

Stewards of the Wild – S2E13

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:00:08] Hello. Welcome to a Talk on the Wild Side, your biweekly tour, of all things, wild in Texas. I'm your host. I'm Sandra Rideout-Hanzak.

Andrew Lowery [00:00:16] Howdy. Howdy. And I'm Andrew. Lowery.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:00:19] Hey, Andrew. What have we got new going on this episode?

Andrew Lowery [00:00:22] Well, Sandra, this week, we may be crossing the genre lines. I have a crime for us. As of Tuesday, Nov 8, an individual wanted for a Lacey Act, an Endangered Species Act violation, has turned themselves into authorities in Houston.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:00:36] Oh, no, that's. That's not good. What did this person do?

Andrew Lowery [00:00:40] Oh, no, it's never good. In time, you're violating the Endangered Species Act and the Lacey Act. You've done something very wrong, for one. Yeah. Oh, you know, just interstate commerce of an endangered species. Jaguar, to be specific. And from what I read, the individual in question sold the Jaguar to another person in California for like \$30,000. Right. And then transported the animal across state lines. The animal was then sold again and was then abandoned to animal rescue facility, which was actually what helped authorities be able to capture the people involved.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:01:15] Wow. That is crazy. First of all, it's just crazy to think that you're going to have that kind of animal and you're going to be able to care for it and whatever. But also, I mean, are there people out there who still don't know that it's illegal to, you know, trade? So whatever endangered species. I don't understand what people are thinking.

Andrew Lowery [00:01:37] I really don't understand. I mean, I know we have certain things here in Texas that there are laws that allow for ownership and transport within state lines of certain endangered species. But not big cats. No, not even close.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:01:54] Yeah. And you have to have all the permits and all of that stuff.

Andrew Lowery [00:01:57] So there's, there's rules and regulations and processes. Yes.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:02:03] That's just pretty crazy.

Andrew Lowery [00:02:04] And this was not the process.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:02:06] both the Lacey and the Endangered Species Act, they got there?

Andrew Lowery [00:02:10] Yeah. Would you mind breaking down just in a nutshell, what those acts are for our listeners?

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:02:15] Yeah, sure. Well, the Endangered Species Act people are probably more familiar with than Lacey. The ESA was adopted in 1973, and

that's just to conserve and protect endangered and threatened species and also their habitat. And the Lacey Act is really an old act. It was adopted in 1900, the year 1900, and it just basically prohibits you from taking illegal animals across state lines. So if it's illegal to have it or possess it and take it across state lines, really amps it up.

Andrew Lowery [00:02:57] And it goes for animal parts, too. Yes. It's not just the animal. Right.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:03:00] even the parts, because there are some animals like bald eagles. I don't know if it's still the case, but I know when bald eagles were on the endangered species list, it was illegal to just have a feather off of a bald eagle. Even if you picked it up at the zoo, you know, you could get, you know, like a \$2,000 fine or something just for owning the feather.

Andrew Lowery [00:03:20] So there's even some animals that fall within big game laws, like you could harvest bears, but you cannot harvest the gallbladder because the gallbladder is in some traditional medicine.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:03:30] Right. Wow. Okay.

Andrew Lowery [00:03:32] Well, thank you so much for the refresher, Dr. Rideout. So who are we interviewing today?

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:03:37] Well, today we're going to talk to Katie Spurgin. Katie is with the Stewards of the Wild program, which is a really, really cool, really interesting program here in Texas. And I'm going to let her tell you about the details. So let's just get right to it. Well, we're here today on A Talk on the Wild Side with Miss Katie Spurgin, who is with the Stewards of the Wild program. And so that's where we're going to get started. Why don't you tell us about yourself, Katie, and what you do?

Katie Spurgin [00:04:06] Well, thanks so much, Sandra. Thanks for having me. I'm excited to be here. Well, I am currently the Engagement Manager for Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation. So because of that, I oversee the Stewards of the Wild program and some other fundraising projects like Lone Star Land Stewards with TPWD. But I grew up in Dallas. I'm a native Texan. I grew up hunting and fishing, mainly fishing with my dad, camping and hiking. I was always outside, always loved the outdoors. And I think that a lot of my love for outdoors came from through my love of photography, because I always had a camera in my hand from the time I was, I don't know, six or seven. My parents gave me a camera for a holiday or a birthday, and I started seeing the out the wild things in our wild places through the camera. And that really just instilled this all in me when it came to the outdoors, whether that was in Texas or elsewhere. But yeah, so I've always loved the outdoors and it took me a while to get into conservation professionally. I after school, I taught high school journalism. My background was in communications and public relations, and it took me a while to get here. But I am finally here and I love it.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:05:41] Well, you sound like the perfect person for the job. I want to ask you about--you mentioned the foundation. I want to ask you about the foundation because I think a lot of people know what Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is, and what they do, you know, managing the wildlife and the state parks and other wildlands. But what does the foundation do? Can you tell us what that does?

