

# texas parks & wildlife news

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78744

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## LUNKER PROGRAM ON PAR WITH 10 ENTRIES

TYLER--After a tremendous first week of February, entries to the Operation Share A Lone Star Lunker program have slowed a little, although Cupid did strike on Lake Quitman on Valentine's Day.

Cupid is a 13.62-pound largemouth bass caught from Quitman on Feb. 14 and the 10th entry into the lunker program. Douglas Hill of Emory caught the lunker entry, which measured 25.325 inches long, on a Ring Rascle Worm. Hill named the fish Cupid for obvious reasons, but before he is taken to the cleaners for fishing on Valentine's Day, it should be mentioned that he also took his wife along.

Hill's catch is the first Lone Star Lunker entry from Lake Quitman and is a new lake record. His catch replaces a 12.58-pound fish caught by James N. Burns of Quitman on Feb. 17, 1990.

Of the other nine entries, five are from Lake Fork, two from Sam Rayburn and one from Bob Sandlin.

The two from Sam Rayburn are that lake's first entries into the lunker program. Curly Johnson of Kirbyville caught a 13.55-pounder on a crawworm on Feb. 3. Gary Boyett of Lufkin caught a largemouth weighing 13.13 using a Zoom Lizard on Feb. 5. The lunkers measured 26.5 inches and 24.75 inches long, respectively.

Johnson's bass also is a lake record. His and Boyett's fish top the previous record of 12.75 pounds, caught by Orville Lee of Los Alamos, N.M.

The year's largest entry to date is a bass weighing 16.86 pounds, caught by Bryan Turner of Carrollton on Feb. 8 at Lake Fork. The 25.5-inch long fish is the eighth largest bass caught in the state. It was caught on a lizard.

Other entries include:

- \* Phillip Thom of Haslet, 13.48 pounds, 23.5 inches, Jan. 16, Fork, crankbait
- \* David Patak of Ennis, 13.20 pounds, 25 inches, Jan. 31, Bob Sandlin, minnow
- \* Harry Daniel of Houston, 13.33 pounds, 24.5 inches, Feb. 5, Fork, Stanley spinner
- \* Tommy Neff of Potean, Okla. 13.8 pounds, 24.5 inches, Feb. 6, Fork, black jig and purple worm
- \* Michael Teel of Sulphur Springs, 14.16 pounds, 24.25 inches, Feb. 7, Fork, Bomber Long A
- \* Roger Hartness of Jonesboro, Ark., 13.13 pounds, 24.625 inches, Feb. 8, Fork, spinner bait

"We're about on par for number of entries," said Debbie Wade, assistant manager of the Tyler State Fish Hatchery, which houses the lunker program. "We pick up the bulk of our fish in February and March. We've already got two new lakes (Sam Rayburn and Quitman). That's exciting."

Thom's entry was released back into Fork on Jan. 23. Wade said tests showed the lunker was a first generation cross between a Florida bass and northern bass. The lunker program attempts to spawn pure Florida bass. The lunkers entered by Patak and Johnson died.

"All of the other fish are doing real well," Wade said. Samples from the entries are at the A.E. Wood Hatchery in San Marcos for testing on whether or not they are pure Florida bass.

Five of the bass have been paired with males. "They are nice and potbellied, she said. "The water is still a little cool in the tank, but it's close to the lake temperature. We'll just wait and see."

Operation Share A Lone Star Lunker accepts largemouth bass weighing more than 13 pounds for attempted spawning and studying. Entries will be accepted until April 30. If someone has a qualifying fish, they should call the Tyler hatchery at (903) 592-7570. If no one answers, leave a message on the recorder. The recorder is checked at least every two hours around the clock.

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### **BIOLOGISTS FLY COAST FOR NEW WETLANDS MAPS**

AUSTIN--State and federal wildlife biologists are cooperating on a major effort to update and computerize Texas coastal wetlands maps. The four-year project will yield important data about wetlands loss that will help policy-makers make decisions involving coastal development and management priorities.

In December NASA flew over two-thirds of the Texas coast shooting color infrared photography. These photos will be used to establish base maps of coastal wetlands so scientists can better analyze current wetlands conditions. Over time, periodic updating will help scientists evaluate the impacts of change.

'Texas coastal wetlands loss continues even though loss to development may have slowed in the last two decades because of stronger federal environmental laws, said Dr. Dan Moulton, a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department biologist who is working temporarily with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) project.

'Much coastal wetlands loss in Texas is now due to natural phenomena, such as saltwater intrusion, soil erosion, sea level rise and land subsidence, although many of these are hastened by artificial forces such as ship channels, water, oil and gas withdrawal and inadequate freshwater inflow.

The wetlands mapping project will create three important new products. It will update and digitize NWI maps for all of 23 Texas coastal counties and parts of nine others. It will produce a Status and Trends Report that will provide comprehensive, statistically valid acreage estimates of Texas coastal wetlands losses and gains from the 1950s to the 1990s. Finally, it will produce 21 county atlases with data on wetlands values, fish and wildlife habitat, acreage, soils, plants and more.

