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TEXAS

PARKS & WILDLIFE

The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS

Cycling the Texas

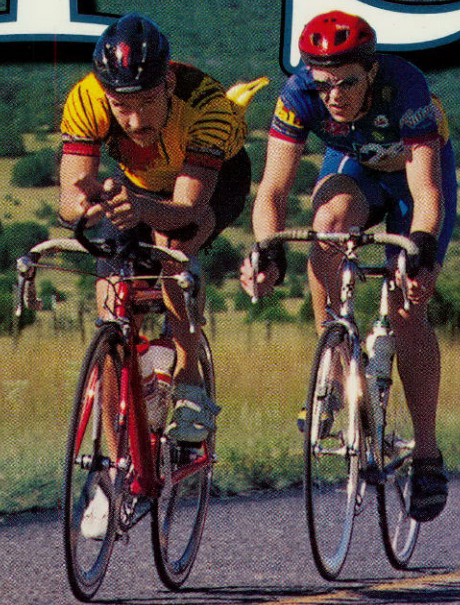
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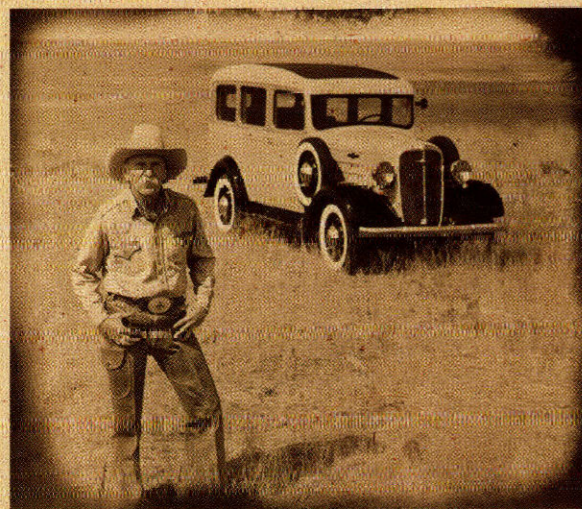
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LIKE A ROCK

C O N T

F E A T U R E S

20 The Jordan/Rodman Dog
Author Rick Bass reminisces about a memorable South Texas quail hunt with his dog, Colter; part Michael Jordan, part Dennis Rodman.

by Rick Bass

26 Marine Meadows
The Texas coast's shallow grass flats offer a unique fishing opportunity that is being threatened by propeller scarring and other factors.

by Phil Shook

32 Cool Weather, Hot Fishing
Fairfield Lake and the adjacent Fairfield Lake State Park provide anglers plenty of reasons to venture out during the normally cold months of January and February.

by Paul Cañada

37 Ninety Minutes from Anywhere
A Texas Parks and Wildlife biologist offers tips on where to catch a trophy bass within a 90-minute drive of anywhere in the state.

by Ken Kurzawski

42 Cycling the Texas Alps
Experience the challenge and dramatic scenery of Texas' Davis Mountains.

by Thad Sitton

48 Ned Fritz
This Dallas attorney has been at the vanguard of environmental issues for more than 50 years.

by John H. Ostdick

D E P A R T M E N T S

- 4 AT ISSUE**
- 8 MAIL CALL**
- 11 SCOUT**
- 54 LEGEND, LORE & LEGACY**
- 56 GETAWAYS**
- 59 SIGHTS & SOUNDS**
- 64 PARTING SHOT**

C O V E R S

Front: With Sawtooth Mountain in the background, these cyclists enjoy the challenge and scenery of the Davis Mountains Scenic Loop. See story on page 42. Photo by Earl Nottingham. Nikon N90S camera, 80-200mm Nikkor zoom lens, 1/500 second at f/5.6, Fuji Sensia film.

Back: Looking for a place to catch trophy bass without driving halfway across the state? See a TPW biologist's tips for lakes within a 90-minute drive from anywhere in Texas. Story on page 37. Photo © David J. Sams. Nikon F3 camera, 35mm lens, 1/125 second at f/5.6, Fuji Sensia film.

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EVENTS

JANUARY 2000



AT ISSUE

From the Pen of Andrew Sansom



I first met Ned Fritz when I worked for the Department of Interior in 1971. Ned was a relentless champion of the remarkable Big Thicket series of ecosystems in East Texas and, following the departure of Senator Ralph Yarborough from Congress, was carrying the ball virtually by himself. Ever since the late 1930s, conservationists had been calling for protection of the Thicket, which is one of America's most biologically rich and diverse natural resources. By the time I began to work with Ned, most of the original forest had been logged and many of the most ardent proponents had given up.

Not Ned.



Over the last half-century, nearly every Texas conservation organization has had Ned Fritz as an officer at one time or another and his impact on the landscape is just as pervasive and extensive.



I remember visiting the Big Thicket for the first time in the company of Geraldine Watson, the self-taught naturalist who, in the footsteps of Lance Rosier, also self-educated, was the most eloquent interpreter of the natural wonders of the deep forests and bottoms north of Beaumont. Geraldine told me Ned would come to her house in the middle of the night and badger her into leading just one more tour for someone he thought might help make a difference. He never left her or any of the rest of us alone until Charlie Wilson was elected to Congress and the possibility of a National Preserve in the Big Thicket became a reality.

He never gave up.

In those days, Ned's hair was fiery red. Today, as you will read in our piece on this Texas treasure, it is all white, along with his beard. But he still hasn't given up. And he won't.

Over the last half-century, nearly every Texas conservation organization has had Ned Fritz as an officer at one time or another and his impact on the landscape is just as pervasive and extensive. I have had the privilege of knowing and working with Ned over most of this period and he would be the first to tell you that we haven't always agreed.

But I can assure you that we have agreed on more than we have disagreed, particularly as it relates to the rich natural heritage of Texas.

Actually, I'm thinking of giving myself a Christmas present by talking Ned into visiting one of the many sites he has helped to protect in Texas.

They are his gift in any season to the future of the place he loves most.

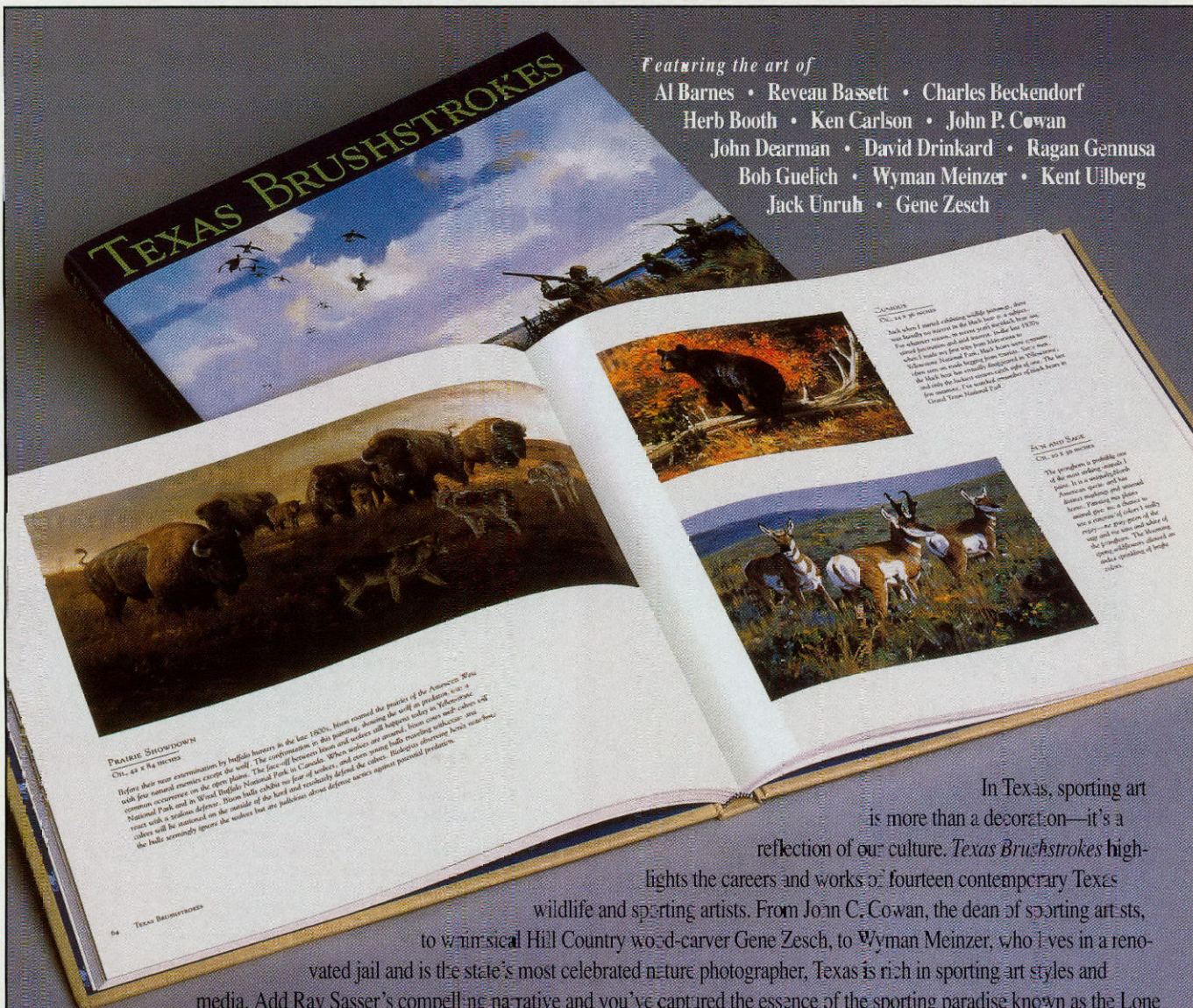
Merry Christmas to Ned Fritz and to all of you.

Andrew Sansom

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PRAIRIE SHOWDOWN
Oil, 48 x 84 inches

Before their near extermination by buffalo hunters in the late 1800s, bison roamed the prairies of the American West with four natural enemies except the wolf. The confrontation in this painting, showing the wolf in prairie, was a common occurrence on the open plains. The four off-brother bison and wolves still happen today in Yellowstone National Park and in Wood Buffalo National Park in Canada. When wolves are around, bison cows with calves off season with a season before. Bison bulls charge in fear of wolves, and even young bulls roaring with their calves will be stationed on the outside of the herd and routinely defend the calves. Hunters observing herd members will be startled as the wolves but are cautious about these vicious animals.

TEXAS BRUSHSTROKES

CANADIAN
Oil, 24 x 36 inches

The bear is a symbol of strength and power. In 1970, the last black bear was seen in the United States in the state of California. It is a symbol of strength and power. It is a symbol of strength and power. It is a symbol of strength and power.

BLY AND BARK
Oil, 20 x 30 inches

The pronghorn is a symbol of strength and power. It is a symbol of strength and power. It is a symbol of strength and power. It is a symbol of strength and power.

In Texas, sporting art is more than a decoration—it's a reflection of our culture. *Texas Brushstrokes* highlights the careers and works of fourteen contemporary Texas wildlife and sporting artists. From John P. Cowan, the dean of sporting artists, to whimsical Hill Country wood-carver Gene Zesch, to Wyman Meinzer, who lives in a renovated jail and is the state's most celebrated nature photographer, Texas is rich in sporting art styles and media. Add Ray Sasser's compelling narrative and you've captured the essence of the sporting paradise known as the Lone Star State. *Texas Brushstrokes* includes over 200 color images from the best contemporary Texas wildlife and sporting artists. 184 pages, 9 1/2" x 12", hardbound. \$65.



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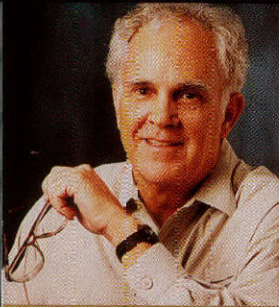
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Rick Bass, native Texan and former petroleum geologist, is the author of 15 books of fiction and nonfiction, including a novel, *Where the Sea Used to Be*. His nonfiction work — essays about wolves, winter and life in the wilderness — include his most recent contribution, *The New Wolves*, which discusses the controversy surrounding reintroduction of Mexican wolves to the American Southwest. Bass works out of a one-room log cabin studio in northwest Montana's Yaak Valley, where there is still not a single acre of protected wilderness in the Kootenai National Forest, despite its being the wildest valley in the Lower 48.



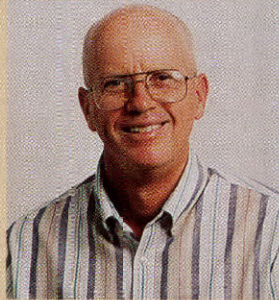
A native of San Antonio, **Phil Shook**, 56, currently writes from Houston and is a certified fly casting instructor. A University of Texas at Austin graduate in journalism, Shook specializes in fly fishing and marine fisheries issues.

He contributed his first feature to *Texas Parks & Wildlife*, on tarpon in Texas waters, in June 1993. Shook has written more than a dozen stories for this magazine, and co-authored with Chuck Scates the recently published *Fly Fishing the Texas Coast*. His work has appeared in virtually all the national fly fishing magazines, as well as *Field & Stream*, *Fly Rod & Reel*, *Tide*, *American Angler* and *Pole*.

A professional oral historian specializing in rural Texas lifeways in the early 20th century, **Thad Sitton**, 58, has published books about rural schools, Big Thicket stockmen and hunters, sawmill towns, family cotton farms and rural sheriffs.

From the age of 10, Sitton hunted and fished in the woods along the Neches River valley with his maternal grandfather, E.E. Cochran, setting the stage for a lifelong interest in what Sitton calls "the lost world of the Texas countryside."

He currently lives in Austin with his wife, Sarah, numerous cats and, as he says, "a garage full of canoes and bicycles." In this issue, he dusts off one of his favorites, a recumbent road bike, for a heart-pumping tour of the "Texas Alps."



TEXAS

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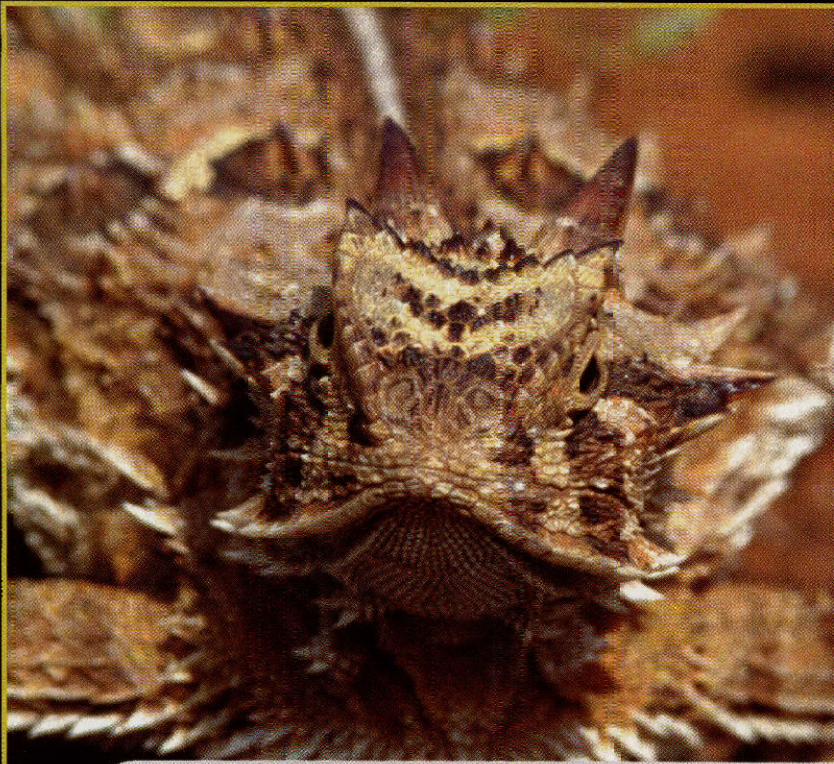
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MAIL CALL

Picks, Pans and Probes from Previous Issues

As we plan for the next year's editions of *Texas Parks & Wildlife*, we're looking forward to annual events that are as predictable as the seasons themselves. The creative — and fun! — part of the planning that we do is to present these predictable events to you with a fresh, innovative perspective. Here's a "sneak peek" of what we have in store for you.

Spring turkey season: More than 60 turkey hunting articles have appeared in this magazine since its debut in 1942. This March, we'll put down the pen and share the view through the lens with Texas' finest outdoor photographers to enjoy the sheer beauty of wild turkeys in the Texas spring countryside.

April heralds the 2000 Great Texas Birding Classic, now in its fourth year, and our annual birding issue. We have a special treat in store for you, as Managing Editor Mary-Love Bigony will divulge the secrets of the "other" migration (fall, that is) gleaned last September on a week-long tour of the now-completed Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail. Bigony scouted the trail with Ted Eubanks of Fermata, Inc, who designed the trail along with Texas Parks and Wildlife; Bob Behrstock, also of Fermata, Inc.; and TPW Nature Tourism Coordinator Linda Campbell. The GTCB Trail, the first of its kind in the nation, now extends from the Big Thicket to Laredo and includes more than 300 separate sites. A special feature this April will be a year-long birding event calendar — bigger and better than the spring migration calendar than debuted last year!

In May, we'll kick off the camping season with a series of features: one geared to senior campers, a report on an Outward Bound adventure and campground cooking that everyone can master and enjoy from Robb Walsh, two-time James Beard Journalism Award winner and current editor-in-chief of *Chile Pepper* magazine.

The June issue will be distributed at the 2000 Texas Fly Fishing Show, to be held May 19 - 21 on the grounds of Aquarena Springs in San Marcos. As this event has evolved (and especially in its second year at Aquarena), paddlesports have become even more of an integral part of the show. This is the only weekend of the year that the general public can get out on Spring Lake in a canoe or kayak, and doing just that was my favorite part of last year's show. Of course, the June issue will also feature plenty of new tips and techniques for fly fishing, both freshwater and saltwater, from some of the nation's foremost authorities — Texans all!

Now, no more peeking! That's all I'm telling for now. Our staff looks forward to yet another year of celebrating the rich outdoors traditions of Texas and hopes you'll join us in doing the same.

Susan Chest

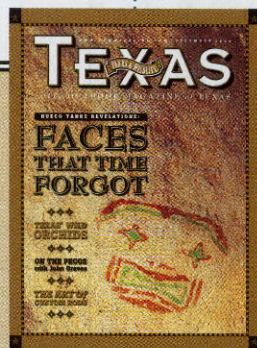
Rock of Ages

I am enjoying the articles and the new look of your magazine, and I am glad to see you highlighting the famous rock art that Texas has in the Pecos and at Hueco Tanks (December).

Just one correction, please. The two red masks on page 32 of your article "Rock of Ages" are printed upside down. These masks have the Quetzalcoatl "conical" headdress and the mouth of one mask is made of two fish coming together.

The reader can enjoy these magnificent drawings as they appear by simply turning your magazine upside down!

✉ Kay Sutherland
St. Edward's
University
Austin



Our whole family looks forward to your magazine, and has for many years. The articles and photography are of premier quality and are always informative and educational.

We particularly enjoyed John Graves' article, "The Pecos" (December 1999).

Cliff Woerner, Austin

Although I agree with certain aspects of Elaine Robbins' article (Rock of Ages, December), I have a problem with the picture of the climbers on page 34. I have been climbing for a few years, and I have never seen a situation like this. Usually bouldering problems are attempted by a single person who is spotted by several others. This picture creates a biased image of climbers and their impact on the environment. I have never been to Hueco Tanks, and I would like to be able to climb there

FORWARD

LETTERS



one day. I understand the need for preservation of the rock images, but climbers are not the only people who affect the area. Please do not make it appear that way.

⚡ Jennifer Stonaker

White Tales

I enjoyed the white-tailed deer photos in the November issue. The velvet covering on the bucks' antlers doesn't just fall off. The bucks rub it off on trees and branches. We live in an area that allows us to have a good look at deer, and we have had the pleasure of seeing this happen.

We have a favorite buck we named George. One morning George showed up and all the velvet covering was hanging in shreds around his head. His antlers were raw and bloody looking. The next day, when George returned, all the shreds were gone.

I'm basically a city gal, and living out here where the deer roam has been a beautiful experience, from seeing a young fawn with its mother to seeing bucks on the hunt for the right doe.

Sandra Wohl
Lago Vista

Student Appreciation

I am a college student at Stephen F. Austin State University pursuing a degree in environmental science with minors in biology and forest wildlife management. I would like to personally thank you guys for providing an excellent resource. The information in this magazine has been extremely beneficial for me as a student and as a dedicated observer of Texas' diverse flora and fauna. I also appreciate the excellent photography you guys provide each month. The sandhill crane on the cover of the November issue was astounding.

⚡ Keith Webb

A Voice for the Land

Ms. Ebert is correct that "tree hugger" stereotypes are held by many hunters and that non-hunters figure we're "Bambi-killers." I guess we'll always have those types of people.

I remember in years past that a statistic showed that more deer starve to death in Texas than are shot. Perhaps it's time to print today's

statistics. I have managed 18 sections of hunting land for 10 years now. I remember the first year that it was the worst place to hunt that I'd ever seen. However, thanks to assistance from TPW biologists, we have created a larger, healthier wildlife population.

I, for one, enjoy reading your articles on birding, walking, biking, rafting, etc., as well as hunting.

My hope is that the non-hunters will come to realize how beneficial *most* hunters are to wildlife in general.

Ray Scott
Midland

The 2000 Texas Fly Fishing Show

Do you have dates for the Texas Fly Fishing Show next spring?

⚡ Patrick V. Nicosia Jr

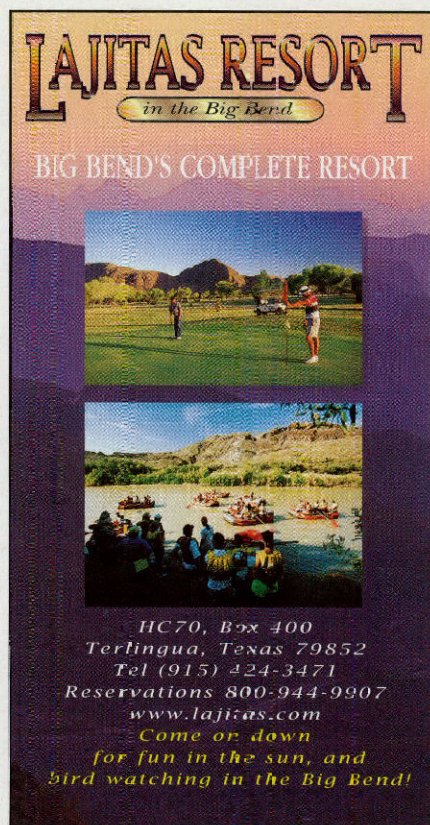
SUSAN L. EBERT replies: *We sure do! This year's show will once again be held in San Marcos, at Aquarena Springs. The dates are May 19 - 21, 2000. We've been working since last year's event to make this year's show even better, and hope that you'll mark your calendars to join us on the scenic and inspirational waters of Spring Lake for a weekend of family fun, skill building and outdoor adventure. For updates on this year's show, visit <www.ktc.net/flyfishing>.*

More Mabel Fans, Far and Near

I was born lucky. On the day I first drew breath, my grandmother already had more than 30 years of hunting experience she was just waiting to impart to younger generations of our family.

