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WATERFOWL BIRDS

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TEXAS

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The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS



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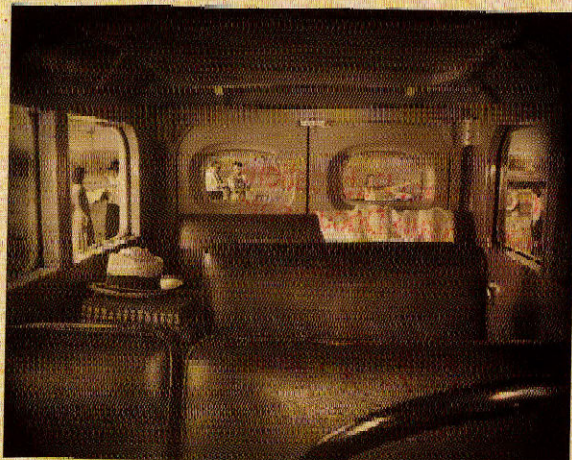
PLUS: LARRY D. HODGE ON TEXAS TEAL HUNTING
GIBBS MILLIKEN FIELD TESTS WATERFOWL CALLS

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CONT



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E N T S

SEPTEMBER 200

F E A T U R E S

20 Waterfowl Primer

by Russell A. Graves

What essential gear do you need to take up duck hunting? Here's a fowl play starter kit.

30 The Deal on Teal

by Larry D. Hodge

Texas tradition requires that hunters be humbled in September before the beginning of deer season. Hunters who believe doves were placed on earth for this purpose have obviously never been teal hunting.

38 Running of the Bulls

by Paul A. Cañada

Each fall anglers trek to the passes that connect Texas' bays to the Gulf in hopes of catching one of the state's most amazing phenomena — the "bull" redfish run.

44 Will Work for Food

by Elaine Robbins

Hummingbirds are more than just another pretty face. They "work for their supper" by pollinating more than 150 native Texas plants.

52 An Alpenglow Adventure

by Valerie Bernat

Join us on a moonlight hike in Franklin Mountains State Park. What's the attraction? Great sunsets, cooler temperatures and a glimpse of creatures that go bump in the night.

DEPARTMENTS

4 AT ISSUE

8 MAIL CALL

11 SCOUT Stalking the endangered meadow rue, dodging deer, waterfowl calls and a fish finder

60 LEGEND, LORE & LEGACY

Waterfowl hunting guide Jimmy Reel created a conservation ethic that still holds water.

62 GETAWAYS Events across the state

66 SIGHTS & SOUNDS Texas Parks and Wildlife's television and radio schedule

72 PARTING SHOT

COVERS

Front: The colorful wood duck frequents wooded ponds and streams in the eastern part of the state. Photo © R. L. Stanley.

Back: Introducing a youngster to duck hunting offers a chance for them to learn about wetlands and the animals that inhabit them. Photo © David J. Sams.

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AT ISSUE

From the Pen of Andrew Sansom

Back during the early 1980s, when I first went to work for The Nature Conservancy, I commuted weekly between Brazoria County and Austin. It was a stressful time with so much separation from my family and having responsibility for a fledgling organization which, at that time, was deeply in debt. One of my main sources of comfort and confidence was my friend David Wintermann, whose second-floor office in Eagle Lake was a regular stop on those trips back and forth from the coast to the Hill Country.

On the wall of that simple office overlooking the square was a wonderful painting by Texas artist Herb Booth of Mr. Wintermann and Jimmy Reel, whom you will meet this month in "Legend, Lore and Legacy." Mr. Wintermann not only was my mentor, he was one of the finest sportsmen I've ever known. But to the end of his life, he gave all the credit to Jimmy Reel.



Texas Parks and Wildlife for many years has relied on Ducks Unlimited for essential political and financial support in one of the most successful wetland protection and restoration programs in the nation.

As Larry Hodge will tell you, Wintermann and Reel conceived the very practical custom of half-day waterfowl hunting, which is still practiced as an unwritten rule in the gulf prairie counties today. They co-founded the Rice Belt Chapter of Ducks Unlimited and fined their hunting companions for indiscretions of form and sportsmanship, directing all proceeds to the international waterfowl conservation organization.

Thanks to the two of them and many more Ducks Unlimited members, much has been accomplished for the ducks. Texas Parks and Wildlife for many years has relied on Ducks Unlimited for essential political and financial support in one of the most successful wetland protection and restoration programs in the nation. The relationship between our department and Ducks Unlimited is a partnership, which helped create Peach Point Wildlife Management Area and a total of 10,566 acres acquired for waterfowl conservation. It is a partnership whose 18 Matching Aid to Restore States' Habitat (MARSH) projects have restored more than 66,528 acres of wetlands to productivity in Texas.



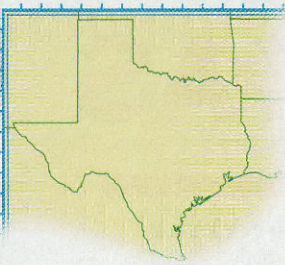
Time after time, Ducks Unlimited has taken the lead in the most difficult issues, including the looming snow geese crisis, which are so much a part of the way of life in Eagle Lake where Jimmy Reel is a legend.

He and David Wintermann understood that waterfowl hunting is kind of like baseball, made the richer by virtue of its many traditions, its special gear and its rituals.

One of the joys of the teal season coming this month will be to toast the birds and the companionship, the great efforts of Ducks Unlimited, and the legacy of Jimmy Reel.

Andrew Sansom

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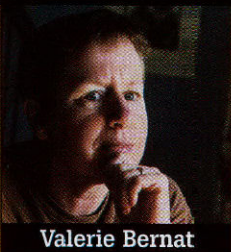
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Elaine Robbins, who is currently serving as interim executive editor of this magazine, is a freelance editor and writer living in Austin. She writes about travel, preservation and environmental issues for such publications as the *Utne Reader*, *Preservation*, *Southern Living*, and *E Magazine*. Her credits include "The 50 Best Places to Live" (*Modern Maturity*), "Trouble in Paradise: Islands in Ecological Crisis" (*E Magazine*) and contributions to the upcoming book *Visionaries Who Can Change Your Life* (*Utne Reader*). She started her career in book publishing, and has edited numerous guidebooks, served as senior editor of *TWA Ambassador* and as a contributing editor of AAA's *Texas Journey*. A regular Barton Springs swimmer, she also can be found two-stepping at the Broken Spoke. She writes about hummingbirds in this month's issue.



Elaine Robbins



Valerie Bernat

Valerie Bernat, an El Paso writer, never tires of hiking the Franklin Mountains, with either the light of the sun or glow of the moon to illuminate her way. She has taken friends, family and organized groups on Franklin Mountain moonlight hikes such as the one she writes about in this issue. She says that once hiker's eyes become accustomed to seeing by moonbeams, they find the transformed landscape, the quiet of the evening and the city lights, sparkling like scattered jewels, a magical experience. Having gotten over her own childhood fear of the dark, Valerie now loves exploring, observing and learning about nature while crawling through caves, scuba diving, backpacking and cycling as well as hiking. Recent travel to Nicaragua, Hawaii, and Finland have allowed her to discover everything from rainforests to active lava flows to tundra-topped islands in the Baltic Sea. Her articles on travel and the outdoors have appeared in *Texas Parks & Wildlife*, *New Mexico* magazine, *National Geographic Traveler*, and *Backpacker*.

C. F. Eckhardt grew up in Austin and on a ranch outside Georgetown. He majored in history at the University of Texas, specializing in Texas and the American West. History as a profession — unless you're going to teach, which Eckhardt refused on principle to do — didn't pay much in the 1960s, so he spent many years as a soldier and a police officer, writing in his spare time. He is a member of Western Writers of America, the Westerners International and the Guadalupe Storytellers' Guild. His books include *The Lost San Saba Mines*, *Texas Tales Your Teacher Never Told You*, *Tales of Badmen, Bad Women and Bad Places: Four Centuries of Texas Outlawry* and the forthcoming *Texas Smoke: Black Powder on the Frontier*. Eckhardt lives in Seguin with his wife, Vickie, who is assistant librarian at Texas Lutheran University. He writes constantly when not hunting, fishing or shooting. This month he tells how to build a fish finder.



C. F. Eckhardt

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SEPTEMBER 2000, VOL. 58, NO. 9

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RobRoy McDonald Editorial Intern

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Grady Allen, Wyman Meinzer, Earl Nottingham and David J. Sams

EDITORIAL OFFICES:

3000 South IH 35, Suite 120, Austin, Texas 78704

Phone: 512-912-7000 Fax: 512-707-1913

E-mail: magazine@tpwd.state.tx.us

ADVERTISING SALES OFFICES:

Advertising Account Management

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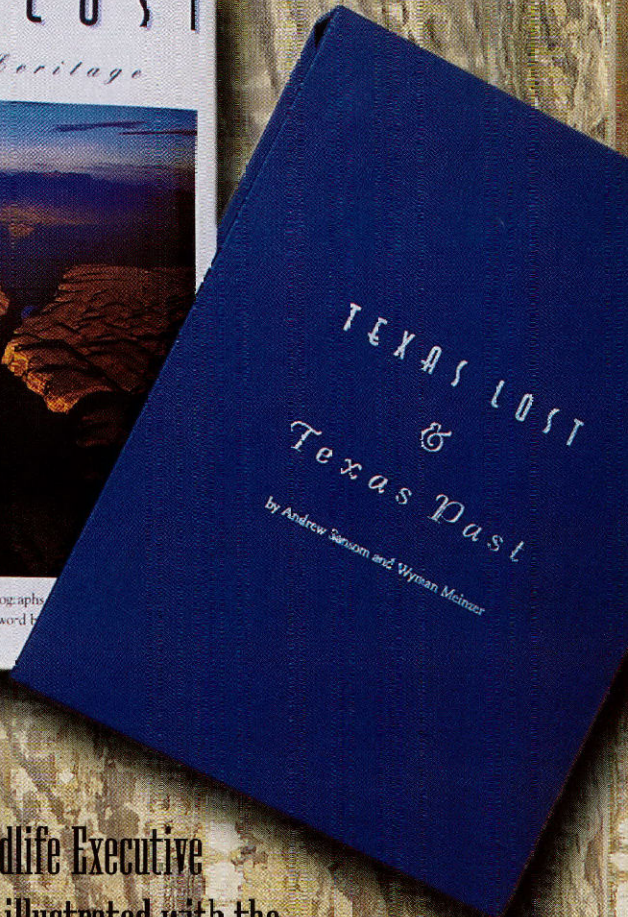
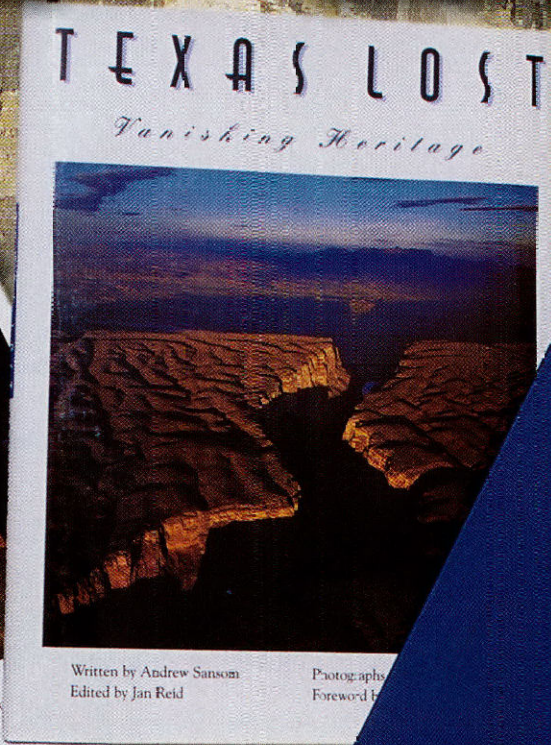
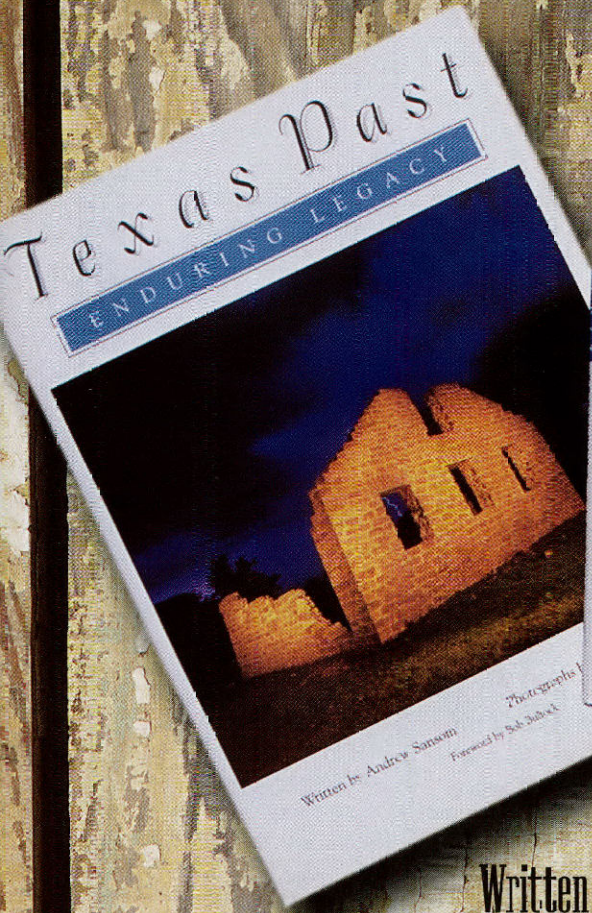
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Written by Texas Parks and Wildlife Executive Director Andrew Sansom and lavishly illustrated with the photographs of Texas State Photographer Wyman Meinzer, *Texas Lost: Vanishing Heritage* and *Texas Past: Enduring Legacy* capture the magnificence of Texas as never before.

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MAIL CALL

Picks, Pans and Probes from Previous Issues

FORWARD

A MAGAZINE IS MORE THAN WORDS, PICTURES, PAPER AND INK stapled together. It is a community of readers, bound together by common interests, ethics and sensibilities. To succeed, the issues that matter most to readers must always be foremost. We make it our daily business around here to put our readers first — not the personal value systems and tastes of our editors and writers.

Covered among our most frequent topics are the activities that appeal to the broadest group of our readers, such as conservation efforts, natural history, state parks, hunting and fishing. Increasingly, we include topics on birding, biking, rafting, wildlife viewing and adventure travel as greater numbers of our readers are expressing interest in new and varied ways to enjoy the Texas outdoors. Welcome, y'all!

We are pleased that you have responded vigorously to our efforts to live up to our charge as "The Outdoor Magazine of Texas." Our circulation has increased from 147,000 in 1999 to 156,000 for the first six months of 2000 in our just-completed Audit Bureau of Circulation audit.

Still, even though we are attracting more readers, we realize we can't be "all things to all people" and that some subscribers, like Larry McCarley, whose letter appears to the right, will decide our magazine is not for them. We are saddened whenever a reader writes to cancel a subscription, saddened to lose a member of our community and the chance to hear his or her voice among the diverse, vibrant (and vocal!) congregation of outdoorsmen and women who connect with each other through the pages of *Texas Parks & Wildlife*.

Sometimes, when you point out that we've made a little goof, we'll take ourselves to task and correct it. Other times, such as with Mr. McCarley's dislike for one of our core subjects, hunting, we must simply cheerfully refund his subscription money, realize that he stepped into the wrong "town meeting," and say goodbye and good luck.

If you know others who share your conservation ethic, I hope you will consider using the Christmas Gift Postcard in this issue. For just \$15.95, you can share the diversity of the Texas outdoors — and the diversity of our ever-lovin' readers! — with a friend, month in and month out. Readers, we need more like you.

If a magazine is more than words, pictures, paper and ink, it is also due to the craft of the Art Director who weaves all these into a tapestry. With this issue, we say Godspeed and thank you to Art Director Mark Mahorsky, whose interpretive mastery has helped us achieve yet another First Place National Award, this time with the Association for Conservation Information.

Thank you, Mark. You have put a fresh face on a true Texas legend. We won't forget you.



The Once and Future Silver King

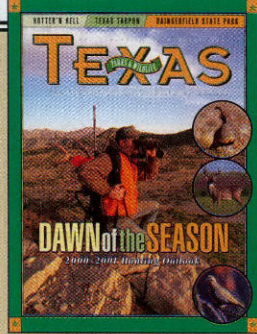
Great article on tarpon in the August issue! I have been fortunate to have seen a few of these great fish in the bays near Rockport and have been awed by their

beauty. If only my predecessor fishermen had not so lightly killed the spawning-age tarpon during the '40s and '50s, maybe there would be more tarpon for my generation to enjoy catching and releasing.

Your page 55 photo of the "wall of scales" at the Tarpon Inn is evidence of just why there are so few tarpon in our bays today. They were overfished, just as trout and redfish were in the 1960s. I wish you would have pointed out to the non-knowing public that tarpon are catch-and-release only, and perhaps made a greater contribution to the resurgence of what

was once a great tarpon population.

⚡ Greg Blasko



I prefer *Texas Parks & Wildlife* over my other fishing magazines — but not just for the fishing. My 12-year-old daughter is a student of wildlife photography and my 14-year-old son is a history buff. Your magazine fits the bill on all counts: you are truly publishing a family magazine.

**Dan Hottman
Conroe**

Speaking His Mind

I just got my August issue of *Texas Parks and Wildlife*, which on the cover features a quail, a deer, and a dove as targets (not to mention the Neanderthal hunter-gatherer with a set of antlers in his backpack). I should have known better when I moved to

LETTERS

Texas, the land of Bubbas and good ol' boys, pickups and gun-racks, small minds and oversized belt-buckles, that a subscription to *Texas Parks & Wildlife*, a magazine one might think is concerned with the environment, is in fact a propaganda piece for gun nuts, whose idea of fun is to go out and kill a sentient creature just for the endorphin rush of watching it die.

The only concern you people have for parks and wildlife is to trash the former and kill the latter. Because of macho hunters like you, we no longer enjoy the company of the passenger pigeon, the Carolina parakeet and the Arizona panther, not to mention countless other species on the brink of extinction. Cancel my subscription and refund my money. I think I will send it to the Fund for Animals.

⚡ *Larry McCarley*

The "Wright" Stuff

As a subscriber, I have enjoyed *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine for years and think the new look of the magazine is spectacular.

Over the years, I have seen the anti-hunting, anti-fishing faction do nothing but slam your publication, and I would like to comment on that.

I have been a hunter and angler since I was five years old. Fortunately, I had a grandfather and father who instilled good ethical rules for me to follow in the outdoors. I am a member of several conservation organizations and even worked for one for five years.

I firmly believe in land, game and fish conservation. I ask the "antis" the following: How do they intend to raise money for food and habitat for these animals? Would they rather see them die of starvation than be ethically managed by landowners, conservation agencies and hunters?

Most important, where and how do they intend to replace the millions of dollars generated by hunting and fishing license sales? Where do they think Texas Parks and Wildlife gets the income to serve its conservation mission if the hunters and anglers go away?

If any of the anti-hunters can logically answer these questions and provide a plan on how they will implement it, I would reconsider my position and help them. Until they can answer these simple questions, I will keep on fishing and hunting as I have done for 41 years. I was always taught that if you can not help solve the problem then you are part of the problem.

Keep up the good work and I will continue to look forward to my next issue of *Texas Parks & Wildlife*.

*Art Wright
Humble*

Watching Out for Water

The article "Drought," (July 2000) by Todd H. Votteler, Ph.D., was excellent. I've grown very concerned about the future water situation in Texas, and this article hopefully will make others become more aware how precious water is. Now may be the time for coverage of

water conservation methods, such as cisterns, that seem to have been ignored.

The last sentence of the article states that the key to living with drought is preparation. It's time that we Texans get really serious and deal with this problem before it's too late.

*Paula T. Armstrong
Del Rio*

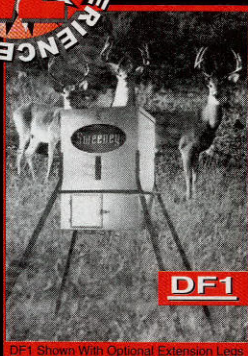
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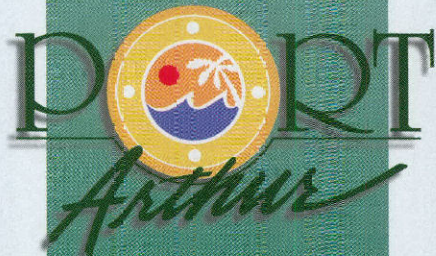




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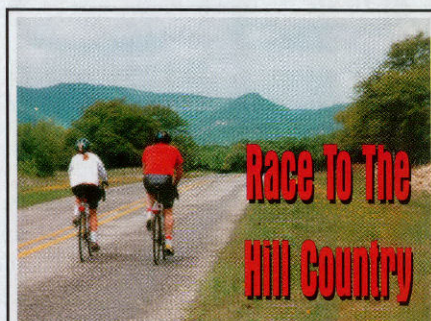


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# SCOUT

NEWS AND VIEWS IN THE TEXAS OUTDOORS

## RARE ARKANSAS MEADOW-RUE

Sometimes a scientist literally stumbles on a new discovery. That's how it happened this spring. Botanist and plant ecologist Jason Singhurst was walking through a cemetery in northeast Texas in search of a rare shumard and chinquapin oak woodland. He took a step and his colleague yelled, "Stop! Don't step on that plant!"

Singhurst let out a string of excited expletives when he realized the plant he has almost stepped on was in fact the rare Arkansas meadow-rue, *Thalictrum arkarsanum*, known to occur in only a half dozen or so locations in Texas. The plant is nearly as rare in Oklahoma, and it hasn't been seen in Arkansas in more than 20 years.

The Arkansas meadow-rue, a beautiful, delicate plant that blossoms in early March, prefers rich bottomland hardwood forests in extreme northeastern Texas (and adjacent Oklahoma and Arkansas). Only a handful of botanists actually have seen the plant — which is on The Nature Conservancy/Texas Parks and Wildlife Rare Plants of Texas List — in the field. Soon after that discovery, Singhurst's field work led him to several additional, previously unknown populations in a few wooded tributaries of the Red and Sulphur rivers.



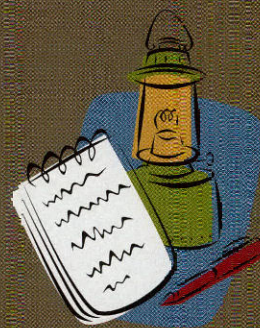
Arkansas meadow-rue probably was once more common in mature wooded streams and creeks in northeast Texas, although 150 years of habitat destruction has reduced the bottomland habitat it depends upon. "They are still very rare in Texas," says Singhurst,

"and each year they become more and more rare, particularly as additional sites are altered."

One extensive site that was found this spring has just been clearcut. According to Roger Sanders, research associate at the Botanical Research Institute of Texas who also has studied the Arkansas meadow-rue, removing the trees from the forest allows the hot summer sun to bake the ground, killing the microcorms that are just under the surface.