The entire project should be complete by 1997 though various parts will be completed in stages as the data are analyzed. The first maps should be completed in by 1994, the Status and Trends Report should be done by 1996 and the County Atlases by 1997

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### **ARCO DONATES TO ARTIFICIAL REEF PROGRAM**

AUSTIN--An executive of ARCO Oil and Gas Company this week presented a check for \$263,100 to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department biologists for the Texas Artificial Reef Fund. The gift supports the Rigs to Reefs program, which transforms former drilling rigs into beneficial undersea reefs.

The ARCO donation is the culmination of efforts begun last year when the company applied for permission to topple its Brazos Block A-132 platform onto an artificial reef site approved by the department.

The project is a winning situation for the company, state biologists and all others interested in marine conservation. By providing needed habitat for reef fish communities, artificial reefs improve sport and commercial fishing, scuba diving and the general health of the Texas marine environment.

'Hard reef structures are critical for many of the over-fished reef populations, including red snapper and grouper said Hal Osburn, TPWD artificial reef program director. 'For those fish stocks, the ARCO reef will be like an oasis in the desert.

Rigs to Reefs makes bottom line sense for oil and gas producers like ARCO because, once an offshore platform is no longer producing petroleum, it must be dismantled and taken ashore, an expensive undertaking. The Rigs to Reefs alternative is a practical and economical method of converting old structures into living ecosystems.

'Offshore platforms can have far greater value as artificial reefs than they ever could as scrap metal, said Chuck Davidson, eastern district manager for ARCO. 'Not only do we have an economic incentive through cost savings, we also have an opportunity to create a permanent artificial reef that will benefit many Texans.

'Texas Parks and Wildlife deserves great praise for their creativity and dedication to this program. Their administrative and logistical support was key to ARCO's decision to make this donation," he said.

Artificial reefs help forge a vital missing link in the life cycles of various reef fish who eat the variety of invertebrates and smaller fish that grow on and around the reefs. They also use the reefs during spawning and as shelter from predators.

Since 1990, the Rigs to Reefs program has received 15 rigs that have been placed on 10 sites in the Gulf, and has received donations to the artificial reef fund totaling almost \$2 million.

The program currently emphasizes deep water reef sites because of the availability of rigs in those parts of the Gulf. However, the long-term goal is to use money from the fund to develop more inshore sites using a wide range of materials besides rigs, ranging from derelict ships to large concrete blocks. These inshore sites will be more accessible to coastal divers and anglers.

TPWD biologists stressed that no materials will be placed as artificial reefs until stringent testing criteria confirm that they are both environmentally safe and stable enough to remain where they are positioned.

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## **TOAD TOUR HIGHLIGHTS MARCH PASSPORT EVENTS**

AUSTIN--A nighttime tour to a pond in Bastrop State Park in search of the endangered Houston toad highlights a full schedule of Texas Conservation Passport events scheduled for March.

This pond is one of the only places in the world that is home to the Houston toad. It is now the site of a new Texas Conservation Passport tour led by Dr. Andy Price, who has been studying the toad in Bastrop County for four years.

'Most people head to the outdoors by day,' said Price, an endangered species biologist with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. 'This is a chance to see wildlife species that are active at night. The breeding choruses of the Houston toad can be spectacular when you're right in the middle of the action, and their calls are really very pretty, as toads go.'

The Houston toad once flourished in the coastal prairie near Houston, but the species declined sharply because of land clearing for development. For decades until 1989, the Bastrop site and an area near College Station were the only known Houston toad sites in the world. A TPWD survey has since identified toad populations in eight Texas counties. Price's Bastrop field work is a continuation of efforts to monitor and protect the species.

The tours will be conducted every Tuesday and Saturday evening through the end of April. Each tour can accommodate only 10 people, so advance reservations are recommended by calling Bastrop State Park at (512) 321-2101. Participants will gather at sunset at the park. They should come dressed warmly, be prepared for rain and bring their own flashlight. Tours will last about two hours, but visitors who wish to leave earlier will be guided out.

There are several other events scheduled for Texas Conservation Passport holders during March. They include:

- \* Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP bird watching and nature study tour (210) 585-1107, March 10.

- \* Big Bend Ranch SNA, bus tour with chuckwagon lunch, (915) 229-3613, March 6. Tours for March 20, April 3 and April 17 already are sold out.

- \* Black Gap WMA in Brewster County, border birding, (915) 376-2216, March 20. Also, a peregrine falcon tour March 27

- \* Cedar Hill SP at Joe Pool Reservoir Penn Farm walking tour (214) 291 3900, March 13.

- \* Chaparral WMA in Dimmit and LaSalle counties, 'Blossoms in the brush' slide show and tour (210) 676-3413, March 27

- \* Dinosaur Valley SP near Glen Rose, mountain bike trail ride, (817) 897-4588, March 27

- \* Fairfield Lake SP near Fairfield, 'Wings on the wind of spring' tour and slide show. (903) 389-4514, March 13.