"Mabel the Mighty Huntress," (November) is Grandmother Birkner to me and scores of other grandchildren and great grandchildren who have loved her and her hunting stories for lo these many years.

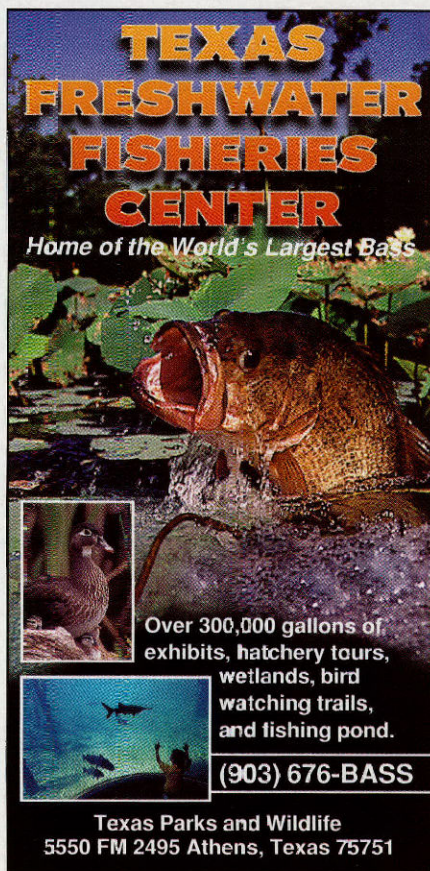
With Grandmother still successfully hunting at age 98, she inspires all of the rest of our family to keep participating in and passing down the hunting culture we grew up with. She always taught ethical and responsible hunting practices and, though now there are plenty of us around to help her with game she takes, she has always prided herself on being proficient at scouting, tracking, field dressing, and so forth.



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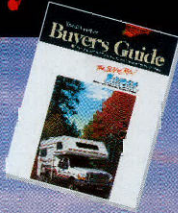
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MAIL CALL

Incidentally, if your readers wonder whether all the game harvested on last season's hunt was appropriately used, the answer is yes. We supplied meat for a church festival, an appreciation dinner for volunteer firefighters, a charity auction dinner to raise library funds, the family of a Marine, two out-of-state college students, and all of our own freezers. Grandmother wouldn't have it any other way.

⚡ Donald Birkner

I thought Kentucky was the only state that had "tree huggers" (people who are offended by hunting and fishing articles in outdoors magazines). Much to my delight, a fellow counselor brought a copy of your fine magazine to our office.

Your superb photography, wide range of topics and overall appearance of your publication has prompted me to subscribe; not to mention that you *do* cover hunting and fishing! The article on the 98-year-old huntress, Mabel Green Birkner, was paramount.

With great appreciation in the Bluegrass State, I am,

Mrs. Scotty Clenney
Board Member

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Scottsville, KY

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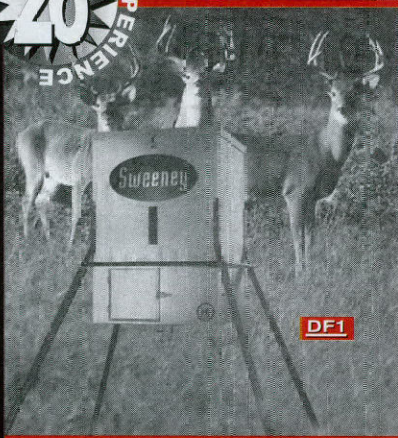
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NEWS AND VIEWS IN THE TEXAS OUTDOORS

APLOMADO FALCONS RETURNING

With Zorro-like masks and streamlined, steel-colored bodies, aplomado falcons are again hunting the shortgrass prairies of South Texas. This year, The Peregrine Fund released 115 young falcons in seven Texas locations with the help of Texas Parks and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



Biologists documented 19 pairs of aplomado falcons in South Texas in 1999, up from five in 1998.

The aplomado falcon historically roamed the open country of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. The last documented aplomado nest in Texas was found in the 1940s, south of Falfurrias. Specific reasons for their decline cannot be cited, but museum collections, habitat loss and pesticide use probably contributed. The birds were added to the Endangered Species List in 1986.

A remnant population of aplomados was found in northern Mexico. The Peregrine Fund began a captive-breeding program with a goal of reintroducing the species in the United States.

The Peregrine Fund has released a total of 466 young falcons in South Texas since 1985. The release sites for 1999 include three sites on the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge and Matagorda Island. The Keredy Ranch, Seadrift Ranch and the Weider Wildlife Refuge are private ranches serving as release sites.

The Peregrine Fund obtained permission

from the private landowners to release aplomados on their land. A "Safe Harbor" agreement releases ranchers from liability for the birds on their ranch. More than a million acres of ranchland have been added to the release program using the "Safe Harbor" agreement, which is an addendum to the Endangered Species Act.

Biologists documented 19 pairs of aplomados in South Texas in 1999, up from five in 1998. Five pairs were

found on Matagorda Island and 14 pairs were located around the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge. Of the 19 pairs, eight attempted to breed and four successfully hatched and fledged three young falcons each.

The reintroduction program for aplomado falcons is achieving success because of the combined resources of Texas Parks and Wildlife, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Peregrine Fund. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provides housing for the biologists and garaging for vehicles. Texas Parks and Wildlife issues permits and provides local public education and dialogue. Many Texas charitable foundations and individuals contribute to the restoration of the aplomado.

The Peregrine Fund hopes to expand the aplomado falcon reintroduction to sites in West Texas. By working with ranchers and wildlife agencies, they are returning the aplomado falcon to Texas' desert prairies.

— Sally Bickley



FIELD NOTES

Watching wildlife at Pedernales Falls State Park is even easier at a new wildlife viewing facility. This "nature theater" provides benches and chairs for visitors watching various animal antics through a 35-foot-long glass wall. It accommodates up to 25 visitors and is ADA-accessible.

More than a dozen migrating species, in addition to resident birds, deer and armadillos, are attracted by a rock birdbath and ground feeders in this Hill Country jewel. Hummingbird feeders provide a refreshing break for the spring migration of black-chinned hummingbirds and for ruby-throated hummingbirds in the fall. For more information call 830-868-7304.

PHOTO © LARRY DITTO • SPOT ILLUSTRATIONS BY: KYE DEIER

Beautiful but Deadly Chinese Tallow on “Dirty Dozen List”

Chinese tallow, also known as popcorn tree, chicken tree or Chinese tallowberry, is invading coastal prairies and marshes from coast to coast. Here’s how it came to Texas and why we should be concerned.

Exotic species, those species that are not native to the state or country, often alter the environment and cause the demise of native species. Tallow’s initial introduction into Texas was based upon the economic potential of its seed oil. The original tallow introduction was a result of a study by the Foreign Plant Introduction Division, U.S. Bureau of Plant Industry, U.S. Department of Agriculture, some time between 1900 and 1910. The specifics of the study are not well-known, but the premise was to investigate the economic viability of tallow seed production in the U. S. and attempt to establish soap industries in Houston, Texas, and Jacksonville, Florida. This industry never became economically feasible, but likely provided the origin of tallow expansion. From these original plantings, tallow has expanded its distribution from North Carolina to Florida, throughout the



The spread of Chinese tallow over the past 20 years has displaced native wildlife and plant species.

Gulf Coast states and into southern California.

Tallow’s expansion during the past 20 years has been rapid, displacing native wildlife and plant species at an alarming rate. When tallow invaded coastal Texas, it established in native prairies and negatively impacted species such as the Attwaters’ prairie chicken that need open grassland habitat. The Nature Conservancy has placed tallow on its “Dirty Dozen” list of the 12 worst exotic invasive species in the United States. Exhibiting characteristics similar to other successful exotic plants, such as saltcedar, tallow grows rapidly, produces abundant seeds, can resprout, and thrives on a variety of soils. Effective control and management of tallow is still in its infancy, and little is known about the mechanisms by which tallow

successfully naturalizes.

Tallow starts producing seeds after just two to three years and its rootstock may be viable for more than 100 years. Mature trees may produce up to 4,500 pounds of seeds per acre per year, facilitating expansion via flooding events and birds.

The invasion of Chinese tallow into coastal Texas has changed much of the region from coastal prairie to monotypic tallow woodlands, displacing native plant and wildlife species. When tallow invades coastal prairie habitats, grassland-dependent birds are forced into smaller habitat patches or may leave altogether. Waterfowl and wading birds are also impacted when tallow invades wetland marshes.

How can we slow down tallow’s invasion and reclaim native habitats? First and foremost, all

Texans can help stem this bioinvasion by not planting tallow. Live oaks, southern red maple and a variety of native trees will do much better in the long run. If you already have tallow established on rural property, a combination of spraying and use of prescribed fire can help reduce tallow densities. If tallow is sprayed when its seeds have developed, but are not ripening, and its leaves are still green, effective control may be observed. Similarly, once trees are dead in a pasture, prescribed fires may be used to clean up the dead trunks and return the nutrients to the soil. This may rejuvenate the soils in a given pasture and promote growth of native grassland plants. Finally, prescribed fire combined with proper rotational grazing may help prevent tallow establishment in areas where it is now absent. Unfortunately, the commonly held belief that cattle help control tallow is just plain wrong.

By not planting tallow, preventing new establishment, and working to reduce present tallow acreage, Texans can stem this bioinvasion. For tips on removing Chinese tallow, contact Texas Parks and Wildlife’s Urban Wildlife Program at 512-912-7011 or The Nature Conservancy of Texas at 210-224-8774.

— W.C. Conway, L.M. Smith and J.F. Bergan



GREAT TEXAS BIRDS

Texas is well-known for the diversity of birds found within its borders. The University of Texas Press has recently released a new book that focuses on some of those special birds. *Great*

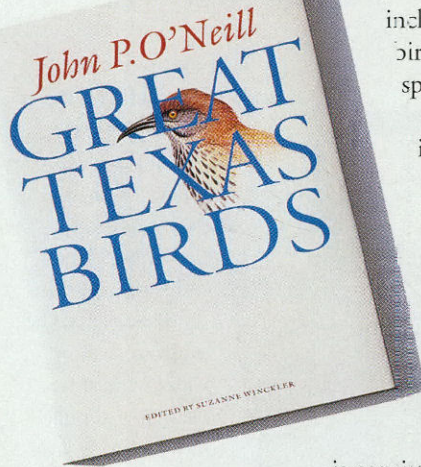
Texas Birds takes a look at 50 birds, some that are considered Texas specialties and others that occur beyond the state's borders. This attractive coffee table edition includes a full-page painting of each bird by Dr. John O'Neill, with a species account on the facing page.

An interesting aspect of the book is that a different author provided each species account. These authors include long-time Texas birders, experts on particular species and noted ornithologists. Dr. O'Neill is well-known as one of the premier neotropical ornithologists in the world, and as a gifted artist. The quality of the artwork

is consistent throughout the book and exhibits O'Neill's distinctive style.

Each plate includes a bird and one or two plants that are characteristic of the habitat where that species is found. Two of my personal favorites are the green kingfisher and the cave swallow. The species accounts vary somewhat in length and in style, as would be expected when 50 authors are involved. These accounts are informative as well as entertaining, and knowledge of the subject matter is obvious throughout the book. This volume will be a welcome addition to anyone's personal library.

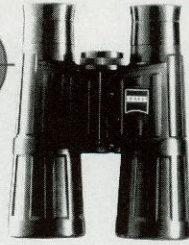
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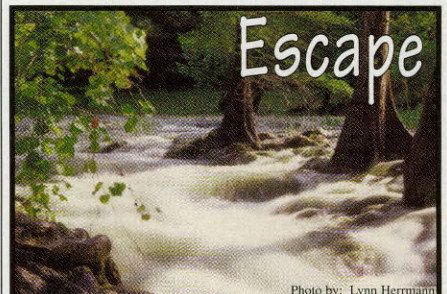


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SCOUT

BY GIBBS MILLIKEN

FIELD TEST

CHEST

WADERS

Sportsmen of all types have long used waders to keep away the wet, cold and muck of the outdoors. Most have universally condemned the uncomfortable nature of these membranes — the weight, bulk, clamminess that builds up with activity and, most of all, the restriction of movement by thick, rubberized fabric. All this has changed. The modern waders are none of the above, yet they still keep out the damp and keep in the warmth.

The early designs were simply extended-top “hip boots” and were in use for many years until it was noticed that, in most swamps, ponds and rivers, the deeper holes caused a major barrier with their crotch-high design. The first thick and heavy chest waders with big stiff boots attached solved this, but created real problems of their own. More than a few hunters and fishers drowned when a fall in deep or swift waters filled these waders and sank them like a sea-anchor.

New designs in chest waders incorporate several layers of different synthetic materials to form their structure. Soft, lightweight nylon is combined with membranes of one-way permeable fabric with the ability to wick away perspiration without reentry of external water. This results in an ideal composite material that is neither heavy nor uncomfortable for long hours of field wear.

The manufacturers call their new wader products “breathable” and extol

the virtues of this innovation. It is indeed a major improvement over past wetlands gear, but some problems still remain to be solved. The thin membranes are subject to excessive wear and tear from sharp surfaces and thorns that abound in nature. Also the bulk, insulation factor and some movement restriction is still with us. The ample cuts of these units does allow for layering to meet the weather and water conditions. Silk next to the skin is an ideal way to start this layering process. In winter, a synthetic fleece liner can be adequate for most Texas northers, but extreme cold will require additional layers.

The feet are a primary concern. The foot and ankle portion of the waders is usually in a stocking-design neoprene, a sponge-like material that offers flexibility, insulation, and wear resistance. Boots are separate and come in a range of styles and functions. When selecting wade boots, make sure they are one size or more larger than normal to allow for socks, wader-foot and athletic insole support.

Aqua Design Pro Line Thinsulate Waders are an innovative concept in camouflage that makes it harder for the fish to see the angler.

BASIC TYPES OF WADERS

1. Breathable Waders. These are the most popular, lightest and comfortable waders made to date. They may be purchased in either stocking-foot or integral boot types. Proven new designs are the Orvis Pro Guide Series, Simms Gore-Tex Guide Model, Patagonia and Hodgeman Supplex Wadelite.

2. Neoprene Waders. Available in stocking-foot or boot style, this type is soft, stretchable and excellent for cold weather applications. Good models are the Orvis River Otter with slick finish, Simms Polartec Neoprene, Hodgeman Lakestream III and Cabela’s Camo Neostretch.

3. Rubberized Canvas. The traditional heavy-duty construction of this type is for rugged wear and insulation under the most demanding conditions. Typical of these are Red Ball Master Insulated Rubber or the newest Aqua Design Pro Line Thinsulate Waders.

The bottom line in waders is versatility and the newer breathable types with their comfort features are the choice of most users. They can be

worn with the tops rolled down and secured at the waist in shallow water or warmer weather and pulled up with inside layering for colder spells. Most brands now offer numerous measurement combinations, including women’s and youth sizes for proper fit. Best of all, they fold small and pack light for air travel or hiking into the backcountry.



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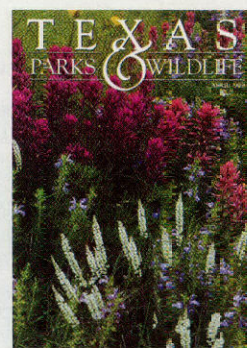
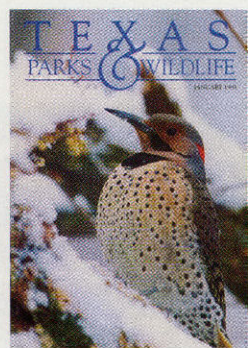
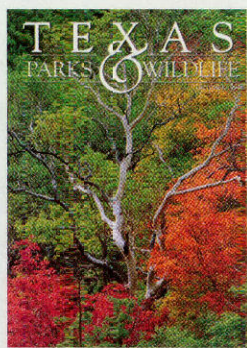
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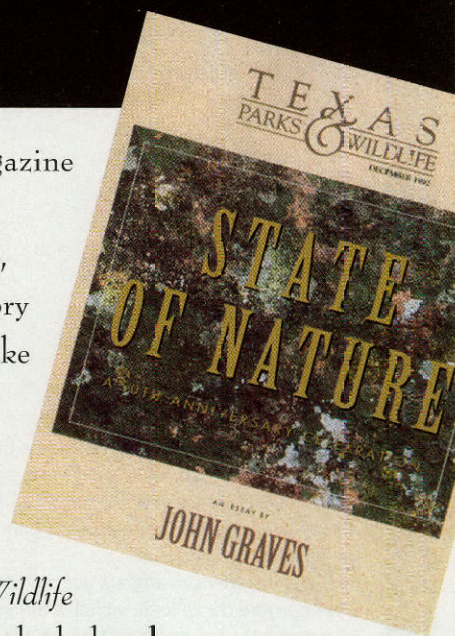
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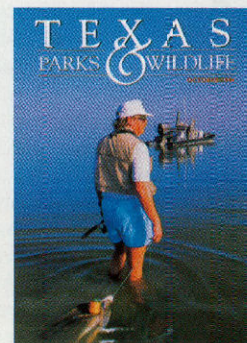
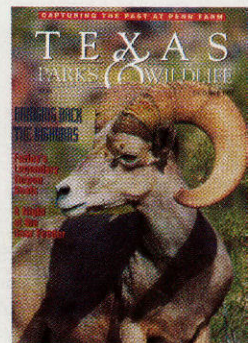
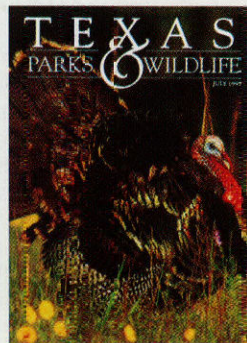


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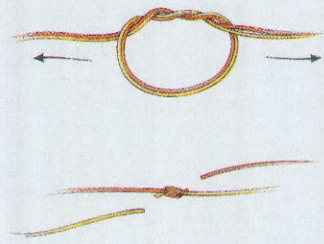
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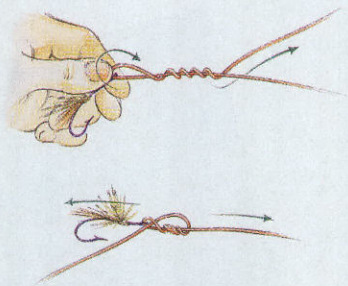
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KNOTS

TO KNOW



Fishing tackle of any weight is only as strong as the knots used to connect lure, line and reel. Knots should be lubricated with water or saliva, then tightened with firm, steady pressure and trimmed as closely as possible. Here are five simple, effective knots that can be quickly mastered by beginners and young anglers:



CLINCH KNOT: The clinch knot is used to tie a hook or lure to monofilament line. Hold the lure or hook in your left hand. Thread about six inches of line through the eye. Hold the line firmly against the eye with the left thumb and

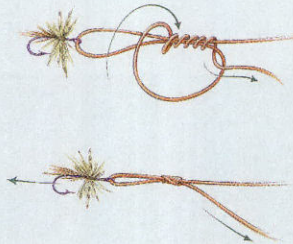
forefinger and wrap the tag end of the line around the standing part of the line five times. Bring the tag end back through the loop closest to the eye of the hook. Holding the tag end against the eye of the hook, lubricate and tighten by pulling steadily in opposite directions. Trim.

Many experienced anglers use a more difficult variation called the improved clinch knot, which is formed by the additional step of passing the tag end back through the loop formed by the wrapped and working parts of the line.

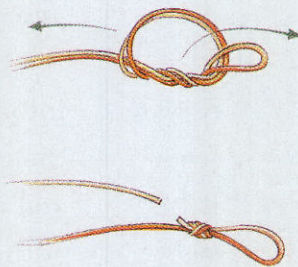
DUNCAN LOOP KNOT:

The Duncan loop is an alternative to the clinch knot. It is a sliding knot used whenever additional shock absorption or lure action is desired. The loop size can be adjusted to provide more or less lure action; the larger the loop, the more the lure action.

When a fish strikes and the hook is set, the knot slides and tightens against the eyelet. Pass eight inches of line through the eyelet. Form a two-inch diameter loop with the tag end. Wrap the tag end through and around the line and loop five times. Lubricate and tighten by pulling on the tag end with one hand while holding the lure with the other. Trim.



SURGEON'S KNOT: The surgeon's knot is used to connect two lengths of monofilament line such as leader and tippet. Lay the two lengths of monofilament side by side. They should overlap about eight inches. Tie an overhand knot in the doubled section – do not tighten. Tie another overhand knot through the same loop. Lubricate and tighten, holding all four ends. Trim.

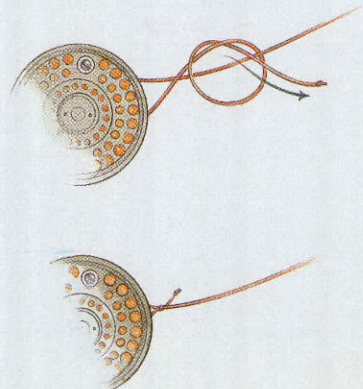


SURGEON'S LOOP:

The surgeon's loop is useful for loop-to-loop connections such as leader to loop-terminated fly line or monofilament line to snelled hook. Form a loop with a circumference of about six inches at the tag end of the

monofilament line. Make an overhand knot in the doubled line. Do not tighten. Make a second overhand knot. Lubricate and tighten by pulling steadily on the loop with one hand and the line and tag end with the other. Trim.

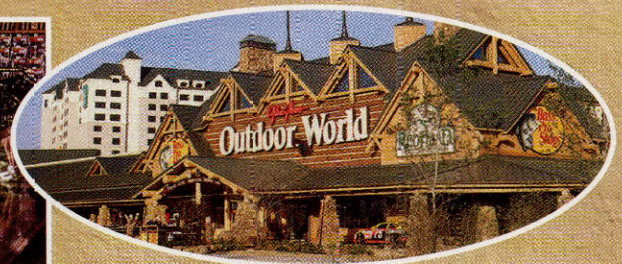
REEL KNOT: The reel knot is used to attach monofilament line or fly line backing to a reel spool. Pass the tag end of the line or backing around the spool hub. (Wrap twice in the case of fly line backing.) Tie an overhand knot in the end of the line. Tighten. Tie and tighten a second overhand knot around the standing part of the line. Pull steadily on the standing part of the line until the two knots tighten against the spool.



