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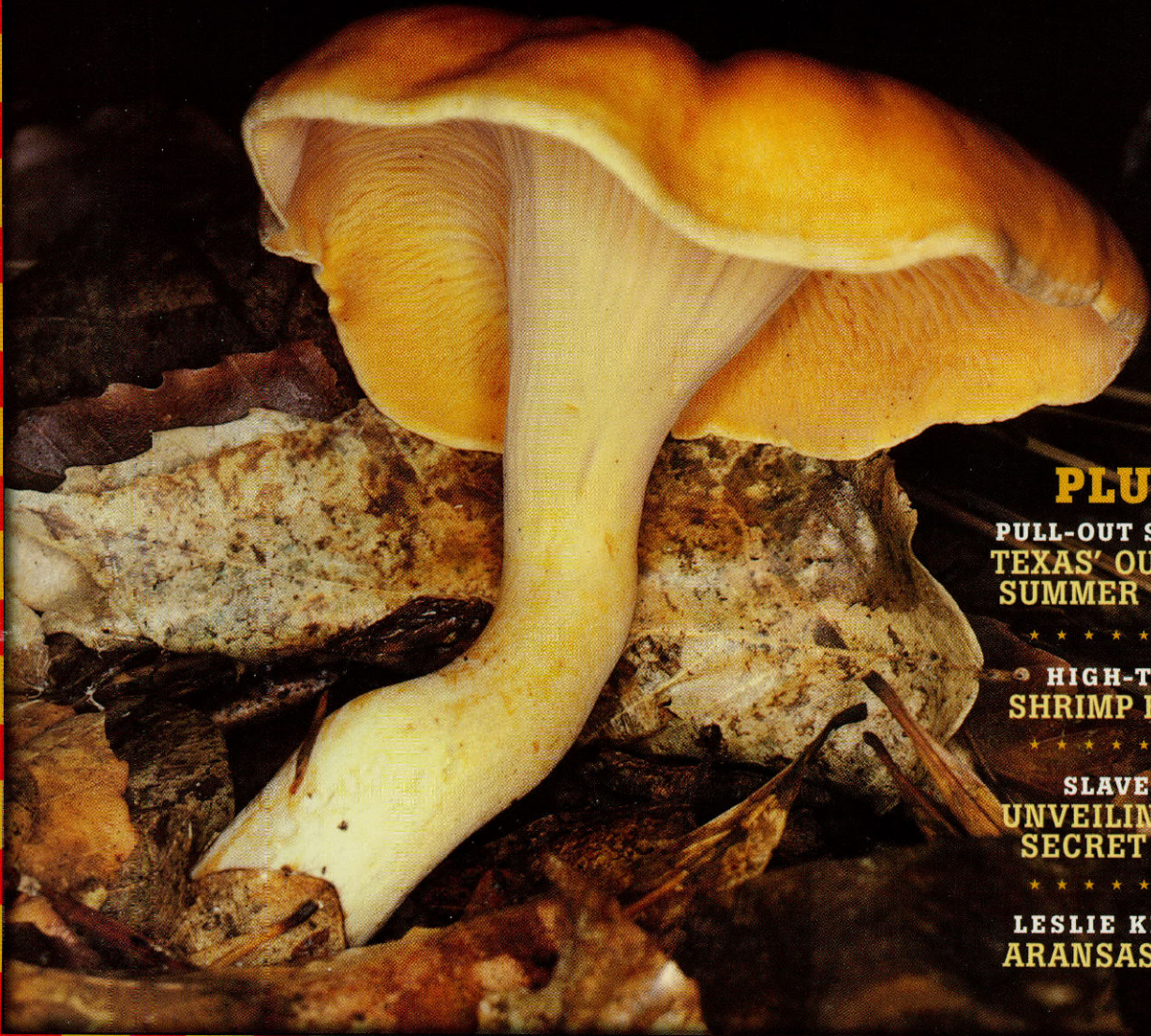
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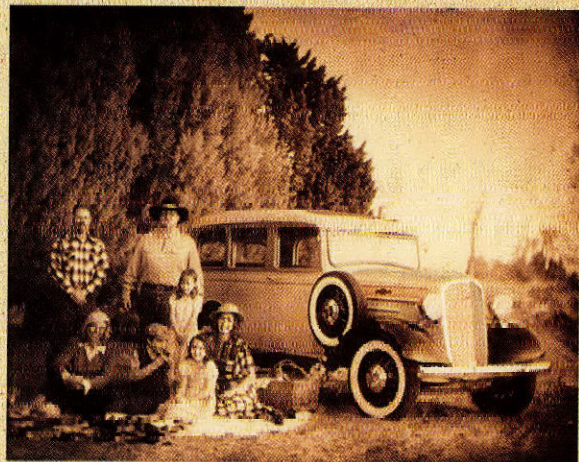
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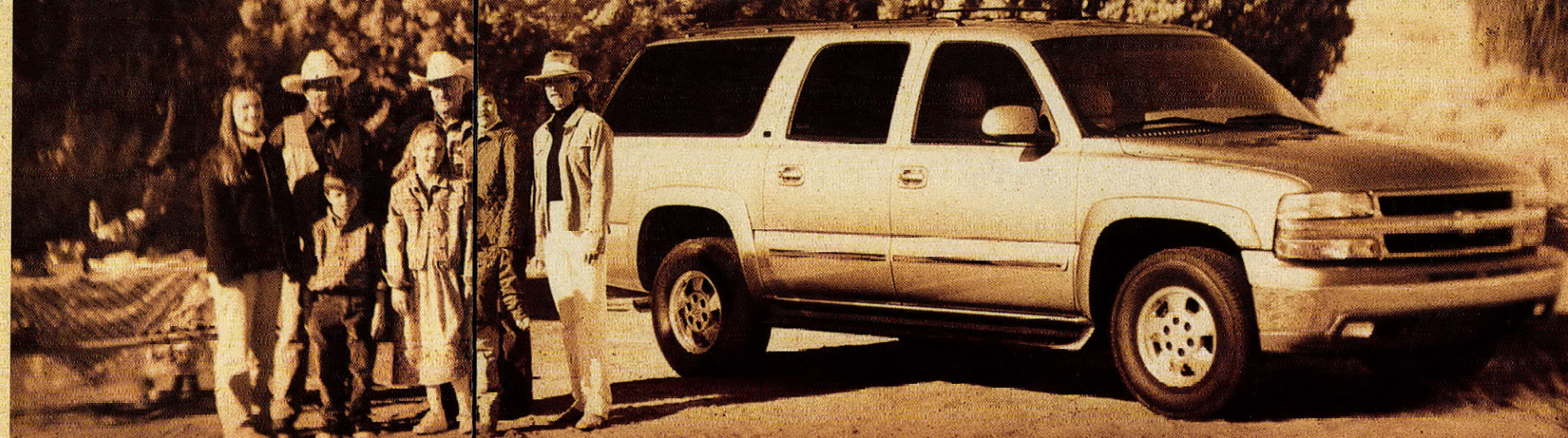
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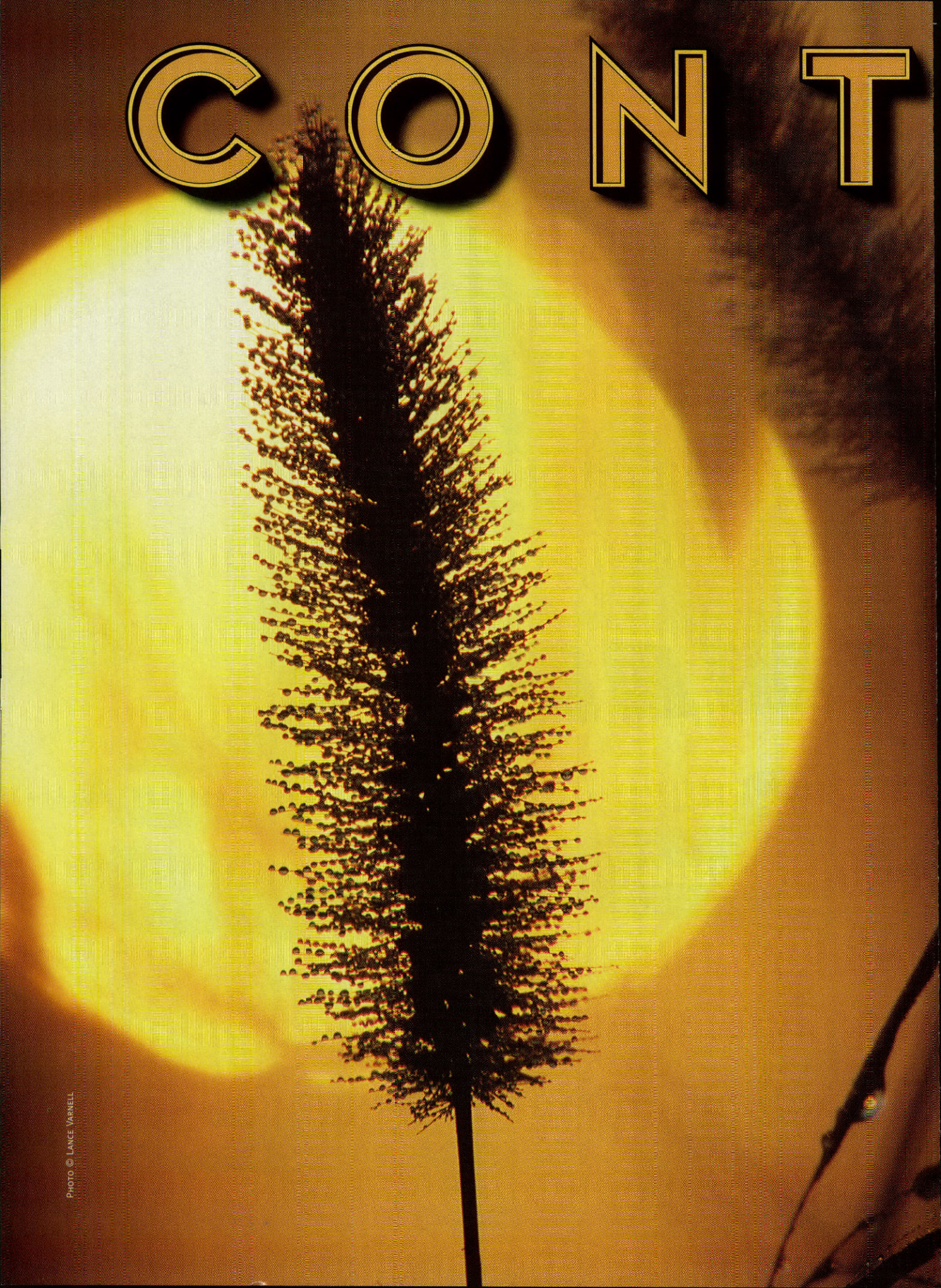


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FEBRUARY 2002

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Front: Edible chanterelles can be found in Texas during summer and fall in years with good rainfall. See story on page 22. Photo © Joe Liggio.

Back: Visitors to Barrington Living History Farm learn about new research on slavery in Texas. See story on page 44. Photo by Earl Nottingham.

For the latest and greatest parks and wildlife information, check out our Web site <www.tpwd.state.tx.us>.

AT ISSUE

From the Pen of Susan L. Ebert

A year ago this February, Dale Evans died. I wept upon reading the news. Dale Evans was born Frances Smith in Uvalde, Texas, on October 31, 1912. I queried Frank Roberts, “the singing ranger” at nearby Garner State Park, about her shortly after her death. Roberts’ performances of cowboy poetry and music — on top of his regular park duties — help keep Garner State Park a legendary Texas destination. Surely Dale must have sung once or twice at the hallowed outdoor pavilion at Garner. “There are no records of her performing here,” says Roberts, “but she came home often to Uvalde, and loved to ride the Frio canyon along with Roy Rogers.”

I was born in the 1950s, but unlike many of my girlfriends, I never connected with Barbie dolls. I found Annie Oakley mildly intriguing, as she could smartly handle a gun and a horse. But she challenged her counterparts: “Anything you can do, I can do better; I can do anything better than you!” Barbie was fake and Annie didn’t play well with others; I sought a role model.



