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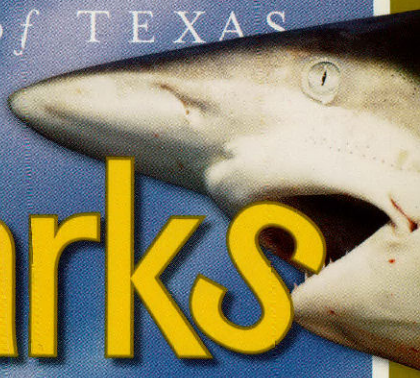
# TEXAS

PARKS & WILDLIFE

The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS

## Jacks & Sharks

FACE OFF  
WITH THE  
BRUTES OF  
THE BAY



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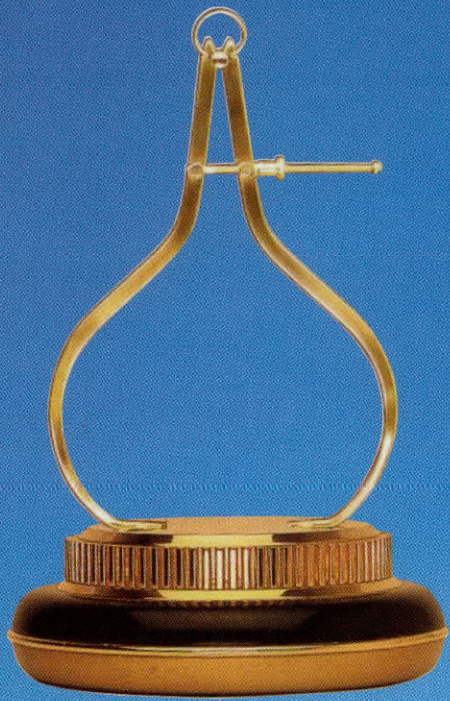
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# Features

## 30 History that Floats *By Tom Behrens*

Originally commissioned in 1914, the battle-hardened USS TEXAS rests peacefully now — but it still has many stories to tell.

## 34 Tackle Box or Treasure Chest? *By Scott Sommerlatte*

While some antique lures can be valuable, most collectors see them as cherished artifacts of a beloved sport.

## 42 Bass and the Moonlight *By Paul A. Cañada*

Working Lake Fork's night shift, guides divulge their dark secrets for locating lunkers.

## 48 Archery Trends *By Gibbs Milliken*

The latest equipment runs the gamut from elegantly redesigned recurves to mega-high-tech bows with triggers.

### COVER STORY

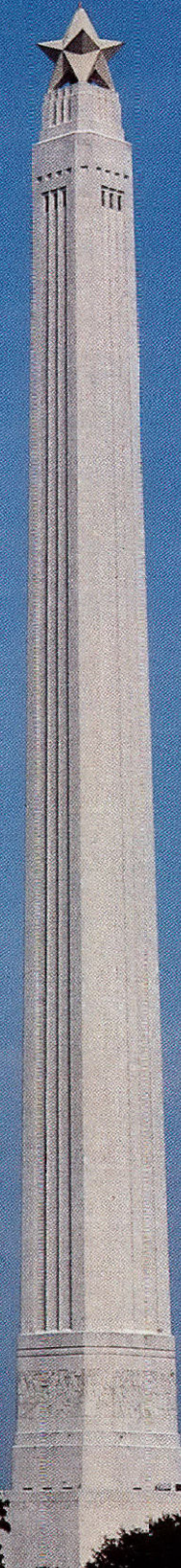
## 22 Brutes in the Bay

*By Scott Sommerlatte*

If you're looking for a fight, sharks and jack crevalle are guaranteed to make your blood boil.

# CONTENTS

J U N E 2 0 0 5



It's definitely time to get outside! For the latest information on Texas' parks and wildlife, visit the department's Web site:

<[www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)>

You'll find a link to the magazine's Web site (and special subscription offers) on the department's home page.

# Departments

**6** At Issue *By Robert L. Cook*

**8** Mail Call

Join the dialogue with *Texas Parks & Wildlife* readers.

**10** Scout

The latest conservation news and events.

**10** WHERE DID ALL THE BOX TURTLES GO?

*By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers*

Experts seek the public's help to determine the turtle's status.

**12** PICTURE THIS *By Earl Nottingham*

Our chief photographer shares a few tips on creating a catalog of your digital images.

**13** TEXAS READER *By Charles Lohrmann*

6666: Portrait of a Texas Ranch

**14** CAMERA "TRAPPING" OCELOTS

*By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers*

Automatic motion detectors help biologists get photos of rare cats and other elusive species.

**15** BAT-O-NOMICS

*By Sheryl Smith-Rodgers*

In a new study, scientists hope to quantify the economic impact of bats in helping Texas agriculture.

**16** SKILL BUILDER *By Larry Bozka*

How to avoid stingrays and jellyfish — and what to do if they penetrate your defenses.

**17** FIELD TEST *By Gibbs Milliken*

Some of the best saltwater lures rattle, pop, glow in the dark or just plain taste good to fish.

**18** Three Days in the Field

WHERE BIG OIL WAS BORN

*By Tom Behrens*

While most Texans know Beaumont mainly as the site of large petrochemical plants, if you snoop around a little, you'll find a whole lot more.

**52** Legend, Lore & Legacy

KING OF THE MOUNTAIN *By E. Dan Klepper*

Though rarely seen, the cougar looms large in the popular consciousness of all Texans.

**57** Sights & Sounds

Take a minute to find out why the TPWD television and radio programs are so popular all across Texas.

**58** Getaways

Your state parks offer exciting activities for June.

**64** Parting Shot *By Erich Schlegel*

## Covers

**FRONT:** The jack crevalle will give you a good fight on light tackle. Photo © Scott Sommerlatte; inset photo © DavidJSams.com.

**BACK:** By any of its many names, the mountain lion lives large in the outdoor lore of the Lone Star State. See the article on page 52. Photo © Grady Allen.

Previous page: San Jacinto Monument. Read about the nearby Battleship TEXAS on page 30. Photo © Glen Mills.

This page: When the sun goes down on Lake Fork, the big bass come out to prey. Photo © Paul A. Cañada.

# TEXAS

The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS

JUNE 2005, VOL. 63, NO. 6

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*Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine is edited to inform readers, and to stimulate their enjoyment of the Texas outdoors. It reflects the many viewpoints of contributing readers, writers, photographers and illustrators. Only articles written by agency employees will always represent policies of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

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# In the Field

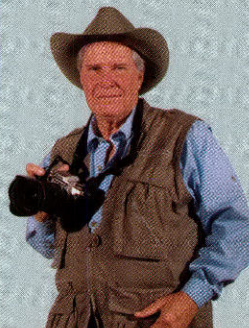
## SCOTT SOMMERLATTE, or Capt. Scott

Sommerlatte, as he's known on the Texas Coast, is a fly-fishing and light-tackle guide working out of the Port O'Connor and Seadrift area. From late spring through early autumn, Sommerlatte can be found on the poling platform of his flats skiff, searching for redfish and numerous other inshore species to keep his customers happy. The rest of his time is dedicated to photographing and writing about the outdoors. In this issue, he writes about both his full-time work (the cover story, "Brutes of the Bay" on page 22) and his part-time obsession ("Tackle Box or Treasure Chest" starting on page 34). His photographs and articles have appeared in numerous national and regional publications such as *Salt Water Sportsman*, *Shallow Water Angler*, *Tide*, *Texas Sporting Journal*, *Sport Fishing* and *Lone Star Outdoor News*.



## GIBBS MILLIKEN

has been an active bow hunter and field archer for more than 50 years, and in this month's issue, he writes about current trends in archery equipment. His enthusiasm for the outdoors carries over into his other life as professor of art and Latin American studies at the University of Texas at Austin, where his research projects and creative efforts frequently take him into remote wilderness areas of the Neotropics. Milliken's articles, paintings, drawings and photographs appear in numerous exhibitions, periodicals, and books published by Time-Life and by the University of Texas Press. He regularly contributes to *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine as product editor, field testing and reviewing the latest and most innovative outdoor gear for his monthly column, *Field Test*.



## SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS,

who makes her home in the Hill Country town of Blanco, is a full-time freelancer who has contributed regularly to *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine since 1990. Her first taste of journalism, at age 16, came with her writing for her high school newspaper in Corpus Christi. From then on, she was smitten. After earning a journalism degree from Trinity University, she worked as a reporter for several newspapers, then began freelancing after the birth of her son, Patrick, in 1987 (daughter Lindsey followed in 1991). Since then, she's been published in numerous state and national magazines. In the course of her work, she's been honored with a number of awards, and made time for two books. Smith-Rodgers is a self-educated spider naturalist, and is known around Blanco as the "Spider Lady."



# AT ISSUE

FROM THE PEN OF ROBERT L. COOK

**For the first time in years,** I went quail hunting several times this past season. It was super — lots of quail, great company and good times. This is somewhat remarkable, since some folks have been predicting the demise — and even the extinction — of quail for the past decade. Everybody has an excuse for why quail numbers are lower than they used to be. Predators, fire ants and feral hogs seem to be leading the list of assumed causes today. Well, folks, I am here to testify that the bobwhite quail is not extinct. The reason for their “decline” is because their habitat has declined in quality and quantity.

Although we hunted on some of the best quail country in North America, I must confess that neither my old friend who invited me hunting nor I are the best shot I’ve ever seen. In fact, we can barely hold our own against a covey rise of 12–18 wild bobwhite quail. It is a “rush,” as they say. Even with a good pointer dog locked on the birds, you just don’t know when they’re going to get up. When they do flush, it is like the earth comes up around you. Maybe you’re too close, maybe too far. Maybe there is a tree between you and the birds that come your way, or maybe they all go in front of the other shooter. A gentleman or lady does not shoot at the other hunter’s birds.

I also like the fact that my gracious host hunts slowly. I try to avoid hunters who hunt too fast, who rush to the point. I’ve always enjoyed hunting slow, and nowadays I’m even slower. I’ve learned to appreciate the experience more, to enjoy the dogs, to smile at my friends’ poor jokes and our frequent misses; maybe I get a shot, maybe I don’t; no matter.

There is one thing that my old friend does as well — or better — than anyone else, anywhere. He manages his land for wildlife, and in doing so, he produces better wildlife habitat for all species. He manages some of his country specifically to favor bobwhite quail. He knows what quail habitat looks like and he makes his country look like that. He thinks like a quail — not too much brush, just barely enough for escape cover; plenty of bunch grasses for nesting, but open enough for easy travel by these little critters and their thimble-sized offspring; jillions of insects; and lots of BB-sized seeds. If an artist wanted to paint a picture of “quail habitat,” he or she would use this fellow’s place as the model.

Another thing, hunting with this guy is like hunting with J. Edgar Hoover. He insists on recording all this information, this data, on quail and your hunt. “You must have the data to make decisions,” he states. “Do not depend on your memory.” We diligently recorded the number of coveys encountered during each hunt; how many birds were in each covey; how many birds were harvested from each covey; how many were mature birds or immature birds of the year, male or female; and what they have been eating. He was constantly asking questions and writing down information. I like that about him.

What are the three key ingredients for more quail, I ask? “Habitat, habitat and habitat,” he replies softly, “Very good deer habitat may only be fair quail habitat. If you want to maximize quail numbers, you must produce quail habitat, you must manage for quail, and ... no excuses,” he smiles.

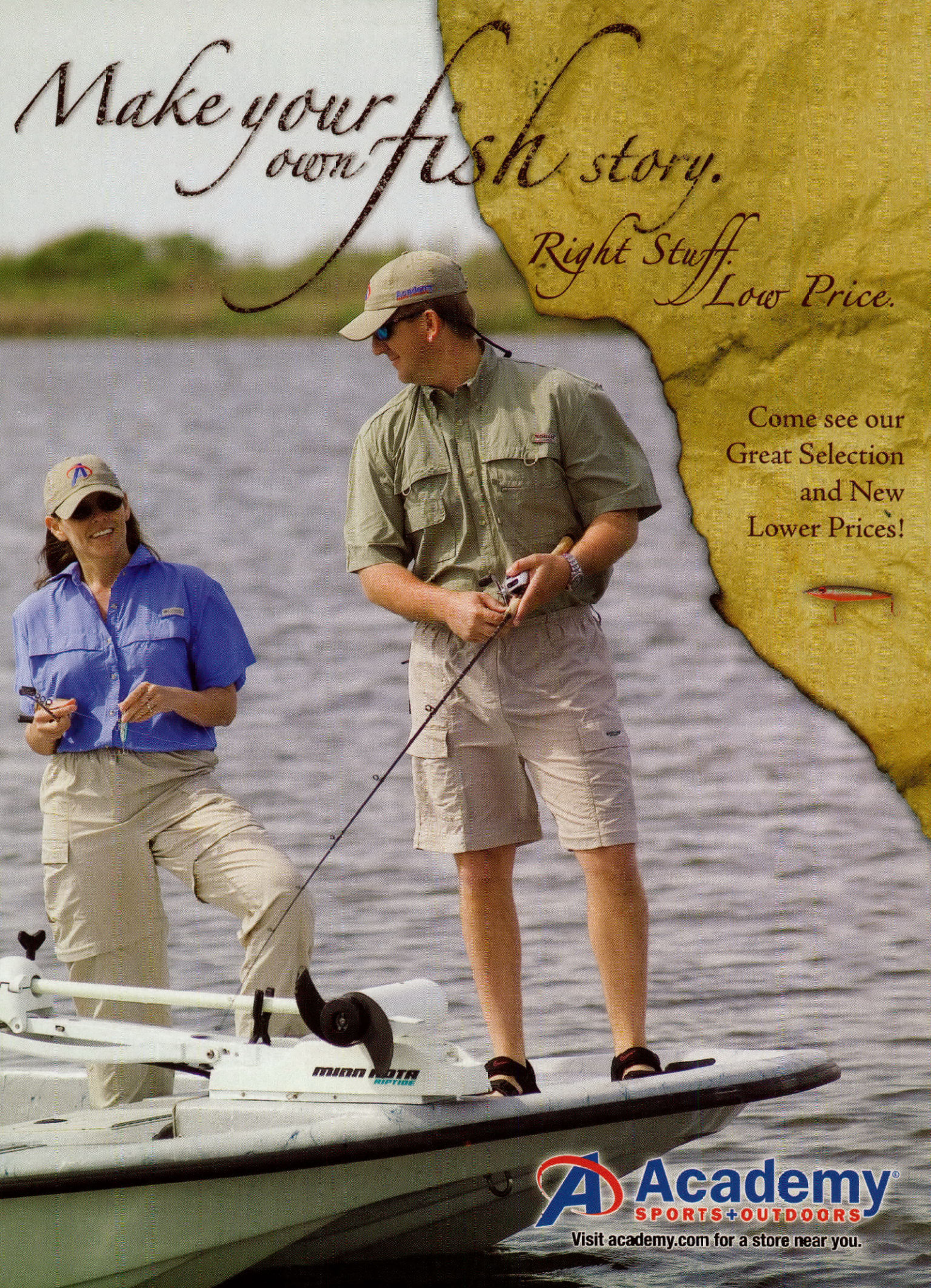
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# MAIL CALL

PICKS, PANS AND PROBES FROM OUR READERS

## FOREWORD

**Now that school is out for summer** and vacation season is in full swing, there is much to do outdoors before the summer heat goes from warm to white hot.

I have some family coming to visit from out of state and I know they will want to see the Battleship TEXAS (see related story on page 30). My 86-year-old father served in the Navy in WWII; I can picture him standing proudly on the deck of the warship, reminiscing about the good old days — and the bad ones, too. He told me only once about how he got the shrapnel scars on his back (a shell exploded next to him). One telling will last a lifetime.

As the summer heats up, I look forward to some night bass fishing (see *Bass and the Moonlight* on page 42). I always enjoy night fishing. My senses seem to tune into the surroundings more. Every splash and every fish is a new sensation. No matter the size of the catch, the fish seem to pull harder and fight better. And, you catch plenty of big fish after dark.

Now is also the time to start preparing for the fall hunts. Archers should be practicing and learning about all of the latest equipment. The new technology in archery gear is quite impressive (see story on page 48). When I was a serious hunter, especially bow hunting and waterfowl hunting, I joined a summer archery league and the local trap-shooting club to get ready. That was time well spent. I don't hunt as much anymore because it gets in the way of fishing, but there are times when the hunting itch gets stronger. One of these days I'll have to scratch it.

Finally, I would like to introduce the magazine's new photo editor, Eduardo "Andres" Carrasco. When the esteemed Bill Reaves retired at the end of January, we knew we would have to scramble for a couple of months while we searched for his successor. That meant Art Director Mark Mahorsky had to do double duty, a task he's handled admirably. We are all thrilled to have Andres on the team (and Mark is more than a little relieved). He was imported to Texas 10 months ago from Australia by his new bride, a Fort Worth native. He brings a strong background in the technical aspects of photography as well as a keen eye for artistic design. First-rate photography and design have always been key factors in the success of *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine. With Andres' expertise, we hope to honor that tradition even as we continue to evolve and explore exciting new possibilities. Let us know how we're doing.

*Randy Brudnicki*

RANDY BRUDNICKI  
PUBLISHER

## LETTERS

### TROOPS AT BALMORHEA

**I**n the picture in the lower left on page 28 of the April issue, I found something very interesting that is not mentioned in the article. In the background of the photograph, you can see a tent city of white tents with a few cars and a

lot of horses. This tent city, I believe, is a camp of the U.S. Cavalry that went on maneuvers on horseback from Fort Bliss in El Paso into the Big Bend area of West Texas in 1938. Possibly, they went as far as the town of Pecos. The picture says Howard, which is the name of the photographer who operated Howard's Studio in Pecos. I remember this information from stories my father, Zech Dameron Jr. who was living in Balmorhea at that time, used to tell.

ZECH DAMERON III  
Coppell



In the background of the photograph, you can see a tent city of white tents with a few cars and a lot of horses. This tent city, I believe, is a camp of the U.S. Cavalry that went on maneuvers on horseback from Fort Bliss in El Paso into the Big Bend area of West Texas.

Zech Dameron III  
Coppell

*TP & W EDITORS RESPOND: We called Brenda Contreras, the administrative assistant at Balmorhea. They have a larger print of a similar photograph made by Howard's Studio, of the 1st Cavalry Division, taken in January of 1940. At one time, the 1st Cav. had as many as 4,000 horses at Balmorhea.*

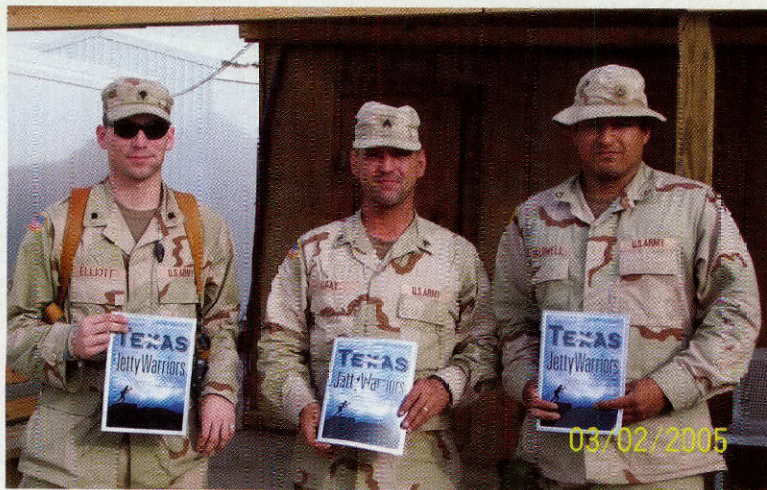
### BRAZOS REVERIE REVISITED

**I** was pleased to read your recent article about fly fishing along the Brazos River on the stretch below the Lake Whitney Dam. I have fished this river several times with Chris Shafer.

Missing from the story were the many natural splendors that draw me back whenever the opportunity arises.

While I am drawn to the Brazos

# MAIL CALL



We've been shipping boxes of TP&W magazine to Iraq, and have heard from many loyal readers. 2nd Lieutenant James B. Renft sent us this photograph of three Texans who enjoy the read. Left to right: SPC Elliot from Glen Rose, SGT Gray from Winters and PFC Calcwell from San Antonio. All are with E Company, 3rd Br, 35th Infantry Division.

because of the great fishing and excellent company, I can't get enough of the natural springs that feed the river, the waterfowl that stalk their prey at the water's edge, the occasional flock of wild turkeys that flies across the river or the chance observation of a water moccasin sunning itself on the same branch where my trophy fish is waiting for my fly. I return to the Brazos because of the serenity of quietly drifting down the river where few people are seen and where I can pretend that life is simple and all things are well in the world.