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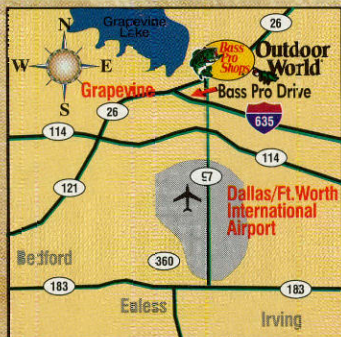
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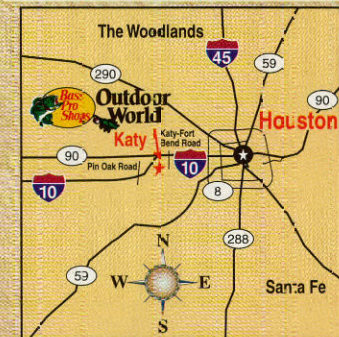
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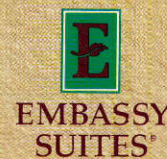
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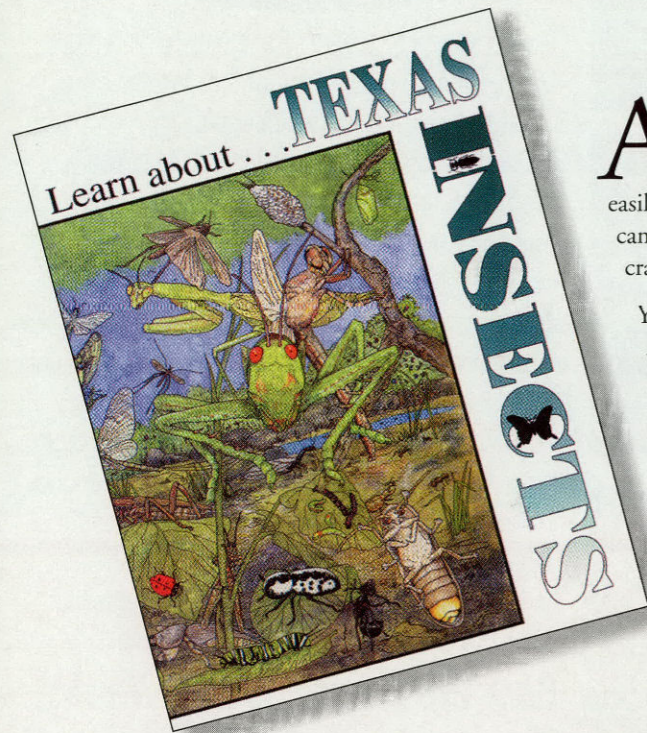


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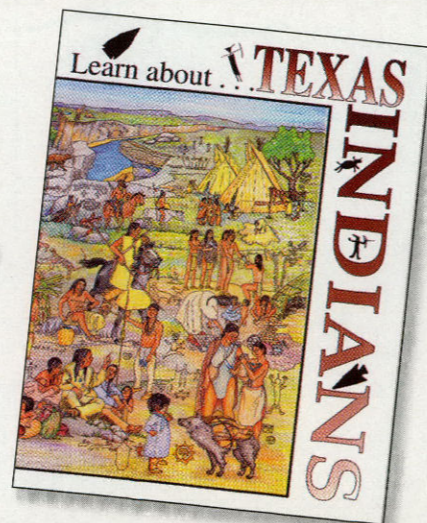
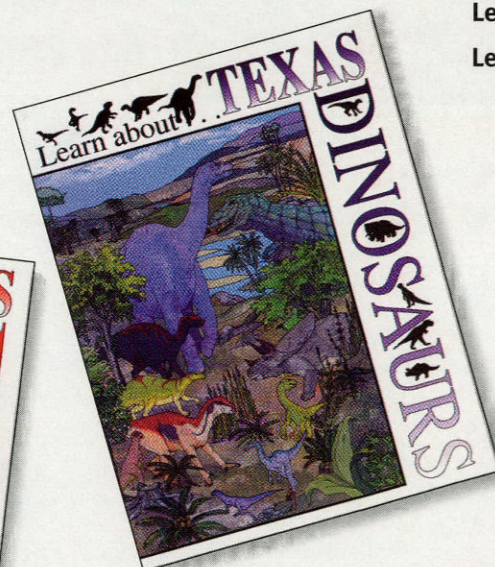
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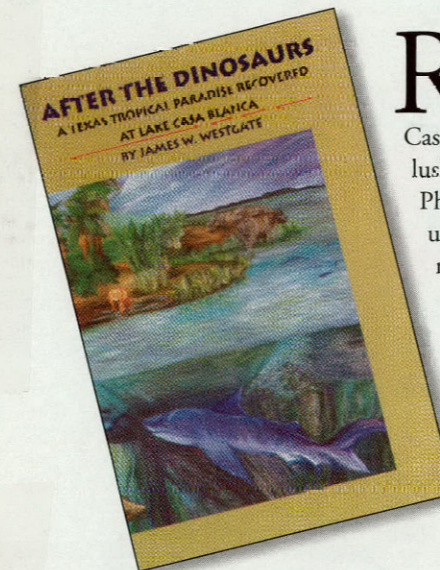
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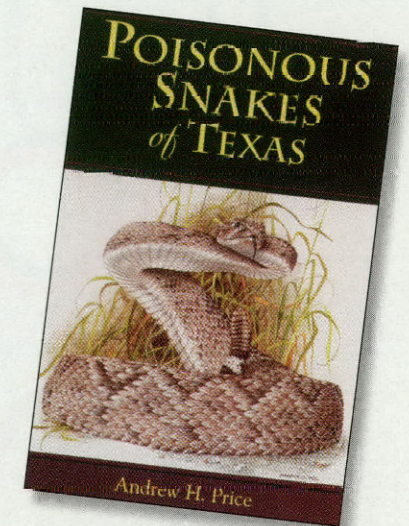


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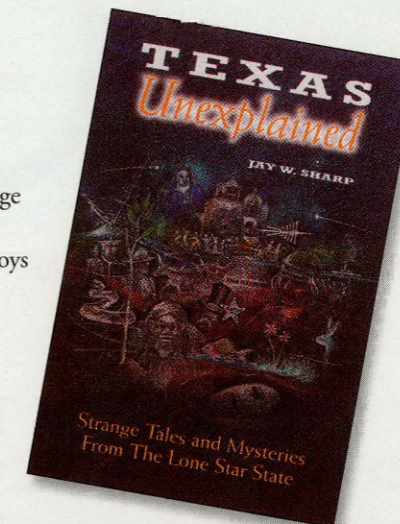


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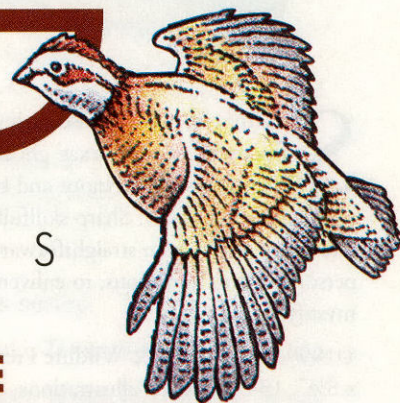
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JOHN WILSON

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN WILSON

Dennis Rodman: looping too wide, ranging too far, pretending not to hear the whistle, and even, on some nutty mornings, heading straight for the covey of birds and busting them as if out of sheer devilment. As if he just wanted to watch the excitement of the flush. Or to make sure Jarrett was paying attention.

Colter was one of the greatest bird dogs that ever lived. (You can doubt my word on that, but not Jarrett's.)

But to truly capture the essence of the dog, I have to include this idiosyncrasy. It happened only once in a blue moon, but for many traditional, tweedy sportsmen, once would be enough to dismiss a dog with a loud harrumph. They'd prefer a dog that is more like a robot — a dog that would never, ever bump a bird, not by mistake (even if

the dog had to become ever-more cautious, gradually lowering its intensity level), and never, by God, on purpose, for the sheer adolescent joy of messing up. They have spent the last hundred years line-breeding the perfect dog, or so they believe, intent upon all the things a judge can quantify in a trial, but overlooking, decade after decade, the intangible of heart....

Jarrett said that it really threw him, the first few times it happened — that at first he couldn't figure out why a dog of Colter's caliber would behave that way — but he figured it out, soon

enough, and was tickled by it, amused rather than threatened. It was strange, he said, to see the two traits, greatness and mischief, so twined together, but he viewed it as a challenge, and was intrigued by it. The basic training process, the physical exercises, have become largely rote for Jarrett, and the real wisdom and value in his work comes from learning a dog's type and personality, and establishing a relationship: knowing when to push, and when to back off. Knowing what can be demanded of the dog: the sky was nearly the limit. (The first time my friend Jerry saw Colter work, Jerry marveled at Colter's energy and said, "That dog's got a lot of bottom." Meaning, I think, you couldn't do anything that would make Colter want to not hunt.)

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Sometimes, when we were hunting, after Colter made a staunch point and I stepped forward to flush the bird, and fired and missed — missed twice, with both barrels, at close range — Colter would become frustrated and begin to yip, would even howl and scream. And after a couple of easy misses by me, he would sometimes throw an adolescent tantrum and take out howling across the countryside, chasing the bird to the horizon and then hunting on his own, galloping in huge, wide-casting circles,

IT HAPPENED ONLY ONCE IN A BLUE MOON, BUT FOR MANY TRADITIONAL, TWEEDY SPORTSMEN, ONCE WOULD BE ENOUGH TO DISMISS A DOG WITH A LOUD HARRUMPH. THEY'D PREFER A DOG THAT IS MORE LIKE A ROBOT.





bumping the birds rather than pointing them. It would be quite some time, often an hour or so, before Colter's nerves would calm down enough that he would return to my beckoning call and resume hunting, rather than howling.

Again, it is only because Colter was so great that can I tell you of this little weakness which, of course, was not his weakness, but mine; one which he was forced, by the nature of the man-dog relationship, to accept.



Colter hunted well for Jarrett, it should go without saying, and he performed admirably when we were out in the field with Tim, who had, after all, spotted that first wild bird for him, that red ruffed grouse right at dusk, his rookie season. For some strange reason, however, he did not take to my father, who tends at times to be slightly critical, particularly with regard to subjects on which he has a high degree of knowledge and experience, of which hunting and bird dogs are two.

The first couple of times Colter went grouse hunting with my father up here in Montana, we found nothing; Colter ranged too far (easy to do, in these tight woods), galloped with his tongue hanging out, didn't come to the whistle, and didn't even find any birds to bump, must less point, which didn't surprise me: in a low year, I'll often hunt all day without seeing a bird. I really didn't think much about it. My father grumbled that I was being overly generous in my praise of the dog, but because we'd encountered no birds, there really wasn't anything to measure Colter against. There'd been no challenge. My father was dubious, but gave him the benefit of the doubt.

Down in Texas, Colter had been trained on quail, though they were slow-flying, witless, butterball pen-raised birds, not the lean wild quail that still inhabit the brush country and grasslands. To hunt wild quail in Texas, you need to own or lease some land. A lease costs around \$8 an acre; and 2,000 to 3,000 acres is about the minimum you'd need to hunt all season.

RICH PEOPLE NEED FRIENDS, TOO, AND MY FATHER WAS ABLE TO GARNER US AN INVITATION TO HUNT WITH A FRIEND OF HIS WHO, DESPITE BEING IN THE OIL BUSINESS, HAD STILL RETAINED SOME DEGREE OF WEALTH.

Not many folks can afford to pay \$20,000 a year for what Guy de La Valdene has called, affectionately, "a handful of feathers." But rich people need friends, too, and my father was able to garner us an invitation to hunt with a friend of his who, despite being in the oil business, had still retained some degree of wealth. The friend owned over 100,000 acres — a small ecosystem — adjacent to the legendary King Ranch in South Texas, and so one weekend in January I loaded Colter into his kennel and left the snows and subzero temperatures of Montana for the blue sky down near the Mexican border, near the Gulf. We stayed in the bunkhouse — my father, his friend B. and another of their friends, R., the three older men all over 60, and me, the youngster, not yet 40 — and I have to confess that that first night around the campfire, before we'd been hunting yet, I bragged Colter up something fierce.

Being veteran oilmen, the other hunters had each seen and heard a lifetime of scams and shady deals and possessed acutely what Hemingway referred to as the "shockproof bull detector." Watching them listen to my tales of Colter's greatness, I could tell that their detectors were on alert. They were puzzled, though, by the apparent disingenuousness of my set-up, for the proof of the pudding would be forthcoming very

soon — the next morning! — and what kind of con artist would be mouthing off with such hyperbole when the day of reckoning was so close at hand?

They had never seen a completely liver-colored German shorthair before, and I thought this might work in Colter's favor, but R. said, "I don't like his looks," and B. added, "That's a pretty strange-looking knot on his head, kind of a knob-dealy."

"You'll see," I said. "You gentlemen are in for a treat. In fact, if you really knew what kind of a treat you were in for, you wouldn't be able to sleep tonight, you'd be so excited."

The oilmen studied Colter some more, then looked back at the fire, non-committal. I could tell that they wanted to dare to believe, but had become so encrusted by age and routine that they just weren't able, no matter how much they wanted to. Too dangerous. They held their tongues, though; they didn't disparage him. They played it safe. They gave him the benefit of the doubt.

It was exciting, being down there in a new landscape with him; like traveling to a foreign country. It didn't occur to me that what I would be asking him to do the next day would be the equivalent of delivering the Gettysburg Address in a language he had never spoken before.

I kept on bragging long after the fire had burned down to coals and the oil-

men had begun to nod off. My sweet brown bomber dozing by the fire with his head in my lap. I couldn't wait. He would slay them. Even my father was getting excited about my sales job: believing for that worst and most tenuous of reasons: because he wanted to.

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The manner in which the older gentlemen hunted was to ride a jeep down winding trails cut through the brush, pulling a trailer of dogs behind them while one dog loped ahead, casting for scent.

When the dog encountered scent, and then crept in on the hidden, huddled quail and pointed them, the driver of the jeep would stop, and the hunters would clamber out, load their guns, and stride with alacrity toward where the frozen dog stood waiting. After one dog had run for a while, the driver of the jeep would stop, whistle the dog in, water the dog, examine its paws for thorns, and turn out another, fresher dog. It was a style of hunting to which I was unaccustomed, preferring instead the pace and intimacy of being down on the ground with my dog and my quarry. But you could run a lot of dogs and cover a lot of ground, and it was a good way to find a lot of birds, too.

When it was Colter's turn, he just ran — not casting ahead of us, but galloping along like a kid running cross-country, grinning and watching us sidelong with his tongue hanging out. It was his

grin, I think, that was most aggravating to the older gentlemen, and B., our host and driver, seemed to be taking it personally, accelerating to try to keep up with Colter, who seemed in turn delighted by this strategy — a race — and so on down the bumpy dirt road we hurtled, not really hunting as much as just trying to stay up with the fabled, magical dog, even as everyone but me lost every inkling of faith in him.

Colter galloped through the thorny brush like a thoroughbred — not hunting a bit, just running, like some kid in cross-country practice. Running as if he didn't have a thought in his mind, and as if his blood no longer carried any instinct at all, only sheer contrariness. A demon hound, the other hunters saw now, a brown muscled genie brought down from Montana to unravel the very object of their longing.

Colter was busting birds as he galloped: veering course only slightly in order to run right over the top of them, exploding them into the heavens, at which point he would grin still wider, would throw his head back and bark at the sky, howling his success, and run even harder, so that now white flecks of foam were spittling from his jowls, and when I whistled and called and hollered for him to come in, to scold him and to water him, and to try to calm him down, he just grinned and ignored me, which I knew in the eyes of these veteran hunters was the worst thing a bird

dog could do. Our morning's hunt deteriorated into a chase-scene, with us following the bounding brown dog through the brush, with covey after covey of wild quail catapulting frantically into the sky.

We finally captured him with the aid of a herd of javelinas. When we caught up with him, they had him half-surrounded, tusky boars and angry sows and half-grown shoats, and were facing him, clicking their tusks, while he was crouched and growling with his hackles raised. I jumped out of the jeep and hurried into the brush with my shotgun, hoping to ward off the fight, and to my relief the javelinas turned and raced off into the brush.

I took hold of Colter by the collar and led him back to the trailer, hosed him down and watered him. He was as hot as a bed of coals, his breath a blowtorch, and as an excuse to the other hunters I offered up the notion that perhaps Colter was having trouble picking up the birds' scent, with the strange climate so new to him, so hot and dry.

We put him in his kennel and resumed hunting with the other dogs, none of whom appeared to have any trouble with how hot and dry it was, though I had to say that after watching Colter's exuberance and athleticism, watching the other dogs creep and prance around so tentatively, so leery of making a mistake — so without style — was about as exciting as watching old men play croquet. I would rather have watched my dog run like the wind, any day, even if it meant passing up a few opportunities at birds. Being a guest, however, I kept my thoughts to myself, and eventually, we got in a little shooting.

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As we hunted with the other dogs, I kept pondering on what had gotten into Colter: why he had turned so demonic. I kept bragging on him, too; I wouldn't just let it drop, and let these other hunters go away believing, so mistakenly, that he was a dud. In my mind, a hypothesis began to take shape, and later in the day, I cautiously proposed it.

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“He’s such a sweet boy,” I said, “that I think he was freaking out, panicking that we were going to drive off and leave him. He’s never hunted this way before. Maybe if I get out of the jeep and hunt on foot, while y’all drive behind us, he’ll calm down.”

Bless their old hearts, you could see them wanting to believe: knowing that they shouldn’t, knowing that they’d already seen more than they needed to, but hooked, nonetheless, on the idea, or the possibility, of one of the world’s greatest bird dogs appearing into their lives from out of some near-mythical land of glaciers and ice-bears.

They gave Colter — gave us — one more chance.

Of course Colter didn’t care if the Queen of Sheba was giving him one more chance; or rather, he did care, and was only too delighted to goof things up again, running even wilder, grinning and mugging even more maniacally, and busting just as many quail as before — busting in his second brief foray more coveys than all the other dogs had found all day cumulatively, so that I understood at that point (and I think that the other hunters did, too) that there was nothing at all wrong with his nose. On the contrary, they realized that I was right, that he probably could smell every bird in the county, even which way the wind was blowing.

My father suggested that I put Colter up for the rest of the day, which I did, speaking sternly to him as I did so: “Colter! What has gotten into you? What do you mean?” It was a kind of language which, to the old-school hunters, was doubtless the equivalent of my counseling Colter to take a few deep breaths before trying to get in touch with his inner feelings; and I could tell by the way the three other hunters looked off fiercely in three different directions that they were thoroughly disgusted by both dog and man alike.

The younger generation, I could hear them thinking, it’s just not what it used to be, in the old days...



A postscript, as if any were needed.

IT WAS A KIND OF LANGUAGE WHICH, TO THE OLD-SCHOOL HUNTERS, WAS DOUBTLESS THE EQUIVALENT OF MY COUNSELING COLTER TO TAKE A FEW DEEP BREATHS BEFORE TRYING TO GET IN TOUCH WITH HIS INNER FEELINGS.

That night, around the campfire, with all the “true” hunting dogs asleep in their kennels and Colter lying beside us, four men and one dog watching the fire, Colter got up and wandered off into the starry night. I would have thought he would be too whipped from his peregrinations to have any jauntiness left in him, and figured he had just eased off to take a pee, but I was mistaken; when he did not return after a few minutes, I called for him, but he did not return. I stood up and walked out into the darkness myself and called louder, but still he did not respond.

“Oh, God,” my father said, “he’s probably out running deer.” The other hunters groaned, particularly the ranch owner, who had planned to take some other friends deer hunting later in the week.

“No,” I said, “he won’t run deer. He’s scared of them. He’s probably out hunting quail.”

“Oh, please,” said R. “Spare me.”

B., the ranch owner, said nothing, just got up and went off to bed. After a little while R. retired too, and it was just my father and me, waiting for Colter to come back — “Don’t worry,” my father said, “he’ll be back” — and then, after my father went to bed, it was just me and the campfire.

I got a blanket and lay down there by the coals, and a little after midnight, Colter returned. I could tell he’d done

something wrong, because he didn’t come bounding straight back, but instead was kind of circumnavigating, staying just on the outer boundaries of firelight. There was a rustling in the brush, too, as if he were pulling something, and when I got up and went with my flashlight to go see what it was, I nearly retched.

He had found a dead calf and dragged the carcass back to camp. I could tell right away that he hadn’t killed the calf himself, thank God — it had been dead for a few days — but such was his beastliness in the eyes of my hosts that I knew I might have trouble convincing them of that.

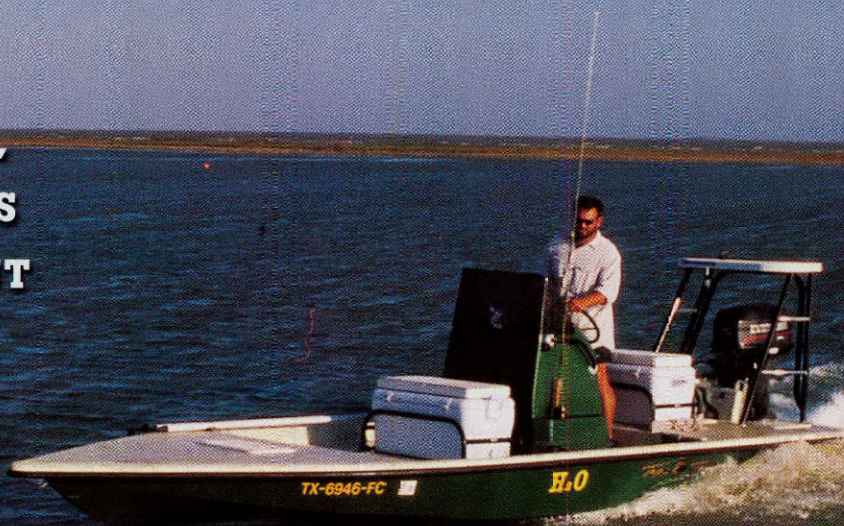
I went and found a shovel, and dragged the calf far back out into the brush, and buried it deep. I knew coyotes would probably dig it right back up, but by that time Colter and I would be long gone, never to return — never to be invited back — and I could only marvel at my luck that the other hunters had not still been sitting around the fire when the great chesty hound had come scuttling back in after a night out on the prairie, returning with game twice his size, his eyes shining red in the firelight. ★

“The Jordan/Rodman Dog” is a pre-publication excerpt from a collection of essays entitled My Colter, to be published next summer.