Katie Spurgin [00:06:03] So Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation is the official nonprofit partner of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. We support the mission of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. That is our mission. We get to raise money for a lot of the extra fun initiatives that Texas Parks and Wildlife is working on, such as the Black Bear Restoration in West Texas, or updating the Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens, Texas. So we do a lot of the fun stuff, but we do help the department when it comes to some events like Lone Star Land stewards. We help them raise money, but we are the official nonprofit fundraising arm.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:06:54] Okay.

Katie Spurgin [00:06:55] But we are a separate entity. And I think that's important for people to understand.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:07:00] Okay, good deal. So we want to talk to you today about the stewards of the water program. Can you tell us what the stewards of the wild program is? How does one become a steward? What? What's the purpose?

Katie Spurgin [00:07:12] Yeah. Stewards of the Wild is a young professionals group. Our mission is to equip Texans aged 21 through 45 to actively participate in the conservation of our wild things and wild places in Texas. How we do that is by providing education, networking opportunities and outdoor experiences. So we have a lot of events. We focus on events and stewards are really the next generation of conservation leaders because they're getting involved. They want to learn more about the outdoors and conservation. So we're kind of preparing them for them to serve on a board of an organization or to become an employee of an organization that's working on conservation. Stewards actually began in 2013. It was a funny story how it began. Two guys in Dallas, Mack McFarland and Josh McKee. They were looking for an organization like Stewards of the Wild and they couldn't find one. So they approached Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and said, "Hey, we have this great idea. Would you guys be interested in helping us?" The foundation said yes, and the rest is history. But it's funny, you know, it came from an external source and it made sense because it is such a unique program. I don't think that often you get like an outdoor element with the social networking professional element. A lot of times those are separate in an organization, so I think it's really unique in that way and special in that way. So our stewards come from all different backgrounds across the state. Some are native Texans, some aren't. But we welcome everyone. People have different levels of experience in the outdoors. Some people are extremely experienced fishermen or hunters or hikers or birders, and then some people are just interested in the outdoors and they want to get more involved. So it really is a range and we have local chapters and then we have the statewide program. So if you want to become a steward, you can become a steward at the Dallas chapter of the Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, Austin, Midland. Or you can become a statewide member and get access to all of those events and all of those happenings.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:09:53] And so anybody in that age group could just volunteer and join?

Katie Spurgin [00:09:59] Anyone can join. And we really do want to increase the diversity of our group. We want people to come that are just interested in the outdoors or just want to get outside more, but they don't know how. Right? This is a perfect organization for those people to join.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:10:13] That's cool. Yeah. It sounds like a great place to start for folks who really don't know where to start. Like you say, they're interested, but they maybe didn't grow up with that family background like you did.

Katie Spurgin [00:10:24] Exactly.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:10:25] A place to start. That's pretty cool. And how would they find you, just Google?

Katie Spurgin [00:10:30] So a lot of people do just find us online. They're looking for something like this and they come across us. You can go to Stewards of the Wild dot org and learn more about us. But we're on Facebook, we're on Instagram. I think our Bryan College Station chapter's on Twitter. A lot of people find us through the foundation. So they come to the department looking to volunteer and then sometimes they're sent to the foundation and that's how they find us. Yeah.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:11:03] Really cool.

Katie Spurgin [00:11:04] Yeah. So we're looking to try to get out there more and spread the word a bit. So anything we can do like this helps.

Andrew Lowery [00:11:14] So, Katie, we have listeners all over the country and I'm wondering if the Stewards program is specific to Texas, or are there similar programs in other states?

Katie Spurgin [00:11:22] Good question. The stewards program is specific to Texas. I have done quite a bit of research and I haven't found anything in other states that's exactly like Stewards. I've found some similar organizations that maybe focus on the social aspect or focus on the outdoors aspects. But I can't find an organization that is like Stewards, and I think that's because it came from this external source, just two guys looking for an organization where they can meet like-minded people, and that's how it came to be. So I think that's a lot of the reason why.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:12:01] Yeah, I was just get ready to say these other states need a couple of folks who want to do this and make it happen.

Katie Spurgin [00:12:08] I know; I've heard that Arkansas has a similar organization, but I haven't looked into that specific organization. So as far as I know, Stewards is very unique.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:12:21] Okay, okay. I can see how somebody who is participating in the stewards of our program would really benefit from it. Are there benefits just to the general public that come out of the program, though?

