

Conservation Matters

THE TEXAS LAND, WATER AND WILDLIFE CONNECTION

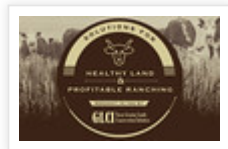
A publication of the Texas Water Resources Institute and the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources

[Employment opportunity: IRNR postdoctoral research associate](#)

The [Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources](#) (IRNR), the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Kingsville and the East Wildlife Foundation (EWF) are soliciting applications for a 3-year position with a focus on designing, implementing and evaluating a EWF-wide monitoring program. The postdoctoral research associate will coordinate the long-term project focused on monitoring activities intended to detect short- and long-term changes in terrestrial vertebrates and vegetation on the EWF properties.

More information is available at irnr.tamu.edu/postdoctoral-research-associate. Applications will be accepted until **Aug. 16** or until the position is filled.

[Today is last chance to register for Texas Grazing Land Conference](#)



The [Texas Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative](#) (GLCI) will host the [Texas Grazing Land Conference](#), **July 15–17**, at the Radisson Hotel Fort Worth at Fossil Creek. Cattle ranchers, land managers and others interested in learning profitable grazing management, managing wildlife with livestock, risk management and marketing strategies need to register by **June 28** at

regonline.com/txgrazland2013.

The conference's keynote speakers are **Dr. Temple Grandin**, noted animal behavior expert, author, speaker and professor at Colorado State University; and **Kit Pharo**, speaker, author and rancher and owner of Pharo Cattle Company, according to organizers.

[Finch offers reliable advice for homeowners, leads WCTC in its inaugural year](#)



Have a question about water conservation at home? Or maybe a drought-tolerant landscapes or gardening question? Chances are, longtime water expert **Dr. Calvin Finch** probably has the answer.

Finch, director of the [Water Conservation and Technology Center](#), has been answering questions about horticulture, water conservation and the environment for more than 20 years. His informative gardening and water conservation columns run in South Texas newspapers, including the *San Antonio Express-News* and *Primetime* newspapers, his question and answer columns are published in South Texas and Hill Country weeklies, and radio and television programs air in the San Antonio market.

In the summer, Finch's columns typically cover gardening and landscape solutions, ranging from tomato production to drought-tolerant groundcovers. Other columns offer water-saving tips such as instructions on installing drip irrigation in your landscapes. Read his columns by visiting wctc.tamu.edu/columns/.

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[Prescribed Burning School set for Aug. 8–10 near Sonora](#)

The [Academy for Ranch Management](#) will host a Prescribed Burning School **Aug. 8–10** at the [Texas A&M AgriLife Research-Sonora Station](#) located on State Highway 55 between Sonora and Rocksprings.

The workshop will provide information on the history of fire, weather, planning a burn, fuels and fuel moisture, and equipment, according to **Ray Hinnant**, a Texas A&M AgriLife Research senior research associate in College Station and a workshop presenter.

[UT hosting Water Technology and Policy Conference in October](#)



The University of Texas at Austin's Center for Lifelong Engineering Education is presenting the [Water Technology and Policy Conference](#), held at the university's [IC² Institute](#), **Oct 22–23**.

The conference will also be simultaneously available online, and topics will include hydrology, infrastructure, water treatment technologies, the water-energy nexus, policy and economics. **Dr.**

Michael Webber, **Ashlynn Stillwell** and **Raj Bhattarai** will be course instructors. **Dr. Kevin Wagner**, [Texas Water Resources Institute](#) associate director, will be presenting at the conference.

[IRNR social media training July 18 in Austin](#)

The [Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources](#) (IRNR) will conduct a [Social Media 101—Raising Stakeholder Awareness in an Information Age](#) workshop **July 18** in Austin.

The workshop will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Airport Commerce Park, 1340 Airport Commerce Park.

The program is designed for governmental and organizational representatives, and others involved in outreach, information dissemination and advocacy on natural resources, said **Amy Hays**, IRNR program specialist and workshop trainer. Hays said the workshop will focus on teaching participants how to use social media to enhance outreach and engage stakeholders.

[Texas A&M's Chu studies water-improving, estrogen-eating bacteria](#)



A Texas A&M University engineering researcher believes the right bacteria can be a natural weapon for fighting an emerging water contaminant: estrogen.

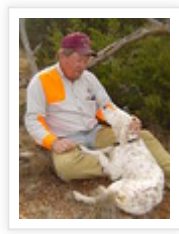
Increasingly sensitive methods of screening water for polluting substances allow environmental scientists to monitor traces of previously undetected contaminants in otherwise clean water: trace amounts of pharmaceutical and personal care products ranging from antibiotics to anesthetics and, especially,

estrogens.

The presence of any of these drugs concerns public health officials, but [Dr. Kung-Hui \(Bella\) Chu](#), an associate professor in the Environmental and Water Resources Engineering Division of the [Zachry Department of Civil Engineering](#), is particularly interested in estrogen in water.