MARINE

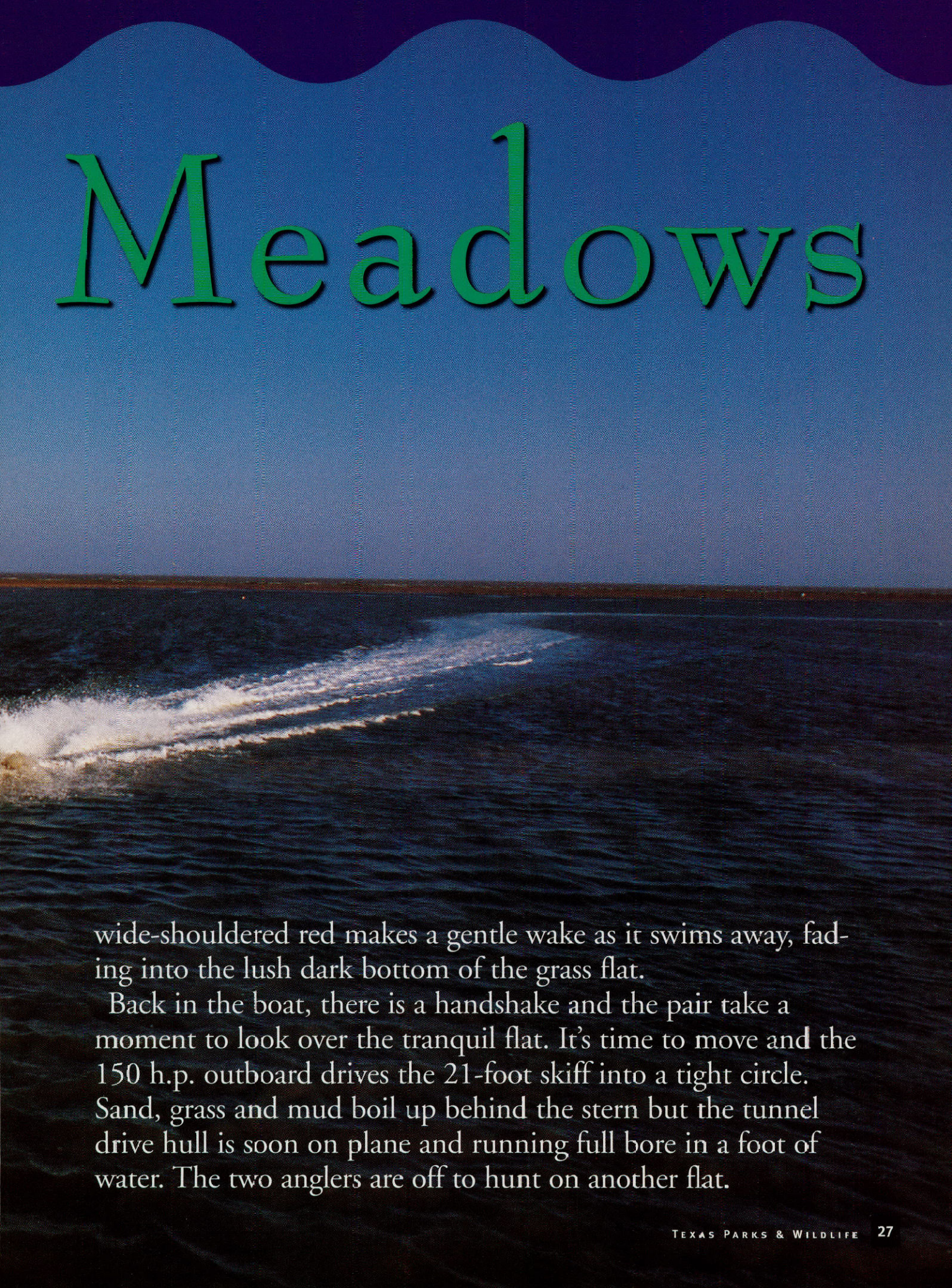
**THE DELICATE
SEAGRASS BEDS
ALONG THE TEXAS
COAST NURTURE
JUVENILE FINFISH,
CRABS AND SHRIMP,
AS WELL AS TURTLES
AND WATERFOWL. BUT
HOW WELL ARE WE
NURTURING THEM?**

BY PHIL H. SHOOK



THE LEAN FIGURE on the poling platform freezes like a bird dog on point. Speaking in hushed tones to his companion on the bow, he points out a redfish moving into view on a shallow Aransas Bay grass flat. When the fish puts its head down to root for crabs and shrimp, the caster flicks a gold spoon a few feet away. The redfish sees the flashing lure and wallops it in a boiling strike. When the fight is over, the fish is revived at boatside and released. The

Meadows

A wide-shouldered red fish is swimming away, leaving a gentle wake in the water. The fish is a vibrant red color, and its wake is a white, frothy trail that tapers off into the distance. The water is a deep, dark blue, and the sky above is a lighter, hazy blue. The overall scene is serene and captures a moment of quiet observation in nature.

wide-shouldered red makes a gentle wake as it swims away, fading into the lush dark bottom of the grass flat.

Back in the boat, there is a handshake and the pair take a moment to look over the tranquil flat. It's time to move and the 150 h.p. outboard drives the 21-foot skiff into a tight circle. Sand, grass and mud boil up behind the stern but the tunnel drive hull is soon on plane and running full bore in a foot of water. The two anglers are off to hunt on another flat.



The best way for boaters to avoid scarring seagrass beds is to know the water depth requirement of their boat's design.

The 150-h.p. outboard drives the 21-foot skiff into a tight circle. Sand, grass and mud boil up behind the stern but the tunnel drive hull is soon on plane and running full bore in a foot of water.

In the course of the day, these anglers have bent over backward to be good stewards of the coastal resource. They have practiced catch and release, given a wide berth to other anglers on the water and refrained from running shallow shorelines.

Yet on several occasions, when moving off shallow grass flats, the prop on their flats boat has carved gashes in the seagrass beds.

Along 235,000 acres of seagrass beds that extend from Port O'Connor to South Padre Island, Texas anglers are able to fish clean, clear flats, where they can see bottom structure as well as the game fish they hunt. But prop scarring and other factors pose a threat to this unique style of angling found on the flats of the middle and lower Texas coast.

"Nobody likes to fish when the water is turbid or a bright brown in color," points out Larry McKinney, senior director of aquatic resources for Texas Parks and Wildlife.

Despite noticeable damage from prop scarring in some areas and more serious coastwide threats from declining water quality, dredging and channelization, seagrass meadows along the middle and lower coast have stubbornly held their own over the last two decades. Marine scientists and fisheries experts warn, however, that forces are present that could cause significant losses in this critical marine resource.

Besides filtering out sediment, seagrasses provide a natural hunting ground for game fish and the anglers who pursue them. They function as food sources for fish, waterfowl and sea turtles, nurseries and sanctuaries for juvenile finfish, crabs and shrimp and generally serve as biological indicators of water quality on Texas bays and estuaries.

From Matagorda Bay southward along the Texas coast, seagrasses are the dominant structural vegetation. Almost 80 percent of the seagrasses are located in the Laguna Madre, an estuary that begins just south of Corpus Christi Bay and runs southward 140 miles to South Padre Island. Most of the remaining seagrasses, about 45,000 acres, are located in the heavily traveled San Antonio, Aransas and Corpus Christi Bay areas.

Marine biologists have identified five species of seagrasses on the Texas coast: shoalgrass, turtle grass, manatee grass, star grass and widgeon grass. Seagrasses fill many roles and provide many benefits in the marine environment. "If the seagrasses are destroyed,

a critical element in the life cycle of juvenile finfish is removed from the marine environment,” McKinney says.

Ken Dunton, research scientist and seagrass specialist with the University of Texas Marine Science Institute (UTMSI) in Port Aransas, points out that seagrasses also are important to water quality.

“By their very nature, they provide structure on a bay bottom and, by providing that structure, they slow and retard water movement. That results in the deposition and settling of particulate matter and that particulate matter is then deposited on the bottom.”

As a result, the water around seagrass beds is always a lot clearer. “The water transparency is always higher and people like that because fish are mainly visual predators and part of the joy of fishing is being able to see what you are fishing for or watch a fish chase your lure, chase your bait.”

Seagrasses also trap and conserve nutrients that are essential to other marine organisms, Dunton says. “They internalize nutrient cycling. Instead of being washed out of the system, nutrients important to productivity systems are taken up by seagrasses in their roots and leaves so those nutrients don’t leave the system very easily. We have a reservoir for nutrients that otherwise would be flushed right out of that system.”

Seagrasses also serve as secondary sources for a variety of marine organisms. “Nature makes it, nature eats it, the saying goes,” Dunton says. “What turns into dead, decaying matter is ultimately consumed in the food web and becomes a very important part of the marine system. What we call the scavenger-based food web is the basis of the shrimp industry.”

Another important role of submerged grasses is to provide habitat for gamefish, forage fish and crustaceans, Dunton says. “The habitat issue is important not only for adult organisms but particularly for the larval forms of fish, shrimp and crabs. Seagrasses also provide a substrata for a lot of other organisms that are important as food sources to larval fish and crabs. Small algae or bacteria grow all over the surface of these blades and turn out to be very important food sources for these small developing organisms.”

Seagrasses suffer from a variety of man-made and natural abuses. While scientists say prop scarring is not the most serious coast-wide threat to seagrasses, it has taken a toll on heavily traveled areas of the middle coast.

Simply stated, propeller scarring of seagrass beds occurs when boats travel in water that is too shallow. The best way for boaters to avoid scarring seagrass beds is to know the water depth requirements of a boat’s design. If seagrass is observed in the propwash, a boater obviously is running too shallow.

McKinney says annual surveys of seagrass beds conducted with UTMSI officials indicate that 97 percent of the area in the Estes Flats area of Aransas Bay shows evidence of prop scarring. “When you fly a few hundred feet over the flat, you get a perspective that I don’t think the boaters have,” McKinney says. “Estes Flats is crisscrossed with prop scarring.”

McKinney says the fact that seagrass beds have actually showed some overall growth increases in Aransas and Redfish bays in recent years should not distract from the prop scarring issue. “People ask why we are concerned about a little loss of seagrass on Estes Flats when other areas are gaining. That’s fine when you look at the whole landscape, but folks don’t fish in those other areas.”

While prop scarring presents a serious problem for seagrasses in some areas of the coast, it may be the easiest problem to address, McKinney says. He says up to 80 percent of the problem of prop scarring can be dealt with just by putting up signs and buoys to direct boat traffic around the most fragile seagrass beds.

On a coastwide basis, water quality problems, subsidence, dredging and channelization pose even bigger threats to seagrasses. Texas Parks and Wildlife reviews every permit for wastewater discharges that occur next to wetlands for their effect on seagrasses. “We try to make sure that the impact (of the discharges) is either eliminated or minimized,” says McKinney. “Some of these smaller com-

TEXAS’ FIVE SPECIES OF SEAGRASS

SHOALGRASS, *Halodule wrightii*, is an opportunistic, fast-growing species capable of invading bare areas and recovering relatively fast. It is the most abundant subtropical species coastwide, with the most extensive beds in the Upper Laguna Madre.

TURTLE GRASS, *Thalassia testudinum*, occurs in deeper water. It is a slow growth species that can take eight to 10 years to grow back if it is disturbed. Turtle grass has been hit hard in some areas like Redfish Bay.

MANATEE GRASS, *Syringodium filiforme*, for practical purposes, occurs (along with turtlegrass) only as far north as Aransas Bay, and is abundant in the Lower Laguna Madre and Corpus Christi Bay areas.

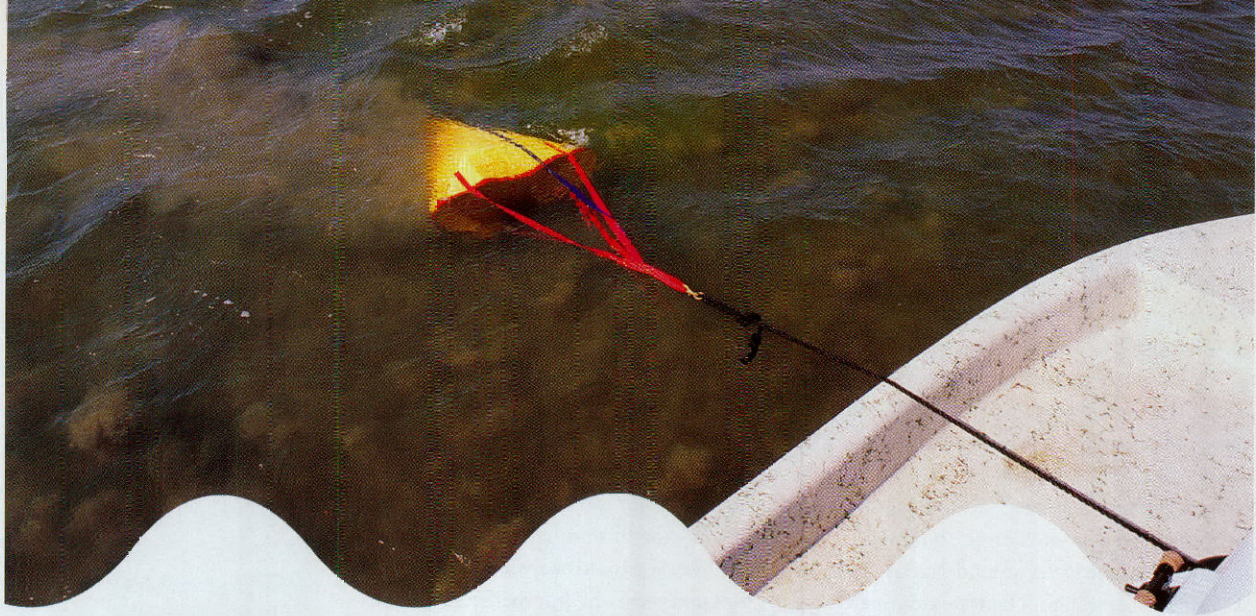
WIGEON GRASS, *Ruppia maritima*, although technically not a seagrass, is placed in the same category because it is important in the marine environment as a food for waterfowl.

STAR GRASS, *Halophila engelmannii*, is another invasive plant that occurs in higher salinity waters. It is often found interspersed in shoalgrass and manatee grass beds.

Speckled trout are among the scores of fish, waterfowl and sea turtles that depend on seagrasses for food.



PHOTO © DAVID J. SAMS



Seagrass beds are not adversely affected by boat anchors, although boaters should make sure the anchor is of the proper size to prevent dragging.

"Some of these smaller communities say you can't cut off motorized boating because fishing is their most important activity, yet they want to turn around and discharge their wastewater right on top of seagrass beds that support that very economy."

munities say you can't cut off motorized boating because fishing is their most important activity, yet they want to turn around and discharge their wastewater right on top of seagrass beds that support that very economy."

Subsidence, which can be caused by a number of factors, including natural processes such as compaction and faulting, withdrawal of shallow subsurface fluids and shallow sulfur and salt mining, also takes a toll on seagrasses. Subsidence in Texas also is caused by human activities associated with water use and oil and gas extraction.

Dredging causes problems because of the spoil that can pile up on top of the submerged grasses. Spoil can become big piles of mud and when there is wind action the turbidity is increased, cutting out sunlight and creating an adverse situation for seagrasses. On the lower Laguna Madre, the two issues that have had the most impact on seagrasses are brown tide algal blooms and dredging.

Walter Kittelberger, chairman of the Lower Laguna Madre Foundation, says the best way to understand the harmful effects of dredging on Laguna Madre seagrass beds is to visualize dropping a cup of dirt into an aquarium every day. "At first the effects might not be so noticeable as in the case of dredging. But after 50 years of doing it in a very harmful way, the cumulative effects are just now becoming obvious even to those hardened against environmental and conservation initiatives."

There also are concerns that too many nets from shrimp boats scar the bottoms of bays, disturb sea grasses, stir up sediment, and generally disrupt the ability of bays and estuaries to function in their critical role as marine

nurseries. In 1996, 1,871 bay shrimpboat license holders and 1,806 bait shrimp license holders dragged trawls through Texas bays and estuaries. Since then, working with the shrimping industry, Texas Parks and Wildlife has put into place a limited entry plan designed to address both the economic plight of the bay shrimper and the overharvesting of the resource.

Submerged seagrass habitats on the Texas coast are the focus of a number of special conservation and management programs. While approaches differ, a committed group of marine scientists, state fisheries officials, coastal conservation groups, recreational anglers, and coastal communities is united in trying to find ways to protect this marine resource while still providing the broadest possible access to these waters.

In 1996, a Symposium on Texas Seagrasses was held in Corpus Christi. Participants, who included representatives of Texas Parks and Wildlife and the Texas General Land Office, produced a coastwide Seagrass Conservation Plan for Texas. The plan addresses the critical research and management needs and the types of programs that can be developed to solve the problems.

The Corpus Christi Bay National Estuary Program is a four-year, community-based effort to identify the problems facing the bays and estuaries of the Coastal Bend, and to develop a long-range conservation and management plan. The program's fundamental purpose is to protect, restore, or enhance the quality of water, sediments, and living resources found within the 600-square-mile estuarine portion of the study area. It includes

three major estuaries — Aransas, Corpus Christi and the Upper Laguna Madre.

Texas Parks and Wildlife, in its role as overseer of state fisheries, is involved in a number of initiatives to protect and enhance seagrass beds on the Texas coast. For the first time ever, McKinney says, there is an opportunity to set state water quality standards that take into account the protection of seagrasses.

Every three years, the TNRCC reviews water quality standards, the standards against which they judge their permitting allowances. "Seagrass has not been recognized as an aquatic use before and so we are trying to put into those water quality standards a standard that says we should set water quality so that it allows for their propagation."

Texas Parks and Wildlife also spearheads the Seagrass Task Force. Created last June and made up of 20 representatives with a broad mix of coastal interests, the volunteers will help reach a consensus and draft proposals to Parks and Wildlife commissioners for protecting and enhancing seagrass beds.

Other plans related to the seagrass issue include the creation of aquatic reserves or no-motor zones on selected estuaries. Will Myers, an Austin architect and avid angler, seeks support for a plan called the Aransas Aquatic Preserve that would close a large portion of Redfish Bay to all inboard and outboard motor use except in designated boat traffic areas. Outside the traffic zones, anglers would be restricted to wading, drift-fishing, poling or the use of an electric trolling motor.

Redfish Bay contains some of the most bountiful estuarine nursery grounds on the Texas coast and also includes some of the

most attractive and popular fishing grounds. Critics of the plan include business owners in communities on the middle coast who have questioned the wisdom of a measure that could cut off access to thousands of anglers.

The Corpus Christi Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association also is proposing a no-motor zone on the north side of the Nine Mile Hole, a more remote estuary on the upper Laguna Madre. Duke Bonilla, president of the Corpus Christi chapter and a member of the Seagrass Task Force, says it would include a boat traffic lane that would be wide enough to drift through and fish, as well as provide a point where boaters would be required to shut down their motors. From that point boaters would be allowed to pole over the shallow flats, use an electric trolling motor or anchor, get out and wade the area. "We think the Nine Mile Hole area is a terrific starting place for a demonstration project because there is not as much traffic and usage as in other parts of the (bay systems)," Bonilla says.

McKinney says the current discussion of seagrass issues is a healthy and positive sign for the resource, especially since it is taking place when there is no state of emergency. "There is a wide range of opinion, both for and against, the various ideas that have been proposed. Regardless of their opinion, they all agree that seagrass conservation is important, and that bodes well for the future," he concluded. ★

PHIL SHOOK is *co-author* of *Fly Fishing the Texas Coast: Backcountry Flats to Bluewater*.

A committed group of marine scientists, state fisheries officials, coastal conservation groups, recreational anglers and coastal communities is seeking ways to protect this marine resource while still providing the broadest possible access.

Texas' shallow grass flats provide a unique fishing experience, which is being threatened by prop scarring and other factors.



A fisherman wearing a blue quilted jacket and a blue and white patterned cap is kneeling on a boat. He is holding a large fish by its mouth with his right hand. The fish is dark with a lighter belly and is suspended in the air. The background is a calm body of water under a grey sky. The text "Cool Weather," is overlaid in a large, teal, serif font across the middle of the image.

Cool Weather,

FAIRFIELD LAKE STATE PARK, JUST OFF I-45 BETWEEN DALLAS AND HOUSTON, BECKONS DAY-TRIPPERS WITH FRESHWATER REDFISH, BASS AND WINTER BALD EAGLE TOURS.

BY PAUL A. CAÑADA

Hot Fishing



A LONE BALD EAGLE winged just a foot or two above the lake's surface. With every other wingbeat the large bird's primary feathers gently stroked the slick water. Nearby, a teenager fishing a crankbait along a cut paused long enough to follow the bird's lithe flight.

On cue, the predator dropped its talons long enough to pluck a meal from the unseasonably warm water. Struggling to keep the blue tilapia under control, the eagle made a strategic turn toward the shore. Eventually, the big bird awkwardly flopped to the ground with its prey, seemingly disappearing amongst the yellows and browns of the shoreline.

"Yes!" a young Kelly Jordan exclaimed. "I've got him!"

The treble hooks of Jordan's lure found their mark. The anxious angler struggled to turn what was certainly a sizeable large-mouth bass. For a brief moment, the Waco angler was sure he had a bucketmouth that would easily surpass his personal best — a whopping 10-pounder.

The fish's refusal to be turned and its "spool-warping" runs left Jordan guessing at its true identity. The young angler's partner argued it was a big flathead, while he guessed a large hybrid. Both anglers agreed — it certainly wasn't the large-mouth bass Jordan had hoped for.

"Finally," proclaimed Jordan, "it's coming up."

A big fish — easily more than 30 inches — thrashed near the surface. Immediately, the two anglers recognized what they had. The redfish didn't stay on top for long, taking another 20 or 30 yards of line with it. "Did you see my crankbait?" Jordan queried. "I didn't see the crankbait!"

The Waco angler's partner confirmed what he assumed — the fish had taken his crankbait deep in its throat. A new sense of urgency came over Jordan. If the fight continued much longer, the odd predator's rough mouth would certainly tear the line. The fish would be lost and Jordan's crankbait would be lost.

As chance would have it, Jordan and his partner successfully netted the bull red. The large predator weighed a respectable 18 pounds. Although the prized redfish wasn't quite what he was hoping for, it made for good table talk later that evening. Kelly Jordan would continue to catch big reds — up to 25 pounds — and plenty of double-digit largemouth on Fairfield Lake before moving on to Lake Fork, where he's now a popular bass guide and professional tournament angler.

Photo © David J. Sims



Look for hot fishing action during January and February on Fairfield Lake, which benefits from warm-water discharges of the nearby Texas Utilities power plant. Fairfield Lake State Park offers campsites and the chance to see wintering bald eagles.

Anglers frequenting Fairfield Lake today will find conditions similar to those Jordan found as a teenager, 10 years ago. The East Texas power plant lake — located six miles northeast of Fairfield — still has good numbers of trophy-sized largemouth and redfish. Fairfield Lake State Park and the fishery offer anglers plenty of reasons to venture out during the normally cold period of January and February.

SMALL FISHERY, LARGE FISH

At 2,400 acres, Fairfield Lake is relatively small. Still, the modest reservoir offers anglers plenty of big-time bass fishing. This is especially true in January and February, when the discharge of warm water from the Texas Utilities power plant warms much of the lake.

Texas Parks and Wildlife fisheries biologist Richard Ott tells why Fairfield Lake's bass fishery is so productive. "Although the reservoir has a relatively small watershed, it's rich in nutrients. Also, the heated water extends the growing season of the freshwater environment and so the impoundment's bass tend to grow faster. Finally, the reservoir has a tremendous forage base."

As good as the bass fishing can be at Fairfield Lake, it doesn't fit the billing of other renowned trophy bass fisheries in Texas. Although Fairfield Lake produces a tremendous number of double-digit bass, it has yet to produce a

bass larger than 13 pounds, 1 ounce (caught in 1987). Again, Ott believes he knows why this might be. "In the long run," notes Ott, "that longer growth season and the extreme water temperatures in summer might be reducing the life span of the fish. That might explain why the lake doesn't produce a lot of gigantic bass."

While many would argue that the lack of giant bass proves the impoundment needs a fresh stocking of the Florida strain largemouth, Ott disagrees. According to the fishery biologist, the initial stockings of the reservoir were with the Florida strain largemouth. Regular electroshocking surveys and genetic tests show the percentage of the Florida strain remains strong.

"Because of the timing (initial stockings occurred when TPW was experimenting with Florida strain bass) Fairfield Lake received a good amount of Florida bass," says Ott. "There really haven't been that many northern bass in the lake to hybridize with them. The percentage of the Florida strain in that population has been so high that, instead of stocking, we have gone there to collect our brood fish."

One angler who agrees with Ott's assessment of the lake's productivity is Fairfield regular Johnny Procell. The long-time metroplex guide has caught his fair share of Fairfield Lake lunkers. "Fairfield has a tremendous bass fishery," says Procell. "I have caught 98 fish over 10 pounds from the lake and I only spend about an hour fishing for bass when I am on the lake."





