that has fueled conservation and research programs necessary to be wise stewards of this biodiversity.

Certainly we are all aware of the significant and persistent degradation of habitats that threaten the biodiversity of our state. Similarly we have seen in the last 25 years the appearance of potentially dangerous diseases that threaten parts of our biodiversity. The conservation community has had to take steps to ensure that diseases are managed. And to that end, Texas has wisely made it illegal to import deer into the state and has ensured that individuals with deer breeding permits appropriately mark their animals and document their movements and releases. As I remarked in my testimony before the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, “We do not have devastating infectious diseases in the wild deer herd, or captive herds, precisely because of the vigilance and efforts of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department [and of course responsible deer breeders]. Any legislation that dilutes and places roadblocks to the management of deer permits [administrative processes] in our state not only jeopardizes our wild deer populations, but our wildlife diversity in general. Experiences in other states, such as Wisconsin, show the dangers of compromising disease management on wild deer populations.” For Texas, lax regulations could have devastating impacts on the economy of entire regions of our State. Ultimately, the stewardship of our wildlife legacy requires that we continue to be ever vigilant.

Doug Slack
Austin, TX 78739
Phone: 979.324.3266
dslack.tctws@gmail.com
GREAT NEWS! We are still searching for a few good campers. Spaces are filling quickly so send your applications in today!

Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society’s Wildlife Conservation Camp
July 17-23, 2011
Welder Wildlife Foundation
Sinton, Texas

The Wildlife Conservation Camp will be held July 17-23, 2011 at the Welder Wildlife Foundation near Sinton, Texas. It is sponsored by the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society and is open to high school students who have completed the 9th grade or higher. Camper applications are due by MAY 1st! Please consider nominating any high school students you may know or have worked with as volunteers that would be interested in a natural resource career.

The camp focuses on exciting hands-on activities with presentations led by Texas Chapter members and wildlife professionals from across Texas. Campers study wildlife and plant identification, hunting as a management tool, species diversity, conservation ethics, wildlife capture and survey techniques, wildlife tracking, predator-prey dynamics, white-tailed deer management, fishing, hunter safety, shooting skills and much more. This year campers will experience the UT Marine Science Institute’s Research Vessel Katy.

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!

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 http://site.tctws.org/users/wildlife/doc/2011conservationcamp.pdf for an application/brochure.

ATTENTION STUDENT CHAPTER ORGANIZATIONS! Please consider sponsoring a meal during the Wildlife Conservation Camp. Not only does this support the TCTWS, but gives your university chapter an opportunity to advertise to high school students in the market for a natural resource college. A lunch sponsorship is $200 and dinner sponsorship is $300. Please contact Megan Dominguez (MKDominguez@ag.tamu.edu, 361-265-9203) for additional information or a donation address.

SEND APPLICATIONS TO:
Wildlife Conservation Camp
ATTN: Dr. Jim Gallagher
PO Box 1849
Uvalde, TX 78802
jfgallagher@ag.tamu.edu
April 2011

I had a chance to visit with many of you at the recent Arizona/New Mexico or Texas Chapter meetings in February. Since then I attended the March Council meeting in Kansas City and have news to report. The Southwest now has a member on the Certification Review Board (CRB). Scott Lerich is Southwest Regional Biologist with the National Wild Turkey Federation and was selected to serve for 3 years on the CRB. Scott is based in New Mexico, and travels a lot among our states so knows the area and TWS members well.

TWS has a strong interest in working with colleagues in Mexico and would like to develop a Mexico Section. Several TWS members in the Southwest Section have already joined a TWS committee to discuss how we might accomplish this. We are identifying people and organizations who work on wildlife issues in Mexico and hoping to talk with them about how TWS can network and collaborate on wildlife management across borders. The Wildlife Professional (TWP) will feature wildlife management along the U.S.-Mexico border in an upcoming issue (Winter 2011). In addition, TWP is developing a list of contacts among Mexican universities and wildlife agencies so we can publish more articles by and about Mexican wildlife biologists and their work. We are also planning to produce Spanish language abstracts of some TWP articles to run online as a way to engage a larger Mexican audience. Contact me if you have an interest in promoting cross border integration.

Plans are moving forward for the IV International Wildlife Management Congress which will take place in Durban, South Africa, July 9-12, 2012. The Board for the Wildlife Environmental Society of South Africa (WESSA) has voted to co-host the Congress with TWS. A program committee is being established by James Cain from New Mexico State University.