DAVID LEMKE  
Houston

## THE WARDEN FROM SCOTLAND

A number of years ago my friends in Tomball, Texas, sent a copy of the TP&W magazine as a yearly subscription birthday present. What can I say? This publication is very informative and has great articles. Should I ever have the

opportunity to return to Texas, I will visit as many of the wonderful sites that have been mentioned in the magazine as possible.

To all of the writers and staff of TP&W, thank you for an enjoyable experience, one that will stay with me for many years yet to come. The quality is unsurpassed along with the dedication of all who work at TPWD.

What is the criteria for becoming a warden within Texas? Sadly I am in Scotland and aged 53 years, but have a great affinity for the outdoors, have my poetry published within 28 anthologies in the U.S. and the U.K.

I'm keen to become a game warden if possible. Thank you for allowing myself and my grandson into your world of the Texan outdoors. Kind regards,

DAVE WILKIE  
Aberdeen, Scotland

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# SCOUT

NEWS AND VIEWS IN THE TEXAS OUTDOORS

## WHERE DID ALL THE BOX TURTLES GO?

*Experts seek help from the public to determine the turtle's status.*

**For generations, horned lizards thrived** in arid and semi-arid habitats across Texas. Then, in the 1970s, Texans noticed they didn't see as many as they once did. The resulting citizens' concerns led the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in 1997 to establish the Texas Horned Lizard Watch.

Now Texans are asking why box turtles aren't as prolific in the Lone Star State as they once were. Biologists are wondering, too.

"TPWD would like to know more about what's going on with these species," says Lee Ann Linam, a biologist with the department's Wildlife Diversity Branch. "They seem to parallel the horned

lizard — there's a perception that there's not as many box turtles as there used to be. But there's not a lot of research on them. So TPWD biologists and staff will be on the lookout for box turtles around the state."

Box turtles have a single hinge at the front of their lower shell, which allows them to fold up and close their shell entirely, hence, their common name of "box turtle." Two species are found in Texas. The eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina*) inhabits East Texas, while the ornate box turtle (*Terrapene ornata ornata*) ranges throughout most of the state. Ornate box turtles west of the Pecos River are commonly called desert box turtles (*Terrapene ornata luteola*).

Linam hopes that members of state herpetological societies will assist with gathering reports on turtle sightings. Data will be compiled and analyzed. "If box turtles appear to be scarcer than they used to be, then we may develop a citizens' watch program as well as other research," the biologist says.

Michael Smith with the Box Turtle Partnership of Texas staunchly advocates conservation of the species. "We're going to lose box turtles if we don't take steps now to save them," he says. "We need to learn a lot in a hurry or it will be too late to bring them back."

Highway mortality, habitat degradation, urban sprawl, collection from the wild and low reproduction rates may be contributing to the turtles' possible decline. Fred Gehlbach, a research professor of biology at Baylor University, has surveyed reptiles in a 170-acre region west of Waco for the past 40 years.

"The ornate box turtle together with eight other reptiles were totally wiped out by suburban sprawl that erased the rangeland after it was sold to developers," he reports. "The eastern box turtle population has been reduced by approximately 85 percent and is probably not reproducing. I haven't seen a juvenile eastern in 15 years!"

For more information, including forms to report box turtle sightings, visit <[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/box\\_turtles/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/box_turtles/)>. The Box Turtle Partnership of Texas also has an online form at <[www.gctts.org/BTPT](http://www.gctts.org/BTPT)>. ★

—Sheryl Smith-Rodgers

**Box turtles — both the eastern, below, and the ornate, inset — might soon enjoy the protection of a citizens' watch group if research proves that their numbers are dwindling in Texas.**



EASTERN BOX TURTLE: PHOTO © SCOTT SUMMELAY; INSET PHOTO © GRADY ALLEN

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Our chief photographer shares his insights.



## ORGANIZING YOUR DIGITAL IMAGES

**Face it.** Digital photography is here to stay. Its ability to provide immediate imagery, ease of transferring and outputting files and image quality rivaling or exceeding traditional film make it a valuable (and fun) tool in the fast-paced world of personal and business communications. Even a photo purist such as myself, with a devotion to the traditional darkroom and with D-76 in his veins, has embraced the new digital technology, comforted and absolved in the knowledge that even Ansel Adams, shortly before his death, said that he looked forward to using the electronic image.

Thankfully, most of the basics of photography still apply in the digital environment. Things like shutter speed, aperture focal length and ISO remain the same. In fact, many digital cameras look and feel just like their film-based counterparts. The biggest

Image management programs allow you to organize, edit and share your digital photos. Some provide nifty features like this photo collage created with the free Picasa2 program from Google.

difference comes after the photos have been taken and multitudes of digital files take up residence on your computer's hard drive. At that point you have reached the digital equivalent of stuffing all of your old family snapshots and slides into shoeboxes and envelopes, with the best intentions of someday organizing them into albums or indexed files.

To the rescue comes the digital photographer's best friend: the image management program. While there are many variations of this type of software (see suppliers below), most enable you to download, browse, rename, edit and organize your photos. In fact, your computer probably came preloaded with its own proprietary image viewing/management program. Most digital cameras come with some type of management software to install on your computer. Some programs are more

full-featured than others; the better ones allow you to add keywords and caption information to your images and perform searches based on those keywords and captions. For instance, if I want to find all images of my son, Adam, I just enter the search term "adam" and every digital image I have with him in it will instantly be displayed. Try doing that with a shoebox.

To make best use of any image management program, it helps to establish a consistent workflow when organizing digital files. Here are the basic steps:

**1.) Download images from the camera to a folder on the computer.** Some programs will automatically launch and download the images when a camera or memory card (via a card reader) is connected. Some download programs give you the option of renaming your files at this point. Renaming a file from a camera-generated naming convention such as "DSC022.jpg" to a more practical name such as "Vacation2005.jpg" makes for easier searching and organizing.

**2.) Cull.** Now is the time to delete any duplicate or unwanted images. Otherwise they will take up valuable disc space.

**3.) Edit.** Use the features included with most management programs to correct exposure, color, contrast or cropping. Do not size your image down! Keep this original at its maximum size for archiving. You can always down-size a copy for later use.

**4.) Archive.** Currently, burning to a CD or DVD is the most practical way to archive your images. For irreplaceable images, it's best to make two copies of your archive disk, keeping each at a separate location in case of fire, flood or other disaster.

Check out these providers of image management software. Costs and features vary. Most have free trial versions available for download. Picasa is free.

**ACDSee (Windows & Mac)**

<[www.acdsystems.com](http://www.acdsystems.com)>

**Breeze Browser (Windows)**

<[www.breezesys.com](http://www.breezesys.com)>

**iView Media (Windows & Mac)**

<[www.iview-multimedia.com](http://www.iview-multimedia.com)>

**Photo Mechanic (Windows & Mac)**

<[www.camerabits.com](http://www.camerabits.com)>

**Picasa2 (Windows)**

<[www.picasa.com](http://www.picasa.com)>

**Portfolio (Windows & Mac)**

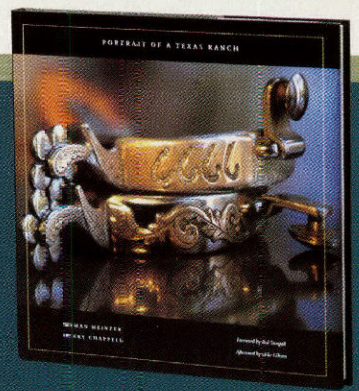
<[www.extensis.com](http://www.extensis.com)>

—Earl Nottingham

## TEXAS READER

6666 IS ETCHED DEEPLY IN TEXAS LORE, conjuring the steely-eyed gaze at the far horizon, the rawboned, high-rolling battle with the elements that is ranching and the salt-of-the-earth toughness required to make the business work. *Portrait of a Texas Ranch* (Texas Tech University Press, 160 pages, \$45, cloth) evokes this ranch's 19th-century legend—as well as the 21st century reality—in crafted text and stunning photographs. The book captures all of 6666 life, from the starting of the chuck wagon fire at 2 a.m. through branding, herding and even a glimpse of a jet on the ranch runway.

—C. J. L.



# SHOCK

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# Trapping Ocelots with a Camera

Automatic motion detectors help biologists get photos of rare cats and other elusive species.

**Darkness falls** at Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge near Brownsville, in South Texas. Through a clearing in the woods, an ocelot emerges, cautiously smells the air and then plops down on the ground, rolling and rubbing lazily on its back like a house cat.

Suddenly, a brilliant light flashes, illuminating the sleek, spotted feline and its brushy surroundings for a mere second. Just as quickly, the darkness returns. Oblivious, the ocelot rubs in the dirt a while longer, then jumps up and vanishes into the night.

A week or so later, Linda Laack, a wildlife biologist at the refuge, grins at a photograph of the ocelot, caught off guard that night, relaxing. Flipping through a stack of snapshots, Laack pauses to peer at another picture of an ocelot. This one is wide-eyed, slightly crouched, its head bent down, nose nearly to the ground.

The pictures are among thousands taken by remote 35 mm film cameras set up at select sites at the refuge and activated by infrared beams or motion sensors. Their mission: to "capture" the elusive ocelot, the region's endangered carnivore.

"It's a lot of fun, interesting and exciting," Laack says of the scientific method called camera trapping. "It's a great way to survey for specific animals, like ocelots. If we didn't have cameras for surveying areas, then we'd have to use live traps, which are more expensive and time consuming. Cameras are less invasive to the animal."

Occasionally, though, animals must be caught. "There's still a place for trapping and attaching radio-collars in our work if we need to learn more specific



Camera traps, above, make it easier to gather some data. Conventional traps, left, are still necessary for radio tagging.

information about behavior, habitat use or movement patterns," Laack explains. "That type of information can't be gathered by cameras alone."

This year, an intensive camera-trapping study will attempt to determine exactly how many ocelots inhabit the 65,096-acre refuge. "There are about 50 to 100 ocelots left in South Texas," Laack says. "We estimate that there are 30 to 40 in and around Laguna Atascosa."

Using cameras to "trap" animals has been around for more than a century. George Shiras III developed and used trip-wire photography of animals at night for the first time in 1899. His stunning photos were published in *National Geographic* in 1906. In the 1920s, rudimentary camera traps documented the presence of tigers on Barro Colorado Island north of the Panama Canal.

Generally, biologists use camera traps — such as models marketed by TrailMaster and CamTrakker — to inventory species at specific locations as well as determine species density, animal activity and behavior. By comparing spot patterns and other distinguishing marks, scientists can identify individual animals.

Camera traps aren't perfect. Waving grass or birds flying by can trigger a camera. Batteries wear down, flash units break down, film rolls run out. Animals can even wreak havoc with equipment. Especially raccoons.

"They love to play with the cameras," Laack says. "We'll get a picture of a raccoon far away then one of it closer up, then a picture of its face. Then the camera gets knocked over." ★

—Sheryl Smith-Rodgers

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## Rekindle Your Sense of Wonder Visit the Texas Hill Country River Region

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Photo by John & Gloria Treven

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# Bat-o-nomics

*In a new study, scientists hope to quantify the value of bats in Texas.*



**It's dusk** in the Hill Country, and a bat flits out of Bracken Cave in northwestern Comal County. Another follows, then a few more. Soon, a cloud of Brazilian free-tailed bats spirals from the cave and disappears into the darkening sky.

"It's one of the great wonders of the world," says Dr. Thomas Kunz, the director of Boston University's Center for Ecology and Conservation Biology.

"Watching bats emerge is like watching flames of a fire — it's mesmerizing."

An estimated 100 million Brazilian free-tailed bats (*Tadarida brasiliensis*) roost in caves, under bridges and within buildings across Central Texas. During their nightly forays, they consume enormous amounts of insects, including pests that wreak havoc on area crops. Researchers like Kunz want to know more precisely their significance to agroecosystems in Texas.

A five-year, \$2.4 million project — funded by the National Science Foundation — is underway to assess the bats' ecological and economic value.

Kunz leads a team that includes mathematicians, meteorologists, climatologists, economists and entomologists from the University of Tennessee, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and TPWD.

A major goal will be to count the bats. Using infrared thermal video cameras and a specialized computer program, researchers take images of bats at night as they leave 12 selected caves and several key bridges. "They fly out at 600 — 1,000 bats per second," Kunz says. "No one could stand there and count them one at a time."

Having a more accurate handle on bat numbers will better equip scientists to estimate how much they're eating on the fly at night. Plus, DNA tests on bat feces will reveal exactly what they're devouring — likely thousands of destructive corn earworm moths that migrate north from Mexico in June.

According to Kunz, biologists already know that a nursing mother bat weighing 12 grams can consume up to two-thirds her body weight in insects every night. A million nursing bats eat up to 21.5 tons night-



↑ The Brazilian free-tailed bat, more commonly called the Mexican free-tailed bat.

ly, so the bats' appetite translates to less need for pesticides to treat corn and cotton. "Which reduces costs for farmers," Kunz adds, "and also costs beyond purchase because pesticides tend to accumulate in the environment."

Part of the research project includes developing educational materials that will teach people how bats benefit the environment. "Historically bats have been portrayed as evil," Kunz says. "They're considered to be bad because they come out at night and are shrouded in myth and superstition. It's just a matter of putting bats in perspective. They do have many valuable traits."

Patricia Morton, program leader for conservation outreach in TPWD's Wildlife Division, will produce two videos and a bilingual children's book on the importance of bats to agriculture.

"We share the species with Mexico, so it makes sense to produce materials in English and Spanish," Morton explains. "If the bats are not protected in Mexico, where they overwinter, then they won't be as effective in consuming agricultural pests here in the U.S."

"In Mexico, the bats roost in such large numbers in caves that if someone started a fire, they could kill a huge number of bats," Morton says. "Bats roosting in large numbers are always vulnerable to human disturbance," Morton adds. "Education on both sides of the border is essential to maintaining healthy populations of these highly beneficial animals." ★

— Sheryl Smith-Rodgers

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# Noxious Goo and a Stinger, Too

*How to avoid jellyfish and stingrays — and what to do if they penetrate your defenses.*

**When I tell nonanglers** that I'm an avid wade fisherman, they usually predict that I will someday, inevitably, be attacked by a shark or ambushed by an alligator.

I assure them that the odds of either are far less likely than those of my graphite trout rod getting struck by lightning.

No, what I'm worried about, most every time I hop over the transom of my boat, are — and not in this order — jellyfish and stingrays.

Jellyfish tendrils etch meandering, watermelon-red welts onto exposed skin, but that's about it (unless, of course, you're allergic, in which case an agitated honeybee can do you in just as quickly).

Stingrays?

They're another matter.

The southern stingray will not kill you. But it will, according to the guys I know who have "been hit," at least briefly make you wish you were dead.

If this frightens you, take heart. Fear is a valuable defense mechanism, and if you play good defense, odds are you will never feel the scorch of a jellyfish burn or the outright agony of a stingray barb as it lances your Achilles tendon.

When I began wade fishing in the mid-1970s, the only effective stingray deterrent was the "bay bottom shuffle."

Drag your feet, toes angled down, and shuffle. The bottom-hugging creatures almost always yield to a slowly shuffling wader.

Fortunately, nowadays, we also have the option of wearing the equivalent of bulletproof vests for our feet and calves. Though none are foolproof, ray-deflecting leggings and wading boots provide a remarkable and reassuring degree of protection.

I'd no sooner wade fish without my stingray boots than drive a destruction derby car without wearing a seatbelt.

Protective leggings sell for 50 to 60 bucks; calf-high boots go for double that. They're worth it. (For quality examples, check out Tulsa-based Crackshot Corporation's **Sting Ray Guardz** leggings, (800) 667-1753; or ForEverlast Hunting Products, Inc.'s line of **Ray-Guard** shields, reef boots and wading boots, manufactured in Hallettsville, Texas, (361) 798-1530 or <www.foreverlast.com>.)

The southern stingray (*Dasyatis americana*) spends most of its time peacefully at rest on the bottom, the

thin fringes of its light brown "wings" covered by silt. Like flounder, a bedded ray can be difficult if not impossible to see, especially in deeper, off-colored waters.

Bay specimens are rarely larger than a garbage can lid. Still, even a small ray brandishes a short but sharp barb that, when reflexively lifted like a scorpion's tail, can easily pierce leather boots.

After skin penetration or laceration, the sheath that surrounds the barb breaks and releases a potent toxin. Stingray victims experience a drop in blood pressure and increased pulse that can cause dizziness, and in some cases, shock, paralysis and even convulsions.

Mostly, it hurts like sin.

Hot water, gathered from a running outboard engine's pump stream into a foot-wide bucket, will reduce the pain once the injured foot is immersed. It will not, however, eliminate it.

Nothing will. After a stingray incident, a hasty trip to the nearest emergency room is inevitable.

Jellyfish burns are not nearly so severe and are much more easily avoided. Prevention is as simple as wearing long pants and long-sleeved shirts and carefully inspecting the waters around you for gelatinous underwater bells.

In the unfortunate event of contact, a quick application of unseasoned meat tenderizer can help counteract the toxins.

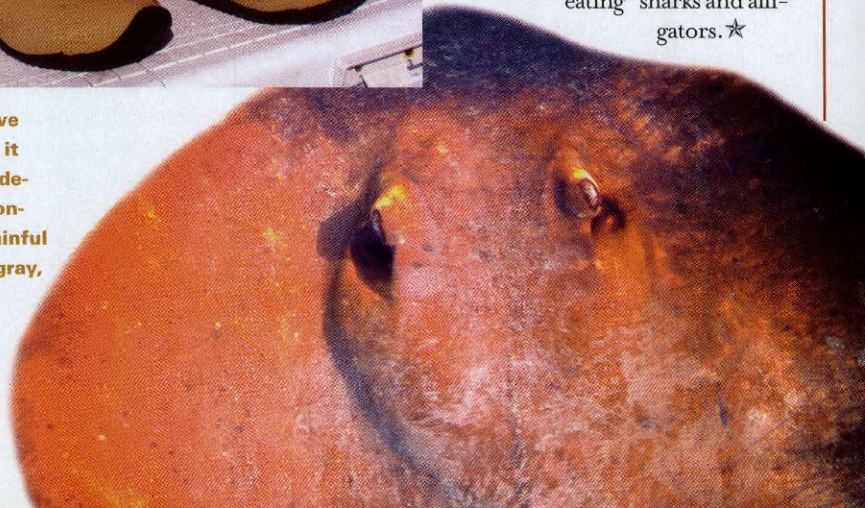
Cannonball-shaped cabbage-heads are abundant but harmless. Of concern to bay waders are moon jellies and sea nettles. In the surf, the deceptively pretty purplish bubble of the Portuguese man of war always signals trouble.

All of these creatures can trail surprisingly long tentacles that, as individual "nematocysts" with microscopic stingers, can irritate the skin even when broken free.

Keep yourself covered, from clothed arms and legs to ballistics cloth-armored calves and feet, and your next trip is no more likely to be interrupted by jellyfish and stingrays than it will be by "wader-eating" sharks and alligators. ★



**These protective leggings make it possible to wade-fish without concern for the painful jab of the stingray, pictured right.**



# Soft Lures for Saltwater

*The best artificial baits rattle, pop, glow in the dark or just taste good to fish.*

In Texas, innovations in soft fishing lures seem to come from independent makers experimenting with odd materials and shapes. It all started in 1949, when Nick Creme of Tyler, Texas, invented the soft plastic worm. Since then, few anglers fish without some variation of this technology.