- \* Fulton Mansion SHP at Fulton, 'Bounty of the sea: From the boat to the table, (512) 729-0386, March 2. Also, 'A tale of two houses' mansion tour and boat ride to lighthouse, March 27

- \* Gene Howe WMA near Canadian, nature tour (806) 492-3405, March 12 and 27

\* Hill Country SNA and Running R Ranch in Bandera County, interpretive horseback riding tour with mount and lunch provided, (210) 796-4413, March 14.

\* Honey Creek SNA in Comal County, lower Edwards Plateau ecosystem tour (210) 438-2656, March 6, 13, 20 and 27

\* Kerr WMA near Ingram, birding tour focusing on endangered species, (210) 238-4483, March 5.

\* Kickapoo Cavern SNA near Uvalde, Montezuma quail slide show and calling demonstration, (210) 563-2342, March 6. Also, a bird banding observation and birding tour March 13, and a cavern tour and Green Cave bat flight observation, March 20.

\* Lake Livingston SP near Livingston, fishing seminar, (409) 365-2201 March 3.

\* Las Palomas WMA and Lower Rio Grande NWR, wildlife corridor tour (210) 383-8982, March 3.

\* Las Palomas WMA-Ocotillo Unit, birdwatching on the Rio Grande, (915) 837-2051 March 27

\* Lubbock Lake Landmark SHP at Lubbock, photography workshop focusing on close-up shots, (806) 765-0737 March 4 and 11

\* Pedernales Falls SP in Blanco County. Twin Falls nature trail walk, (210) 868-7304, March 6, 10, 13, 17 20 and 27

\* Richland Creek WMA in Freestone and Navarro counties, dog demonstration, (903) 389-4514, March 6. Also, birding and banding spring migrants in the wetlands, (903) 928-2251 March 27

\* University of Texas Coastal Studies Lab, marine life in South Texas slide show and tour (210) 350-4490, March 5.

A Texas Conservation Passport is required to attend these events for each person 17 years old and older. The \$25 passport also provides a waiver of park entry fees, discounts for camping and is a way for everyone to contribute directly to the preservation and enjoyment of Texas' natural and cultural resources.

Other benefits of the passport include entry to some currently undeveloped park lands, discounts on some department items such as the Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine and news of special outdoor programs.

The Texas Conservation Passport is sold at all state parks, TPWD regional law enforcement offices and through two vendors, Whole Earth Provision Company in Austin, Dallas and Houston and REI (Recreation Equipment Inc.) in Austin.

For more information about a tour, call the telephone number given above for the specific tour. For more information about the Texas Conservation Passport, call your local state park or department headquarters in Austin at 1-800-792-1112.

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### **BE SMART WHILE BOATING, SWIMMING**

AUSTIN--Many water enthusiasts already are getting itchy to get back on the water. Many of them may be so excited to hit the water that they may not spend enough time checking their safety equipment or making other preparations for a safe trip.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department urges everyone participating in water related activities to exercise extreme caution while enjoying the many resources of Texas, said Capt. Dexter Harris, TPWD boating law administrator. "Compliance with the laws is necessary and, when combined with prudence and common sense, a safe and enjoyable trip to the water will result.

There are several rules of the water to remember when enjoying water related activities:

- \* keep the proper number of life jackets readily accessible in your boat and make certain any child under 13 is wearing one,
- \* avoid the use of alcoholic beverages during any activity.
- \* whether boating or swimming, familiarize yourself with the area and potential underwater hazards,
- \* notify someone of your specific intentions, including how to contact you and your estimated time of return,
- \* stay alert of impending changes in weather conditions,
- \* use good judgment and exercise good common sense.

"The most effective thing people can do to prevent accidents is wear life preservers," Harris said. " While life preservers are not required for adults, many lives may be saved if all boaters wore them.



'More people would probably wear life preservers and provide them to others in the boat if they realized that the boat operator is responsible for doing so, he said. 'Failure to do so is punishable under Texas law in case of an accident.

Department staff also recommends the free boating safety courses offered throughout the state. Graduates get a certificate that may get them a discount on boat insurance, depending on which insurance company they use.

Some of the upcoming boater education courses scheduled across the state (by city, date course begins, instructor and contact telephone number) include:

- \* Austin - March 23, Rafael Salgado, (512) 389-4999; also, July 25, Gilbert Bartz, (512) 266-2572 or 3607
- \* Carrollton - March 3, Thomas Spalding, (214) 350-1810
- \* Fort Worth - July 19, Russell Clapp, (817) 244-7251
- \* Garland - March 29, Jeffrey Kunkle, (214) 530-7342.
- \* Georgetown - March 20, Billy Whitfield, (512) 863-2342 or 458-7201
- \* Harlingen - Feb. 22, Duane Scott, (210) 399-5852; also, June 14
- \* Lake Arlington - April 13, Russell Clapp, (817) 244-7251
- \* Lewisville - May 5, Thomas Spalding, (214) 350-1810
- \* Victoria - March 4, David Reagan, (512) 575-4406 or 574-3449; also, March 4, Charles Schons, (512) 575-8600

For more information, call the TPWD boater education course hotline at 1-800-253-4536, general information at (512) 389-4800, boater registration at (512) 389-4828 or boater education at (512) 389-4999. The TPWD toll-free number is 1-800-792-1112.