Although Singhurst's discoveries are encouraging, the species is not out of the woods yet. As demand for water becomes more and more critical, a number of proposed dam construction projects within the heart of their range threatens this species and many other plants and animals that live in the endangered bottomland forests. In fact, less than 10 percent of these ecologically important forests remain. These reservoirs could wipe out more of what little habitat is left for the Arkansas meadow-rue — a fate we will rue indeed.

— Matt White



FIELD NOTES

Texas Wildlife Expo, the state's largest outdoor show, returns September 30 and October 1 to Texas Parks and Wildlife's Austin headquarters.

Visitors to the two-day event, now in its ninth year, will have the opportunity to shoot, fish, kayak, rock climb, bird watch, mountain bike, see Texas wildlife and more.

The Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas, Inc. presents Expo on behalf of Texas Parks and Wildlife to introduce Texans to the state's outdoor recreation heritage and its cultural and natural resources.

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## How to avoid hitting a deer

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One moment you're driving along, clear road ahead; the next, the windshield is filled with the looming wall of a deer in profile. Your foot flies off the accelerator pedal, your hands tighten on the wheel...

My recent test drive in a Mercedes SLK230 was cut painfully short by just such an unexpected encounter. A deer bounded into the gently curving Hill Country road less than 20 feet in front of me. At 40 miles per hour, I covered the distance in less than half a second. Rather than chance the impact, I swerved violently to the right, hoping to scoot past the animal on the shoulder. It didn't happen. The Mercedes struck a large rock, which destroyed the front spoiler and suspension and ripped the bottom of the radiator out. The impact launched the car three feet into the air, and the passenger side clipped a tree before the car crashed back to earth, skidding sideways across the road.

Thankfully, the only casualty was my trip to Fredericksburg. I was lucky. The Texas Department of Public Safety reports 18 fatalities due to collisions with animals in 1998. That same year, there were almost 1,300 accidents involving injuries and more than 2,000 non-injury accidents caused by unfortunate meetings of animals and cars.

What should you do if you face such

a dilemma? After my crash, friends and family were equally divided into "hit the deer" and "dodge the deer" camps. Did I do the right thing?

According to Greg Fresquez at the

of Public Safety. According to Clark, the primary concern in any animal encounter is to maintain control of your vehicle. For small animals like rabbits and squirrels — and even deer —

hitting them is better than losing control of your car. When these darting animals leave no time for an escape plan, steer straight, brake gently and come to a safe stop. Hitting a deer isn't pleasant, but it is preferable to running off the road, slamming into a fixed object and making a bad situation worse.

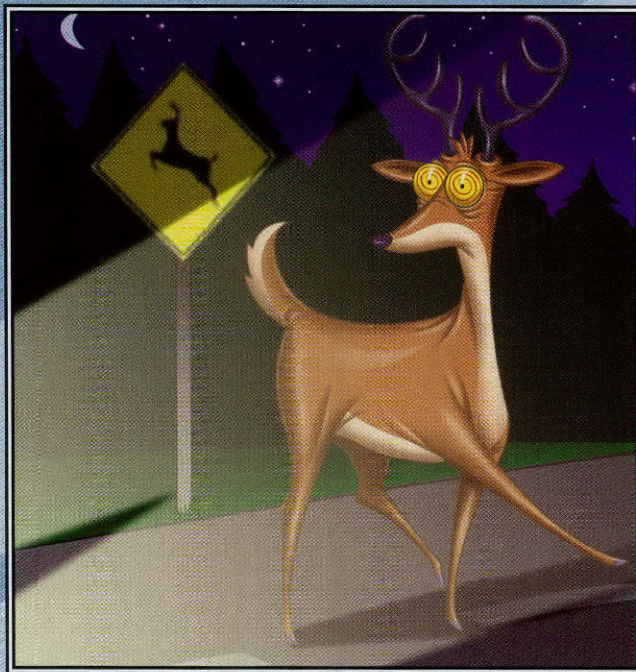
Once the crisis is over, report collisions with large animals to the state police, whether or not human injuries are involved. The police will hand the situation over to game wardens if a deer

is killed, or they will contact the owners of injured domestic animals.

Of course, the safest approach is to avoid encountering deer at all. Several companies offer bumper-mounted "deer whistles," which supposedly warn deer and other animals away from the road with audible or ultrasonic noise. But studies by several universities, as well as testing by police departments in Utah, Wisconsin, Georgia, Michigan, and Europe, show that none of them work.

The best advice? Be extra careful on roads where you know deer are abundant. Avoid driving them at night, slow down and keep a sharp lookout for the glow of an animal's eyes.

— Chris Jackson



Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving in Arizona, a cool-headed driver can use what he calls the "lift, turn, squeeze" method to dodge an obstacle: 1) Lift off of the gas, but don't slam on the brakes. (Hard braking can cause the car to spin, even on dry pavement.) 2) Turn into the clear path and then quickly turn back into your lane; 3) Accelerate to stabilize the vehicle. Remember an important rule of thumb: The car goes where the driver is looking. If you swerve and stare wide-eyed at an approaching tree, that's where your car's going to go.

The downside to this method is that it requires practice and a cool head. For most drivers, it's best to take the advice of Major Stan Clark of the Department



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**\$2.1 billion** The cost to plug these wells today, money that should be paid by the oil industry.



Texas Land & Mineral Owners Association (TLMA) was formed in 1999 by a concerned group of Texas farmers, ranchers and mineral owners. This group supports the exploration and development for oil & gas wells but believes the oil industry has a responsibility to clean up its mess.

## Help TLMA keep Texas' water clean.

TLMA supports the following:

- Mandatory bonding for all oil operators in Texas
- Stop all transfers of wells to unbonded oil operators
- Crack down on false production reporting and establish a minimum "producing" level of 1.01 barrels per day
- Annual witnessed pressure testing of all inactive wellbores
- Increase drilling permit fees to pay for plugging existing abandoned wells.

For more information about TLMA and its efforts please contact:

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PMB 913  
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# SHOOTING STANDBY

Some lucky hunters win a permit on They Shoot Standby, Don't They?



**S**o you forgot to apply for a Texas Parks and Wildlife public hunt? Not to worry. You still have a chance to hunt hogs, javelina, exotic big game — even deer. As Yog Berra used to say, “It ain't over till it's over.”

Here's why: Hunters apply for a limited number of permits, but some lucky applicants from the computer crawl fail to send in their \$50 permit fee or to inform TPW that they will be

unable to show up for the hunt. This results in unclaimed hunting positions. These vacancies become available at noon on the first day of the hunt. The hunt manager collects the names of candidates who show up and conducts a manual drawing right on the spot.

*Pssst...* The number of applicants for stand-by positions tends to be dramatically smaller than number of applicants in the computerized draw.

“People are missing a bet if they overlook the standby system,” says Herb Kothmann, TPW public hunting director. “Your odds of getting a permit through standby are usually a lot better than through the computer drawing.”

Take, for example, the Chaparral Wildlife Management Area, located in prime white-tailed deer habitat south of San Antonio. Last fall, no fewer than 5,712 applied for 50 either-sex deer permits, a 100-to-1 longshot.

Amazingly, there were 13 no-shows. For the 139 who showed up as potential fill-ins, their odds improved to almost 1 in 10.

All told, TPW statistics show that 1,681 standby applicants showed up last year and 1,003 were rewarded for their optimism. Among standby applicants for bowhunts, fully 80 percent drew permits for archery deer hunts.

To obtain a listing of scheduled public hunts, visit your nearest TPW field office or phone TPW at 512-389-4800. Public hunt coordinator Vickie Fite says standby applicants don't have to pay an application fee; however, selected standby hunters age 17 or older must pay the hunt permit fee.

“Just because you aren't selected in the computer drawing,” says Kothmann, “doesn't mean you're out for the year.”

— Mark McDonald

## The DUCKS UNLIMITED GUIDE to SHOTGUNNING

Shotgunning, like writing, is a thing of beauty when it flows — and a bit ugly when it doesn't. I had both experiences while reading *The Ducks Unlimited Guide to Shotgunning*.

The book is a collection of 44 columns that appeared in Ducks Unlimited magazine between 1990 and 1998. Penned by the late Don Zutz, a renowned wingshooting authority, the columns cover four subjects: guns, loads and ballistics, shooting, and a catchall of unrelated tips and tidbits.

“Catchall” is an apt description of the book as a whole. The chapters bounce from one topic to another with little continuity. The book reminds me, in fact, of my learning days as a shotgunner, when I was prone to start my swing, stop it, start it again, and sometimes let a target get completely out of range before shooting.

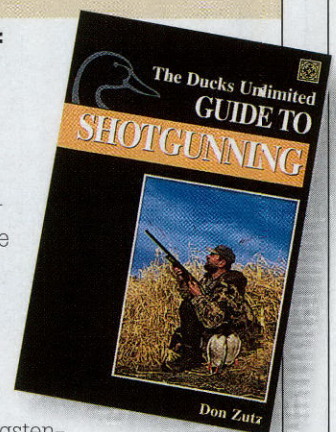
Zutz, who died in 1998, was at his best when dealing with shooting techniques and the technical aspects of shotgunning. You can take what he had to say about

chokes, loads and how to hit the target to the field or to the range and be entirely happy with the results. But regrettably, the book includes nothing on the newer waterfowl loads such as bismuth, tungsten-matrix, tungsten-polymer, tungsten-tin-bismuth and tungsten-iron, or the faster steel loads now available.

The experienced shotgunner will find little new in the book, but the neophyte will find much that is helpful. I highly recommend the chapters on peripheral vision and long leads, hitting long-range flushing shots, and shooting high birds. The 60 black-and-white photographs in the book are for decoration, not instruction.

*The Ducks Unlimited Guide to Shotgunning* (Ducks Unlimited, \$24.50), is available through bookstores or through DU at 901-758-3825 or <[www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org)>.

— Larry D. Hodge





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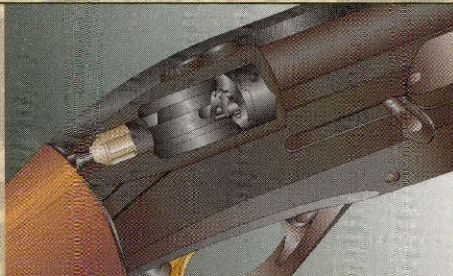
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By Gibbs Milliken

# Waterfowl Calls

New & Traditional Calls Help You Master Bird-Talk

CALLING WATERFOWL IS A SKILL THAT must be developed with good instruction, patience and practice. Even then, the calling of wild birds is learned by knowing about the birds themselves: their habits, various voices, frequency, volume and, most important, knowing how, when and where to use these calls.

The migratory birds that reach Texas are wise to hunters by the time they have run the gauntlet of gunfire across Canada and the United States. Only the smart or lucky individuals have made it to the wintering grounds, and they keep a wary eye and ear out for anything unnatural. Videotapes, sound recordings or individuals can instruct the novice hunter in the basics of calling,

but beyond that, calling time in the field is needed to develop real finesse.

"Waterfowl calling is different in every hunting situation," says Vernon Bevell, TPW Migratory Game Bird Program Director.

"The birds seem to respond to different things; loud attracts some birds on any day of the season just as soft calling may. The call notes used also influence different species. The

hunter must learn how to figure out what is and isn't working on any given day. Woods hunting is different from prairie hunting and both of them are different from marsh hunting. Hunters also must learn what works in their environment and

that, too, will change as the season progresses."

Spread-hunting with correctly set decoys, good blind position and satisfactory calling can produce amazing results. The birds will often come in, wings set, and attempt to land among a convincing display that speaks the right language. According to Bevell,

Keats Custom  
Goose Call, Orvis



"Good callers have mastered the rhythm and pitch of the various call notes, but the quality of the notes varies among birds and bird callers. It is not necessary to produce a near-perfect imitation to bring waterfowl within gun range. The most important thing is to become experienced enough to under-



Custom Duck and Canada Goose, Cutt  
Down Game Calls

stand what adjustments to make from day to day and location to location."

Hunting waterfowl is an exciting sport, rich in tradition, and challenging to both the beginner and veteran hunter when the cold north winds bring huge flights to Texas skies.

Call selection and use is a matter of individual preference. These are some traditional and newer design calls that are available and found to produce quality imitations of bird-talk. The finest calls are not always the most expensive. Custom waterfowl models that are hand-carved from exotic woods naturally cost considerably more than standard production grades. **The Keats Custom Goose Call** (\$135, Orvis) is a beautiful work of art in fancy, oiled burlwood. In the hands of an expert, this is an excellent full-throated Canada call. Easier to use are commercial calls like the **Imperial Honker and Imperial Snow Goose** (\$25.45, Sure Shot) which are large-fluted walnut tubes for reaching high-flying, distant birds. Also in this series is the **Imperial Double Reed Duck**



Buck Gardner  
Custom Series,  
Hunter's Specialties



Imperial Honker &  
Imperial Snow Goose,  
Sure Shot



Woody Wood Duck  
Whistle, Quaker Boy



Imperial Double Reed  
Duck, Sure Shot





*Easy Chuckle Duck Call, Quaker Boy*

(\$27.45, Sure Shot) with a big sound and reach. Among the finest new designs in duck calls are the **Buck Gardner Custom Series: Open Water and Timber Single Reed Calls** (\$129 ea., Hunter's Specialties) in polished acrylic and brass. Also topping the list for call realism is the **Custom Duck and Canada Goose** (\$60 ea., Cutt Down Game Calls), beautifully constructed of cocobolo wood and hand-finished.

The pocket-size **Woody Wood Duck Whistle** (\$16.99, Quaker Boy) is tuned to produce the high-pitch squeal of these exquisite birds. This company also makes a good "shaker" type, the **Easy Chuckle Duck Call** (\$19.99, Quaker Boy) for dark ducks. It is very easy to use



*Rascal 7-in-1 Call, Sure Shot,*

and produces excellent feeding calls by simply shaking the bladder-neck with either hand while holding the end of the mouthpiece.

Each call is species-specific and, in some cases, call-specific. This means that one call will not do for all waterfowl. The closest thing to a universal call is the **Rascal 7-in-1 Call** (\$6.45, Sure Shot), which can be tuned for multiple high-voiced species. Most hunters will have several types of calls strung on a neck lanyard for a quick response to whatever waterfowl might be flying at that time.



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# \$5 FISH FINDER

By C.F. Eckhardt

WELL, MAYBE IT'LL COST A COUPLE OF BUCKS MORE than \$5, but not that much more. It doesn't use batteries. It works in salt and fresh water, night or day. You don't have to program it. Actually, it's been around since who flung the chunk — the 1880's at least — and the first one I made, a half-century or so ago, cost me less than a dollar.

Here's what you'll need:

### Materials

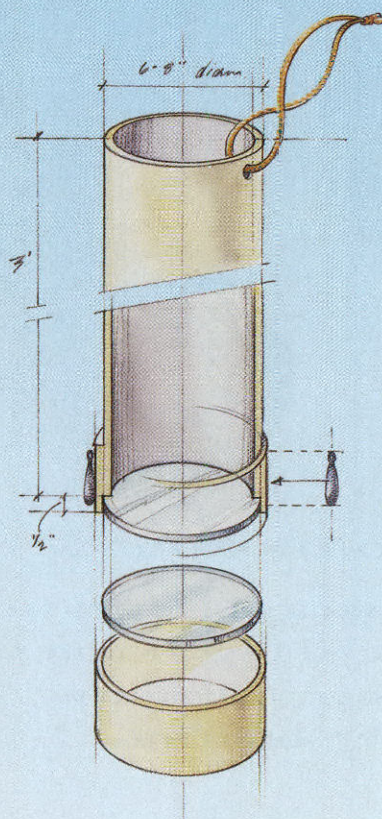
- A piece of rigid PVC pipe 6 inches to 8 inches in diameter and about 3 feet long
- A PVC pipe collar to fit it
- A piece of clear glazing plastic about a foot square
- Two to three feet of 1/4-inch nylon cord
- Two eight-ounce trotline sinkers
- PVC pipe glue
- Clear waterproof caulking
- Two-part epoxy cement

### Tools

Tri-square, hacksaw, coping saw with blade to cut plastic, scratch awl, hand drill with 1/4-inch bit, fine grit sandpaper or a flat fine file, waterproof flat black paint, disposable cigarette lighter.

### Steps

- 1) If the ends of your piece of PVC pipe are not squared off, use the tri-square and hacksaw to square them.
- 2) Sand the interior of the pipe lightly and paint it black.
- 3) Once the paint is dry, place the glazing plastic on a flat surface, put the pipe atop it and, with the scratch awl, scribe around the pipe, making a circle on the clear plastic. With the coping saw, cut out the disk you've scribed.
- 4) Slide the collar on the PVC pipe, leaving about half



an inch of collar protruding below the pipe.

With the PVC glue, secure the collar to the pipe, making a watertight joint.

5) Once the glue is set, clip the clear disk inside the collar, butting it firmly against the bottom of the pipe. If it won't slip in, sand or file the rim until it does. The fit should be snug. Don't bend or distort it. Seal the clear disk inside the collar against the bottom of the pipe with the clear waterproof caulking, making sure you get a watertight seal.

6) Sand or file two rough spots opposite each other on the outside of the pipe collar that roughly correspond in size to the trotline sinkers. Glue the sinkers to the collar with the epoxy.

7) Drill a 1/4-inch hole in the upper, open end of the pipe, put the nylon cord through it, tie the ends of the cord together, and fuse the knot with the lighter.

As soon as the caulk has cured — it takes about 48 hours for it to cure completely — your fish finder is ready to use. Slip the cord's loop over your wrist so that if you accidentally drop the fish finder it will be recoverable. Push the collar end into the water — the sinkers help hold it down — and look through the open end. You'll be amazed how far into a river, pond, lake — or even into the Gulf — you can see. To use the fish finder at night, lower a chemical lightstick on a weighted hand-line and watch what happens around it.



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# WASTE P

BY RUSSELL A. GRAVES

PHOTO © GARY KRAMER



# REFLOWL RIMMER



**Want to try this challenging sport?  
HERE'S A FOWL PLAY STARTER KIT.**

The feeling of being on a duck marsh as the sun peeks above the horizon and spills its rays onto still water is near indescribable. As I wait in anticipation, hidden from view, fleeting wings approach and slice through the still morning air and push invisible air with an audible, high-pitched *whoosh!* Crouching, with eyes honed on the sky, I watch a group of ducks circle the decoy spread like fighter jets on final approach to an aircraft carrier. Cupping their wings and extending their webbed feet toward the water, they commit to land among a spread of carefully placed decoys.



**ACCORDING TO DUCK HUNTING ETIQUETTE**, everyone holds their shot until the person calling the ducks in gives the go-ahead. When the ducks are in range, the signal is given and shotgun reports shatter the morning quiet. Some ducks fall but most fly away — that's why it's called hunting.

Duck hunting, without a doubt, is one of the most exciting outdoor activities, and many people throughout the country are catching on. According to a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service survey, duck hunting has seen a resurgence in the last few years. From 1991 to 1996 duck hunting enjoyed nearly a 34 percent increase in participation throughout the United States. In Texas alone, there were 101,000 duck hunters in 1996 — 11 percent of the total hunters in the state.

The popularity is no wonder. Duck hunting is a challenging sport that has many aspects to learn and master, such as calling, duck identification, decoy placement and, for more advanced waterfowlers, dog training. And because participants set out decoys, call and watch for incoming birds, boredom is kept to a minimum, which makes duck hunting an excellent way to introduce new hunters to the outdoors. Wetlands are also dynamic places that teem with all sorts of wildlife such as white-tailed deer, beavers and scores of birds. In addition, ample public and private land is available in Texas for those wishing to pursue the sport.



PHOTOS © DAVID J. SMIS



# SO WHERE DO YOU START?

## Here's a list of items that a beginning hunter may want to consider.

### The Gear to Go

Like other outdoor adventures, duck hunting has its list of "must-have" gear that you need in order to get started. However, the amount of gear you need is all a matter of how involved you'd like to become in the sport.

As a teenager growing up near the Red River in northern Fannin County, my introduction to duck hunting was somewhat informal. Being a zealot for outdoor activities, my friends and I often would crawl up tank dams or stalk beaver ponds in order to jump-shoot whatever ducks would explode from the water. Back then all we needed was a shotgun and some shells. It was an economically efficient way to hunt, but our success rate was horrendously low.

As I matured, my interest in duck hunting also matured. The amount of gear I bought and my interest as a student of the sport increased.

So what kind and how much gear does a beginner need? Of course, that's up to each individual hunter. According to duck hunting experts, there are a few things that a person new to the sport needs to consider.

### Camouflage, Waders and Other Gear

"You need good camouflage," says Mike Bardwell, co-owner of the Red River Hunt Club, a guide service and hunting lease club near Ravenna, in northeast Texas. "A camo waterfowl


parka that has a lot of pockets comes in handy in the duck blind or in the field." Currently, there are dozens of patterns of camouflage on the market that are available for hunters. Each pattern will do well in helping conceal a hunter and are certainly better than jeans and a denim shirt, but they may not work equally well in all wetland situations.

Two good camouflage patterns to look for are the Advantage Wetlands pattern and the Mossy Oak Shadow Grass. These patterns, which are widely available at many retail and mail-order stores, are designed exclusively for waterfowl hunters. Each pattern is made up of cattail reeds placed against a background of neutral colors that blend in well with the type of vegetation commonly associated with marshes, lakes and ponds.

When choosing camouflage, total body concealment is the rule. Because ducks have extremely keen eyesight, all parts of the body need to be covered, especially the face and hands.

Camouflage waders are a good idea if you plan to hunt in flooded timber, potholes or intend to wade out and retrieve your own ducks. Waders, like camouflage, come in a variety of styles. The first step would be to analyze your own particular needs.

I use neoprene-lined waders with a Cordura nylon shell. The neoprene is especially helpful in insulating against the cold water of winter. The nylon shell also helps protect against briars, tree limbs and other sticky stuff that you may rub against when duck hunting. However, if you are hunting along the coast or strictly during the early fall teal season, uninsulated waders are available for added comfort.



Ducks have excellent eyesight, so hunters take lengthy measures to camouflage themselves. Even the blinds take on the appearance of the surroundings.



Another important rule to remember when selecting waders is to get them in the proper size. Nothing makes walking more difficult than improperly sized waders. Waders are sold according to boot size. Always try to buy them as close as you can to the size of boot you normally wear. Buy them too small, and you'll rub blisters on your feet and have a hard time taking them on and off. Buy them too big and your socks will come off your feet as you walk, and the extra bulk of the waders will make it hard to walk. The bottom line? Do your homework.

In addition to personal camouflage, intrepid duck hunters may also want to invest in a piece of military-issue camo netting. Netting can be strung up across a couple of limbs to conceal the subtle movements of picking up a shotgun or rummaging for shells.

For permanent blinds, several commercially made models are available such as the Nacogdoches-based Ultimate Blind Company. A less-expensive alternative to a commercially made blind is to build one from readily available materials.