THE EAGLE - TILAPIA CONNECTION

A common sight on Fairfield Lake in winter is a bald eagle winging overhead. Beginning in fall, migrating northern bald eagles follow the various river systems down to the Gulf of Mexico. Most of the eagle's diet consists of fish, so the birds head south when freezing weather blocks access to their food source.

Park Manager Dennis Walsh believes Fairfield Lake has a number of factors that draw the bald eagles to the impoundment. "We're very close to the Trinity River and that makes the reservoir very accessible to the eagles," notes Walsh. "However, the bald eagles are mostly drawn to our tremendous fish population and our relatively warm water."

One of the favorite targets of Fairfield Lake's bald eagles is the plentiful tilapia. Also known as the African perch, tilapia were first introduced into Texas in the 1970s. During the winter, the exotic fish are drawn to the warmth of the warm water discharge so they stack up in the discharge cove and the canal between the cove and the cooling ponds.

"There's a large density of fish in that area and the eagles know it," adds Walsh.

"Because of the easy pickings, the bald eagles feed a lot in this area. In fact, it's not unusual to see a bald eagle take a fish right off the surface. That's why we run the tours in that area." — Paul A. Cañada

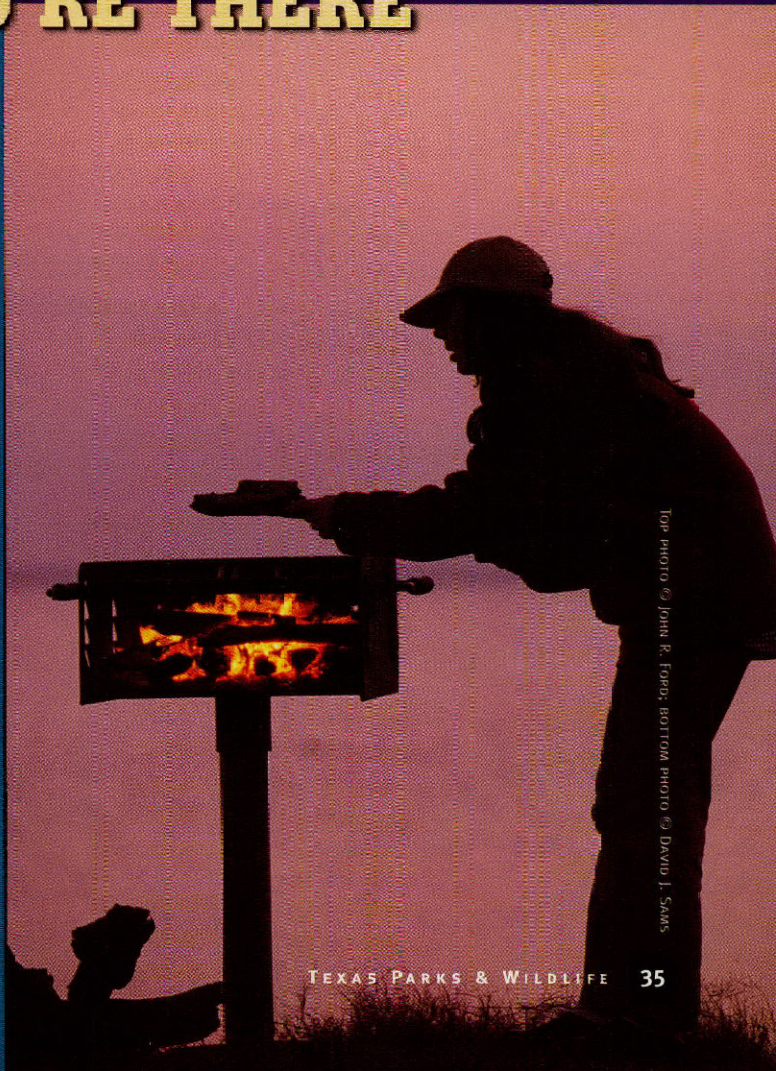
WHILE YOU'RE THERE

PUBLIC ACCESS THROUGH FAIRFIELD LAKE STATE PARK

The only public access to Fairfield Lake is through Fairfield Lake State Park. The 1,460-acre park is located six miles northeast of Fairfield off FM 3285. The town of Fairfield is located off Interstate 45, approximately 1½ hours southeast of Dallas and 2½ hours northwest of Houston.

Anglers will find two, 2-lane boat ramps in the park and plenty of parking for trailers. The park has 135 campsites with water, water and electricity and hike-in primitive sites (closed for camping December through February), approximately 20 miles of trails, including 9 miles available for mountain biking, picnic areas, restrooms and showers, a fish-cleaning station, playgrounds, a group dining hall and an amphitheater. Because of the bulrush, cattails and hydrilla, shore angling is somewhat limited to the lighted fishing pier. Day use cost is \$2 per person.

The park staff offers a number of interpretive programs. Anglers will find programs covering the stocking of red drum in fresh water and information on the bowfishing for tilapia and other nongame fish. Other timely programs cover seasonal waterfowl, including duck hunting and decoying, and the white-tailed deer and the Post Oak/Savannah habitat. Two of the more popular non-fishing events occurring at the park in winter are the bald eagle tours (conducted every Saturday, November through February) and the annual Bird House Day (held on the first Saturday of February). — Paul A. Cañada



TOP PHOTO © JOHN P. FORD; BOTTOM PHOTO © DAVID J. SMITH



An extended growing season and plentiful forage make Fairfield Lake's bass fishery especially productive.

LOCATING WINTER'S LUNKERS

As good as the bass fishing at Fairfield Lake can be, many first-time anglers are quickly frustrated trying to establish a fish-catching pattern. Much of this frustration is due to their error in assuming that the thermal warming from the power plant leaves the entire reservoir's bass population shallow and aggressive. Procell counters, "On any power plant lake, you have basically three impoundments in one — a hot-water lake, a moderate-water lake and a normal-water (cold) impoundment. People often make the mistake of assuming that the water temperature is uniformly hot throughout the lake. It's not."

Because of this variance in water temperatures, anglers often find bass at various stages — prespawn, spawn and post spawn — during the months of January and February. The first fish to spawn are those closest to the warm water discharge, in water temperatures ranging between 65 and 70 degrees, on the southwest end of the lake. As the weather continues to warm, the spawning activity moves out away from the discharge area, until it reaches those areas farthest from the discharge. By April, the fish near the dam are spawning.

Long breaks in power plant operation can cause water temperatures to drop. During periods of infrequent power generation, Procell has learned to fish the mid-range water. Unlike the fish closest to the discharge cove, these fish are less dependent on the discharge of warm water and remain a bit more active. "Many people fail to understand," advises Procell, "when they stop generating power and discharging warm water, the reservoir reverts somewhat back to a typical winter fishery."

Because the water clarity on Fairfield Lake is normally

good, the better bass are typically found between 12 and 20 feet. Although anglers can catch large fish in relatively shallow water, Procell finds the more reliable pattern is to fish deep. Anglers will typically find bass stacked over points and deeper creek channels. A slow-rolled spinnerbait, crankbait, jig or spoon will produce good numbers of quality fish in January.

According to Procell, wind plays a major role in positioning bass during frontal activity. Northeast winds typically associated with a winter front push the warmest water up on key points along the south bank. "A lot of times," explains Procell, "the water in Brown Creek will be 60 degrees while the water 50 yards from the discharge will be only 54 degrees. The prevailing wind will stack that warmer water back into Brown Creek."

During winter months, TU normally generates power at night, when energy demand is highest. Procell takes advantage of this by first confirming the direction of the previous night's prevailing wind and targets the corresponding windblown bank. The baitfish move with the warmer, windblown water and the bass are quick to follow. Following the windblown discharge is one of Procell's more productive winter patterns.

HOOKEIN' UP WITH A RUNAWAY TRAIN

Arguably, one of TPW's more successful experiments has been the introduction of the redbfish to Fairfield Lake's freshwater habitat. Like the largemouth bass, the freshwater version of the redbfish is an opportunistic feeder, taking shad, tilapia and sunfish. Because of this, bass anglers often catch the huge predators on crankbaits, spinnerbaits, jigs, worms and spoons.

The same conditions — extended growing season and plentiful forage — which cause Fairfield's largemouths to reach a considerable size in a hurry also produce big redbfish. Richard Ott credits the good mineral and salt content of the reservoir and the large forage base for the redbfish's fast growth rates. Although the current lake record is a respectable 27 pounds, Ott confirms that a 41-pound bull was caught in 1998.

That 41-pound fish and a 40-pound, 2-ounce fish were both caught by guide Billy Tyus' partners. Tyus doesn't require anglers to document their catch with Texas Parks and Wildlife, so many of the largest redbfish seen on Fairfield Lake go unchecked. Needless to say, the East Texas angler is a specialist at targeting Fairfield Lake's hybrid stripers and redbfish.

Tyus' secret to catching the bull redbfish is live bait (shad and sunfish) and location. Although redbfish are caught all over the lake, the majority of the fish are found in the circulation pattern that exists between the intake down by the dam and the warm water discharge. Tyus suggests anglers target the deeper points adjacent to open water.

"Nine times out of ten," suggests Tyus, "when you find a school of hybrids, you find big redbfish nearby. The redbfish take advantage of hybrids feeding on schools of shad. The redbfish take the injured shad that fall to the bottom. When you're in the right area, you will certainly know it." ★

Paul Cañada, writer/photographer and illustrator based in Fort Worth, is currently the warm water editor for the Flyfishing & Tying Journal, a columnist for the Southern Sporting Journal and a staff writer for the Bass Pro Shop's Outdoor World.

NINETY MINUTES



FROM ANYWHERE

JOIN TPW INLAND FISHERIES BIOLOGIST KEN KURZAWSKI ON A WHIRLWIND TOUR OF THE BASS HOTSPOTS WITHIN A 90-MINUTE DRIVE, NO MATTER WHERE IN TEXAS YOU LIVE.

BY KEN KURZAWSKI

PHOTO © GRADY ALLEN



ASK ANY Texas angler where to go to catch a trophy largemouth bass

and chances are the answer will be Lake Fork or maybe even Sam Rayburn. Those lakes have a deserved reputation for turning out big fish year after year. Your chances of catching a trophy bass are greatly improved by a

trip to one of these lakes. What if you don't have the time or desire to make the trek to Fork or Big Sam? A review of largemouth bass water body records from the Texas Parks and Wildlife angler recognition awards program revealed that trophy bass (bass weighing 9 pounds or larger) have been caught from public water bodies within 90 minutes from just about everywhere in Texas, except for a few parts of West Texas. As of September 1999, 104 lakes or rivers produced a trophy bass. If a 9-pound bass isn't big enough for you, there are 54 lakes where you wouldn't be the first angler to catch a bass weighing 13 pounds or larger.

Where are these lakes? I will take you around the state to identify the hotspots that are a 90-minute drive away, no matter where in Texas you live. The lure of Lake Fork will always beckon bass anglers hoping to become the next state or even world record holder. However, trophy bass fishing in Texas is more than Lake Fork. The number of lakes that have produced trophy bass proves that.

WEST TEXAS AND THE PANHANDLE

Although reservoirs aren't as abundant in West Texas and the Panhandle as in some other parts of the state, there are

some that have proven they also can crank out trophy bass. One of the least likely spots is Ascarte Reservoir, a 50-acre lake in El Paso that yielded a 9.87-pound bass in 1988. Farther north, in the Amarillo area, anglers have multiple choices. Close-by Lake Meredith just makes the grade with a 9-pounder. Head east from Amarillo and you can easily reach Greenbelt Reservoir. Right at the 90-minute limit, you have your choice of two reservoirs: Baylor Lake and Lake Childress. These two lakes also are within striking distance of anglers in the Lubbock area.



Lubbock anglers also have some closer options such as Buffalo Springs, White River Lake and Alan Henry. Baylor Lake has produced the biggest bass among these lakes, at 14.88 pounds. Alan Henry Reservoir, located between Post and Snyder, is the only place in Texas you can fish and catch a largemouth bass, smallmouth bass and Alabama spotted bass. Alabama spotted bass are close relatives of the spotted bass that is found throughout the eastern part of Texas. This variety attains larger sizes than the spotted bass found in

Texas. The Texas state record for spotted bass stands at 5.56 pounds, while the world record, an Alabama spotted bass caught in California, is 9.56 pounds. TPW is experimentally assessing the recreational value of Alabama spotted bass in Texas. Biologists hope to duplicate the California success in stocking this species in reservoirs with fluctuating water levels such as those found throughout West Texas.

In the triangle formed by Midland/Odessa, San Angelo and Abilene are four trophy-producing lakes: Colorado City, Champion Creek Reservoir, E.V. Spence Reservoir and Oak

Phantom Hill and Lake Clyde. Driving a little farther gets you to Hords Creek Lake, Lake Brownwood, Coleman City Lake, Hubbard Creek Lake, Proctor Lake or Lake Leon. Some of these lakes also are within striking distance from San Angelo. Another trophy-producing bass lake that is shared by San Angelo and Abilene area residents is O.H. Ivie. As one of the newest reservoirs in the region, its potential for big fish is still on the upswing.

Possum Kingdom, one of the most scenic lakes in Texas, can be reached easily from both Abilene and Wichita Falls.

Its top bass so far has weighed 16.02 pounds. By the way, there are numerous anglers in Ft. Worth who consider Possum Kingdom a local lake. Some other trophy-producing lakes closer to Wichita Falls are Wichita, Arrowhead, Nocona, Amon G. Carter and Bridgeport.

SOUTH TEXAS AND THE VALLEY

Water has become an increasingly precious commodity in South Texas in recent years. The water level in the area's two flagship reservoirs, Amistad and Falcon, are at record lows. Even at these levels, trophy bass continue to be caught. Amistad is on the doorstep of Del Rio, while anglers from Laredo frequent Falcon. Laredo anglers also have a trophy-producing bass lake within their own backyard in Lake Casa Blanca. For anglers living in the Valley, Falcon is their best bet for trophy bass. I admit to stretching the 90-minute rule here, but I promise this will be the only time! Getting caught in traffic trying to get out of Houston or Dallas-Fort Worth doesn't count.

When anglers in Corpus Christi fish away from saltwater, they have their choice of three trophy-producing lakes: Corpus Christi, Choke Canyon and Coletto Creek. Coletto Creek also is convenient to nearby Victoria.

SOUTHEAST TEXAS

Houston-area anglers have plenty of choices of trophy-producing bass lakes if they want to avoid the drive to Toledo Bend or Sam Rayburn. Their choices

include four large reservoirs (Lakes Houston, Conroe, Livingston and Somerville) and four smaller ones (Lake Raven in Huntsville State Park, Lake Madisonville, and two power plant reservoirs: Fayette County and Gibbons Creek).

The Golden Triangle area of Beaumont, Port Arthur and Orange has limited choices, but you won't hear many anglers in that part of Texas complaining. Two of the three trophy-producing lakes are the Texas heavyweight tag team of Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend. But the much smaller

Texas anglers don't have to travel far from home to enjoy good bass fishing. More than 100 lakes and rivers in every part of the state have produced trophy bass.



Creek Reservoir. E.V. Spence has bragging rights in this group of lakes, topping out with a bass weighing 14.2 pounds. Anglers in San Angelo can fish any of the three trophy-producing bass reservoirs near their town: O.C. Fisher, Nasworthy or Twin Buttes. O.C. Fisher has produced one of the largest bass in West Texas, a 15.69-pound bass caught in 1988. An 11.34-pound bass was even caught from the North Concho River near Bell Street within San Angelo.

Abilene anglers have even more choices: close-in Fort

B.A. Steinhagen Reservoir won't be written off. It produced a 12-pound bass in 1992.

CENTRAL TEXAS

From San Antonio up through Austin to Waco, trophy-producing bass lakes can be reached within an easy ride from Interstate 35. Starting at San Antonio, anglers have two trophy reservoirs nearby in Braunig and Calaveras. Medina Lake also is close to San Antonio. Medina is famous for the 13.5-pound state record bass caught by H.R. Magee in 1943, a record that stood until 1980. The Guadalupe

LBJ and Buchanan. Lakes Georgetown and Walter E. Long add to the Austin-area list. A short drive east to the Lost Pines area gets you to Lake Bastrop.

The Waco-Temple area has options ranging from 23,560-acre Lake Whitney to 73-acre Meridian State Park Lake. Other spots include Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir, Lake Belton, Lake Waco, Tradinghouse Creek Reservoir, Squaw Creek Reservoir, Lake Mexia, Lake Limestone, Lake Aquilla, Lake Granbury, Alvarado Park Lake and Cleburne State Park Lake.



These happy fishermen are among the many Texans who catch big bass in the morning and are back home in time for lunch. There is a lake that has produced trophy bass within a 90-minute drive from anywhere in the state.

River north of San Antonio lays claim to four trophy bass spots: Canyon Lake and three smaller downstream reservoirs, McQueeney, Dunlap and Placid. Other rivers also play an important role in fishing in this area, as the Blanco River in and around Blanco State Park has produced trophy bass. If you really insist on pushing the 90-minute limit, Choke Canyon is just south of San Antonio.

The Colorado River around Austin also has demonstrated trophy potential. Starting with Town Lake in Austin and going upstream, the trophy bass spots are Austin, Travis,

NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS

Although on any weekend it seems most of the Metroplex bass anglers are on Lake Fork, Dallas-Ft. Worth is literally ringed by trophy-producing bass lakes. Lakes Arlington, Benbrook, Eagle Mountain, Grapevine, Joe Pool, Lewisville, Ray Hubbard and Worth all have contributed lunker bass. Extending the 90-minute range to the east brings you in contact with the trophy bass-rich waters of Northeast Texas (including, of course, Lake Fork). Continuing around the Metroplex you can reach other well-known big lakes

(Texoma, Ray Roberts, Possum Kingdom and Richland-Chambers) and some smaller-sized bass waters such as Lakes Bridgeport, Mineral Wells, Weatherford, Waxahachie and Squaw Creek. Metroplex anglers also can fish reservoirs that range from the rocky, cliff-lined shores of Possum Kingdom to the tree-lined banks of Lake Fork.

NORTHEAST TEXAS

The Tyler-Longview-Marshall area may be the closest area you can find to a trophy bass fishing heaven. This area probably has more trophy-producing bass lakes per square mile

Along with the large reservoirs there are a number of smaller reservoirs that have produced trophies: Monticello, Murval, Welsh, Hawkins, Holbrook, Mill Creek, Athens, Fairfield, Purtil Creek State Park, Tyler and Nacogdoches. If you live in this area and don't think you are within a few minutes of some trophy bass fishing, think again; there is probably some right down the road.

That's it for our trophy bass travelogue. The itinerary should demonstrate that the opportunity to catch a trophy bass is probably better in Texas than in any other state. Not only is there an amazing number of trophy bass lakes, they



SHARELUNKER PROGRAM

The Budweiser ShareLunker program kicks into high gear each year as the peak of largemouth bass spawning approaches statewide in late March through April. The ShareLunker program was created in 1986 to give anglers the opportunity to be recognized for catching 13-pound-plus largemouth bass and to give TPW the opportunity to study these rare animals. Entering the 1999-2000 season, 298 bass have been entered into the program.

Anglers who catch a 13-pound-plus bass between October 1 and April 30 can donate or lend their bass to the program. Depending on the wishes of the angler, loaner bass are either returned to the angler or maintained on display at TPW's Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center (TFFC) in Athens. Participating anglers receive a fiberglass replica of their fish and a lifetime fishing license (Texas residents only) from the Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas.

Lakes contributing bass to the ShareLunker program comprise a good list of fishing spots for the wannabe state record holder. As expected, Lake Fork accounts for around 63 percent of all bass donated to the program. Other reservoirs, such as Sam Rayburn and Lake Conroe, have emerged in the last five years to challenge Lake Fork as the top producer of lunkers.

Bass lent or donated to the ShareLunker program are used by TFFC staff in research to produce potentially trophy-size bass for stocking in Texas public waters. Allen Forshage, director of TFFC, notes that facilities at TFFC will allow TPW to address some of the questions — asked by anglers and biologists alike — that surround growth and production of trophy bass. "Our goals," Forshage added, "are to make Texas the leading destination for trophy bass anglers and, through a selective breeding program, produce a world record bass in Texas."

For additional information on the ShareLunker program, contact TFFC at 903-676-2277 or visit our Web site at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fish/infish/fwfish.htm.

than anywhere in the U. S. Just about any lake you choose to fish in this area has produced trophy bass. Lake Fork is definitely the 800-pound gorilla of the area lakes. As of September 1999, 34 of the 50 largest bass caught in Texas have been caught from Lake Fork.

Anglers shouldn't overlook lakes such as Pinkston, which produced a state record bass in 1986; Caddo, with a 16-pounder to its credit; or up and comer Cooper, one of the newest lakes in the area. The vast waters of Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend are at the southern end of this area.

are accessible from wherever you live in the Lone Star State.

To find fish records for any lake or river near you, check the TPW Angler Recognition Awards Records on the Web at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fish/infish/fwfish.htm or contact Jinger Knight at Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center. 903-676-2277. Information on applying for an angler recognition award also can be obtained through these sources. ★

KEN KURZAWSKI is a biologist with TPW's Inland Fisheries Division. He is stationed in Austin.

CYCLING in the

DARE TO TAKE THIS 75-MILE TREK AND YOU'LL BE REWARDED WITH

AUGUST TEMPERATURES are still in the 50s as I pedal away from the campground at mile-high Davis Mountains State Park and turn left on State Highway 118 along Limpia Creek. A canyon wren's descending song breaks the early morning silence, and mule deer feed in the brush along the



TEXAS ALPS

THE PHENOMENAL SCENERY AND THE GLOW OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

creek, reluctant to leave their breakfasts for a lone cyclist. These large, grayish, big-eared creatures look strange to an eye accustomed to whitetails, as do the rugged, purple-gray, volcanic slopes lining the canyon. This is not my familiar Texas Hill Country, and I'm heading for higher ground.

**ARTICLE BY THAD SITTON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY EARL NOTTINGHAM**



In fact, much higher ground. The state's most spectacular, beautiful, and challenging 75-mile bicycling route begins at Fort Davis in the Trans-Pecos, winds up Limpia Canyon, climbs the heights to the University of Texas' McDonald Observatory at 6,791 feet, skirts the northern slopes of 8,378-foot Mount Livermore, the highest peak in the Davis Mountains, then roller-

coasters across the Davis Mountains for miles before dropping off the edge into the high desert and turning south and east back to the starting point. Thirty-four miles of this route lie above 5,000 feet, and from the beginning I notice an unaccustomed quickness of breath. The hills west of my hometown of Austin are nearly a mile lower than this, and oxygen there is easier to come by. Highway 118 rises gradually at first, crosses a valley of yellow grasslands, passes a solar power site, then begins a serious ascent. The white domes of the McDonald Observatory appear far above — my goal, if I can reach it. I shift down, spin my pedals, breathe deeply, and try to think pure thoughts.

I have not driven this route in 20 years and have never cycled it. At age 58, I ride a recumbent bicycle known for its great comfort but not for speed up steep mountainsides. With a recumbent, I can't stand

on my pedals for a gravity assist but must force myself upward by leg power alone. Presumably, I'm eventually going to get there.

