Grant Lawrence, M.S. Thesis Candidate

My name is Grant Lawrence. Although I have close ties to several areas, I would refer to Coleman, Texas as my home. I am a follower of Christ and believe it is difficult to spend time in the natural world and not see evidence of the Maker's hands. It didn't take long for me to gain an appreciation of nature, as I was called to the outdoors at an early age. From fishing with a cane pole on the creek, to learning how to spot and stalk whitetail deer, I immersed myself in every adventure. Encouraged by the support from my parents, I decided to follow my passion into college. I received my B.S. in Range & Wildlife Management from Abilene Christian University in May 2013. During my tenure at ACU, I was deeply involved in large and meso-mammal research on Dyess AFB. Following internships in both the state and private sectors, I accepted an invitation to pursue a M.S. in Wildlife Management through the Borderlands Research Institute starting in June 2014. Under the guidance of Dr. Ryan Luna, I am studying feral pig control methods in the form of toxicant baits.

Thesis Project: Development and Evaluation of Prototype Feral Pig Toxicants

Feral pigs are the most prolific large mammals in North America. The U.S. population level is estimated around 3 million, with 2 million pigs in Texas alone. This destructive, invasive species has increased its range across the state of Texas at alarming rates. Equipped with the abilities to reach sexual maturity as young as six months, and birth multiple litters per year with numerous offspring, feral pigs have now been recorded in 253 of Texas' 254 counties. Control can be difficult as 70% of the population must be removed annually to remain at a stable threshold. Several methods have been exercised in attempts to curb the population: hunting, trapping, snaring, use of dogs, even aerial gunning. Toxicants have been shown to be the most cost-effective means of control, although there is not a registered toxicant within the U.S. Our goal is to develop and evaluate a humane, effective feral pig toxicant(s) by testing promising active agents and bait matrices.

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