Chicken wire strung up between a couple of trees makes a good foundation for a blind. Cattails, grass and other natural materials can be woven into the wire to make a blind that blends exactly to the marsh that you are hunting. Because it is galvanized, chicken wire can last for many seasons around the dampness of a pond before it starts to rust.

Wildlife biologist and avid duck hunter. "I shoot a Remington 11-87 model shotgun with an improved cylinder and love it." It is important to know how your gun sprays a pattern of shot at various distances so that you can lessen game-crippling shots. Take your shotgun out early and shoot it at paper targets at various distances well before the season starts. Learn the nuances of the gun through measurable tests instead of through trial and error in the field.

Bardwell agrees. "If you are going to start duck hunting, it is very important that you buy a shotgun early and learn how it shoots. Then learn how to shoot it safely and accurately."

Shotgun brands, like pick-ups, are a source of endless debates in Texas. Therefore, it is best to leave the topic alone. A good rule of thumb in selecting a shotgun, though, is to buy one that is durable and takes apart easily. Since duck hunting typically takes place in the wettest and muddiest places and under cold conditions, it is important that a shotgun be able to hold up for many seasons.

A pick of many waterfowlers is a fully camouflaged 12-gauge shotgun that has a stock and forearm made of synthetic mate-



Due to price, steel shot, left, and copper-plated steel shot, below, are the most widely used since the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service banned lead shot in 1991.



rials. These shotguns are water- and rust-resistant and take apart easily for a thorough cleaning after returning from the duck marsh.

Furthermore, a 12-gauge packs enough punch to down a flying duck at 40 yards away. Although there are many choices of

chokes, brands and actions available in shotguns today, shot types are a bit more limited.

In 1991 the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), the body that governs migratory waterfowl hunting laws, banned the use of lead shot for hunting waterfowl. The reason? Ducks and geese were ingesting lead that had sunk to the bottom of wetlands. The lead rose to toxic levels in the bloodstreams of



## Gunning for Waterfowl

What's the best gun to use for hunting ducks? Opinions vary, but your best bet is to talk to someone with experience in duck hunting. "Everyone has their favorite, but I like a 12-gauge autoloader," says Scott Sudkamp, Texas Parks and





PHOTO © GARY KRAMER



the birds, and they ultimately died. Steel shot was phased in to lessen the impact of lead shot on waterfowl populations.

The USFWS has approved steel, tungsten-iron, tungsten-polymer and bismuth-tin for hunting waterfowl. The upside is that they all lessen the effect on the wetland ecosystem. The downside is that they all behave differently from lead shot and are considerably higher priced.

Steel is harder and lighter than lead, so it patterns tighter at the same distances yet packs a smaller punch at 40 yards and beyond. Bismuth, on the other hand, behaves more like lead shot but is considerably higher in price than steel. The highest priced shot that waterfowlers might consider is tungsten. Tungsten can pack a wallop at 50 yards and retains a tight pattern to boot.

Your best bet is to try out different types of shotgun/shot combinations on paper and clay targets and see what works best for you well before the first day of duck season.

## Duping Ducks with Decoys

Perhaps the essence of waterfowling can be found in the use of decoys. Once carved for functionality, wooden decoys are considered works of art today and many fetch into the hundreds and even thousands of dollars from collectors.

Don't fret, though. Plastic decoys are readily available for a whole lot less.

"I would start with two dozen plastic Flambeau water keel decoys," advises Bardwell. "They are a nice-looking decoy, and I use them whenever I guide duck hunts."

Water keel decoys have a central ridge that runs down the middle of the bottom of the block. Water keel decoys are indeed less expensive and lighter to carry, but critics contend that they don't look natural riding the waves when the water gets rough. For wary ducks, that is plenty of evidence to send them flying the other way.

Weighted keel decoys, on the other hand, have counterbalanced keels that add to rough-water stability. As a result, they have a more life



**Decoys can make or break a hunt. Depending on water movement and the hunter's wishes, weighted keel decoys and motion decoys can be used for a more lifelike appearance.**



like appearance when riding waves. The downside is that they are heavier and more expensive. If you're hunting big, open-water lakes, though, they could make the difference between success and failure.

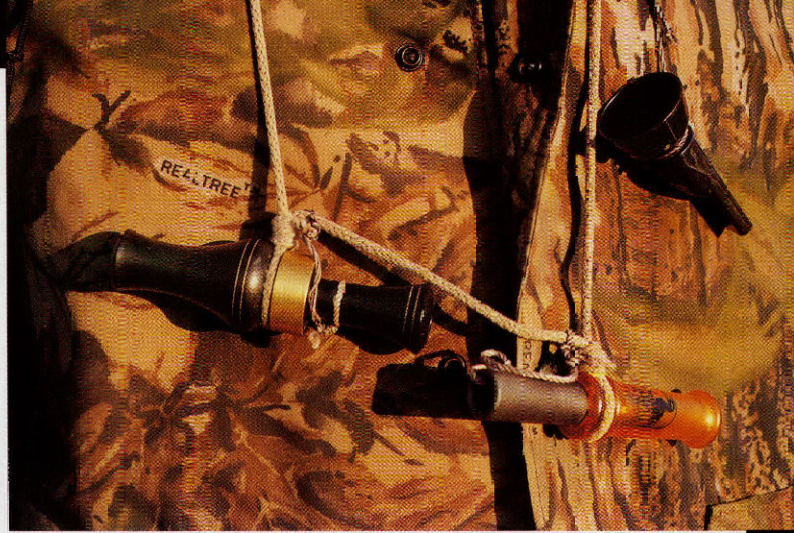
"As for a variety, beginners can't go wrong with mallards. Nearly all ducks will fly into mallard patterns. I also like to add a few teal in the spread, especially early in the season," explains Sudkamp. When going after diving ducks, add some scaup, ringneck or canvasback decoys.

Beginning hunters might also want to consider adding a motion decoy to their collection. A motion decoy can add life to a spread by creating movement on still days when there is little or no wind. It works by using a battery-powered ball that sits inside of the decoy body and wobbles when the power is turned on. The wobble creates ripples on the water that mimics ducks swimming around and dabbling for food. The motion can be just what you need to convince the wariest ducks to commit to a spread.

Another type of motion decoy is the flying decoy. A flying decoy mounts on a pole and has rotating "wings" that mimic the flapping of a landing duck. I have hunted with a Red River Spinner flying decoy and was amazed at how effective it was in getting flocks of birds that were a couple of hundred yards away to turn and land right beside it.

To add a motion decoy to your collection, be prepared to pay \$50 or more for a single bird. Is it worth it? It depends on how serious of a duck hunter you plan on becoming.

In addition to the decoys, a lightweight mesh decoy bag is a must for toting the faux birds in and out of the field.



## Calling All Ducks

Perhaps one of the most difficult and, at the same time, crucial aspects of duck hunting that a waterfowler must master is the art of calling. Yes, art.

Calling ducks is more of an art than a science. It is kind of like playing a piano. You can always get a sound to come out of a piano, but whether it is any good or not depends on your skill level and artistry.

Both Bardwell and Sudkamp agree that your best bet for becoming a good caller is to buy a quality wooden mallard call and an instructional tape and practice over and over. Then go out to local parks or other places where mallards may congregate and see how the ducks respond to your calling.

After that, hunt with experienced callers and see how they work the calls by varying pitch, tone, duration and frequency of calls.

Through trial and error, those wretched sounds that all new duck hunters make in the beginning will begin to sound like the greeting call and feeding grunts uttered by mallards. One word of advice, though. Always practice by yourself — your vehicle is a good spot — if you don't want your family to hide your new call.

## License to Hunt

Although it seems like a given, it bears mentioning that new duck hunters need to read and understand the Texas Parks and Wildlife and USFWS laws as they apply to hunting waterfowl. Game wardens often report that many violations Texas hunters commit are due to an ignorance of the game laws. To avert that problem, pick up a *Texas Outdoor Annual* for detailed information, a brochure called *Texas Hunting Regulations for Ducks, Mergansers, Coos and Geese*, and a USFWS migratory game bird bulletin wherever hunting license are sold. In each book you will find a list of opening dates for various species of ducks and other waterfowl, legal shooting times, bag and possession limits and legal shot types.

To hunt ducks in Texas, you will need a current Texas hunting license (\$9), a state duck stamp (\$7) and a federal duck stamp (\$15).

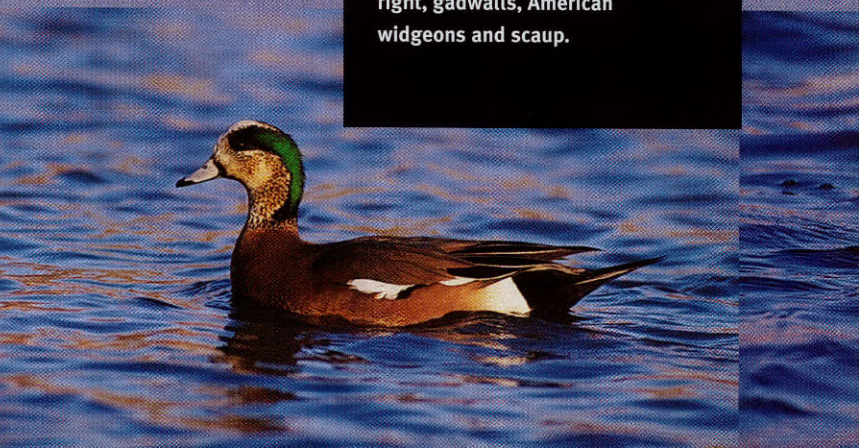


TOP PHOTO AND BOTTOM PHOTO © RUSSELL A. GRANVILLE/MINI-PHOTO © DAVID J. SAMS





Among the ducks that make their way to Texas each fall are mallards, left, and below, left to right, gadwalls, American widgeons and scaup.



LARGE PHOTO © DAVID J. SWAN; OTHER PHOTOS © RUSSELL A. GRAVES



## Ducks at a Distance

Maybe the most important skill that you can develop as a duck hunter is relatively free to obtain. The skill is duck identification.

USFWS and TPW guidelines state that different species of ducks have different bag limits. For example, on any given day during the season, the current daily bag limit is six ducks in the aggregate. Five mallards may be taken per day; only two of which can be hens. Alternatively, only two wood ducks can be taken, while a single pintail can be harvested. And those are the bag limits for only three of the 14 or so species of ducks listed as huntable species in Texas.

Can you tell a wood duck hen from a blue-winged teal hen? How about a mallard hen from a black duck hen? Do you know the difference between diving and puddle ducks? If not, you'd better learn before you hit the water.

There are many sources from which you can learn duck identification. The most obvious is picking up a field guide at your local library or bookstore. If you are Internet ready, visit the Web sites of Texas Parks and Wildlife <[www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)>, Ducks Unlimited <[www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org)>, U.S. Geological Survey Biological Resources <[www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/Infocenter/infocenter.html](http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/Infocenter/infocenter.html)> and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service <[www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)> for information on the identification of ducks both on the water and in the air.

Once you have studied up on learning various wing patterns, plumage coloration and flight behavior, the next thing to do is test your skills in the real world. Often there are a number of wild ducks that make their home in small impoundments in city parks. Go there and try your hand at identifying them in the field. If you can recall the species successfully, you are ready to hunt. If not, hit the books another day or two and give it another try.

After all, the beauty of duck hunting is getting a chance to learn all you can about natural wetlands and the animals that accompany them. Taking in the sights, smells and sounds is all a part of a great waterfowl experience, whether you harvest any birds or not.

"Look around you," Sudkamp emphasizes. "Even on those days when the ducks don't commit to decoys, there's always something neat happening in the marsh or swamp. Don't look so hard for ducks that you're oblivious to the hundreds of other critters out there. Whether you realize it or not, they make the experience all the richer." ★

RUSSELL GRAVES is an agriculture science instructor from Childress. He was recently named the 2000 High Plains Conservation Educator of the Year by the Region 1 Texas Association of Soil and Water Conservation



## What Will It Cost?

**M**Y DAD ALWAYS TOLD ME that everything comes with a price. Unfortunately, duck hunting is no different. Getting started in the sport can be a daunting and expensive venture if you go in headfirst and buy all the accessories and gear that you can.

Take, for instance, a good retrieving dog. Some will contend that a good dog is a must for a beginning waterfowler, while others argue that you can get by without one. Ultimately, your commitment to the sport and your wallet will decide whether or not you need a dog. If you decide that you do need one, expect to pay in excess of \$500 for a dog with proven bloodlines.

If you want to get the basic equipment listed in the article, here's a rundown on some approximate prices:

Remington Model 870 SPS-T Super Magnum Shotgun: \$550  
Remington Nitro-steel Magnum Shotshells (2 boxes): \$20  
Walls Waterfowl Insulated Camo Wading Jacket: \$98  
Camo gloves and face net: \$15  
Cabela's Brush Guard Waders: \$100  
Flambeau Decoys with bag and decoy weights (2 dozen): \$150  
Primos Wench-P2 Duck Call: \$22  
Hunting License with stamps: \$41  
**TOTAL: \$996**

Don't let that figure scare you. These numbers are assuming that you don't already have a suitable shotgun to hunt with. Take away the gun and the price is less than \$500 to get started with brand-new stuff.

At this point you can get creative. Look at flea markets and garage sales for old decoys you can repaint. Instead of buying a wading jacket, get an over-sized camouflage fleece jacket to wear over the top of an insulated jacket that you already own. Try different things and have fun while you learn — isn't that the whole point?

Add a few friends with decoys and other equipment, and getting started might not be too expensive after all.

— R.G.



# *The* DEAL



PHOTO © GRADY ALLEN





*on* TEAL

**Given their flighty nature, teal hunting is a hit-or-miss proposition.**

BY  
LARRY D.  
HODGE

Texas tradition requires that hunters be humbled in September before the beginning of deer season in November. Many hunters believe doves were placed on earth for this purpose. Obviously, they've never been teal hunting.



States farther north — much farther north — regard September as the beginning of fall, but outdoor recreationists in Texas know the month is really summer (long after everyone is tired of the season) with aspirations of autumn. Gun barrels grow hot during September dove hunts whether the gun is fired or not. Tempers sometimes warm as well, as muscles not yet retrained in practiced paths find it difficult to swing a shotgun fast enough to keep up with darting doves.

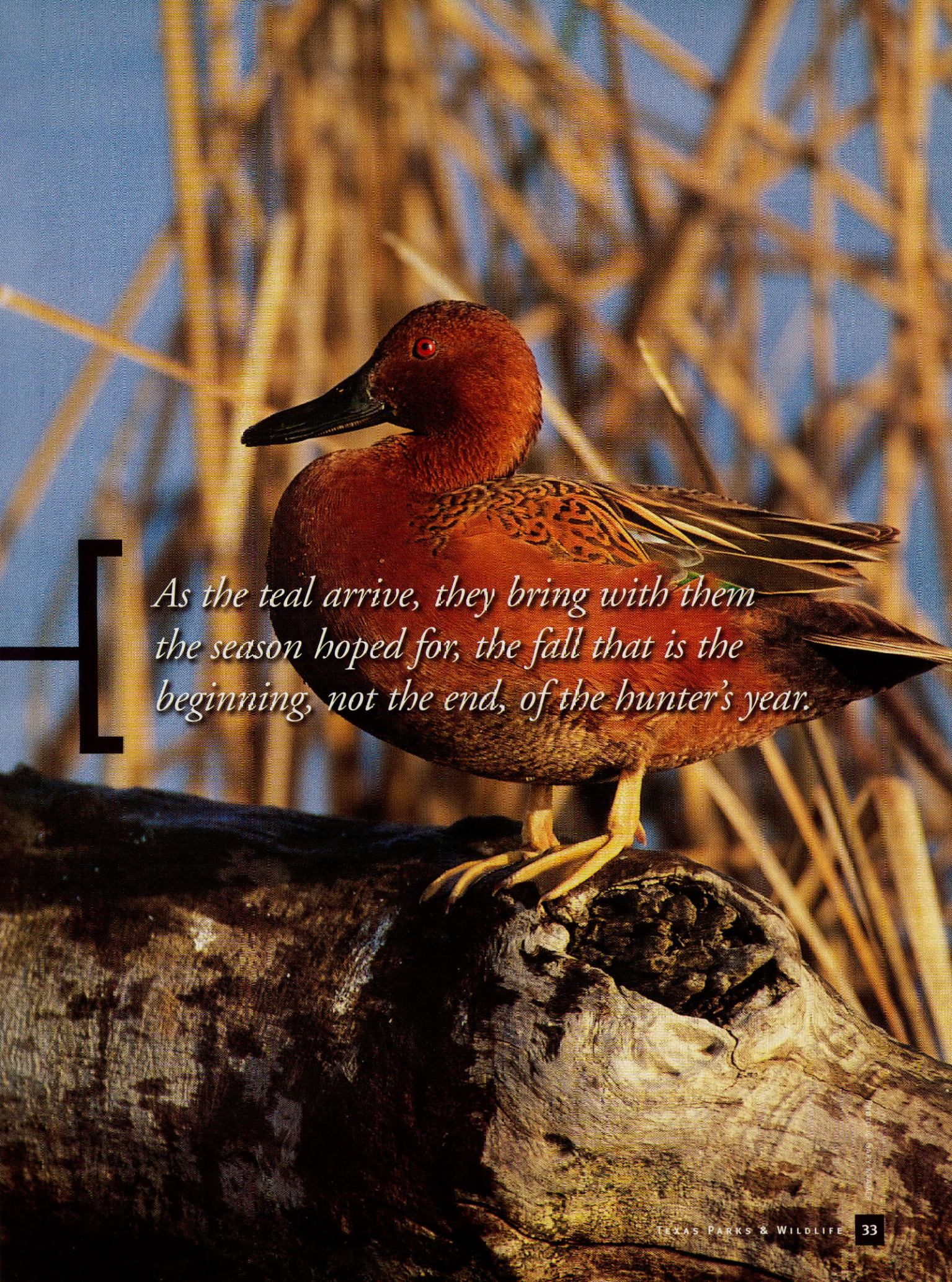
**Texas teal hunters have the pleasure — or maybe the discomfort — of hunting in shorts one day and needing neoprene-lined waders the next.**

Hunting teal may be even more damaging to shooters' egos than punching holes in the sky just behind fleeing doves. September's other birds fly equally fast and can change direction 90 degrees with every other wingbeat. They are one of hunting's toughest targets and one of September's sweetest pleasures, both in the air and on the plate. Blue-winged teal, one of three subspecies, summer in the prairie pothole region of the northern United States and Canada, where most of them raise their young. But when the first chilly winds of fall begin to blow, bluewings abandon their northern haunts and head for Central America, an avian version of the south of France.

Tiny bodies store little energy reserves, and as teal wing their way down the Central Flyway, they must eat often. Harvested rice fields on the Texas Coast





A teal duck with a distinctive red eye and mottled brown feathers is perched on a weathered log. The background is a dense thicket of tall, golden-brown reeds against a clear blue sky. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. A large black bracket is positioned to the left of the text.

*As the teal arrive, they bring with them  
the season hoped for, the fall that is the  
beginning, not the end, of the hunter's year.*



# Everyman's Duck

**T**INY, SPEEDY AND FOND OF FREDAWN FLIGHT, teal are overlooked by the majority of Texas hunters, but they shouldn't be. "People are focused on coves, and they don't think about hunting teal on stock tanks," says Vernon Bevill, TPW migratory game bird program director. "The best teal hunting is the 20 minutes before sunrise. You can hunt teal, then go dove hunting on the same stock tank." Note that you may have

only nontoxic shot in your possession while waterfowl hunting.

"There are an abundance of hunting opportunities going untutilized statewide," Bevill continues. "Teal are numerous on playa lakes, reservoirs and stock tanks scattered across the state. They are in every hunter's backyard." Teal flock to wildlife management areas in East Texas and along the coast, to stock tanks in Central Texas and the Rolling Plains, and

to playa lakes in the High Plains.

Surveys of waterfowl populations reveal that teal numbers increase in Texas throughout September as ducks migrate south, and harvest data show that hunter success rates are higher later in the month. Those two facts led staff to recommend to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission that the 16-day teal season this year be initiated on September 15. In addition to a hunting license, a Texas waterfowl stamp and a federal duck stamp are required to hunt teal.

Successful hunting of teal, which can fly up to 85 feet per second, requires a picture-perfect stance with weight slightly forward and a good swing along the bird's path.

spread a banquet for migrating waterfowl, and teal stop and feed as long as the temperature suits them. "They are definitely a warm-weather duck," says outfitter Clifton Tyler of Eagle Lake. "When we have temperatures in the 80s and 90s and a lot of open water, it's like they hit a wall and stay here. Then a little front comes through, and they are gone to Central America."

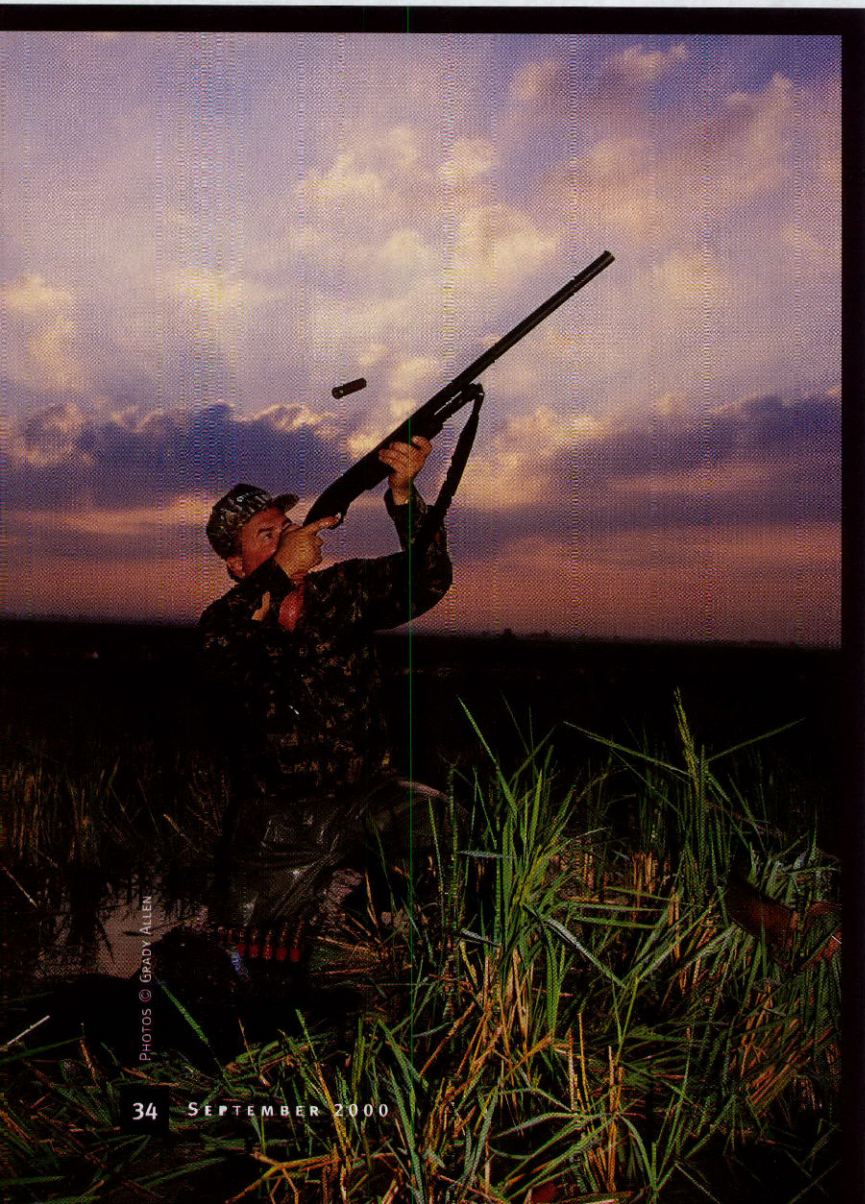
Given their flighty nature, teal hunting is a hit-or-miss proposition, puns intended in both cases. The early teal season in Texas is timed for mid- to late September to coincide with their expected presence in the state, but early cool fronts can push the birds south. Until then, free food in abundance quickly anchors teal.