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### **FERAL HOG SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULED**

KERRVILLE--Feral hog experts from across the country will discuss the pros and cons of wild hogs as well as present information from the history of feral swine in Texas to ecological impacts during a national symposium, scheduled for March 24-25 at the Y.O. Hilton in Kerrville.

Recent estimates suggest that Texas has about one million wild hogs, half of the U.S. population. These hogs can be found in 189 of the state's 254 counties, said Dr Dale Rollins, wildlife specialist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. Their numbers continue to increase.

'Feral swine enjoy a 'taste great, less filling' relationship among Texans," Rollins said. "To most farmers, feral hogs are a cancer, but to hunters, hogs are probably second only to deer in terms of challenging quarry."

The symposium is sponsored by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas Animal Damage Control Service and USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The groups are sponsoring the event because of a general lack of information about feral hog ecology and management.

The symposium will feature 24 speakers, most focusing on Texas situations, but others will speak about California, Florida and Pakistan. Discussion panels will examine hogs from the perspective of a county agent, locker plant operator and commercial swine operator and ranchers who will specialize in offering hunting safaris for wild boars.

TPWD biologist Rick Taylor of Uvalde will speak on the history and distribution of feral hogs in Texas. David Synatzske, manager of the Chaparral Wildlife Management Area will discuss the ecological impacts of feral hogs.

Registration for the meeting is \$25 if received by March 13, \$35 at the door. Registration includes a wild hog barbecue and a copy of the symposium proceedings. For more information, contact Rollins at (915) 653-4576.

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## **OUTDOOR NOTEBOOK**

AUSTIN--More than 50 percent of muzzleloader hunters who participated in the first public deer hunt at Possum Kingdom State Park this winter were successful.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department offered hunts to 63 computer drawn applicants through its Type I Public Hunting Program. Thirty hunters harvested 17 white-tailed deer, said Jim Dillard, TPWD wildlife biologist from Mineral Wells. He said the 57 percent hunter success rate is above average for muzzleloader hunts.

TPWD scheduled four three-day hunts on the 1 700-acre park in Palo Pinto County to provide additional public hunting opportunity and to help reduce an overpopulated deer herd. Dillard said high deer densities have resulted in degradation of the habitat, low reproduction and nutritional stress on the resident herd.

\* \* \* \* \*

AUSTIN - Lt. Rod Chalmers of Austin will receive the National 4-H Council award at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference on March 22 in Washington, D.C.

Each year the Extension Service-USDA and the National 4-H Council recognize four outstanding volunteers in the natural resources area of 4-H. Candidates are nominated by extension staff members in their states, who supply supporting documentation to a national panel of judges. This award is the most prestigious offered to 4-H natural resource volunteers.

Chalmers, a training officer at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's game warden training academy, was nominated because of his outstanding contribution to the 4-H Field and Stream Program in Crockett County. Chalmers has been with TPWD since September 1978.

'Rod is richly deserving of the recognition,' said Dr. Ronald A. Howard Jr. with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service in notifying the department of Chalmers' selection. 'He has served as a key volunteer in the Field and Stream program in Crockett County for many years, leading the program with creativity and a strong focus on the kids as well as the resource.'

'Providing a positive role model for young people and introducing them to a game warden in a positive context provided mutual benefits. His insight and advice have been as valuable as his creativity and dedication.'

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AUSTIN: Here is the weekly fishing report as compiled by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for Feb. 17:

#### CENTRAL

**BASTROP:** Water clear, 58-60 degrees, normal level; black bass are good through 7 1/2 pounds on Rattle Traps and jigs; crappie are good at night on minnows in 18 to 20 feet of water; catfish are excellent to 10 pounds in the old creek beds and channels on Bill's Sponge Baits and Punch Bait in areas baited with fermented wheat.

**BELTON:** Water clear, 55 degrees, 7 feet above normal level; black bass are fair to 4 pounds on spinners and jigging spoons; striped bass are slow; crappie are good to 2 pounds on fleaflies and minnows; white bass are excellent to 2 1/2 pounds on jigging spoons; catfish are slow.

**BROWNWOOD:** Water clear, 65 degrees, 2 feet low; black bass are fair to 6 1/2 pounds on deep running spinners in 12-14 feet of water; striped bass are good in the 6 pound range schooling under birds and are caught on spoons and slabs; crappie are fair to 12 fish per string on jigs and minnows in 12-13 feet of water; white bass are good in the same area to 2 1/2 pounds on the same baits; channel catfish are good in the 2 1/2 to 3 pound range on silver minnows and shad on trotlines; yellow catfish are good to 33 pounds at the same time.