Although there are no records of Dale Evans performing at Garner’s famed outdoor pavilion, she came home often to Uvalde, and loved to ride the Frio canyon along with Roy Rogers.

Then Dale Evans came into my living room by way of black-and-white television, with the full flush of a Texas springtime.

My first “cowgirl” outfit was pure Dale Evans style: white leather with red appliqué and red leather fringe everywhere, and a gun belt with a six-shooter cap gun that I studiously loaded to fire along with Dale during the “Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Show.” I wore off the fringe on that skirt, kneeling before our television set as I admired Dale.

Dale starred in 35 movies and a ’50s television series with her husband, Roy Rogers. Although some sources credit it to Roy, it was Dale who decided he needed a theme song for his series, and she jotted down “Happy Trails” on a scrap of paper and handed it to him. Her personal heartbreak in parenthood led Dale to create, along with Roy, the Happy Trails Children’s Foundation for abused and neglected children, yet another milestone in her lifelong campaign for the health, happiness and emotional well-being of children.



When I see her now in my mind’s eye, I see her mare Buttermilk racing eye-to-eye with Trigger, nostrils aflame, and Dale’s jaw jutting out as firmly as Roy’s as they fly hell-for-leather in pursuit of truth, justice and the American Way.

Join us on some happy trails in this issue’s “Three Days in the Field,” and discover the many equestrian trails in Texas state parks by visiting tpwd.state.tx.us/parks/activities/equine. Garner’s “Cowboy Sunset Serenade” runs from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.

Listen closely: This is not the night breeze singing through the Frio canyon, it is Dale herself, whispering along with Garner’s singing ranger Frank Roberts as he sings her anthem to a new generation of Texas youth: “Happy Trails to You, Until We Meet Again.”

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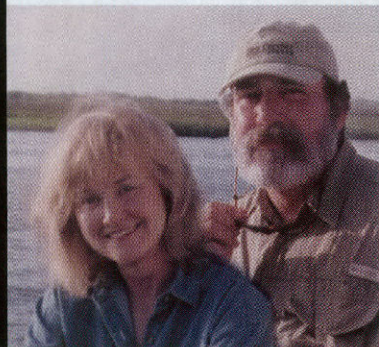
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Reginald Owens, Ph.D. writes African American tourism stories for newspapers and magazines, and opinion pieces for two Louisiana dailies, *The News-Star* in Monroe and *The Times* in Shreveport. He is associate professor and holds the F. Jay Taylor Endowed Chair of Journalism in the Department of Journalism at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, where he teaches news writing, media and culture and civic journalism. He has also taught at Texas Southern University,



Huston-Tillotson College, Grambling (Louisiana) State University and Austin Community College. In this issue he writes about research into slavery being done at Texas state parks.

Leslie Kelly, who along with Jonette Childs became a first-time contributor with "Wade In!" (August 2001), succumbed to cancer before seeing his first *Texas Parks & Wildlife* feature in print. He was the editor of *Saltwater Texas*, where Childs still serves as publisher. "He kept his laptop computer with him right 'til the end," says Childs, "but I never knew what he might be



writing." To our delight, she discovered it was "Aransas Bike," beginning on page 58, a final contribution to Kelly's enduring legacy to coastal conservation.

Garland Levit, who writes about outdoor summer camps in this issue, spent 10 summers as a camper and counselor at Vista Camps in Ingram and maintains ties to Texas' summer camp community. He will graduate from the University of Texas at Austin in May with a bachelor's degree in journalism. Levit is currently working as an editorial intern at *Texas Parks & Wildlife* and writing for the *Daily Texan* and the *Round Rock Leader*.



IN THE FIELD

MAIL CALL

Picks, Pans and Probes from Previous Issues

All That is Texas

My father, who lives in the great state of Texas and whom I've visited there numerous times, gave me a subscription to *Texas Parks & Wildlife* several years ago as a Christmas present. He has been renewing it faithfully ever since because of my love for the Lone Star State.

I have the utmost affection and appreciation for nature, and I commend *Texas Parks & Wildlife* for capturing the essence and diversity of all that is Texas. They say home is where the heart is, and my heart dwells in Texas. It is my dream to one day make my home in God's country that lies below the heavenly clouds in the great Texas sky, nestled in the Pineywoods, among all that is pure, simple and beautiful.

*Sunny L. Brokaw
Cincinnati, Ohio*

Winter Whitewings

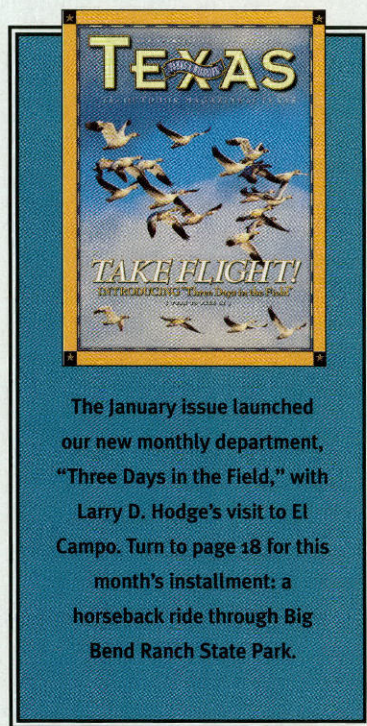
I grew up in the Rio Grande Valley, in McAllen, and was familiar with the white-winged doves that would come in each spring and then head south as soon as the first early fall rains came.

I now live in Houston, and about five years ago I noticed some white-winged doves in the neighborhood. So I was interested in "Wings of Change," the article that your magazine ran last summer about whitewings expanding their range (*July 2001*).

We now have pairs of white-

winged doves that we feed in the back yard, along with mourning doves and the other neighborhood birds. The surprising thing to me is that the whitewings are staying here all winter. This has occurred for the last three years.

*Jack Keck
Houston*



The January issue launched our new monthly department, "Three Days in the Field," with Larry D. Hodge's visit to El Campo. Turn to page 18 for this month's installment: a horseback ride through Big Bend Ranch State Park.

A Son's Tribute

When I was a young boy, I thought that being first was always best.

But I have learned that, in some cases, last place is the best.

I started hunting when I was very young, since deer hunting is important to my family. When I was

about 3, my father and I were in a ground blind in Bryan. Dad had made a pallet for me to sleep on, which I was doing very early on opening morning. Some time after daylight, I saw him reach for his rifle. He kept his foot on my back to keep me from standing up and scaring off the deer. He got the deer, and I was excited to be part of a successful hunt. I guess I was hooked on hunting from that moment on.

As I grew older, hunting and fishing — mostly hunting — occupied a lot of my time. Each year my father and I would compete to see who would kill the biggest buck. I usually won, and would rub it in, because I believed first place was best.

Many years have passed and many hunting seasons have come and gone. Now I have a son who soon will be 6 years old. I want to share with him what my father shared with me, and as I get older I have found out what it means to be a father.

A father is someone who places family above all. A father is someone who will not join a deer lease unless he can bring his son. A father is someone who puts his son in the best spot on the lease, then takes what is left. A father is someone who takes the time to teach even when, as a teenager, the son thinks he knows more. A father is someone who will always watch out and protect his son, no matter how old his son is.

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MAIL CALL

And now I know what my father knew: Finishing last is sometimes the very best.

Mike Stanfield
Cushing

New Year's Resolutions

If any of your readers' New Year's resolutions were to volunteer their time or improve their outdoor skills, I'd like to let them know about opportunities available at Texas Parks and Wildlife.

Those who would like to pass along safe, knowledgeable, responsible and fun practices in boating, floating, hunting and shooting can enroll to become volunteer instructors in our boater education or hunter education programs. Both are state mandated, so we're always looking for volunteers. Instructor courses will take place across the state, so call for information.

We also need volunteers this spring and summer to train youngsters in angler education. Whether you're an avid angler or someone who enjoys working with kids, becoming a volunteer angler education instructor is fun, exciting and rewarding. You'll join the ranks of those who share their joy of fishing while teaching kids how to fish safely and responsibly, and how to conserve our aquatic environments.

Readers who want to improve their own outdoor skills might be interested in the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman workshops, which are scheduled this year in March, April, May, August and October. Women attending the workshops can learn a variety of skills, such as rifle and muzzleloading, archery, camping and backpacking, horseback riding, canoeing and kayaking, fly fishing and fly tying, outdoor cooking and much more.

If any of your readers would like information about these or other Texas Parks and Wildlife educational

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Steve Hall

Education Director

Texas Parks and Wildlife

Calling All RVers

Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine needs your input for a feature we're planning on recreational vehicle vacations in Texas state parks. If you or anyone you know has camped in a state park in an RV, we'd like to hear about your experiences.

Please tell us about your favorite Texas state parks for camping. What makes the RV experience there worthwhile and unique — a great RV community, birds and wildlife, terrific bass fishing? Do you have any stories about your vacation there?

Please send your comments to: RVing in State Parks, *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine, 3000 S. I-35, Suite 120, Austin, TX 78704 or e-mail magazine@tpwd.state.tx.us. Please include your name, telephone number and e-mail address if you have one, so we can contact you for more information.

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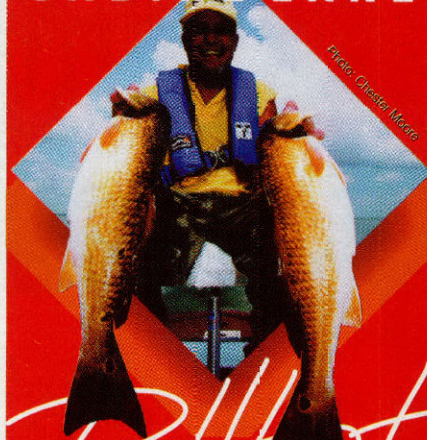
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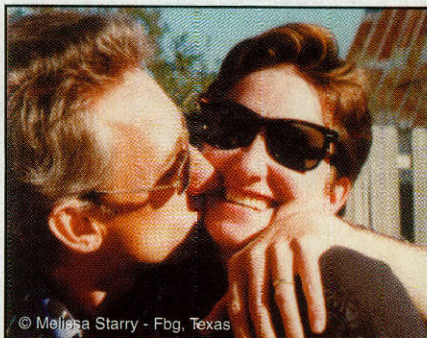


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SCOUT

NEWS AND VIEWS IN THE TEXAS OUTDOORS

A Blast from the Past

The New Braunfels shooting club claims to be the oldest in America.

IT SEEMS THAT SOCIAL CLUBS ARE A DISAPPEARING PART OF Americana. Whether bowling leagues in Milwaukee, carts in Boston pubs or bridge clubs in Long Beach, establishments such as these have given generations of immigrants a place to socialize while pursuing their hobbies. In New Braunfels residents have their own

unique social club with a distinctive pedigree: A shooting club that claims to be the oldest continuously operating gun club in the country.

The New Braunfels Schuetzenverein, as it is known, was formed by a group of German immigrants in 1849, not long after the community was settled. Members of the club have shot every season since. Soon, other shooting clubs were created in the surrounding area, and members formed what is called a Bunc: a league of clubs. These popular clubs competed against each other. While at one time there were 22 Verein (clubs) in Comal County alone, today only five remain in Comal and Kendall counties.

This Bund is distinguished from any other in the world by its style of shooting. Members shoot only .22-caliber rifles on a 100-yard range. Guns must be single-shot, and only iron peep-type sights can be used (an exception is made for vision-impaired members). Members shoot from a standard off-hand position (using no gun rest).

But what really makes this Bund different is the tradition of shooting from a standing rest — a stair-cut piece of wood spanning the shooting lane. This specially cut wood runs



diagonally so shooters can find the right “step” to fit their height. The rifles have modifications to the end of their barrels that allow shooters to lean into the rest from a standing position. “As far as we know, this Bund is the only one in the world that still shoots this way,”

says Gay Wimberley, secretary and

historian of the club.

