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FROM THE CEO

NEAL WILKINS

JAVELINAS

“If somewhere in Texas you come across a creature so uncomely as to appear gotten up for the ugliest Texan competition, so cantankerous as to out-do even the crustiest mustang and so pugnacious as to be considered by many in the running for Texas’ most vicious native animal award, you have almost certainly met a peccary or javelina.”

– Del Winiger, in “Explorers’ Texas: The Animals They Found”

Del Winiger’s sentiment certainly expresses a common perception of those that first encounter javelina in the field. However, at least in South Texas, those that have grown to appreciate an environment that favors prickly-pear, mesquite, and other attributes of the brush country might simply agree that javelinas fit the job description of a proud mascot for the region. The javelina does, in fact, serve as the mascot for Texas A&M University-Kingsville, and it seems to be the only university with the proud javelina as its mascot.

Otherwise known as the collared peccary, javelinas are one of only three species of peccary in the world. The others include the white-lipped peccary ranging from southern Mexico to South America, and the Chacoan peccary with a small range in Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay. Fossil records show that peccaries have been in North America for about 37 million years. The



Javelinas are native throughout much of southwestern Texas. They are a good mascot for what it takes to survive the harsh natural environment of South Texas.

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ABOUT US

East Foundation promotes the advancement of land stewardship through ranching, science, and education.

We manage more than 217,000 acres of native South Texas rangeland, operated as six separate ranches in Jim Hogg, Kenedy, Starr, and Willacy counties. Our land is a working laboratory where scientists and managers work together to address issues important to wildlife management, rangeland health, and ranch productivity. We ensure that ranching and wildlife management work together to conserve healthy rangelands.

East Foundation was established with a bequest from the estate of Robert East in 2007. In pursuit of our mission, we use our resources to build future leaders through programs that introduce students to private land stewardship. We invest in future professionals through internships, graduate fellowships, and close engagements with university programs.

We care for our land and are always exploring more efficient ways to get things done and are continuously guided by our values to conserve the land and resources.

We do what's right for the land and the life that depends on it.

now-extinct flat-headed peccary ranged throughout North America during the Pleistocene, and according to many scientists, was among the most numerous medium-sized mammal of the time. Flat-headed peccaries likely went extinct about 12,000 years ago – before human hunters (Clovis people) showed up in North America. So, javelinas are likely the only peccary species to be hunted in Texas ... ever.

NEW RESPECT FOR JAVELINAS

At its annual meeting in December of 2024, the Boone and Crockett Club decided to create a new big game record category for javelina. This is the first new species added to the record-keeping of North America's big game animals since 1998. Until now, javelina were among only a few native big game animals in North America absent from the Boone and Crockett record books. The Texas Big Game Awards, however, have included javelina for many years.

While javelinas no doubt remain unaware of their new status, this designation does represent a sizeable public relations victory for them and may well promote future conservation of javelinas and their habitat.

The Boone & Crockett Club established big game records for North America starting in 1902 with a committee led by Theodore Roosevelt. Early on, these records were important for documenting the condition of North America's big game populations. At the time, much of our nation's wildlife populations were depleted through unregulated hunting and habitat loss. By establishing a uniform standard of measurement that documents the characteristics of mature animals, the published big game records recognized the benefits of wildlife management.


Over time, the Boone and Crockett scoring systems for deer, elk, bighorn sheep, pronghorn, and many other species became the commonly accepted standard for measuring big game in North America. Scoring systems are focused on the symmetry, common configuration, and size of horns, antlers, and skulls. Each species category has its own threshold score for being entered into the records. But that is not all that counts – for eligibility, Boone and Crockett's big game records must only include trophy animals taken under certain ethical standards, a code known as “fair chase.” In this way the Club's recognition promotes not only conservation, but respect for wildlife and self-restraint for hunter-conservationists.

While the Boone and Crockett Club has not yet established the minimum scores for javelina, the scores will likely be based upon the length and width of the animal's skull. This would be a reliable indicator of an individual's health and maturity.

In Texas, 99 of 254 counties allow legal harvest of two javelina per license holder. The southern zone for javelina, including much of the southern and western parts of the state, has a yearlong season. This creates a yearlong opportunity for many hunters. About 30,000 javelina per year are harvested in Texas, and hunting interest appears to be increasing. Furthermore, the javelina population appears to be moderately expanding.

Javelina do have a reputation for smelling bad, and this comes from the strong odor from their musk glands that they use for marking territory and communication among other members of their squadron (group of javelinas). Without careful removal of the musk gland on a javelina's lower back, the meat can become tainted, and this sometimes leads to the rumor that javelina meat tastes bad. In my opinion, with proper care, javelina meat is excellent (a good idea is slow cooking the hams and shoulders in a Dutch oven).