**BUCHANAN:** Water clear, 54 degrees, 10 inches low; black bass are slow; striped bass are excellent to 9 pounds on live bait from Council Creek to Garrett Island; crappie are slow; white bass are good from Tow up the river; catfish are fair to 12 pounds on trotlines with cut bait.

**CANYON:** Water clear, 56 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to 3 pounds on silver spoons and Rattle Traps; striped bass are fair downrigging extra large minnows; crappie are fairly good off piers and up the river and in Tom Creek; white bass are good upstream at the rapids, no limits caught yet; catfish are good to 10 pounds on worms, shrimp and chicken livers; trout are good to 7 pounds plus below the dam on corn.

**FAYETTE:** Water clear, 61 degrees, normal level; black bass are excellent to 10 pounds, 13 ounces on spinners early and jerk baits, worms, cranks, slab minnows and live water dogs; crappie are fair on minnows; catfish are fair to 6 1/2 pounds on chicken livers and slab minnows.

**GIBBONS CREEK:** Water stained, 59 degrees, 4 inches above normal level; black bass are good to 8 pounds on Slug-Gos, buzz baits, lizards; crappie are slow and scattered; blue catfish are good to 32 pounds on live perch baited rod and reel; channel catfish are slow.

**LBJ:** Water clear, 55 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to 6 pounds, 2 ounces on chartreuse jigs; striped bass are slow; crappie are slow; white bass are good up Llano River with limits caught daily; catfish are slow.

**LIMESTONE:** Water murky, 51 degrees, normal level; black bass are slow to 5 pounds on Bulldog Spinners; crappie are very slow; white bass are slow; catfish are fair in the 5 to 7 pound range on live perch in the creek channel.

**NAVARRO MILLS:** Water slightly murky, 53 degrees, 2 feet above normal level; black bass are slow; crappie are fair to 2 pounds on minnows in 8-15 feet of water off the rocks near the dam; white bass are slow; channel catfish are fair on minnows and shrimp; yellow catfish are good to 40 pounds on trotlines baited with live sunfish near the dam.

**SOMERVILLE:** Water murky, 18 inches above normal level; black bass are fair to 4 pounds on minnows near the marina; crappie are fair on minnows and jigs in 5-8 feet of water; catfish are slow.

**SQUAW CREEK:** Water clear, 60 degrees, normal level; black bass are good in the 4-5 pound range on cranks, jigs and Rattle Traps; crappie are slow; white bass are slow; catfish are good in the 5-6 pound range on stinkbait and cheese bait.

**STILLHOUSE:** Water clear, 59 degrees, 1 foot up; black bass are good to 19 inches on minnows; white bass are good on slabs and spoons in 14 to 25 feet of water; catfish are good to 24 inches on stinkbait and dough bait.

**TRAVIS:** Water clear, 57 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 4 pounds on Crippled Herring, smoke glitter Pat Gitzits and live minnows; Guadalupe bass are good to 16 inches on the same baits; striped bass are spotty to 20 inches off points on Crippled Herring Spoons; crappie are fair on live minnows around docks in 15 feet of water; white bass are spotty in lake, some large females caught; catfish are slow.

**WACO:** Water murky, 52 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to good to 5 pounds on jigs and spinners; striped bass are slow; crappie are fair to 1 1/2 pounds on minnows; white bass are good through 1 pound on small jigs and Roadrunners; catfish are slow.

**WHITNEY:** Water clear, 50 degrees, 2 1/4 feet low; black bass are good to 8 pounds on cranks, spinners and Power Worms; smallmouth bass are slow; striped bass are good to 11 pounds with limits in 35 feet of water on Roadrunners and Mann Shadows; crappie are good to 1 1/4 pounds on fleaflies and minnows in the barges; white bass are slow; blue catfish are fair to good on shad and perch baited trotlines.

#### NORTHEAST

**ATHENS:** Water clear, 52 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 8.26 pounds on black and blue jigs; crappie are slow; white bass are slow; catfish are slow.

**BRIDGEPORT:** Water clear, 42 degrees, 2 feet low; black bass are good to 4.25 pounds on Rattle Traps in 5 feet of water; striped bass are slow; crappie are good through 1 1/2 pounds on minnows and jigs, strings of 20 fish are fairly easy to get; white bass are good on slabs, spoons and minnows, near limits caught around Steel Island; catfish are fair in number.

**CEDAR CREEK:** Water murky in all coves, 49 degrees, normal level; black bass are good with limits to 4 1/2 pounds on Carolina rigged lizards; striped bass are slow; crappie are spotty; white bass are slow; blue catfish are good on jug lines to 12 pounds on goldfish.