Some members of the Schuetzenverein are fifth- and sixth-generation members, and it is not uncommon to see several generations of families shooting together. Gay’s husband, Bill Wimberley, is president of the club, and all of their adult children participate in the Verein. Their son Charles, who now serves as the club’s range master, has been coming with his father since he was 4 years old.

Although the matches are competitive, the main purpose of the club is to gather with friends and neighbors. When one of the five Vereins hosts a shoot for the rest of the clubs, the host club provides the bratwurst or brisket, and the guests bring German potato salad and beans. After a day of shooting, they gather at long wooden tables to enjoy an old-fashioned potluck. The talk — in English and German — is centered on the old days and the sport that has endured for more than 150 years.

Like a lot of social clubs, the membership of the New Braunfels gun club is aging. Will younger generations find time in their busy lives to keep this rich Texas tradition alive? We can only hope it’s not a long shot.

— Allen Green



CONSERVATION

RVs AND KISKADEES

Changes are in store for a premier birding campground.



THEY COME EACH WINTER BY THE thousands, driving recreational vehicles from across the U.S.A. and as far away as Canada, vying for spaces on the loop campground at Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park.

These “Winter Texans” set out bird feeders and then sit back to watch the show. Colorful green jays and great kiskadees, birds seldom seen elsewhere in North America, flit through big trees here, in one of the last stands of riparian forest left in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

It’s a decades-old tradition, but there’s trouble in this paradise, and park experts and outside supporters say something has to change.

“We are loving this park to death,” says Steve Bentsen of McAllen, an ardent birder and member of the family that originally donated the land for the state park. “The human pressure, coupled with environmental changes, is causing serious habitat problems. The older, large trees are dying. Riparian habitat is being replaced by thorn scrub habitat.”

Texas Parks and Wildlife plans to restore the park by revegetating with native plants and flooding it periodically, which would mimic natural

floods that used to back up into riparian forests before dams were built along the Rio Grande. To do this effectively, and to relieve the pressure of increased visitation, park officials propose removing paved camping facilities.

By fall 2002, all or almost all of the park’s RV campsites will be closed. However, new wildlife-friendly RV campsites will be created adjacent to the existing park, through a partnership with Bentsen-Palm Development. Other RV sites may be available at private and municipal RV/mobile home parks in the Valley, some of

which have excellent habitat and birding potential. In addition, there may be opportunities for volunteer birders to be Bentsen resident park hosts. Bentsen-Palm is also donating land for the World Birding Center headquarters and access to irrigation water for restoration work.

By late 2003, visitors will no longer drive into Bentsen, but instead will park at the new WBC headquarters just north of the current park entrance, then walk, ride a bike or take a shuttle tram into the park to picnic, hike, fish or bird. With WBC funding, the park will get new nature trails and boardwalks, a new observation tower and extensive habitat restoration. Through a partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, federal land adjacent to the park will open to the public for the first time as part of an expanded park trail system. Counting state and federal lands, bird habitat at Bentsen will ultimately increase from about 600 acres to more than 1,300 acres.

For details on the World Birding Center, check the Web site, <www.worldbirdingcenter.com>. To comment on park plans, contact Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park, P.O. Box 988, Mission, TX 78574-0988. Or send an e-mail message to park manager Rey Ortiz at reynaldo.ortiz@tpwd.state.tx.us.

—Tom Harvey

FIELD NOTES

Cozy Accommodations in Parks

Let’s face it, tent camping isn’t for everyone – especially when the wind chill is below freezing! But Texas state parks offer many alternatives to “roughing it,” with 37 parks that offer some sort of indoor overnight accommodations, five of which feature wood-burning fireplaces to knock off the chill of winter. From cozy mini-cabins to full-service lodges, prices range from \$35 to \$100 per night. Reservations can be made by calling the Texas Parks and Wildlife reservation center at (512) 389-8900. To check availability before you call, visit <www.tpwd.state.tx.us>.

PHOTOS © LARRY DITTO



CANOE CHALLENGE!

IN THE DARK NIGHT, a ruckus begins to grow. People are running over wooded terrain, their lights bobbing as they forge their way through the trees toward the river. No, this is not The Blair Witch Project. These are canoe racers partaking in the East Fork/West Fork Challenge on the San Jacinto River: men and women, champion and novice, young and old.

The 16-mile challenge is a small-scale version of the 260-mile Texas Water Safari. "It allows racers to experience the thrill of an adventurous canoe race without having to spend a year training," says Mike Stinson, Challenge coordinator. "It is also designed to bring attention to Lake Houston State Park and the San Jacinto River."

The third annual Challenge and the accompanying River Bottom Festival, which is scheduled for March 9–10, will benefit the San Jacinto Conservation Coalition and also raise awareness of East Texas' disappearing bottomland hardwood forests. The race begins at 4 a.m. at Lake

Houston State Park, northeast of Houston.

Racers run with their canoes a quarter mile through the woods to narrow Peach Creek. "It's pandemonium," says race participant Jerry Brown of a previous Challenge. "Boats are smacking each other, running aground on the sandbars." Peach Creek widens when it reaches the East Fork of the San Jacinto, but the river brings new obstacles: a maze of dead-end coves and cuts that must be navigated in the dark. Racers who don't get lost finally reach the West Fork of the San Jacinto, where they paddle upstream to the finish at Forest Cove marina.

The racers range from novices to some of the best canoeists in the nation. Many are nighttime training for longer races, but

most think the Challenge holds plenty of, well, challenges. "It has it all," says Phil Bowden, president of Texas Water Safari, who surprised two alligators during his last race. "I will definitely be back."

— Wendee Holtcamp



TEXAS READER

JUST THE FACTS, MA'AM

Boost your Texas IQ with the latest edition of the *Texas Almanac*.

FOR 144 YEARS, the *Texas Almanac* has been providing a wealth of information about Texas, all bound into one tidy volume. I can't say I've been using it quite that long, but the *Almanac* has been a heavily used staple on my bookshelf for many years. And every two years, when the new edition hits the bookstores, I can't wait to get my hands on it.

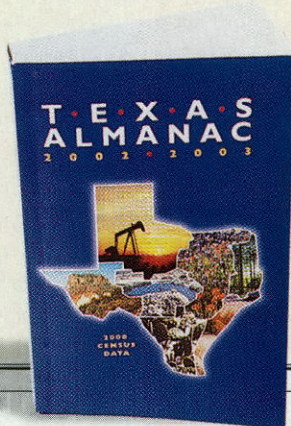
The 2002–2003 *Texas Almanac* — the 61st edition — is available now, and it's hard to imagine any fact about Texas that can't be found on these 600-plus pages. Complete with 2000 census data, there are detailed maps of each of the state's 254 counties, along with a profile of each county's population and resources; a list of cities and towns with current population, as well as charts showing the population history of counties and selected cities from

1850 to 2000. There's even a list of some 10,000 towns that aren't around anymore. Other sections cover elections, state and local governments, health and science, media, agriculture and more.

You can find the times for sunset and sunrise for every day in 2002 and 2003; a list of colleges and universities; temperature and precipitation records for every county; and the surface area and storage capacity of more than 200 lakes and reservoirs. The chapter on the environment includes information on Texas water resources and forests, and facts about destructive weather, beginning with a 1766 hurricane in Galveston Bay that destroyed a Spanish mission.

The *Texas Almanac*, published by the *Dallas Morning News*, is available at bookstores for \$13.95 paperback, \$19.95 hardcover.

— Mary-Love Bigony



FIELD TEST

Ultralight Fishing Tackle

The challenge of angling with the lightest tackle is not for lightweights, but mastery is rewarded with more fish.

BY GIBBS MILLIKEN

THE PROLIFERATION OF ANGLERS using ultralight tackle has spawned a wide range of spinning, spincasting and fly fishing gear, from freshwater line weights of 1 to 4 pounds to 6-pound class rigs for saltwater. What's the ultimate appeal of ultralight gear? In slow fishing conditions or highly pressured locations, ultralight anglers are most likely to be the ones catching fish when others go empty-handed. The key to success is a limber rod, smooth drag, patience and skill — and lots of open

water in which to fight a fish.

ULTRALIGHT SPIN FISHING

Ultralight spin fishing uses soft-action rods intended to function with 1- to 4-pound test monofilament like micro-thin **Tectan** (\$7.49, Cabela's, (800) 237-4444) or braided **Fireline** (\$15.45, Pure Fishing, (877) 777-3850) and thumbnail-size $\frac{1}{32}$ - to $\frac{1}{4}$ -ounce lures. By bending, these flexible rods allow a fighting fish to be shock-dampened, thus preventing low test lines from breaking on the first strong run. The rod length varies greatly, starting with a very short, 4'6" stream or pond rod like the innovative **Wrist Saver Rod and Reel** (\$114.95, Wrist Saver, (877) 721-0020). Built with a special ergonomic grip to reduce wrist fatigue, this one-piece rod feels like a natural extension of the arm.

The longest ultralight in production is the 11'6" **GL Noodle Rod** (\$180, G. Loomis, (800) 456-6647), made originally for finicky steelhead and salmon in crystal-clear waters, but now favored in Texas for crappie and white bass. Between these extremes in length are the soft-tipped snap-cast rods like the reasonably priced 6'6" **Daiwa Procaster-S-B** (\$34.95, Daiwa USA, (562) 802-9589). This two-piece rod has a custom look, but beyond aesthetics, it offers outstanding rod action, especially when combined with the **Daiwa SS II 1500-C Spinning Reel** (\$149.95, Daiwa USA). This multi-bearing reel features an oversize reverse-tapered spool for longer, tangle-free, smoother casts and can be used in either

freshwater or saltwater. For micro-spinning, the most advanced rod is the three-piece, 6'3" **Escape** (\$225, G. Loomis), with a classic action for tiny reels like the **T-2 Pinnacle** (\$49.95, Pinnacle, (803) 794-8521).

SALTWATER ULTRALIGHT

For saltwater, the best choices are spinning rods 7 feet or longer, reels with corrosion-resistant parts and larger spools holding at least 170 yards of 4- to 6-pound **Fireline** (\$29.59, 300-yardspool, Pure Fishing). The terminal tackle also may require a leader section of a stronger line or light wire to prevent toothy species from instantly cutting loose. An excellent combination is the two-piece, 9' **Fin-Nor PowerLite Rod and MegaLite 2000 Reel** (\$49.95 rod, \$129.95 reel, Fin-Nor, (888) 886-2064) built for marine conditions.

ULTRALIGHT SPINCASTING

Finding good-quality spincast rods in ultralight is difficult. The best currently available in 7-foot length is the two-piece Intrepid **Titanium IM7 Rod** (\$35, #CA3070UL-2, Shakespeare, (803) 754-7000). A great spincast reel to combine with this rod is the new **Abumatic 275** (\$29.95, Pure Fishing) featuring a small star drag and instant anti-reverse.

In saltwater, a longer casting rod, like the **Wally Marshall Pro Series 9-foot IM8** (\$49.99, Bass Pro Shops) matched with the larger **Abumatic 1275 Reel** (\$64.95, Pure Fishing) and 6-pound fluorocarbon line, makes a fine bay fishing outfit for sea trout and reds.

