

Indian Creek Ranch

Emergency Contacts

Fire Rocksprings - (830) 683-4111

Fire Barksdale - (830) 234-3473

Fire Camp Wood - (830) 597-6100

EMS Rocksprings - (830) 683-3305

EMS Camp Wood - (830) 597-4200

Sheriff & Highway Patrol - (830)
683-4104

Border Patrol - (830) 683-2255

Game Warden - (210) 416-2513

Game Warden Reg. Ofc. - (210) 348-7375



Golden-cheeked Warbler

Ranch Contacts

President:	Marcus Wieser	(210) 771-3330, marcussatx@satx.rr.com
Vice President:	Mike Hoffman	(713) 301-7088, mwh1113@hotmail.com
Treasurer:	Jo Roberts	(830) 834-0884, joanna.m.roberts@us.pwc.com
Secretary:	Gwen Lanning	(281) 460-3620, gwenlanning@yahoo.com
Ranch Coordinator:	Randy Wood	(830) 683-4537, rw09176997@yahoo.com
Wildlife Committee Chair:	David Heft	(830) 683-3289, dsheft82@swtexas.net
Water Committee Chair:	Randy Wood	(830) 683-4537, rw09176997@yahoo.com
Road Committee Chair:	Ron Itz & Ken Wilson	(281) 383-2783, cjitz1@gmail.com
Security Committee Chair:	Dan Himmerich	(512) 656-4748, ICRSecurity@gmail.com
Webmaster:	Philip Nelson	(210) 863-0360, PNelson@newtek.com



President's Report

By Marcus Wieser

We had a great turnout at the spring gathering. Thanks to Mike Hoffman for grilling the burgers and thanks to Randy Wood for getting the hangar set up. There was an abundance of freshly grilled chicken, tasty sides and sweet treats. Thanks to all of you for making it a fun event.

One of the issues that was brought up are the locks. Many of us leave the ranch and change only one digit on the combination lock. This seems to be a well-known practice and others have been able to gain access to the ranch by rotating the first or last dial on the combination until they find the right combo. Please scramble the numbers when you go through the gates to prevent this from happening.

Our water system has been performing relatively well over the last few months:

- We had only one issue with a member leaving their valve partially open. A leak on the property owner's line drained several thousand gallons from the association tank and left neighbors without water. Please make sure you completely close your valves.
- Another issue arose when one of the association valves was opened by someone. It caused the water from the new well to feed back into phase V and leave phase IV without water. Please do not handle the association valves. The system is made up of a series of complex interconnected lines, which are easily thrown out of balance.

Many thanks to Randy Wood for keeping our water system up and running.

Please remember that the association water is for wildlife use only and not save for domestic use. Rainwater harvesting for domestic use can be a relatively easy and inexpensive alternative to drilling a well. One of our association members mentioned at the spring gathering that he has been supplying all the water for his property with harvested rainwater for the past four years.

We will put together additional information for suggestions on materials used for rainwater collection and filtration and publish it in an upcoming newsletter.

As you may have noticed, we piled up material for the road maintenance work in the gravel pit at phase IV/V. We have been waiting for a good rain to wet down the roads before starting the maintenance work. A couple of weeks ago we had several good downpours, and the road work has begun. At this time we are completing the first phase of this year's work. The main road should be in much better shape. Thanks to the hard work of our road committee and Randy's help.

We posted several signs throughout the ranch as a reminder that the speed limit on the ranch roads is 20 MPH. Please do not speed on our roads, as driving too fast is unsafe and wears the roads out prematurely.

David Heft, our wildlife committee chair, has been working with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to coordinate the Montezuma Quail Study on the ranch. This is a great opportunity for Indian Creek Ranch to further our wildlife management efforts. Many thanks to David for his hard

work and thanks to all of our association members who volunteered to participate in this study.

Always remember, if you have any classifieds, please let Gwen Lanning, our secretary and newspaper editor, know and she will be glad to publish them in the next newsletter.

I want to thank our officers, committee chairmen and volunteers for all their hard

work and support. Remember, this is your association and you can help to make it great. Please let us know if you want to get involved and volunteer.

Marcus

Wildlife Committee Report

By David Heft

The most important news on the wildlife front for the ranch is that we finally received some substantial rainfall. Over the last 2 days (May 25-26) I measured 1.7 inches here at our place on the north end of the ranch. Hopefully this will provide some good nesting conditions for our quail and good conditions for deer fawning. It may have come too late to be of significant benefit to our turkey population. We will continue our elk survey again this year but only in the month of August. Forms and instructions will be sent out separately.

Montezuma Quail Study Update: Texas Parks and Wildlife conducted a training workshop for their personnel here on the ranch May 14 for Montezuma quail surveys. Some biologists and managers from other large ranches and one subdivision also attended. They have not yet developed a workshop specifically for landowners yet but hopefully that will happen in the future. They were successful in having birds

respond to the survey calls and filmed several Montezuma quail on my property.