**CYPRESS SPRINGS:** Water clear, 49 degrees, 4 inches high; black bass are good to 10.19 pounds on white spinners in 12 feet or less of water; crappie are fair to 1 1/2 pounds in 17 feet of water on minnows; catfish are good to 11

1/2 pounds on nightcrawlers.

**FAIRFIELD:** Water slightly muddy, 2 inches low; black bass are good to 6 pounds; hybrid striped bass are slow to 5 pounds on shad; catfish are good to 10 pounds on live bait; redfish are fair to 15 pounds on live bait.

**FORK:** Water clear, 47 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to 8 1/2 pounds on Slug-Gos, jigs and spinners in shallow water; crappie are good in 20-30 feet of water and under 154 bridge; catfish slow.

**GRAPEVINE:** Water stained, 53 degrees, 2.1 feet above normal level; black bass are good to 5 1/2 pounds on black and blue jig combinations along creek channels in 15 to 18 feet of water; striped bass are slow; crappie are good on tube jigs in chartreuse and chartreuse and red, some also caught on minnows in 15 to 20 feet of water, most fish are in the 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 pound range; white bass are good to 1 3/4 pounds on minnows and Sassy Shad; catfish are fair to 10 pounds on trotlines baited with shrimp.

**JOE POOL:** Water murky 43 degrees, floodgates are open 1 foot, a little above normal level; black bass are fair to 10 pounds on minnows, shad and spinners; crappie are good to 1 1/2 pounds on minnows in 14 feet of water; white bass are slow; catfish are fair to 9 pounds on shad gizzards and fresh shad.

**LAKE O THE PINES:** Water clear, 53 degrees, 2 feet above normal level; black bass are fairly good to 9 pounds on black and blue jig and pig combinations, chartreuse spinners and Rattle Traps; crappie are fair in 20 feet of water on minnows; white bass are slow; catfish are good to 6 pounds on trotlines with nightcrawlers and stinkbait.

**MONTICELLO:** Water clear, 66 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 11 pounds on live water dogs and black jigs; crappie are fair to 10 fish per string on minnows; catfish are good to 8 pounds on nightcrawlers and shrimp.

**MOSS LAKE:** Water clear, 44 degrees, 18 inches high; black bass are slow; crappie are slow; white bass are slow; catfish are good to 4 pounds on shrimp and home made stinkbait or cheese bait.

**MURVAUL:** Water a little murky, 48 degrees, 6 inches above normal level; black bass are good to 10.8 pounds on spinners and jigs in 3-10 feet of water; crappie are good around 1971 bridge with limits to 2 1/2 pounds on minnows and jigs; catfish are fair to 4 pounds on cut shad; only a few fishermen out.

**PALESTINE:** Water a little murky, 51 degrees, 1 foot high; black bass are fair to 7 pounds on spinners and jigs; crappie are good to 2 1/2 pounds on minnows; white bass are moving up river, some caught on spoons and cranks; catfish are slow.

**PURTIS CREEK:** Water clear, 51 degrees, 1 foot above normal level; black bass are fair in number to 3 pounds on cranks; crappie are slow; catfish are slow.

**RAY HUBBARD:** Water clear, 43 degrees, normal level; black bass are slow; striped bass are fair near the power plant; crappie are fair to good to 1 1/2 pounds on minnows and jigs in deep water; white bass are slow; catfish are fair in number.

**RAY ROBERTS:** Water clear, 48

degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to 7 1/2 pounds on black and blue jigs; crappie are good with limits at 922 bridge on minnows; catfish are good to 7 pounds on live shrimp baited trotlines.

**RICHLAND-CHAMBERS:** Water muddy, 3 inches high; black bass are good to 9 1/2 pounds on jigs; crappie are slow; white bass are slow; catfish are good to 46 pounds, a possible lake record.

**TAWAKONI:** Water off color, 54 degrees, 4 inches high; black bass are good through 6 pounds on spinners, worms and cranks; striped are poor; crappie are fair to 2 pounds on small minnows and jigs; white bass are fair on slabs; catfish are excellent to 6 pounds on worms and bloodbait.

**TEXOMA:** Water a little off color up the river, clear in main lake, 44 degrees, 1 foot above normal level; black bass are fair to 4 1/2 pounds on pig and jig combination; striped are good to 13.59 pounds on Tad Roadrunners; crappie are slow; white bass are good to 1 1/2 pounds on small Sassy Shad and live bait; catfish are excellent to 40 pounds on cut bait.

**WRIGHT PATMAN:** Water a little murky on the south end, clear on the north, 52 degrees, 2 feet above seasonal normal and falling; black bass are slow to fair to 4 1/2 pounds on pig and pig combinations and minnows; crappie are slow to 1 1/4 pounds on minnows; catfish are fair to 9 pounds on trotlines baited with live shad, cut bait and chicken livers, some caught on rod and reel baited with nightcrawlers.