Katie Spurgin [00:12:37] Yeah. So I think one of the primary benefits is that stewards is creating that next generation of conservation leaders, and it's just educating these young professionals to start understanding the issues that are facing Texas. And we need people who are well versed in conservation issues or conservation leadership so they can become like board members and lead us in the right direction, even if their background is not in a conservation-related, you know, outdoors-related background.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:13:16] Sure. Maybe they're business people or whatever...

Katie Spurgin [00:13:19] Exactly. Exactly. So I think that's one benefit to the public. Another one, we're always looking for service projects, so the Stewards will do a lot of service projects. I know the Fort Worth chapter does an annual fishing trip with kids from a school nearby, and they teach them how to fish. They provide all the tackle. You know, we do service projects like that. And, then we were just down at Powderhorn Ranch last weekend and we did a beach cleanup. So they really range, but they're always looking for service projects. So I think that's another benefit. And then, I mean, Stewards is open to the public. It's open to anyone who's a young professional. And if you join, you're going to learn. And I think that benefits the public. The more we can increase awareness, the better.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:14:13] Yeah.

Katie Spurgin [00:14:14] It's connecting those like-minded people so it can make more of a difference.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:14:18] Mm hmm. What's your favorite thing about the stewards of the water program?

Katie Spurgin [00:14:23] Mm hmm. That's a good question. That's a hard question to answer. Um. I think one of my favorite things is our mentored fishing and hunting programs, because there's something special that happens when you get a group of people together and we've got, you know, say we've got six mentees and six mentors and five volunteer and staff members out at a mentored hunt. There's something special that happens when everyone is connecting with nature at the same time. You develop this camaraderie, just this special bond. And so, I think that's my favorite thing when that happens. It's just so refreshing to see people connect with the outdoors and then connect with each.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:15:16] On these mentor hunts and mentor fishes, where did the mentee, who are the mentees? Who are we mentoring?

Katie Spurgin [00:15:24] So the mentees, they're members of Stewards of the Wild, and they're mainly individuals who either have no fishing or hunting experience or just a little bit of experience. You know, maybe they when they were young, they went fishing with their grandpa at the lake, but they haven't done anything since and they don't know how to start by themselves. So they apply usually in late summer or July, the application goes out. We leave that open for about a month and people apply, and we pick them out and we try to put everyone on a trip. Unfortunately, I think our numbers have gotten so high that we can't do that anymore. But we try our best to get everybody out on a trip.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:16:08] Yeah. Well, that's pretty cool. It seems like that's a good problem to have that you have too many.

Katie Spurgin [00:16:14] So many. Yes, yes. I wish we could do more of them. I mean, they're so wonderful. And once someone has one good experience with the outdoors, I feel like they are hooked, you know?

Andrew Lowery [00:16:27] Would you say that you have a favorite story that you've, you know, had during your time with Stewards of the Wild?

Katie Spurgin [00:16:34] Mm. I think I think I have two. So, one is every year we have an annual dove hunt out in Albany, Texas. It's a big party. And there are hunts as well. But it's also just a big celebration of Stewards of the Wild. And Jesse Griffiths, the last couple of years has been out there, the chef. He's got a restaurant here in Austin. He's wonderful, but he has helped us do a dove plucking contest. So his big thing is using the entire animal. He teaches everyone how to pluck the doves, pluck the individual feathers and leave the skin on. So it's nice and pretty. And so every year we've been doing this. When the contest starts, the feathers are just flying everywhere. It's crazy. It's so funny. I mean, if you stand anywhere near them, you'll wake up with feathers for hair the next day. So I love I love that story or that contest. It's really fun.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:17:47] What's that chef's name again? Jesse.

Katie Spurgin [00:17:49] Jesse Griffiths. Okay. He has a couple of books out. He has a restaurant here called Dai Due. It's he's all about wild game. He's a great, great guy.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:18:01] Well, he might be somebody good to talk to.

Andrew Lowery [00:18:03] I was thinking the same thing.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:18:06] Wild Game. Yeah.

Katie Spurgin [00:18:07] Yeah, I bet you all would love that.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:18:10] Mm.

Katie Spurgin [00:18:12] Yeah. That or I have to say another one of my favorite stories and it's kind of about me... But, we did a women's fishing trip on Lake Athens in the spring of 2020, I think, or 2021; I can't remember. It wasn't during COVID, I think it was afterward, but we had about five women on the lake who had never really fished or didn't have much experience fishing, and it was bedding season for the bass. So we were fishing for bass and we could see the bass on their beds. And, so you try to cast over them and bring your lure into the bed so they hit it. And I was in a boat with a couple of mentees and I was trying to get them to cast. I could see this huge bed and I was like, okay, Cast over there, cast over there. You guys can do it. I gave them probably ten or 15 tries and they just weren't quite getting it there. So I said, okay, I'm just going to throw one over there to see if I could do it. And I throw it over there and I suddenly see this huge bass swim by, and it hits my bait and ended up being a 9 pound bass.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak Wow.