One trendsetting soft lure designed specifically for saltwater is the now famous **B & L Corky**, a chunky 4-inch baitfish with over-size wild-looking eyes that drive trout and redfish crazy. Made in Houston, these fine baits have always been in limited supply. All genuine Corky lures are very well crafted, with rattles and internal steel cables connecting the treble hooks to the main eye. (\$5 Original Corky, B & L Mfg., (713) 946-9188, <www.corkybandl.com>)

The most advanced baitfish styles emit flashes of color from light-refracting holographic strips and flecks inside their translucent bodies. They're also impregnated with salt or scents that encourage striking fish to hold fast and run with the tasty bait. **Tidal Surge Split Tail** lures from Baytown, Texas, offer a diverse color selection of 4.5-inch durable stretchy plastics that can take a beating from multiple strikes and that contain a special "fishy" scent that is a proven attractor. (\$2, Split Tail, Tidal Surge Fishing Lures, (281) 420-7604, <www.tsflures.com>)

In larger lures, the 6-inch thumper-tail **Yum G-Shad** comes scented with their LPT simulated enzymes and sport bright-colored reflective bodies. Similar designs in the **Berkley Saltwater PowerBaits** are prerigged with internal weighted hooks, a distinct advantage when the fishing action really gets going. Their new **Swimmin' Poggy** looks, feels and smells like a baitfish and its 1-ounce low-balanced weight runs well in the strong currents off the piers, jetties and surf. (\$3.44, 3-pack, G-Shad, Yum Bait Co., (479) 782-8971, <www.yum3x.com>; \$3.95, 4-pack, 4-inch Swimmin Poggy, Berkley Pure Fishing, (800) 237-5539 <www.berkley-fishing.com>)

Soft plastics that are eyeless can be enhanced using large-eyed

**Holographic Head Jigs.** Predator fish are strongly attracted to baitfish displaying a frightened look along with a distressed movement. These heads in various sizes, weights and styles offer a distinct advantage when fishing in clear or slightly colored water. (\$3.99, 1/8 ounce 5-pack, Holographic Jig Heads, Bass Pro Shops, (800) 277-7776, <www.basspro.com>)

Realistic invertebrate designs like the **Creme Killer Diller Shrimp** are proving very effective in the bays. Another is their heavy **Saltwater Super Tube** with pulsing tentacles that, when properly rigged using a bleeding red treble-hook, resembles an injured squid trying to escape. (\$2.12, Shrimp, \$4.82, Super Tube, 8-pack, \$5.48. Creme Lure Co., (903) 561-0522, <www.cremelure.com>)

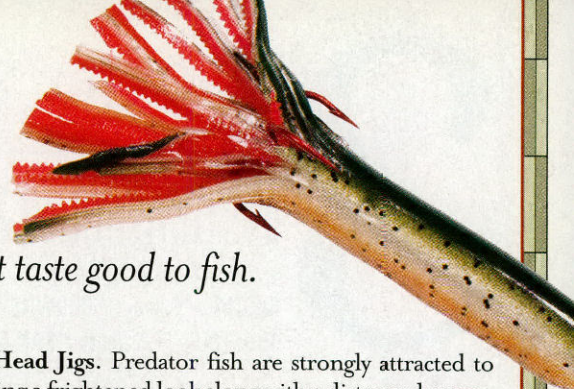
Even more naturalistic are the crab patterns by **ReaLures** that are almost identical to the living thing. They are prerigged to work the bottom, and the hook is imbedded in the soft carapace to reduce snagging. When slowly retrieved, the crab appears to walk or swim sideways with legs and claws moving in lifelike motions. (\$4.99, 2-inch Perfect Crab, ReaLures, (504) 279-0683)

Popular for night fishing are shrimp, crab and fish patterns that glow in the dark. They contain phosphorescent impregnations activated by simply holding a flashlight or other strong light source close to the lure for a few moments. These are particularly effective around lighted docks or piers by casting into the dark just beyond the floodlights, where larger fish often feed. One of the best of these is the fully rigged **Popping Shrimp** fished under a **Dinner Bell Cork** that simulates a natural fish feeding sound. (\$4.99, 3-inch Popping Shrimp, \$2.99, Dinner Bell Cork, ReaLures (504) 279-0683)

Anglers have so many choices, that it is often difficult to choose what bait and color will be most effective. If in doubt, just ask a coastal guide or bait shop which soft plastics are producing best for the season, location and water conditions. ★



Clockwise from top: B&L Corky; Tidal Surge Split Tail with holographic head jig; Yum G-Shad; Creme Killer Diller Shrimp; ReaLures Popping Shrimp; ReaLures Crab; Berkley Swimmin' Poggy; top of page: Creme Saltwater Super Tube.



PHOTOS © GIBBS MILLIKEN

# 3 Days in the Field / By Tom Behrens

**DESTINATION:** BEAUMONT

**TRAVEL TIME FROM:**

AUSTIN — 4 hours / BROWNSVILLE — 4.5 hours / DALLAS — 4.75 hours / EL PASO — 13.5 hours

HOUSTON — 1.5 hours / SAN ANTONIO — 4.75 hours / LUBBOCK — 9.75 hours

## Where Big Oil Was Born

While most Texans know Beaumont as home to large petrochemical plants, if you snoop around a little, you'll find a whole lot more.

**When I used to regularly drive** Interstate 10 heading east toward Louisiana, I often thought as I came into Beaumont that the city seemed to rise up out of nowhere; no gradual buildup of highway businesses till you hit town — but all of a sudden, there it was. You go from vistas of rice fields on both sides of I-10 to an overhead highway sign announcing the exit for Washington Avenue and U.S. Highway 69.

If you look at a Texas map, you notice that Beaumont is the first major city going east on I-10 after leaving Houston. It's 25 miles from the Louisiana border and has a population of 113,866 — still a small city — but as I was to find out, it has all

the amenities of a larger metropolis. Longtime residents of the city like its smallness. One local commented, "A traffic jam is being stopped by two red lights."

The Neches River, flowing north to south, cuts through the city on the east side. I had forgotten, but was quickly reminded by the sight of camouflaged tanks and other military vehicles, that the Port of Beaumont is the primary port and headquarters for shipping military cargo to places like Iraq. Beaumont is a city complete with museums; an entertainment district — Crockett Street; a major university — Lamar University; great places to eat — especially if you love Cajun seafood and lots of history. There are also ample opportunities to wet a line or just enjoy the great outdoors.

The outdoor activities available in the area include hiking in the Big Thicket National Preserve, canoeing or kayaking on Village Creek, freshwater fishing in the Neches and Sabine rivers or saltwater fishing in Sabine Lake.

For this trip, the MCM Elegante Hotel would be my base camp. On the first day, after coffee and pastries at Rao's Bakery, I decided to start off with a little history lesson by visiting Spindletop.

When oil was discovered at Spindletop, it marked the birth of the modern petroleum industry — and a bold new direction for Beaumont. Before oil, the area's economy was based mostly on agriculture and logging.

The person who began the quest for oil from Spindletop was Patillo Higgins. Higgins' life would make a great book or movie. He was a third-grade

dropout who, as a teenager, was wounded in a gunfight with the deputy sheriff but later found religion and became a Sunday school teacher. By the way, the deputy lost his life in the gun battle. But because the deputy was a Yankee and shot first, Higgins was simply told to get out of town for a while. Higgins lost his left arm in the fight, so maybe they figured that was punishment enough. He also worked tirelessly to get the oil out of the ground at Spindletop.

In the retelling of the Spindletop story, certain names come up again and again, including Lucas, Guffey, Galey and Bingham. Higgins named the drilling company and the area around Spindletop after Gladys Bingham, a young girl who attended his Sunday school class, and gave her a 2 percent interest in the company (which made her extremely rich). The Lucas Gusher, named after Austrian-born mining engineer Anthony F. Lucas, erupted

Visit Spindletop to experience a reenactment of the awesome power of a true "gusher" like the one that erupted in 1901, marking the beginning of the modern oil business.

PHOTO © TOM BEHRENS

GRAB LIFE BY THE HORNS



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BUCKLE UP



on January 10, 1901, spewing oil 100 feet above the top of the 90-foot derrick. Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Company and Gladys City were developed to handle the needs of the burgeoning oil business and the growing population in the area around Spindletop.

At its peak, Spindletop spewed forth at the unbelievable rate of 80,000 to 100,000 barrels a day. At the time a normal well pumped 500 barrels a day. Around the turn of the century, Beaumont's population was 8,500. Within 30 days of the discovery of oil, the population exploded to 20,000.

Our next stop after lunch was the central museum area, in downtown. Visitors can park their cars and be within walking distance of the various museums and restaurants. The Texas Energy Museum tells the story of oil through colorful, state-of-the-art exhibits. Remember Higgins? A robotic image of him is there, minus an arm, talking about his exploits. A new exhibit, scheduled to open in the fall, will take visitors on a virtual trip that covers the entire life cycle of oil, from the ground to the gas tank.

Next, we took a short walk to check out the Art Museum of Southeast Texas.

"We have four art museums, which I think is pretty neat for a town of our size," says Kathi Weathington Hughes, director of tourism for the Beaumont Convention and Visitors Bureau. "The Art Museum of Southeast Texas is a revolving collection. The Art Studio is where local artists have their studios. They also have an art gallery. The Brown and Scurlock Gallery features art from around Southeast Texas. The Dishman Art Gallery is out at our university. They bring in exhibitions from outside the area. Also, they host a number of graduate exhibits." Other museums located in downtown Beaumont include the



Edison Museum and the Fire Museum of Texas.

A couple of blocks from the Texas Energy Museum is the McFaddin-Ward home. In 1983 the Mamie McFaddin-Ward Heritage Foundation began restoring the home. In 1988 work began on its carriage shop, which includes servant quarters, stable, garage and a gymnasium. This 8,100-square-foot structure was started in 1905. Located on the block behind the McFaddin-Ward house, it opened to the public in 1992, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The adjacent rose garden has more than 100 varieties. Other areas around the house are planted with more than 400 azaleas, which bring riotous color to the grounds each spring.

Saturday was my favorite day, the back-to-nature part of the trip. We headed north on U.S. Highway 69 to Kountz and the Big Thicket National Preserve. Visitors can select from nine trails ranging from 5 miles to 18 miles in length. I only had a chance to hike about a quarter of a mile on the Turkey Creek trail before we had to return for lunch and the swamp tour, but it's on my "to do" list. I've got to come back to hear the warbler that, locals say, often serenades hikers.

"Between markers 23 and 24 on the trail in the Turkey Creek Unit, there is a bench to rest on," says Judy Alen, preserve volunteer. "If you sit on that bench and be

Clockwise from above far left: Texas Energy Museum; McFaddin-Ward house; interpretive display in the Big Thicket Visitor Center; the swamp tour; Big Thicket National Preserve Visitor Center.

quiet for a minute or so, a Swainson's warbler, which lives here year round will fly into the trees right over your head and enter-

tain you. Some gal went down there last spring and she came back up here and came running in and said she wanted to know if we trained that bird to sing like that. I replied, "No, it's just part of the magic of the Big Thicket."

Our afternoon was spent in a boat on a guided swamp tour, with our captain, Eli Tate, regaling us with tales of cannibalistic Indians, soaring eagles and jumping alligators. Nutria, small beaver-like critters, put on a show for us, but the alligators were missing in action. The day was too cool for them to be out sunning themselves.

I can't end this report on my stay in Beaumont without a comment on the food — everything from authentic Mexican to Cajun (spicy boudin, etouffe and boiled crawfish) to steaks to barbecue and quite often a mix of them all. I heartily enjoyed a five-course meal at Bryan's 797, along with a tour of their well-stocked wine cellar. At the boisterous Larry's French Market & Cajun Restaurant in Groves, choices along the cafeteria line included two or three different types of etouffe and gumbo, alligator and fried fish. They're right — alligator does taste like chicken. Visit on the weekend and dance away to a zydeco band playing music for young and old alike.

Beaumont today is the region's largest city, a cultural crossroads rich in history, art and culture, but still small enough to give that extra personal attention. The Cajuns call it *lagniappe*, meaning a little something extra. ★

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# BRUTAL IN THE BAY



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IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A FIGHT, SHARKS AND JACK CREVALLE

ARE GUARANTEED TO **MAKE YOUR BLOOD BOIL.**



BY SCOTT SOMMERLATTE





BOTH PHOTOS ON THIS SPREAD © SCOTT SOMMERLATTE

**IN LATE SPRING**, WHEN LIGHT SOUTHEAST WINDS

START TO BRING THE CLEAR AND TEMPERATE WATER OF

THE GULF CLOSER TO TEXAS BEACHES, IT BRINGS WITH IT

**LARGE SCHOOLS OF JACKS AND SHARKS**. THEIR

DESTINATION, ULTIMATELY, IS **TEXAS BAYS**. WHILE MOST

ANGLERS REGARD JACKS AND SHARKS AS NOTHING MORE

THAN NUISANCES THAT STAND IN THE WAY OF A

STRINGER FULL OF TROUT AND REDFISH, MANY ANGLERS

REGARD THEM AS **TRUE SPORT FISH** AND HAVE TURNED

TO THE PURSUIT OF THESE **TACKLE-BUSTING BRUTES**.

FACING PAGE: "Sams somehow made an awkward and miraculous hook-set by raising the rod high above his head."

BELOW: Photographer David Sams, right, and Marcos Enriques celebrate landing the big jack. "This is so ... cool!"

About 10 years ago, when I started guiding full time, stalking redfish and large trout with a fly rod in mere inches of water was my passion and the only way I cared to fish, so I marketed to the people who shared my passion. Then, one day, a couple of years into my career, it happened. A change of heart, that is.

I had just released a nice slot-sized redfish for a client, his fifth or sixth for the day, when I heard him ask, "What are the chances of finding something bigger?"

Surprised that anyone would want to leave what was turning into a superb day of sight-casting and remembering the first rule of guiding — do not leave fish to find fish — I thought for a moment and reluctantly revealed that I had heard of some bull reds working the base of the jetties on the outgoing tide. I quickly added that I was unsure how successful we would be throwing flies at them in the deeper water. He assured me that he was pleased with the day already and wanted to try something different. I obliged.

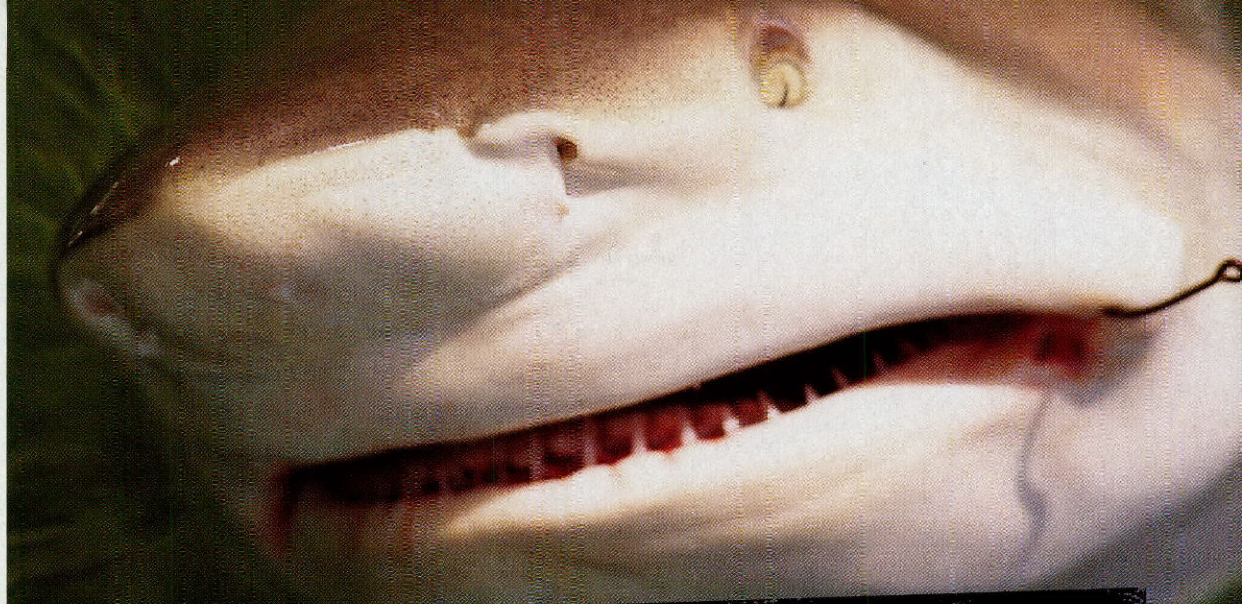
After an hour or so of blind-casting weighted streamers along the rocks, his line came tight and a brutal struggle began. Some time later I lifted a 20-pound jack from the water. Shaking with excitement, he quickly fetched a camera from his bag

A COUPLE OF SUMMERS AGO, I CALLED UP SAMS AND MARCOS ENRIQUES OF THE ORVIS CO. AND CONVINCED THEM BOTH TO MAKE THE LONG DRIVE DOWN TO PORT O'CONNOR FOR SOME FUN FISHING.





PHOTO © SFC / SOMMERLATE



REMEMBER, BECAUSE SHARKS USUALLY FEED BY SMELL, AND BY FEELING THE ERRATIC MOVEMENT OF INJURED FISH, THEY WILL BE CHALLENGING TO FEED A LURE TO. BUT IT CAN BE DONE.



and had me take about 50 pictures. It was the biggest fish he had ever caught, and he was jacked (literally and figuratively). As for me, I was trying to keep my cool, pretending it was all in a day's work, but silently thinking to myself—I could really get into this.

Over the next couple of years, I spent my free time exploring different ways to put my customers on jacks, both in the passes and in the bays. It had become an obsession, an obsession that led to another obsession.

I had heard some of the trout guides whining about all of the 20-to-30-pound jacks they were hooking over a popular mid-bay reef. I left the dock with a 5-gallon bucket of chum with the intention of bringing some of these big fish to the surface. Just about the

time I had a good slick going and my fly rod rigged with a big popper, I noticed a 5-foot shark swimming through my chum line. Not really thinking, I tossed the large popper out in front and gave it a chug. Much to my surprise, it got the shark's attention, and it started frantically looking for the offering, with no luck. On my next cast I put it on the shark's nose and the game was on.

Nowadays, at least in the summer and early fall, chasing jacks and sharks has become a given for me when I have time off. As for my customers, the ones that have experienced the pull of one of these brutes, well, they are ready for some more. A good example would be my friend David Sams.

Sams is mostly known for the spectacular

images he produces, but few know that he is also a great angler. Well, I can assure you he is — at least until you put 30 or 40 grey-hounding jacks in front of him.

A couple of summers ago, I called up Sams and Marcos Enriquez of the Orvis Co. and convinced them both to make the long drive down to Port O'Connor for some fun fishing. When we left the dock it was flat calm, and we all had tarpon on the brain, so I headed to the tarpon hole and pulled to the shoreline to get rigged and ready. Once everything was ready, Sams took the bow and I found my place on the poling platform. I slowly started the track to deeper water when I saw several large bulges of water coming down the shoreline from a couple hundred yards away. I announced that we either had a school of big reds or jacks heading our way. Sams quickly exchanged the 12-weight rod for the 10 and turned his attention to the wakes heading our way.

Before he had the chance to get enough flyline off the reel to make a cast, the knifing yellow tails of jack crevalle became

PHOTOS © DAVIDSAMS.COM



apparent above the glassy water, and they were closing fast and starting to feed.

"Jacks! Cast, cast, hurry up, what are you waiting for?" I yelled at Sams, who had turned rubber-legged as the school started to cross the bow at less than 50 feet, annihilating everything in their path.

The water exploded and frothed as mullet fled the voracity of the school while Sams did his best to wrap us all in the fly line as he flailed away in a clumsy attempt at what might be called fly casting.

By some miracle the popper landed close enough to the fish to be noticed. Sams started stripping the popper as fast as he could while every fish in the school tried to inhale it. Before long the whole school was erupting at the bow of the boat and one finally had the bug. Sams somehow made an awkward and miraculous hook-set by raising the rod high above his head.

I screamed from the poling platform as I imagined my fly rod exploding into pieces, but it was done. The fish had felt the hook and turned with blinding speed to join the others in the school and the reel was screaming. "This is so . . . cool!" Sams yelled with satisfaction.

in front of the school and present a large, noisy bait and move it as quickly as possible. This will produce a violent strike most of the time.

As for tackle, many jacks have been landed on traditional trout and redfish outfits; however, when released, the fish is usually overstressed and seldom survives. When you hook up a jack on light tackle, sometimes it's best to just crank down the drag and bust off the fish — otherwise the angler is looking at a burned-up reel with no line, a dead fish or even worse, all of the above.

When fishing for jacks, a medium-to-medium-heavy-action 6-foot spinning rod with a reel spooled up with 10- to 12-pound diameter (about 25- to 30-pound test) braided line with a 40-pound fluorocarbon leader is a good choice for making long casts to fast-moving schools. For those who prefer level-wind gear, it is best to use an outfit that can handle casting large topwaters with 17- to 20-pound test line. It should be light enough to cast easily but still have the backbone to whip a 25-pound fish quickly. The reel should be able to hold at least 200 yards of line.