#### SOUTHEAST

**CONROE:** Water fairly clear in main lake, some color in the upper end, 56 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to 7.3 pounds on black and blue worms in 6 feet or less of water; white bass are slowing down but are moving; crappie are good under 1097 bridge, a few caught around boat sheds; channel catfish are fairly good from the bank; yellow catfish are good to near 60 pounds on trotlines baited with live bream.

**HOUSTON COUNTY:** Water slightly off color, 58 degrees, 9 feet above normal level; black bass are good to 9 1/2 pounds on water dogs, several 5s, 6s and 7s on waterdogs, spinners and worms; white bass are good to 15 inches below the dam on minnows; crappie are fairly good to 25 fish per strings in 8-12 feet of water on minnows; catfish are slow.

**LIVINGSTON:** Water a little off color, 58 degrees, 6 inches high; black bass are fairly good in the 4-8 pound range from the drop offs and in the creek beds on white and yellow spinners and black lizards; striped and white bass are still up river; crappie are slow; catfish are slow.

**RAYBURN:** Water clear, 55-60 degrees, 6 inches low; black bass are fairly good to 7 1/2 pounds on firecracker worms, gold and black Rogues and Carolina Rigged Crawworms and Lizards; crappie are slow; catfish are slow.

**TOLEDO BEND:** Water clear, 55 degrees, 2 feet low; black bass are fair to 6 1/2 pounds on spinners, Rattle Traps, jigs and Crawworms; striped are fair to 10 pounds on jigs and live bait near the generators; crappie are slow to 1 1/2 pounds on shiners; white bass are slow; catfish are slow to 5 pounds on cut bait.

#### SOUTH

**AMISTAD:** Water clear, 55 degrees, 2 feet above normal level; black bass are fairly good in the smaller range on worms; striped are slow; crappie are slow; white bass are fairly good up the Pecos and Devils Rivers on slabs at night; catfish are fairly good in the 3-4 pound range in 60 to 120 feet of water on cheese stinkbait.

**BRAHNTG:** Water murky, 60 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 8 pounds, 6 ounces on cranks; hybrid striped are good to 3 pounds on chicken livers and Rattle Traps; channel catfish are good in the 2-3 pound range on worms and chicken livers; blue catfish are slow to 14 pounds on cut bait; redfish are good to 15 pounds with some caught from the bank on nightcrawlers, shrimp and crawfish.

**CALAVERAS:** Water murky, 60 degrees, normal level; black bass are good through 5 1/2 pounds on artificials; striped are slow; channel catfish are good in number in the 1 pound range on shad, minnows and chicken livers; yellow catfish are slow; redfish are slow to 8 pounds on shad and artificials; corvina are slow.

**CHOKO:** Water clear, 58 degrees, normal level; black bass are good through 11 1/4 pounds on chartreuse spinners, cranks, plastic worms, topwaters, slug-Gos and Thinfin in shallow water mostly around weed beds, early and afternoon fishing seem to be best; striped are slow; crappie are fair around 99 bridge on live minnows in 3-8 feet of water around river channels in heavy cover; white bass are good in the back of San Miguel Creek near Tilden, action plentiful around 99 bridge, best baits are live minnows or white grubs; catfish are slow.

**COLETO CREEK:** Water murky, 57 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair in the 14 inch range on a variety of baits; striped are excellent with some limits on spoons; crappie are slow; catfish are good to 14 inches and above in good numbers on trotlines baited with minnows.

**CORPUS CHRISTI:** Water clear mid lake to the dam, murky in the upper reaches, 59 degrees, 2 1/2 feet low; black bass were improving to 5 1/2 pounds before the front arrived Monday, fish were hitting black lizards and white spinners in 3-5 feet of water; striped are slow; crappie are improving with strings to 13 fish in the coves in 2 feet of water with minnows; white bass are good up the river around Haileys Hollow on white Roadrunners and smaller cranks; blue catfish are good to 4 pounds on trotlines baited with shad and soap, good numbers of 2 1/2-3 pound blue and channel catfish biting shrimp, shad and minnows along the shore.

**FALCON:** Water clear, 64 degrees, 2 feet low; black bass are excellent to 11 1/2 pounds on blue flaked Power Worms in shallow water; striped are slow; crappie are slow; white bass are excellent up the Rio Grande on fleafly and Blue Fox Spinners; catfish are excellent to 6 pounds on frozen shrimp.

**MEDINA:** Water clear, 2 1/2 feet low; black bass are slow; striped are slow; crappie are slow; white bass are fair, but no limits, on L'il Georges and Shysters, most fish are male; catfish are fair to 4 pounds on nightcrawlers and shrimp.

**TEXANA:** Water muddy, 59 degrees,

normal level; black bass, crappie and white bass are poor; blue catfish are fair on trotline in the 1-3 pound range; yellow catfish are fair to 28 pounds on live perch baited trotlines.