CREATING VALUE

The proposal for creating a new records book category for javelina was supported by a group of professional wildlife biologists from New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas. They concluded in their recommendation that the sum of the outcome for a new record book classification for javelina “would add to the conservation value of javelina and their habitats.” If this is true, then the outcome would also add value for native rangelands in South Texas. As our state's population becomes increasingly disconnected from ranching, wildlife, and the native habitats of working lands, we might do well to engage people in those things that make our world more interesting. Javelinas make native rangelands in South Texas more interesting – and they add value. 





OUR PEOPLE

Just as the East Foundation mission drives our organizational focus, our people are the boots on the ground who work diligently to promote land stewardship through our ranching operations, science-focused research, and informative educational programs. Below are highlights on the foundation's recent hires and program alumni.



DAMIAN MARTINEZ

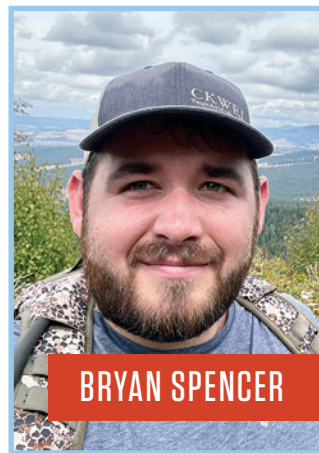
EMPLOYEE PROFILE

Damian Martinez was born in Corpus Christi and raised in George West, Texas. As a generational cowboy, Damian's roots run deep in the ranching world. After honing his skills for nearly a decade in the Santa Gertrudis division at King Ranch, Damian worked for the

Bass Brothers at La Paloma and then joined us at East Foundation in 2024.

As our Unit Foreman at Ranchito and Buena Vista, Damian is responsible for caring for managing cattle herd health, grazing rotations, and ranch operations at those ranches. During his typical day-to-day routine, Damian tends to fences and working pens, gathers cattle, and makes sure mineral tubs and water sources on the ranches are available and in working condition.

Damian enjoys working for East Foundation because he feels that it is a family-oriented ranch. He is glad to continue his family tradition by passing down the cowboy legacy to his children who ride horses and drive cattle down the lane to the working pens he manages. In his free time, Damian and his family compete in ranch rodeos and team roping. He also enjoys going on trail rides. Damian lives with his wife and children on Ranchito.



BRYAN SPENCER

ALUMNI PROFILE

Bryan Spencer is originally from San Antonio, Texas, where he developed a passion for the outdoors through activities like hunting on his family's cattle ranch in the Texas Hill Country. This early connection to the natural environment and ranching led him

to pursue a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at Texas A&M University. As an undergraduate, Bryan participated in East Foundation's annual deer captures, an experience that deeply influenced his academic journey and research interests.

He later joined the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, where he earned a master's degree in Rangeland and Wildlife Management. He collaborated with East Foundation on the same white-tailed deer research project he assisted with as an undergraduate. His research focused on how competition with cattle might affect deer behavior, body fat, and antler size. In this role, Bryan coordinated with undergraduates from Texas and Louisiana universities, providing educational opportunities and fostering hands-on learning experiences. This experience honed his skills as a scientist, communicator, and educator, as he shared his

research with a diverse group of stakeholders both nationally and internationally.


Bryan is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at the University of Idaho, where his research in Alaska and Idaho explores how moose heat exchange with their environment impacts their behavior, nutrition, and reproduction. This research will enhance understanding of how warming climates could potentially impact wildlife populations and the strategies wildlife use to adapt to these changes. This work has introduced Bryan to new environments and challenges, but adapting to the harsh winters has been the most challenging for this native Texan.

Bryan strives to use his research to inform landowners, managers, and policymakers, helping them create multi-use landscapes where both livestock and wildlife can coexist and thrive while helping to mitigate the effects of climate change on wildlife populations.



In his own words:

"I did not realize how impactful East Foundation had been on my early career and development. Opportunities to get such unique hands-on experiences are rare. While we may learn about wildlife handling techniques and biology in the classroom, field experiences leave an everlasting impression. It was during moments like the deer captures that I began to understand the range of career paths available in this field. I am grateful to have been able to offer undergraduate students the same experiences I had as a volunteer, and I hope they walked away with a sense of the exciting opportunities within this career."

"I can't speak highly enough of the people at East Foundation. The deer research project is a large undertaking and can be daunting, however, every person at the East Foundation was so supportive that my success would not be possible without them." 

PROUD PARTNER



Strengthening Beef Advocacy Through Science and Collaboration

As conversations around healthy and sustainable diets continue to grow, ensuring key influencers understand the realities of ranching and beef production is more important than ever. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), as a contractor to the Beef Checkoff, has long advanced research and science-based communications about beef's nutritional benefits on behalf of the nation's beef cattle farmers and ranchers. In coordination with the Texas Beef Council, NCBA recently forged a collaboration with East Foundation to help educate the nutrition research and health and medical expert community on beef's role in healthy sustainable diets.