"They feed here in the second crop rice," says Tyler. "After the first crop is harvested in August, the stubble is reflooded, and the roots that remain create a new stalk. The birds eat the residue from the first crop left floating in the water and don't damage the new crop at all. Teal concentrate heavily. You may see none for five miles, then there are 10,000 in one rice field.

"Waterfowl like open water," Tyler continues. "It's what they went to when they were ducklings. Mostly they loaf on ponds until they digest what they've eaten, then go back to the rice field to feed again. Some days they arrive at the pond before dawn; sometimes you have to wait 30 minutes or so. In all of hunting, location is still the most important factor. Being where they want to go will make your calling and decoys seem more effective."

Rocky Leopold, a guide for the Pintail Hunting Club of Garwood, agrees that when you are where the ducks want to be, not much else matters. "Calling and decoys impress the hunters," he says with a smile, "but if you have water and are where ducks want to be, that's all that matters. You can stand out in the open and they will still come in."

The morning Judy and John Jurak and I hunt



PHOTOS © GRADY ALLEN



*As the sky turns from black to gray, we see ducks bobbing all over the pond, cutting tight little circles like wind-up toys.*

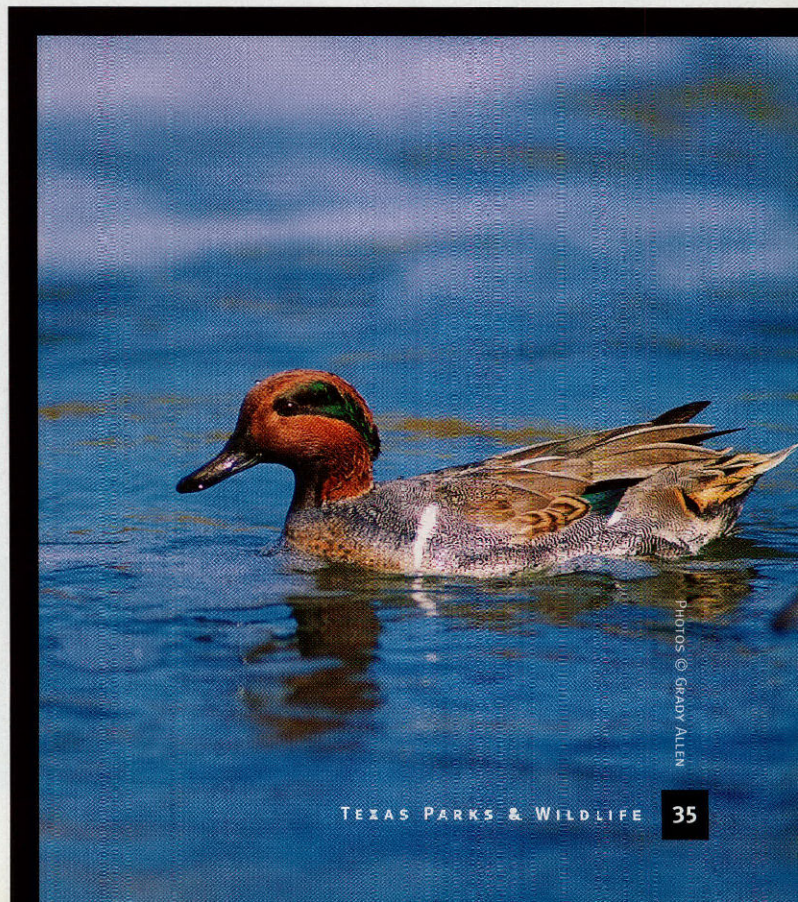
with Tyler, guide Jeff Emmons and a retriever named Astro, the Lissie Prairie south of Eagle Lake is where the teal want to be. We are there ahead of them: an hour before sunrise. Side-by-side blinds perch on the southeast side of a four-acre pond of water pumped up to attract ducks. A metal frame skinned in net wire, covered with cane stalks held on with bungee cords, conceals us sitting on benches inside, our feet in foot-deep water. Astro is happy to plop his rump into the water and wait for the sky to rain ducks. Like most retrievers, he normally is a bundle of nervous energy wrapped in raw nerves; being around people holding shotguns transforms him into a big hairy spring itching to uncoil.

Astro does not have to wait long. Well before legal shooting time arrives at a half-hour before sunrise, blue-winged teal begin wiffing in, almost invisible in the predawn gloom, landing in the open space between two irregular groups of decoys. As the sky turns from black to gray, we see ducks bobbing all over the pond, swimming among the decoys, cutting tight little circles like wind-up toys. Their loud quack, quack, quack — far too big a sound to issue from such a small body — mingles with the short whistles from Tyler's call.

Out of still air suddenly springs a stiff north wind, boring into our faces, rattling the cane covering the blinds. Summer loosens its grip on September in the last quarter-hour before sunrise. As the teal arrive, they bring with them the season hoped for, the fall that is the beginning, not the end, of the hunter's year.

It may be appreciated that under these circumstances it is difficult to send skyward a charge of shot with the intent of bringing to earth such a symbol of hope and

**Teal like open water and feed on the residue left by August rice harvests. Despite heavy concentrations, the teal rarely harm the second-crop rice.**



PHOTOS © GRADY ALLEN



joy. Emotion fogs one's shooting eye and spoils the aim. At least, that's my story, and I'm sticking to it.

Our blinds are situated for the southeast winds that are normal during teal season, and the birds ignore our decoys for the most part, preferring instead to seek the stiller waters of the lee shore. Tyler gives us leave to fire whenever we have a target in range. Teal continue to streak in from behind us, often leaving us standing looking at each other asking, "Why didn't you shoot?"

But enough birds circle around for a closer look at the two pods of imitation ducks with a landing space between to give us plenty of opportunities to redeem ourselves. In one flurry John, Judy and I all drop birds, and before Tyler sends an impatient Astro into action, there are six teal riding ripples in the pond. Then a flight of perhaps a dozen birds suddenly appears from the left, catching us by surprise, and only I recover my wits in time to sweep my gun through the mass of birds three feet above the water and hauling the mail. There's time for just one shot, but two birds splash. I've fired two times and have three-fourths of a limit of teal. This isn't so tough, I think.

Thinking is generally the worst thing you can do when shooting a shotgun, which works best on instinct. Half an hour later, John and Judy are each nearing their limit, and I am still one bird short. The morning ends one bird short of three limits, yet we are all satisfied. Except Astro — he's just getting warmed up.

Hunting the next day with guide Jeff Taylor of Texas Waterfowl Outfitters confirms that teal do indeed abandon an area at the first hint of cooler weath-



## Teal Appeal

**T**HREE KINDS OF TEAL visit Texas on their way to Central America: blue-winged, green-winged and cinnamon. Blue-winged teal are by far the most numerous (an estimated 6.4 million in 1998), and tend to be the first to arrive in the fall and the last to leave in spring. They are distinguished by a blue patch of feathers, or speculum, on the wings. Green-winged teal, which bear a brilliant, iridescent green speculum, have a wider wintering range and number only about one-third as many, so they are seen less often. A

rare prize for Texas hunters and birders is the cinnamon teal, named for its predominant reddish color. Cinnamon teal breed in the western United States and have an estimated population of only 260,000.

Their small size distinguishes teal from other species of ducks. The name itself possibly originated from the Middle English word, *tele*, or the Dutch term, *taling*, both meaning small. In a bit of onomatopoeia, biologists assigned the scientific name, *anas crecca*, to green-winged teal in recognition of a creaky-sounding note in

their call. Female green-winged teal may weigh little more than six ounces, roughly the size of a bobwhite quail.

Blue-winged teal are the quintessential prairie pothole duck of central North America. They prefer to nest in wetland areas within grasslands, a perfect description of the prairie pothole region. Shallow marshes, sloughs, flooded ditches and even temporary ponds serve them well. So attuned are they to utilizing ephemeral bodies of water that unusually wet conditions south of their normal breeding areas may induce them to nest as far south as the Texas Coast.

Last year just the reverse happened.





er. The beauty of the sunrise over a flooded rice field is exceeded only by the scarcity of ducks. Unlike the previous morning, fewer than a dozen birds arrive in the predawn. Then, following a brief flurry at sunrise, the action dies. Six hunters collect only 10 teal, but there are no complaints. More than one person remarks on the beauty of the morning; in fact, the only subject receiving more attention is the shooting skill, or lack thereof, of fellow hunters.

Already dreaming of the hunts for deer and turkey and quail and geese to come, we clamber awkwardly out of the pit blinds and mush for dry ground. The time for teal is gone. But so much more lies ahead. ★

LARRY D. HODGE is the author of *The Official Guide to Texas Wildlife Management Areas*, to be published by *Texas Parks & Wildlife Press*.

**Blue-winged teal, left and above, can fly almost as fast as doves and have an erratic flight pattern. These are among the first ducks to migrate each fall and one of the last to leave in the spring.**

Texas and much of the lower United States suffered from drought, but the prime duck breeding territory in North Dakota, Manitoba and Saskatchewan received record rainfall. "In my 27 years as a waterfowl biologist in the breeding region, I have never seen wetland conditions for duck production this unusual and this good," says Lloyd Jones of the Delta Waterfowl Foundation, a waterfowl research organization. Abundant ponds allowed ducks to breed

over a wider area than normal, resulting in the loss of fewer nests to predators and a record number of ducks heading south. The bounty was not lost on Texas hunters.

"The skies have been black with birds," said guide Rocky Leopold of Garwood's Pintail Hunting Club. "We had more birds this year than we've had in the last 14 years."

Green-winged teal breed from Alaska to Canada's maritime provinces and as far south as central California, Utah,

Colorado, Nebraska, Minnesota and Wisconsin. More tolerant of cold than blue-winged teal, they are generally the most abundant dabbling duck — a term referring to their habit of feeding on top of the water — on Arctic breeding grounds. Green-winged teal nest around shallow permanent ponds near woodlands with an abundance of vegetation. Coastal marshes and rice fields of Louisiana and Texas suit them just fine for winter habitat, although their winter range extends from

Newfoundland to northern South America.

Cinnamon teal breed mostly in the western United States in areas such as Utah's Great Salt Lake and Colorado's San Luis Valley. Cinnamon teal prefer small, shallow, alkaline wetlands surrounded by grassy cover. Nearly all winter in Mexico and Central America. The occasional cinnamon teal seen in Texas generally accompanies a flock of the bluewings they are known to hybridize with.



# Runnini

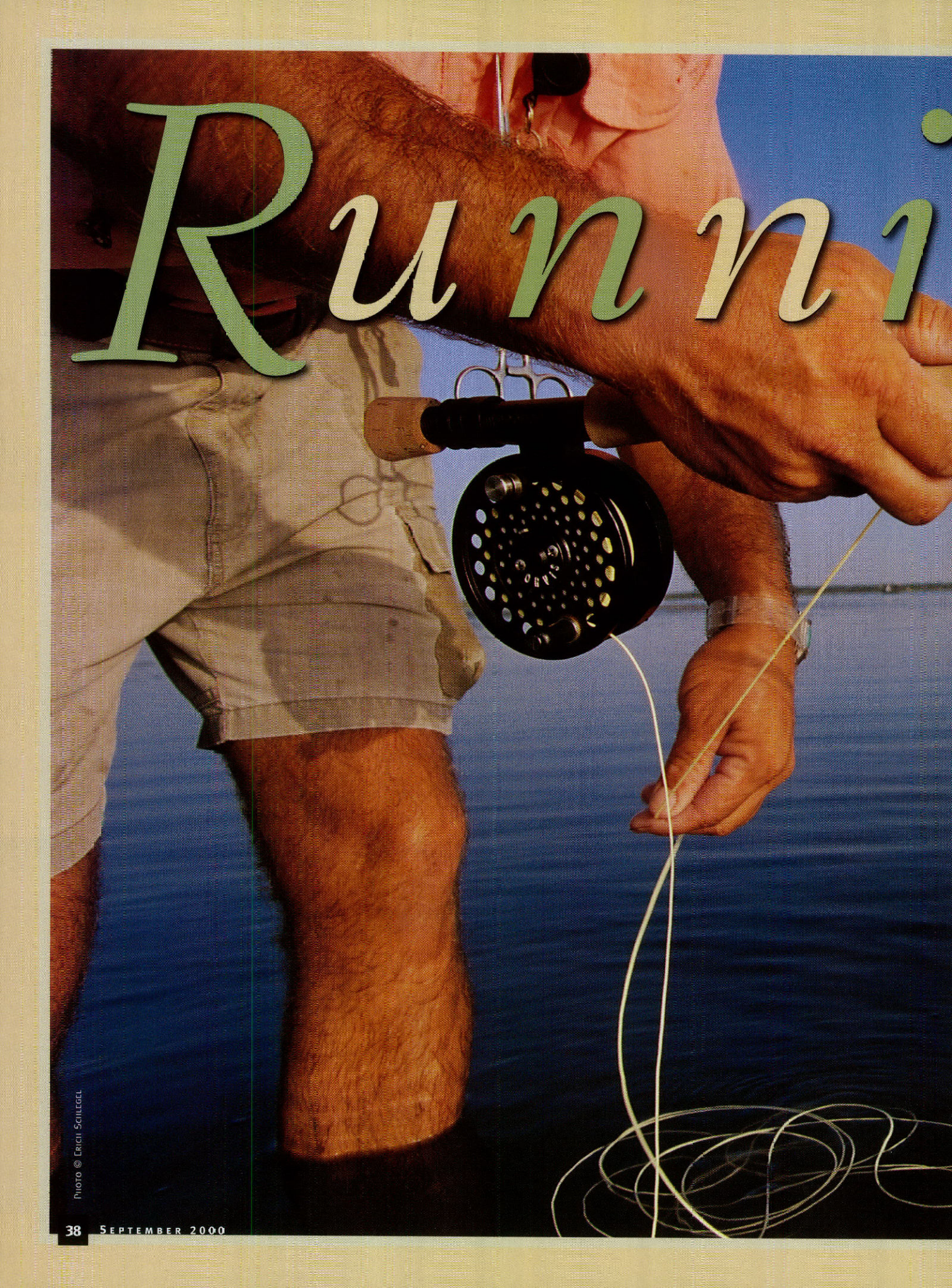
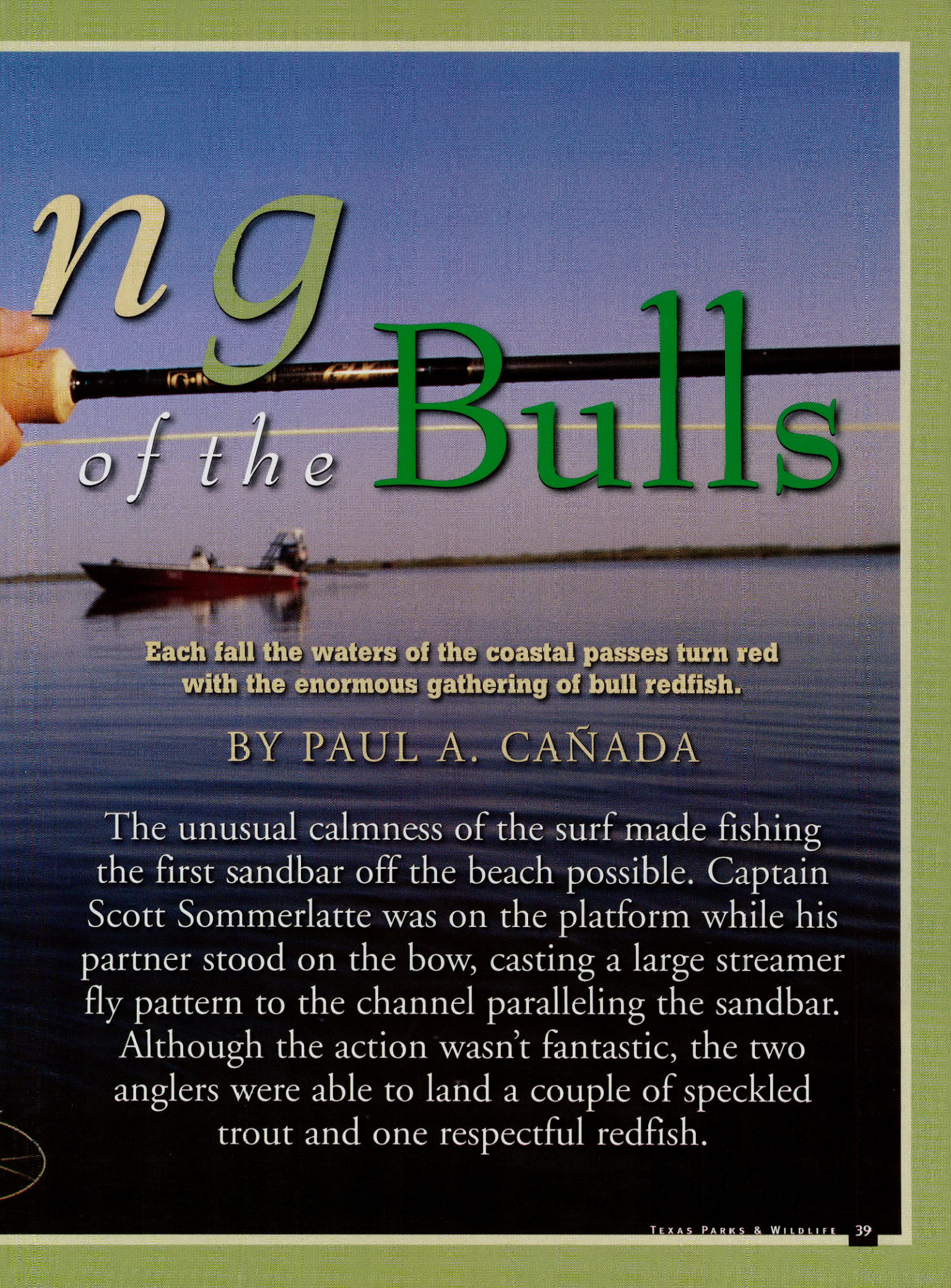
A close-up photograph of a man's hands and arms. He is wearing a pink short-sleeved shirt and khaki shorts. He is holding a black fly fishing reel with a wooden handle. A white fishing line is attached to the reel and is being held by his other hand. The background is a solid blue color. The word "Runnini" is written in a large, stylized font across the top of the image.

PHOTO © ERIC SCHILLER





# ing of the Bulls

**Each fall the waters of the coastal passes turn red with the enormous gathering of bull redfish.**

BY PAUL A. CAÑADA

The unusual calmness of the surf made fishing the first sandbar off the beach possible. Captain Scott Sommerlatte was on the platform while his partner stood on the bow, casting a large streamer fly pattern to the channel paralleling the sandbar.

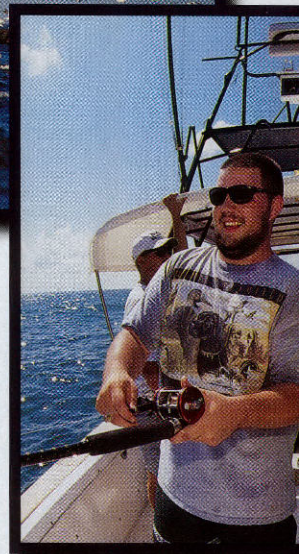
Although the action wasn't fantastic, the two anglers were able to land a couple of speckled trout and one respectful redfish.



Sommerlatte had hoped for more. The way he saw it, the recent tropical storm should have pushed the annual migration of bull reds up a week or two. About the time the lead fly angler set the hook into a third speck, Sommerlatte caught an eyeful — approximately 200 yards down the beach.

tremendous amount of water, creating a surface disturbance nearly a foot high as it approached. Sommerlatte continued poling until the bay boat was only 50 feet from the approaching wake. Standing on the poling platform, Sommerlatte could clearly see the redfish herding an enormous school of menhaden. In an instant, the large baitfish were being knocked clear out of the water. Throwing aside all concern for decorum, Sommerlatte excitedly barked, “Cast, dude, cast!”

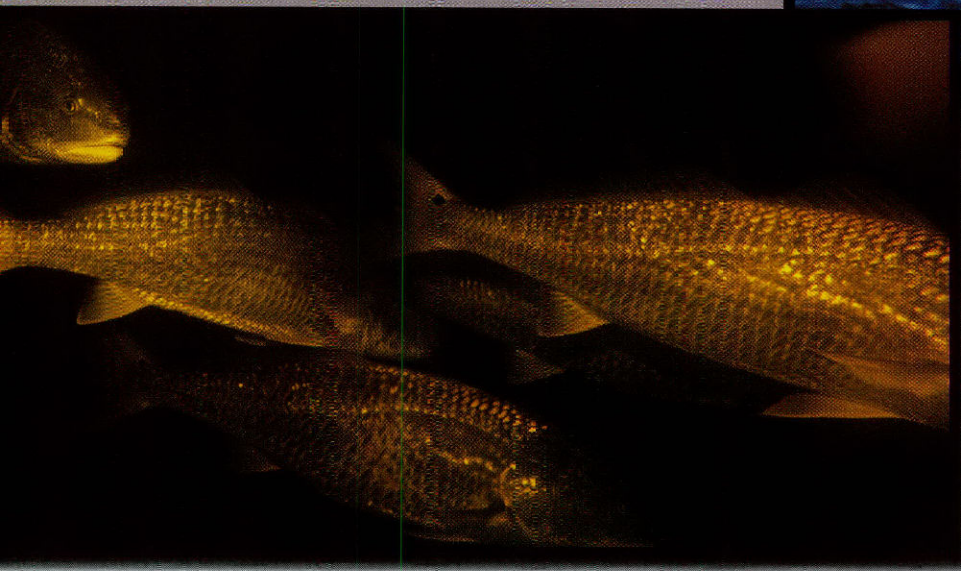
Without hesitation, Stanley pushed the eight-weight fly rod into action. A quick roll of line sent the large, weighted Clouser pattern airborne, and a simple



two-stroke cast was all it took to place the fly in front of the fish. Later, the fly fisher would admit he wasn't sure if he actually got a strip or two in before the first fish nailed the fly. Indeed, hook-up was immediate, and both anglers let out a tremendous scream of joy.