ULTRALIGHT FLY FISHING

Smaller fly rods, weights 0-4, are considered in the ultralight class. They perform beautifully when properly balanced. The 4 weight **Adventure Series Rod and #3 Reel** (\$190 rod, \$100 reel, G. Loomis) are quality entry-level products. The ultimate in line lightness is the 0 weight, three-piece, 8-foot **SLT Sage Rod** (\$500, Sage, (800) 533-3004), used with a special line for the most delicate presentations. ★

PHOTOS © GIBBS MILLIKEN



Bass Pro Wally Marshall Series IM8 rod, Abumatic 1275 reel

Intrepid Titanium IM7 rod, Abumatic 275 reel

Daiwa Procaster-S-B, Daiwa SS II 1500-C spinning reel

Loomis Escape Series Rod, T-2 Pinnacle spinning reel

Fin-Nor PowerLite Rod, MegaLite 2000 reel

Loomis Adventure Series Rod, #3 fly reel

Wrist Saver rod and reel

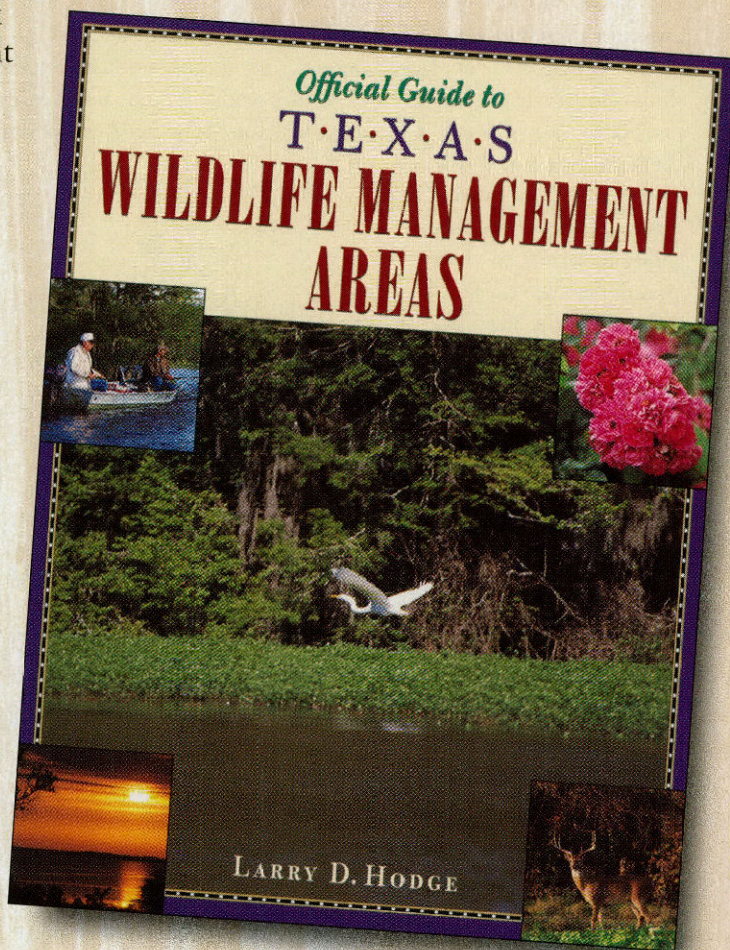
A HUNTER'S BEST FRIEND:

OFFICIAL GUIDE TO TEXAS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS



Hunters, here's an insider's look at Texas Wildlife Management Areas. Larry D. Hodge has collected expert advice from guides, biologists and wildlife technicians throughout the state on each of the state's 51 WMAs – covering more than 750,000 acres – including history, geography, local points of interest, nearby lodging, recreational activities and facilities and wheelchair accessibility. Handy locator maps and easy-to-follow driving directions are included, and full-color photographs enhance the descriptions. Detailed hunting and fishing sections include pro's pointers on the best locations and techniques for hunting and fishing for a variety of species. Photographed and written by Larry D. Hodge.

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SKILLBUILDER

To Build a Fire

In an emergency, knowing how to start a fire under adverse conditions can be the key to survival.

BY DAVID ALLOWAY

ILLUSTRATION BY NARDA LEBO

“THE MAN WAS SHOCKED. It was as though he had just heard his own sentence of death.... Well, it was up to him to build the fire over again, and this second time there must be no failure.”

The protagonist in Jack London's short story “To Build a Fire” is a prospector snowshoeing to a camp in the Yukon in minus-50-degree weather, whose survival depends on his ability to start a fire. It is an unforgettable cautionary tale on the need for any outdoorsperson to know how to build a fire quickly and under adverse conditions.

Moisture and wind are the enemy of fire, and panic and fatigue are the foes of the fire-builder. It is imperative to remain calm and protect your beginning flame from the elements. By using the following tips you can quickly have a fire in wind, rain or snow.

A fire requires ignition, tinder, kindling and fuel. You should carry a reliable means of ignition anytime you venture outdoors. This can be waterproof matches, a lighter or specialty items such as magnesium bars, which are sold at most camping outlets. Scrape a magnesium bar with a sharp knife, and you'll get a small pile of highly flammable shavings. Scrape the artificial flint attached to one side of the bar to unleash a shower of sparks that will ignite the shavings and burn at temper-

atures hotter than 2000 degrees Fahrenheit.

It also is a good idea to carry tinder with you when afield. Tinder is any fine, highly flammable material that catches flame and sets the other components to combustion. Fine steel wool readily ignites, and so do shredded cotton balls, bandages and alcohol swabs



Start with a loose pile of dry leaves or other tinder. Add some sticks for kindling and light the fire. When the fire is burning well, add larger pieces of wood to keep it going.

from a first-aid kit. You can also purchase trioxane bars at surplus stores in waterproof pouches that burn for over two minutes.

Natural tinder sources include items such as dead pine needles, dried grass and abandoned bird and rodent nests. Even during rainstorms, pine trees usually protect the dropped needles at their base from moisture. Dry inner bark of dead trees such as cedar (juniper) and

cottonwood can be shredded for excellent tinder. If you are in an area with pine or fir trees, gather the hardened nodules of sap that collect on broken limbs or insect holes. When ignited, this sap burns hot and long enough to dry and ignite damp kindling.

Kindling consists of small wood pieces that increase and transfer heat to the fuel. Fuel is the large wood that keeps the fire going and allows you to stay warm, cook, purify water and signal for help. You should gather “standing dead wood” for fuel — dead limbs that are still attached to a tree and off the ground and away from moisture. In areas where wood is very wet, you may need to split larger pieces and chop out the dry inner portions. Once a fire is well established, wet wood can be placed nearby to dry.

The surest way to build a fire is to proceed in this order:

1. Lay the tinder in a clear spot and loosely pile the kindling on top of it in the shape of a tepee. Leave an opening to ignite the tinder.

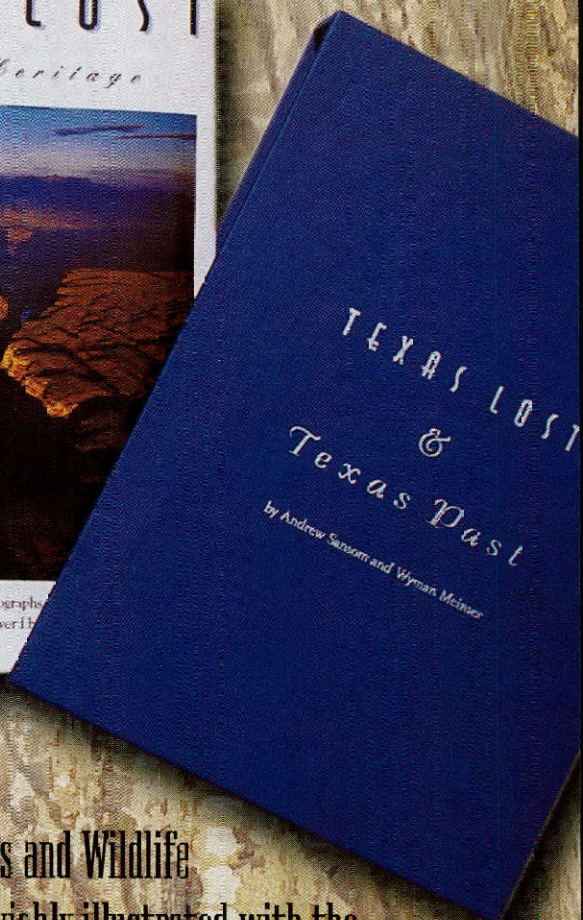
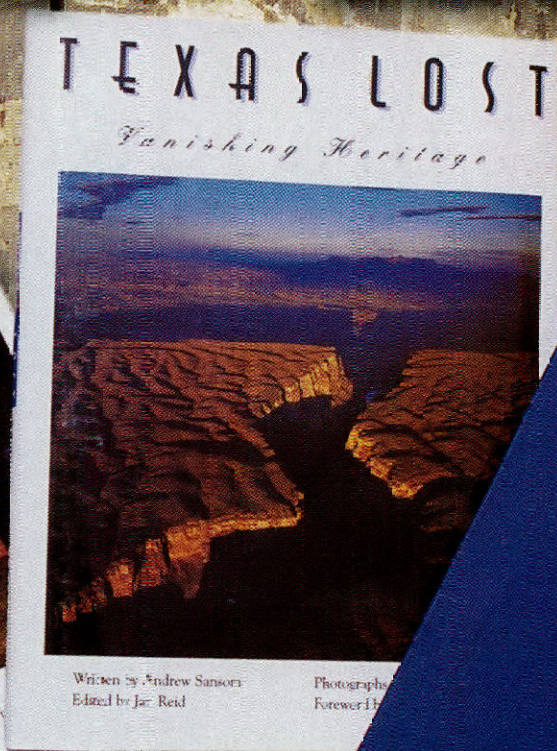
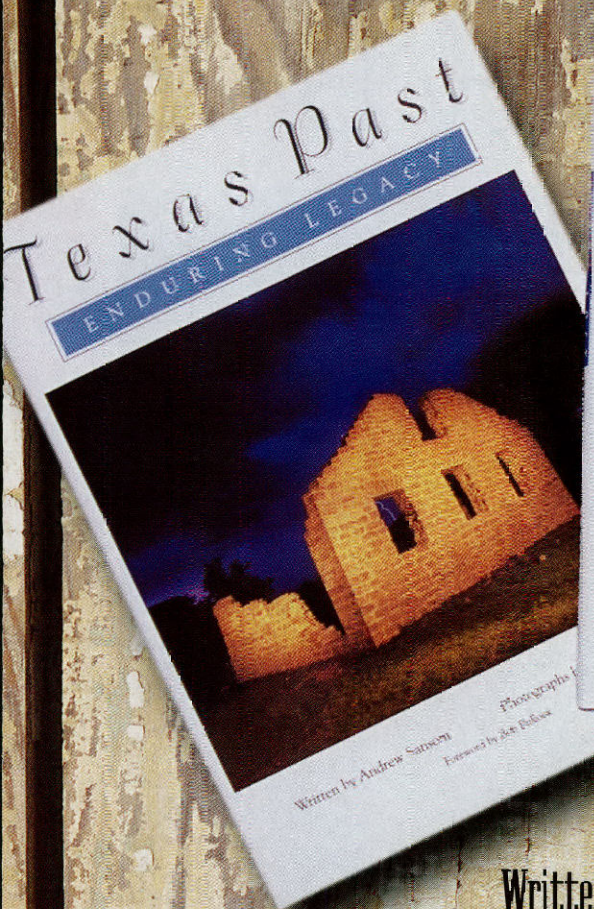
2. On top of this, loosely place some of the smaller fuel, allowing oxygen to freely flow through the fire and support combustion.

3. Light the fire, and when the fuel is burning well, add larger pieces. It is important in the beginning stages to resist the urge to rearrange or disturb the fire, as this can cause it to go out.

Jack London's character comes to a tragic end when frostbite sets in before he can properly build a fire. But even in places where hypothermia is not a danger, a fire can help you fight loneliness and panic when night falls. And when you find yourself lost in the backcountry, a fire can be a good way to signal for help. ★

Jack London's character comes to a tragic end when frostbite sets in before he can properly build a fire. But even in places where hypothermia is not a danger, a fire can help you fight loneliness and panic when night falls. And when you find yourself lost in the backcountry, a fire can be a good way to signal for help. ★

SHARE THE LEGACY



Written by former 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.

This limited edition boxed set is the perfect gift for any conservation-minded Texan - but why not order two? It's a thoughtful addition to your own library as well! The handsomely bound and dust-jacketed books are encased in a cloth-bound, embossed collector's case. Each book is 8" x 12" and full color throughout.

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Ants in a Jewelry Box



We greet the predawn in the Saucedo Lodge mess hall. Strangers when we met yesterday, the prior evening's camaraderie and a good night's rest has relaxed us all.

Now, with a hot breakfast, steaming coffee and the anticipation of the two days ahead, we're getting downright amped up.