TPWD will conduct call surveys once a month through July to determine where the birds presently occur in this geographic area. They also confirmed that a research project involving a graduate student from Texas A&M Kingsville under the direction of Dr. Eric Grahmann will begin this fall. They will begin to interact with individual property owners who indicated a willingness to participate at that time. I will try to get them to come to our fall meeting again to coordinate and have the researcher meet the landowners. I can be reached here at home on the ranch at **830-683-3289** or by

email at dsheft82@swtexas.net if you have additional questions.

I would like to begin a regular species highlight in each newsletter to better inform our members of some of the habitat requirements and management needs for various species on the ranch. I will begin with those species of greatest interest to our membership and work into the lesser known non-game species as we progress.



Stealth Cam 04/30/2014 09:29:28 85F

The first species I would like to talk about is the **Rio Grande wild turkey**. I wanted to do this because in visiting with members on the ranch there seem to be some common misconceptions about the status and management of this species. The Rio Grande turkey is the most common of 3 sub-species of wild turkey found in Texas. Their numbers in the Edwards Plateau have actually declined since the highs of the 1980s but appear to have stabilized over the past 2 decades. Current statewide population estimates from TPWD put the number of birds statewide at about 500,000. That sounds like a lot but compare it to 3.8 million whitetail deer in Texas.

Wild turkeys on average only live 2-3 years but some individuals have lived to be 10 years of age. The three most critical

components of good turkey habitat are roost sites, nesting cover, and brood habitat. **Roost sites** in the Edwards Plateau are most often associated with drainages where larger trees grow due to higher moisture availability. Good roost trees have spreading horizontal branch structure and fairly open canopies that allow the birds to fly into the trees. The majority of roost sites on the ranch are large oak trees. It is critical not to disturb birds at the roost sites as they will abandon them with continued disturbance. It is also illegal to hunt turkeys on the roost in Texas and most states. Good roost sites also have open approach areas where the birds can detect any predators before they go to roost.

The most critical element in good **nesting cover** is tall grasses approximately 18 inches in height. Most nests will be found in grasses near the base of some type of shrubby cover. One Texas study reported that 87% of all nests were in this type of grass cover. Most hens nest within ¼ mile of a water source. Recent studies in Texas have shown that only 1/3 to 2/3 of hens will actually try to nest each year depending on the weather and habitat conditions. Each hen will lay an average of 9-11 eggs with up to 16 reported over a 2 week period. She will then incubate the eggs for 28 days until they hatch. A maximum of only 30-40% of the nests will be successful in hatching. The rest will be lost to weather or predation events.

The first 2 weeks of a poult's life are also characterized by high mortality losses to a variety of causes. The poults immediately begin foraging on their own under the watchful eye of the hen. Semi-open grassy

areas with high bug populations and nearby overhead cover provide good **brood habitat** in this stage of their life. After 2 weeks the poults can fly and will begin roosting in trees substantially increasing their chances for survival. Out of an average of 8-10 poults hatched from a nest only 2-3 are usually still alive at the end of the summer. The point here is that becoming an adult turkey is not a high percentage game for young poults even if the eggs do successfully hatch. Once fully grown, turkeys are primarily herbivorous but will still take insects and other invertebrates. A large variety of grass seeds, fruits, nuts, and forbs make up the majority of their diet. Under severe conditions supplemental poultry feeds do seem to benefit turkeys but will not make up for poor natural habitat conditions.

Good habitat in a mosaic of open and wooded cover with available water will provide everything a turkey needs. Most recommendations suggest a 50-50 mix of open areas and brush. Some more recent research and my experience is that 30-40% seems to be sufficient. Brush is all species, not just juniper (cedar). Juniper berries are eaten by turkeys but heavy brush cover will deter turkey use since their primary defense against predators is their eyesight.

Our current overall ranch management plan calls for harvesting no more than 20% of our

turkey population in any year. This is based on a normal year with normal reproduction. I will discuss beginning a population survey at our fall meeting so we can monitor not just our overall population but also our poult/hen ratios each year. My current estimate is that we have approximately 200-300 birds on the ranch. In our best rainfall years we may have approached 400 birds. Because of their diurnal movements and large ranges most of our members seem to assume their numbers are much higher. Last years reported harvest was 28 birds with an estimated harvest of 40. Most of the birds were taken during the fall hunt and were hens. As you can see we are very close to our maximum recommended harvest.

Two good publications for information are "Rio Grande Wild Turkey in Texas, Biology and Management" by the Texas AM Extension Service publication number B-6198:
<http://wildlife.tamu.edu/files/2012/05/77906723-Rio-Grande-Wild-Turkey-in-Texas-Biology-and-Management.pdf>
and "Texas Turkey Talk" by TPWD:
http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_w7000_0827.pdf .
As always if you have any wildlife questions give me a call or send an email.

