

The Protectors Message

TLGDA BOARD UPDATE

The Texas Livestock Guardian Dog Association Board meets monthly to work for the membership. We had a successful field day in Caldwell this past June and we are already planning the next field day in Caldwell for June of 2024. If you have any topics you would like to hear about or know of any good presenters, please let a board member know.

If you are interested in taking on a leadership role in the organization please come to the meeting on August 19th at 1pm at the AgriLife Sheep & Expo at the Spur Arena. We will be looking for new board members at the event. Our current board has served



the association for three years and some need to rotate out. We will also be looking for directors at large to help spread the word about the association and encourage membership.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Roaming vs Patrolling	2 & 4
Calendar of Events	2
Helpful Tips	3
Membership Update	3
Pasture Fresh	4

Presidents Message

In June, we held our first annual field day in Caldwell, Texas at the Burleson County Fairgrounds. We had several great presentations for the small but enthusiastic crowd. Several breeders attended the event with pups for sale. We are hoping to make this an annual event for the membership and producers across the state. If you missed the event two of the workshops can be found on our YouTube channel. Midway through the year or a little more we are looking forward to the annual association meeting at the Texas A&M AgriLife Sheep and Goat Expo on Saturday Aug. 19 at 1 p.m. in the Spur Arena in San Angelo. I hope to see everyone one there! Member participation is needed to help this organization continue to grow and succeed.



EVENTS CALENDAR

SEPT:

6—BOARD MTG

14—LGD & POULTRY
WEBINAR ON ZOOM

OCT:

4—BOARD MTG

NOV:

1—BOARD MTG

16—AGRILIFE LGD
WEBINAR

DEC:

6—BOARD MTG

JAN:

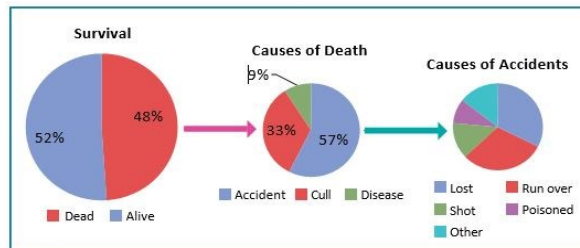
3—BOARD MTG

FEB:

7—BOARD MTG

LGD Roaming vs Patrolling

How to stop LGDs leaving their property is a common question from ranchers. It is one of the main problems with LGDs. Based on a study conducted in 1986 almost half of the LGDs on ranches were deceased by six years. As seen in the chart, the main cause of death in LGDs was from accidents.



A six-year survival of LGDs and causes of losses. Most accidents would not have occurred if the LGD had not left the rancher's property. (Lorenz et al. 1986).

Most of the accidents in this study were caused by dogs roaming off ranch boundaries. However, are the dogs really roaming or just patrolling an area larger than we would like? Producers often lump everything a dog is doing away from their charges as roaming. However, producers may be confused about why their dogs are leaving their charges.

Roaming is more of a random movement of the dogs across an area with no real reason other than they are exploring the area. Roaming dogs can travel many miles before stopping. Often, they travel so far away from their home pastures, that they cannot find their way back. Patrolling dogs usually have a specific pattern to their behavior. For instance, LGD Thor at the AgriLife Center between 9-9:15pm leaves his pasture and patrols the neighboring pastures for threats. Once he is done, Thor returns to his charges until the next night. Dogs that are patrolling or chasing a threat often have similar movement patterns. You can determine your dogs' movements by using a GPS tracker.

Many dogs are often just patrolling and defending their territory and not really roaming. Through use of GPS trackers, AgriLife has learned that dogs that roam tend to travel in longer straight lines with some direction changes every so often. Dogs that are patrolling or chasing something tend to have more circular loops or lines that zig zag across an area.