The Southwest Section is starting a newsletter! I appreciate those of you who have provided articles. I already have several for our next newsletter. Two Northern Arizona University students, Nick Zakhar and Heather Stehle-Tate, created the look of the newsletter and ‘typeset’ the articles. If you have an article you’d like to submit (300 words or less; pictures welcome) send to me at the e-mail address below. If you are not a member of the Southwest Section but are interested in seeing the newsletter, let me know. We hope to promote membership in the Section with the development of the newsletter, shared meetings with state TWS Chapters, and reestablishment of our web site.

Please send me your questions or comments by e-mail to Carol.Chambers@nau.edu with subject line ‘TWS’. If you prefer, you can send written comments to the address below.

Southwest Section Representative (2012)
Carol L. Chambers
Box 15018, School of Forestry
Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, AZ 86011
FEDEX: 200 E. Pine Knoll Room 116
Phone: (928) 523-0014 Fax: 928-523-1080
Email: Carol.Chambers@nau.edu
Students assist with 2 wildlife translocations

In the past 4 months, Sul Ross State University’s Department of Natural Resource Management and the Borderlands Research Institute in cooperation with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and several conservation organizations have translocated two iconic species. One translocation involved capturing and moving 45 desert bighorn sheep from Elephant Mountain Wildlife Management Area (EMWMA) to Big Bend Ranch State Park. The translocation is part of a nearly 50-year ongoing project to restore desert bighorn sheep in their historic mountain ranges throughout the Trans-Pecos. More recently, 200 pronghorn antelope were captured in the Texas Panhandle and transported over 500 miles to the Trans-Pecos. They were released on the Marfa Plateau to recover severely declining populations in areas where once the highest densities of pronghorn occurred in the state.

Graduate and undergraduate students have been heavily involved in these translocation projects. Students were given the opportunity to assist during helicopter net-gun captures on both EMWMA and the Texas Panhandle. Students were exposed to the science and management that lies behind these translocations. In addition, students networked with wildlife professionals from across the state, as well as interacting with the public and media.

After animals were successfully translocated and released, the science and management had really just begun. Both translocations are also part of student research projects that will examine the success of translocated animals by investigating their survivability, causes of mortality, site-fidelity, movements, home ranges, and several other aspects. Data from these projects are vital to understand what happens to animals after translocation and how it can be more successful. Students have recently been engaged in monitoring the survival, investigating causes of mortality, assisting with fence modifications for more efficient movement of pronghorn and constructing feeding pens to increase survivability and reproductive success of restored pronghorn.

The SRSU Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society or “Range and Wildlife Club” members have been actively assisting with these projects. These opportunities have provided immeasurable experience to the wildlife students. Students are on-the-ground, hands-on, fulfilling the duties as young aspiring wildlife professionals and building those relationships with university officials, wildlife professionals, and private landowners. They are actively learning these topics in the classroom and experiencing it first-hand in the field through these projects.
The TCTWS is requesting a change in annual dues for both student and professional members. A dues increase was discussed during the Executive Board meeting on February 19, 2011 at the annual meeting in San Antonio.

The proposed change would increase **student membership dues from $10.00 to $15.00 and professional membership from $15.00 to $25.00.**

The Texas Chapter **has not had a dues increase in at least 10 years if not longer.** Income generated from the dues increase is important for covering normal chapter expenses, the salary of the Executive Director, and more importantly to help **raise funding for the upcoming celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Texas Chapter in 2014.**

According to Chapter by-laws, changes in annual dues must be voted on by membership. In addition, notification shall be submitted to membership 30 days prior to mailing, e-mailing, or electronically sending an official ballot. **Electronic ballots will be sent sometime in early June.**

Please, keep an eye out for this e-mail and vote on the proposed change. Please make your voice heard.
### Chapter Business

#### TCTWS Committees….looking for a few good men and women!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMITTEE</th>
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<th>EMAIL</th>
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<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Kevin Schwausch</td>
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The 2011 TCTWS Annual Meeting was held on February 17-19 at the El Tropicano Hotel in San Antonio. A Safe-Capture Chemical Immobilization workshop was held just before the conference. The plenary session was on managing public resources on private lands. Speakers were Neal Wilkins from the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources, Carter Smith for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Mark Steinbach for Texas Land Conservancy, Kirby Brown for Texas Wildlife Association, and Fred Bryant from the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute. There were eight Cottam competition presentations, 55 posters, and 73 paper presentations.