Secretary's Report

By Gwen Lanning

The spring Indian Creek Ranch landowners' meeting was held on a nice cool day,

Saturday May 24th, 2014, at the air strip. About 50 people attended. Officers and committee members gave brief updates on ongoing issues and activities on the ranch, including road work, and Montezuma quail research. More details about those topics may be found in Marcus Wieser's and David Heft's reports.

No security problems have been reported lately.

One of the big topics of conversation was the water system. A new sign has been placed at the entrance to remind everyone that this is non-potable water, meant for the wildlife only. It is not a closed, sanitized system. Several people shared their successful experiences with rain harvesting, and we are going to try to have a speaker on that subject at the fall meeting.

Some housekeeping notes - previously our newsletter was numbered to reflect the

news period that it was summarizing and reporting – so for example, the fourth quarter reports from 2011, would have been sent out during the first quarter of 2012. We have changed that so that the date of the newsletter reflects the time period that it actually comes out. Therefore this newsletter is 2014 Second Quarter. There was no newsletter titled 2013 Fourth Quarter, due to the change in attributing the date.

Also, I have just switched from a 10-year-old computer to a newer one, and I am still trying to figure out all the updates in Microsoft Word! There are random lines and text box borders in this newsletter that I have not been able to clean up. I hope to get those fixed by the next issue.

And, if you have classifieds or photos to include in future newsletters, please email them to me at gwenlanning@yahoo.com .

Treasurer's Report

By Jo Roberts

It was great to see such a good turnout at the spring gathering. After a good start, payment of your dues has slowed down. 72% of landowners paid on time (thank you) but we still have 5 landowners owing a total of \$1850. Payment would be appreciated so I don't have to keep chasing you.

We expect to incur our road work expenses in the next few months and water expenses are always a wild card, but so far this year we are well within budget.

Income and Expense Report - 2014
The Owners Association at Indian Creek
As of May 28, 2014

	2013	1Q 2014	2Q 2014	3Q 2014	4Q 2014	2014 Total	Budget	Remaining
Balance brought forward from 2013:		\$ 45,411.94						
Income in 2014¹								
Annual Assessments	\$ 32,342.59	\$ 23,579.16	\$ 7,529.17	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 31,108.33	\$ 32,653.17	\$ 1,849.58
Special Assessments	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Income	\$ 32,342.59	\$ 23,579.16	\$ 7,529.17	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 31,108.33	\$ 32,653.17	\$ 1,849.58
Expenses in 2014^{2,3}								
Road Work	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Water System Maintenance	\$ 39,204.06	\$ 3,977.46	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,977.46	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 16,022.54
Wildlife Biologist	\$ -	\$ 585.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 585.00	\$ 500.00	\$ (85.00)
Electric Bills	\$ 2,671.53	\$ 1,121.23	\$ 286.39	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,407.62	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,592.38
Annual Meeting	\$ 167.52	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Grounds Maintenance	\$ 116.65	\$ -	\$ 243.75	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 243.75	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,256.25
Property Taxes	\$ 472.66	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00
Administrative Expenses	\$ 1,688.26	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 300.00
Attorney Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Reserve	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,372.52	\$ 5,372.52
Total Expenses	\$ 44,320.68	\$ 5,683.69	\$ 630.14	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,313.83	\$ 47,672.52	\$ 41,358.69
Current Balance:								
Emergency Reserve						\$ 70,206.44		
Amount Available for Current Year						\$ (28,000.00)		
						\$ 42,206.44		

¹ Income is considered received when it is deposited in the ICR bank account.
² Expenses for labor, e.g., well services or road work, are accrued in the month the work was performed.
³ Expenses incurred and submitted for reimbursement by Owners, e.g., plumbing supplies, annual meeting expenses, administrative expenses, are considered incurred upon acceptance of invoices/receipts by the Treasurer.

Some Resources that you may find helpful:

Do you have a grass you would like to identify? You can see a collection of scans of Central Texas grasses at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center:

http://www.wildflower.org/gallery/search_image.php?newsearch=true&id_photographer=&id_collection=13

And this is a brochure that I have found helpful in both identifying plants and learning their importance to whitetail deer diets:

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_w7000_1675_07_11.pdf

Do you know of more resources I should include? Let me know at gwenlanning@yahoo.com

Miscellaneous Business

CALENDER - Upcoming Events

CLASSIFIEDS:

Fill your feeders once a month for \$80.00 plus feed

Corn – 50# bags for \$7.50 each

Protein – 50# bag 20% crude for \$10.50 each

Contact Kevin Stephen (713) 203-1075

ICR Website address: <http://www.Indian-Creek-Ranch.org>



Rufous-crowned Sparrow