Through this collaboration, East Foundation provides invaluable hands-on learning opportunities, including immersive educational experiences at San Antonio Viejo, where scientists experience real-world cattle ranching and land stewardship practices. These experiences, along with in-depth discussions with influential nutrition-focused culinary and media experts, as well as presentations at national nutrition conferences featuring East Foundation's Chief Science Officer, Dr. Jason Sawyer, help bridge the gap between agriculture and nutrition science.

These efforts ensure that research and public education on beef's role in healthy sustainable diets are grounded in both science and real-world agricultural expertise. By working together, beef advocacy is strengthened among the nation's top health and nutrition leaders.

For more information on NCBA's Human Nutrition Program, visit www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com/nutrition.



FROM THE RANCH

EDDIE REYNA

East Foundation Ranches operate six ranches across 217,000 acres. Our properties include Tamaulipan Thornscrub, Coastal Sand Plains, and Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes, making it a diverse operating landscape. Each of our ranches serves a specific purpose in our cattle operations, but together they function as an integrated system within our dual calving season approach with both spring and fall calving cow herds.

Keeping an extensive ranching operation running smoothly depends on a strong team of people committed to common values and goals. Our ranch operations team includes 10 Foremen, and each plays an important role in the success of our cattle operation.



Each of our eight Cattle Unit Foremen is accountable for approximately 26,000 acres and roughly 600 head of cattle. They are responsible for the daily care of our livestock, cattle gathering, cattle working, IPT (Individual Plant Treatment, or brush control), and fence repairs. They routinely evaluate livestock and ensure optimal body condition is maintained. They also evaluate forage conditions and determine when it's time for pasture rotation, or if additional supplemental feed is needed, and work to ensure that cattle have ample clean water at all times.

Every Cattle Unit Foreman is responsible for gathering the cattle under their care prior to cattle workings, which can include sorting, branding, castrations, and vaccinations. The time and effort each Unit Foreman spends handling their cattle plays a big role in the success of their gathers.

Understanding cattle behavior, using cubes/feed, and managing access to different water sources are all tools to help efficiently gather cattle in a challenging landscape. Depending on pasture size, it may take one to two weeks to gather a herd to a set of working pens, and each Cattle Foreman takes pride in trying to achieve the highest gathering rate possible for their country and cattle type. In addition to managing the productivity of our cattle operations, Unit Foremen improve the value of our land by implementing individual plant treatment (IPT) brush control techniques and maintaining and improving fencing and working facilities.


While daily operations are most often independent, during our cattle workings, the Unit Foremen all come together as a team. Everyone values the importance of teamwork and the role it plays in smooth, successful cattle workings. Trusting and

supporting one another is important to each team member, and we value and respect everyone on the team. That respect is earned through hard work and creates a culture that is very important to us. We can compare our operation to a giant puzzle, where we must have all the pieces to be able to see the big picture at work. Our water systems and shop foremen are essential pieces of this puzzle when operating at scale. The Water Systems Foreman is responsible for ensuring that we have water supply infrastructure in place for our cattle and wildlife, and for the people who live on and visit

our ranches. Because of the scale of our operations, we also need a reliable fleet of vehicles and equipment in functional condition to be able to operate. Our Shop Foreman keeps the wheels turning – literally.

Without these

important contributions we would not be able to efficiently accomplish our goals.

The role of every Foreman is important in our operation. It takes someone who understands the importance of caring for the land and the animals that live on it. We take pride in the culture and traditions that have been established over the years. We are fortunate to have the chance to work with unit foremen that, in some cases, have been a part of our team for over 50 years. It gives those who have been with East Foundation for less than five years the opportunity to work alongside more experienced members and learn the value of our culture and traditions. Our goal is to create an environment that ensures a foundation for a strong land stewardship culture going forward. 





EDUCATION INSIGHTS



SPARKING CURIOSITY AND INSPIRING STUDENTS

KATARINA JOHNSON

Katarina Johnson is East Foundation's Hebbronville Business Coordinator. She works with our accounting and investment departments, but in addition to her administrative responsibilities, Katarina is passionate about education and community engagement. Below, in her own words, she describes how she assists with our Behind the Gates education program and why she believes the program is significant and successful.

