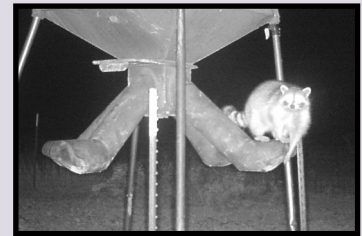


Erin E. Bittner — BRI Undergraduate Researcher

My name is Erin Bittner and I am a senior Geology major and Natural Resource Management minor at Sul Ross State University. I grew up in the small town of Lockhart, Texas. Growing up I was always outside hiking, camping, and rock hunting. Much of my pre-college years were spent in 4-H and FFA, competing in an array of competitions. Going into college opened many doors for me. In the summer of 2017 I was fortunate enough to be offered a position at Kerr WMA as a summer intern. During my time there I was able to work in the Deer Research Facility where I learned much about white-tail does and fawns. In the fall of 2018 I became a Texas State Park Ambassador for Balmorhea State Park. Through this opportunity I was able to educate the public that Balmorhea SP is so much more than a pool; it is a wonderful ecosystem that supports a variety of life. I am very excited to be working with Borderlands Research Institute and hope to learn much more about the wonderful west Texas.



Raccoon Feeder Utilization in the Cienega Mountains, Texas

26 September 2018 — 31 May 2019

Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) are a generalist species capable of utilizing a range of habitats and resources. My undergraduate research project will quantify and analyze protein feeder utilization characteristics of raccoons. The objectives of this study are to better understand raccoons' patterns and characteristics when it comes to protein feeder usage, with an emphasis on their group sizes, time spent at feeders, feeder preference, and potential interactions with other species that also utilize the feeders. Data will be obtained from motion-activated trail cameras stationed near free-choice protein feeders ($n = 13$) on a private ranch located in the Cienega Mountains south of Alpine. The cameras will be deployed from November 2018 – April 2019. The results will allow for better understanding on how these raccoons spend their time at feeders and characterize any interactions between the raccoons and other species utilizing the feeders.



CONSERVING THE LAST FRONTIER



The BRI Undergraduate Mentorship Program is proudly supported by a grant from the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.