
POLK COUNTY GRAZIER

September 20, 2021



An eNewsletter by the Rich Mountain Conservation District

WILD PIG MANAGEMENT

Wild pigs (also called feral swine) have become a considerable problem in Arkansas and the United States in general and are now found in at least 45 states. Estimates put damages to agriculture and the environment at \$1.5 billion annually and that number is increasing as the pigs expand their range and density. These wild pigs are not native to the US but were brought to the "new world" by European explorers such as Hernando DeSoto as domestic swine that were allowed to free range. They did not become a major problem until the introduction and crossing with the Russian wild boar in the 1900s.

The wild pigs are highly adaptable and can live just about anywhere and eat just about anything. Their diet includes a lot of vegetation (such as nuts, roots, and other plant matter) but they also consume meat (such as frogs, lizards, rabbits, turkey eggs, and fawns). It is also likely that they feed on newborn livestock. They also have a high reproductive potential, are very nomadic, and once they mature have very few predators. These characteristics allow their populations to keep expanding.

Although wild pigs can kill and eat wildlife and small domestic livestock, their main diet is plant matter. They directly consume acorns and other mast that wildlife rely on to survive and also eat lots of roots. It is the rooting and wallowing that causes the most damages to the environment and especially to agricultural crops. Wild pigs have been known to move into a field and completely destroy it overnight with the rooting and wallowing. The ruts make it very difficult or impossible to harvest the hay crop and may even require the field to be leveled and replanted. Exposed soil from the rooting also causes soil erosion and downstream water quality issues as well as encourage weed infestations. Wild pigs are also carriers of many different diseases and parasites that can be transmitted to wildlife, livestock, pets, and even humans.

So how will you know if you have wild pigs on your land? You may not see the pigs because they are commonly nocturnal but you will very likely see the damage if you are scouting your land regularly. The ruts, wallows, tree rubs, and tracks are usually what you will find (see pictures below). They are also commonly seen on game cameras used for monitoring deer feeders and food plots.



A hay field damaged by wild pigs.

Other signs of wild pig in the area include wallows and tree rubs.



A wild pig wallow with rubbing on trees in the background.

Wild pig tracks are similar to deer tracks but are more rounded.



Wild pig tracks.

The source of this information and above pictures is "A Landowner's Guide for Wild Pig Management" by Mississippi State University and Alabama Cooperative Extension Services. A copy of the guide is available by request for more detailed information.

Although in Arkansas we may love the Razorbacks and "calling those hogs", wild pigs are actually very detrimental to the environment, cause major damages to farm crops, and carry diseases so they should be controlled. What can you do if you have wild pigs on your land?

See the next edition of the Polk County Grazer for part 2 on Feral Pig Management which will focus on control options.



Wild pigs trapped near Vandervoort using the Rich Mtn Conservation District trap.

Plant your winter annual pastures now!



Upcoming Grazing Meetings and Seminars:

- ▶ **September 21, 2021—H brace Installation Demonstration (1PM—online seminar)** you are invited to attend the weekly grazing training sessions by Jeremy Huff, the USDA/NRCS state grazing specialist. He offers these training sessions as a Zoom meeting and the instructions for logging in are included in attached flyer. If you have the Zoom app on your phone you can just scan the QR code on the flyer. If you want to see it on your computer there is a link included in the attachment. There are sessions normally every Tuesday at 1pm so [see the attached flyer](#).
- ▶ **September 28, 2021— Where Quail Want To Be (1PM—online seminar)** next week's online grazing seminar.

WE'VE GOT NUTS!!!!!!!!!!

The Rich Mtn Conservation District is now taking orders for our annual nut sales to benefit our conservation scholarship fund.

There is a variety of nuts to pick from. We are offering pecan halves and pieces, praline pecan halves, white chocolate pecan halves, chocolate amaretto pecan halves, dark chocolate pecan halves, milk chocolate pecans, deluxe mixed nuts roasted/salted, double dipped chocolate peanuts, chocolate almonds, whole cashews roasted/salted, English walnuts, chocolate raisins, and gourmet pecan log rolls. There is also a conservation sampler option that includes 1 lb bags of pecan halves, cashews, honey roasted peanuts, chocolate raisins, chocolate amaretto pecan halves, chocolate peanuts, chocolate almonds and walnuts. This year we have added flavored peanuts they come in a 10-ounce tin. You can get Dill Pickle, Jalapeno, Salt & Vinegar and Southern Heat peanuts. These make great stocking stuffers.

All proceeds from the nut sales go towards our annual scholarship that is awarded to a Polk County student who will be going into an ag-related field in college. With your support we were able to fund \$3000 in scholarships to four local high school and college students this last year.

Orders will be taken until October 15, 2021 and will be ready by Thanksgiving!

Please help to support this worthy cause by purchasing some of these items. By doing so you are supporting our local youth with the opportunity to continue their education.

Attached is an order form; or, you can pick up an order for at the office at 508 7th St. in Mena or you can call and request one to be mailed, faxed or emailed to you at 479-437-6054. There is also an order form on our

website www.rmcd.org or you can email richmountainconservation@gmail.com.

Rich Mountain Conservation District Email: richmountainconservation@gmail.com Web: www.rmcd.org
Phone: (479)437-6054
Mail: 508 7th Street, Mena, AR 71953



Take a picture with your cell phone to visit the RMCD website -->

Please reply to unsubscribe if you do not wish to receive this newsletter.

Sent on behalf of the Rich Mtn Conservation District. Thanks for your interest in grazing management and conservation,

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