

The TXNDD Report

September, 2013

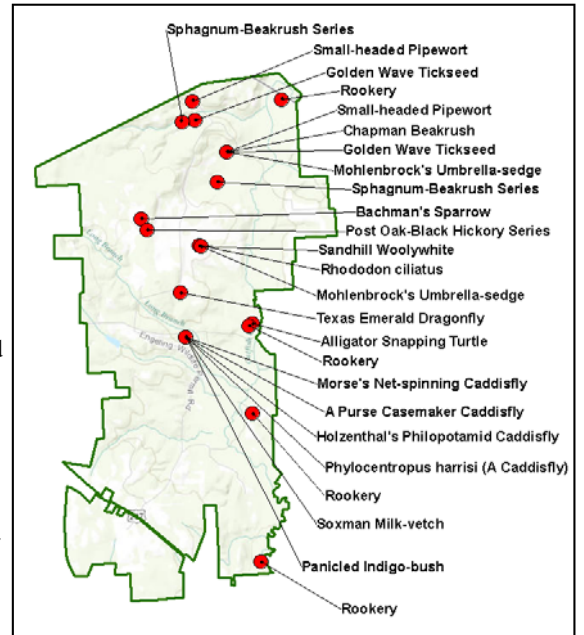


Data Highlight: EOs on Gus Engeling WMA

Wildlife Management Areas are important for the conservation of rare populations and plant communities; they not only protect sensitive features within their borders, they also provide opportunities to experiment with and demonstrate management strategies for habitat with high conservation value. Gus Engeling WMA (GEWMA) is a good example of both benefits.

GEWMA has a total of 25 element occurrences (EOs) representing 18 different elements. These elements include 1 animal assemblage (waterbird rookery), 2 plant communities, 8 species of animals, and 8 species of plants. Each EO record in the TXNDD represents a population, and may consist of a single observation, or many observations over time.

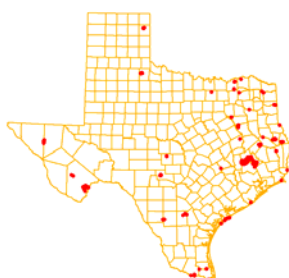
GEWMA has a very active habitat management program. One example of their success can be seen in the pitcher plant bogs; an important habitat for a number of rare species. One of them, the small-headed pipewort, or dwarf pipewort, only has nine known EOs in Texas, and two of them are on the GEWMA. In fact, GEWMA hosts one of the healthiest populations in the state, in part due to successful management activities. Tucker Slack, GEWMA biologist, said that “after about five years without fire, you can lose your bog to red maple and other woody plants.” GEWMA burns their bogs every 3-4 years, and they use these areas as examples for private landowners in the area. In early 2013 they burned one of their largest pitcher plant bogs, and it has had a significant impact on the pipewort population. According to Tucker Slack “I surveyed the bog after the fire and found the healthiest population of dwarf pipewort in at least three years.”



Element Occurrences on the Gus Engeling WMA

TXNDD Patterns: WMA EOs

In total, there are 416 EOs found on our WMAs, and approximately 60% of our WMAs host EOs. On average, each WMA has about three elements and seven EOs in the database. The WMA with the most elements is Black Gap WMA, which has 20 different elements; 15 of which are plant species.



EOs on WMAs in Texas

Many WMA EOs have not been updated in over 15 years, and many WMAs have rare species that have never been documented; your observations are critical to updating these records. To see a list of EOs for a particular WMA or to submit an observation, please contact TXNDD staff or see the TXNDD website.

WMA	# EOs	# of Elements
Black Gap	38	20
Gus Engeling	25	18
Sam Houston Forest	220	11
Las Palomas	12	9
Sierra Diablo	12	8
Bannister	16	7
Matagorda Island	9	6
Chaparral	6	6
Kerr	12	4
Caddo Lake	4	4

Element: Element of biodiversity, an element can be a species, a native plant community, or an animal aggregation such as a colonial waterbird rookery or a bat roost.

Element Occurrence (EO): an area of land or water where an element is or was present and has practical conservation value.

TXNDD's Most Wanted

The TXNDD tracks over 700 elements. An element is a species, animal aggregation (e.g. bat cave), or native plant community. Here are three species of plants that flower in the fall and that could be found in a WMA.



Photo by Jackie Poole

Rough-stem aster (*Symphyotrichum puniceum* var. *scabriceale*)

25 EOs, most recently observed in 2006

Counties: Anderson, Franklin, Freestone, Henderson, Smith, Van Zandt, and Wood

Habitat: Found in seepage areas, bogs, marshes, ponds, drainages, and degraded wetland remnants

ID tips: Rough hairy stems that can be 1-2 meters long, midstem leaves clasp

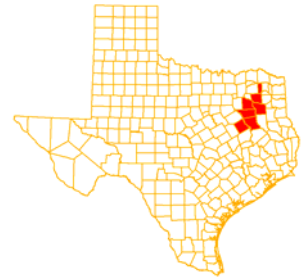


Photo by Jackie Poole

Runyon's water-willow (*Justicia runyonii*)

16 EOs, most recently observed in 1994

Counties: Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy

Habitat: Margins and openings within subtropical woodlands or thorn shrublands on silty and sandy soils

ID tips: 1" long purple flowers growing from where leaves attach to stem, flowers two lipped with 3-lobed bottom lip & arching upper lip

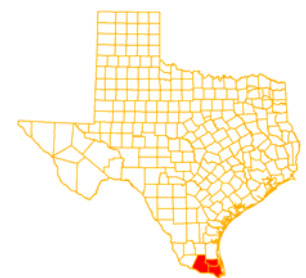


Photo by John Waters

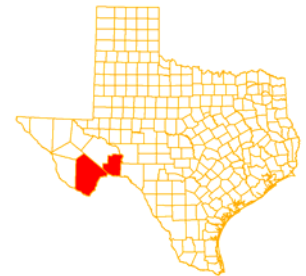
Bunched cory cactus (*Coryphantha ramillosa* ssp. *ramillosa*)

23 EOs, most recently observed in 1993

Counties: Brewster and Terrell

Habitat: Rocky slopes, ledges, and flats in the Chihuahuan Desert, most frequently on limestone at low elevations

ID tips: Usually single stemmed, stems without slime, egg-shaped green fruits less than an inch long



TXNDD Profile: Tucker Slack

Tucker Slack is a Wildlife Biologist at the Gus Engeling WMA (GEWMA). He is heavily involved in habitat management research and education. Tucker spends much of his time planning and managing burns at GEWMA, a critical habitat management technique for the area.

Following a burn, Tucker will survey the area to document the impact on the habitat. The small-headed pipewort is one species that he uses to indicate healthy pitcher plant bog habitat. Tucker also leads field trips and participates in educational

events such as a habitat field tour, and an annual youth shooting event.

Wildlife Biologists like Tucker Slack are critical to managing native habitats on WMAs, as well as for documenting these populations of rare species in the TXNDD.

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