



Pictured above are the Rice Raiders practicing handoffs for the upcoming football season.

## Hunting Helps Keep Ecosystem Balanced

**By Texas Parks and Wildlife Department**  
 Man has hunted wildlife since before recorded history for both food and as a means of protection from the elements.

Prehistoric hunters may or may not have understood their role in hunting but rather knew it as a means of survival.

Along with predators and outbreaks of disease, these prehistoric societies helped to keep animal populations in balance with the habitat.

In North America, the Native Americans were the first conservationists for wildlife populations.

Native American tribes, either sedentary or nomadic, understood their role in the environment and did not attempt to control it but rather co-existed as part of it.

They harvested what they needed and respected the predators that did the same, thus maintaining a balanced, healthy ecosystem.

Under their stewardship, wildlife populations thrived.

When European settlers first arrived on the North American continent, they found a thriving ecosystem with abundant game.

These new comers to North America were more sedentary and practiced farming and ranching.

They attempted to eliminate predators that once helped to control wildlife populations because

they posed a threat to livestock.

European settlers also brought with them a new set of values and traditions, harvesting animals from abundant wildlife populations not only for subsistence but also for profit.

Market hunting became a way of life for many.

Market hunter's harvested vast quantities of game, most of which was to be shipped to the northeast or overseas for

not harvesting does allowed the deer population to explode to the point that overpopulation affected the health of the deer population and the habitat upon which they depended.

Periodic die-offs, due in part to starvation, along with degraded habitats, became a cyclical event

occurring every few years.

By using hunting as a management tool we are able to estimate populations, calculate the carrying capacity of the habitat and harvest surplus animals, thus keeping wildlife populations in balance with the resources that are critical for their survival.



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Pictured above are Rebecca Dota and Falin Braden running on the track at cross country practice which started this week.

### RJH Cheerleaders Participate in Cheerleading Camp

The Rice JH Cheerleaders participated in a private camp this week with Premiere Cheer Camp to ready them for this year's football season.

This year's squad consists of the following. Representing the 8th grade is Mallory Thomas (captain), Shaniah Hardcastle (captain), Oleatha Coleman, Melissa Hassin, Erin McConnell and Brittany Moore.

Seventh grade squad members are Virginia Hardcastle (co-captain), Mary Beth Huvar (co-captain), Jameka Johnson and Taylor Semora.

The girls spent three days grueling over new chants, cheers and a dance but had lots of fun along the way as well.

They progressed very well as a squad and look forward to leading the school spirit at the new junior high school. Taking home special awards from the camp were Mary Beth Huvar - Best Jumper; Brittany Moore - Most Spirited; and Mallory Thomas - Most Valuable Cheerleader.



Rice Jr. High Cheerleaders from left to right: Jameka Johnson, Oleatha Coleman, MaryBeth Huvar, Brittany Moore, Melissa Hassin, Mallory Thomas, Taylor Semora, Shaniah Hardcastle, Erin McConnell, Virginia Hardcastle

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