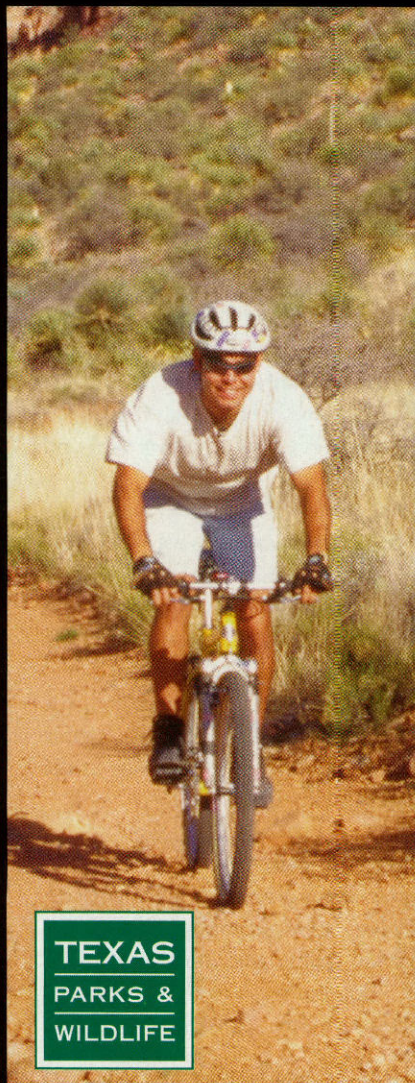
No one lingers over breakfast: We came to ride. Not just to take a little trail ride, but to spend six to seven hours each day riding across part of the

267,000-acre expanse that is Big Bend Ranch State Park. At the corral, outfitter Linda Walker and her wranglers, Missy Sutherland and Gary Sutton, are saddling up the remuda. Depending on the horse's build, they fit some with breastplates and cruppers, rigging to help keep a saddle in place during steep ascents and descents. As the wranglers ready the horses, the riders gather up

the prepared lunches and water bottles for the day's ride.

Walker, who has already queried each of us on our level of riding skill, casts an appraising eye toward our waiting group. Glinting above her fringed chaps is a large oval Team Roping Champion belt buckle emblazoned with her name. I raise my eyebrows in admiration: That's not a belt buckle one can buy; it

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can only be earned through soaking wet saddle blankets and years of hard work. Yep, this gal's the real McCoy. No wonder she's the only horse outfitter that TPW allows to operate out of Big Bend Ranch. The deft, gentle handling of the horses by Walker and her wranglers demonstrates both their experience and their love for their charges.

"Denise, you'll take Fancy. Susan, you'll be on Little Red," she says, matching each of us with the saddle and the horse she deems is the best fit. "Actually, anyone in the group could ride any one of my horses," confides Walker later. "They've all been raised in the Big Bend, either north or south of the border, and they're used to the terrain and to going out more than 300 days a year. Many of

them I've raised from my own mares."

It's April, and thanks to plentiful spring rainfall, the Chihuahuan Desert is aflame with flower. There's barely more than a horse's hoof gap between the blooms festooning the desert floor. Riding just behind Walker as our group heads up the north trail away from the Saucedo, I twist in my saddle and look back over Little Red's rump to the string of riders winding their way behind us. Diminutive in the vastness of the mountain ranges falling away behind us, we riders appear as tiny as a trail of ants in a jewelry

box.

I fall in with TPW interpreter Bill Broyles, who can handily identify the 300-plus varieties of cactus indigenous to the ranch, now in full bloom. I recognize the spindly ocotillo (not a cactus but in a family by itself), with its startling flame-orange clusters of blossoms that tower over our heads even on horseback and the giant yucca with tree trunk-sized stalks and creamy white blooms. Three varieties of prickly pear grow here — the Engleman prickly pear, the spineless "blind pear" and the showy purple prickly pear. Broyles points out rainbow cactus, button cactus, strawberry p. yucca cactus, claret cup and more — each in vivid bloom. Creosote bushes and candelilla punctuate the lower level

of blooms. Three mule deer peer at us warily from atop a ridge and bound away. A hawk surfs the thermals overhead.

The Climb

Today's ride takes us through the drainage area below Ojo Escondido Springs, where a giant cliff looms overhead. "That's where we're going," says Walker, pointing to the top of the cliff. "We'll eat lunch up there." I scan the intimidating sheerness of rubble and rock for a trail, but my eye cannot pick one up. But soon, in a series of switchbacks, we are loosening our reins to let our horses put their heads down and work their way up a tiny rocky trail. To our left are giant looming boulders; a foot to the right of where the horses are carefully planting their feet, the rocks drop away to the valley below.

The word "breathtaking" has just taken on a whole new meaning for me. The silence of my saddlepals is tacit agreement.

At the top of the hill, I express my appreciation to Little Red with a series of pats, head scratches and murmured endearments, and my companions (who have also regained their voices) are doing the same. We dismount, and pull out our lunches, water, cameras and binoculars as the wranglers secure the horses. The landscape sweeps away from us in every direction as we slake our thirst and fall greedily on our lunches.

The afternoon ride, on a different route after we work our way down the steep trail, takes us on a big loop back to the ranch by late afternoon. Tired and exhilarated, we have time for a brief rest and shower before a fajita feast prepared by the TPW staff. Then we watch the sunset over the Bofecillos Mountains and a meadow of stars blooming in the darkening sky.

Down in Below

The next morning, we are at the corral even more promptly. Denise and husband Ralph, who rode the previous day, are volunteers with the Korima Foundation (see "Around the Bend,"

Getting There

Big Bend Ranch State Park: (315) 225-3416, www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/bigbend. Texas Parks and Wildlife staff can tell you about mountain bike and equestrian outfitter trips. Camping is by permit only. No RVs are allowed.

P&J Tours: (281) 486-8070 or (512) 398-7627, www.pandjtrailrides.com.

Travel Tips: Big Bend Ranch State Park is remote. It is roughly an hour's drive on a dirt road off the River Road on Casa Piedro, just south of Presidio. Cell phones don't work here. Plan your gasoline fueling wisely and carry plenty of water.

The \$495 cost for this trip is all-inclusive, with meals, a bunk and a shared bathroom at Saucedo Lodge. With advance reservations, you can reserve more plush accommodations at the Saucedo Ranch House (the Big House).

PHOTO ON THIS PAGE BY BILL REAVES; OPPOSITE PAGE © PEGGY PARKS PHOTOGRAPHY

Blooming ocotillo, left, tower over riders' heads. Pictographs, such as the one at right, at Big Bend Ranch State Park range from 1,000 to 3,000 years old. Riders below demonstrate that headgear and long sleeves are wise choices even in the early spring.



November 2000) and have stayed behind today. Walker offers me the chance at a new steed, and I quickly agree. Not only do I love the opportunity to try a new mount, I'm already envisioning sharing this experience with my son and daughter, and want to check out Walker's horses. Different in gait and personality, Fancy is every bit as enjoyable as Little Red.

Whereas we had climbed the day before, today we ride in the arroyos, washes and gullies in the riparian zones. The wildflowers and blooming cactus are just as present, with the addition of willow and cottonwood in these more verdant areas. We startle a longhorn cow with two calves among the tangle of grasses. Quail dart through the understory. The ranch dog, Paco, chases jackrabbits until they outrun him and he returns, heaving and lop-tongued. "In his dreams, he catches them," says Walker with a smile, adding, "We all deserve to catch our dreams."

Our first dismount is mid-morning, with a short hike up to an overlook into a steep canyon with Cinco Tinajas (Five Little Pools) below. We continue down

centuries of raging torrents. "This is Los Baños," says Walker, "the bathtubs." We lunch in the cut between Los Baños, as ghosts of Comanches loom over the cliffs above, the deep pools reflecting their images and my thoughts.

El Despoblado, this land was called, the desolate and inhospitable place. Although the Chihuahuan Desert has encroached upon this land, and the prairie grasslands have given way to brush, even then it was a vast, empty land. The natives who lived here, from the Archaic Indians to the more recent Comanches and Kiawas, were hunter-gatherers and some all-round tough hombres to make a life in such a rock-encrusted, ruthless land.

Still, as I lay on my back near Los Baños with my horse grazing nearby, I could see the sense of it: Living on the high outcrops, there was safety from predators, flash floods and hostile intruders. At nightfall, one could slip down to the riparian zone with an atlatl (a primitive slingshot) when the animals came to drink and climb back up to the safety zone with both food and water to get you through the next day.

the dry riverbed to another big cluster of rocks, where cliffs and cottonwoods offer respite from the midday sun, and deep chasms are carved

The afternoon ride takes us to a cave overhang with pictographs 1,000 to 3,000 years old drawn by Archaic Indians. "Some archeologists think this is possibly a birthing cave," explains Walker, "as the pictographs seem to show women in childbirth. Even more puzzling are the chevrons and crosses, nearly identical to those found in Australia and Africa. The stains should never be touched in any way; these paintings have survived more than a thousand years and are here for us to marvel and learn." Above this Archaic site, Walker and Broyles point out a cluster of *metates*, where women ground corn and other grains, and most likely watched over children while younger women and men hunted and gathered grain. "These indigenous people did not live long," says Broyles. "Most likely, the stone pebbles ground into their food wore down their teeth, and by their late twenties or early thirties, they were no longer able to eat."

Later that afternoon, we linger at the corral, reluctant to say goodbye. Strangers two days before, we are now saddlepals — the youngest, 16 years old and the oldest pushing 60 from one side of the other. Sun-bronzed and pleasantly saddle-sore, we embrace, take a few pictures and talk vaguely about meeting again.

Perhaps, like Paco finally catching his jackrabbits, we will ride together again in the dream world that laces thousands of years of human life together in the Big Bend Country. ★

Just For

FORG

OUR INTREPID WRITER GOES OUT
IN SEARCH OF TEXAS' EDIBLE
MUSHROOMS.

"The slugs have been eating the pleurots, but the *Auricularia* are in good shape," Igor says, pointing to the brown wavy growths. Igor is a crackerjack mycologist. When he called me this morning to say that today might be a good day to do a little "pot hunting," I couldn't refuse. Pot hunting is mycologists' lingo for hunting for edible mushrooms, and I have been begging Igor to take me. The pleurots and *Auricularia* growing on this huge pile of rotting logs in the East Texas woods are the first edible mushrooms I have ever found in the wild.

BY ROBB WALSH/PHOTOS BY JOE LIGGIO





Black morel



Honey mushroom



Pear-shaped puffball



Gem-studded puffball



Crown-tipped coral mushroom



Smooth chanterelle



Deer mushroom



Purple spored puffball



Chicken mushroom

“What’s the common name for pleurots?” I ask Igor. “Little brown mushrooms,” he says. “Do you call *Auricularia* ‘wood ears?’” I ask.

I don’t know, look it up,” he says, handing me a field guide called *Mushrooms Demystified* by David Arora. *Auricularia* are actually called “cloud ears” in Asian cooking, I find out. They are used in Chinese hot-and-sour soup and are highly prized both for their chewy texture and purported blood-thinning qualities. Igor says they are probably the easiest edible mushrooms to find in Texas. They grow all year round and are excellent for beginning mushroom hunters. Unfortunately, they don’t have any flavor.

There are Texas wild mushrooms that taste absolutely spectacular. And I am determined to learn how to find them. That’s why I’ve been bugging Igor George Alexander, a fellow food writer at the *Houston Press*, to take me hunting. Igor once had a mushroom cultivation business of his own, so he knows his fungi. And I have been a frustrated mushroom hunter for nearly 15 years.

My fascination with Texas edible mushrooms began on one of those glorious Saturday afternoons in redbud season when my old friend Alan Lazarus came strolling in to my backyard. It was spring 1987, and I was living in Austin.

“Check this out,” he said, holding out a big brown paper bag.

“Morels,” I said, taking one of the weird, brainy-looking mushrooms out of the bag. At the time, morels sold for around \$15 a pound at the grocery. The bag he was holding looked like it held around 10 pounds. “Are they for the restaurant?” I asked him. Alan is a chef who currently co-owns Vespaio restaurant in Austin. At the time he had another Italian place.