I help with the Behind the Gates education program by leading activities and lessons for K-12 students on topics such as cattle ranching, wildlife management, and land stewardship. I teach these lessons in various formats: in-person at San Antonio Viejo, in classrooms across South Texas, and virtually through Zoom. Additionally, I participate in an incredibly impactful, week-long event called Behind the Gates Field Days. I typically assist with the cattle

or adaptation stations, teaching students about resource availability or about South Texas mammals, their adaptations, and their roles in the environment. This year, I had the opportunity to serve as a facilitator for our Land Stewardship Ambassadors program. In this role, I was able to successfully recruit three promising high school students from two districts that had not previously participated in the program.

Through my work with students of all ages, I have gained valuable insights into the importance of making complex topics like ranching, wildlife conservation, and science both relatable and engaging. Every group of students brings unique perspectives, interests, and learning styles, which have challenged me to continuously adapt and refine my teaching approach with every encounter. Working with these students has contributed significantly to my personal growth. They have




challenged me to expand my knowledge of ranching, wildlife, and science, motivating me to continue learning and deepening my expertise in these areas.

I have also learned that education is about more than just passing along facts — it is about sparking curiosity and inspiring students to think critically. My goal is to foster an environment where students feel empowered to ask questions, make connections, and actively engage in the learning process. Over time, I have come to realize that my role as a leader extends beyond ensuring students learn about cattle or ecosystems; it is about nurturing leadership qualities and encouraging students to never stop learning.

Ultimately, I want students to leave not only with a solid understanding of why these lessons matter but correspondingly share their knowledge

confidently with others and make informed decisions that contribute to responsible stewardship of our land and wildlife.

My experience working with students is deeply important to me because it aligns with my passion for the environment, education, and the values I grew up with. Being able to share my knowledge and witness the growth of students as they engage with these vital topics gives me a sense of purpose. I feel strongly about inspiring the next generation to care for the land and wildlife even if they do not pursue careers in those fields. I enjoy helping students see that everyone plays a role in preserving the land for future generations. By teaching them the importance of land stewardship and its positive impacts on the environment, I feel as though I have a hand in raising a community of individuals who will take care of the land they will inherit. 



ASPIRATIONS FOR OCELOTS: ASSISTING REPRODUCTION

HISTORICALLY, WILD OCELOTS THRIVED ACROSS THE SOUTHWESTERN UNITED STATES, BUT BECAUSE OF HABITAT LOSS AND FRAGMENTATION, OVEREXPLOITATION FOR THE FUR AND PET TRADE, AND WIDESPREAD PREDATOR CONTROL PROGRAMS, THEY BECAME LISTED AS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES IN THE U.S. IN 1982.

Currently, ocelots only occupy a small region along the Texas coast in two known breeding populations within Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge and private ranches in Kenedy and Willacy counties. The viability of these small populations is threatened by their proximity to low-lying coastlines with the risk of catastrophic weather-related disasters and their lack of interconnectivity with ocelot populations in Mexico promoting inbreeding and reduced genetic diversity. Proposed recovery actions include establishing new ocelot populations within historical ranges in Texas, introducing new genetics into existing populations, and investigating the use of assisted reproductive


technologies (ARTs) to establish a genetic resource bank and mitigate declining genetic variation.

Our goals for assisted reproductive technologies are to 1) collect and preserve genetic samples from wild male ocelots through semen cryopreservation, 2) evaluate the feasibility of artificial insemination (AI) and in-vitro fertilization using semen sources from wild Texas ocelots to produce pregnancies in zoo managed ocelots, and 3) develop a breeding plan to utilize natural and assisted reproduction to enhance genetic diversity in new and current ocelot populations in the United States.



Introduction of new genetics into the population can boost their genetic diversity and overall health, allowing them to remain healthy and present into the future. Collection of reproductive cells (oocytes, semen) can allow for the efficient movement of genetics across a landscape, limiting the need for translocation of individuals from one population to the next. ARTs can also be used to address behavioral or physical incompatibilities among suitable breeding pairs, preserve genetic diversity using liquid nitrogen tanks in the event of a natural disaster and population demise, and link wild and human-managed populations without relying solely on removing animals from the wild.

Our trapping efforts for wild ocelots are ongoing, with a purpose of collecting biological samples such as genetic material, collaring to monitor health and movement and gather ecological data to shape our monitoring and recovery program.

From January to March, we captured 15 ocelots (13 males, two females). We will continue trapping efforts through April 2025. Since 2020, we have collected and preserved semen samples from 21 male ocelots, with seven of those being collected and preserved during this current season. In March 2024, East Foundation established a Safe Harbor Agreement for future participation of landowners in ocelot conservation with a new population to be established in South Texas in the future. Construction of the Ocelot Conservation Facility has begun in Kingsville, which will allow for breeding (natural and assisted) and preparation of future offspring for a life in the wild with important survival attributes including hunting skills, fear of humans, and habituation to the South Texas landscape. Our team continues to prepare protocols for facility operations and animal care with a goal of beginning facility operations in 2026. 



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