

# John R. Whetstine — BRI Undergraduate Researcher

My name is John Whetstine. I am from Cypress, Texas, which is in northwest Houston off of Highway 290. I was a part of the Cypress Ranch High School varsity football team from 2010 to 2011. I came to Sul Ross State University in the fall of 2014 as a junior. I completed my first two years of college at Blinn in Brenham, Texas and earned my Associates of Science degree in the spring of 2014. When not at school or work, my favorite past time is archery. Archery has been ingrained into me since the age of 7. There is no thrill like watching an arrow being propelled to the target, knowing that it was produced by one's own aim and strength. Both my love of archery and the outdoors has led me to enjoy the art and challenge of traditional bow hunting. My time hunting and being outside has made me a more astute student of the outdoors and my surroundings.



## Shorebird Density and Diversity of Sandia Wetlands, Texas

*16 February — 15 August, 2015*

I am currently working on a project in the Sandia Wetlands in Balmorhea, Texas studying shorebird density and diversity. This data, along with previous observations, will give us a better understanding of what species utilize the wetland, and if the wetland has an increase, decrease, or constant use by various bird species during certain times of the year. Furthermore, I am also sampling and comparing the biomass of invertebrates between different study units in the wetland. This part of the project is to help graduate student Ryan Anthony in his research of the overall wetland ecosystem. Interestingly, the current Sandia Wetlands are man-made, but literature suggests that even in this arid region of west Texas, the area was in fact a natural wetland before 1914. I hope that this research will give the Borderlands Research Institute and others a greater understanding of the area and its impact on the resident and migratory wildlife species that utilize it.



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