

Registration Open For August Quail Symposium

By Steve Byrns

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ABILENE – The Statewide Quail Symposium is set for Aug. 16-18 in Abilene and registration is now open. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service symposium will be held at the MCM Elegante Hotel, 4250 Ridgemont Dr., Abilene, Texas.

"This major event gathers experts in quail management, research and conservation together to address topical questions being asked by quail enthusiasts on all levels," said Dr. Dale Rollins, San Angelo.

Rollins is a symposium planner and AgriLife Extension's statewide coordinator for the Reversing the Quail Decline Initiative. He's also director of the Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch at Roby.

The event will open at 1:30 p.m. Aug. 16 with a field tour of the Hailey Ranch, he said. Participants will view quail management strategies in action and learn how to evaluate quail habitat. Directions and GPS coordinates to the Hailey Ranch – Pavilion Gate entrance are as follows: 13542 County Road 301, Abilene, Texas 79601, link:[Hailey Ranch – Pavilion Gate Entrance](#).

"Mr. Hailey, a landowner and dedicated quail enthusiast, will be leading us on a personal tour and describing his management strategies," Rollins said. "We'll also be demonstrating habitat evaluation tools and plant identification techniques."

The Aug. 17 program slated from 8:45 a.m.-5:45 p.m. and Aug. 18 from 8 a.m. until adjournment at noon will take place at the hotel. Rollins said both days will be devoted to seminars led by a host of specialists ranging from expert field biologists to land managers and Texas Quail Index census volunteers.

"We'll tackle some controversial issues in point/counterpoint sessions to encourage debate," Rollins said. "Topics will include the self-regulating nature of quail hunting, invasive plants and quail, and translocation as a method for restoring wild populations. We will also hear the latest from quail researchers and meet the graduating class of QuailMasters 2017.

"The past two years have seen booming quail populations throughout Texas," he said. "To that end, some of the major points of discussion will be from experts

addressing ways to insulate these healthy quail populations while offering ways to address issues still threatening quail numbers with an eye to the future in terms of quail conservation and management."

Early individual registration by Aug. 7 is \$50; \$20 for students. Registration at the door will be \$75, \$50 for students.

For more information and to register, go to <http://statewidequailsymposium.com/>.