For the fly-caster, 10- to 12-weight rigs with a floating fly-line and a 5- to 7-foot

feet, and it exhibits quite a few of the same habits. Fishing for them, especially in the shallows, can take on a new spin, literally. Also known as spinners, it is common for blacktips, when hooked, to launch from the water spinning in midair. For the angler, this action can create some exciting moments.

By far the easiest way to catch bulls and blacktips is to fish near the passes and jetties with heavier tackle and large-cut mullet on circle hooks. However, to fish them with lures, anglers must scale down to tackle capable of comfortably casting plugs. Level-wind reels on a medium-heavy rod with 17- to 20-pound line would be a good choice.

As for the true light-tackle enthusiast, it is hard to beat the sport provided by bonnethead sharks and Atlantic sharpnose sharks (aka sandsharks) in the surf and on the flats. These sharks seldom reach more than 3 feet and provide excellent sight-casting opportunities for anglers tossing jigs, small plugs and flies. Also look for these species behind shrimp boats culling their catch. Once you spot a fish, continue placing the bait right on its nose. The key is try to get the fish excited

**AS FOR THE TRUE LIGHT-TACKLE ENTHUSIAST, IT IS HARD TO BEAT THE SPORT PROVIDED BY BONNETHEAD SHARKS AND ATLANTIC SHARPNOSE SHARKS (AKA SAND SHARKS) IN THE SURF AND ON THE FLATS.**

After releasing the jack, the three of us sat on the boat pondering why the jack is not more respected. The truth is, the jack crevalle is often overlooked because it is of very little food value. As a result, the unappreciated, hard-fighting jack crevalle is seldom pursued by anglers in Texas.

Every April, schools of jacks start to move from the offshore waters of the Gulf, where they spawn, to the beaches, jetties and passes. A few larger fish, usually traveling in pairs, find their way into the bays, where they can sometimes be found tailing on the grass flats. For the light-tackle or fly fisherman, these fish can provide exciting sight-casting opportunities. As the water warms, the large schools of fish will begin to migrate into the larger bay systems, where wade-fisherman using topwaters for trout and redfish often encounter them.

For anglers up to the challenge of landing a jack, the real action does not heat up in the bays until late summer and early autumn. While large schools of jacks are always present, they are easiest to find this time of the year, when the bays slick off. Anglers in poling skiffs and bay boats rigged with trolling motors can pursue large schools of 20- to 30-pound jacks as they ravage schools of baitfish along shorelines and in the open bays. The key to success is to get out

-long, 20-pound leader with a 40-pound bite tippet get the job done. Most of the action is near the surface, so a fly box loaded with large poppers and bulky streamers will do.

Whether it is with a fly or lure, a fast retrieve is the key in duping jacks on artificials. But also remember, large jacks are not the only big fish in the bay that will eat a lure.

Just about every angler in Texas knows that all that is needed to catch a shark is a trip to the beach, a heavy rod and some cut mullet, but many do not realize that sharks can be duped by a well-presented artificial lure and even a fly.

The largest of the four species to frequent the near-shore waters and bays of Texas is the bull shark. While 6- to 8-footers are common on the shallow inshore flats, 4 to 5 feet is the norm. The best way to bring one in is to chum the flats near passes and deep bay reefs. When you sight a fish in the chum line, present a shallow diving plug as close to the shark's nose as possible. If it does not respond, reel in and cast again. Remember, because sharks usually feed by smell and by feeling the erratic movement of injured fish, they will be challenging to feed a lure to. But it can be done.

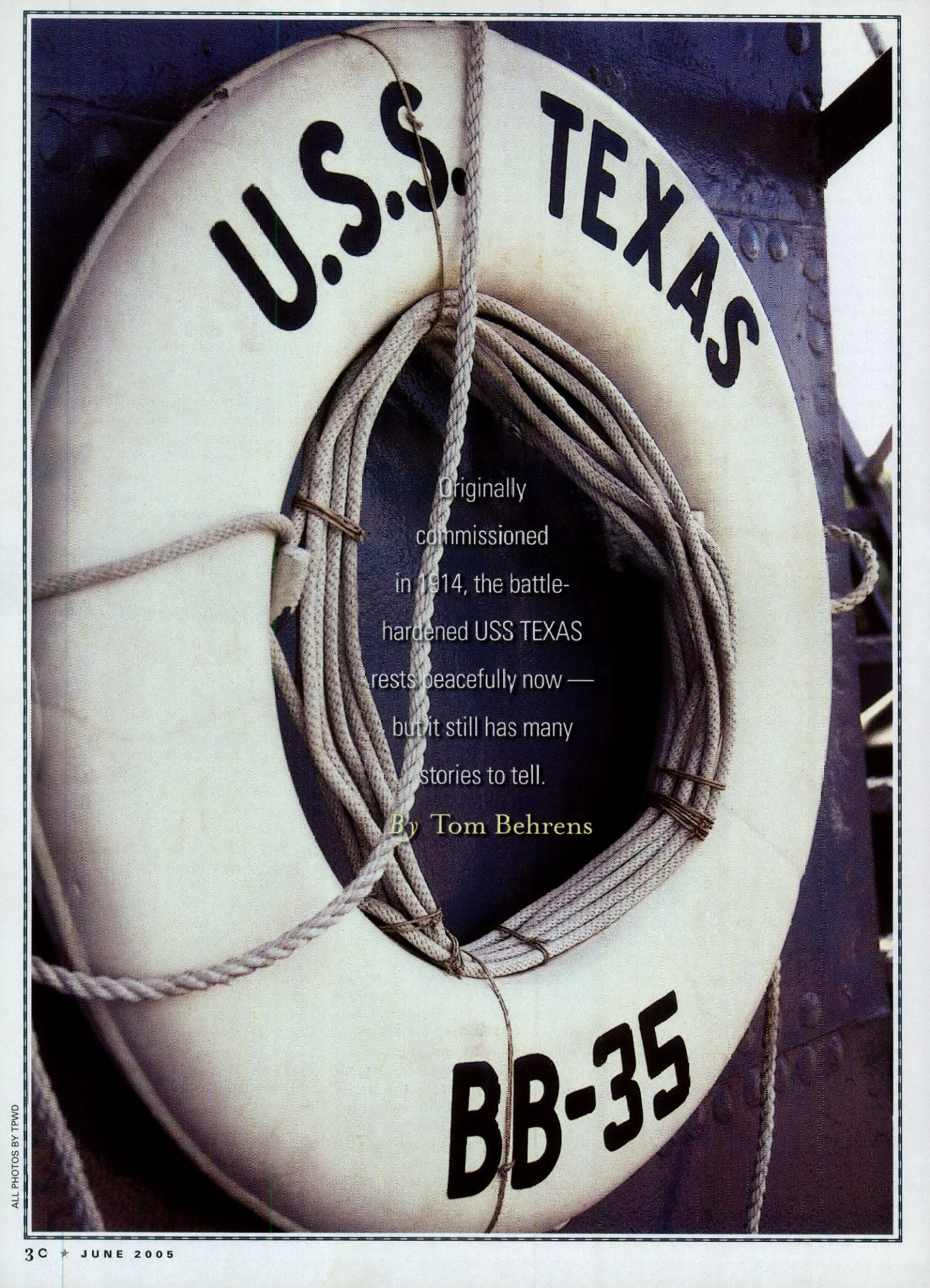
The blacktip is a very close relative to the bull, although considerably smaller at 3 to 5

enough to eat.

Medium action plugging and spinning gear rigged with 12- to 14-pound test will work fine for chasing these smaller species. When choosing a lure, slow sinking or suspending plugs and jigs in bright colors produce the best results. Fly anglers should arm themselves with a 10- to 12-weight outfit, depending on the size of the sharks, and bright colored streamers.

When in pursuit of sharks, remember that they have menacing teeth. This is a particularly important thing to remember when rigging and retrieving tackle. A small section of wire leader is a plus, especially when tying a \$5 plug to the line to feed to a shark. Failure to recognize this could get expensive after losing the fifth or sixth plug, but not nearly as expensive or painful as making a mistake when trying to retrieve one of those lures — a quality pair of fishing pliers and a long-handled hook-out type device are essential. A shark can attack an angler's hand just as viciously as the plug it was caught on.

For anglers who have not experienced the violent explosion or hard run of a shark or jack, I highly recommend giving it a try. It is not fishing for the table, it is better — it is big-game fishing in the bay. ☆

A close-up photograph of a white life preserver. The words "U.S.S. TEXAS" are printed in large, bold, black letters across the top. At the bottom, the hull number "BB-35" is also printed in large, bold, black letters. A thick, light-colored rope is coiled inside the life preserver. The background is a dark, metallic surface with rivets.

U.S.S. TEXAS

Originally  
commissioned  
in 1914, the battle-  
hardened USS TEXAS  
rests peacefully now —  
but it still has many  
stories to tell.

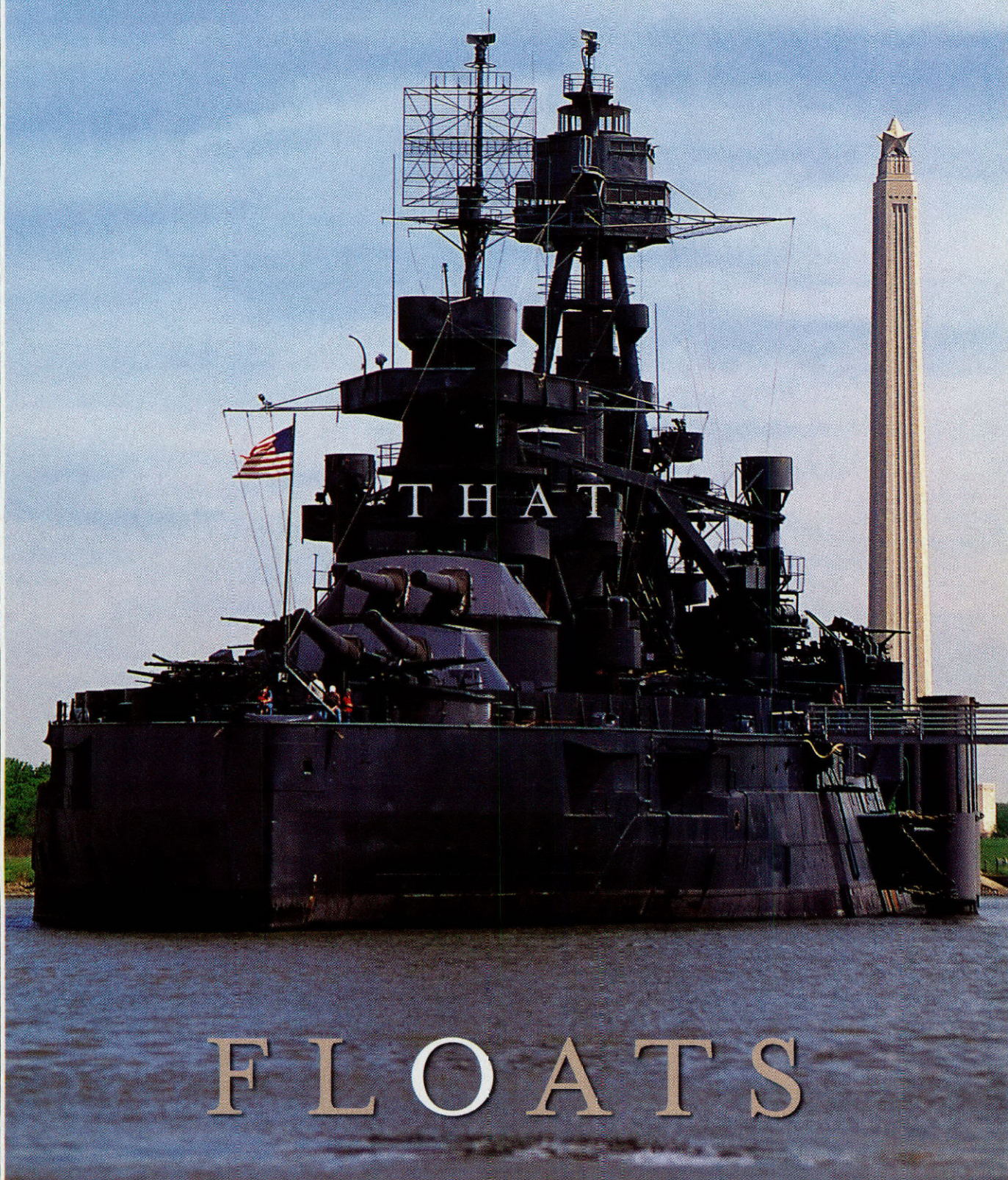
*By Tom Behrens*

BB-35

# HISTORY

THAT

# FLOATS



TPWD PHOTO BY EARL NOTTINGHAM



## ONCE THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON IN THE WORLD, THE BATTLESHIP TEXAS

REMAINS AN AWE-INSPIRING REPOSITORY OF U.S. AND TEXAS HISTORY.

"This ship is a microcosm of the United States from 1908, when it was designed, to 1948, when it came here," says Barry Ward, museum curator for the Battleship TEXAS. "Everything that happened, or was happening in our country in that first half century, is reflected by this ship. There were anywhere from 800 to 1,600 men living aboard this ship at any given time, and those men are a reflection of our culture, how they lived, where they were from, what they did and where they went after leaving this ship."

More obvious is the technological arc that can be traced through the ship. When the USS TEXAS was commissioned on March 12, 1914, it was the most formidable ship on the planet. To this day, visitors are awestruck by the ship's size. Now permanently anchored on Buffalo Bayou along the busy Houston Ship Channel, the ship is two football fields (573 feet) long, 16 stories high and has five levels, or decks.

The TEXAS has the last 14-inch guns in existence, and five gun turrets in total. Visitors can climb up inside a turret and see the breech mechanism, the shells the powder bags and observe how the gun was loaded.

"You are looking at a shell that weighs about as much as a Volkswagen Beetle," says Ward in describing the projectile that was launched from the 14-inch guns.

The maximum range of the gun, as it was configured in World War I, was about 14 miles, and it left a crater the size of a tennis court. A gun's range is determined by how far the barrel can be elevated. You can elevate this gun to only about 15 degrees.

By 1942, with the advent of spotter planes and radar, it was no longer safe for the ship to sail within 14 miles of an enemy position. Increasing the range of the guns would have required a modification to the construction of the turrets, which was not feasible at the time.

"One of the interesting things they did to enable them to shell Nazi positions off the coast of southern France, was to counter-flood the ship about two degrees — pumping fuel and water over to one side so it gave the ship a list," says Ward. "That gave them a couple extra miles so they could engage deeper inland targets."

In 1916, the TEXAS became the first U.S. battleship to mount anti-aircraft guns. At the end of World War II there were almost 100 guns of different sorts on board, including .20 and .40 mm anti-aircraft guns. The .20 mm was a short-range weapon; the .40 mm range stretched out to about 5,000 yards and was the first gun controlled with "directors" and "range-keepers," analog forerunners of today's computers.

"Battleships were not easily hit by aircraft fire," says Ward. "There were only two battleships in World War II hit by large caliber enemy shells, the TEXAS and the SOUTH DAKOTA. Only one seaman was killed and 12 injured during the war [on the USS TEXAS]. Kamikazes were a more likely threat, but battleships were not their favorite targets. They went after ships with fewer guns."

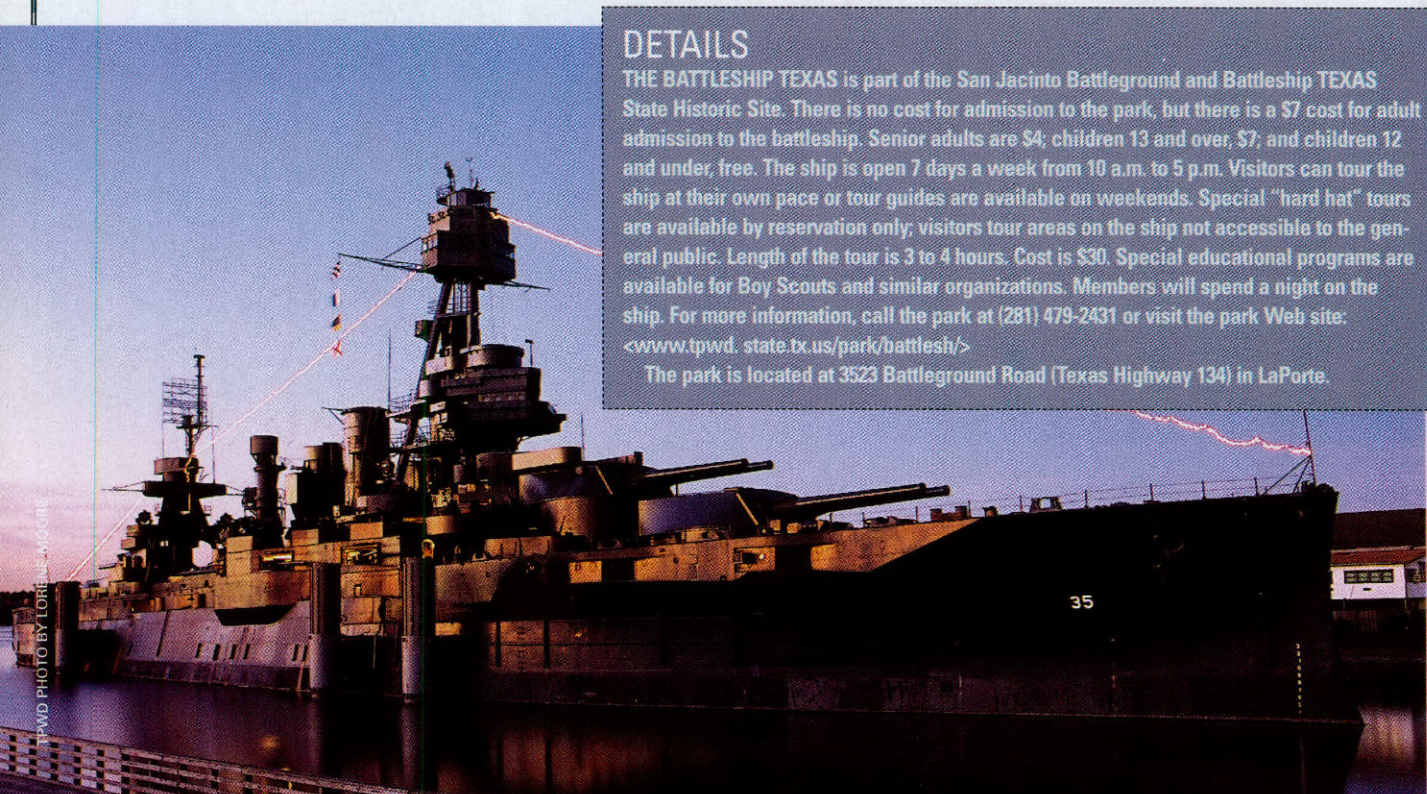
In 1919, the USS TEXAS became the first U.S. battleship to launch an aircraft. The mission of the aircraft was to act as a forward fire controller. "The interesting part of the launching of aircraft was not the launch, but retrieving the plane after the mission was over," says Ward.

"The plane lands in the water, they swing the crane out and lower what they call a sea sled, a canvas netting. The pilot motors the plane over on to the sea sled. When the plane is right over it, a signal is given from the ship and the pilot cuts power. The pontoon pitches downward and is snagged by the hook on the sea sled. Now the plane is being towed. The man in the back seat crawls out over the wing and the pilot reaches

### DETAILS

THE BATTLESHIP TEXAS is part of the San Jacinto Battleground and Battleship TEXAS State Historic Site. There is no cost for admission to the park, but there is a \$7 cost for adult admission to the battleship. Senior adults are \$4; children 13 and over, \$7; and children 12 and under, free. The ship is open 7 days a week from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors can tour the ship at their own pace or tour guides are available on weekends. Special "hard hat" tours are available by reservation only; visitors tour areas on the ship not accessible to the general public. Length of the tour is 3 to 4 hours. Cost is \$30. Special educational programs are available for Boy Scouts and similar organizations. Members will spend a night on the ship. For more information, call the park at (281) 479-2431 or visit the park Web site: [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/battleship/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/battleship/)

The park is located at 3523 Battleground Road (Texas Highway 134) in LaPorte.