The backing shot off the spool as if tethered to a Saturn rocket, while the fly rod bowed respectfully to every sprint the big fish made. The first run pulled out 50 yards of line. It seemed that for every 10 yards Stanley gained, the fish took another 20 to 30 yards back out.

Eventually, the experienced fly angler landed the 25-pound “bull” redfish. When it was over, the two fly anglers sat



**P** OINTING DOWN THE BEACH, he called out to his fishing partner, “Stanley, look what’s coming this way. Do you see it?”

The “copper penny” look of the water left little for the two anglers to ponder — it was indeed a large school of redfish.

Uncharacteristically, Stanley sped the trout to the boat, unhooked it and without much thought, cast it back to the surf. “How many?” he queried. “How many do you think there are, Scott?”

“Hundreds — no thousands,” guessed Sommerlatte. “Get ready to cast when I say to.” The large school pushed a



and pondered their good fortune. Together, they had successfully landed three more redfish in the 15- to 20-pound range; hooked, jumped and lost a 100-pound-class tarpon; and broke off three blacktip sharks. Sommerlatte wasn't surprised by their catch. He claimed it was typical of a run-in with a school of bull reds.

Every fall, anglers rush to the numerous passes that connect Texas' bays to Gulf waters. Some wade the surf, others chance the slippery rocks of a jetty and yet others approach by boat. Whether casting a fly, soaking bait or flinging a topwater plug, they come for the run.

## Bull Run

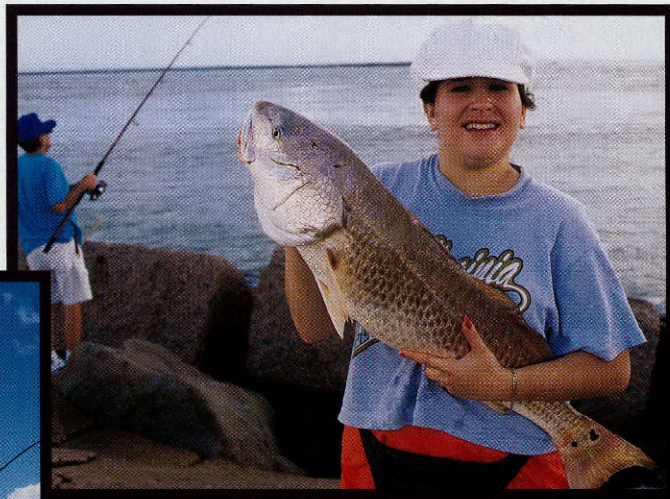
The name "bull red" is somewhat misleading. According to Scott Holt, a research associate at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute in Port Aransas, both males and

the bay system for the Gulf waters. After leaving the marshes of the bay systems, the mature reds spread throughout the nearshore areas. Fishing in and around the Galveston Bay complex, Captain Terry Haynes typically finds big redfish as far out as 60 miles and as deep as 150 feet.

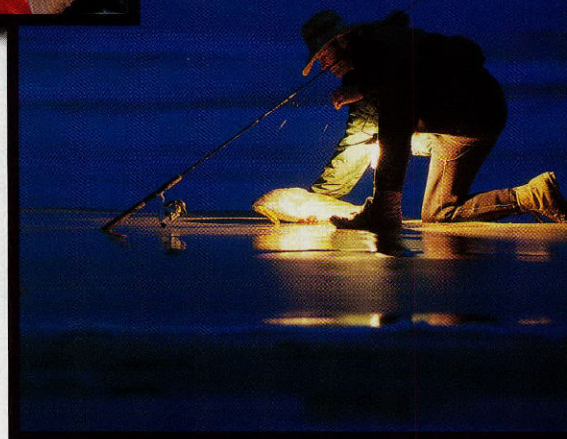
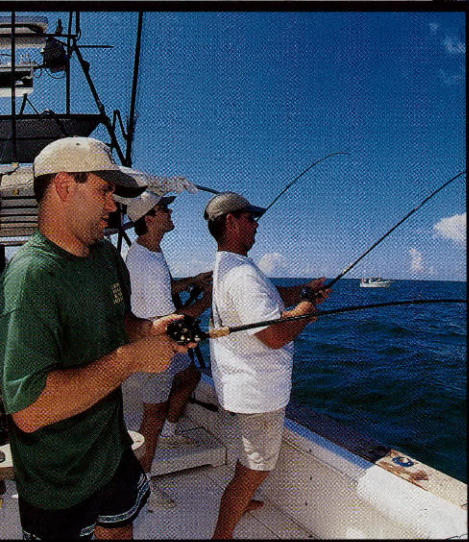
Beginning as early as August and continuing throughout October, the big reds begin their annual run, or migration. Like the anglers who rush out to meet them, mature females and males congregate in large schools and move along the nearby beaches and jetties. Eventually, the mature fish move into the passes and inlets of various bay sys-

Understandably, guides such as Haynes and Sommerlatte get excited when they find a large school moving along a surf line or jetty. When the fish are moving and feeding in large schools, they are easier to follow and target. Of course, this is one of the better times to throw an artificial bait.

When large schools of redfish are pushing baitfish behind a surf line, the topwater action can be phenomenal. "Unlike the speckled seatrout, which takes a topwater bait from below similar to a largemouth bass," says Haynes, "the redfish hits the bait directly from the side. A big redfish typically rolls on the bait and so often misses it. This type of a surface hit leaves a lasting impression on you."



Fall finds Texas anglers fishing from boats and jetties, as well as wading the surf, to take advantage of the redfish run, when the fish migrate into passes and inlets to spawn.



tems. The big reds are driven by a single innate purpose: to spawn.

Holt has studied spawning redfish for years and is considered by his peers to be an authority on the saltwater predator. Although many guides believe the stronger tides and changing water temperatures of early fall trigger the migration, Holt believes the big redfish are more likely cued by changes in the length of daylight. Whatever the cue, both fishery biologists and anglers agree: the timing of the migration and spawning activity is certainly tightly tied to something.

According to Haynes, the migrating schools are so large that they simply have to be seen to be believed. "The schools get so enormous," he explains, "they actually change the color of the water they're moving through. I have seen schools 30 to 50 yards across. We call this phenomenon the red cloud."

females reach the tremendous size associated with the name "bull red."

"The different sexes are roughly similar in size," Holt explains. "If there's a difference, it's not significant like it is in other species. When we're talking about bull reds, we're talking about big fish, not necessarily female or male."

Typically, the smaller redfish — found throughout the year in the various bay systems — are adolescents. Upon reaching sexual maturity (approximately 28 to 30 inches in length), the redfish leave

Although the schooling redfish will readily take a topwater pattern, Sommerlatte prefers casting a wet fly pattern to the feeding fish. He argues that hookups are more assured when anglers go below the surface. When targeting the schools, Sommerlatte recommends that fly anglers use a stout eight- or nine-weight outfit, an intermediate sinking fly line and five- to seven-foot

PHOTOS © DAVID J. SMAS

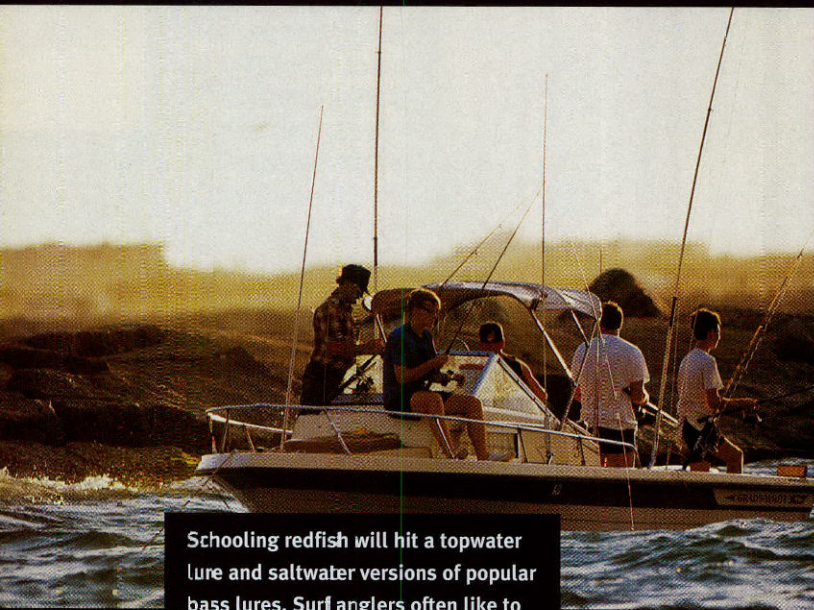


## Keeping Trophy-Sized Bulls

**C**URRENT TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE REGULATIONS prohibit the keeping of a redfish measuring more than 28 inches unless the angler affixes a properly executed Red Drum Tag. The Red Drum Tag allows the angler to keep one trophy fish during a license year. The special tag is included free with the purchase of the following licenses: a Resident Combination Hunting and Fishing, a Super Combo, a Texan, a Resident Fishing, a Special Resident Fishing, a Disabled Veteran Hunting and Fishing or a Non-Resident Fishing license. Those persons wanting a Red Drum Tag but are currently exempt from fishing license requirements, or have purchased a Temporary Resident or Temporary Non-Resident license, may purchase a Special Resident Fishing License in order to secure a Red Drum Tag. An individual can obtain an additional tag, called Bonus Red Drum Tag, which allows them to take an additional trophy-sized (28 inches or greater) red drum per license year. This Bonus Red Drum Tag is provided free at any license sale location after the angler has presented a valid fishing license and provided critical information about the first red drum retained under the authority of the Red Drum Tag. Anglers must provide the following information: total length of the fish, date caught, place where caught (bay or Gulf). Anglers are allowed only one Bonus Red Drum Tag per year.

ray. Beached anglers can effectively take cruising redfish on heavy artifices such as a 5/8- to 3/4-ounce casting spoon.

Sommerlatte advises anglers targeting the surf, "Your best times along the surf are going to vary, according to your means of angling. When fishing from a boat, your best angling will typically occur during outgoing tide. However, anglers fishing from the beach will have an easier time when the tide is coming in and pushing the fish closer to them."



Schooling redfish will hit a topwater lure and saltwater versions of popular bass lures. Surf anglers often like to use live bait, although it doesn't allow them to target specific species. When fishing around jetties, place the live bait or artificial lure as close as possible to the jetty wall.

leader with a monofilament shock leader on the business end. No matter what baitfish pattern is fished — Deceiver or Clouser — Sommerlatte recommends anglers choose a large pattern size.

Conventional anglers find saltwater versions of popular bass lures work well on bull reds. In fact, one of the better ways to take the large predators off a jetty wall is with a deep-diving crankbait

in one of many baitfish patterns. Plastics fished on leadhead jigs and spinnerbaits produce well when redfish are schooling up. Whether casting a fly or flinging a conventional lure, anglers should push the barb down on all hooks. This practice allows for a quick release.

When fishing the surf from the beach side, many anglers prefer to fish live bait. Although this is certainly a very productive means of angling, it doesn't allow anglers to target a specific species. A "songrodder's" catch will often include speckled seatrout, jack crevalle, blacktip shark, black drum and the occasional



### Head Them Off at the Pass

Some of the better locations to find and catch bull reds are the many jetties found at the mouths of the passes themselves. By funneling the incoming and outgoing tides, the long riprap structures keep the passes open to shipping. In turn, the tidal action found along the rocky structure creates a marine environment rich in prey and predators. Large redfish patrol the jetty walls, herding and taking various baitfish.

Whether anchoring or using a controlled drift, boaters typically present their live bait or artificial lures as close to



the edge of the rock structure as possible. Although spoons, jigged plastics and spinnerbaits are productive along the wall, deep-diving crankbaits often are easier to fish and often are more productive. The floating diver reaches the depth at which the bigger fish are often found, yet rarely hangs up on the rocks.

Fly anglers also can experience relatively good success along the jetties. When redfish are herding baitfish near the surface, a floating fly line is preferred. However, in most cases, fly fishers are better served when fishing a full, uniform sinking fly line and a stout, relatively short (three to four feet) leader. Many experienced fly anglers prefer to fish a neutrally buoyant baitfish pattern because it keeps the fly out of the rocks.

Exercise caution when fishing from the jetty itself. The slippery rock, ripping tide and deep water make fishing on the rock structure fairly risky. Anglers should carefully scout out a flat, dry rock from which to cast. When caution is used,

number of fish that form these spawning schools. However, we know they can number in the thousands.”

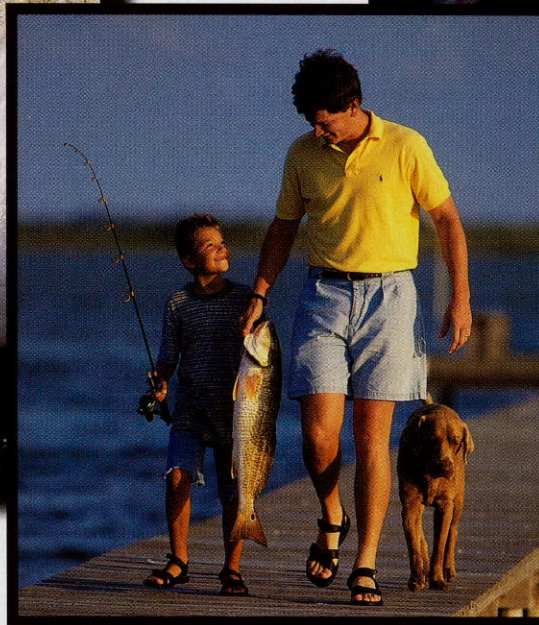
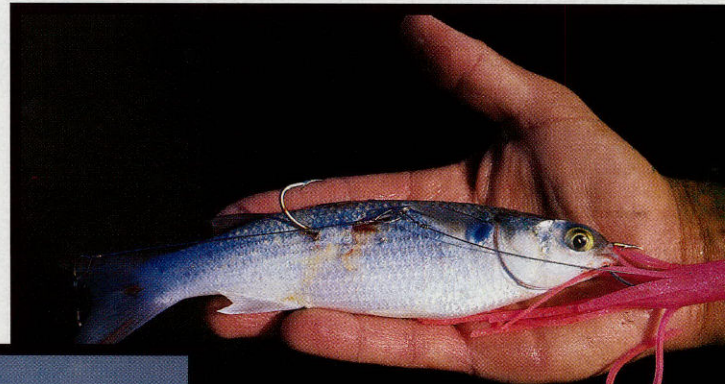
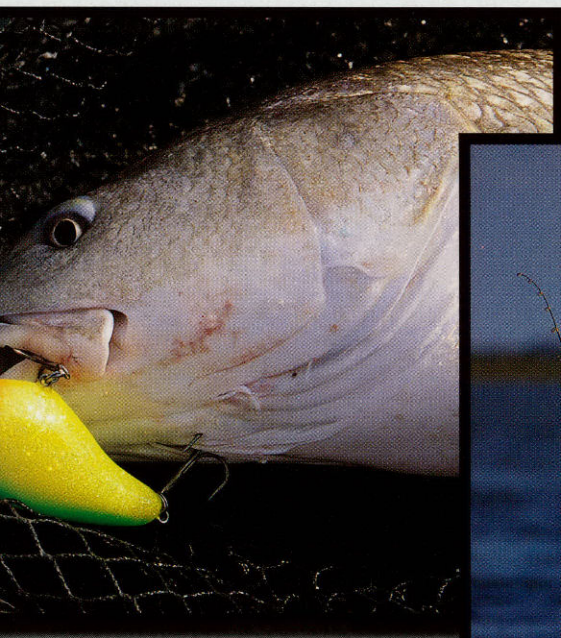
Holt cites the number of fish lost to a red tide that occurred a few years ago as an example of the size that spawning groups can achieve. “Three years ago,” he says, “we lost approximately 12,000 redfish to red tide that were probably part of the spawning group around the pass [Aransas]. Even with those losses, the fish spawned, so we know there were thousands in that spawning group.”

Although anglers make a number of assumptions as to how the redfish spawn, fishery biologists don't yet know all the detail surrounding the spawning activity. Again, Holt explains, “We don't know if the fish spawn in tight schools or loose schools, or whether there's some kind of very temporary pairing. However, whether they're pairing up or not, we do know that there are a lot of fish

full moon or new moon. Researchers have looked hard for an obvious lunar or tidal signal, but have yet to find one.

Although fishery biologists know that an individual female will release eggs more than once, little is known about how many times a female will release eggs during a spawning period. “We don't know whether a group of females spawn for a week or two and then another group of females takes over,” adds Holt, “or if that group spawns one day and then doesn't spawn again for another three to five days.”

Additionally, Holt admits that fishery biologists aren't sure if all spawning activity actually occurs in the passes and inlets. Holt and his associates currently



fishing from the jetty can be an incredibly positive experience, especially when a large school of bull reds is encountered.

### Spawning by Moonlight

How large do the spawning schools get in and around the passes? At this time, fishery biologists aren't sure. Scott Holt explains, “We're not sure about the

spawning — as much as 20 percent of the school — at the same time.”

According to Holt, the actual spawning activity occurs at night, regardless of what the tide is doing. Holt and his associates find redfish spawn on both flooding tides and ebbing tides, during a

are attempting to determine the spatial extent of the spawning activity. “My guess at the moment is that the big schools of redfish found along the beaches and jetties adjacent to the passes are either feeding or migrating to the passes themselves,” he says.

Whether feeding, migrating or spawning, the annual bull run along Texas' beaches, jetties and passes is worth experiencing. This fall, Texas anglers won't want to miss the hard-charging run of an oversized redfish. “There's nothing like seeing a school of reds the size of a football field,” concludes Sommerlatte, “tearing up baitfish on the surface.” ★

PAUL A. CAÑADA is a freelance writer living in Fort Worth. His articles appear regularly in a variety of fishing magazines.



# WILL WORK FOR FOOD

**Long admired for their prismatic beauty, hummingbirds “pay for their supper” of nectar by pollinating more than 150 native Texas plants.**

BY ELAINE  
ROBBINS





THE RUBY-THROATED  
HUMMINGBIRD BUZZES like an

unwelcome alarm clock over the head of a tourist taking a siesta in a Yucatan garden. The tourist quaffed multiple margaritas last night to steel himself for the trip back to Houston, and the hummer, too, is tanking up on the nectar of 1,500 to 3,000 flowers a day in preparation for the grueling, 600-mile trip across the Gulf of Mexico. Like the tourist, the tiny bird is heading to the Houston area. To conserve energy on its nonstop flight of 11 to 18 hours, it will fly at an altitude of 2,000 to 5,000 feet, taking advantage of tailwinds. But the ruby-throated still won't get to rest once it arrives in Texas. It will feed on more nectar and insects, then will likely take off to establish territory in its summer grounds in the eastern United States or Canada.





Pictured at this feeder are what could be either female ruby-throated or black-chinned hummingbirds — essentially identical in appearance. When making an educated guess, remember female black-chinned hummingbirds usually have longer bills and pump their tails in flight.

The ruby-throated isn't the only long-distance traveler in the hummingbird family. By the time the ruby-throated comes through Texas in mid-March, the rufous hummingbird has already made its 3,000-mile journey from Jalisco, Mexico, to Alaska. "The rufous hummingbird has the distinction of flying ... 49 million body lengths, the longest migration of any bird," writes William A. Calder in *Gatherings of Angels: Migrating Birds and Their Ecology*. "Hummingbirds are the tiniest birds in the world, but they migrate extraordinary distances," says Karen Krebbs, manager of ornithology at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson. "For such a tiny bird, it's got a lot of guts."

In the spring, several species of hummingbird migrate along the "nectar trail" from Mexico or Central America through Texas or the Southwest to the northern United States. In a careful choreography, they follow the sequence of local plant flowerings as they head north. "When the birds start north in the spring, sometime between the first of March and the middle of April, it's usually a quick rush," says Mark Klym, Texas Parks and Wildlife Hummingbird Roundup coordinator. "They've got one thing on their mind: Get up north and find a nesting site as quickly as possible. It's not like the fall migration, which may be spread out over a two- to three-month period."



## Did you know?

The smallest species is the bee hummingbird of Cuba, which grows to about 2¼ inches long.

• **Talk about low blood sugar: The hummingbird needs to feed every 7 to 12 minutes.**

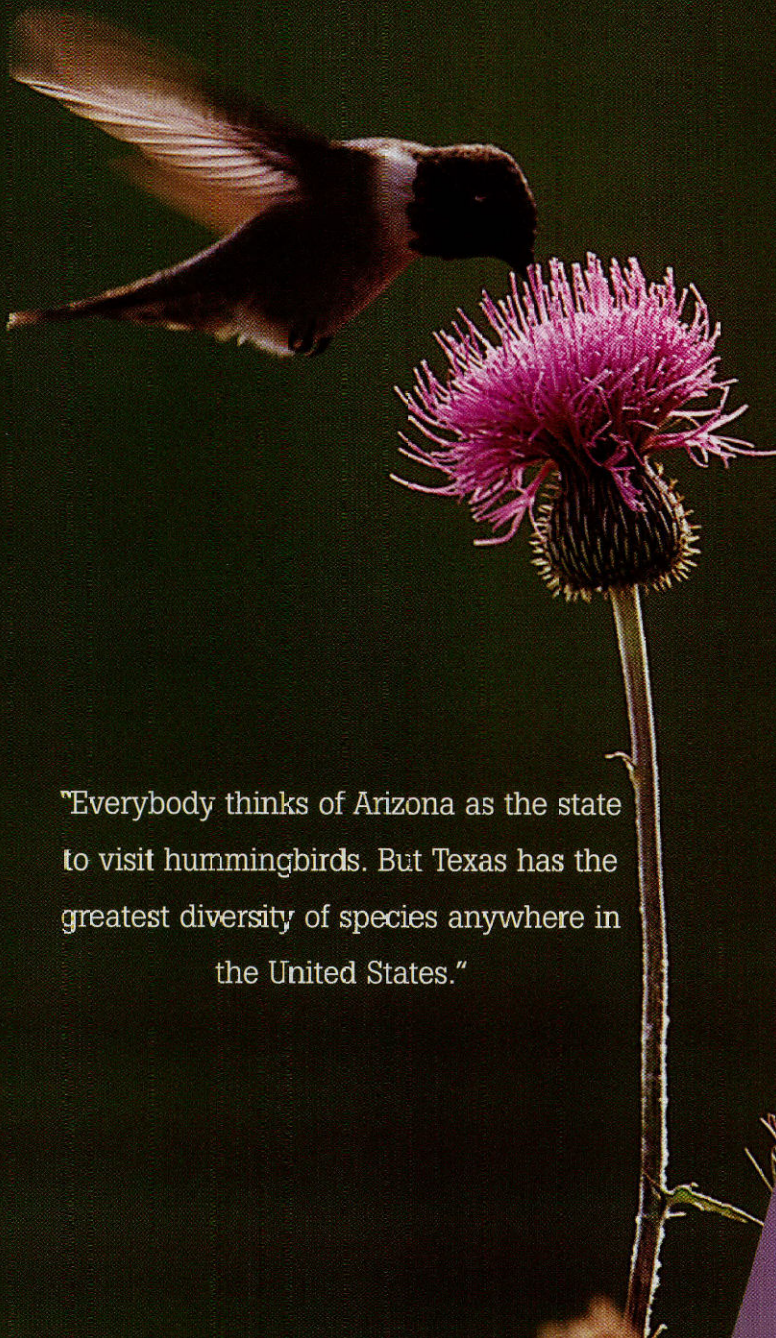
• A hummer's colors can change from dull brown or black to dazzling iridescent green, blue, or purple, depending on the angle of light that's hitting it. That's because the feather colors are made not by pigments but by light refraction.

