

Gregg County Office  
405 E. Marshall, Ste. 101  
Longview, TX 75601  
903-236-8429

October 17, 2010

**NEW NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF:**

**Dennis Smith  
County Extension Agent-Agriculture  
Gregg County**

**ARMADILLOS**

With the large number of calls we have been receiving at the Extension Office, it is obvious that armadillos are hard at work in many of the home lawns in Gregg and the surrounding counties. Armadillos are one of the frustrating pests that invade the beautiful, well managed lawns.

The armadillo is active primarily from twilight through early morning hours in the summer. In winter it may be active only during the day. The armadillo usually digs a burrow 7 or 8 inches in diameter and up to 15 feet in length for shelter and raising young. Armadillos often have several dens in an area to use for escape.

The young are born in a nest within the burrow. The female produces only one litter each year in March or April. The litter always consists of quadruplets of the same sex.

The armadillo has poor eyesight, but a keen sense of smell. In spite of its cumbersome appearance, the agile armadillo can run well when in danger. It is a good swimmer and is also able to walk across the bottom of small streams.

More than 90% of the armadillo's diet is made up of insects and their larvae. Armadillos also feed on earthworms, scorpions, spiders, and other invertebrates.

Most armadillo damage occurs as a result of their rooting in lawns, golf courses, vegetable gardens, and flower beds. Characteristic signs of armadillo activity are shallow holes, 1 to 3 inches deep and 3 to 5 inches wide, which are dug in search of food. They also uproot flowers and other ornamental plants.

Armadillos can be captured in 10 x 12 x 32 inch live or box traps, such as Havahart, Tomahawk, or homemade types. The best locations to set traps are along pathways to armadillo

burrows and along fences or other barriers where the animals may travel. In the home lawn, set the trap in an area where the armadillo has been working.

The best trap is the type that can be opened at both ends. Its effectiveness can be enhanced by using “wings” of 1 x 6 inch boards about 6 feet long to funnel the target animal into the trap. This set does not need baiting. If bait is desired, use overripe or spoiled fruit.

Since most of the damage armadillos cause is a result of their rooting for insects and other invertebrates in the soil, soil insecticides may be used to remove this food source and make areas less attractive to armadillos.

Plans to construct an armadillo trap may be obtained from the Gregg County Extension Office or from the web site at <http://gregg-tx.tamu.edu/>

## ATV Focus Group Meeting

Do you go 4-wheeling, utilized a 4-wheeler or ATV on your farm or ranch? Have you or a family member ever had an ATV accident? Your opinions are needed. We want to prevent all-terrain vehicle injuries and fatalities and believe your opinions are important.

The Lake Country Area Health Education Center is conducting a focus group meeting on Monday, October 25. The meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. and conclude at 7:30 p.m. in the Gregg County Extension Auditorium located at 405 East Marshall in Longview. A free meal will be served but is limited to the first 20 to preregister. To preregister contact the Lake Country AHEC at 903/877-5735.

*Dennis Smith can be contacted at the Gregg County Extension Office by e-mail at [dg-smith@tamu.edu](mailto:dg-smith@tamu.edu) or telephone at: 903-236-8429.*

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.