TPWD PHOTO BY LORELEA DOCHERT

out and grabs hold of his legs. Then he [the man on the wing] grabs the second hook from the crane and hooks it to the plane. The plane is lifted up out of the water. There were a lot of guys alongside the ship with long padded poles to help keep the airplane from bumping or crashing into the side of the ship as it was brought on board. It was like watching a train wreck. You didn't want to see it, but if it did happen you wanted to see it."

In 1925, the USS TEXAS underwent major modifications. It was converted to oil-fired boilers, tripod masts and a single stack were added to the main deck. Then, the 5-inch guns that bristled from her sides were reduced in number and moved to the main deck to minimize problems with heavy weather and high seas. It is interesting to note that the 5-inch guns, although modern versions, are throwbacks to the age of wooden ships when cannons would be wheeled out and fired from the sides of the frigates.

The engines were very similar to those on the HMS TITANIC, the last significant example of large triple-expansion engines around. The engines are now a National Mechanical Engineering Landmark.

"This was originally a coal-burning ship," says Ward, "then changed to oil-fired. Rather than this being a steam turbine engine like most ships, the steam is pumped directly into the cylinder, which expands and drives the piston. It is called triple expansion because it expands at three levels, high, medium and low pressure. When you go to visit our engines, you are actually below the water line, although you would not know that."

In addition to the ship's offensive and defensive capabilities, the TEXAS was a home to the sailors who served on board. The medical facilities, barbershop, machine shop, electrical shop, post office and bunking areas are all available for visitors to tour.

Medical facilities included an operating room and a dental suite. "They had an X-

ray machine, a centrifuge for blood work, an autoclave to sterilize equipment and anesthesia," says Ward. "In short, if you had something like acute appendicitis, it was survivable. Even in World War I, acute appendicitis was survivable because you had the ability to operate. In 1895 if your appendix broke and you were in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, you were dead."

Electricity fired the ranges in the galley. Open flames on a ship were a bad thing for a number of reasons. "In a previous design generation, ships used wood to cook with. Paint at this point in time was highly flammable — lead-based. If you have your galley and an open flame down below deck and fire gets loose, you are going to have a fire racing up through the structure of the ship."

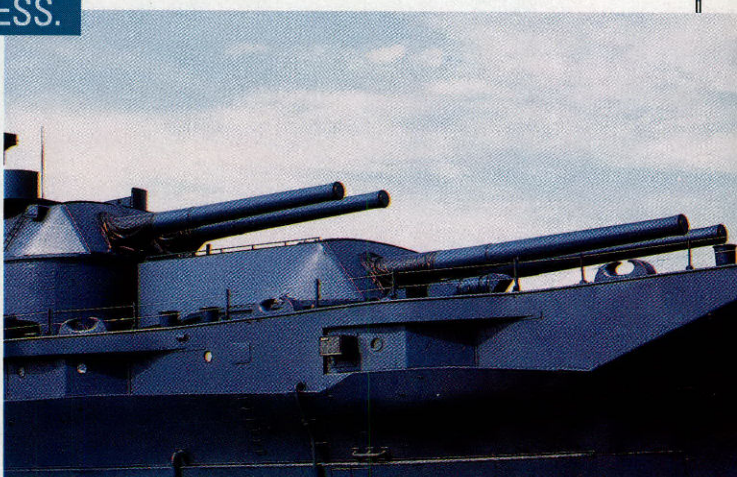
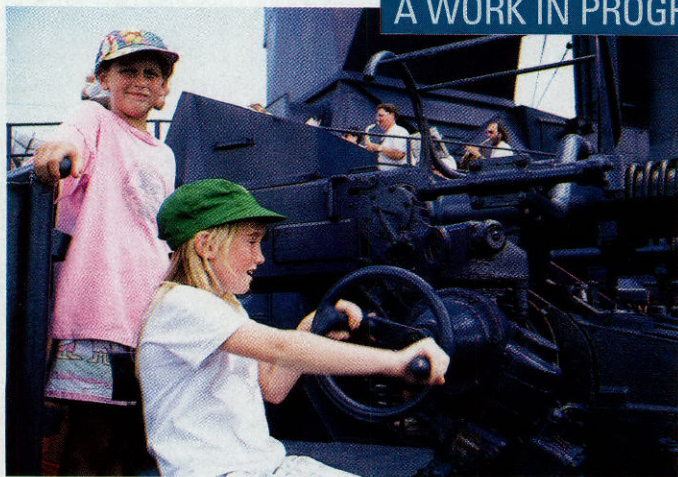
Other interesting World War II add-ons include the cage structures above the galley. With everything else the ship had to carry, there wasn't enough room for lifeboats for everyone. The topless cages contained large nets with cork floats attached to them. If the ship was sinking, the nets would float out and sailors could grab onto the nets.

The USS TEXAS continues to be a visitor favorite for thousands of people every year, from school children to Navy veterans. Maintenance of the aging ship is a work in progress. During 1988-90 the TEXAS underwent dry-dock overhaul. Instead of peacetime gray, the ship was painted Measure 21 blue camouflage, which it wore during service in the Pacific in 1945. Steel plating that had been previously removed by the

Navy was replaced. Masts and superstructure of the ship were repaired, a non-historic layer of concrete was removed and a new wood deck was installed.

The TEXAS is due for another renovation this year, providing the Texas Legislature approves funding and a suitable dry-dock facility can be located. ★

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# TACKLE BOX ~OR~



# ★ TREASURE ★ CHEST

While some antique lures can be valuable,  
most collectors see them as  
cherished artifacts of a beloved sport.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT SOMMERLATTE



This page: Ben Kocian, a serious collector of antique fishing tackle, explains, "Lures are little pieces of art — little sculptures even." Facing page, center: Kocian fishing with pieces from his collection. Facing page, top and bottom: Kocian's favorite tackle collectibles are the "Bingo Baits," made in Texas by Doug English.



“You don’t know what you’ve got until it’s gone.”

**T**HOSE WORDS CONSTANTLY RING in my head every time I think about the treasures that I lost, destroyed or threw away as a kid.

I can still remember it as if it was yesterday. I was 7 or 8 years old and my dad and I were cleaning out the garage one

morning when we came across an old wooden box.

“Do you know what this is?” he asked with a gleam in his eye.

“No!” I responded spitefully as I walked away, still ticked off that my weekend was being consumed by something as trivial as cleaning.

“This is your grandpa’s old fishing tackle.”

I would almost be willing to bet that my squeakers sounded like the spinning tires of my mom’s old Ford Gran Torino as I wheeled around with the look that said, “Now you have my attention!”

My dad, like everyone else who knew us, knew that I had an on/off switch and that switch was flipped by the word “fishing.”

The rest of the morning I intently helped my dad while he told me stories of how my grandfather would take his old wooden johnboat and his tackle box, both of which were made with his own two hands, and go down to the Laguna Madre and come back with enough fish to feed the family.

After the chores were done and we finished a fine lunch of grilled-cheese sandwiches, tomato soup and iced tea, my father sat me down in the lawn chairs on the patio, and he

went back into the garage. Shortly thereafter he came out with that old green wooden box. As I roamed through what I would realize later in life was a treasure chest, my dad continued to tell me stories of the grandfather I never knew.

Sometime later that day, while I was playing with neighborhood friends, my dad hid the box away from my reach. It was one of the biggest favors he ever did for me, although he may have never known it. In retrospect, though, I wish he would have locked it away and lost the key. You see, he knew then what I know now — appreciation comes with age.

A few years passed, but I had not forgotten about that old wooden box full of lures, worms and bobbers. When I was finally big enough to start snooping where I should not have been, much to my detriment, I found it. And, thinking at the time how smart I was, I would take a lure or two here and there, always making sure I left the box the way I found it, hidden away by my dad years before. As the years went by, the contents of that old box slowly disappeared. But for fear of punishment if I ever got caught, I never moved the box. Thankfully!

I can still remember the last thing that I took from it. I was probably 13 or 14 and I was heading down to the pond behind Old Man Fredrick’s lake to meet some friends for an afternoon of bass fishing. I did not have any plastic worms and then remembered where I had seen some. I stood on the seat of my dad’s motorcycle and reached up over my head, into the shelves and under the tarps where he had hidden it. I carefully lifted the lid and stuck my grubby little hand in there to retrieve the last





piece of treasure. It was a package of four Boone's plastic worms. I remember it vividly because the worms were bright yellow (a color of plastic worm that I have not seen since, by the way). I quickly hopped on my bike and was off, with my fishing rod in hand and the worms in my pocket.

Happy to be the first to arrive because I would get first pick of the few open areas to cast from, I quickly started rigging my rod. Now I do not exactly know how I remember this, but I do and am glad for it. That day, for some reason, I rigged one of those yellow worms Texas style, but without a weight. On my first cast of the day, I tossed the worm out to a grass bed just offshore and started working it back just under the surface. When the worm was about halfway back, I saw a

He came walking down to the boat carrying a couple of old bamboo rods matched with some mint-condition, antique, level-wind reels and an old wooden tackle box.

Shorty thereafter my friends arrived, and we fished until dark, but we did not catch another fish. Incidentally, a few days later I went back with the three yellow worms that I had left in my pocket to try to fool another bass. I was riding down the bike trail through the woods that led to our little honeyhole only to notice that the dark trail had an unrecognizable bright light at the end of the tunnel. I pulled my bike up next to my buddies, and we watched in horror as a bulldozer pushed dirt into our pond. And, now someone's home is built on our beloved fishing hole.

I realize now that one of my grandpa's yellow worms, purchased long before I was born, probably caught the last fish

ever out of that pond, and I often relive the memory of that yellow worm wriggling just under the surface only to disappear into that fish's mouth. I'm not real sure what happened to the 3 yellow worms that did not get used on that dreadful day that "progress" took away the first of many childhood fishing holes. But, I keep hoping that I will find them in a junk drawer someday.

As for the box that those crazy-colored worms came from — knowing that I had taken all that it had to offer, I did not see it again until some 15 years later when my dad passed away, and I went right to the spot where he had hid it from me. It is now one of my most prized possessions and occupies a space in my bedroom, where it holds a few old lures that I managed not to lose and some old reels that my father was able to keep hidden from me.

Sadly enough, I could go on forever about losing old rods and reels and tackle — stuff that, had I held on to it, would be worth some serious scratch these days. Nowadays I am constantly on the lookout for old tackle to collect, though I could hardly be considered a collector. The bulk of my stuff consists of my grandpa's tackle box with a couple of well-used lures, my dad's reels and a nicely framed collection of Bingo Baits that good friend and collector Ben Kocian gave me as a gift (another prized possession).

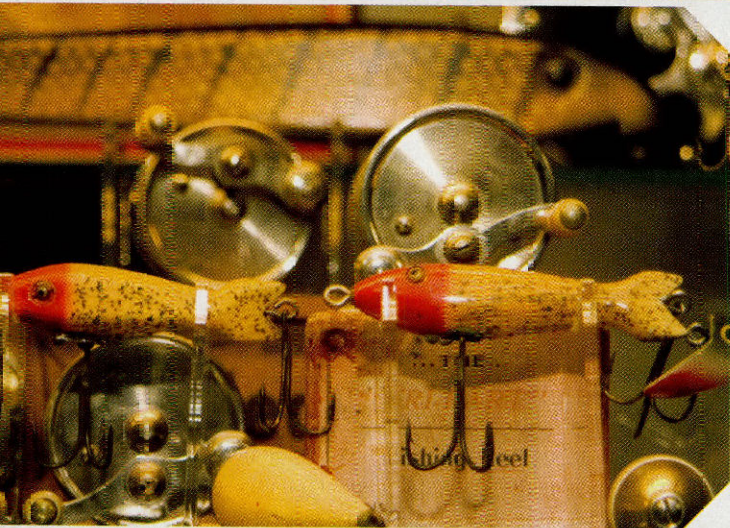
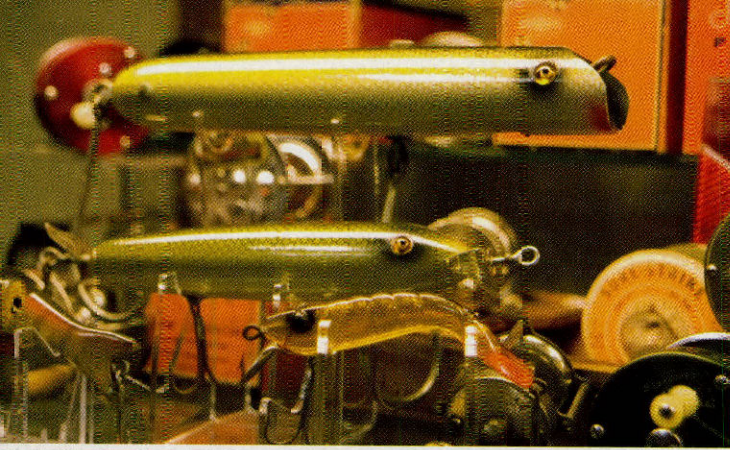
Kocian, best-known for his talent as an artist and illustrator as well as for his tireless work with the Coastal Conservation Association, is probably one of the biggest collectors of old, rare and antique tackle in Texas. He got started back in 1990 when a friend, Lee Richter, gave him his collection. At the time, he was not interested in another hobby but accepted the gesture. Now, some 15 years later, the hobby has become an obsession. And he doesn't just collect the tackle — he also loves to go out and fish with the stuff.

This spring, I invited Kocian down for an afternoon of bass fishing. "Are they hitting topwaters yet?" he quizzed. "I've got a killer little wooden plug that I love to fish with."

When we arrived at the lake, I expected him to pull out a

Facing page: Ben Kocian's collection creates a riotous rainbow of color and texture punctuated by the glint of shiny metal. It's important to note that the collector's valuation of a lure isn't always determined by how old it is. Condition and rarity of color play the most significant role in its value.









Facing page: Ben Kocian reflects on two favorite lures, the Creek Chub and Tarpon Pikies. Right: the Egyptian Wobbler; bottom photo: the Midge-oreno: "If they're hitting on top, it gets 'em every time," says tackle collector Kocian.



more modern rod and reel and a small box of old lures. However, he came walking down to the boat carrying a couple of old bamboo rods matched with some mint-condition, antique, level-wind reels and an old wooden tackle box. He wore a smile much bigger than his face, and I knew he was already having a great time.

As we worked down the shoreline, I was in constant awe as I watched him cast the old direct-drive reel (unlike more modern reels, the handle does not disengage and spins during the cast), tossing the small wooden plug to shoreline with amazing ease. We hadn't made it too far when the plug got toilet-flushed by a largemouth. I have to say that the ker-d in that old bamboo rod was a sight to behold, and I could not help but think how far technology has brought us. But regardless, Ben was having a blast.

As the day came to an end, Kocian experimented with, and caught a few fish on, other lures, but he always seemed to come back to that little copper colored plug. He later told me that it was a plug made by South Bend Lure Company called a Midge-oreno. "If they're hitting on top, it gets 'em every time," he added.

Lures by South Bend are pretty popular among collectors; however, Kocian's collection goes way beyond that. Lures made by popular tackle companies such as Heddon and Creek Chub are a major part of his collection. His favorite collectibles, though, are lures made in Texas by Doug English (later known as Bingo Baits) that were being made as early as the '40s and '50s and Nichols Shrimp and Percin that date back to the '30s.

When asked what the oldest lure in his collection was, Kocian produced an old spoon-like bait made by the J.T. Buel Co. near the turn of the century called a Buel Spinner. It was wild to hold a piece of tackle that was made before my dad was born, and maybe even before my grandfather's time. As for his favorite, he says it's the copper-colored, mint-condition bait made by Shakespeare called the Egyptian Wobbler.

"Lures are little pieces of art — little sculptures even. Every one has a story to tell." Kocian told me as he carefully placed the lure back into its protective box. "They tell the history of fishing."

When talking tackle with Kocian, it is evident that he truly loves what he is doing. Over the years I have learned a great deal about collecting from him. For instance, the worth of a lure isn't always determined by how old it is. Condition and rarity of color play the most significant role in its value. I'm also learning that it is not too late to get started collecting. There are tons of treasures lying around in people's garages, attics and basements just waiting to be discovered. Another great place to search for old tackle is at flea markets.

For those interested in collecting, Kocian recommends that you attend an antique lure show or pick up any one of a number of books on collecting. The information to be learned from these sources will give you guidance as to what to look for and what certain lures are worth. He also recommends that if you are not interested in collecting but have some old tackle stowed away somewhere, give a collector a call.

"There is a whole lot of old tackle in garages and basements getting ruined. The constant temperature changes and moisture are hard on the old lures. It is better to get them into the hands of someone who can care for them."

"Like you?" I asked.

"Yeah, like me," he answered.

Well if you do try to contact him and cannot find him, chances are he is snooping around a garage sale or flea market looking for the next piece of treasure. ★

I was in constant awe as I watched him cast the old direct-drive reel, tossing the small wooden plug to shoreline with amazing ease. We hadn't made it too far when the plug got toilet-flushed by a largemouth.



WORKING LAKE FORK'S NIGHT SHIFT

GUIDES DIVULGE THEIR DARK SECRETS  
FOR LOCATING LUNKERS.

# BASS ~AND THE~ MOON LIGHT

BY PAUL A. CAÑADA

As the permeating light of a summer afternoon fades, schools of shad migrate toward the surface. Under the deteriorating light conditions, the visually schooling fish disperse and, in doing so, lose the protection afforded by their normally greater numbers. Near the surface, gizzard and threadfin shad feed on light-sensitive plankton. In response, good numbers of average-sized predators move up from midday haunts to actively feed on the now-vulnerable prey.





About the time all color fades from the horizon, a large bass leaves her home base — a fork between two gigantic limbs — where she suspends during periods of inactivity. The big sow moves off the sizable pecan tree and up a wash leading to a timber-filled point. The subtle ditch acts as a pathway between the relatively deep water and the first break along the point.

A number of stumps and a single rocky outcrop provide the lunker with ample cover along the way. An overcast sky diffuses the full moon, encouraging the large female to move as shallow as 9 feet. After reaching the first break, the bass turns and briskly moves along the contour of the structure. The nocturnal predator advances with seemingly great purpose, searching out susceptible prey.

A slight disturbance in the shallows reaches the bass' two sound-detection systems — the inner ear and the lateral line. Although the disturbance is barely discernible, the aggressive bass turns toward the shallow water. As the fish draws nearer the source, the noise and the vibration become more distinct.

Relying on all her senses — vision, hearing and touch — the big female attempts to pinpoint the source. She turns and swims toward the approaching object. Within moments, the pulsing vibration reaches the creature's lateral line, and the bass spies a flash in the distance. With speed rarely witnessed by anglers, the large predator breaks toward the now full silhouette.

Above the waterline, Lake Fork guide John Tanner detects a slight change of pressure. The throb of his spinnerbait's large Colorado blade is conspicuously absent. Almost immediately, the angler strikes back. The stout rod bows to the fish's might, while the braided line refuses to give an inch. With some effort, Tanner succeeds in turning the big female's head up and away from the timber.

Eventually, the bass tires and pitches to its side. Tanner gen-

tly slips his four fingers under her jaw and forces his thumb inside her mouth. Confident of his grip, the guide lifts the bass up. In the moonlight, he's able to appreciate her tremendous girth and shoulders.

"Yes," he exclaims. "This is why I'm out here."

Normally, sensible anglers don't venture out at night. When hampered by darkness, it's difficult to complete the most common of angling tasks. Detecting subtle strikes, making accurate casts, navigating stump-littered waters and selecting or changing out lures can be terribly difficult to accomplish at night.

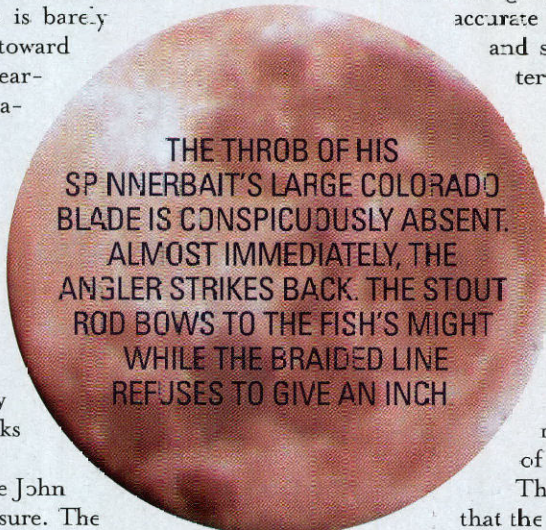
Still, there are many incentives for wetting a line at night. Typically, boat traffic is nonexistent and temperatures are more tolerable. However, the primary reason to take on the challenges of nighttime angling is that summer's trophy-sized bass move shallower and feed more aggressively at night.