For four miles the road climbs steadily upward. The grades are tolerable, I find to my relief, though I experience the optical illusion of long mountain switchbacks. The rising slopes up ahead appear to be easy cycling, but in my legs and lungs I feel the truth. Slowly spinning up the switchbacks, I see the country change from yellow grasslands with scat-

tered trees, to green slopes of juniper and oak, to even greener slopes of juniper and piñon pine. Now, the Davis Mountains begin to live up to their name as the "Texas Alps." The air cools and thins and — beyond the whirring gears of the bicycle — I notice that I climb through a great silence. Traffic is nil, no airplanes pass overhead, and no human sounds echo in the empty mountains. As I crest a switchback, breathing hard, two turkey vultures pass effortlessly 50 feet above my head with an audible swish of gliding wings.

Finally, in a green piñon pine forest,

familiar mountain roads still to come and prefer to save my legs for the unknown.

For miles I follow SH 118 across the mountains, as the road alternately hugs steep slopes and plunges into deep, forested valleys. The temperature remains pleasantly cool and the scent of piñon pines hangs in the air. The road narrows after passing the observatory, and there are occasional cattle guards and hairpin curves to negotiate, but nothing really difficult. Finally, SH 118 climbs steeply up Elbow Canyon, crosses a divide, then begins a three-mile descent to its juncture with SH 166 in

the high grasslands below the mountains.

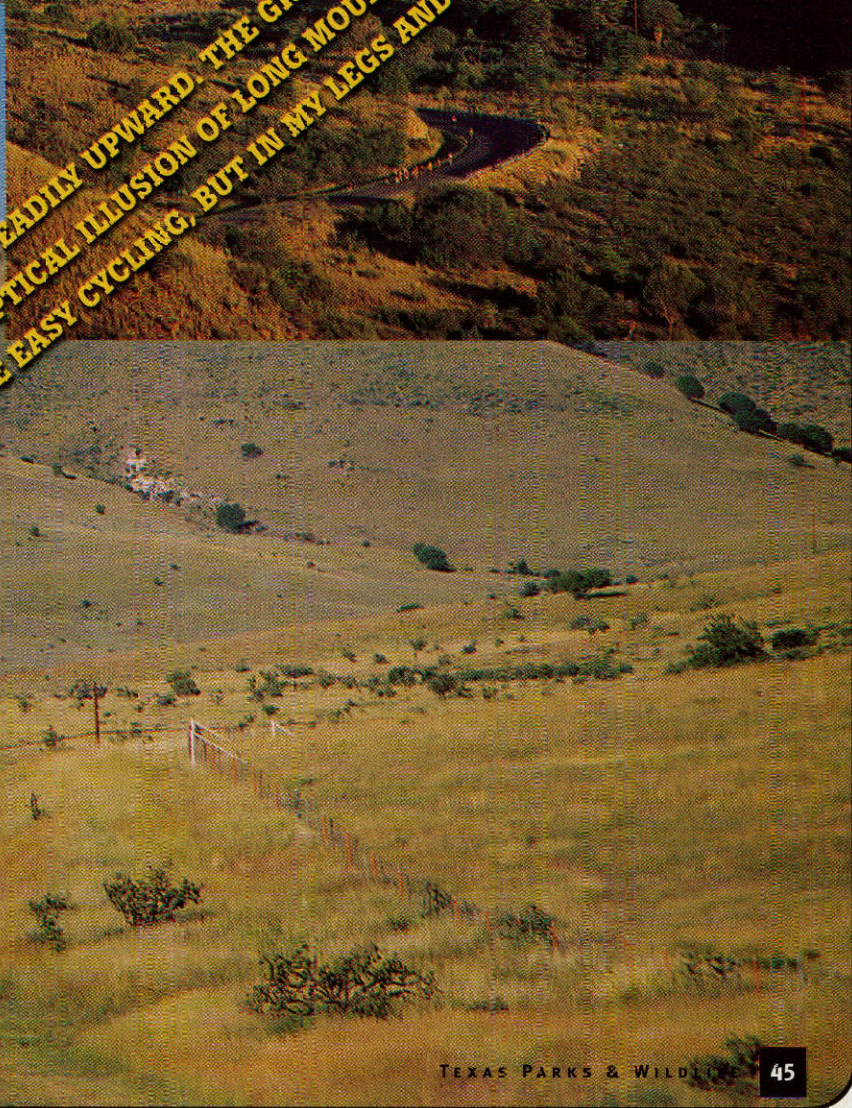
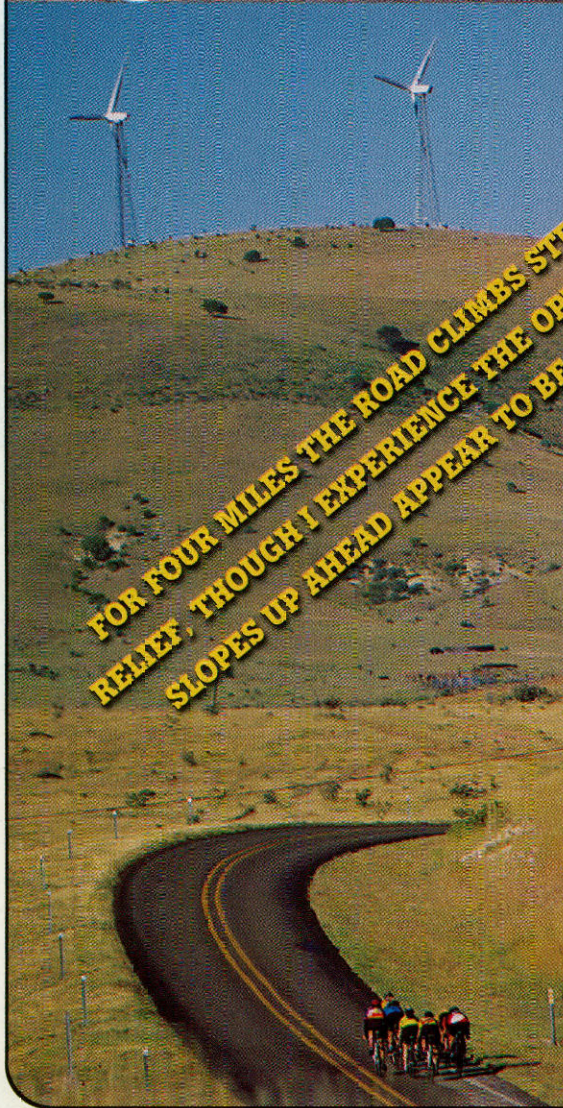
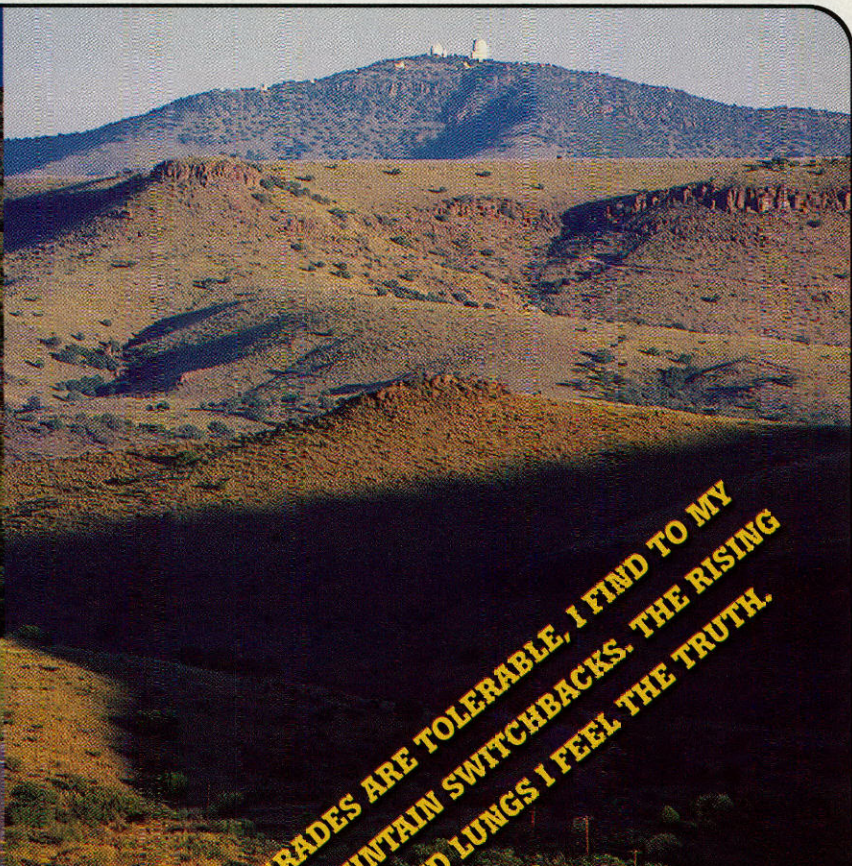
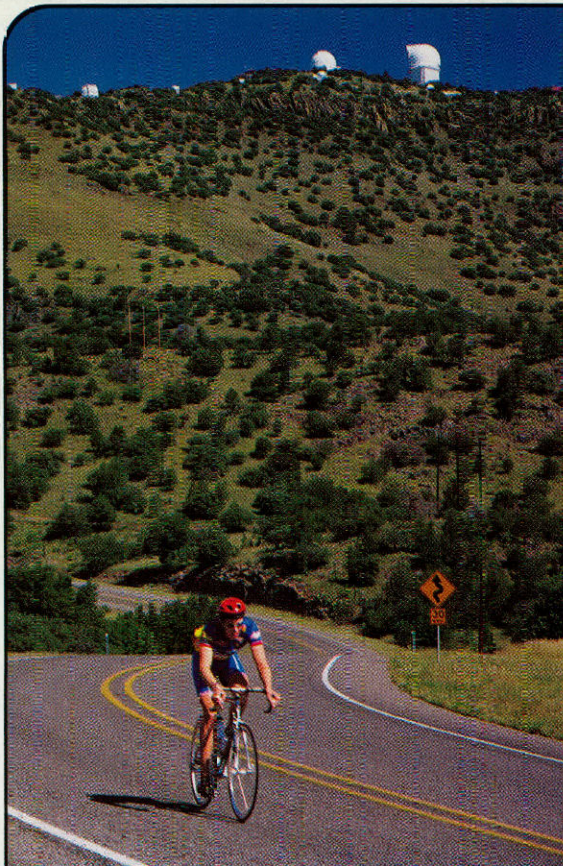
After a spectacular roll-down that seems to take only a few minutes, I reach the juncture with SH 166 and turn left on the route back to Fort Davis. The landscape is transformed once again — green forested mountain to yellow grassland valley, lined

by volcanic foothills. SH 118 had almost no traffic, but SH 166 seems to have none at all. After a while, I stop in the middle of the road, drink water, eat a candy bar and listen.

The silence is awesome. Yellow range land stretches away to blue hills, with Mount Livermore and Sawtooth Mountain looming behind them miles away to the east. The only sounds are the occasional distant clatter of flying grasshoppers and — every few minutes — the faint booms of a late summer



the road flattens, and I come to the turn for the McDonald Observatory Visitor Center, just to the north. Here I stop to catch my breath, top off my water bottles, and consider if I will attempt the 1.2-mile, 17-percent-grade climb to the McDonald Observatory at the top of Mount Locke. The cycling guidebooks agree that everyone should try this side trip up the steepest slope to the highest point on a paved road in Texas (6,791 feet), but this time I decide not to take their advice. I have many miles of unfam-

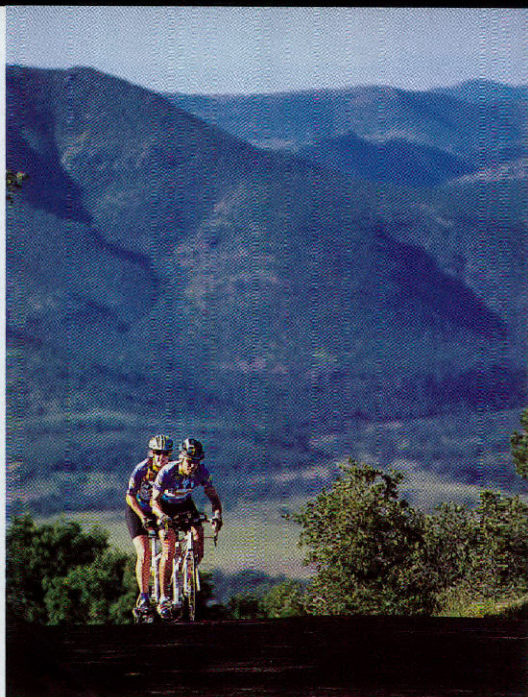


FOR FOUR MILES THE ROAD CLIMBS STEADILY UPWARD. THE GRADES ARE TOLERABLE, I FIND TO MY RELIEF, THOUGH I EXPERIENCE THE OPTICAL ILLUSION OF LONG MOUNTAIN SWITCHBACKS. THE RISING SLOPES UP AHEAD APPEAR TO BE EASY CYCLING, BUT IN MY LEGS AND LUNGS I FEEL THE TRUTH.

thunderstorm in the peaks a half-mile above.

Reluctantly, I mount my bicycle and ride away, replacing the silence with the buzzing of chain and gears. Miles of yellow grasslands and blue juniper hills lie between me and Fort Davis. As I ride south, then east, throughout the long afternoon, I watch the Davis Mountains scroll slowly by on my left, while the slopes on my right fall away into a sea of desert.

The Scenic Loop in the Davis Mountains described above fully lives up to its reputation as the "best bike ride in Texas," but it should be attempted only by reasonably fit and experienced cyclists on well-maintained road or mountain bikes with low gears and good brakes. This 75-mile circuit is strenuous mountain cycling.



sunlight. A perfect first occasion to ride the challenging Scenic Loop is the Permian Basin Bicycle Association's fully supported "Fort Davis Cyclefest" held

FORT DAVIS TO MCDONALD OBSERVATORY VISITORS' CENTER AND RETURN.

This challenging out-and-back takes you 15 miles into the mountains, then back again — 30 miles total. The route is nearly all uphill ("up-mountain," actually) to the observatory, then an effortless roll most of the way back. Stronger riders can attempt the formidable 17-degree slope to the top of Mount Locke before turning around, or they may ride several miles farther to picnic sites along SH 118 before returning to Fort Davis.

BALMORHEA STATE PARK TO FORT DAVIS AND RETURN.

This 64-mile, moderately difficult route climbs 32 miles up SH 17 into the Davis Mountains, ending at 5,050 feet

DAVIS MOUNTAINS AND BALMORHEA STATE PARKS

Balmorhea State Park: Located in a green oasis at San Solomon Springs in the dry desert flatlands on the north side of the Davis Mountains. **Size:** 46 acres. **Open** all year, but hot in summer. **Spring-fed 1.75-acre swimming pool open** all year from 8 a.m. until a half hour before sunset, swim at your own risk. **Small campground** with partial hookups and showers. **Motel units, some with kitchenettes, are popular; reserve ahead.** Limited visitor services available in Balmorhea; full services in Fort Davis, Pecos and Fort Stockton. **For information:** Balmorhea State Park, Box 15, Toyahvale, TX 79786, 915-375-2370. **For campsite reservations call the Central Reservation Center at 512-389-8900.**

Davis Mountains State Park: Located above Fort Davis in the mountain foothills. **Size:** 2,770 acres. **Open** all year. Warm days, cool nights in summer make Davis Mountains State Park popular in that season. May be cold in winter, with occasional snows. **Moderate-sized campground** with partial and full hookups. **Primitive backpacking campsites** now open north of SH 118. **Famous Indian Lodge** has 39 rooms, swimming pool and restaurant; reserve well in advance. **Scenic drive, hiking and nature trails, picnicking, Interpretive center.** Full visitor services available in Fort Davis. **For information:** Davis Mountains State Park, P.O. Box 1458, Fort Davis, TX 79734, 915-426-3337. **For campsite reservations call the Central Reservation Center at 512-389-8900. For reservations at Indian Lodge call 915-426-3254.**

probably more challenging than any 100-mile "century" route in Texas. Road surfaces are good, but cyclists should be alert for tight turns and cattle guards, some of them on steep downhills. They also should carry extra water and food. Aside from the McDonald Observatory Visitors' Center, some 13 miles into the ride from Davis Mountains State Park, there are no sources of water or telephones. Cyclists should be self-supported, carrying everything they need, and perhaps arranging for a friend to drive "sweep" a few hours behind them, just in case of mechanical trouble. This is a beautiful landscape, but it is remote, dry, hot or cold, and windy, with intense

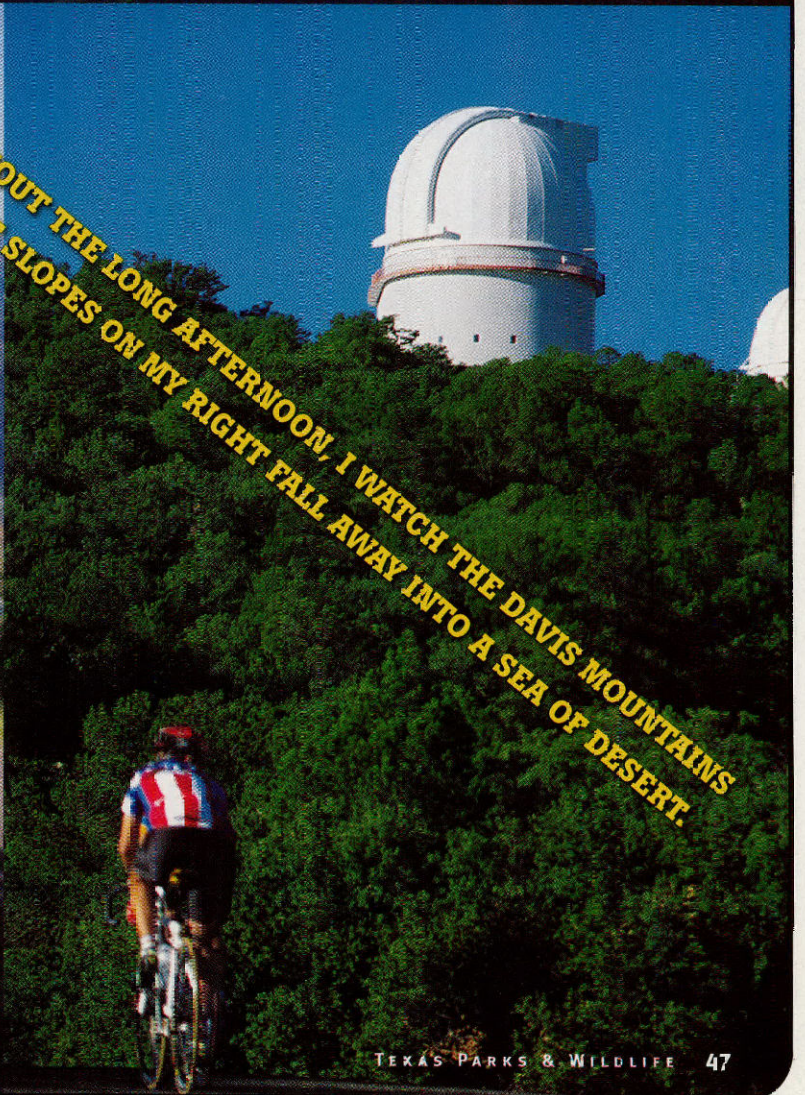
each year in September. (For information, write or call: Permian Basin Bicycle Assn., P.O. Box 6018, Midland, TX 79711-0018, 1-800-373-4764.) Part of SH 166 was under construction (although still passable) when I rode the route, but cyclists should inquire at Davis Mountains State Park headquarters about current conditions before beginning a ride.

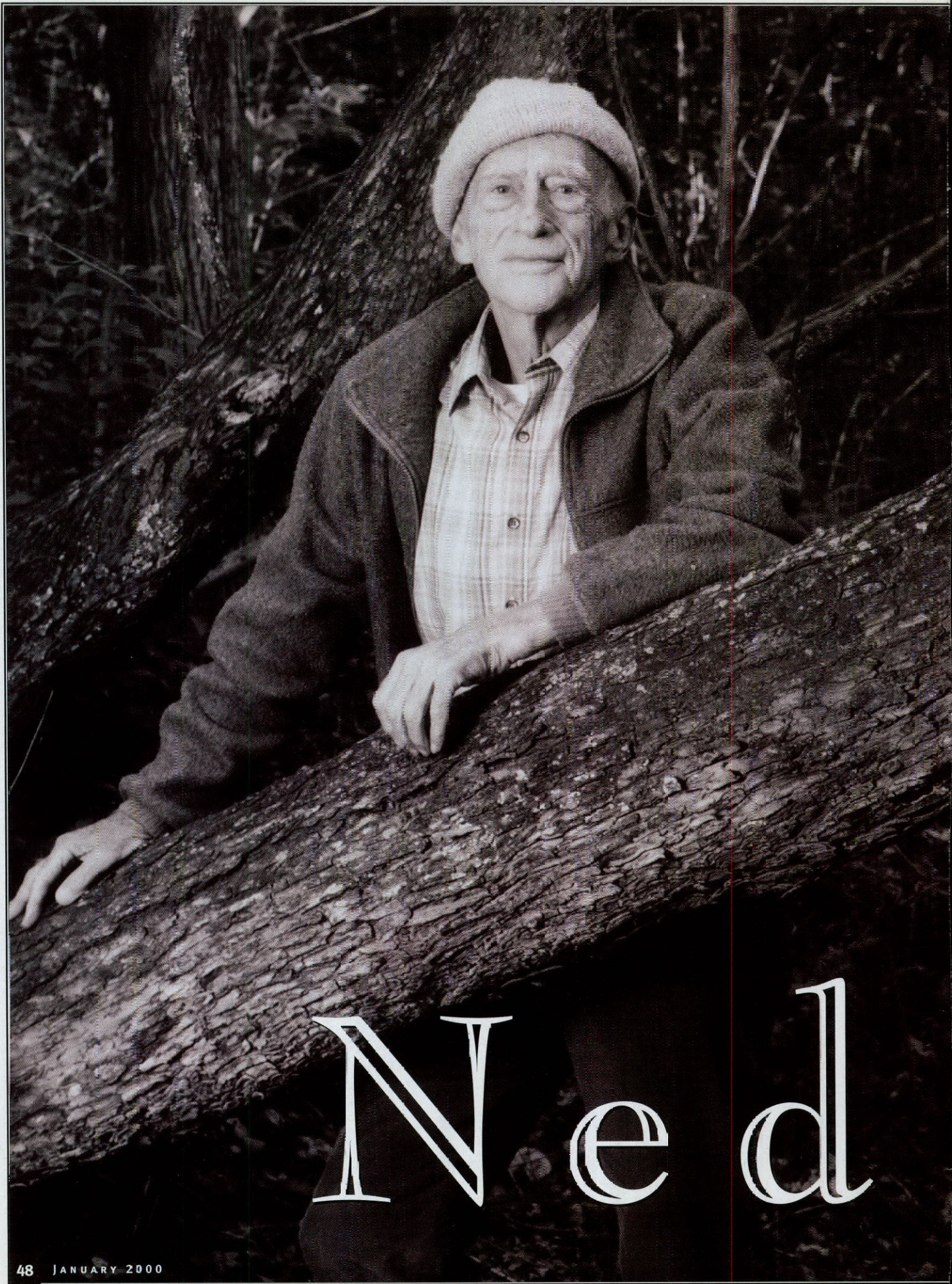
The Scenic Loop is not the only possibility for Davis Mountains cycling, however. Several easier routes are described below, each with commentary. All roads mentioned (including those of the Scenic Loop above) are shown on ordinary Texas highway maps.

at Fort Davis, then rolls 32 miles back down again — a return one bicycling outfitter referred to as "The best Texas bike ride — 90 percent downhill!" In truth, this route may be ridden from either end, depending whether the cyclist prefers his dose of uphills in the first or second half of the ride. With vehicular assist, it may also be ridden as a one-way, 32-mile downhill from Fort Davis to Balmorhea, or even as a 48-mile downhill from McDonald's Observatory to Highway 17 at Fort Davis, then Highway 17 to Balmorhea. This isn't a complete 50-mile "roll down," but it's close. ★



AS I RIDE SOUTH, THEN EAST, THROUGHOUT THE LONG AFTERNOON, I WATCH THE DAVIS MOUNTAINS
SCROLL SLOWLY BY ON MY LEFT, WHILE THE SLOPES ON MY RIGHT FALL AWAY INTO A SEA OF DESERT.