Katie Spurgin I know. So it was really fun, though. They actually loved seeing someone catch that fish. It was a beautiful fish, but I felt so bad. It's like a mentor here trying to help them learn. And of course, I catch this big fish. So that was pretty funny.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:19:48] No, I think that's great. I mean, sometimes we think that fishing is just about luck.

Andrew Lowery [00:19:52] But I will say something—you learn a lot from watching other people catch big fish because then it's like, Oh man, I should have done this and I should have done that because look how easily you just flick it out there and rake it across the bed and wham, they smack it.

Katie Spurgin [00:20:06] Right. But that's you know, that's a skill I learned over, you know, 30 years. It wasn't something I learned just immediately. So, you know.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:20:17] It shows that you know what you're looking at to recognize where that bed is.

Andrew Lowery [00:20:21] Yeah, yeah. No one's like a bass fisher to start out. You have to learn a skill.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak That's right. It's not inherent.

Katie Spurgin [00:20:28] That's for sure. But everyone can learn it. It's not that difficult, you know?

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:20:33] Right. Well, that's a good fish story. So, a lot of young people, I think, would like a career in conservation. Maybe they're not really sure what they could do. Maybe they think game warden, zookeeper, ranch manager, whatever. How would you characterize your career? Is it a career in human dimensions or education or what?

Katie Spurgin [00:20:56] You know, I don't think it would be technically defined as education. I think maybe the human dimension of conservation in a way, because it is all about people. It's all about getting people connected and people outdoors. And I'm not really an educator; I am more of a facilitator. And then we depend on the experts at TPWD and other organizations to be the educators, you know? All right. So I'm ultimately just trying to further that mission of TPWF and TPWD.

Andrew Lowery [00:21:32] So do you think you could give some career advice for someone who might want to do something similar to what you're doing?

Katie Spurgin [00:21:39] Sure. So I'd say never overlook anyone you meet. You never know how that connection can help you do what you want to do. I actually got into, so I joined Stewards of the Wild, I think, in 2018, and I just wanted to get more involved in the outdoors and conservation and, you know, try to make it into a career eventually. And so I joined and I started meeting people and a friend introduced me to someone, a couple of people who now work at the foundation. And those two people ended up being key to me getting this job; they let me know about it. They helped me interview. So never overlook anyone you meet. I mean, keep those contacts and stay in touch. I think that's the most important thing you can do with any kind of career, you know, but especially one that's so, I think, tight knit sometimes in the conservation world in Texas, it is a smaller world than you might expect. You know.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:22:48] It is; even though Texas is a big state, it seems like everybody knows everybody.

Katie Spurgin [00:22:52] So right. It's weird. You run into people all the time. And also just keep trying. Don't give up. Because even though, you know, your dream job isn't open at the moment, it might open up, you know, so never give up and just keep pushing; keep meeting people and keep trying to figure out what you really like to do. You know, I really love to meet people and interact with people and communicate with people because of my

background. And so this ended up being a perfect position for me. So you never know what'll open up.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:23:30] Yeah, that's great. Yeah, just good advice.

Katie Spurgin [00:23:34] Yeah.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:23:35] I love the advice of just the networking advice. It's kind of, you know, like the old hokey "you're only six degrees away from Kevin Bacon."

Katie Spurgin [00:23:46] Yeah.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:23:47] In Texas, actually, conservation, you're probably only three degrees from that person that you need to get to.

Katie Spurgin [00:23:54] Carter-Smith.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:23:55] Yeah.

Katie Spurgin [00:23:59] Yeah. It's funny. It's funny how you just. You'll randomly meet someone one day and never think about them again for two years. But then they pop back up and you say, Oh, I know you. Yeah, you helped me with this and let's do this now. You know, it's great.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:24:15] Yeah, that is great. Well, one of our favorite questions, you know, we always ask folks for a Biology Blunder. And, so I'm wondering if you have a Biology Blunder that you could share with us where things just went awry in the field or with the class or something.