“No, they’re for you and me to cook right now,” he said.

“But why did you buy so many?” I asked him, mentally calculating the cost of so many expensive morels.

“I didn’t buy them, I picked them,” he said.

“You’re kidding! Morels? In Texas?” I asked in astonishment.

I knew that the morel, or *Morchella esculenta*, as the scientists call it (the Latin *esculenta* literally means “good to eat”), is the most highly prized wild mushroom in Europe. I also knew that Michigan had a famous abundance of them. But I had never heard of anybody picking them in Texas. Over a dinner of these succulent *esculenta* in cream sauce, Alan told me all about his mushroom hunting spot out near Dripping Springs. It was under some cedars, in a shady area along a creek bed, and there were morels growing everywhere.

I kept my eyes out for a spot exactly like the one he described, and I found it. One year later, after a rain, at the same time of year, I drove out to the country. I spent three hours marching up and down the creek bed. And I came back with an empty paper bag. Thus began my unsuccessful mushroom-hunting career.

“I don’t get it,” I whined to Alan. “How come I can’t find any?”

“You can’t go looking for them,” he replied cryptically. “Some years they don’t even sprout. You just need to watch for them all the time. And once you see one, you go get your paper bag.” I’m sure this is very sage advice. But it has never done me a lick of good.

Although I’ve still never seen one in the wild, Texas morels have been spotted as far west as Big Bend and as far east as the Big Thicket. But they are most common in limestone soils under cedar trees, around creeks and near Hill Country

springs. They have a distinctive shape, but are easily confused with look-alike species called “false morels,” such as *Gyromitra caroliniana*, which are toxic.

Would-be mushroom hunters should always rely on knowledgeable friends, certified mycologists or mycological groups to teach them how to tell the difference between edible species and dangerous ones. But once you learn the difference, you probably will never need to ask again.

“Imagine you had never seen a head of lettuce or a head of cabbage before,” amateur mycologist Van Metzler explains. “If you read the description of each of them in a book, you could still confuse one for the other. But

once you’ve touched them both and smelled them and handled them, it isn’t so confusing anymore.”

Van Metzler’s wife, Susan Metzler, is the president of the Texas Mycological Society. (It’s pronounced MIKE-ological not MICK-ological, they will constantly remind you.) The group, which is headquartered in Houston, is currently the only group in the state that leads mushroom-hunting events. There is an annual fall foray as well as unscheduled events throughout the year. In 2000, on the weekend after Thanksgiving, a well-known mycologist visiting Houston from Oklahoma offered to lead several impromptu tromps through various parks within an hour’s drive of Houston. Each walk included around 25 people, and Metzler estimates that some 50 species of fungi were identified.

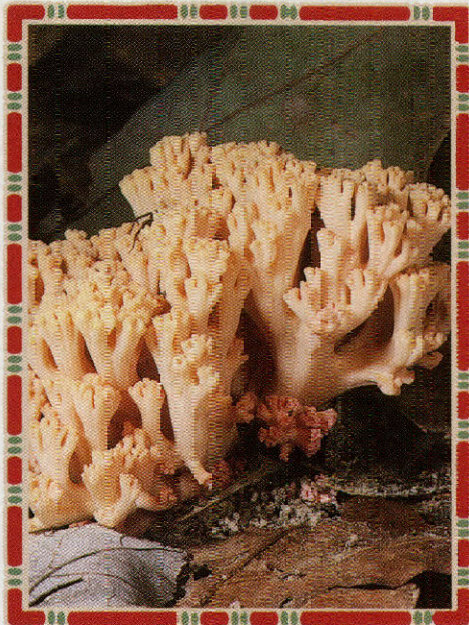
“How many of them were edible?” I wanted to know.

“Oh, I don’t remember. These weren’t pot hunters,” Metzler chided. “They were interested in all sorts of species.”

Morels pop up in March, usually after a wet cold snap, most prolifically in a year in which the preceding fall was very rainy. They have a distinctive shape, but are easily confused with look-alike species called “false morels,” such as *Gyromitra caroliniana*, which are toxic.



Lobster mushroom



Rec-tipped coral mushroom



American coral tooth mushroom



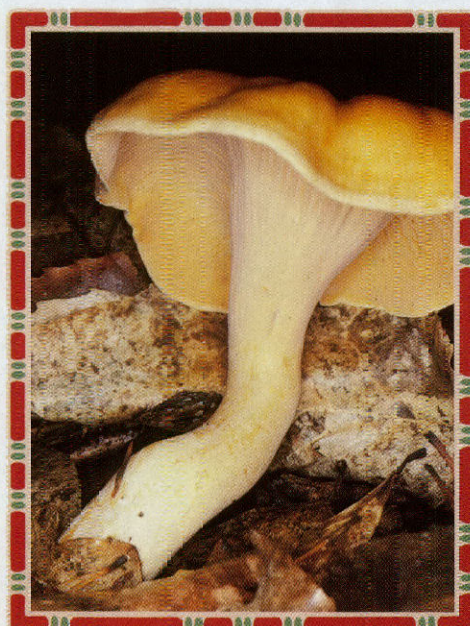
Shaggy mane mushroom



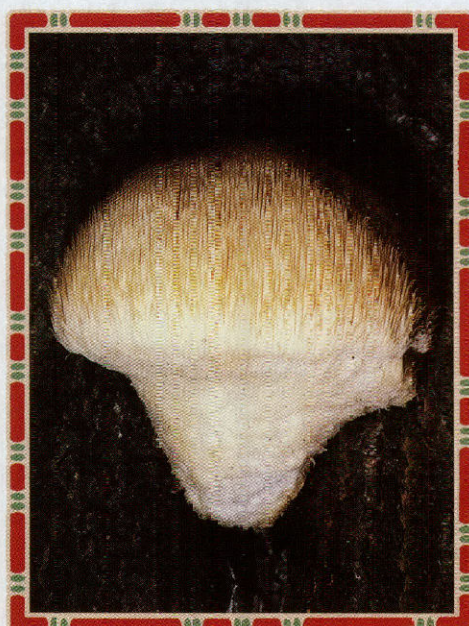
Blewits mushroom



Oyster mushroom



Smooth chanterelle



Hedgehog mushroom



Caesar's mushroom

The Texas Mycological Society includes chemists who are interested in fungi for scientific reasons, nature photographers who hope to bag shots of rare species — and some people who just like to hunt for mushrooms. I asked Metzler if the society welcomed people like me who are only interested in learning how to positively identify the ones that taste good.

“Sure,” Metzler said. But I already knew she had a low opinion of “pot hunters.” That’s because we only join the society long enough to learn how to I.D. the tasty ones.

Texas edible mushrooms aren’t quite the same as those from other parts of the world. Take the members of the *Amanita* family, for instance. Legend has it that the bright, red-capped *Amanita caesarea* was so named because in the Roman era, ordinary people were prohibited from harvesting this mushroom in the wild. Any that were found were supposedly reserved for the emperor. You’d think that this mushroom, fairly common in Texas, would be quite a treat. But the Texas Mycological Society recommends that the Texas variety of *Amanita caesarea* not be eaten.

“First of all, the Texas specimens I’ve had taste like wet paper maché,” says Metzler. “Secondly, there are too many closely related amanitas that are toxic. And then there’s a problem with complexing.” In layman’s terms, complexing refers to the crossover of genetic material between closely related species, Metzler explains. So what looks like one kind of *Amanita* can turn out to have characteristics of another. “It’s just not tasty enough to be worth all that trouble.”

Puffballs and oyster mushrooms are edible Texas mushrooms that are easy to find. Texas boletes (family *Boletaceae*) can be pretty good, but they are nearly impossible to tell apart. Scientists are still cataloging the southern boletes, and it isn’t unusual to find one that hasn’t been identified yet. Fortunately, most are edible, but they all don’t taste very good. While they won’t kill you, some, like *Tylophylus*, are extremely bitter and will ruin a whole pot of soup, Metzler says.

In their field guide *Texas Mushrooms*, Van and Susan Metzler explain a test for boletes that ensures you get only the best-tasting ones, even if you can’t figure out precisely which species they are. The book also includes photographs of more than 20 edible boletes found in Texas, as well as a couple of nonedible boletes and one that nobody has tried yet.

It sounds a little inexact, doesn’t it? In truth, it has been estimated that there are between 8,000 and 10,000 species of fungi in Texas. But fewer than 1,000 of them have been identified to the species level. East Texas, particularly the Big Thicket, is one of the most varied fungi habitats in the United States.

As far as edible mushrooms go, East Texas isn’t a very good place to look for morels, but it’s a great place for chanterelles — at the right time of the year. While morels are the spring mushroom in Europe and are often eaten with asparagus, chanterelles (known as “girolles” in France) are one of the

most popular fall varieties. In Texas, chanterelles are more of a summer mushroom. They begin appearing in August after a good rain and are found through most of September. Chanterelles do best in years with heavy rain in June.

There are actually several species of chanterelles found in Texas, including the very common golden chanterelle (*Cantharellus cibarius*), a tropical relation, *Cantharellus lateritius*, found near the Gulf Coast, and the tiny orange chanterelle (*Cantharellus cinnabarinus*). Chanterelles of all sorts are found under oak trees. In fact, this kind of mushroom has a mycorrhizal relationship with the oak tree — the two organisms function symbiotically.

To confirm that a mushroom is truly a chanterelle, field guides suggest you rub a piece between your fingers and smell it. Chanterelles smell sweet like apricots — not musty.

“Actually, the easiest place to find chanterelles is on people’s front lawns,” Igor tells me. “If you dress up like a gardener and crawl around on your hands and knees like you’re pulling weeds, nobody will pay any attention.”

I suspect he’s pulling my leg. But you never know with Igor. ★

ROBB WALSH is a food columnist of the Houston Press.

Would-be mushroom hunters should always rely on knowledgeable friends, certified mycologists or mycological groups to teach them how to tell the difference between edible species and dangerous ones. But once you learn the difference, you probably will never need to ask again.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

TO FIND OUT ABOUT upcoming mushroom-hunting expeditions and lectures from visiting mycologists, write:

Texas Mycological Society
7445 Dillon
Houston, Texas, 77061

To purchase a copy of *Texas Mushrooms*, a field guide with color photographs by Susan and Van Metzler, e-mail miteg999@aol.com or visit the All Books bookstore at 2126 Richmond Avenue in Houston. (The book was published by the University of Texas Press and is now out of print.)

IF IN DOUBT, DON'T!

WHILE MUSHROOMS are indeed the flesh of the gods, they also produce some of the most deadly poisons on earth. Many species are toxic, with reactions ranging from respiratory distress to nausea and vomiting to death. Other species taken in combination with alcohol (even alcohol consumed several days after the mushrooms are eaten) can cause unpleasant symptoms. The best policy is not to ingest any mushrooms unless you are absolutely positive of what they are.

If you are interested in dining on these delicacies, you should join a mushroom foray with the Texas Mycological Society (see box). They can help you with identification of species and their habitats as well as preparation of these tasty treats. Bon appetit!

— Jackie Poole



SONG OF *Chahk Chahk*

Shooting chachalacas isn't

BY LARRY D. HODGE

OF THE *ChLahhChah*



the hard part. *Seeing them is.*

Sport dog eases forward, matching us step for furtive step. Perhaps 15 yards ahead, several chachalacas appear to be in the midst of a brush country rumble. Sounding like angry guinea fowl with sore throats, they rant at each other, their distinctive cha-cha-lac cries stirring more distant groups into equally noisy uproars.



I FIND MYSELF WONDERING IF THE ELUSIVE BIRDS MIGHT BEST BE HUNTED FROM A HOWDAH ATOP AN ELEPHANT, THE ULTIMATE ALL-WHEEL-DRIVE HUNTING VEHICLE FOR JUNGLE SUCH AS THIS.



This time, I think, we're going to get one. Earl Nottingham and I have stalked within yards of several groups the last two days and are still chachalaca-less. Suddenly Sport, who shares my allergies as well as my love of hunting, explodes a sneeze that rattles her collar, her rabies tag and the thick South Texas brush. The birds fall silent and, we surmise, hop away through the trees.

