**Joseph K. Richards**

College Station, TX  210-592-3001  Wildlife4joe@tamu.edu

**EDUCATION**

**Texas A&M University,** College Station, Texas Currently Enrolled (Senior Status)

Bachelor of Science in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

*Student Employee* August 2019-present

*Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute, College Station, Texas*

* Create and manage social media content for the Feral Hogs Community of Practice Facebook and Twitter pages.
* Write blog posts concerning a variety of topics related to wild pig control and abatement.
* Create new, multimedia educational materials for distance education and private land stewardship lesson programs.
* Assisted with set up and running of the Texas A&M AgriLife Service’s 2019 Ranch Workshop.
* Shot and delivered quality photographs of various wildlife species used for promoting Texas A&M NRI and its education message.

*Social Media Coordinator* June 2020-December 2020

*Texas Brigades, New Braunfels, Texas*

* Provided guidance on electronic engagement and information sharing on behalf of Texas Brigades for all e-presence platforms.
* Created and managed content for all Texas Brigades e-media accounts.
* Communicated with camp committees and designated social media coordinators on outreach and social media performance.
* Trained social media coordinators for seven Texas Brigades camps at annual retreat.

*Field Technician*  May 2019-August 2019

*Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch, Roby, Texas*

* Monitored daily bobwhite and blue quail movements using radio telemetry to address questions about space and habitat use, nesting success, survivorship curves, and cause-specific mortality rates.
* Conducted spring call counts used for indexing quail abundance over time.
* Live-trapped small mammals for mark-recapture over eight distinct ecological sites.
* Collected arthropods to estimate abundance and diversity using pitfall arrays and sweep-net samples.
* Collected vegetation samples and planted pollinator-friendly species in spreader dams.
* Conducted raptor counts twice a week along Texas Quail Index routes.
* Assisted with prescribed burns on fire plots by constructing fire lines with hand tools, practicing fire safety protocols, deploying mop-up techniques, and using different fire ignition devices.
* Established and examined remote camera images for estimating mesopredator abundance.
* Provided quality images of wildlife and ranch facilities to be used for social media and reports.
* Entered data into graphics for annual report.
* Worked independently and in teams in remote settings.
* Gained knowledge of issues affecting quail and the wildlife industry.

*Wildlife Photographer*  June 2019-Present

*Richards Outdoor Photography, LLC., Boerne, Texas*

* Facilitated the creation of a new website and maintain all information uploaded to the site.
* Created and managed social media content for the Facebook and Instagram accounts.
* Educated youth and parents on wildlife photography basics at a Texas Brigades Experience.
* Conducted a white-tailed deer photography workshop on the Hindes Ranch. Provided direction for amateur and professional photographers on interpretating animal behavior and camera settings.
* Hosted wildlife photography galleries in San Antonio and Comfort, TX.

*Student Worker* August 2018-November 2019

*Texas A&M Entomology Department, College Station, Texas*

* Inventoried and digitally cataloged collected hexapod specimens using a Keyence VHX microscope.
* Constructed digital 3-dimensional models of insect specimens using computer software packages.
* Pinned and cataloged specimens for the department collections.

*Education Interpreter* June 2016-April 2017

*San Antonio Zoo, San Antonio, Texas*

* Educated youth and adults on zoo exhibits, animal behavior, and conservation practices using PowerPoint presentations, biofacts, and poster projects.
* Facilitated giraffe feedings for zoo visitors and monitored daily giraffe behavior.
* Operated daily butterfly house activities including monitoring environmental settings, cleaning and replacing food trays, caring for chrysalises, maintaining pollinator plants, and guest interpretation.
* Presented to zoo visitors on a variety of topics including the following: pollinators, marine seafood conservation, safe camping practices, enrichment, water conservation, and bats.
* Presented with ambassador animals in the zoo collections for visitor encounters.
* Provided quality customer service in a courteous and professional manner to zoo visitors.

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

*Deer Captures* October 2019-October 2020

*East Foundation, Raymondville, Texas*

* Led a team of 17 college students from the Texas A&M University Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society on the El Sauz Ranch in conjunction with the East Foundation and Texas A&M University- Kingsville.
* Transported live deer to a processing station using Polaris Rangers and Kawasaki Mules.
* Responsible for collecting body weight, age, antler size, blood, hair, and tissue samples to help answer questions about age structure, genetics, recruitment, and the influence of rainfall, soil, and plant communities on body condition and antler size.
* Assisted TPWD biologists with an ultrasound to measure rump fat to index nutritional condition.
* Coordinated with TAMU Student Activities and East Foundation personnel to create COVID-19 mitigation strategies and travel plans for conducting deer capture during the 2020 pandemic.