• **When a hummer hovers in front of a flower or feeder, it makes rapid figure eights with its wings.**

• Bad news for tequila drinkers: The Lucifer hummingbird steals nectar from the agave, which is pollinated by the long-nosed bat.

• **Hummingbirds live only in the Western Hemisphere.**

• Brightly colored hummingbird feathers were all the rage among 19th-century Europeans. In London during one month in 1888, according to Paul A. Johnsgard, 12,000 hummingbird skins were sold to the public "to supply the upper-class Europeans with specimens for collections and for ornamental uses."



"Everybody thinks of Arizona as the state to visit hummingbirds. But Texas has the greatest diversity of species anywhere in the United States."



## The Search for Nectar

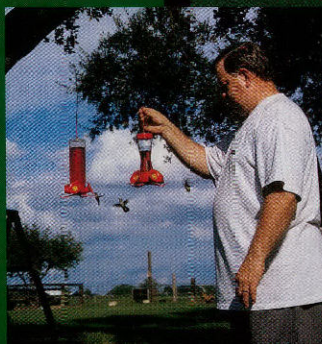
If the hummingbird's migratory flight is demanding, its daily energy needs are nearly unquenchable. To keep up with the constant demands of a supercharged metabolism, it feeds from dawn to dusk, consuming more than half its body weight in food per day. A hummingbird's heart — the largest per body size in the animal kingdom — beats a rapid 1,200 times a minute during flight. "If man had as high a weight-specific metabolic rate as a hummingbird," write Esther and Robert Tyrrell in *Hummingbirds: Their Life and Behavior*, "his daily intake of food would have to be approximately twice his body weight. Also, his temperature would be over 750 degrees F, and he would use up to 155,000 calories per day."

As if the bird's feeding requirements weren't demanding enough, the 150 or so native plants that depend on hummingbirds for pollination make the task of feeding even more challenging. In an ingenious codependence scheme, when the bird feeds, the pollen sticks to its crown and gorget throat and chin). It then carries the pollen to other flowers of the same species. But in a trick that recalls Louis XIV's habit of providing too few chairs at Versailles to keep his courtiers perpetually jockeying for position, these bird-adapted plants dispense only small amounts of nectar at a time. This keeps the birds moving to ensure the plants' propagation.

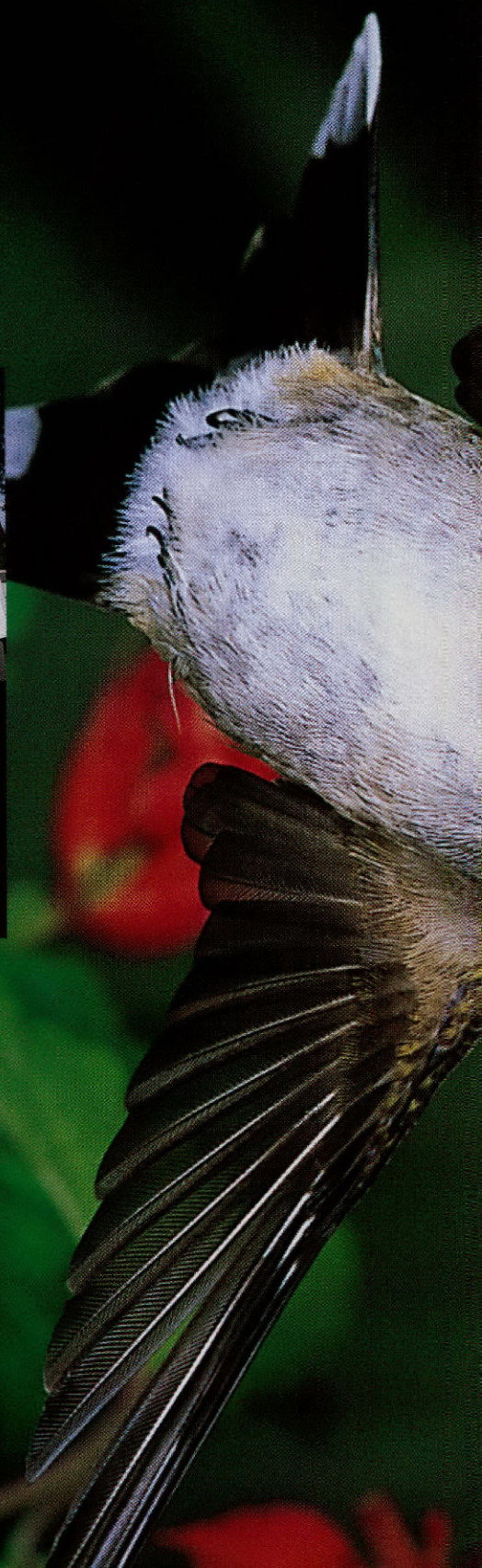
Fortunately, the hummingbird has a few advantages in the competition for nectar. Since it has no sense of smell, it is attracted to unscented blossoms — a preference that gives it a near monopoly, since bees and other insects are attracted to fragrant flowers. The hummingbird is also smart enough to learn fairly quickly which flowers in an area offer high-quality — that is, high-sugar-content — nectar.

"Hummingbirds learn that red signals the possible presence of nectar nearby," write Stephen L. Buchmann and Gary Paul Nabhan in *The Forgotten Pollinators*, the book that first sounded the alarm about the threats to migratory pollinators. "In fact, this color stimulus is so strong for hummingbirds that if you put on lipstick, filled your pursed mouth with wine, and stand where crimson-colored sugar feeders or potted magenta flowers have been outside, the hummingbirds will often feed right out of your mouth." (One can only imagine how researchers stumbled onto that discovery.)

Hummingbirds also have acrobatic abilities that enhance their ability to find food. They have a unique ability to hover while feeding — giving them minimal competition for flowers that have no perches or landing pads. They can dart from side to side or even fly rapidly backward — feats that allow them to grab insects in midair to supplement their nectar diet with protein. And as anyone with a hummingbird feeder knows, they defend their food source aggressively. The male performs a series of impressive aerial dives to protect its feeding area against male intruders (or to court a female — in hummers, it's often hard to distinguish between the two behaviors).



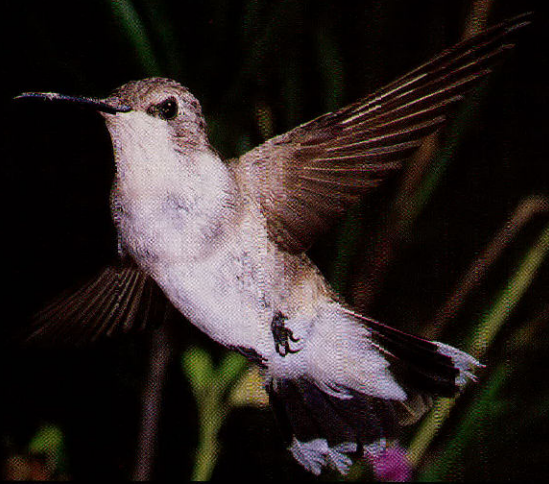
The female ruby-throated, right, lacks the brilliant red throat of the male. Clean feeders and replace the sugar solution every few days, and keep feeders up during the fall and winter.



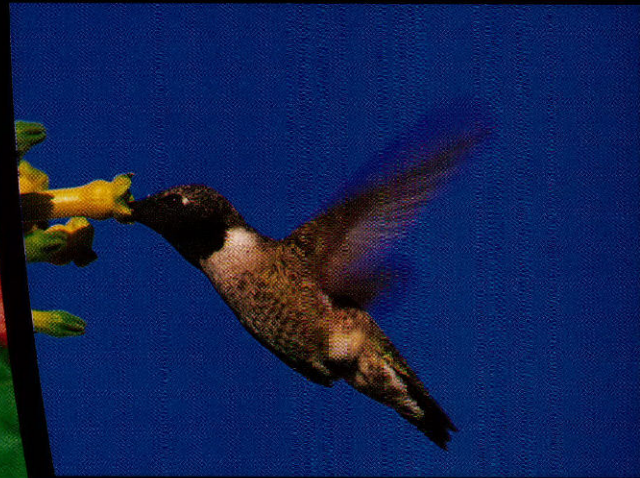




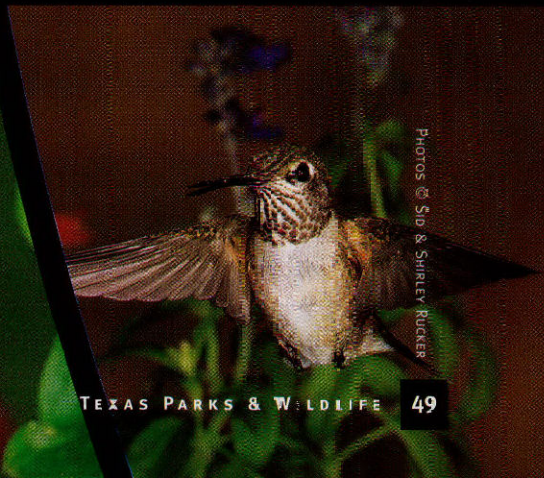
Rufous hummingbird, above



Black-chinned hummingbird, female, above; male, below



Broad-tailed hummingbird, below



PHOTOS © SUE & SHIRLEY RUCKER





## HOW TO ATTRACT HUMMINGBIRDS TO YOUR YARD OR TERRACE

**FEEDER FEVER:** Buy a glass hummingbird feeder (they are easier to clean than plastic) and fill it with a mixture of one part sugar to four parts water. (Don't substitute honey, and don't add food coloring — both can be harmful to hummers.) Boil the mixture for two to three minutes to delay fermentation. Let the solution cool and fill the feeder, storing the remaining solution in the refrigerator.

Be sure to clean the feeder and replace the sugar solution every two to three days, especially in warm weather, to prevent the growth of bacteria that can harm the birds. Give hummers time to find your feeder; once they do, they'll come back every year. Keep the feeder up in the fall and winter. Contrary to popular belief, feeders do not keep hummers from migrating. In fact, those birds that do overwinter in Texas will use your feeder as a clean, reliable source of food. It can help them get through periods when nectar sources are rare.

**A HUMMINGBIRD GARDEN:** To attract hummers to your garden, plant clumps of native wildflowers, shrubs and vines in a mixture of shade and sun. Keep in mind that flowers that attract hummingbirds are often red or orange and tube-shaped. Ask your local nursery about choosing plants that bloom at different times of year. In *Texas Wildscapes: Gardening for Wildlife* (Texas Parks and Wildlife Press), Noreen Damude and Kelly Conrad Bender recommend the following species:

Eastern and coastal Texas (ruby-throated): Red columbine, scarlet sage, coral honeysuckle, phlox, trumpet creeper, cross-vine, standing cypress, various species of red, pink and magenta penstemon.

Central and West Texas (black-chinned): Ocotillo, chuparosa, lantana, palo verde, butterfly bush, scarlet delphinium, paintbrushes, red columbine, agaves, scarlet gilia, various penstemons, and red yucca.

Minimize the use of pesticides on your lawn or garden; they can kill the insects that these birds feed on. Have water available, whether from a birdbath or sprinkler; hummingbirds love to bathe. Hummers also like perches such as dead tree limbs, which they use to survey their territory.

### Survival of the Smallest

How is the hummingbird faring in the struggle for survival? Accurate numbers are hard to come by, since it is difficult to track such tiny birds traveling over such vast territory. But in Texas, they seem to be thriving.

"Everybody thinks of Arizona as the state to visit hummingbirds," says Klym. "But Texas has the greatest diversity of species anywhere in the United States" — 18 recorded species to Arizona's 16. Although the Trans-Pecos region offers the greatest diversity, more species than ever are overwintering on the Texas Gulf Coast. Says Brent Ortego, a wildlife diversity biologist with Texas Parks and Wildlife in Victoria, "There's more of everything — more black-chinned, more rufous, more Anna's, more broad-tailed, and more buff-bellied being recorded wintering than historically. It may be partly because we have more people looking for them, and partly because people maintain gardens and keep feeders up in the winter."

Indeed, these birds seem to adapt better than many other creatures to suburban sprawl and other signs of human presence. Says Ortego, "They can survive in woodlands — especially woodlands with evergreen vegetation — for a period of the winter, feeding on insects and nectar. But once the first heavy frost hits, many hummingbirds head to subdivisions, where people have put up sugar feeders. If people didn't maintain feeders in the winter, probably quite a few of these birds would die."

Nationwide, though, some species are showing preliminary indications of decline. Three species — the rufous, Allen's, and buff-bellied — are on the National Audubon Society's WatchList. Calder heads the rufous study for the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum's five-year Migratory Pollinators program, which has received a \$500,000 grant from the Ted Turner Foundation and the Turner





Homeowners can attract hummingbirds to their yards by planting native wildflowers, shrubs and vines. Minimize the use of pesticides, and have water available for the birds.

Endangered Species Fund to study threats to pollinators such as birds, bees, butterflies and nectar-eating bats. He is investigating possible habitat threats in their wintering or summering grounds or along their migratory corridors.

“Is drought-caused flower failure the reason for apparent decreases in rufous hummingbird populations?” he asks. “We simply don’t know. Habitat protection is important, but the greatest effects may come from the effects of climate change. Perhaps rapid evolution or changes in migratory behavior can provide the flexibility needed to cope with climate change, as suggested by the exponential increase in the numbers of rufous wintering in the southeastern United States.”

Ironically, the greatest threat to hummingbirds and other pollinators is their specialization — the same evolutionary tactic that has allowed them and the plants they pollinate to thrive so successfully. On the Caribbean island of Tobago, for example, researchers Peter Feinsinger and Yan Linhart studied a flower dependent on the hummingbird for pollination. *The Forgotten Pollinators* reports that they found “a greatly diminished fruit set” on these plants in Tobago, where fewer hummingbird species live than on neighboring Trinidad. This suggests that “highly specialized plant-pollinator relationships are especially susceptible to perturbations of any sort, because any factor affecting the relative availability of either the plant or its pollinator necessarily affects both populations.”

For now, though, these adaptable birds continue to coexist with humans, thriving even on the edges of booming cities such as Houston and Tucson. When one appears suddenly in a desert or backyard like a glittering jewel, it speaks to our heart of nature’s fragile balance. ★

## HUMMINGBIRD ROUNDUP

Do you have hummingbirds in your backyard? If so, Texas Parks and Wildlife would like you to participate in a backyard survey. The information will be used to gain a better understanding of the range, distribution, favored sites and feeding habits of the 18 hummingbird species that have been sighted in Texas. To sign up, send your name, address, and county with a \$6 donation (payable to Texas Hummingbird Roundup) to:

Hummingbird Roundup  
Nongame and Urban Program  
Texas Parks and Wildlife  
4200 Smith School Rd.  
Austin, TX 78744

You will receive a hummingbird roundup packet, which contains a survey form, scarlet sage seeds and a reference guide for easy identification. For more information, go to the Hummingbird Roundup Web site:

<[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/birding/humrunup.htm](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/birding/humrunup.htm)>

## WHERE THE BIRDS ARE

Hummingbird Festival, Rockport/Fulton, September 14–17, 800-242-0071, <[www.rockport-fulton.org](http://www.rockport-fulton.org)>. If you enjoy peering at rubies in a jewelry store, you’ll be amazed at the scene in Rockport each September, when the hummingbirds are in town. It’s not unusual to stand in a backyard and see hundreds of hummingbirds gathered at 25 or 30 feeders.

Dan Brown’s Hummer House, Christoval, 915-255-2254. Dan Brown puts out 600 pounds of sugar each year. About 3,000 birds, mostly blackchins, come for supper — and stay for breeding.

Davis Mountains Hummingbird Festival, last weekend in July, 915-426-3015. Violet-crowned and black-chinned hummingbirds are common in the Davis Mountains. You may spot a Lucifer, rufous, Allen’s or calliope. Even rarer sightings: the berylline, blue-throated and Anna’s.

Newbury Park Hummingbird Garden, Aransas Pass. This community park is filled with ruby-throated hummingbirds during migrations and in the winter. The park offers a relaxing place to enjoy the hummers.



PHOTO © GRADY ALLEN



# *An* Alpenglo

PHOTO © LAURENCE PARENT



# W Adventure

**Cooler temperatures, seldom-seen nocturnal creatures and the buttery-gold glaze of alpenglow reward evening hikers at Franklin Mountains State Park.**

BY VALERIE BERNAT

At sunset in Franklin Mountains State Park, creatures of the day retire as the night falls. Hikers who are active only during daylight hours miss the “other” world of twilight and night, and the emergence of the crepuscular and nocturnal creatures whose day begins at dusk.





A PERFECT TIME TO VENTURE into the twilight world is on nights just before the full moon. The light of the moon, combined with twilight, illuminates the landscape and the trail. We discovered the beauties of moonlight hiking in the Franklins years ago, and

Rock climbing and mountain biking are popular at Franklin Mountains State Park during the day, but a nighttime hike offers a different perspective, including a view of the city lights of El Paso, with Juarez in the distance.

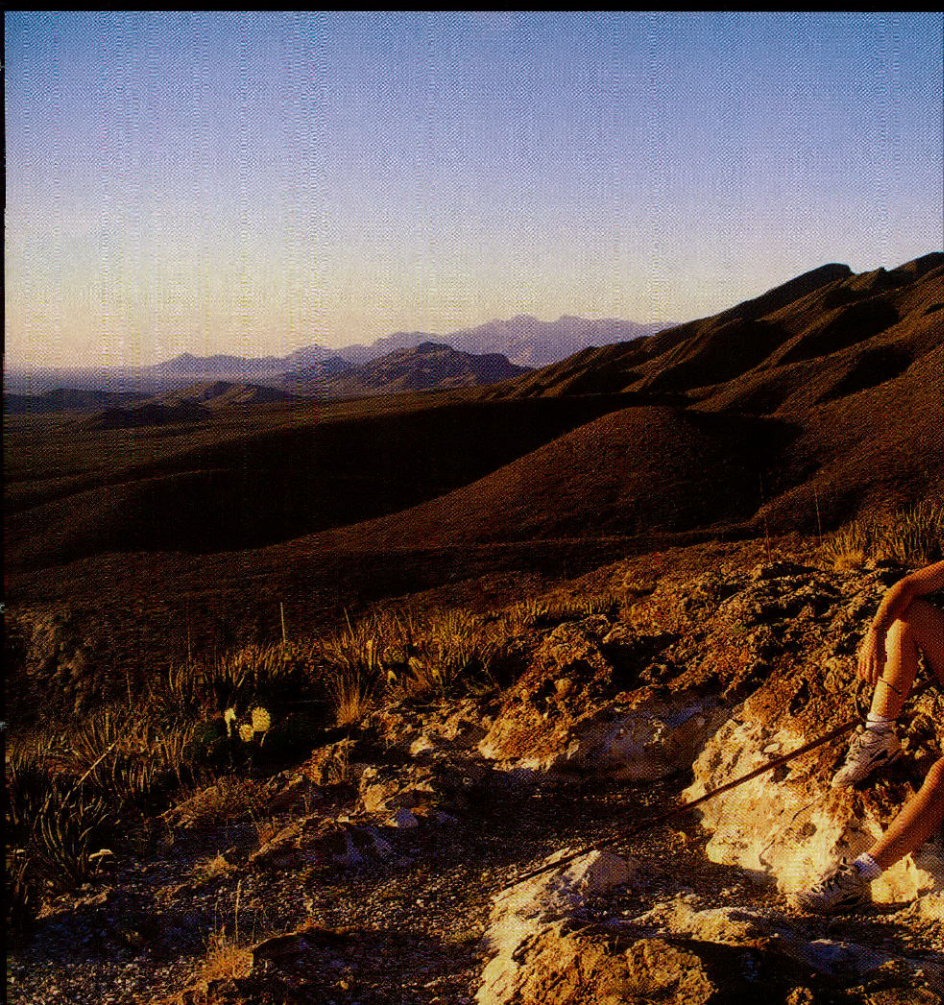
now don't miss an opportunity to take a moonlit stroll.

The Franklin Mountains run like a rocky spine down the middle of the city of El Paso. The Rocky Mountains end here, at a point overlooking the Rio Grande. North Franklin Peak crests at 7,192 feet, towering 3,000 feet above the city below.

Franklin Mountains State Park is in the land of little rain known as the Chihuahuan Desert. Although most of the Chihuahuan Desert lies in Mexico, sections of it extend across into Texas, in the Big Bend and El Paso. The animal and plant life in this desert, which receives less than 10 inches of rain a year, is surprisingly diverse and, not surprisingly, extremely hardy.

Texas is well known for its brags, and Franklin Mountains State Park is responsible for a few of them. With an area covering some 24,000 acres entirely within El Paso, this is the largest urban park in Texas and one of the largest parks in the world lying within city limits. "Only a few minutes from downtown El Paso we have an entire Chihuahuan Desert mountain range in one park," former lead ranger Joshua Santillan notes with pride.





WITH AN AREA OF SOME 24,000 ACRES LYING ENTIRELY WITHIN EL PASO, THIS IS THE LARGEST URBAN PARK IN TEXAS AND ONE OF THE LARGEST PARKS IN THE WORLD WITHIN CITY LIMITS.

PHOTOS BY EARL MATTINGHAM



"From here you can see three states and two countries."

As we drive into the park late one afternoon, a red-tailed hawk soars overhead, circling in the last shafts of sunlight. We set off from a picnic shelter along the Sunset View Trail. Snaking along the crest of a limestone ridge, the trail takes full advantage of a 360-degree view of the sunset and the vast canopy of sky. A buttery gold light, the beginnings of alpenglow, glazes the mountains. An effect of the changing light at sunset, alpenglow is as visible in the desert as it is on snow-covered mountains.

We soon skirt bedrock mortars, circular depressions ground into a limestone slab by early inhabitants. "They ground mesquite beans gathered nearby," explains park ranger/interpreter Lisa Hernandez. "Or they brought acorns from farther away." Even 6,000 years ago, people came here to dine and enjoy the view.

