

The Feral Hog (or Wild Pig) Problem

- Eurasian wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) introduced by Spanish explorers as domestic hogs, over the years many escaped or let go or just abandoned during civil war and others to run wild.
- Feral Hogs are an invasive species and one of the most destructive.
- They are omnivorous – will eat just about anything. Small mammals, eggs, nuts, insects, grubs, rodents, vegetation, roots, crops, including their own babies if need be (usually already dead).
- Damage done to TX crops due to destructive rooting habits estimated at 50+ million dollars annually, and getting worse. Guestimates nationally approach \$1.5 billion! In all but 14 states.
- Their ability to carry and spread disease is dangerous to animals and humans.
- Your own back yard and landscaping could be next!!
- Excellent smell – can detect odors 5-7 miles away and 25 feet deep.
- Eyesight and hearing not as good.
- No sweat glands, no sweat. Stay cool by active foraging only at night, finding water.
- Can run up to 30 mph, jump fences up to 3 feet high (or just bust through them)
- One of most intelligent wild species and quickly adapts to human pressures.
- Amazing reproductive ability:
 - Life span 4-8 years,
 - Litters come every 5 – 14 months, average every 8 months, yields about 1.5 litters per year.
 - Each litter has 3.3 – 8 pups, averages 5.6
 - Estimated about 2.6 million in Texas in 2011. Probably many more by now.
 - Rapidly expanding throughout the southern states
- If we removed 28% of the population every year, in six years they will still double their numbers.
- Have to remove 66% of the population every year, just to stay at 2.6 million. And that's too many.
- Do you think we are doing that? Hunting? Trapping to kill or sell? Not a chance.
- Research still under way for contraceptives and toxicants. Obvious issues with unintended species.
- How many hogs would be prevented by removing just 1 sow?
 - Assume every sow has 1 litter every 8 months, with 6 pups and a 50/50 ratio of sows/boars.
 - In just over 5 years, that one sow would be “responsible for” **128,000 hogs!**
 - That number would include her 13,000 great, great, great, great, great, great grandchildren – in just over 5 years!!
 - Even if this mathematical calculation were off by 50% from real life, that's still HUGE.
- The ONLY natural predator for feral hogs is the Mountain Lion, and that is only in early months of the hog's life – up to about 15-20 pounds
- There are only two kinds of land owners in Texas – those with wild pigs, and those about to have wild pigs. Which are you? REMOVE THOSE SOWS!

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References:

Feralhogs.tamu.edu

Feralhogreports.tamu.edu

Extension.org/feral_hogs

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