### Finding Big Bass at Night

Like Tanner, Lance Vick spends many of his summer nights in pursuit of Lake Fork's lunkers.

The professional angler and guide finds that the bigger fish hold in deeper water during the heat of day and move up to shallow structure at night to feed.

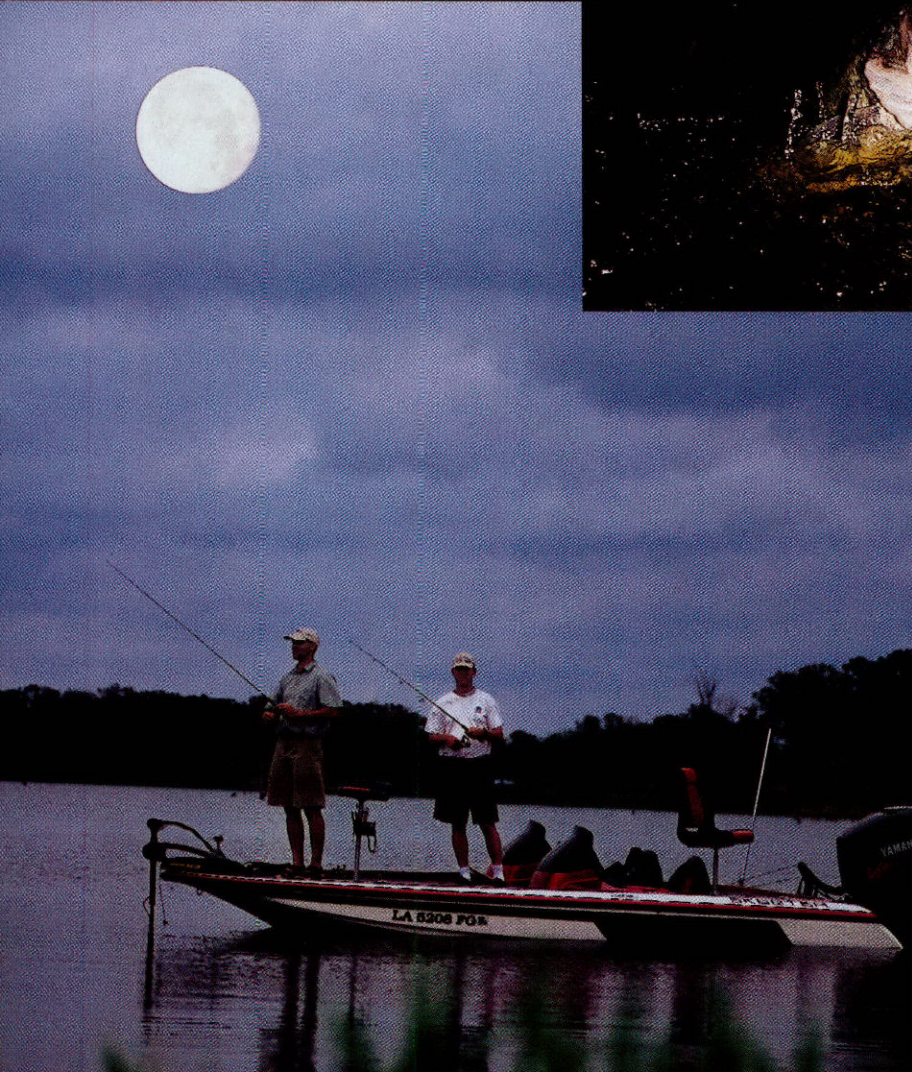
"At night, the biggest bass use structural features to move from their deep daytime haunts to shallow feeding zones," explains Vick. "Once they find that certain depth, typically 8 to 12 feet on Lake Fork, they cruise along it looking for prey."



THE THROB OF HIS SPINNERBAIT'S LARGE COLORADO BLADE IS CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT. ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, THE ANGLER STRIKES BACK. THE STOUT ROD BOWS TO THE FISH'S MIGHT WHILE THE BRAIDED LINE REFUSES TO GIVE AN INCH.



PHOTO © GRADY ALLEN



Vick looks for structure that rises to within 10 feet of the surface and extends out to a depth greater than 30 feet. Once he has such a feature located, he uses his electronics to find a secondary feature that intersects both the deep and shallow water. Typically, this will be a ditch, a drain or a wash.

"I find the bass follow subtle features to 'funnel' through at night," Vick adds. "The ditches and drains concentrate fish and that's why it's important to know where they are prior to taking to the water at night. I use daytime trips to scout out potential nighttime hot spots."

On Lake Fork, some of the better funnels are the many remnant roads impounded by the reservoir that exit points and cross nearby creeks. The submerged roadbed is typically sitting atop a levee or berm, and has trees running along one or both sides. In most cases, the edge of cover — such as a tree line or grass line — represents a change in water depth or bottom relief. Because bass often follow these edges while moving shallow, the cover provides a reference point for anglers and makes it easier to place a lure in the fish's strike zone.

According to Vick, actively feeding bass, once shallow, continue to move along a key water depth, weed edge or timberline. Moving along an edge, the bass cruise the shoreline or cover, looking for easy prey. The fish will often rush into shallow water or up to the surface to overtake prey.

Like his good friend Vick, Kelly Jordon often works Lake Fork's night shift. Jordon agrees with Vick's assessment, only adding that he believes the largest bass are flushing-type feeders.

"When tracking trophy-sized bass," explains Jordon, "Texas researcher John Hope showed that big bass are flushing feeders. They move relatively fast, covering ground and looking for feeding opportunities."

### Placement and Displacement are Key

Jordon's perception of how the largest bass feed plays a significant role in his approach to nighttime angling. Typically, Jordon fishes his bait so that it parallels the edge of a fencerow, a tree line or the outside edge of a grass bed along which the bass are moving. He reasons that his chances of encountering a feeding lunker are better when he keeps his bait in that zone of activity.

"I don't throw a large worm or jig at night like most anglers do," he explains. "Instead, I almost exclusively throw a spinnerbait. I have found that you can catch more and bigger fish by simply slow-rolling a spinnerbait near the bottom."

The young pro fishes a spinnerbait, with a number 6 or 7 Colorado-style blade, on braided line. That setup allows him to fish a small-diameter line without sacrificing the line strength required to fight and land Lake Fork's big Florida-strain bass. The small diameter is important because it makes it easier to keep the slowly retrieved spinnerbait down near the bottom. Also, the low-stretch braided line telegraphs the rotation of the lure's large blades, making it easier to detect the subtlest strikes.

"I fish my spinnerbait much like a jig," notes Jordon. "I purposely keep the bait close to the bottom and occasionally stop it

and allow it to tumble downward. In fact, I fish that bait so slow, it takes forever to get a cast back to the boat."

Like Jordon, Tanner believes the placement of a lure at night is absolutely critical to success. Because of this, the longtime guide uses lures designed to stay in the bass' strike zone longer. His primary lure of choice is a 1/2-ounce jig with a 3-1/2-inch plastic trailer. The large trailer is vitally important in that it slows the bait's fall and gives the package a larger profile, making it easier for the bass to find the lure. When throwing spinnerbaits, he likewise uses the large plastic trailer.

### Lunar Light Determines the Bite

At night and during periods of low-light conditions, bass rely more on sound and vibration than sight to detect and locate potential prey. The bass' inner ear and lateral line hear or feel both the particle motion and pressure changes created by sound. Both systems are important in helping bass find prey, avoid predators and relate to their liquid environment in low-light conditions. Once the bass moves close enough to the object producing the sound or disturbance, it uses its sight to locate the object's silhouette.

Understandably, Tanner believes lure and blade selection should match the amount of lunar light penetrating the bass' watery environment. On dark nights, Tanner chooses to fish color combinations that include black and black-nickel blades. On moderately lit nights, he fishes a purple or plum bait and gold blades. During brightly lit nights, he chooses white or yellow baits.

Similar to daytime conditions, the bass' position in relation to cover and structure and its activity level are determined by the amount of light penetrating their environment.

There are many factors that influence light penetration at night. First and foremost, the lunar phase determines greatly where the fish are found and how they feed.

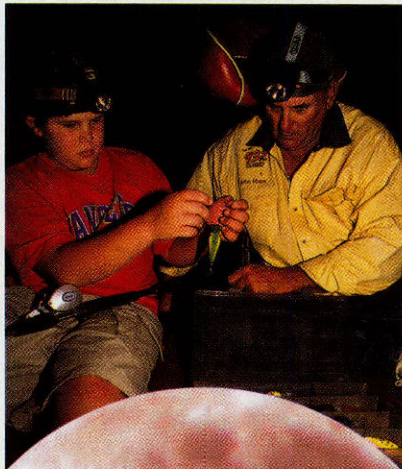
Second, water clarity determines how deep the light penetrates. Finally, a stiff breeze or wind, agitating the water surface, will diffuse the light penetrating the water column.

According to Tanner, the best fishing doesn't necessarily occur during a full moon. In fact, the best fishing typically takes place during the low-light conditions of a new or quarter moon.

"The amount of light penetrating the water column positions often determines how they feed," explains Tanner. "On a bright night, the bigger fish stay deep and pull tighter to cover. During new- and quarter-moon phases, the fish tend to be shallower and actively feeding."


Night fishing tests an angler's skill, stamina and, most of all, patience. It also usually means having to tolerate hovering hordes of airborne pests and fight off the body's persistent need for sleep. Why endure so much frustration and irritation?

Jordon answers it best, "When active, the big bass are cruising relatively fast. I mean they're very aggressive. They will hit a lure and fight like they're on steroids. That's why I fish Fork at night." ★



THE PRIMARY REASON TO TAKE ON THE CHALLENGES OF NIGHTTIME ANGLING IS THAT SUMMER'S TROPHY-SIZED BASS MOVE SHALLOWER AND FEED MORE AGGRESSIVELY AT NIGHT.

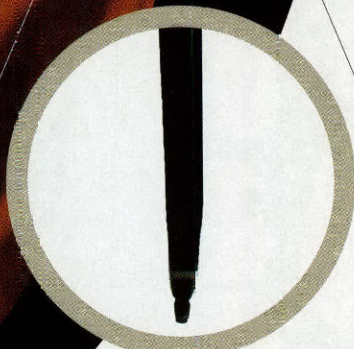
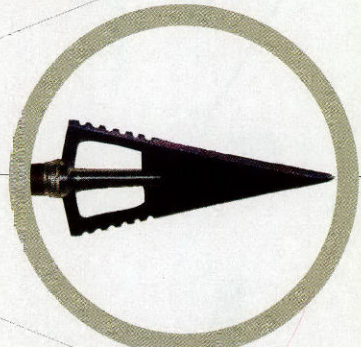
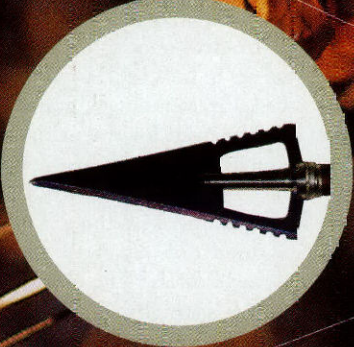


A person wearing a camouflage jacket and hat is shown in profile, aiming a bow. The background is a dense forest of trees with autumn foliage in shades of orange and red. The person's hands are visible, holding the bow and arrow. The overall scene is captured in a warm, golden light, suggesting a late afternoon or early morning setting.

THE LATEST  
EQUIPMENT  
RUNS THE  
GAMUT FROM  
ELEGANT  
RECURVES TO  
HIGH-TECH  
BOWS WITH  
TRIGGERS.

**BY GIBBS  
MILLIKEN**

# ARCHERY TRENDS

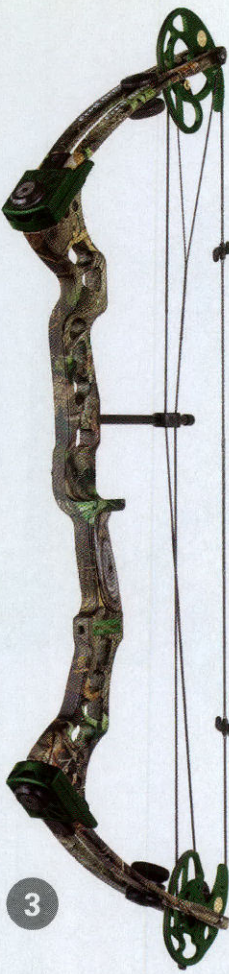


PRODUCT PHOTOS © GIBBS MILLIKEN



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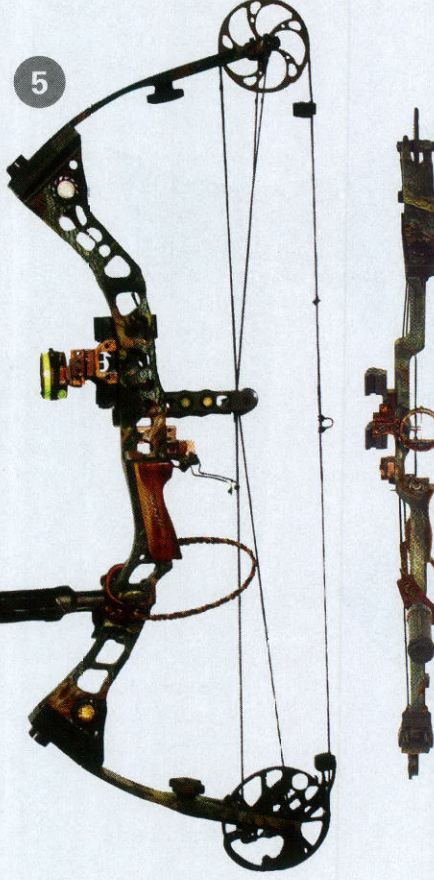
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Bow hunting, bow fishing and field archery seem to get more and more popular every year. Hunts for feral hogs and small game provide an archer with the chance for exciting action on both day and night hunts. The same is true for bow fishers hunting the backwaters of lakes and rivers in search of huge alligator gar and other rough fish. In addition, field archery and 3-D animal target ranges scattered across the state offer hours of fun and the practice needed to keep shooting skills well tuned. And for many, organized competitions are not simply tests of skill—they represent a new and challenging sport.

**THE LATEST ARCHERY EQUIPMENT ON THE MARKET:**

(1) Front and side views of the Fred Bear TakeDown;

(2) Front and side views of the Sarrels Bobbcatt II Recurve;

(3) Fred Bear 2005 Premier Line SQ32.

(4) AMS Bowfishing reel and arrow

(5) Mathews Switchback

The latest trend is a renewed interest in traditional bows, accessories and instinctive shooting. This seems to be a back-to-the-basics movement generated by the need for the primal touch of releasing an arrow at a target using a conventional bow with the arrow guided only by eye-hand coordination. The shot is made instinctively using a spread-draw to a familiar anchor point, ending in a smooth and natural release without the aid of mechanical sights. It takes lots of practice, but nothing in archery compares to the Zen feeling and deep satisfaction of becoming one with the arrow in a pre-visualized perfect shot.

**IMPROVEMENTS IN TRADITIONAL EQUIPMENT**

Among the most innovative bow designs of all time is the **Fred Bear TakeDown**, a laminated recurve, conceived after years of tinkering with variations by this legendary archer. Since it was first introduced in 1969, Bear has considered this to be the finest production bow he ever built. It was an ideal choice for him as he traveled around the world, hunting big game and making films of his adventures. The wide fiberglass-powered limbs are removed from the riser by special latches that require no tools, so the bow packs easily for transport and storage. Reassembly and stringing the

bow requires about 60 seconds. This bow is expensive, but it is still available in two handle lengths: the classic "A" handle bow measures 56 inches, and the "B" handle bow is four inches longer. This model has a crowned arrow shelf, Bear Hair rest, inlaid compass, fast-flight string and classic Bear Kodiak styling. (\$975, Bear TakeDown Bow, Fred Bear Archery, 866-566-2754, <www.fredbearoutdoors.com>)

New designs in traditional bows evolve slowly because the existing technology is already such a proven performer. It takes a master bowyer to tweak an already great design to an even higher level of speed and smoothness. Such is the case with the new **Sarrels Bobbcatt II Recurve**. These bows are hand-built one at a time to the highest standards of materials and craftsmanship. Bob Sarrels has been making classic hunting bows for nine years. He has now taken another step forward in this latest formula, so that the riser tapers gradually into the limbs and the working curve is modulated to produce virtually no handshock. His recurves flex at full draw into a graceful parabolic, adding considerable speed and penetration to the arrow. (\$475, Bobbcatt Recurve, Sarrels Archery, 512-940-3098. <www.sarrelsarchery.com>)

### AQUATIC ARCHERY

Bow fishing is also surging in popularity, and most archery shops stock an assortment of this specialized equipment. Fish hunters are restricted to shooting only non-game fishes ("rough fish"). Included are such quarry as the huge alligator gar and its smaller relatives. Also targeted are river suckers, bowfin, tilapia, buffalo and carp.

Innovations in bow fishing equipment include a new reel design and arrow connection system by **AMS Bowfishing**. This design is safer to use than the standard line attachment, where a possible line snag on release can be dangerous to the shooter if the arrow snags back,nock first, into the archer's face or neck. The reel utilizes a delivery method consisting of a bottle container for the line that is connected to a sliding ring around the solid fiberglass arrow. When shot, the ring slides to the nock and the line flows out safely from the bottle and can be retrieved using a friction trigger and crank handle. (\$83.65, Slotted Retriever Bowfishing Reel. \$13.50, Fiberglass Fish Arrow with point and safety slide. AMS Bowfishing. 888-541-7657. <www.amsbowfishing.com>)

Both conventional and compound bows are used for this sport. In most cases, it is not necessary, and generally undesirable, to have heavy-poundage, high-performance bows with sights for close-range bow fishing.

### HIGH PERFORMANCE GEAR

At the other end of the technology spectrum are the most advanced bows, arrows, points, sights and mechanical releases ever produced.

The latest hunting compound bow is the **Fred Bear 2005 Premier Line, SQ32**. This 32.5-inch, 4-pound unit features a parallel-limb design with straight carbon-fiber quad limbs, a long perforated machined aluminum riser and a totally synchronized cam-and-a-half pulley system. It is fully adjustable for different draws and comes with 75 percent let-off that can be changed to 65 percent. Shooting smooth and recoil-free, it can deliver arrows consistently and accurately at a blazing 310 F.P.S. by IBO speed standards. (\$599, Fred Bear SQ32, Fred Bear Archery. <www.fredbearoutdoors.com>)

Also using parallel-limb design and weighing just over 4 pounds is the new 33-inch **Mathews Switchback**, considered by many to be one of the best compounds built to date. This model introduces the new **Straight-line Cobra Cam** with dual perimeter weights shooting ultra-fast at 318 F.P.S. measured IBO. The entire system is made

### THE OPTIONS IN ARROWS:

(6) Titanium steel-force broadhead;

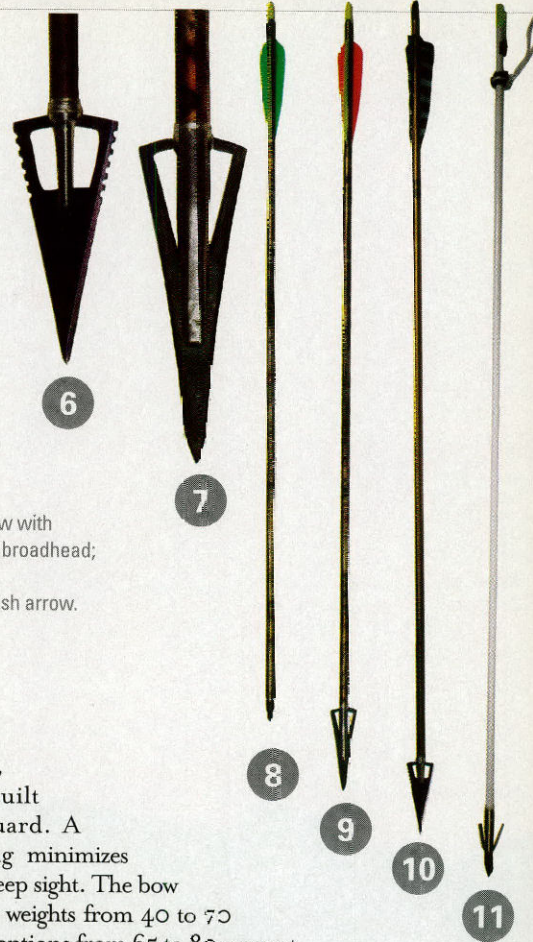
(7) Classic Howard Hill broadhead;

(8) Field-pointed arrow with soft plastic parabolic veins;

(9) Easton big game aluminum arrow with the classic Howard Hill broadhead;

(10) Easton feather-fletched legacy arrow with titanium steel-force broadhead;

(11) AMS fish arrow.



smooth and silent by using harmonic dampers at multiple points, including two built into the roller-guard. A new type of string minimizes adjustments of the peep sight. The bow is available in draw weights from 40 to 70 pounds with let-off options from 65 to 80 percent. (\$769, Switchback Bow, Mathews Inc., 608-269-2728, <www.mathewsinc.com>)

As in any sport, accessories are a vital part of the mix. Experienced archers make sure the arrow with its fletching and point is correctly matched to the bow. With major improvements in arrow shafts, the consistency of precision-built aluminum and carbon arrows allows the archer confidence that the occasional missed shot will not be the result of the shafts. The same is true of arrowheads. High-tech broadheads are now a standard weight of 100 grains and, in the best designs, have aerodynamics that will not cause them to plane off target. Fletching also is improved, with smaller sizes made of soft plastic for greater speed in the high-performance bows.