[We see not so much as a tail feather.]

I've hunted blue quail in Big Bend arroyos so clogged with catclaw and prickly pear that hunts ended with me leaking more blood than the quarry. I've heard woodcock hunters tell of fighting their way through coverts laced with blackberry vines so thick that emerging still clothed was a victory. But nothing I've seen or heard of surpasses the density of plant matter per square meter of those South Texas plots of chachalaca land. I find myself wondering if the elusive birds might best be hunted from a howdah atop an elephant, the ultimate all-wheel-drive hunting vehicle for jungle such as this.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep indeed. We walk in shadow along tunnels bored through vegetation so thick one cannot crawl through it on hands and knees. We revel in 75-degree temperatures while the rest of Texas shivers in the 50s. Here along the Rio Grande, the part of Texas I think of as more Mexico than Texas, such temperatures in February are the norm. But huge, gnarled mesquite trees keep us completely in the shade, and cool. The only sounds are of green jays fussing and long-billed thrashers singing from high branches. The pulse of history throbs *sotto voce*, telling of times when this hundred-acre wood was a mere footnote in a forest stretching over thousands of square miles of South Texas instead of a conspicuous island of brush amid a sea of cultivated fields.

The plain chachalaca, about the size and shape of the drab female ring-necked pheasant, ranges from the Lower Rio Grande Valley southward, with various subspecies occurring along the western coast of the Gulf of Mexico into Honduras. In the United States it is native only to Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr and Willacy counties in Texas, although a transplanted population thrives in San Patricio County.

Once so numerous that commercial hunters supplied

Brownsville markets with hundreds daily, chachalaca numbers fell as the amount of native South Texas brush converted to fields and towns rose. By 1940 chachalacas found only remnant patches of brush adjacent to resacas, inland bays and bottomlands of the Arroyo Colorado and Rio Grande. From that time until 1971, over 75 percent of remaining chachalaca habitat in the Lower Rio Grande Valley vanished beneath bulldozer blades. Today populations are considered to be stable, although no one has a good estimate of how many are left. The scarcity of scientific knowledge about them is matched only by the low numbers of hunters who pursue them. If you want to be alone in South Texas, hunt chachalacas.

Oddly, chachalacas — sometimes called Mexican pheasants or Mexican tree pheasants — seem to thrive in disturbed habitat like the thickets and brushlands that spring up after tropical forests are cleared. They are supremely adapted to living in tangled environs of trees and vines. While they are able to fly sufficiently far and fast that Earl and I miss what should have been easy shots at two of them, they prefer to run through trees, hopping from limb to limb. If you are lucky enough to see a group feeding, you may well have to restrain yourself from laughing, for they will perch in any position and even hang upside down to pluck berries from coma or hackberry trees.

Chachalacas adapt easily to contact with people, so much so that they throng campgrounds and other public areas in such places as Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park and the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge. They relish the free groceries campers put out to attract all varieties of birds. But wild chachalacas are so far removed from tame that they might as well be a totally different species. "They are not the same birds," Steve Benn says flatly. Benn man-

A CHORUS UPROARIOUS

SO OBNOXIOUS AND DISTINCTIVE is the chachalaca's calling that it gives the bird its name. For many years listeners thought the song contained four notes, but careful study revealed it has only three. When one bird — usually a male — emits the raucous *cha-cha-lac*, any other bird around chimes in on the second note, making it sound as though one bird has sung four notes. The birds are especially prone to group vocalizations in the early morning and evening hours and on moonlit nights.

Since the birds prefer to sing from the treetops and the calling of one group usually ignites others in earshot, the noises they make have been described by observers as "loud and simply indescribable," "deafening," "ear-splitting" and "a pandemonium." The uproar they produce is said to rank with that of another tropical resident, the howler monkey. Male chachalacas are uniquely equipped for noise-making: Their tracheas are doubled, much like the body of a saxophone. The longer air passage lends a deeper timbre to the males' calls and no doubt contributes to their volume.

STEVE MOTIONS ME TO TAKE THE LEAD, AND I APPROACH A BUMELIA TREE FROM WHICH BOOM RAUCOUS NOISES REMINISCENT OF A CROWD WATCHING THE LAST TWO MINUTES OF A HARD-FOUGHT BASKETBALL GAME.

ages the Las Palomas Wildlife Management Area, more than two dozen parcels of land acquired for white-winged dove nesting habitat that, ironically, furnish the best remaining chachalaca habitat north of the Rio Grande as well.

Benn joined Earl and me on the Longoria Unit of Las Palomas WMA for a morning hunt. The Longoria Unit illustrates the resilient nature of these shy birds. Following revegetation projects on the area, 40 captured wild chachalacas were released on the area in 1959 and 1960. They multiplied so rapidly that by 10 years later, 283 birds had been trapped on the Longoria for restocking elsewhere. And there are still plenty of birds left to hunt.

Benn probably knows as little as any about hunting chachalacas but more than most. At least his ears, much younger than mine and not dulled by too many shotgun blasts, are able to pick up the sound of chachalacas clamoring a quarter-mile away. We move in that direction and finally, after an hour of furtive creeping down winding roads expecting any moment to see a chachalaca dash across, we hear a half-dozen or so in full cry in a tree not 15 yards distant — yet totally invisible. Steve motions me to take the lead, and I approach a bumelia tree from which boom raucous noises reminiscent of a crowd watching the last two minutes of a hard-fought basketball game. I cannot see a bird, but as Sport trots forward, the calling suddenly stops, and the flapping of wings announces their departure. I relax a bit and take another step, hoping to catch one as it hops through the



trees, and the last chachalaca in the tree cackles and flies. Had I seen him, it would have been an easy shot. Shooting chachalacas isn't the hard part. Seeing them is.

Benn grins wryly at me. "This is not the kind of hunt where you say, 'I shot five boxes of shells, but I got my limit.' Probably the best way to hunt them is just to walk quietly along pasture roads. Sooner or later one will mess up and cross the road in front of you. You can't sneak up on

them through the brush. It's just too thick, and you make too much noise."

Chachalaca season runs concurrently with quail season, generally from November through February. Thus it overlaps the split dove season in South Texas. "Perhaps the best time to hunt them is during the second split of the mourning dove season, from late December into early January," Benn says. "You can hunt chachalacas until you get tired of trying to get one, then go out in the open fields and hunt doves."

We circle the 20-acre patch of brush twice more, hoping to see some birds crossing the road, but they give us the slip. By this time the bacon and eggs of 6

a.m. are a distant memory. Sport and I share a bottle of water. I let her drink first, but for some reason my companions decline a drink. "Does it taste like Alpo?" Earl asks.

For all I know, it tastes like chachalaca. ★

LARRY D. HODGE is executive editor of *Texas Parks and Wildlife Press* and wildlife editor of this magazine.

REFLECTIONS ON HUNTING CHACHALACAS

OUR BEST CHANCE at bagging a chachalaca came on the Carricitos Unit of Las Palomas WMA. While we watched the thick brush to the right of a road we were walking, a chachalaca launched from a tree in a clearing to our left and headed into the brush, taking us totally by surprise. We both missed it. The sound of our shots spooked a second bird from the same tree. It flew behind us with the same result: two hunters with smoking guns, dumbfounded looks, and no bird.

On the way back to the hotel, I thought about those two birds and wondered if they were the only ones on that unit — chachalacas are relatively scarce in Texas. If that was the case, I sure didn't want to be the one to shoot one of them. Later, over supper, Earl volunteered similar feelings. Sometimes I think — no, I know — that the best hunters are the ones who sympathize with the game they hunt. Call those feelings foolish if you will, but they are a symptom of respect for the animal, and that simple emotion will, more often than not, be the foundation for ethical actions in the field. In a curious contradiction, we love what we try to kill, and what seems even more curious unless you have experienced it, often you take more pleasure in your failure to harvest an animal than you do in its conquest.

As long as the moon rises over South Texas, I hope there are chachalacas to sing it up.

OUTDOOR SUMMER CAMPS

BY
GARLAND
LEVIT

TEXAS BOASTS A WIDE VARIETY OF RESIDENT AND
DAY CAMPS SPECIALIZING IN OUTDOOR SKILLS.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WAYNE VINCENT



HUNT, TEXAS, IS MORE THAN 300 MILES FROM PAM AND DAN BOND'S WEST TEXAS HOME IN VERNON. FOR THE BOND DAUGHTERS, THOUGH, THIS SMALL TOWN NESTLED IN THE HEART OF THE HILL COUNTRY, ABOUT 70 MILES NORTHWEST OF SAN ANTONIO, HAS BECOME ALMOST LIKE A SECOND HOME.

IN 1994, a family friend encouraged the Bonds to send their daughter Natalie, who was 9 at the time, to an overnight resident camp in Hunt called Heart O' the Hills. But Pam and Dan had serious reservations. Neither had stayed at an overnight camp growing up, and they wanted to make sure they researched their options fully before committing to a camp for Natalie.

"We visited several camps before we decided on Heart O' the Hills," says Pam, who later sent her youngest daughter, Meredith, now 13, to Heart O' the Hills as well. "The owners of the camp really impressed me, and I liked that it was all girls. The size of the camp was also important in that it had a nice, small atmosphere where the girls could get to know each other."

Natalie, now 16, has been to camp almost every year since. She is preparing to return to Heart O' the Hills this summer as a counselor in training.

According to the American Camping Association, 9 million children went to summer camp in the United States in 2000. In all, there are more than 8,500 camps in the United States that serve the purpose of enriching children's lives each summer. The ACA says there are 1,111 summer camps in Texas, and the actual number is higher.

With so many camps to choose from, what is the best way to go about finding the right camp for your son or daughter? There is no exact formula for discovering the perfect summer camp. For the most part, parents can't go wrong in their selection process so long as they use some discretion. Still, there are personal issues for any parent to consider, such as deciding what type of camp is best suited for a child.

The first step in narrowing down a list of potential summer camps is determining whether a day camp or resident camp is right for your child. A day camp may be preferable for younger children, whose parents are not ready to send them away for an extended period. Day camps typically are more affordably priced because the camp does not have to provide lodg-

ing or multiple meals for the campers. Additionally, at a day camp, parents can closely monitor their children and keep up with any potential or ongoing problems, because the child returns home each day.