*Chronic Wasting Disease Check Stations* November 2018-November 2020

*Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Snook, Texas*

* Responsible for collecting lymph node samples from hunter harvested White-tailed Deer and other cervids to be tested for chronic wasting disease (CWD).
* Collected morphological data for each deer processed at hunter check stations. Data included age, weight, and antler measurements.
* Educated hunters, members of the public, and private landowners about CWD, how it can be managed and its potential biological and economic impacts.
* Assisted TPWD wildlife biologists in deer spotlight surveys.

*Habitat Management and Park Maintenance* September 2018-October 2020

*Lake Somerville State Park (Birch Creek & Nails Creek Divisions), Snook, Texas*

* Assisted TPWD biologists and park staff with habitat restoration by planting native tree species.
* Conducted invasive species control for Chinese tallow trees.
* Cleared brush and overgrown vegetation from the trails and removed fallen trees and snags that were deemed tripping hazards for park visitors.

**CERTIFICATIONS**

* Hunter-Ed Safety August 2011
* National Wildfire Coordinating Group Type 2 Firefighter January 2019

**AWARDS AND HONORS**

* TAMU College of Agriculture & Life Sciences Senior Merit Award 2021
* TAMU WFSC Department Outstanding Junior Student Award 2020
* College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean’s Honor Roll (Fall & Spring) 2020
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* Texas Outdoor Writers Association Dan Klepper Award 2019
* TAMU WFSC Department Outstanding Freshmen Student Award 2019
* Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society TAMU Outstanding Wildlife Student 2019

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

* The Wildlife Society August 2019- present
* Texas Outdoor Writers Association August 2019- present
* Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society August 2018- present

**EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES/MEDIA PUBLICATIONS**

**Richards, J.**, and Helcel, J. 2021. Exclusion Fencing for Wild Pig Management. Private Land Stewardship Academy. [Exclusion Fencing for Wild Pig Management - Overview | Rise 360 (articulate.com)](https://rise.articulate.com/share/u9E6-5atKreAx3SpWJBggIbbOwJpIrA2#/)

**Richards, J.**, and Helcel, J. 2021. Wild pigs negatively impact ground-nesting birds. NRI Educational Video. [Update: Wild Pigs Negatively Impact Ground Nesting Birds - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZ7uuN6RvPg&list=PL-fHLDjeQUqY6yq-0EsvO0GhqOsH8UL0Y&t=1s)

**Richards, J.,** Helcel, J., and Kinsey, J. 2020.Sodium Nitrite: A Potential Toxicant in the Fight Against Invasive Wild Pigs. NRI Blog. [Sodium Nitrite: A Potential Toxicant in the Fight Against Invasive Wild Pigs | Texas A&M NRI (tamu.edu)](https://nri.tamu.edu/blog/2020/january/sodium-nitrite-a-potential-toxicant-in-the-fight-against-invasive-wild-pigs/)

**Richards, J.** 2020.Differences Between Wild Pigs and Javelinas. Private Land Stewardship Academy.

[Differences Between Wild Pigs and Javelinas - Overview | Rise 360 (articulate.com)](https://rise.articulate.com/share/0y0sjNcXoaFqeQ1GSIaKyEL7uYDMkNcy#/)

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

*TAMU Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society* August 2018-present

* President (2020-2021)
* Wildfire Coordinator C0-Chair (2019-2021)
* Conclave Chair (2019-2020)

**SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED**

* Nova Silvy Fellowship Scholarship 2020
* **Daniel Lee Martin '83 Memorial Scholarship 2020**
* Donnie Harmel Endowed Scholarship 2020
* William Thomas Wright '50 Memorial Scholarship  2020
* COADC Dallas Ecological Foundation Scholarship 2020
* Charly McTee Memorial Scholarship 2020
* W. B. Davis Endowed Scholarship 2019
* Charles and Frances Fleming Scholarship 2019
* San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo, TWAF Scholarship 2018
* Rocco C. Caffarelli Scholarship 2018