Ned

One of Texas' most prominent environmentalists packs a thunder that belies his thin build and gentle countenance. Tap into his passion about protecting nature and a storm of strident beliefs flash to the fore.

"The main problem now is that big business is exploiting the environment for a profit," declares Edward C. (Ned) Fritz, his fervent opinions honed by years of mostly successful legal challenges to government agencies on environmental issues. ▶

BY JOHN H. OSTDICK



Fritz



“The forests have the timber industry to deal with,” Fritz notes, “exploiting our forests worldwide to where there’s very little left. The rivers have been exploited heavily by the water

hustlers, as the Texas author John Graves identified them. As long as they can make money out of building dams or channels or levees, they will push us to do that.”

The northwest Dallas home of this 83-year-old dynamo reflects the heart of the man. Among mammoth, tailored yards and regal homes with orange-tiled Santa Fe roofs, Fritz’s abode is the one shrouded by overgrown brush, trees and faded wildflowers. A narrow gravel driveway leads to a gray, split-level house blanketed by native flora. Here, rattling city sounds fade and a chorus of birds serves as greeters.

Inside, the wiry, white-haired lawyer lives amid a warehouse of boxes, research materials, transcripts, faxes, court documents and press clippings. One minute the lawyer-activist, dressed in plaid Bermuda shorts and white T-shirt, tugs at his white beard and talks warmly of the nature show just outside the large rear windows of the house. (His street abuts the Bachmar Creek Nature Area.) The next, he narrows his gaze and grous-

es about the number of species that neighborhood construction has chased off in the almost five decades that he’s called this three-acre site home.

Fritz is not shy with his views on society’s current relationship with nature, nor prone to meaningless tangents. The lawyer in him listens to questions carefully and composes answers in his head before responding.

“We’re exploiting almost every form of the environment, the natural resources that we use to maintain our lives and livelihoods,” he says. “The solution is to have governments, democratic governments, to own and control the natural resources. That would not work in a dictatorial government, because dictators are exploiters, too. It would not work if our present system of elections is not reformed, because an exploiter can curry legislative favor by campaign and other contributions.”

Such inclinations are not common in

northwest Dallas. Fritz is a constant burr under the establishment’s saddle. A professional adversary, he wouldn’t have it any other way.

The love for and defense of nature — especially forests — has been part of the lawyer’s maelstrom since he became an environmental activist more than three decades ago. Born in Philadelphia in 1916, he spent his childhood in Tulsa. “I lived on the edge of the city, and I’d walk out into the Osage Hills,” he says. “That opened up nature to me, and I felt a part of it. And I’ve loved the birds and the animals and the streams and the trees and the flowers ever since.”

Fritz earned an undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago, and also attended law school there. He finished his law degree in Dallas at Southern Methodist University in 1940. World War II interrupted his practice. As a flight instructor at the Naval Air Station in Corpus Christi, he taught young

recruits such as one George Bush how to fly; he noted in his instructor's log that Bush "practically always drags his right wing."

Grinning, he insists today that he had nothing to do with teaching the former president about jumping out of the planes.

After the war, he earned a reputation as a consumer lawyer, then turned his focus toward the environment. As co-founder and longtime chairman of the Texas Committee on Natural Resources (TCONR), Fritz led a coalition to establish 35,000 acres of wilderness areas in East Texas, and helped attain designation for the Big Thicket National Preserve.

Fritz proved to be an irritating thorn for the lumber industry, winning lawsuits that ended clear-cutting on 200,000 acres of national forest in East Texas and required the Forest Service to protect soils and watersheds being logged in Texas.

In ensuing years, he proved to be an irritating thorn for the lumber industry, winning lawsuits that ended clear-cutting on 200,000 acres of national forest in East Texas and required the Forest Service to protect soils and watersheds being logged in Texas.

His work with the Forest Reform Network has resulted in federal legislation to require that only low-impact logging methods be used in federal forests, and in a grassroots network of activists working for better forest management. In 1982, he also co-founded the Natural Area Preservation Association, which has

led to the creation of 30 nature preserves throughout Texas. In multiple capacities with the Texas Nature Conservancy, he has negotiated the acquisition of 16 major preserves.

In 1996, a suit he prepared for the TCONR, the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society against the Forest Service went to trial. The plaintiffs charged that logging in national forests in Texas had degraded soils and watersheds, reduced numbers of wildlife, and harmed other key natural resources. In 1997, U.S. District Judge Richard Schell issued an injunction against the Forest Service, stopping all logging on Texas national forests pending the industry's

The ruling, which shut down timber sales on an estimated 110,000 acres of national forests, marked the first time a federal judge has issued an injunction on the entire national forest system. The court found that the Forest Service, which chopped up timber sale areas into parcels that would fit the categorical exclusion definition and offered them for sale without meeting the NEPA regulations, had failed to explain in the record the volume limits for the timber sale categorical exclusion.

Fritz says of the Texas case, which has been working about a year: "We [a team of lawyers, the TCONR, the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society] are about to



For more than 50 years, Ned Fritz has campaigned to save U.S. forests, frequently conducting nature hikes on trails such as one of his favorites, the Texas Buckeye Trail inside the Great Trinity Forest in Dallas.

compliance with provisions of the National Forest Management Act.

Fritz is taking a wait-and-see stance on several late 1999 developments that should significantly alter how U.S. forests will be managed in the years to come.

In late September, an Illinois federal district judge ruled that the Forest Service has acted illegally in allowing timber sales under a loophole known as the "categorical exclusion," which excluded timber sales under a given size from provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

see if the United States District Court in Beaumont will apply that [Illinois federal court] ruling. We're in the middle of a motion that seeks to overturn the categorical exclusion that the Forest Service has been broadly using in Texas to exploit the red-cockaded woodpecker habitat and to burn national forest land in the state."

Shortly after the Illinois ruling, the Clinton administration announced new proposed rules for managing the national forests, for the first time recommending that ecological health take official precedence over land uses such as timber har-

PHOTO © GARY BARNETT, DALLAS MORNING NEWS

vests. (More information about the proposed regulation is available online at: <www.fs.fed.us/forum/nepa/rule>.)

Then on Oct. 13, President Clinton directed the Forest Service to develop regulations that will permanently protect about 40 million acres of roadless national forest lands, more than doubling the wilderness land now protected from development. Banning the building of new roads shuts out loggers and miners from about two-thirds of America's remaining wild forests.

The action sets aside 20 percent of the total forest land in America's national forests — the largest chunk of land protected by presidential decree since President Jimmy Carter safeguarded 103

about two-thirds of that land, or about 40 million acres.)

"It's a good step toward protection of our native ecosystem," Ned Fritz says. "I'm in favor of further and broader action than that ... but I have little more hope."

Not every fight involving Fritz has been with environmental enemies, however. He grudgingly admits that the angriest he's ever been in his life was not with an adversary but rather with dear colleagues, almost 20 years ago, over their insistence on pressing for a halt to all logging in U.S. forests.

"Of course, that was never going to happen," he says, grimacing at the memory. "At the time, I was in the middle of

you are going to protect the environment, you're going to have to change the laws, the structures, the environmental agencies. You can't approach everything piecemeal; there are not enough hours in a day. I think he's come to have a much broader vision than most people have."

"I can tell you that you'd better be careful when you get close to Ned Fritz," says Dallas recycling consultant Joanne Hill, laughing. About 14 years ago, the environmental crusader handed Hill, who operated her own public relations firm at the time, some information on recycling, with the instructions "to see if we can get something going on this in Texas." She soon found herself consumed by the subject.



Mr Fritz goes to Washington, right, with his 1989 book, *Clearcutting: A Crime Against Nature*. He has spent countless hours testifying before governmental bodies, including this appearance before the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Forests in 1992, left.

million acres of wilderness in Alaska. Clinton said that he hoped to continue the legacy of President Theodore Roosevelt, who dedicated 120 million acres to national forests and created five national parks. (About 18 percent of the 192-million-acre national forest system is now off-limits to road building and development, according to the Washington, D.C.-based Environmental News Service. The D.C.-based Heritage Forest Campaign says another 31 percent has never been logged or mined, but is not currently protected. The Clinton plan would ban road building in

perhaps my worst experience — when I had an almost fatal arterial aneurysm just above the heart." The pragmatist in him weathered both the personal conflict and ailment, and he persevered.

Janice Bezanson, executive director of the TCONR, first met the attorney while working as a volunteer on a wilderness bill in East Texas 15 years ago. "Ned has been a primary figure in the environmental movement in Texas, but also much more broadly than that — a national figure," Bezanson says. "He started with specific local issues and in time he has come to understand that if

Twelve years ago, she founded the Dry Gulch Recycling Center in Dallas, the largest such venture in Texas. She then took her recycling campaign to 120 area companies, which formed the Corporate Recycling Council. Later, that evolved into a statewide entity, which has since been copied nationally.

Hill, 66, who has received numerous accolades for her own work, unabashedly compares Fritz to such environmental luminaries as Jacques Cousteau and John Muir.

"Being an environmentalist in Texas is almost like trying to grow roses in the

desert," she says. "Ned is exceedingly smart and, being the typical lawyer, good at putting pieces together to make an effective argument. Maybe the most important part of his persona is his perseverance. He works 14 hours a day, seven days a week, even now at 83. Everything that he has done, he's done by scratching, hanging in there, having his facts ironclad.

"You don't see him win many battles. In fact, I don't know that I've ever seen him win a battle, but he wins the war. He knows how to rally people to a cause. He keeps on fighting in the trenches, pulling people in, feeding people information and convincing people to assist him."

"We must help others
recognize how we evolved
with the rest of the
environment, how we are
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than rip it up, run off-road
vehicles through it, or
otherwise abuse it."

— Ned Fritz

Among a heady list of achievements, the bearded advocate is fondest of his roles in the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act (1969) and the National Forest Management Act (1976). "Those were in the days before business had obtained such control over the presidential and congressional elections," he says. "We could not pass those acts today."

Fritz is the author of three published books and has finished another on the Longleaf Ridge area. He received literary awards for *Sterile Forest* (1983), critical acclaim for the poignant *Realms of*

Beauty: The Wilderness Areas of East Texas (1986), and caused the Forest Service immeasurable grief with *Clearcutting: A Crime Against Nature* (1989), a clarion call for public action. A number of national organizations have honored Fritz with prestigious national awards, including the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Award (1990).

Each spring for the past 20 years, Fritz has championed an annual two-mile hike along the Texas Buckeye Trail where Bexar Road dead-ends in the Rochester Park area of Dallas, inside the Great Trinity Forest. The 8,500 acres of woodland that comprise the Great Trinity have long been dear to the environmental lawyer's heart. "I suspect that there is not a comparable ecosystem in the middle of a metropolitan area," he says.

A current Trinity River plan to build a series of lakes, parks and a toll road infuriates Fritz. The \$127 million blueprint calls for the construction of two 20-foot earthen humps that would stretch for several miles on both sides of the river south of downtown Dallas. A tollway called the Trinity Parkway would run along the inside of existing levees from State Highway 183 near Irving to US Highway 175 southeast of town. The project also would include the creation of a series of shallow, water-filled depressions from Corinth Street to Loop 12. Last May, Dallas voters approved \$246 million in river bonds that included \$24.7 million for the levees. The Army Corps of Engineers plans to fund the core of that project.

"Even our recent growing awareness of our water problems and the need for water conservation measures is losing out to economic concerns," Fritz says. "The Trinity River project in Dallas is a good example of that, or a bad example. One of the means of saving rivers nationally has been to avoid channels and levees, with the government paying owners of land that is in danger of flooding to relocate outside of the flood plains. The Mississippi River has included good examples of such policy. That method saves our natural rivers and also saves human beings from floods. The Dallas example has been to write that

view off."

(The Federal Corps of Engineers in Washington still hasn't approved the Dallas plan. A delegation including Dallas mayor Ron Kirk visited Tulsa, a model of floodplain buyouts, in October to check out firsthand a non-structural approach to flooding endemic to some areas along the Trinity River.)

Apart from the need for campaign finance reform, the key to reversing environmental insensitivity, Fritz believes, is education that inspires a respect for nature, especially in the urban areas of the state. "I'm not sure our education in Texas is adequate." Through his work across the country, the legal pugilist believes that "we're right now in a crucial conflict as to whether the nation will learn to conserve its natural resources.

"We must help others recognize how we evolved with the rest of the environment, how we are dependent on it, and how we can nurture it — rather than rip it up, run off-road vehicles through it, or otherwise abuse it."

Fritz's most recent initiative involves organizing a movement under world law to stop the environmental damage and destruction resulting from war and military training. (The first step, he says, is lobbying organizations to establish an informal coalition to provide a platform for discussion of the problem.) And outside of an afternoon nap, a nod toward his long and rich life, the environmental champion is slowing down little, except, as always, to smell the flowers. "Life has been wonderful," he says, "especially when, like right now, you can look out and see the native trees blooming and the sun coming in and out of the clouds, and there are quite a few birds still around here."

He still rises daily in pursuit of the perfect day, "when you can spend part of it at least next to nature and part of it at least saving nature." Those interludes of serenity sustain the long-running battler. After all, even the piercing cry of a hawk can be lost in a city of millions who never look up and notice it is there. ★

JOHN H. OSTDICK is a Dallas writer and editor.



LEGEND, LORE & LEGACY

FERDINAND LINDHEIMER,

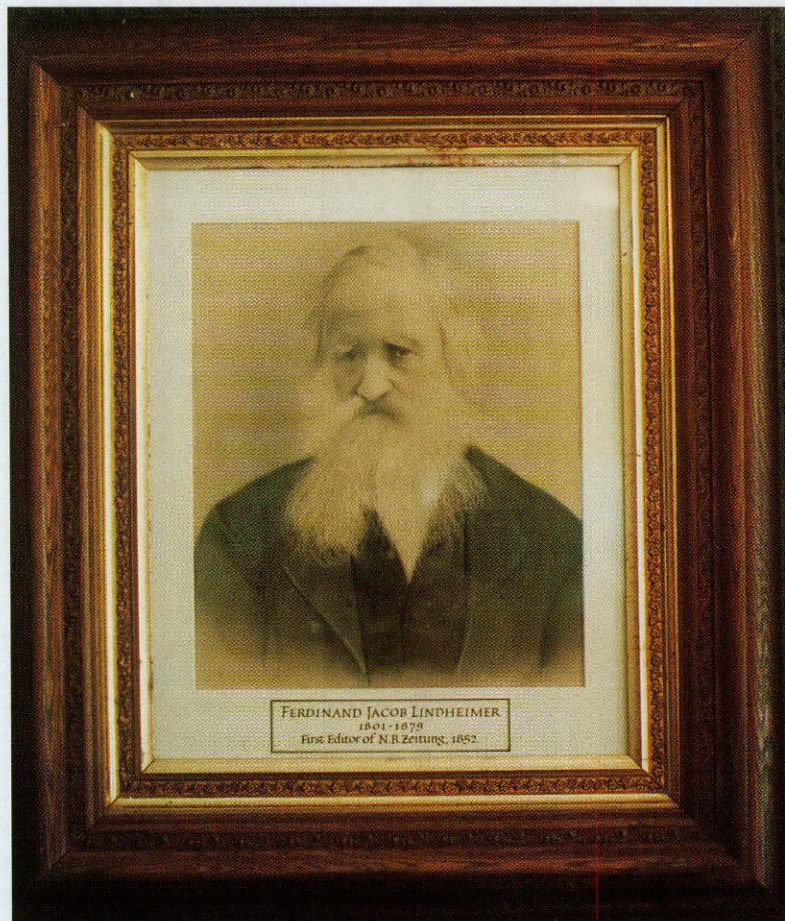
Father of Texas Flora

BY N. RENEE BOENSCH

Ferdinand Jacob Lindheimer, an immigrant and amateur naturalist engaged in plant classification, placed Texas flora on the horticultural map. His plant studies here between 1835 and 1852 earned him the title “Father of Texas Botany.” His half-timbered house, now a museum in New Braunfels, still stands in a residential neighborhood on the Comal River, with front and back gardens containing plantings of a few of the many *Lindheimeri* species.

HOT SCIENCE IN EARLY TEXAS

Born in 1801 in Frankfurt, Lindheimer discovered his aptitude for natural science when he joined a student botanical society there. He and fellow student George Engelmann shared a delight for natural history and, after 1833, a future in America; after being exiled for participation in a political uprising, both joined a settlement of German political malcontents outside St. Louis. When the two met up in Missouri, Engelmann encouraged Lindheimer to pursue his interest in plant classification, and in 1835, he



went to Mexico, collecting plants for Engelmann. In 1836 in New Orleans he joined a company of Kentuckians, led by Capt. Jerome B. Robinson, who had volunteered for

the Texas Revolution. After serving in the army of the Republic, Lindheimer was granted farmland near Houston, where he continued to collect plants for Engelmann. But

in 1839 he returned to St. Louis to spend the winter studying with him. He returned to Texas during the winter of 1843 and found the job that would make him famous.

Following the Texas Revolution, eastern naturalists rushed to the Republic — and across the West — in a race to catalog unknown plants. Such a pursuit today would be called “hot science.” Preeminent among these naturalists was Asa Gray of Harvard University, whom Engelmann had approached in 1840, seeking an association. Gray had targeted the Texas frontier, where no significant discoveries of flora had been made since the 1820s. Engelmann, though he chided Gray for “this chase after botanical notoriety,” sent back notes on specimens and recruited collectors for Gray.

THE MAN FOR THE JOB

Lindheimer was the sort of field botanist that Gray and Engelmann

We are only about 500 in number... Forest, grazing land, and land for cultivated fields of the best quality are available. But what does that matter to me? Palmate yuccas, cactus, and mimosas and the fragrance and blossoms of them all, that's for me. Here I have seen for the first time the total splendor of the prairies. Flower upon flower, richer than the richest Persian carpet. [Letter to Engelmann, dated 18 April 1845.]

LINDHEIMER FLORA

Lindheimer shipped his collections of dried plant specimens to Engelmann and Gray who, in turn, would sort and classify them — a routine that involved naming the plants, corresponding with collectors about the new plants and publishing preliminary papers to establish priority of discovery. *The Flora Texana Exsiccata* consisted of fascicles, or bundles, of the newly classified native Texas plant specimens named in the

Braunfels newspaper daily, the *Neu-Braunfeler Zeitung*. Lindheimer turned toward civic-minded matters; he served as first justice of the peace for Comal County and conducted a school for gifted children. He died in New Braunfels in 1879.

Lindheimer's name is used in the designation of 48 species and subspecies, including plants in the cactus, sunflower, and cucumber families. *A Field Guide to Southwestern and Texas Wildflowers* describes the following more common Lindheimer flora:

- Texas yellow star, *Lindheimera texana*, also called Lindheimer's daisy.
- Lindheimer's globeberry, *Ibervillea lindheimeri*.
- Texas prickly pear cactus, *Opuntia lindheimeri*.
- Lindheimer senna, *Cassia lindheimeriana*.

Unusual as it may be for an amateur to make a significant contribu-

Following the Texas Revolution, eastern naturalists rushed to the Republic — and across the West — in a race to catalog unknown plants. Such a pursuit today would be called “hot science.”

needed in Texas. In 1843 he collected in the Houston area, then moved to the Brazos Bottom in the Bellville-Sealy-Mill Creek area. By October he had moved south into the Chocolate Bayou and Galveston area; in December he lodged in Cat Spring and stayed until May 1844. He continued during that year to gather specimens between the Brazos and Colorado rivers, moving from May to October to Industry, staying there until December 1844, when he was engaged by Carl Prince Solms to welcome the new German colonists to Comal Springs. He wrote that,

standard nomenclature. Included in this publication were 754 varieties of flora of the hundreds of species collected by Lindheimer between 1843 and 1848; in 1852 these specimens were distributed to botanists on a subscription basis by Engelmann and Gray. The distribution provided botanists worldwide with the newest discoveries of Texan flora.

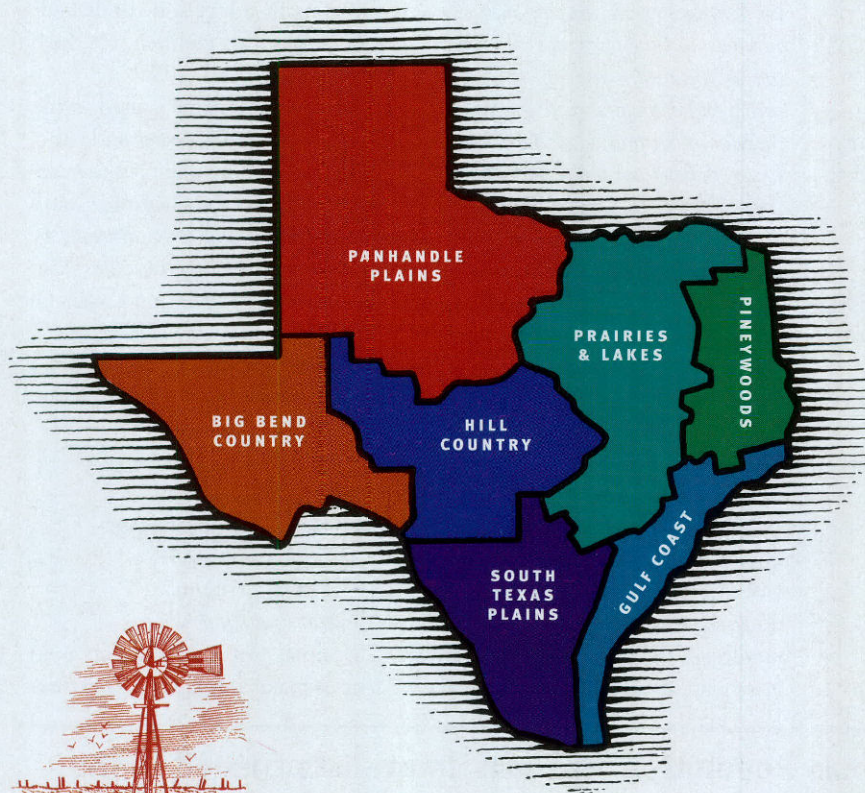
Lindheimer's collection contained plant specimens gathered from 1843 until 1852, and while he wanted a botanical garden for New Braunfels, it never materialized. When in 1852 he was appointed editor of the New

tion in any field of science, Lindheimer's achievement in Texas is the measure of his remarkable talent and aptitude for observation of its natural history. “Nature is beautiful,” he wrote in a letter to Engelmann, “beautiful everywhere, where mankind does not make it ugly; subjectively by means of its mood, objectively by means of its destruction and waste.” ★

N. RENEE BOENSCH is a freelance writer and an archives aide at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum and lives in Austin.