Katie Spurgin [00:24:30] Um, I would have to say, I think the women's fishing trip catching my bass was a bit of a Biology Blunder. I did not mean to do that, but. Recently we had a mentor hunt that was down in southwest Texas. And I was driving and I had been driving all week. And, I put it in the address of the ranch that I thought I was going to. And I drove 6 hours down there and no one was showing up and I realized, hmm, something's wrong here. I'm at the wrong ranch. I was at the wrong ranch and had to drive another three or 4 hours to get here. Is it just, I mean, Texas is big, right?

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:25:26] That's really being at the wrong ranch, though, Katie. That's not like being next door.

Katie Spurgin [00:25:31] Oh, no. I was at the, I was at the ranch for the mentored hunt the following month. So, I was just in the wrong place.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:25:40] I'm here....

Katie Spurgin [00:25:42] Yeah. So make sure you check your address when you put it in. Um, I'm trying to think of something funny out in the field. You know, I think Stewards are really good about safety in the field, and so I can't really think of any, like, real blunders. You know, there's always people, you know, tripping or making a funny joke or something, but I can't think of anything crazy.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:26:11] Yeah, I think being three or 4 hours away from where you need to be is a pretty good blunder. And, you know, it's funny because I'm always kind of concerned that that's going to happen to me. Like if you have to go to a ranch and give a presentation and you're like, "I've never been to this ranch before," you're kind of concerned that you're going to be like completely on the wrong highway and it'll take you to out to nowhere? You're going to be late and you're not going to get there on time, and right?

Katie Spurgin [00:26:38] You're going to get low on gas, and you're out in the middle of nowhere. You don't have cell service.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:26:45] Yeah. End up hitchhiking home, that kind of thing. Yeah, it's always a possibility. Well, is there anything else you'd like to share with us about the Stewards of the Wild program or anything?

Katie Spurgin [00:26:58] Um, yeah. I mean, I think Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation has really incredible projects going on that people should definitely look into to at TPWF dot org. You can find out a lot about that. For example, Palo Pinto Mountain State Park is opening soon. It's 75 miles west of Fort Worth, so that's really exciting.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:27:24] Yeah, it's funny, Andrew and I are smiling at each other because that story is our intro story for...

Katie Spurgin [00:27:32] Oh.

Andrew Lowery [00:27:33] That was the episode before you.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:27:35] Yeah, we're just talking about this State Park that's coming online. How cool is that?

Katie Spurgin [00:27:41] Yeah, I mean, it's so exciting. So we're helping raise money for the park. That's so exciting. And then we've got stuff like the black bear, helping the black bear populations in West Texas, and the Stewards might be able to go out there and volunteer or do some volunteer work. So that's exciting. Maybe see them put a collar on a bear, which.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:28:02] That would be fun!

Katie Spurgin [00:28:03] And then, you know, we have like the gear up for game wardens program, which is awesome. It raises money for the game wardens to get the specialized gear that they need because unfortunately, they just don't get enough money from the government.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:28:22] I had no idea. I didn't even know that was the thing.

Katie Spurgin [00:28:24] Yeah, it's awesome. Austin Taylor runs it this year. We raised, I think more than \$175,000. So that helps them buy boats and drones and like the special equipment that they really could use, but they don't receive because they're just aren't there isn't funding.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:28:44] Funding from the state.

Katie Spurgin [00:28:45] So it's an awesome program. People should look into that. It's on our website, but I think it's really important to know that TPWF is doing some great things because of TPWD and their priorities. So next year is the 100th anniversary of state parks. So that's very exciting that TWD is celebrating that and that every park. So your local park, there will be a fundraiser and you can help your park, which I think is exciting. You know, you can. So like for me, McKinney Falls would be my park says, considering I'm 5 minutes away from it right now.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:29:26] Wow, that one's a pretty one.

Katie Spurgin [00:29:29] Gorgeous, but you can help support your state parks. I think that's exciting. And then, you know, with Stewards, I think the mentored hunting and fishing program is really awesome that we do and, I want people to know that it exists and the application process happens in late summer in July. Okay, so application will open up. If you're interested in that, you can apply and you can find more info about that and the other things that stewards are doing at [stewards of the wild dot org](http://stewards-of-the-wild.org).

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:30:05] Okay, great. Thank you so much for spending time with us today. I learned a lot about stewards and the game warden support and the whole thing. This is an interesting.

Katie Spurgin [00:30:17] Yeah. Yeah. Well, thank you for having me. I appreciate it.

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak [00:30:20] All righty. Well, have a great day. And remember, don't feed the wildlife. A talk on the Wild Side is a production of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute of Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Funding for this project is provided by the Harvey Weil Sportsman Conservationist Award by the Rotary Club of Corpus Christi. Podcast artwork is created by the talented Gabby Olivas. Trey Kendall contributes with his creative talent as well, and editing is conducted by Andrew Lowery.