



Collared Peccary (*Pecari tajacu*)

Kasey Pirkle¹, Whitney J. Gann², Stephen L. Webb³, Jacob L. Dykes⁴

The collared peccary, or javelina, is a native big game species in Texas, also found in New Mexico, Arizona, and throughout much of Latin America. In Texas, javelinas are found in the South Texas Plains, Trans-Pecos, Edwards Plateau, and Rolling Plains ecoregions. Javelinas are often confused with feral hogs, but they are not in the same family as pigs.

FUN FACT: Javelinas are in the Tayassuidae family along with the Chacoan peccary (*Catagonus wagneri*) and the white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*).

Description

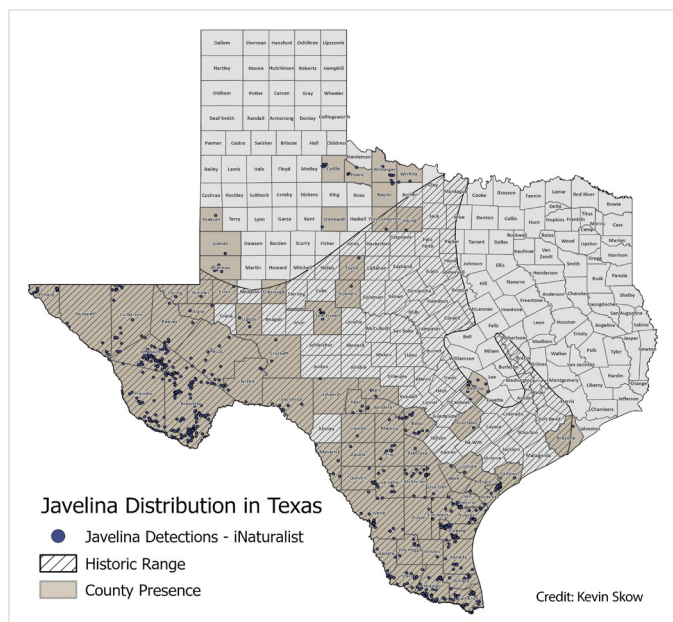
Javelinas have a life expectancy of about 10 years in the wild and average 48-50 pounds when mature. They have a ring of white and gray hair around their neck, giving the appearance of a collar, and hence their name. Javelinas have a scent gland on their rump that emits a musk-like odor used to mark territories and communicate with group members. Unlike pigs, javelinas have no visible tail and only a single dewclaw on their hind legs.

FUN FACT: Javelinas sharpen their upper and lower canines against each other, resulting in a chattering noise used as a defense mechanism to warn predators or other javelinas.

Habitat and Diet

In Texas, javelinas favor semi-arid brushlands (South Texas Plains and Trans-Pecos) and oak-juniper woodlands (Edwards Plateau and Rolling Plains). Water is a key feature of quality habitat. Javelinas are omnivores and eat prickly pears, roots, mesquite beans, forbs, and insects.

FUN FACT: Javelinas have a complex stomach and water efficient kidneys, enabling them to efficiently digest forage and conserve water in arid environments.



¹Kasey Pirkle (kasey.pirkle@ag.tamu.edu), Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management, Texas A&M University

²Whitney J. Gann (whitney.gann@tpwd.texas.gov), Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

³Stephen L. Webb (stephen.webb@ag.tamu.edu), Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute and Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management, Texas A&M University

⁴Jacob L. Dykes (jacob.dykes@ag.tamu.edu), Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management, Texas A&M University

Home Range and Behavior

Home ranges vary between 200-900 acres, depending on vegetation structure and availability of forage. Javelinas tend to be semi-territorial, and home ranges of javelinas do not overlap.

FUN FACT: Javelinas live in groups called squadrons, ranging from 8 to 12 members.

Reproduction

Javelinas can breed year-round, beginning at 11 months if habitat conditions are favorable. The average gestation period for a javelina is 145 days. They can produce two litters per year, each usually consisting of two young.

FUN FACT: Javelina young are known as “reds” because of their reddish color.



Javelina Hunting in Texas

- ▶ Northern Zone: Dates vary annually
- ▶ Southern Zone: Open year-round
- ▶ Bag limit: Two javelina per license year
- ▶ For more information: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/regs/animals/javelina/>

Learn More

Please contact the authors to learn more about javelina ecology and management and new, long-term research projects that evaluate survey methods, population dynamics, health, and habitat of javelinas in southern Texas.

Cite as:

Pirkle, K., Gann, W. J., Webb, S. L., & Dykes, J. L. (2024). Collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*), RWFMP-PU-420. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Texas A&M University.

All photos ©Joseph Richards/Richards Outdoor Photography, LLC



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Rangeland, Wildlife
& Fisheries Management



Texas A&M AgriLife provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.