GETAWAYS

From Big Bend to the Big Thicket and the Red to the Rio Grande



PANHANDLE PLAINS

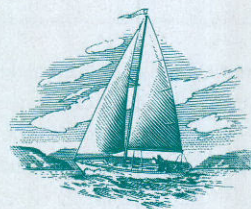
JANUARY EVENTS

- Jan. 8:** Wildlife Call Demonstration, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757.
- Jan. 8:** Longhorn and Buffalo Seminar, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757.
- Jan. 8-16:** Muzzleloader season, antlerless and spike bucks only, 512-389-4505.
- Jan. 15:** Dino Walk, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757.
- Jan. 22:** Nature Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227.
- Jan. 29:** Petroglyph Tour, San Angelo SP, San Angelo,

915-945-4757.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

- Feb. 5:** Wildlife Call Demonstration, San Angelo SF, San Angelo, 915-949-4757.
- Feb. 12:** Dino Walk, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757.
- Feb. 19:** Petroglyph Tour, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757.
- Feb. 26:** Stargazing Party, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757.
- Feb. 26:** Longhorn and Buffalo Seminar, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757.
- Feb. 26:** Nature Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227.



PRAIRIES AND LAKES

JANUARY EVENTS

- Jan.:** Historical Tour, every Saturday and Sunday, Stephen F. Austin SHP, San Felipe, 409-885-3613.
- Jan.:** Kreische Brewery Weekend Tour, every weekend, Monument Hill/Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 409-968-5658.

JAN. 1, 15, 22, 29:

Fairfield Lake Bald Eagle Tour, Fairfield Lake SP, Fairfield, 903-389-4514.

Jan. 2, 9: Kreische House Tour, Monument Hill/Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 409-968-5658.

Jan. 8: Stagecoach Rides, Fanthorp Inn SHP, Anderson, 409-873-2633.

Jan. 28: Fish-It's Fine Food, Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, Athens, 903-676-BASS.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

Feb.: Kreische Brewery Weekend Tour, every weekend, Monument Hill/Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 409-968-5658.

Feb.: Historical Tour, every Saturday and Sunday, Stephen F. Austin SHP, San Felipe, 409-885-3613.

Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25: February Film Fest, Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, Athens, 903-676-BASS.

Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26: Fairfield Lake Bald Eagle Tour, Fairfield Lake SP, Fairfield, 903-389-4514.

Feb. 5: Kids' Trout Fishing Day, Rusk/Palestine SP, Rusk, 903-683-5126.

Feb. 6, 13: Kreische House Tour, Monument Hill/Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange. 409-968-5658.

Feb. 12: Stagecoach Rides, Fanthorp Inn SHP, Anderson, 409-873-2633.

Feb. 26: Fly Fishing Fest, Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, Athens, 903-676-BASS.



PINEYWOODS

JANUARY EVENTS

Jan.: Bald Eagle Tour, call for dates and times, Martin Creek Lake SP, Tatum, 903-836-4336.

Jan. 15: Guided Nature Trail Hike, Village Creek SP, Lumberton, 409-755-7322.

Jan. 15: Floating the Forks, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, 409-384-5231.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

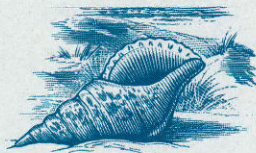
Feb.: Bald Eagle Tour, call for dates and times, Martin Creek Lake SP, Tatum, 903-836-4336.

Feb. 5: Birdhouse Day, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, 409-384-5231.

Feb. 13, 27: Walk on the Wild Side, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, 409-384-5231.

Feb. 19: Guided Nature Trail Hike, Village Creek SP, Lumberton, 409-755-7322.

Feb. 19: Floating the Forks, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, 409-384-5231.



GULF COAST

JANUARY EVENTS

Jan.: Nature Programs, every Saturday and Sunday, Brazos Bend SP, Richmond, 409-553-5101.

Jan.: Plantation house, barn and grounds tours, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHP, West Columbia, 409-345-4656.

Jan. 1-16: Fennessey Ranch Trophy Deer Hunt, Fennessey Ranch, Refugio, 361-529-6600.

Jan. 9: Intracoastal

Whooping Crane Tour, Matagorda Island SP, Port O'Connor, 361-983-2215.

Jan. 17-30: White-tailed deer special late general season, antlerless and spike bucks only, 512-389-4505.

Jan. 21: Whooping Crane and Wildlife Bus Tour, Matagorda Island SP, Port O'Connor, 361-983-2215.

Jan. 22: Beachcombing, Matagorda Island SP, Port O'Connor, 361-983-2215.

Jan. 23: History of Matagorda Island, Matagorda Island SP, Port O'Connor, 361-983-2215.

Jan. 29: Wild Boar Safari, Fennessey Ranch, Refugio, 361-529-6600.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

Feb.: Nature Programs, every Saturday and Sunday, Brazos Bend SP, Richmond, 409-553-5101.

Feb.: Plantation house, barn and grounds tours, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHP, West Columbia, 409-345-4656.

Feb. 5, 19: Whooping Crane and Wildlife Bus Tour, Matagorda Island SP, Port O'Connor, 361-983-2215.

Feb. 9, 21: Intracoastal Whooping Crane Tour, Matagorda Island SP, Port O'Connor, 361-983-2215.

Feb. 19: Wild Boar Safari, Fennessey Ranch, Refugio, 361-529-6600.

Feb. 20: Beachcombing, Matagorda Island SP, Port O'Connor, 361-983-2215.



HILL COUNTRY

JANUARY EVENTS

Jan.: Wild Cave Tours, every Saturday and Sunday, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, 915-628-3240.

Jan.: Gorman Falls Hike, every Saturday and Sunday, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, 915-628-3240.

Jan.: Birding Tours, call for dates and times, X Bar Ranch, off IH-10 near Sonora, 888-853-2688.

Jan. 8-16: Muzzleloader season, antlerless and spike bucks only, 512-389-4505.

Jan. 17: Austin Fly Fishers meeting, 512-918-1832.

Jan. 22: Bird Banding Seminar, Kerrville-Schreiner SP, Kerrville, 830-257-CAMP.

Jan. 26: Lies, Legends and Little Known Facts of the Texas Hill Country, Kerrville-Schreiner SP, Kerrville, 830-257-5392.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

Feb.: Birding Tours, call for dates and times, X Bar Ranch, off IH-10 near Sonora, 888-853-2688.

Feb.: Gorman Falls Hike, every Saturday and Sunday, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, 915-628-3240.

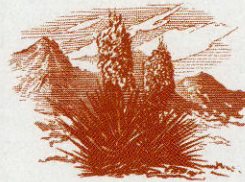
Feb.: Wild Cave Tours, every Saturday and Sunday, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, 915-628-3240.

Feb. 4-5: Sam Bass Treasure Hunt, Longhorn Cavern State Park, Burnet, 512-756-4680.

Feb. 5: Birdhouse Day, Lyndon B. Johnson SHP, Stonewall, 830-644-2252.

Feb. 21: Austin Fly Fishers meeting, 512-918-1832.

Feb. 26: Bird Banding seminar, Kerrville-Schreiner State Park, Kerrville, 830-257-CAMP.



BIG BEND COUNTRY

JANUARY EVENTS

Jan.: Rock Art Tour, every weekend, Hueco Tanks SHP, El

Paso, 915-857-1135.

Jan.: Fate Bell Cave Dwelling Tour, every Wednesday thru Sunday, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464.

Jan. 1, 2, 15, 16: Guided Weekend Hikes, Franklin Mountains SP, El Paso, 915-566-6441.

Jan. 8-16: Muzzleloader season, antlerless and spike bucks only, 512-389-4505.

Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29: White Shaman Tour, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464.

Jan. 15: Presa Canyon Tour, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464.

Jan. 17-30: White-tailed deer special late general season, antlerless and spike bucks only, 512-389-4505.

Jan. 22: Living History Day, Fort Lancaster SHP, Sheffield, 915-836-4391.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

Feb.: Fate Bell Cave Dwelling Tour, every Wednesday thru Sunday, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464.

Feb.: Rock Art Tour, every weekend, Hueco Tanks SHP, El Paso, 915-857-1135.

Feb. 4-6: Private Guide Training, Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center, Lajitas, 915-424-3327.

Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26: White Shaman Tour, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464.

Feb. 5, 26: Presa Canyon Tour, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464.

Feb. 5, 6, 19, 20: Guided Weekend Hikes, Franklin Mountains SP, El Paso, 915-566-6441.

Feb. 5: Bat Houses and Bird Houses, Fort Leaton SHP, Presidio, 915-229-3613.

Feb. 12: Upper Canyon Tour, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464.

Feb. 18: A Stop Along the Chihuahua Trail, Fort Leaton SHP, Presidio, 915-229-3613.

Feb. 19: Panther Cave Boat Tour: Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464.





SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

JANUARY EVENTS

Jan.: Kiskadee Bus Tour, every Tuesday and Friday, Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, Mission, 956-585-1107.

Jan.: El Canelo Ranch Bus Tour, every other Wednesday, Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, Mission, 956-585-1107.

Jan. 8-Feb. 13: Sandhill crane season in Zone C, 512-389-4505.

Jan. 8-16: Muzzleloader season, antlerless and spike bucks only, 512-389-4505.

Jan. 17-30: White-tailed deer special late general sea-

son, antlerless and spike bucks only, 512-389-4505.

Jan. 19: Burning Seminar, Chaparral WMA, Artesia Wells, 830-676-3413.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

Feb.: El Canelo Ranch Bus Tour, every other Wednesday, Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, Mission, 956-585-1107.

Feb.: Kiskadee Bus Tour, every Tuesday and Friday, Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, Mission, 956-585-1107.

Feb. 5: 1880s Wild West Extravaganza, Presidio La Bahía, Goliad, 361-645-3752.

SP STATE PARK

SHP STATE HISTORICAL PARK

SNA STATE NATURAL AREA

WMA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

STATE PARKS OFFER PUBLIC HUNTS

A number of state parks will offer special permitting this fall. As in the past, the carefully controlled public hunts primarily are scheduled for Monday through Friday, a slow time for most parks during fall and winter. Most parks will be open on Saturdays and Sundays for camping, fishing, picnicking and similar activities.

The following schedule lists the times and dates when public access is restricted. On the days when hunts are in progress, access is restricted to individuals with a special permit to hunt. On the other days, public access is restricted to park staff, game wardens and wildlife staff for preparations and to take a day off before other park activities resume.

Call the park of your choice directly to make sure that it will be open on the day you want to visit. Or, call Texas Parks and Wildlife's toll-free automated information line, 800-792-1112 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday - Friday. Press 3 for park information or press 5 for public hunt information.

- | | |
|--|--|
| Jan. 3-7, 10-14, 17-21, 24-28:
Lake Brownwood SP
915-784-5223 | Jan. 2-7, 8-9, 10-14:
Honey Creek SNA
830-433-2656 |
| Jan. 4-7, 11-14:
Caprock Canyons SP
806-255-1492 | Jan. 3-7:
Huntsville SP
409-295-5644 |
| Jan. 5-7, 12-14, 19-21, 26-28:
Colorado Bend SP
915-628-3240 | Jan. 8-9, 10-12, 12-14:
Lake Houston SP
281-354-6881 |
| Jan. 2-7, 9-14:
Enchanted Rock SNA
915-247-3903 | Jan. 2-7:
Lake Whitney SP
254-694-3793 |
| Jan. 2-7, 9-12, 18-21:
Cuadalupe River SP
830-438-2656 | Jan. 4-7, 11-14, 18-21:
Lost Maples SNA
830-956-343 |
| Jan. 2-5, 9-12:
Hill Country SNA
830-756-4413 | Jan. 3-8, 10-14, 17-21, 24-28:
Pedernales Falls SP
830-863-7304 |

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Bring a drained battery back to life without opening your hood

The remarkable Auto Starter® eliminates the need for dangerous jumper cables and car provide independent power for a variety of uses.

Imagine this...after a long flight home, you arrive at the airport parking lot, get in your car and turn the key and nothing happens. Guess what? Your car battery's drained. It's cold, dark and you're alone. Do you flag down a stranger and hope he has jumper cables? Do you walk back to the airport, phone a tow truck and wait? No...you simply reach into your glove box and take out your Auto Starter®. You plug it into your car's cigarette lighter and, in a matter of minutes, you're on your way.

A good start. Before Auto Starter, you either had to call a tow truck or try to get a jump from another vehicle. Tow trucks are slow to arrive and very expensive. Jumper cables, even heavy-duty ones, are dangerous and involve getting under the hood. Plus, there has to be another car around to provide the jump. Battery acid can burn your skin and ruin your clothes. If the cables are not connected correctly they can damage your car's expensive electrical system or, even worse, cause an explosion. With Auto Starter, you don't need a jump—you don't even have to open the hood. You simply plug the unit

into the cigarette lighter, wait a few minutes and you're on your way. Leave the unit plugged in for 30-120 minutes while driving and it recharges automatically.

Portable power. Auto Starter has many other uses. It's an independent 12V DC power supply that can operate TVs, radios, cellular phones and laptops. Almost any appliance that runs off of an adapter can operate independently with Auto Starter.

Auto Starter also makes it easier to work on your car. Plug it in before you change the car battery, and you won't have to reprogram your car's clock, radio or alarm system. You wouldn't think of driving around without a spare tire—why not have a spare battery that fits right in your glove box?

Try it risk-free. Considering the cost of a tow, Auto Starter will pay for itself the first time you have a problem. It is backed by a one-year manufacturer's limited warranty and Comtrad's exclusive risk-free home trial. If you are not fully satisfied for any reason, return it within 30 days for a full refund, "No Questions Asked."

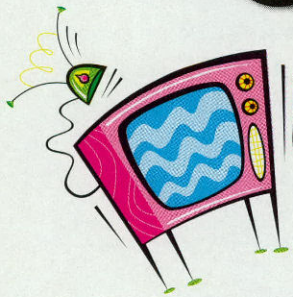


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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS



The Front Line of News and Views

TELEVISION

Look for These Stories in the Coming Weeks:

Jan. 2 – 9:

An inner city sanctuary; what happens inside a leaf when it changes color; Rolling Plains game wardens.

Jan. 9 – 16:

Birds and birders in the Rio Grande Valley; investigating kills and spills along the Texas coast; state park employees who make the past come alive.

Jan. 16 – 23:

Why the Brotherton family is crazy about birds; the CCC's enduring legacy; a man who teaches an often forgotten chapter of history to today's eager students.

Jan. 23 – 30:

Comeback of the Kemp's ridley sea turtle; an East Texas bog where even the plants bite; a trip through Texas history along the Red River.

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Amarillo: KACV, Ch. 2 / Sun. 4:00

Austin: KLRU, Ch. 18 / Mon. 12:00 / Sat. 8:00

College Station: KAMU, Ch. 15 / Thurs. 7:00

Corpus Christi: KEDT, Ch. 16 / Thurs. 7:30 / Fri. 11:30

Dallas/Fort Worth: KERA, Ch. 13 / Fri. 11:00
Also serving Abilene, Denton, Longview, Marshall, San Angelo, Texarkana, Tyler, Wichita Falls, Sherman

El Paso: KCOS, Ch. 13 / Sun. 6:00

Harlingen: KMBH, Ch. 60 / Sun. 12:30
Also serving McAllen, Mission

Houston: KUHT, Ch. 8 / Sun. 5:00
Also serving Beaumont/Port Arthur, Galveston, Texas City, Victoria

Killeen: KNCT, Ch. 46 / Sun. 4:00
Also serving Temple

Lubbock: KTXT, Ch. 5 / Sat. 6:30

Odessa: KOCV, Ch. 36 / Fri. 1:30 / Sat. 5:00
Also serving Midland

San Antonio: KLRN, Ch. 9 / Thur. 12:00
Also serving Laredo

Waco: KCTF, Ch. 34 / Sat. 3:00

Schedules are subject to change, so check local listings.

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Amarillo: KACV-FM 89.9 / 9:20 a.m.

Austin: KUT-FM 90.5 / 1:58 p.m., (12:58 p.m. Fr.), KVET-AM 1300 / 6:00 a.m. • *Austin American-Statesman's* Inside Line 512-416-5700 category 6287 (NATR)

Beaumont: KLVI-AM 560 / 5:40 a.m.

Brady: KNEL-AM 1490 / 7:20 a.m. & 8:50 p.m., KNEL-FM 95.3 / 7:20 a.m. & 8:50 p.m.

Brenham: KWHI-AM 1280 / 6:50 a.m.

Bryan: WTAW-AM 1150 / 5:45 p.m.

Canton: KVCI-AM 1510 / 6:40 a.m.

Canyon: KWTS-FM 91.1 / 7:10 a.m.

Carthage: KGAS-AM 1590 / 6:46 a.m., KGAS-FM 104.3 / 6:46 a.m.

Center: KDET-AM 930 / 5:15 p.m.

Coleman: KSTA-AM 1000 / 7:45 a.m. & 5:15 p.m.

Columbus: KULM-FM 98.3 / 7:20 a.m.

Comanche: KCOM-AM 1550 / 6:30 a.m.




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SIGHTS & SOUNDS

- Commerce:** KETR-FM 88.9 / 10:15 a.m.
- Corpus Christi:** KEDT-FM 90.3 / 5:34 p.m., KFTX-FM 97.5 / 5:35 a.m.
- Crockett:** KIVY-AM 1290 / 8:15 a.m., KIVY-FM 92.7 / 8:15 a.m.
- Dimmitt:** KDHN-AM 1470 / 12:31 p.m.
- Dumas:** KMRE-FM 95.3 / 10:30 a.m., KDDD-AM 800 / 10:30 a.m.
- Eagle Pass:** KINL-FM 92.7 / 7:15 a.m.
- Eastland:** KEAS-AM 1590 / 8:30 a.m., KEAS-FM 97.7 / 8:30 a.m.
- Edna:** KGUL-FM 96.1 / 8:15 a.m.
- El Campo:** KULP-AM 1390 / 2:00 p.m.
- Fairfield:** KNES-FM 99.1 / 6:49 a.m.
- Floresville:** KWCB-FM 89.7 / 1:30 p.m.
- Floydada:** KFLP-AM 900 / 10:15 a.m. & 4:15 p.m.
- Ft. Stockton:** KFST-AM 860 / 12:50 p.m., KFTS-FM 94.3 / 12:50 p.m.
- Freeport:** KBRZ-AM 1460 / 10:15 a.m. & 7:45 p.m.
- Gainesville:** KGAF-AM 1580 / 7:00 a.m.
- Galveston:** KGBC-AM 1540 / 1:45 p.m.
- Gatesville:** KRYL-FM 98.3 / 7:09 a.m.
- Graham:** KSWA-AM 1330 / 8:40 a.m., 5:20 p.m.
- Hallettsville:** KHLT-AM 1520 / 8:15 a.m., KTXM-FM 99.9 / 8:15 a.m.
- Harlingen:** KMBH-FM 88.9 / 4:58 p.m.
- Hereford:** KPAN-AM 860 / 2:50 p.m., KPAN-FM 106.3 / 2:50 p.m.
- Hillsboro:** KHBR-AM 1560 / 9:30 a.m.
- Houston:** KTRH-AM 740 / 11:40 a.m.
- Huntsville:** KSHU-FM 90.5 / 11:55 a.m. & 5:55 p.m.
- Jacksonville:** KEBE-AM 1400 / 7:25 a.m.
- Junction:** KMBL-AM 1450 / 6:46 a.m. & 3:46 p.m., KOOK-FM 93.5 / 6:46 a.m. & 3:46 p.m.
- Kerrville:** KRNH-FM 95.1 / 5:31 a.m. & 12:57, 9:57 p.m.
- Lampasas:** KCYL-AM 1450 / 7:10 a.m., KACQ-FM 101.9 / 7:10 a.m.
- Malakoff:** KLVQ-AM 1410 / 7:20 a.m.
- Marshall:** KCUL-AM 1410 / 7:15 a.m., KCUL-FM 92.3 / 7:15 a.m.
- McAllen:** KHID-FM 88.1 / 4:58 p.m.
- Mesquite:** KEOM-FM 88.5 / 5:30 a.m., 2:30, 8:30 p.m. M-Th, (5:30 a.m. & 4:45 p.m. Fr.)
- Midland:** KCRS-AM 550 / 6:43 a.m. & 1:43, 6:43 p.m.
- Mineola:** KMOO-FM 99.9 / 5:10 p.m.
- Nacogdoches:** KSAU-FM 90.1 / 3:00 p.m.
- Ozona:** KYXX-FM 94.3 / 12:09 p.m.
- Palestine:** KLIS-FM 96.7 / 6:20 a.m.
- Pecos:** KIUN-AM 1400 / 10:30 a.m.
- Pleasanton:** KBUC-FM 103.7, KBUC-FM 98.3 / variable
- Rockdale:** KRXT-FM 98.5 / 5:04, 6:50 a.m.
- San Angelo:** KUTX-FM 90.1 / 1:58 (12:58 p.m. Fr.)
- San Antonio:** KSTX-FM 89.1 / 9:04 p.m. Th.
- Seguin:** KWED-AM 1580 / 7:55 a.m.
- Sonora:** KHOS-FM 92.1 / 12:09 p.m.
- Sulphur Springs:** KSST-AM 1230 / 4:45 p.m.
- Texarkana:** KCMC-AM 740 / 8:30 a.m. or 12:15 p.m.
- Uvalde:** KVOU-AM 1400 / 5:33, 8:30 a.m. KVOU-FM 105 / 5:33, 8:30 a.m.
- Victoria:** KVRT-FM 90.7 / 5:34 p.m.
- Waco:** KBCT-FM 94.5 / 6:10 a.m.
- Wichita Falls:** KWFS-AM 1290 / 6:15, 7:45 a.m.
- Yoakum:** KYKM-FM 92.5 / 8:15 a.m.

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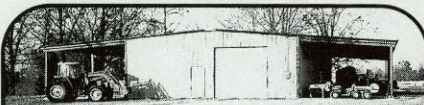
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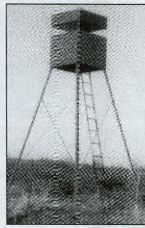
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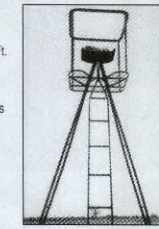
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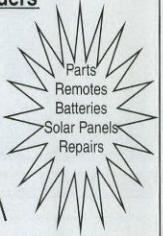
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PARTING SHOT

Wyman Meinzer was excited when a Knox County rancher called him about a "white roadrunner" he had seen on his property. In the 15 years he spent researching his book, *The Roadrunner*, published in 1993, Meinzer had never seen one like this. Fortunately, when he arrived at the rancher's property, cameras in tow, the bird was still there. Meinzer and TPW biologists say that this partially albinistic greater roadrunner is indeed an unusual bird. While partial albinism is not out of the ordinary in the avian world, it is extremely rare in roadrunners. Meinzer shot this photo with a Canon F1 camera, 500mm lens, 1/250 second at f/5.6, Fuji Velvia film.



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