**Publication Awards**

**Electronic Media:**  
Leonard Brennan, Fidel Hernandez, and Joseph Sands, editors for: Quail eNews, Published by CKWRI; Kingsville; Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

**Scientific Publication:**  

**Technical Publication:**  

**Book:**  
Conference Awards

Educator of the Year Award

Bart Ballard, TAMUK

Outstanding Achievement Award

Bob Zaiglin, TPWD

Land Stewardship Award

C. W. Hellen Ranches

Honorary Life Member Award

Wesley B. Littrell Family

Executive Director

Doug Slack

Outstanding Technical Publication

Len Polasek & Meredith Longoria, TPWD

Outstanding Electronic Media

Fidel Hernandez, Leonard Brennan, & Joseph Sands, TAMUK

Outstanding Book

David Hewitt & Timothy Fulbright, TAMUK
Conference Awards

Carl Shoemaker Memorial Scholarship

Charly McTee Memorial Scholarship

Colin Caruthers Memorial & Dallas Ecological Foundation Scholarship

Dan Boone Scholarship

Sam Beasom Scholarship

Gary Waggerman Memorial Scholarship

SCHOLARSHIPS

Carl Shoemaker Memorial Scholarship: Justin Hoffman, SRSU

Charly McTee Memorial Scholarship: Marcus Blum, TAMUK

Colin Caruthers Memorial & Dallas Ecological Foundation Scholarship: Thomas Janke, TAMUK

Dan Boone Scholarship: Ryan Luna, Texas State Univ

Sam Beasom Scholarship: Daniel Brown, Texas State Univ

Gary Waggerman Memorial Scholarship: Jennifer Korn, TAMUK
CONFERENCE AWARDS

STUDENT AWARDS

STUDENT CHAPTER OF THE YEAR:
1. Texas A&M University-Kingsville

QUIZ BOWL:
1. Stephen F. Austin University

OUTSTANDING GRADUATE POSTER:
1. Chase Currie, TAMUK

OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE POSTER:
1. Thomas Janke, TAMUK

STUDENT CHAPTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
1. Texas State University
2. Texas A&M-Kingsville

CLARANCE COTTAM STUDENT PRESENTATION AWARD:
1. Joe Holbrook, TAMUK (tie)
1. Shannon Farrell, TAMU (tie)
2. Erin Cord, TAMUK

PLANT ID CONTESTS

COLLEGE STUDENT:
1. Travis Muchlerroy, TAMUK
2. Caitlin Connell, TAMU
3. Kenna Brooks, TAMU

COLLEGE TEAM:
1. Texas A&M-Kingsville
2. Texas A&M-College Station
3. Tarleton State University

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT:
1. Eric Grahmann, TAMUK
2. Kelly Haile, TAMU
3. Steven Goertz, TAMUK

PROFESSIONAL VETERAN:
1. Mark Moseley, NRCS
2. Robert Knight, TAMU
Conference Awards

**ART CONTEST**

**ART:**
1. Eric Grahmann, TAMUK
2. John Young, TPWD
3. John Young, TPWD

**PHOTO CONTESTS**

**CAPTIVE/CONSERVATION:**
1. Jonah Evans, TPWD
2. Marcus Blum, TAMUK
3. Marcus Blum, TAMUK

**HUMOR:**
1. David Morgan, Texas State Univ
2. Stacie Villarreal, TAMUK
3. David Morgan, Texas State Univ

**PLANTS & SCENERY:**
1. David Morgan, Texas State Univ
2. Blake Martin, TAMUK
3. Blake Martin, TAMUK (tie)
3. John Kinsey, Texas State Univ (tie)

**WILDLIFE:**
1. Blake Martin, TAMUK
2. David Morgan, Texas State Univ
3. Marc Ealy, TPWD

**WORK RELATED:**
1. Josh Pearson, TAMUK
2. Blake Martin, TAMUK
3. Curtis Greene, SRSU

**REMOTE CAMERA:**
1. Jennifer Korn, TAMUK
2. John Kinsey, Texas State Univ
3. Ryan Walser, TPWD

**VIDEO**
1. Christian Mungall

**BEST OF SHOW:**
David Morgan, Texas State Univ
BEST IN SHOW

David Morgan, Texas State
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