On the other hand, traditional archers remain dedicated to thicker spine-tested arrows and longer fletching of real turkey feathers with fixed-blade arrowheads at 125 grains or above for better penetration from slower speed bows.

Sights are considered a necessity on most compound bows. These range in style from adjustable fiber-optic pins to electronic red dots superimposed on the target for deadly accuracy. Fingers no longer contact the string, being replaced by mechanical triggers for a smooth release with short bows. The same is true of arrow rests that vary in an endless array of contrivances, the latest being the "drop-away" that rises when drawing the compound bow and falls at the instant of release. Innovation upon innovation feeds the need to have more and more mounted gadgets until your bow is too heavy and shooting is reduced to a robotic performance.

Sometimes less is more. It is easy to understand why a growing number of archers are returning to a light and graceful handmade recurve or longbow, a quiver of feathered arrows and instinctive shooting. Perhaps our own technology has led us too far from the simple pleasures found in roving unmarked courses and hunting the hard way. ★



# King of the Mountain

*Though rarely seen, the cougar looms large in the popular consciousness of all Texans.*

By E. Dan Klepper

*First he cleared the Grove of Zeus of a lion, and put its skin upon his back, hiding his yellow hair in its fearful tawny gaping jaws.*

Euripides, *Hercules*

**The Nemean lion**, a wily beast that once terrorized the countryside of Greece, was no match for the power of the mighty Hercules, according to the writer Euripides in his chronicles of the strongman's life-tale. The story recounted Hercules, commanded to rid the region of the man-eating nuisance, cornering the lion in its cave and then subduing the animal with nothing but a single rudimentary weapon — his powerful embrace. Bring it on, Ultimate Fighting Champion!

The lion in the Euripides tale was the African species, *Panthera leo*, rather than Texas' own North American lion, *Puma concolor*. But taxonomy and Herculean strength notwithstanding, earth-bound men have wrestled for centuries with the lion in their pursuit to knock the king of the animal world off nature's throne. The lion, however, whether African or North American, has managed to prevail. And the big cat's own deadly sleeper hold, on its prey as well as the human psyche, has proven to be the true measure of muscle.

The ancient Hebrews had several names for their lions, each

according to the animal's formidability and age. *Caphir* was a strong young lion, *Arie* signified a voracious adult, *Shic'nets* indicated a ferocious lion of middle age and *Lice* was the name for an old lion (a name that succinctly describes a cranky old hunter who has spent his entire life stalking, killing and eating wild game). In North America, the Spanish call the lion *león de montaña*, the Mayans *cabcoh* and the Guianans *tig rouge*. Texans also have names for their lions, including *puma* as in its taxonomic designation *Puma concolor*, *cougar*, *panther*, and *catamount*, meaning "cat of the mountain."

The lions of Texas have been routine inhabitants of the state for thousands of years, according to the fossil record. The mountain lion roamed throughout its borders at one time; in fact, it previously inhabited the entire northern hemisphere, from Canada to South America, giving it the broadest known distribution of any wild cat. These predatory animals coexisted with all other wildlife in the natural world until the dawn of our agrarian society. For a time, we were willing to share nature's

**EARTH-BOUND MEN HAVE WRESTLED FOR CENTURIES WITH THE LION IN THEIR EFFORT TO KNOCK THE KING OF THE ANIMAL WORLD OFF NATURE'S THRONE.**

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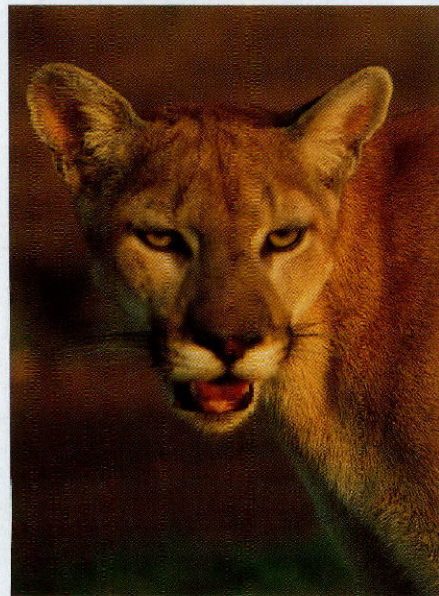
bounty with the lions, if only by default — we ate the same things they did. But then they had the temerity to kill a few fruits of our labor (like domesticated livestock) and later our house pets, and then one or two of our own kind. Thus a demon was born, and a battle ensued.

The healthy balance between predator and prey is a simple and indisputable concept, and to argue otherwise would be to enter the realm of, well, mythology. But for humans, predation is a good thing only when the circumstances place the interests of *Homo sapiens* on the winning end of the ordeal. In Texas, where the domestic livestock industry and property ownership have dominated the dialogue about the state's native predators, the mountain lion has remained the elusive unregulated animal. It is officially classified as nongame and is not protected from hunting any time of the year.

Information on the mountain lions of the Lone Star State, including their range, behavior and total population, is at best sparse and often speculative. Anecdotal stories on Texas lions abound and make for great reading but are inadequate when attempting to comprehend the true nature of the cat. Several excellent research studies by TPWD biologists

age) and the overall area of the teeth. A human's bite force, by comparison, is about 180 pounds. The sharp, dagger-like canines and muscular jaws of a lion manage to inflict considerable damage, oftentimes puncturing the jugular vein and almost always suffocating the prey.

Deer, one of several prey species of the mountain lion, are often bitten beneath the neck during an attack. But rather than suffering the deer's sharp hooves to do so,



#### COUNTER TO POPULAR THOUGHT, MOUNTAIN LIONS DO NOT CHASE AFTER THEIR PREY IN HOT PURSUIT OR POUNCE DOWN FROM CLIFF EDGES OR TREE BRANCHES.

Mike Pittman, Gilbert Guzman and Billy Pat McKinney; university researchers Louis Harveson, Mike Tewes, Bruce Leopold, Jane Packard and David Waid; and legendary lion trapper Roy T. McBride have given us much of what Texans know so far about the wary predator. But one fact has never been in doubt — the mountain lion is nature's consummate takedown master.

Counter to popular thought, mountain lions do not chase after their prey in hot pursuit or pounce down from cliff edges or tree branches. The sheer power of a lion enables it to overtake prey of equal or smaller size by stealthful stalking until the meal is within close range. Then the cat simply rushes the prey and body slams it.

Downing larger prey, however, requires the cat to utilize its powerhouse finisher. A mountain lion does so by mounting its bigger prey from the side and then biting through the esophagus. The estimated bite force of a lion's jaw is somewhere around 600 to 900 pounds depending upon the size of the jaw muscles, the length of the jaw bone (providing lever-

the lion will headlock the deer from behind or the side and twist the head around to expose the neck. Then the lion bites down and holds on until the deer expires.

The mountain lions stalking and killing techniques make it the premier deer hunter of Texas. Deer populations are healthy in Texas thanks to the long-term management of hunting practices, and this gives the state's top predators — mountain lions and human deer hunters — an opportunity to share the wealth. However, lions are frequently accused of reducing deer populations whenever a decline is recognized, especially in the arid country of the Trans Pecos, where water is scarce yet necessary for maintaining herd populations of larger mammals like deer. But in reality the culprit is usually drought or loss of habitat. Research indicates that in areas where neither lion nor deer are hunted, including Big Bend National Park, both species are capable of maintaining healthy populations in response to available resources. Drought, for instance, reduces both predator and prey numbers while habitat gain or recovery increases each

population to stabilized levels.

Contrary to common lion lore, a lion will kill the animal it wants rather than "culling" a herd of the weaker members. Thus, lions typically kill what they have a taste for, including white-tailed and mule deer, javelina, coyote and porcupine. Beef, on the other hand, is not among the lion's favorites. As long as deer and javelina populations remain healthy, cattle have little to worry about. But do humans?

Mountain lion attacks on the human population are few and far between. But they do happen, especially in circumstances where individuals are rambling about in lion country. Prey behavior studies indicate that humans often unintentionally mimic prey by running, walking or swimming like prey or by wandering about alone and stopping frequently (as if browsing), and, well, by simply qualifying in the lightweight class. Fighting back aggressively with fists or any sort of hand weapon has proven effective in preventing fatalities.

These facts shouldn't stop anyone from enjoying the outdoors. Chances of suffering a rattlesnake bite are far greater in Texas than catching even a passing glance of one of the state's big cats. But by better understanding predator behavior, Texas hikers, hunters and mountain bikers can stay safe and be prepared. Some of the following suggested rules of engagement, originating out of studies in other states with lion populations, may help.

For instance, if a mountain lion is sighted at greater than 100 yards and is moving away, enjoy the view. If it is more than 50 yards away and its attention is directed at you, the cat is probably curious — gather up the kids, stay in a group and keep moving with an eye on the cat. If it sits down, looks away or starts grooming itself, then its intentions are nonthreatening for the moment. But if the cat begins to stare at you while crouching and hiding and sneaking towards you and is doing so anywhere within 200 yards, it's time to get your game on! Raise yourself up, spread your jacket or other article of clothing out and above you, and make menacing sounds — yell! Stay as upright as possible and, if you do bend down to pick up stones or sticks for weapons, maintain eye contact with the lion.

These actions usually suffice in deterring an attack. If the tail starts twitching, if the cat is keeping its body and head low to the ground and if its back legs start pumping like a sprinter's, then you better get ready to rumble! But forget the Herculean hug. Think like a boxer. Better yet, if you're carrying a firearm, don't be afraid to use it! ★

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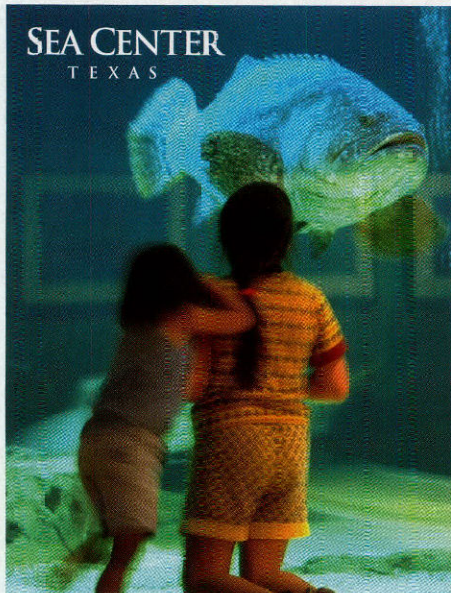
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continued from page 57

- 6 a.m.; KVRT-FM 90.7 / 5:33 p.m.;  
KLUX-FM 89.5 / throughout the day  
**CROCKETT:** KIVY-AM 1290 / 8:20 a.m.,  
KIVY-FM 92.7 / 8:15 a.m.  
**DIMMITT:** KDHN-AM 1470 / 10:30 a.m.  
**EAGLE PASS:** KINL-FM 92.7 / 3:30 p.m.  
**EASTLAND:** KEAS-AM 1590 / 5:50 a.m.,  
5:50 p.m. KATX-FM 97.7 / 5:50 a.m.,  
5:50 p.m.  
**EDNA:** KGUL-FM 96.1 / 7:10 a.m.  
**EL CAMPO:** KULP-AM 1390 / 2:36 p.m.  
**EL PASO:** KTEP-FM 88.5 / 12:15 p.m.  
Thurs.  
**FAIRFIELD:** KNES-FM 99.1 / Sat. mornings  
**FLORESVILLE:** KWCB-FM 89.7 / 1:30 p.m.  
**FORT STOCKTON:** KFST-AM 860 / 7:10  
a.m., KFST-FM 94.3 / 7:10 a.m.  
**GAINESVILLE:** KGAF-AM 1580 /  
10 a.m.  
**GRANBURY:** KPIR-AM 1420 / 4:20 p.m.  
**GREENVILLE:** KGVL-AM 1400 /  
8:10 a.m.  
**HARLINGEN:** KMBH-FM 88.9 / 4:58  
p.m.; KHID-FM 88.1 / 4:58 p.m.  
**HENDERSON:** KZQX-FM 104.7 / 10:20  
a.m., 4:20 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:** KILT-AM 610 / between 4  
a.m. and 7 a.m. Thur.-Sun.  
**HUNTSVILLE:** KSHU-FM 90.5 / through-  
out the day  
**JACKSONVILLE:** KEBE-AM 1400 /  
7:15 a.m.  
**JUNCTION:** KMBL-AM 1450 / 6:40 a.m.,  
3:30 p.m., KOOK-FM 93.5 / 10:20 a.m.,  
3:30 p.m.  
**KERVILLE:** KRNH-FM 92.3 / 5:31 a.m.,  
12:57 p.m., 7:35 p.m.; KERV-AM 1230 /  
7:54 a.m., 11:42 p.m., 6:42 p.m.; KRVL-  
FM 94.3 / :54 a.m., 11:42 p.m., 6:42 p.m.  
**KILGORE:** KZQX-FM 105.3 / 10:20 a.m.  
and 4:20 p.m.  
**LA GRANGE:** KBUK-FM 104.9 / 12:30  
p.m.; KVLG-AM 1300 / 12:30 p.m.  
**LAKE CHEROKEE:** KZQX-FM 104.7 /  
10:20 a.m. and 4:20 p.m.  
**LAMPASAS:** KACQ-FM 101.9 / 8:25  
a.m.; KCYL-AM 1450 / 8:25 a.m.  
**LAREDO:** KHOY-FM 88.1 / throughout  
the day  
**LEVELLAND:** KIVT-AM 1230 /  
12:30 p.m.  
**LLANO:** KITY-FM 102.9 / 5:15 a.m.; 1:15  
p.m.; 3:15 p.m.; 9:15 p.m.  
**LONGVIEW:** KZQZ-FM 101.9 /  
10:20 a.m.; 4:20 p.m.  
**LUBBOCK:** KJTV-AM 950 / overnights  
**LUFKIN:** KUEZ-FM 100.1 / 12:15 p.m.;  
KYBI-FM 101.9 / 12:15 p.m.  
**MADISONVILLE:** KMVL-AM 1220 / 7:45  
a.m.; KMVL-FM 100.5 / 7:45 a.m.  
**MARSHALL:** KCUL-FM 92.3 / 6:12 a.m.;  
KMHT-FM 103.9 / 6:25 a.m.; KMHT-AM  
1450 / 6:25 a.m.  
**MASON:** KOTY-FM 95.7 / throughout

the day

**MESQUITE:** KEOM-FM 88.5 / 8:15 a.m.,  
2:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m. Mon.-Thu.; 8:15  
a.m., 2:30 p.m. Fri.  
**MEXIA:** KROX-AM 1590 / 3:15 p.m.;  
KYCX-FM 104.9 / 3:15 p.m.  
**MINEOLA:** KMOO-FM 99.9 / 5:15 p.m.  
**MONAHANS:** KLBO-AM 1330 / between  
8-9 a.m. and 1-3 p.m.  
**NACOGDOCHES:** KSAU-FM 90.1 /  
2:45 p.m.  
**NEW BRAUNFELS:** KGNB-AM 1420 /  
5:55 a.m.  
**ODESSA:** KCRS-AM 550 / 6:15 a.m.,  
5:50 p.m., KOCV-FM 91.3 / 6:49 a.m.  
**PECOS:** KIUN-AM 1400 / 10:30 a.m.  
**PLAINVIEW:** KVOP-AM 1090 / 9:50 a.m.  
**ROCKDALE:** KRXT-FM 98.5 / 5:04 a.m.,  
8:45 p.m.  
**SAN ANGELO:** KGKL-AM 960 / 6:32  
a.m. and 6:58 p.m.  
**SAN ANTONIO:** KSTX-FM 89.1 / 9:04 p.m.  
**SEGUIN:** KWED-AM 1580 / 7:55 a.m.  
**SONORA:** KHOS-FM 92.1 / 10:15 a.m.;  
KYXX-FM 94.3 / 10:15 a.m.  
**SULPHUR SPRINGS:** KSST-AM 1230 /  
2:50 a.m., 11:50 a.m.  
**SWEETWATER:** KXOX-FM 96.7 / 8:30  
a.m.; KXOX-AM 1240 / 8:30 a.m.  
**TEMPLE:** KTEM-AM 1400 / 10:20 a.m.  
**TEXARKANA:** KTXK-FM 91.5 / 2:04 p.m.  
**VICTORIA:** KTXN-FM 98.7 / 6:50 a.m.;  
KZAM-FM 104.7 / 7:10 a.m.; KGUL-FM  
96.1 / 7:10 a.m.  
**WACO:** KBBW-AM 1010 / throughout  
the day  
**WICHITA FALLS:** KWFS-AM 1290 / 6:15  
a.m., 7:45 a.m.  
**WOODVILLE:** KWUD-AM 1490 /  
throughout the day  
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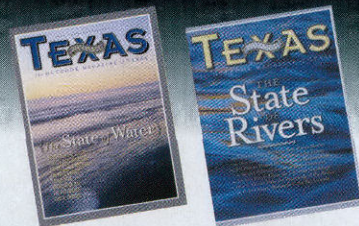
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July 2005:

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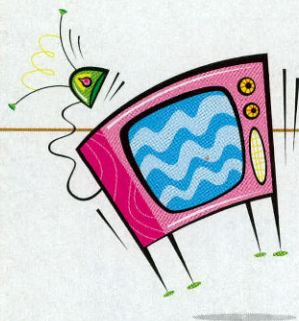


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# SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

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## T E L E V I S I O N

LOOK FOR THESE STORIES IN THE COMING WEEKS:

### May 29 – June 5:

How animals use coloration for camouflage; World War II veterans on the Battleship TEXAS; wildlife funding; relaxing rock walls; Longhorn Cavern State Park.

### June 5 – 12:

Fish cleaning tips; luxurious Fulton Mansion; teaching kids about hunting and conservation; the sights & sounds of waterfalls; exotic bird smuggling.

### June 12 – 19:

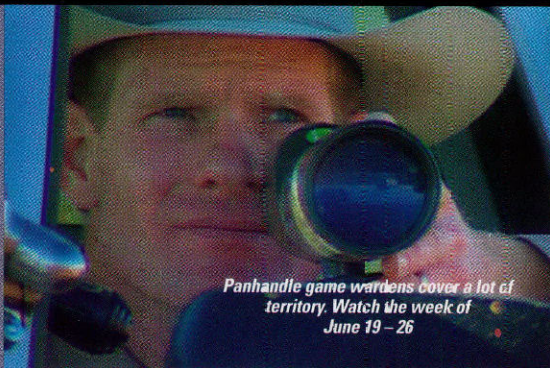
The dangers of exotic plants & animals; state parks as teaching tools; history and mystery at Caddo Lake; a misty morning; encounter the elusive kingfisher.

### June 19 – 26:

Panhandle game wardens; looking at the Lost Pines; innovative ways of working in state parks; tackle box tips; Guadalupe River State Park.

### June 26 – July 3:

Texas trout fishing; Caddoan Mounds State Historic Site; a cross-country trek by handycycle; animal defense; water bugs.