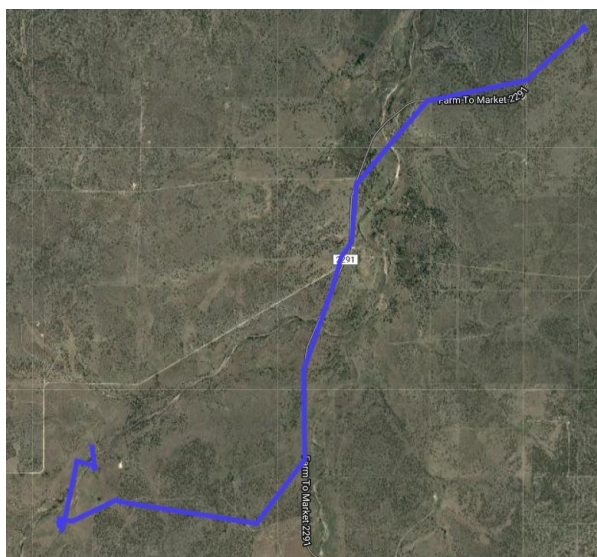


Figure 1: LGD Doc showing a classic example of roaming mainly in straight lines. He was found approximately 4 miles from the ranch location.

As seen in Figure 1, LGD Doc traveled in a fairly straight line on this date. Doc and his sister Thelma have been roaming since they had been released from the bonding pens in 2021. Doc's travels on this date are similar to his and Thelma's movements every time the dogs have roamed off the ranch. On

Continued on Pg 4



HELPFUL LGD TIPS

- Health checks are important for your LGD. Infections can form rapidly in the skin or eyes from grass seeds, noses can crack from sun exposure and teeth can crack or break off causing your LGD to stop eating and lose weight.
- Body condition scoring allows you to make feed changes as needed to maintain proper weight. Make sure to check body condition, toenail length, skin, eyes, ears, nose, and teeth for any issues on a regular basis to keep you LGDs in top shape.
- Deworming LGDs every 6-12 months may decrease feed costs, improve overall health, and increase their ability to guard livestock.
- Try using a canine detangler shampoo and conditioner to work difficult matts out of long haired dogs coats. An old style curry comb for horses works well to remove dead hair from long haired LGDs.
- It's generally recommended to bond LGDs to different species as a pup in case there is a change to different livestock on the ranch in the future. Dogs bonded to a single species as a puppy may not protect other livestock species as well in adulthood.

*Check out our website:
www.texaslgdassoc.org*

MEMBER UPDATE

Our membership is still growing! As of Aug. 1, we have 32 breeder memberships, 15 full memberships and 10 associate memberships for a total of 57 total memberships in the Texas LGD Association! This is down from our high of 66 members last year. We lost about 20 members overall last year.

If you are a breeder member of the organization, consider providing a TLGDA application to all of your clients or giving clients that found you through the TLGDA website a discount!

If you know of anyone that might be interested in joining the association, please get their contact information and let a Board member know so that we can send them a membership application!

this date, Doc was alone and roamed almost four miles away. Other dogs in the project tend to show similar straight patterns when they are roaming.

Figure 2: Photo shows LGD Laverne in a zig zag pattern.

These dog days of extreme heat are getting old. I worry about my dogs, my livestock, my ranch hands and my land. I pray that this dry, scorching summer is just a necessary prelude to a wet, cool fall ... we have seen it before and that is my hope.

Last week, I found a dead cardinal in our yard. We feed these birds and when the feeder is empty, they seem willing to come closer to us as if requesting a refill. Similar to my guard dogs and livestock, I form a little relationship with the birds we feed so I was sad to find one dead... but, of course not as sad as when one of our dogs is injured or dies.

So, where am I going with this? Good question. As a Christian, I believe in the spiritual world. While there is indeed tragedy all around us, there is also hope! I have faith that it will cool down and rain (sometime) but, more importantly, I believe that God is in control of these extremes. My little cardinal example is only one of my personal experiences. As "dog and animal people," I know you also experience the same spirituality in your world. God bless!