Clattering along the trail, we send a squadron of scaled quail scurrying out of hiding from beneath scattered creosote bushes. The solitary creosote provides shelter for birds, lizards, squirrels and mice. Typifying the Chihuahuan Desert, the creosote's wiry branches and small resinous leaves fill the air with a memorable fresh fragrance after even the briefest sprinkling of rain. We see foraging black-tailed jackrabbits and desert cottontails meandering between bushes.

"The nice thing about nature is you never know what you're going to run into," says Jerry Johnson, a local biologist who studies nocturnal animal life in the park under a grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife. "Creatures that are nocturnal in the summer will become diurnal during the winter months." Now halfway into a two-year study, Johnson and his associates have found 30 species of nocturnal amphibians, reptiles and mammals in the park.

"After a summer rain you can hear the spadefoot toad," says Hernandez. "We have a marshy area where they lie dormant until after a rain. The entire population emerges all in one night, and you can hear their chirping all over the park." We hope to see the great horned owl that swooped low over Hernandez one night when she was camping. It's not easy dividing our attention between the shifting kaleidoscope of sky and our watch for creatures scuttling across the rugged terrain. A flash of movement alerts us to a small Texas horned lizard skittering into a hiding place beneath a prickly pear.

The trail climbs steeply. Not many hikes in the Franklins are gentle or easy. When nature fractured these gigantic limestone blocks, it left them tilted at impossibly steep angles. The softening effects of rain and wind haven't made much of a dent in the rocky faces over the eons. They still retain their sharply chiseled features.

Nor do the rocks camouflage their origins. A history of sedimentary geology can be read in the stones, in fossils ranging in shape from perfect spirals to minute ovals no larger than a grain of rice. These countless tiny creatures lived and died so long ago it's beyond imagining.

As we climb, the stark rim of the Franklins punctuates the sky to the east. To the west, the view sweeps across the broad valley of the Rio Grande to the mesa and mountains

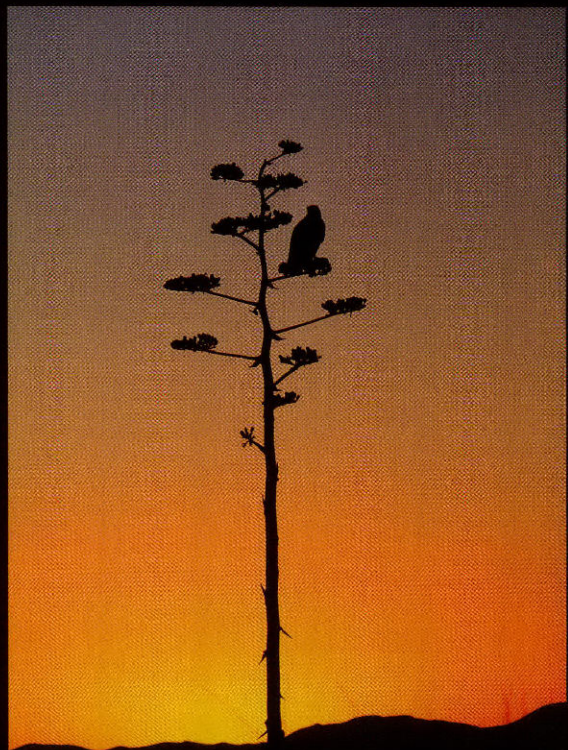
beyond. "You can see beyond the Potrillo Mountains in New Mexico," says park volunteer Earl Bremner. "They're more than 30 miles away. I've been at the park since 1991, and I never tire of the view."

The trail winds through colonies of leather-piercing agave lechuguilla. Another plant typical of the Chihuahuan Desert, agaves are communal, spreading from their roots, giving them their dense, forbidding growth pattern. Agaves bloom only once, shooting up a single tall stalk topped by flowers, and then the plant dies. The fibrous dried husks have provided material for nets, baskets, ropes and sandals for centuries, while the tender hearts have been roasted for food.

We wear long pants and hiking boots and use hiking sticks to protect ourselves from things that can poke and bite in the subdued light. We've stumbled across snakes

Hikers in the Franklin Mountains might catch a glimpse of a jackrabbit, scaled quail or roadrunner.

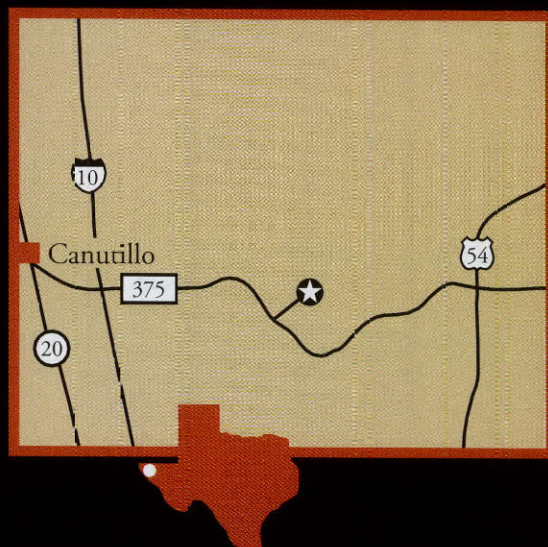
**LOOKING AT THE IMMENSE SHAPE OF NORTH FRANKLIN, I IMAGINE A DRAGON GUARDING THIS WESTERN GATE TO TEXAS, A SILENT SENTINEL NOW CLOTHED IN THE PURPLE VELVET OF MOUNTAINS AT SUNSET.**











## GETTING THERE

**T**he Sunset Trail is located in the Tom Mays section of Franklin Mountains State Park. To get there, take Interstate 10 West through El Paso. Turn east off of Interstate 10 at the Canutillo exit onto Loop 375 (Transmountain Road) for four miles. Hours are 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. daily, with later closings scheduled during the summer months.

Call to arrange a scheduled hike after closing hours. Bring warm clothes; nighttime temperatures can drop to 20 degrees.

A limited number of primitive campsites are available. Entrance fees are \$2 per person, \$8 for camping overnight. There are many more trails in other sections of the park. For information call 915-566-6444.

Map © Texas Parks and Wildlife Press, Official Guide to Texas State Parks. To order, call 512-912-7000. \$19.95 plus \$2.95 shipping and handling. Credit card orders only.

masquerading as rocks in the shadows of the trail. The western diamondback rattlesnake, the largest snake in this country, is common in the park, along with its smaller cousin, the blacktail. Tapping the trail ahead with a hiking stick warns them of our approach.

Tiny bats careen in the air over our heads. "When they dip and turn, they've just caught a bug," explains Wanda Olszewski, coauthor of the park's interpretive manual. These are the western pipistrelles which, at just over three inches, are the smallest bats in the United States. The large, long-winged Mexican freetail also roosts in the park's caves and crevices. "You can tell the difference by the silhouette," Olszewski points out. "Mexican freetails have longer, more jet-like wings, since they migrate. The pipis, with short wings, look fluttery when they fly."

We're out of breath when we reach the 5,184-foot crest of Sunset Peak just in time to watch the sun slip below the distant horizon. We've climbed 600 feet from the car in almost a mile, a short but rewarding hike. Resting on the thoughtfully placed bench, we wait quietly for the desert to forget our presence and go about its business.

To the east, the Franklins seem alive with shades of magenta and rose. We watch the last sliver of sun melt from

yellow into a brilliant lime green — the elusive green flash. We trace arching, crepuscular rays across the sky. The sun causes these alternating bands of color and shadow by shining through clouds below the horizon, and if you look closely you can see them converge again at a point opposite the sun.

Turning around, the golden face of the moon looms large behind the Franklins. To the south, the lights of El Paso and Juarez, Mexico, sprawl like scattered embers. A rosy dome of light hovers above the city of Las Cruces, New Mexico, 25 miles to the north. It may be an illusion, but the air here always seems fresher at sunset.

The ancient Chinese saw the shapes of dragons in their mountains. Looking at the immense shape of North Franklin, I imagine a dragon guarding this western gate to Texas, a silent sentinel now clothed in the purple velvet of mountains at sunset.

We watch our shadows by the light of the moon in a world now rendered in shades of gray as we retrace our steps down the trail. Even the rocks have moon shadows. We scan the hillsides for the broad shapes of mule deer, but the noisy passing of two hikers seems to have warned them away. They like to forage on moonlit nights, but I've seen only





The park's hardy vegetation includes lachugu'illa, left, mesquite, top, and the barrel cactus, above.

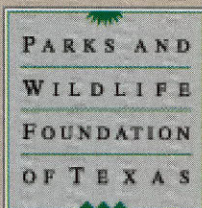
hoofprints as evidence of their presence. We're alert for the flickering movement of a fox and pause to listen for a coyote's long howl. Tonight, only the songs of insects fill the air.

We've taken dozens of moonlight hikes, and each has rewarded us with memorable surprises. The more we linger outside after sunset, the more we see and appreciate in the twilight and nocturnal worlds. Someday, I'm sure, we'll spy that owl. As we return to the city, behind us the night shift in the park has just begun. ★

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# The REEL STORY

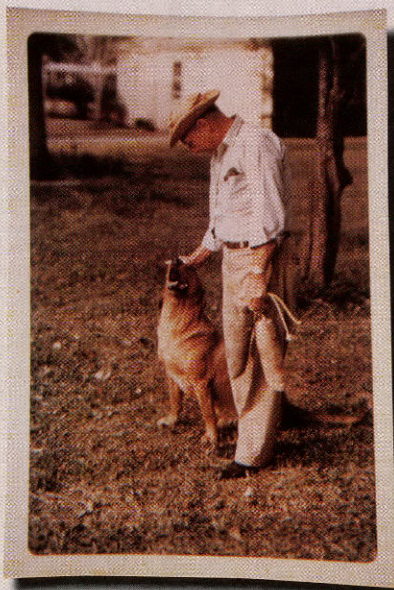
WATERFOWL HUNTING GUIDE JIMMY REEL CREATED A CONSERVATION ETHIC THAT STILL HOLDS WATER.

BY LARRY D. HODGE

**B**irders flock to the Texas Coast each winter to enjoy the sights and sounds of thousands of wintering ducks and geese blanketing the prairie from Katy to Tivoli. Hunters brave mud, cold and lack of sleep while hunting one of the nation's largest concentrations of waterfowl. Few know how much they owe to the foresight and industry of one man, Jimmy Reel of Eagle Lake, who died in 1976.

One of the first for-hire duck and goose hunting guides in Texas, Reel molded patterns still followed by hunters and wildlife managers today. "In the 1940s he was doing things that biologists are just now thinking about," says Bill Appelt of Hallettsville, who guided for Reel and later bought the hunting club bearing Reel's name. "We didn't hunt in the afternoons so the birds would have the opportunity to feed and be undisturbed. He started that — and it's still an unwritten law."

Reel also conceived the idea of pumping water to make roost ponds for ducks and geese, says Appelt. "In 1942 Mr. Reel had the first water put up for the geese, on the Vineyard Estate about three miles southeast of Eagle Lake, which was his first lease." Along with one of his guides and business partners, Marvin Tyler of Garwood, Reel origi-



"THE FIRST THING MY FATHER TAUGHT ME WAS NOT TO POINT A GUN AT ANYTHING I DIDN'T WANT TO KILL, AND NOT TO KILL ANYTHING I DIDN'T WANT TO EAT."

nated the use of white rags as decoys to attract geese, known today as the Texas rag spread.

But ducks — especially mallards and pintails — were Reel's main interest and concern. So well known was his passion for pintails that when Reel's son, Loudon, was born with a sprig of hair sticking up that looked like a pin-

tail's tail, a friend remarked, "Jimmy, it looks like you got your pintail."

Reel's interest in ducks and hunting began early as he tramped the fields and ponds of the family farm near Weiner, Arkansas. His father, Dr. W. C. Reel, introduced Jimmy to duck hunting and, more important, to the principles of conservation and respect for wildlife that guided Reel's life. Late in life Reel recalled a defining moment in his career as a hunter and conservationist. At about age 10, ignoring his father's instructions, he shot into a flock of mallards on the water, killing 18, including three hens. His father cut a limb and switched Jimmy for shooting hens, then made him carry all the ducks home by himself. "You don't forget a deal like that," Reel said. "I haven't shot a duck on the water since."

Reel's prowess as a caller meant he didn't have to shoot ducks on the water. He and his wife, Lucille, hunted both ducks and geese with 28-gauge shotguns. "He was an extraordinary caller," says his daughter, Agnes Strauss, of Cat Spring. "His calling was very realistic — there wasn't a call he couldn't do."

"He used a bronze single-reed call and would sit in his office [he was a rice buyer] and practice during the off season," recalls son Loudon. "He loved



working pintails. His style of calling was the opposite of what everyone advises, which is to call as little as possible. He would call very aggressively and not back off until they got so irritated they had to come see what it was. If you hit one bad note, they'd be gone. He might work them around seven or eight times until he was red in the face and then say, 'Get 'em,' and they'd be hanging there in front of you."

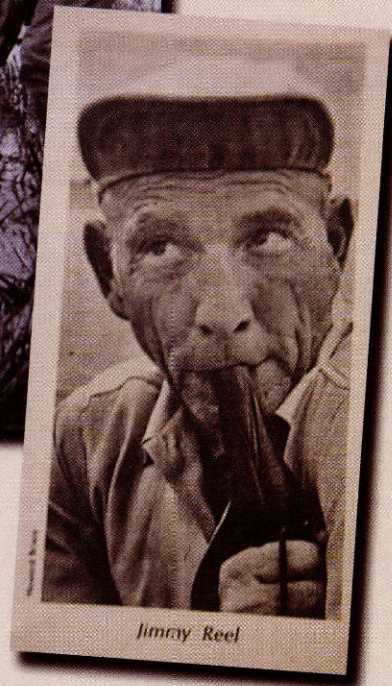
Appelt also recalls with awe Reel's ability to call ducks. "It was amazing. He would talk to a flight of ducks, and they would come around like a bunch of chickens coming to feed in the barnyard."

Despite his ability as a hunter, those who knew Reel best feel his legacy is far bigger than the national reputation he built as a guide and champion duck caller. "The thing that stood out to me was how much of a sportsman he was," says Loudon. "The first thing he taught me was not to point a gun at anything I didn't want to kill, and not to kill anything I didn't want to eat. He had high respect for wildlife and the environment."

"He had an air of authority no one ever questioned," adds Agnes. "I remember walking into a field with him where there were poachers with guns and him sending me back to town for the game warden. He firmly believed in abiding by the law and being a sportsman."

Reel grew up during the Great Depression, arriving in Eagle Lake "riding the rails" in 1932. He knew hunger

and hard work, but life was always more to him than personal survival. "I remember walking through the woods with him and being amazed at how much he knew about the plants and animals," says Agnes. Appelt saw a practical side to Reel's desire to learn about wildlife. "He encouraged his guides to go out to ponds and listen to geese and ducks to see how they sound-



ed as a way of improving our calling. He also wanted us to learn all we could about the wildlife. He said that if you are having a slow day and the hunters want to know why the birds are behaving a certain way, you'd better have some answers for them."

Reel believed that the first responsibility of a hunter is conservation. He and his closest friends and hunting companions made up an informal

group they called the Thanatopsis Society. The main business of the society was to meet following hunts for libations and the collection of fines for inappropriate behavior, such as shooting a hen. Fines levied during the season were donated to Ducks Unlimited, and Reel and his friend, D. R. Wintermann, were instrumental in the formation of the Rice Belt chapter of the hunting conservation group.

Reel was ahead of his time in many ways. One of his enduring legacies was an emphasis on making it possible for all members of a family to be involved in hunting. "When other people were charging \$60 to \$75 per person for a hunt, Mr. Reel was charging \$35," says Appelt. "He wanted families to be able to afford it. If a family member did not hunt but just wanted to watch the birds, he or she could go along for free. He encouraged that, and he didn't require a minimum group size. He wasn't in it just for the money." Reel's

approach built loyalty among his customers, many of whom returned with children and grandchildren.

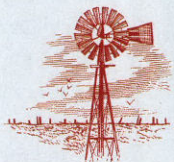
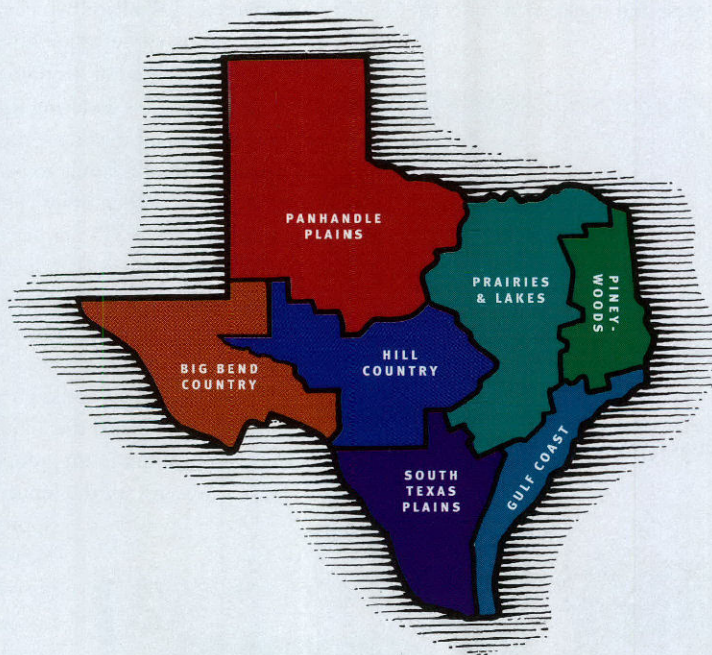
Oddly, for a man who cared so much for others and for the environment, Reel showed little concern for himself. A heavy smoker, he neglected his high blood pressure and died at age 66. Today he and his wife lie together in the Eagle Lake

cemetery, a polished black granite stone bearing the figures of three flushing ducks at their heads. For miles around each winter, geese and ducks throng roost ponds, flying overhead on their way to fields to feed. Anyone searching for Jimmy Reel's legacy has only to listen, and look up. ☆



# GETAWAYS

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



## PANHANDLE-PLAINS

### SEPTEMBER EVENTS

**Sept.:** Llama Treks, by reservation only, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-651-7346

**Sept.:** Palo Duro Canyon Pioneers, every Saturday, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227

**Sept.:** Evening Programs, every Friday, Saturday & Sunday, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227

**Sept. 1:** North and Central Zone dove season opens, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 2:** Starwalk, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, 940-839-4331

**Sept. 2:** Petroglyph Tour,

San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757

**Sept. 2:** Family Nature Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227

**Sept. 2, 16:** Nature Hike, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, 806-455-1492

**Sept. 3:** Campfire Gathering, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, 806-455-1492

**Sept. 9, 23:** Birding 101, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, 806-455-1492

**Sept. 9:** Clarity Tunnel Adventure, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, 806-455-1492

**Sept. 9:** Botany Basics, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227

**Sept. 9:** Lone Star Legacy, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227

**Sept. 15-30:** Teal, rail and gallinule season, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 16:** Prairieland Tour, Lake Rita Blanca SP, Dalhart, 806-488-2227

**Sept. 16:** Longhorn and Buffalo Seminar, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757

**Sept. 16:** Nature Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227

**Sept. 23:** Canyon Ramblings, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, 806-455-1492

**Sept. 23:** Stargazing Party, Fort Griffin SHP, Albany, 915-762-3592

**Sept. 23:** Dino Walk, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757

**Sept. 30-Oct. 8:** Pronghorn hunting by permit, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 30-Oct. 29:** Archery season, white-tailed deer and mule deer, 512-389-4505

### OCTOBER EVENTS

**Oct.:** Llama Treks, by reservation only through Jordan Llamas, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-651-7346

**Oct. 7:** Longhorn & Bison Seminar, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757

**Oct. 7:** Living History, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227 x49

**Oct. 7:** Petroglyph Tour San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757

**Oct. 7:** Harvest Saturday, Big Spring SP, Big Spring, 915-263-4931

**Oct. 14:** Family Nature Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227 x49

**Oct. 14:** Dinosaur Walk, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757

**Oct. 14:** Wildflower Safari, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227 x49

**Oct. 21:** The Haunted Canyon, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, 806-488-2227 x49

**Oct. 21:** Caprock Legacy Day, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, 806-455-1492

**Oct. 21:** Doubleheader - Bats and Starwalk, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, 940-839-4331

**Oct. 21:** 4th Annual Cowboy Symposium, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, 915-949-4757.

**Oct. 22:** Quitaque Quest, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, 806-455-1492



## PRAIRIES AND LAKES

### SEPTEMBER EVENTS

**Sept.:** Historic and Scenic Tour, by reservation only, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 979-968-5658

**Sept.:** Guided Tours, every weekend, Fanthorp Inn SHP, Anderson, 936-873-2633



**Sept.:** Kreische Brewery Tours, every Saturday & Sunday, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP, 979-968-5658

**Sept.:** Independence Hall Tours, daily, Washington-on-the-Brazos SHP, Washington, 936-878-2214

**Sept. 1:** North and Central Zone dove season opens, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 2:** Guided Nature Hike, Cooper Lake SP/South Sulphur Unit, Sulphur Springs, 903-945-5256

**Sept. 3, 10:** Kreische House Tour, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 979-968-5658

**Sept. 9:** Venomous Animals and Poisonous Plants, Cooper Lake SP/Doctors Creek Unit, Cooper, 903-395-3100

**Sept. 15-30:** Teal, rail and gallinule season, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 16:** Jones Farm Jam, Ray Roberts Lake SP/Johnson Branch Unit, Valley View, 940-637-2294

**Sept. 16:** Buggy Whip Trail Hike, Cooper Lake SP/South Sulphur Unit, Sulphur Springs, 903-945-5256

**Sept. 16:** Cowboy Campfire Music and Poetry, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, 940-328-1171

**Sept. 16:** Birds of Prey Festival, Heard Natural Science Museum & Wildlife Sanctuary, McKinney, 972-562-5566 x226

**Sept. 23:** Texian Days, Fanthorp Inn SHP, Anderson, 936-873-2633

**Sept. 23:** Moody Cotton Harvest Festival, Moody, 254-853-9343

**Sept. 23-24:** Cotton Harvest, Washington-on-the-Brazos SHP, Washington, 936-878-2214

**Sept. 23-24:** Hunter Education Instructor Training, Lake Whitney SP, Whitney, 254-694-3793

**Sept. 24:** Hunter Education, Lake Whitney SP, Whitney, 254-694-3793

**Sept. 30:** 4th Annual North Texas Skywatch Amateur Astronomer's Star Party, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, 940-328-1171

**Sept. 30-Oct. 29:** Archery season, white-tailed deer, 512-389-4505

## OCTOBER EVENTS

**Oct.:** Early German Christmas, call for more information, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 979-968-5658

**Oct.:** Historic and Scenic Tour, call for more information, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 979-968-5658

**Oct.:** Evening Campfire Programs, every Saturday, Stephen F. Austin SHP, San Felipe, 979-885-3613

**Oct.:** Historical Tours, every Saturday & Sunday, Stephen F. Austin SHP, San Felipe, 979-885-3613

**Oct.:** Guided Tours, every weekend, Fanthorp Inn SHP, Anderson, 936-873-2633

**Oct.:** Kreische Brewery Tours, every Saturday & Sunday, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 979-968-5658