*Panhandle game wardens cover a lot of territory. Watch the week of June 19 – 26*

## “TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE”

Winner of 12 Emmy Awards, our television series is broadcast throughout Texas on local PBS affiliates. In stereo with closed captions.

[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/tv](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/tv)

**AMARILLO:** KACV, Ch. 2 / Wed. 12:30 p.m.

**AUSTIN:** KLRU, Ch. 18 / Sun. 9 a.m. / Mon. 12:30 p.m.; KLRU2, Cable Ch. 20 / Tues. 11 p.m.

**BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION:** KAMU, Ch. 15 / Thurs. 7 p.m. / Sun. 5 p.m., 10:30 p.m.

**CORPUS CHRISTI:** KEDT, Ch. 16 / Sun. 11 a.m. / Fri. 11:30 p.m.

**DALLAS-FORT WORTH:** KERA, Ch. 13 / Sat. 8 a.m.

Also serving Abilene, Denton, Longview, Marshall, San Angelo, Texarkana, Tyler, Wichita Falls, Sherman

**EL PASO:** KCOS, Ch. 13 / Sat. 3:00 p.m.

(rotates with other programs; check listings)

**HARLINGEN:** KMBH, Ch. 60 / Sun. 5 p.m.

Also serving McAllen, Mission, Brownsville

**HOUSTON:** KUHT, Ch. 8 / Sat. 3 p.m. / Fri. 1 p.m.

Also serving Beaumont/Port Arthur, Galveston, Texas City, Victoria

**KILLEEN:** KNCT, Ch. 46 / Sun. 5 p.m.

Also serving Temple

**LUBBOCK:** KTXT, Ch. 5 / Sun. 5:30 p.m.

**ODESSA-MIDLAND:** KOCV, Ch. 36 / Sat. 5 p.m.

**SAN ANTONIO & LAREDO:** KLRN, Ch. 9 / Friday noon, Sunday 1:30 p.m.

**WACO:** KWBU, Ch. 34 / Sat. 3 p.m.

Check local listings. Times and dates are subject to change, especially during PBS membership drives.



## R A D I O

### “PASSPORT TO TEXAS”

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[www.passporttotexas.org](http://www.passporttotexas.org)

**ABILENE:** KACU-FM 89.7 / 7:00 a.m., 1:43 p.m., 6 p.m.; KWKC-AM 1340 / 6:30 a.m.

**ALPINE:** KSUR-AM 1670 / 2:00 p.m. MWF; KVLV-AM 1240 / 6:30 a.m.; KALP-FM 92.7 / 6:30 a.m.

**AMARILLO:** KACV-FM 89.9 / 9:20 a.m.

**ATLANTA:** KPYN-AM 900 / 7:30 a.m.

**AUSTIN:** KWNX-AM 1260 and KZNX-AM 1530 9:20 a.m. Sun.

**AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN'S INSIDE LINE:** (512) 416-5700 category 6287 (NATR)

**BEAUMONT:** KLVI-AM 560 / 5:20 a.m.

**BEDFORD:** KMCE, K-Meadow, Meadow Creek Elementary / throughout the day

**BIG SPRING:** KBST-AM 1490 / 10:50 a.m.; KBST-FM 95.7 / 10:50 a.m.

**BONHAM:** KFYN-AM 1420 / 10:10 a.m. KFYZ-FM 98.3 / 10:10 a.m.

**BRADY:** KNEL-AM 1490 / 7:20 a.m.; KNEL-FM 95.3 / 7:20 a.m.

**BRYAN:** KZNE-AM 1150 / 5:40 p.m.

**CANTON:** KVCI-AM 1510 / 8:20 a.m.

**CANYON:** KWTS-FM 91.1 / throughout the day

**CARTHAGE:** KGAS-AM 1590 / throughout the day; KGAS-FM 104.3 / throughout the day

**CENTER:** KDET-AM 930 / 5:20 p.m.; KOSI-FM 92.5 / 5:20 p.m.

**CISCO:** KCER-FM 105.9 / 12:00 p.m.

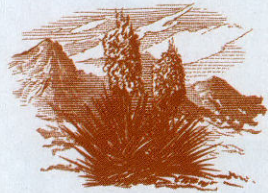
**COMMERCE:** KETR-FM 88.9 / 10:15 a.m.

**CORPUS CHRISTI:** KEDT-FM 90.3 / 5:33 p.m.; KFTX-FM 97.5 / between 5

continued on page 56

# GETAWAYS

FROM BIG BEND TO THE BIG THICKET AND THE RED TO THE RIO GRANDE



## BIG BEND COUNTRY

**JUNE:** Hiking Tours, Hueco Tanks SHS, El Paso, Wed. – Sun., reservations, (915) 849-6684

**JUNE:** Desert Garden Tours, Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center, Terlingua, reservations, (432) 424-3327

**JUNE:** Summer Amphitheater Programs, Davis Mountains SP, Fort Davis, Wed. – Sat. night, (432) 426-3337

**JUNE:** Pictograph Tours, Hueco Tanks SHS, El Paso, every Wed. – Sun., reservations, (915) 849-6684

**JUNE:** Texas Camel Treks, Monahans Sandhills SP, Monahans, e-mail or call for dates, info@texascamel-corps.com, (866) 6CAMELS

**JUNE:** Fate Bell Cave Dwelling, Seminole Canyon SP&HS, Comstock, Wed. – Sun., (432) 292-4464

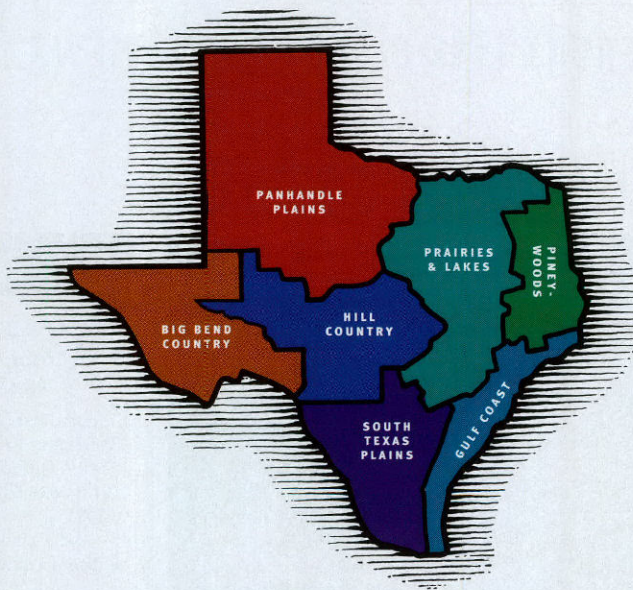
**JUNE:** White Shaman Tour, Seminole Canyon SP&HS, Comstock, Sat., (888) 525-9907

**JUNE 10:** Stories of Spirits, Magoffin Home SHS, El Paso, reservations, (915) 533-5147

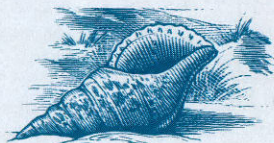
**JUNE 18:** Solitario Tour, Big Bend Ranch SP, Presidio, reservations, (432) 229-3416

**JUNE 19:** Birding Tours, Hueco Tanks SHS, El Paso, reservations, (915) 849-6684

**JUNE 25:** Guale Mesa Tour, Big Bend Ranch SP, Presidio, reservations required, (432) 229-3416



For more detailed information on outdoor events across the state, visit [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us) and click on "TPWD Events" in the blue area labeled "In the Parks."



## GULF COAST

**JUNE:** Weekend Nature Programs, Brazos Bend SP, Needville, Sat. – Sun., (979) 553-5101

**JUNE:** Hatchery Tours, CCA / AEP Marine Development Center SFH, Corpus Christi, Mon. – Sat., reservations, (361) 939-7784

**JUNE:** Bay Seining, Galveston Island SP, Galveston, every Sunday, (409) 737-1222

**JUNE:** Bay Walk, Galveston Island SP, Galveston, every Saturday, (409) 737-1222

**JUNE:** Exploring Sea Life, Galveston Island SP, Galveston, Sat., (409) 737-1222

**JUNE:** Aquarium and Hatchery Tours, Sea Center Texas, Lake Jackson, Tues. – Sun., (979) 292-0100

**JUNE:** Marsh Airboat Tours,

Sea Rim SP, Sabine Pass, Wed. – Sun., reservations recommended, (409) 971-2559

**JUNE:** Summer Night Hikes, Sea Rim SP, Sabine Pass, Sat., reservations, (409) 971-2559

**JUNE 3:** Friday Morning Bird Watching, Brazos Bend SP, Needville, (979) 553-5101

**JUNE 4:** Junior Angler Jamboree, Sabine Pass Battleground SP&HS, Sabine Pass, (409) 971-2559

**JUNE 4:** Free Fishing Day Youth Fishing, Sea Center Texas, Lake Jackson, (979) 292-0100

**JUNE 4, 11, 17, 18, 25:** Story Time, Sea Center Texas, Lake Jackson, (979) 292-0100

**JUNE 11:** Nighttime Alligator Count and Marsh Tour, J.D. Murphree WMA, Port Arthur, reservations, (409) 736-2551 ext. 23

**JUNE 17-18:** Skinny Water Rodeo Fishing Tournament, Ingleside, (888) 899-2906

**JUNE 18:** Juneteenth Service, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHS, West Columbia, (979) 345-4656



## HILL COUNTRY

**JUNE:** Gorman Falls Tour, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, Sat. – Sun. weather permitting, (325) 628-3240

**JUNE:** Walking Wild Cave Tour, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, Sat. – Sun. weather permitting, (325) 628-3240

**JUNE:** Evening Bat Flights, Devil's Sinkhole SNA, Rock Springs, Wed. – Sun., reservations, (830) 683-2287

**JUNE:** Cowboy Sunset Serenade and Historic Hayride, Garner SP, Concan, every Mon. – Fri., reservations, (830) 232-5999

**JUNE:** Interpretive Trail Hikes, Garner SP, Concan, every Tues. – Fri., (830) 232-6132

**JUNE:** Interpretive Programs, Guadalupe River SP, Spring Branch, Sat., (830) 438-2656

**JUNE:** Saturday Morning Interpretive Walk, Honey Creek SNA, Spring Branch, Sat., (830) 438-2656

**JUNE:** Wild Cave Tour, Longhorn Cavern SP, Burnet, Sat., reservations, (877) 441-2283

**JUNE 3:** Range and Wildlife Seminar, Kerr WMA, Hunt, (830) 238-4483

**JUNE 4:** Crawling Wild Cave Exploration, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, reservations, (325) 628-3240

**JUNE 11:** Aztec Eagles Symposium, Admiral Nimtz SHS-National Museum of the Pacific War, Fredericksburg, (830) 997-4379

**JUNE 11:** Bluegrass in the Park, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, (512) 793-2223

**JUNE 11:** Bat Flights at Stuart Bat Cave, Kickapoo Cavern SP, Brackettville, reservations, (830) 563-2342

**JUNE 11:** Morning Bird Walks, Kickapoo Cavern SP, Brackettville, reservations required, (830) 563-2342

**JUNE 11:** Wild Cave Tour, Kickapoo Cavern SP, Brackettville, reservations required, (830) 563-2342

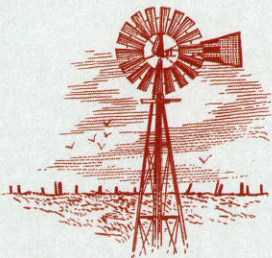
**JUNE 11, 25:** Simple Sounds Concert in the Cave, Longhorn Cavern SP, Burnet, reservations, (877) 441-2283

**JUNE 14:** Flag Day Program, Admiral Nimitz SHS-National Museum of the Pacific War, Fred-ericksburg, (830) 997-4379

**JUNE 17-18:** 30th Anniversary of Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm, Lyndon B. Johnson SP&HS, Stonewall, (830) 644-2252

**JUNE 18:** Trail Project, Enchanted Rock SNA, Fredericksburg, (325) 247-3903

**JUNE 18:** Full Moon Hikes, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, (512) 793-2223



## PANHANDLE PLAINS

**JUNE 2-4:** Texas State Bluegrass Festival, Coliseum, Brownwood, visit [www.lake-brownwoodfriends.org](http://www.lake-brownwoodfriends.org) or call (325) 643-8011

**JUNE 4:** Sun Fun and Star Walk, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, (940) 839-4331

**JUNE:** Lost Creek Trailway Hike, Fort Richardson SP&HS & Lost Creek Reservoir State Trailway, Jacksboro, (940) 567-3506

**JUNE 4:** 13th Annual Kid Fishing Tournament, Lake Arrowhead SP, Wichita Falls, (940) 528-2211

**JUNE 4:** Annual Rough Fish Contest, Lake Arrowhead SP, Wichita Falls, (940) 528-2211

**JUNE 4:** Bison Seminar, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, (325) 949-4757

**JUNE 4, 18:** Night Noises, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227

**JUNE 11:** Stargazing Party, Big Spring SP, Big Spring, (432) 263-4931

**JUNE 11-12:** Slither Under the Moon Night Race, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, visit [www.rattlesnakeracing.com](http://www.rattlesnakeracing.com), (940) 839-4331

**JUNE 24:** Canyon Critters, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227



## PINEYWOODS

**JUNE:** Nature Hikes, Lake Livingston SP, Livingston, reservations, (936) 365-2201

**JUNE:** Walk on the Wild Side, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, every Sunday, (409) 384-5231

**JUNE:** Kids Ride Free, Texas State Railroad SP, Rusk, every Thurs. – Sun., reservations, (800) 442-8951

**JUNE 4:** Kids Fish Flop Tournament, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, (409) 384-5231

**JUNE 4:** Fireside Storytelling, Mission Tejas SP, Grapeland, (936) 687-2394

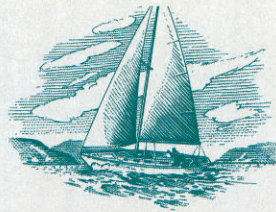
**JUNE 4:** Kids Fishing Day, Tyler SP, Tyler, (903) 597-5338

**JUNE 11, 18, 25:** Saturday Evening Programs, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, (409) 384-5231

**JUNE 18:** Floating the Forks, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, reservations, (409) 384-5231

**JUNE 18:** Archeology Tour, Mission Tejas SP, Grapeland, (936) 687-2394

**JUNE 25-26:** Field Day, Texas State Railroad SP, Rusk, (800) 442-8951



## PRAIRIES & LAKES

**JUNE:** Kreische Brewery Tours, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, LaGrange, Sat. – Sun. weather permitting, (979) 968-5658

**JUNE:** Ranger Tales, Purtils Creek SP, Eustace, every Sat., (903) 425-2332

**JUNE:** Exhibit: Love's Messenger: Courtship in the Victorian Age, Sebastopol House SHS, Seguin, Fri. – Sun., (830) 379-4833

**JUNE 4:** Kids Wilderness Survival, Cedar Hill SP, Cedar Hill, reservations, (972) 291-3900 Ext. 323

**JUNE 4:** Kids Fishing Day, Cooper Lake SP/South Sulphur Unit, Sulphur Springs, (903) 395-3100

**JUNE 4:** Kids Fishing Derby, Eisenhower SP, Denison, (903) 465-1956

**JUNE 4:** Kid's Wilderness Survival, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, reservations, (940) 328-1171

**JUNE 4:** Annual Kids Fishing Tournament, Lake Whitney SP, Whitney, (254) 694-3793

**JUNE 4:** Texas Stars and Guitars Fest, Lake Whitney SP, Whitney, (254) 694-3793

**JUNE 4:** 13th Annual Kids Fish and Play Day, Purtils Creek SP, Eustace, (903) 425-2332

**JUNE 4:** Junior Angler Adventure, Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, Athens, (903) 676-BASS

**JUNE 6-9, 13-16:** Outdoor Adventure and Ecology Program, Palmetto SP, Gonzales, reservations, (830) 672-3266

**JUNE 10:** Wildlife Slide Show, Eisenhower SP, Denison, (903) 465-1956

**JUNE 11:** Wildflower Walk, Cooper Lake SP/Doctors Creek Unit, Cooper, (903) 395-3100

**JUNE 11:** Stagecoach Days, Fanthorp Inn SHS, Anderson, (936) 873-2633

**JUNE 11:** Stargazing Party, Ray Roberts Lake SP/Isle du Bois Unit, Pilot Point, (940) 686-2148

**JUNE 11, 25:** Canoe Tours, Purtils Creek SP, Eustace, reservations, (903) 425-2332

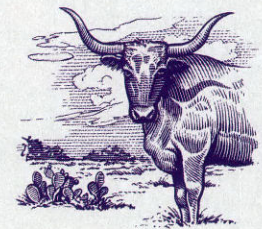
**JUNE 17:** Fish of Lake Texoma Slide Show, Eisenhower SP, Denison, (903) 465-1956

**JUNE 18:** Spiders, Snakes and Venomous Creatures, Cooper Lake SP/South Sulphur Unit, Sulphur Springs, (903) 395-3100

**JUNE 18:** Cowboy Campfire, Music and Poetry, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, (940) 328-1171

**JUNE 25:** Get to Know the Trees, Cedar Hill SP, Cedar Hill, (972) 291-5940

**JUNE 25:** Penn Farm Tour, Cedar Hill SP, Cedar Hill, (972) 291-5940



## SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

**JUNE:** Nature Programs, Goliad SP, Goliad, call for date, (361) 645-3405

**JUNE:** Trail Walk, Goliad SP, Goliad, Sun., (361) 645-3405

**JUNE 11:** Animal Signs, Government Canyon SNA, San Antonio, reservations, [educmte@hotmail.com](mailto:educmte@hotmail.com) or call (210) 688-2208

<b>SP</b>	State Park
<b>SHS</b>	State Historical Site
<b>SNA</b>	State Natural Area
<b>WMA</b>	Wildlife Management Area
<b>SFH</b>	State Fish Hatchery

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MK-1 Control Unit (shown)   MK-2 Control Unit (not shown)   MK-6 Control Unit (shown)   MK-6Solar Control Unit (not shown)

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Karen Burkholder Schlegel and her 5-year-old daughter, Thira, take a break from some early-morning fishing in Shamrock Cove near Port Aransas. Karen pulls a one-person kayak from Wilderness Systems.

**IMAGE SPECS:**

Canon EOS-1 with a 70-200 mm lens set at 200mm on Fuji Sensia film.

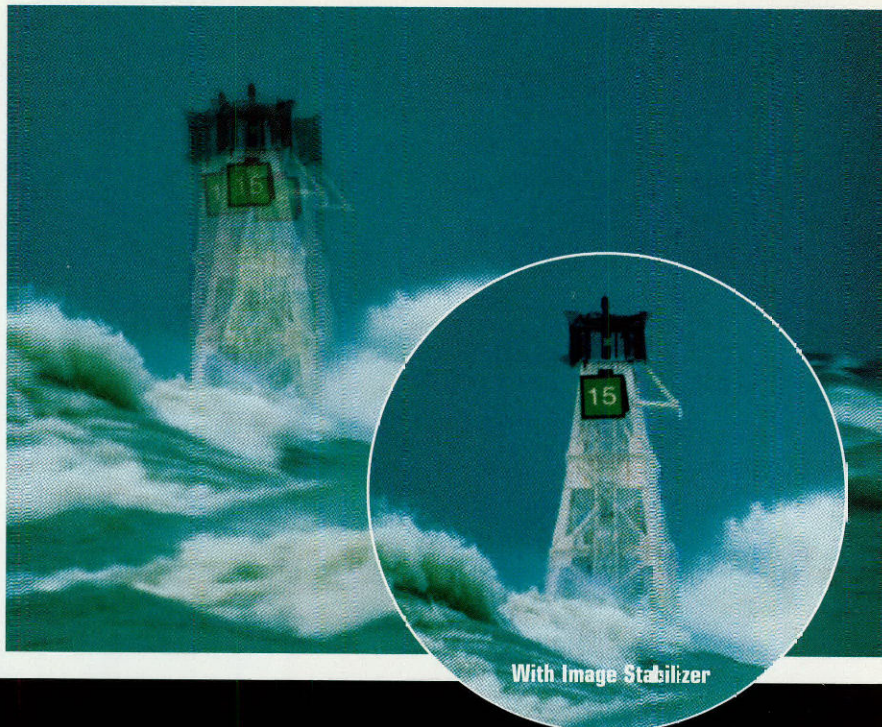


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