#### WEST

**GRANBURY:** Water murky, 54 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair in the 2 1/2-3 pound range on black worms and small cranks around the boat docks; striped are good at the warm water outlet on jigs and below the dam on 5-inch Swimming Minnows; crappie are fair to good around the brush in 20 feet of water on small minnows and jigs; white bass are fair up the river on minnows; catfish are good in heavy brush off river channel on Mr. Whiskers cheese bait in 35 to 50 feet of water.

**HUBBARD CREEK:** Water clear, normal level; black bass are slow; striped are slow; crappie are fairly good in 14 feet of water on minnows; white bass are slow; catfish are slow.

**KEMP:** Water muddy, 42 degrees, normal level; black bass are slow; striped are fair around Moonshine Creek drifting live bait and slabs; crappie are good around brush piles in 15 feet of water on live bait and jigs; white bass are fairly good in the shallows on the upper end on minnows and silver spoons; catfish are fair.

**MEREDITH:** Water clear, 37 degrees, normal level; snow was falling mid week, 15-20 knot winds, outside temperatures were 10 degrees; few fishermen out.

**O.H.IVIE:** Main lake clear, upper end murky, 48 degrees, 2 inches low; largemouth bass are good to excellent in number to 20 inches on big jigs, spinners and deep diving cranks in 10 to 25 feet of water on points and ridges; smallmouth bass are good to 16 1/2 inches on jigs and cranks in 15 to 25 feet of water; crappie are good to excellent to 2 pounds on jigs and minnows along brushy bluffs in 10 to 20 feet of water, many limits; white bass are fair to 2 pounds on jigs and cranks in open water; channel catfish are fair to 5 pounds in baited holes in 50 to 60 feet of water; yellow catfish are fair on trotlines using live bait; walleye are poor.

**POSSUM KINGDOM:** Water clear, 48 degrees, 5 feet low; black bass are fair to 9 pounds on deep running cranks, spinners and jigs; striped are fair in the 20 pound range on live bait and some trolling; crappie are holding under docks and baited brushy areas in 18-20 feet of water, some caught on minnows and tube jigs; white bass are fairly slow; catfish are fairly slow.

**PROCTOR:** Water murky, 43 degrees, normal level; black bass are slow to 2 pounds on lures and minnows; striped are beginning to hit in the 3-4 pound range on live bait; crappie are good to 2 1/2 pounds on live minnows and jigs in fairly shallow water around brush piles, around rocks and near spillway; white bass are slow; catfish are fairly good to 45 pounds; channel catfish are good in the 1 1/2 to 2 pound range on live perch baited trotlines.

**SPENCE:** Water clear, 53 degrees, 26 feet low; black bass are good to 3 pounds on dark worms; striped are good to 27 pounds trolling slabs and live bait; crappie are slow; white bass are good to 2 1/2 pounds on slabs; catfish are very good to 16 pounds on cut bait with trotlines in shallow water.

## COASTAL

NORTH SABINE LAKE: Fishing has been a little slow; one fisherman caught a grindle, a catfish and a redfish on one trip; a few redfish, drum and flounder also caught; fishing is slow in the marsh and in the canal; no live shrimp available, live mud minnows available.

GALVESTON: Scattered trout to 4 1/2 pounds caught in the bays; a few flounder, an occasional redfish also caught; good numbers of whiting caught along the beach front; big sheepshead to 5 pounds caught at the jetties; live bait shrimp plentiful. No great numbers of fishermen out.

FREEPORT: Good numbers of redfish caught in the bays on artificials; a few specks in the keeper range caught on live shrimp; off shore fishermen are catching good numbers of snapper fairly close inshore; live bait shrimp available at \$8-\$10 per quart.

PALACIOS: Lots of fresh water, winds are prohibiting fishing on the south shoreline of Matagorda Peninsula; fishing should be good when the winds lay; live bait camps will begin carrying live shrimp next week; few fishermen out midweek.

ROCKPORT: Some trout and redfish caught in Copano on shrimp and H&H Splittails; some catches made near the wells in Aransas Bay; some redfish caught in St. Charles Bay; some live bait shrimp available but not plentiful.

PORT ARANSAS: Offshore fishing has been good when boats can get out; seas have been rough this week.

CORPUS CHRISTI: Nueces Bay fishing has been slow because of winds; some drum and redfish caught behind the second high line on shrimp; a few specks caught along the causeway; live bait shrimp available at 15 cents each.

PORT MANSFIELD: Trout fishing fair on the west side 4 miles south of Port Mansfield; redfish have been fairly good in the same area all winter; north cut area has good numbers of black drum; live bait shrimp available but not plentiful. Best water is around Pontoon Slough.

SOUTH PADRE: Redfish have been good in the Three Island area with limits caught; good numbers of near limits to 4 pounds on live shrimp; brown tide is clearing somewhat; some trout caught on artificials in the clear area; some whiting and pompano caught in the surf. Good numbers of blue fish caught at the jetties; live bait shrimp plentiful at \$10; sandtrout are good during the day on the pier and specks are good at night; some drum caught during the day; several large drum caught in the ship channel.

PH 2/17/93