**Oct. 1, 8:** Kreische House Tours, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 979-968-5658

**Oct. 2, 16:** Fayette Archeology Week, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHP, La Grange, 979-968-5658

**Oct. 7:** Sunset Nature Hike, Cooper Lake SP/Doctors Creek Unit, Cooper, 903-395-3100

**Oct. 7:** Monument Dedication, Mother Neff SP, Moody, 254-853-2389

**Oct. 14:** Coyote Run Nature Hike, Cooper Lake SP/Doctors Creek Unit, Cooper, 903-395-3100

**Oct. 21-22:** Lone Star Legacy Weekend, Fairfield Lake SP, Fairfield, 903-389-4514

**Oct. 21:** Lone Star Legacy Fall Festival, Stephen F. Austin SHP, San Felipe, 979-885-3613

**Oct. 21:** Critters of the Area, Cooper Lake SP/Doctors Creek Unit, Cooper, 903-395-3100



## PINEYWOODS

### SEPTEMBER EVENTS

**Sept. 1:** North and Central Zone dove season opens, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 2:** Steam Engine Shop Tour, Texas State Railroad SHP, Rusk, 800-442-8951

**Sept. 2:** 11th Annual Martin Creek Lake Perch Jerk, Tatum, 903-836-4336

**Sept. 2:** Starlight Steam Train Excursion, Texas State Railroad SHP, Rusk, 800-442-8951

**Sept. 3, 10, 24:** Walk On The Wildside, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, 409-384-5231

**Sept. 9, 23:** Guided Nature Trail Hike, Village Creek SP, Lumberton, 409-755-7322

**Sept. 15-30:** Teal, rail and gallinule season, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 16:** Floating the Forks, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, 409-384-5231

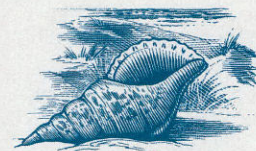
**Sept. 30-Oct. 29:** Archery season, white-tailed deer, 512-389-4505

## OCTOBER EVENTS

**Oct. 1, 8, 15, 29:** Walk on the Wildside, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, 409-384-5231

**Oct. 7:** Campfire Program, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, 409-384-5231

**Oct. 21:** Murder on the DisOriented Express, Texas State Railroad SHP, Rusk, 903-723-3014



## GULF COAST

### SEPTEMBER EVENTS

**Sept:** Plantation house, barn and grounds tours, Wednesdays through Sundays, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHP, West Columbia, 979-345-4656

**Sept.:** Weekend Nature Programs, every weekend, Brazos Bend SP, Richmond, 979-553-5101

**Sept. 1-30:** The Showing of the Quilts, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHP, West Columbia, 979-345-4656

**Sept. 1-3:** 25th Annual Ruff Rider Regatta, South Padre Island to Corpus Christi, 512-850-8884

**Sept. 9:** Wild Boar Safari, Fennessey Ranch, Refugio, 361-529-6600

**Sept. 9, 10:** Dick Dowling Days, Sabine Pass Battleground SHP, Sabine Pass, 409-971-2559

**Sept. 10-30:** Alligator hunting by permit, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 15, 16, 17:** Hummingbird Hayride Tours, Fennessey Ranch, Refugio, 361-529-6600

**Sept. 15, 16:** Gatorfest 2000, Anahuac, 409-267-4190

**Sept. 15-30:** Teal, rail and gallinule season, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 16:** Texas Adopt-a-Beach Cleanup, South Padre Island, 512-475-1468

**Sept. 23, 30:** Hawk Watch, Fennessey Ranch, Refugio, 361-529-6600

**Sept. 22:** South Zone dove season opens, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 30-Oct. 29:** Archery season, white-tailed deer, 512-389-4505

## OCTOBER EVENTS

**Oct.:** Plantation house, barn and grounds tours, Wednesdays through Sundays, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHP, West Columbia, 979-345-4656

**Oct.:** Nature Programs, every weekend, Brazos Bend SP, Needville, 979-553-5102

**Oct.:** Nature Programs, weekends, Lake Texana SP, Edna, 361-782-5718

**Oct. 1-31:** The Showing of the Quilts, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHP, West Columbia, 979-345-4656

**Oct. 5-6:** Beach Combing and Shelling Tour, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, 361-983-2215

**Oct. 7:** Migratory Bird Tours, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, 361-983-2215



## HILL COUNTRY

### SEPTEMBER EVENTS

**Sept.:** Old Tunnel Bat Emergence Tour, every Thursday & Saturday, Old Tunnel WMA, Fredericksburg, 830-644-2478

**Sept.:** Wild Cave Tours, walking tour every Saturday &





Sunday, crawling tour first Saturday of the month, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, 915-628-3240

**Sept.:** Gorman Falls Hike, every Saturday & Sunday, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, 915-628-3240

**Sept.:** Amphitheater Adventure, every Saturday, Guadalupe River SP, Boerne, 830-438-2656

**Sept.:** Honey Creek Canyon Walk, every Saturday, Honey Creek SNA, Boerne, 830-438-2656

**Sept. 1:** North and Central Zone dove season opens, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 2:** Stumpy Hollow Nature Hike, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, 512-793-2223

**Sept. 2:** Fish Seining, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, 512-793-2223

**Sept. 8:** Range and Wildlife Management Seminar, Kerr WMA, Hunt, 830-238-4483

**Sept. 14, 28:** Devil's Waterhole Canoe Tour, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, 512-793-2223

**Sept. 15-30:** Teal, rail and gallinule season, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 16:** Guadalupe River Cleanup, 830-625-9500

**Sept. 16-17:** X Bar Ranch Shoot Out Mountain Bike Race, X Bar Ranch, 888-853-2688

**Sept. 16-24:** Bluebonnet Planting Days, Wildseed Farms Market Center, Fredericksburg, 830-990-1393

**Sept. 18:** Austin Fly Fishers meeting, 512-918-1832

**Sept. 30:** Kayak & Fly Fishing Day on the Guadalupe, 830-625-1505

**Sept. 30-Oct. 29:** Archery season, white-tailed deer, 512-389-4505

#### OCTOBER EVENTS

**Oct.:** Flying with Freetails, Thursday & Saturday, Old Tunnel WMA, Fredericksburg, 830-644-2478

**Oct.:** Honey Creek Canyon Walk, every Saturday, Honey Creek SNA, Spring Branch, 830-438-2656

**Oct.:** Gorman Falls Tour, every Saturday & Sunday, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, 915-628-3240

**Oct.:** Walking Cave Tour, every Saturday & Sunday, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, 915-628-3240

**Oct. 13-14:** Poe at the Landmark Inn, Landmark Inn SHP, Castroville, 830-931-2133

**Oct. 19-21, 26-31:** Haunted Cave, Longhorn Caverns SP, 512-756-4680

**Oct. 21-22:** Lone Star Legacy Weekend, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, 915-628-3240

**Oct. 21:** 50th Anniversary Celebration, Kerr WMA, Hunt, 830-238-4483



#### SEPTEMBER EVENTS

**Sept.:** Bird Banding, every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday, Davis Mountains SP, Fort Davis, 915-426-3337

**Sept.:** Birding Tour, every Saturday, Balmorhea SP, Balmorhea, 915-375-2370

**Sept.:** White Shaman Tour, every Saturday, Seminole Canyon SHP, Langtry, 915-292-4464

**Sept.:** Fate Bell Cave Dwelling Tour, every Wednesday thru Sunday, Seminole Canyon SHP, Langtry, 915-292-4464

**Sept. 1:** North and Central Zone dove season opens, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 2, 3, 16, 17:** Interpretive Tour, Franklin Mountains SP, El Paso, 915-566-6441

**Sept. 2-3, 4-5, 7-8, 9-10:** On the Trail of Echols - Big Bend Camel Treks, Big Bend Ranch SP, Presidio, 915-229-3416

**Sept. 9:** Stories Of Spirit, Magoffin Home SHP, El Paso, 915-533-5147

**Sept. 15-17:** 24th Annual Fort Davis Cyclefest and Race, Prude Ranch, Fort Davis, 800-458-6232

**Sept. 15-30:** Teal, rail and gallinule season, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 29-30:** Living History Days, Fort Lancaster SHP, Ozona, 915-836-4391

**Sept. 30-Oct. 8:** Pronghorn hunting by permit, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 30-Oct. 29:** Archery season, white-tailed deer and mule deer, 512-389-4505

#### OCTOBER EVENTS

**Oct.:** Bird Banding, every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday, Davis Mountains SP, Fort Davis, 915-426-3337

**Oct.:** Fate Bell Cave Dwelling Tour, every Wednesday through Sunday, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464

**Oct.:** White Shaman Tour, every Saturday, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, 915-292-4464

**Oct. 6-8:** Longhorn Cattle Drive, Big Bend Ranch SP, Presidio, 915-229-3416

**Oct. 7-14, 21-31:** Fishing on the Rio Grande, Black Gap WMA, 915-837-3251

**Oct. 21:** Nature Walks for Lone Star Legacy, Davis Mountains SP, Fort Davis, 915-426-3337

**Oct. 21:** Desert Springs Tour and Water Seminar for Lone Star Legacy, Balmorhea SP, Balmorhea, 915-375-2370

**Oct. 21:** Art Show for Lone Star Legacy, Indian Lodge, Fort Davis, 915-426-3254

**Oct. 20-21:** Center for Big Bend Studies 7th Annual Conference, Sul Ross University, Alpine, 915-837-8179

**Oct. 21:** Desert Springs Tour and Water Seminar for Lone Star Legacy, Balmorhea SP, Balmorhea, 915-375-2370



#### SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

#### SEPTEMBER EVENTS

**Sept.:** Kiskadee Bus Tour, every Tuesday & Friday, Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, Mission, 956-585-1107

**Sept. 2, 3, 9, 10:** White-winged dove hunting, special South Texas zone, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 15-30:** Teal, rail and gallinule season, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 22:** Wildlife Management Symposium,

Chaparral WMA, Artesia Wells, 830-676-3413

**Sept. 22-23:** Lonesome Dove Fest, Karnes City, 830-780-3283

**Sept. 22:** South Zone dove season opens, 512-389-4505

**Sept. 30-Oct. 29:** Archery season, white-tailed deer, 512-389-4505

#### OCTOBER EVENTS

**Oct. 14:** Bird Identification Tour, Choke Canyon SP Calliham Unit, Calliham, 361-786-3868

**Oct. 21-22:** Volksmarch, Government Canyon SNA, San Antonio, 210-688-9055

**Oct. 28:** Oral History Symposium, Goliad SHP, Goliad, 361-645-1227

**Oct. 28:** Wildlife Tour, Choke Canyon SP Calliham Unit, Calliham, 361-786-3868

|     |                          |
|-----|--------------------------|
| SP  | STATE PARK               |
| SHP | STATE HISTORICAL PARK    |
| SNA | STATE NATURAL AREA       |
| WMA | WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA |

#### State Parks Offer Public Hunts

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

The following schedule lists the times and dates when public access is restricted. Call the park of your choice directly to make sure it will be open on the day you want to visit. Or call Texas Parks and Wildlife's information line, 800-792-1112, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Press 3 for park information or 5 for public hunt information.

**Sept. 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24**  
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**Oct. 29 - Nov. 1**  
Hill Country SNA  
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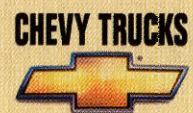
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# SIGHTS AND SOUNDS



The Front Line of News and Views

## TELEVISION

### Look for These Stories in the Coming Weeks:

**Aug. 27 – Sept. 3:**  
Ocelots in South Texas; feral hogs; a weekend deer hunt for kids and their parents.

**Sept. 3 – 10:**  
Wildlife management areas and their role as living laboratories; Zen and the art of bowhunting; children on a field trip.

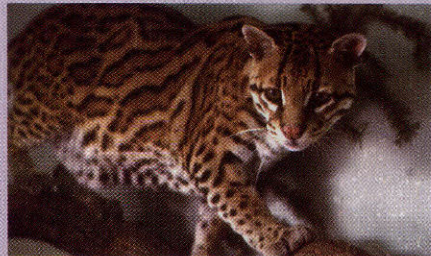
**Sept. 10 – 17:**  
Unearthing Texas history; trailing the white-tailed deer; discovering nature on the Internet.

**Sept. 17 – 24:**  
A week at Parrie Haynes youth camp; raising genetically superior bass; deer management.

**Sept. 24 – Oct. 1:**  
The environmental importance of Caddo lake; butterflies; TPW's "sunset" process.

### "TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE"

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See ocelots in South Texas. Watch the week of August 27 – September 3.

- Amarillo:** KACV, Ch. 2 / Sat. 4:30 p.m.
- Austin:** KLRU, Ch. 18 / Sun. 10 a.m. / Mon. 12:30 p.m. / KLRU-TOO, Cable Ch. 20 / Tues. 9:30 p.m. / Thurs. 3 p.m.
- Bryan-College Station:** KAMU, Ch. 15 / Sun. 6 p.m.
- Corpus Christi:** KEDT, Ch. 16 / Sun. 11 a.m.
- Dallas/Fort Worth:** KERA, Ch. 13 / off the air until fall.  
Also serving Abilene, Denton, Longview, Marshall, San Angelo, Texarkana, Tyler, Wichita Falls, Sherman
- El Paso:** KCOS, Ch. 13 / Sat. 5:30 p.m.
- Harlingen:** KMBH, Ch. 60 / Sun. 12:30 p.m.  
Also serving McAllen, Mission, Brownsville
- Houston:** KUHT, Ch. 8 / Sun. 5 p.m.  
Also serving Beaumont/Port Arthur, Galveston, Texas City, Victoria, Lake Jackson/Clute
- Killeen:** KNCT, Ch. 46 / Sun. 4 p.m.  
Also serving Temple
- Lubbock:** KTXT, Ch. 5 / Sat. 6:30 p.m.
- Odessa-Midland:** KOCV, Ch. 36 / Sat. 5 p.m.
- San Antonio & Laredo:** KLRN, Ch. 9 / Thur. noon
- Waco:** KCTF, Ch. 34 / Sat. 3 p.m.

Schedules are subject to change, so check local listings.

## RADIO

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- Abilene:** KACU-FM 89.7 / 7:06 a.m. & 1:44, 6:01 p.m.
- Amarillo:** KACV-FM 89.9 / 9:20 a.m.
- Austin:** KUT-FM 90.5 / 1:58 p.m., (12:58 p.m. Fr.), KVET-AM 1300 / 6:15 a.m. (Sat.) • *Austin American-Statesman's* Inside Line 512-416-5700 category 6287 (NATR)
- Beaumont:** KLVI-AM 560 / 5:20 a.m.
- Brady:** KNEL-AM 1490 / 7:50 a.m. & 8:50 p.m., KNEL-FM 95.3 / 7:50 a.m. & 8:50 p.m.
- Bridgeport:** KBOC-FM 98.3 / 8:45 a.m. & 5:25 p.m.
- Bryan:** WTAW-AM 1150 / 5:45 p.m.
- Canton:** KVCI-AM 1510 / 6:40 a.m.
- Canyon:** KWTS-FM 91.1 / 6 a.m. – 9 a.m. hours
- Carthage:** KGAS-AM 1590 / 6:46 a.m., KGAS-FM 104.3 / 6:46 a.m.
- Center:** KDET-AM 930 / 5:15 p.m.
- Coleman:** KSTA-AM 1000 / 5:15 p.m.
- Columbus:** KULM-FM 98.3 / 7:20 a.m.
- Comanche:** KCOM-AM 1550 / 6:30 a.m.
- Commerce:** KETR-FM 88.9 / 10:15 a.m.
- Corpus Christi:** KEDT-FM 90.3 / 5:34 p.m., KFTX-FM 97.5 / 5:35 a.m.



## SIGHTS & SOUNDS

**Crockett:** KIVY-AM 1290 / 8:15 a.m., KIVY-FM 92.7 / 8:15 a.m.

**Cuero:** KVCQ-FM 97.7 / 8:20 a.m.

**Dimmitt:** KDHN-AM 1470 / 12:31 p.m.

**Dumas:** KMRE-FM 95.3 / 10:30 a.m. KDDD-AM 800 / 10:30 a.m.

**Eagle Pass:** KINL-FM 92.7 / 7:15 a.m.

**Eastland:** KEAS-AM 1590 / 11:14 a.m., 2:14 p.m., KEAS-FM 97.7 / 1:14 a.m., 2:14 p.m.

**El Campo:** KULP-AM 1390 / 2:00 p.m.

**Fairfield:** KNES-FM 99.1 / 6:49 a.m.

**Floresville:** KWCB-FM 89.7 / 1:30 p.m.

**Ft. Stockton:** KFST-AM 860 / 12:50 p.m., KFTS-FM 94.3 / 12:50 p.m.

**Freeport:** KBRZ-AM 1460 / 10:15 a.m. & 7:45 p.m.

**Gainesville:** KGAF-AM 1580 / 7:00 a.m.

**Galveston:** KGBC-AM 1540 / 1:45 p.m.

**Hallettsville:** KHLT-AM 1520 / 8:20 a.m., KTXM-FM 99.9 / 8:20 a.m.

**Harlingen:** KMBH-FM 88.9 / 4:58 p.m.

**Hereford:** KPAN-AM 860 / 2:50 p.m., KPAN-FM 106.3 / 2:50 p.m.

**Hillsboro:** KHBR-AM 1560 / 9:30 a.m.

**Houston:** KBME-AM 790 / 11:40 a.m.

**Huntsville:** KSHU-FM 90.5 / 11:55 a.m.

**Jacksonville:** KEBE-AM 1400 / 7:25 a.m.

**Junction:** KMBL-AM 1450 / 6:46 a.m. & 3:46 p.m., KOOK-FM 93.5 / 6:46 a.m. & 3:46 p.m.

**Kerrville:** KRNH-FM 95.1 / 5:31 a.m. & 12:57, 9:57 p.m.

**Lampasas:** KCYL-AM 1450 / 7:10 a.m., KACQ-FM 101.9 / 7:10 a.m.

**Malakoff:** KLVQ-AM 1410 / 6:45 a.m.

**Marshall:** KCUL-AM 1410 / 7:10 a.m., KCUL-FM 92.3 / 7:10 a.m.

**McAllen:** KHID-FM 88.1 / 4:58 p.m.

**Mesquite:** KEOM-FM 88.5 / 5:30 a.m. & 2:30, 8:30 p.m. M-Th. (5:30 a.m. & 4:45 p.m. Fr.)

**Midland:** KCRS-AM 550 / 6:43 a.m. & 6:43 p.m.

**Mineola:** KMOO-FM 99.9 / 5:10 p.m.

**Nacogdoches:** KSAU-FM 90.1 / 3:00 p.m.

**Ozona:** KYXX-FM 94.3 / 12:09 p.m.

**Palestine:** KLIS-FM 96.7 / 6:20 a.m.

**Pecos:** KIUN-AM 1400 / 10:30 a.m.

**Pleasanton:** KBUC-FM 103.7, KBUC-FM 98.3 / variable

**Port Lavaca:** KAJI-FM 94.1 / TBA

**Rockdale:** KRXT-FM 98.5 / 5:04 a.m. & 5:50 p.m.

**San Angelo:** KUTX-FM 90.1 / 1:58 p.m. (12:58 p.m. Fr.)

**San Antonio:** KSTX-FM 89.1 / 9:04 p.m. Th., KENS-AM 1160 / 7:40 a.m., 12:30, 5:45 p.m.

**Seguin:** KWED-AM 1580 / 7:55 a.m.

**Sonora:** KHOS-FM 92.1 / 12:09 p.m.

**Sulphur Springs:** KSST-AM 1230 / 4:45 p.m.

**Uvalde:** KVOU-AM 1400 / 5:33 a.m. KVOU-FM 105 / 5:33, 5:33 a.m.

**Victoria:** KVRT-FM 90.7 / 5:34 p.m., KTXN-FM 98.7 / 6:45 a.m.

**Waco:** KBCT-FM 94.5 / 6:10 a.m.

**Wichita Falls:** KWFS-AM 1290 / 6:15, 7:45 a.m.

**Yoakum:** KYKM-FM 92.5 / 8:20 a.m.

"Passport to Texas" is available at no cost to stations across the state. For information contact Donna Endres at 512-454-1922, fax 512-454-2552, or write to P.O. Box 5966, Austin, Texas 78763, e-mail <passport@io.com>.

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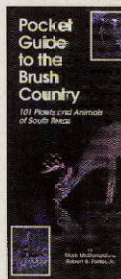
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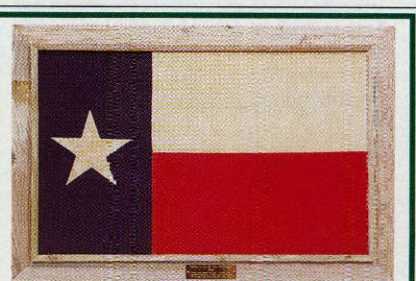
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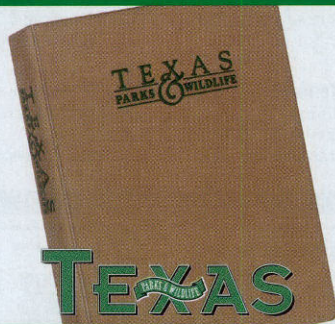
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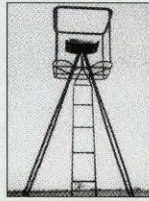
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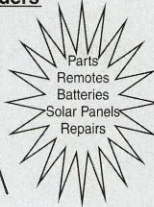
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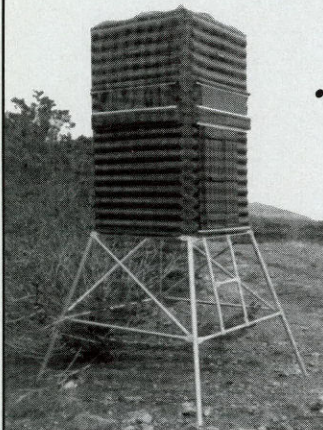
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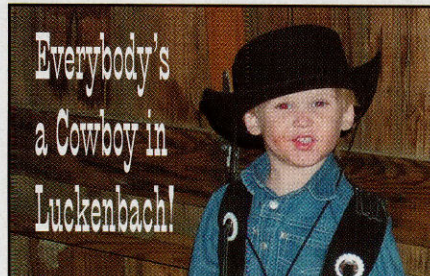
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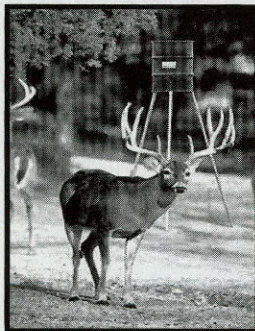


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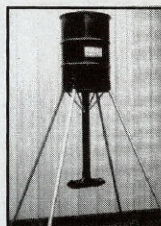
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