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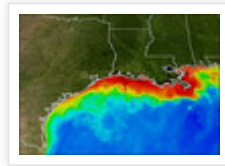
[Veteran AgriLife Extension educator shares social media insights, quail research](#)



Social media is everywhere these days, and a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service wildlife expert is doing his best to harness the fast-evolving technology to spread the word on quail management and other key wildlife-related topics.

“Quail, specifically bobwhite quail, are my favorite species of study and my personal passion,” said **Dr. Dale Rollins**, AgriLife Extension wildlife specialist at San Angelo. “They are indeed social critters, so I’ve found it fitting to use social media to educate ‘students of quail’ from all walks of life.”

[NOAA, partners predict possible record-setting dead zone for Gulf of Mexico](#)



Scientists are expecting a very large “dead zone” in the Gulf of Mexico this year, based on several NOAA-supported forecast models.

NOAA-supported modelers at the [University of Michigan](#), [Louisiana State University](#), and the [Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium](#) are forecasting that this year’s Gulf of Mexico hypoxic “dead” zone will be between 7,286 and 8,561 square miles, which could place it among the ten largest recorded.

[Global Petroleum Research Institute offering August Water/Wastewater course](#)

The [Global Petroleum Research Institute](#) (GPRI) is hosting the Water and Wastewater: Issues, Challenges, Solutions and New Technologies short course **Aug. 6–7** at Texas A&M University.

The course will include experts from industry and academia presenting information about separation technologies in petroleum, chemical, food, water and wastewater processing, according to organizers. Lectures will be in the Richardson Building Room 309. Equipment demonstrations will be held at the Texas A&M University Riverside campus.

[“Value and vulnerabilities” of Texas Coast highlighted in GLO report](#)



The [Texas General Land Office](#) (GLO) has issued a report, [The Texas Coast: Shoring Up Our Future](#), based on issues of concern identified by more than 40 experts that make up the Texas GLO's Coastal Management Program's Technical Advisory Committee. According to GLO, the overview illustrates the Texas Coast's economic and environmental significance and describes the primary challenges and specific issues facing the coast.

To read the report and find more information, visit shoringuptexas.org.

[Read all about it](#)

The Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) and the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources (IRNR) use the content curation website ScoopIt! to share water- and natural resources-related news stories, blog posts and YouTube videos.

At scoop.it/u/texas-water-resources-institute, you will find stories about funding Texas water, innovative water conservation technologies and management strategies and TWRI. At scoop.it/u/Texas-Water you can follow topics on Texas water sustainability and drought management; best management practices evaluation; Texas watershed assessment, planning and restoration; and water resources training and education. IRNR curates stories focused on water and natural resources science and management issues. Read those stories at scoop.it/t/txirnr. Both institutes tweet about water and natural resources events, research and news at twitter.com/TxWRI and twitter.com/TxIRNR.

[Poultry Litter Field Day set for July 10 in Riesel](#)



Management of poultry litter will be the focus of a field day to be held **July 10** at Riesel High School, 600 E. Frederick St. in Riesel.

The field day is hosted by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, [Texas Water Resources Institute](#) (TWRI), the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service and the Texas A&M University Poultry Science Department. There is no cost to attend, and lunch will be provided by the Texas Poultry Federation. Registration begins at 8 a.m. with presentations to start at 8:30 a.m.

[Texas Tech study finds low-grade cotton brings top value in oil spill cleanup](#)



When it comes to cleaning up possible future massive crude oil spills, one of the best and most eco-friendly solutions for the job may be low-grade cotton from West Texas, say Texas Tech University researchers.

Dr. Seshadri Ramkumar, lead author of the study and manager of the [Nonwovens and Advanced Materials Laboratory](#) at Texas Tech's [The Institute of Environmental and Human Health \(TIEHH\)](#), said he and his colleagues found that low-micronaire cotton—one of the lowest-quality types of cotton—is most effective at picking up oil. A pound of the low-micronaire cotton can pick up more than 30 pounds of crude oil, and its natural waxiness helps to repel water.

Natural Resources Training Courses

Poultry Litter Field Day	July 10
Introduction to ArcGIS 10	July 17–18
Social Media 101-Raising Stakeholder Awareness in an Information Age	July 18
Introduction to ArcGIS 10	Oct. 8–9

New Publications/ Papers

Extension publications

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[Water Sample Information Form](#), **T. Provin**, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, E165, 2013.

[Texas Farm Pond Management Calendar](#), **B. Higginbotham, T. Sink**, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, EWF-003, 2013.

[Homeowner Soil Sample Information Form](#), **T. Provin**, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, E-444, 2013.

[Aquatic Herbicide Use](#), **T. Sink, M.P. Masser**, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, EWF-004, 2013.

New IRNR/TWRI publications

[Status of the freshwater mussel \(Unionidae\) communities of the mainstem of the Leon River, Texas](#), **C.R. Randklev, M.S. Johnson, E.T. Tsakiris, J. Groce, N. Wilkins**, Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems. DOI: 10.1002/aqc.2340, 2013.