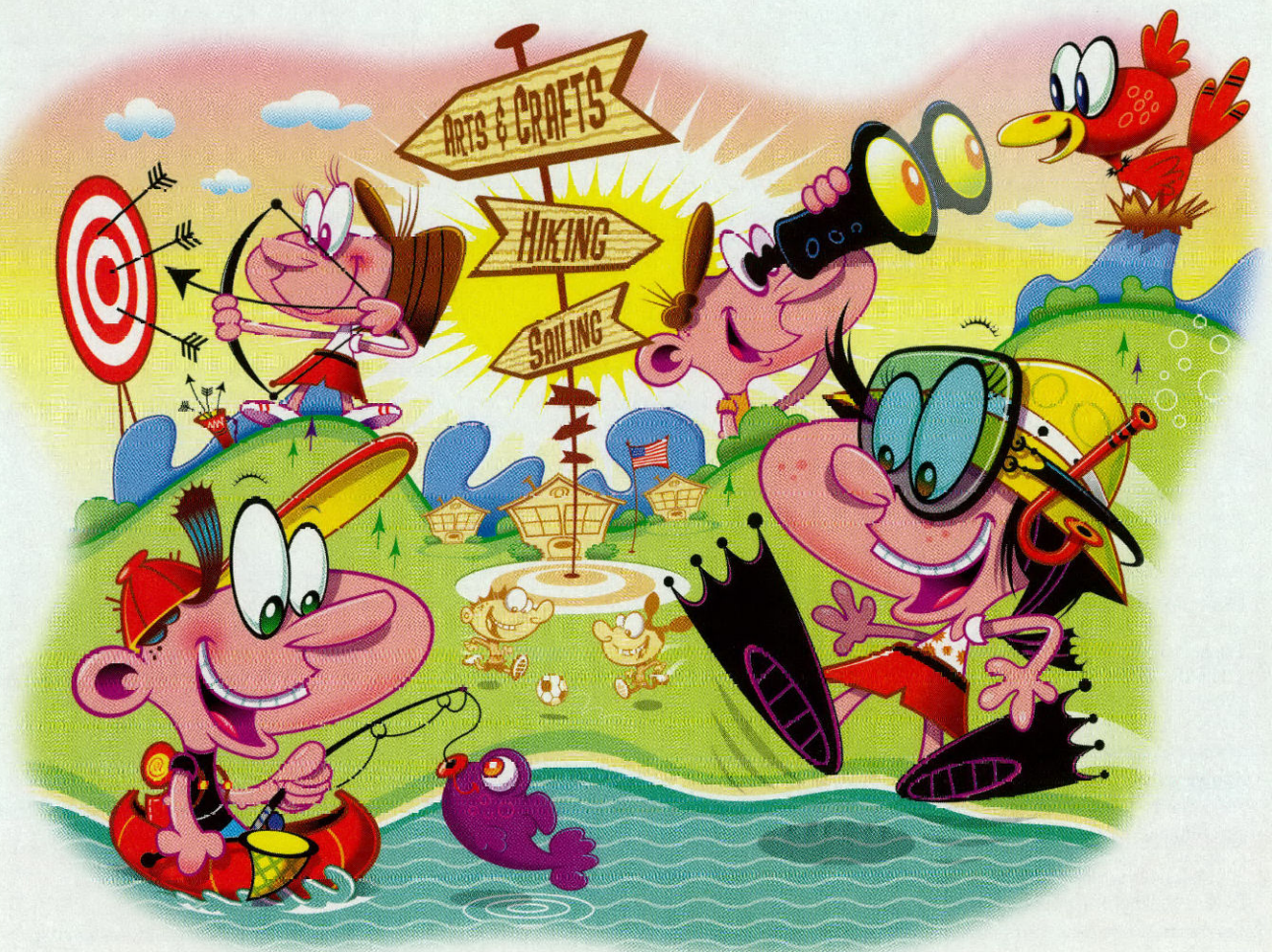
Karen Allman, a district director for the Camp Fire USA First Texas Council since 1990, says that day camps are very effective at catering to younger children. "Parents of first- and second graders may be more cautious about sending a child away from home," she says. "They enjoy the feel of a day camp, because they can have daily interaction with the people supervising their children."

Resident camps differ greatly from day camps. They can vary in length from a few days to usually no more than four weeks. Privately owned resident camps are normally not cheap, but overnight camps run by public agencies such as the YMCA (see directory) are more moderately priced. However, sessions at these camps are normally much shorter in length than the private resident camps.

"At a resident camp, there is an opportunity for campers to develop their independence away from their parents and form closer ties with other children," says Dick Eastland, owner of Camp Mystic, located in Hunt. "Friendships really take off when the child is in a cabin living with other campers their age. In a cabin, they have to learn to share and be more tolerant of others."

Once you decide on the type of camp, there is still the chore of narrowing down what can be a long list of prospects. To start with, listen to recommendations from campers and their parents. Although you shouldn't commit to a camp solely based on word of mouth, testimonials from friends and relatives about the merits or weaknesses of a camp should be considered valuable information.

To help with this task, *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine has compiled a directory of day and resident summer camps in Texas. We've chosen camps with an outdoors emphasis — great places where children can swim, go on nature hikes or, in a few cases, learn about marine biology or wildlife management. This list is by no means a comprehensive directory



of outdoor-oriented camps in Texas, but it is a great starting point for people searching for a fun and valuable camping experience for children.

To feel absolutely comfortable with a camp, you can take other precautions. Tour the camp facilities. If possible, go the preceding summer when the camp is in session, and meet the camp directors. This gives both the parents and campers a feel for the camp. It also affords parents an opportunity to ask questions or express any concerns. Many camps also show informational videos in cities throughout the year. Call the camp to find out when and where these showings take place.

Inquire about safety before deciding on a camp. To ensure the protection of children, especially in activities such as swimming and shooting sports, be sure that the camp has a certified counselor on hand to supervise these activities. Ask about the attention to detail that the camp takes in maintaining their grounds. "Camps must stay on top of things and check equipment frequently by keeping up with day-to-day usage and repairs," says Allman.

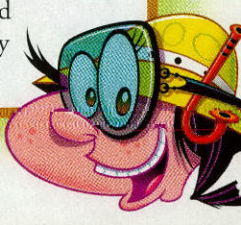
"Training of the staff is very important," says Brian Brandt, executive director of public relations for Sky Ranch, who has worked for summer camps for 13 years. "Most camps have a

staff training week, and what goes on during that time can dictate how safe the camp will be."

The attitude and caliber of a camp staff can have a profound effect on the direction of a camp as well. According to Brandt, the more experience the full-time staff and administration at a camp have, the better a camp will be run.

Camps should abide by health standards dictated by the Texas Department of Health, the American Camping Association or some other accrediting body. Some camps, such as those run by state agencies, are exempt from review by the health department, so be sure to consult the camp to see what standards are being followed.

Plan ahead. Even with the abundance of camps in the state, some of the popular resident camps begin to fill up almost a year in advance. Day camps usually start their push soon after the New Year. Most camps have several sessions during the summer, which provides flexibility for parents who must schedule around family vacations and other summer obligations. Once you've signed your child up for summer camp, sit back and relax, because your child will soon be off on an experience that will stay with him forever. ★



CAMP	SPECIALTY	SESSIONS	PRICE	ACTIVITIES	BEST REASON TO GO
AUSTIN NATURE & SCIENCE CENTER SUMMER CAMP 301 Nature Center Dr. Austin, TX 78746 (512) 327-8181 <www.ci.austin.tx.us/nature-science> E-mail: shannon.kennedy@c.austin.tx.us	Day camp Wildlife/marine biology/conservation	May 28 – Aug. 9	\$85 – \$365 Varies	Paddling, shooting, swimming, fishing, wildlife education, marine biology	The Hill Country ambience is ideal for exploring Austin's "hidden treasure" — more than 70 acres of preserve land — during special "theme weeks" designed for various age groups.
AUSTIN ZOO ACADEMY P. O. Box 91808 Austin, TX 78709 (512) 283-1490 <www.austinzoo.org> E-mail: austinzo@aol.com	Day camp Wildlife	Week-long sessions June & July	\$200 (full day) \$100 (half day)	Nature hikes, study of animal biodiversity, adaptations and habitats	Campers have access to a virtual Noah's Ark of animals, allowing them a closer look at unique adaptations and habitats.
AYUZANTIA Camp Fire USA Balcones Council P.O. Box 203683 Austin, TX 78720-3683 (512) 343-2111 <www.mafn.org/campfire> E-mail: campfire@austintx.net	Resident camp	July 28 – Aug. 3	\$300 (members) \$350 (nonmembers)	Paddling, shooting, swimming, fishing, athletics, ropes course, mountain biking, cookouts	The friendly, active environment welcomes immaturity campers and nurtures future leadership in a bucolic setting along the Little Bosque River.
BEAR CREEK STABLES P.O. Box 1571 Manchaca, TX 78652 (512) 282-0250 <bearcreekstablesinc.com> E-mail: ldovers@aol.com	Day camp	12 five-day sessions (full or half day) beginning May 27	\$200 (full day) \$135 (half day)	Swimming, horseback riding, arts and crafts	Campers ride horses in the morning and earn the basics of horse care and safety before cooling off with an afternoon dip in the pool.
BOBWHITE BRIGADE 3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 212 San Antonio, TX 78230 (210) 467-6575 <texasbrigades.org> E-mail: hfoldsworth@hotmail.com	Resident camp Wildlife/conservation	Rolling Plains: June 22 – 26 South Texas: July 14 – 18 East Texas: July 28 – Aug. 1	\$180 – \$200	Wildlife education with a focus on bobwhite quail; photography, art, plant collection.	High school-age cadets become "quail experts" in these five-day courses held on a ranch.
BUCKSKIN BRIGADE 3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 212 San Antonio, TX 78230 (210) 467-6575 <texasbrigades.org> E-mail: T_trail@texas-wildlife.org	Resident camp Wildlife/conservation	North Texas: July 21 – 25 South Texas: June 3 – 7 (tentative)	\$200	Wildlife education with a focus on white-tailed deer; photography, art, plant collection	High school-age cadets become "white-tailed deer experts" in these five-day courses held on a ranch.
CAMP BALCONES SPRINGS 104 Balcones Springs Dr. Marble Falls, TX 78654 (800) 485-5151 <campbalconessprings.com> E-mail: jbice@campbalconessprings.com	Resident camp	2- and 3-week sessions (campers can stay up to 6 weeks) from June 2 through August 10	\$1,685 (2 weeks) \$2,120 (3 weeks)	Paddling, shooting, fishing, athletics, survival skills, water sports, horseback riding, ropes course	When campers aren't kneeboarding the wake or ziplining through the trees, counselors keep them on their toes with theme nights and exciting adventure trips.
CAMP CHAMPIONS 775 Camp Road Marble Falls, TX 78654 (800) 696-3334 <campchampions.com> E-mail: campchampions@campchampions.com	Resident camp	June 2 – 22 June 23 – July 13 July 21 – Aug. 10	\$1,995 (2 weeks) \$2,260 (3 weeks)	Paddling, shooting, swimming, fishing, athletics, go-cart racetrack, horseback riding	Campers shoot to earn National Rifle Association ski patches on a BE range for younger campers and a .22 range for the older ones.
CAMP CHEROKEE Plano Family YMCA 5101 Terryson Pkwy. Plano, TX 75024 (972) 378-9622 <www.planoymca.org> E-mail: ymca_camp_cherokee@hotmail.com	Day camp Outdoor adventure	May 27 – Aug. 3	\$140 – \$160/week (members) \$160 – \$180/week (nonmembers)	Paddling, shooting, swimming, fishing, wildlife education	Camp Cherokee offers a great outdoor day camp for children ages 6–12 on the wooded shores of Lake Lewisville.



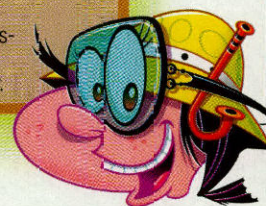
CAMP	SPECIALTY	SESSIONS	PRICE	ACTIVITIES	BEST REASON TO GO
CAMP COYOTE FLATS 1011 Jones Dr. Canyon Lake, TX 78133 (830) 964-3472 <www.coyoteflats.com> E-mail: coyoflat@gbtc.com	Day camp Wildlife/conservation/marine biology	June 1 – Aug. 18	\$85 (full day) \$45 (half day)	Swimming, creative dramatics, nature awareness, camp craft, arts and crafts, archery, canoeing	Field trips and overnight trips. Native American studies and marine biology education. Each one-week session has a different theme.
CAMP DOUBLECREEK P.O. Box 5261 Found Creek, TX 76683 (512) 255-3561 <www.campdoublecreek.com> E-mail: dtlcreek@texas.net or info@campdoublecreek.com	Day camp Outdoor adventure	Week-long sessions from late May through early August	\$200	Shooting, swimming, athletics, agriculture studies, horseback riding	A working farm is the setting for activities from tennis to gardening. Transportation is provided from the Austin/Round Rock area.
CAMP GRADY SPRUCE (YMCA) 3300 Park Road 36 Graford, TX 76449 (940) 779-3411 <www.campgradyspruce.com> E-mail: jpeopleas@campgradyspruce.com	Resident camp Marine biology, wildlife conservation	6- and 13-day sessions beginning June 2. Out-of-state trips offered at Frontier Camp only	\$430 (6 days) \$800 (13 days) \$995 (out-of-state trips)	Paddling, shooting, swimming, athletics	Optional adventures — rock-climbing at Lake Mineral Wells, canoeing the Brazos and rafting trips in Colorado — allow campers to customize their experience.
CAMP EL HAR 5218 Kiwanis Road Dallas, TX 75236 (972) 238-3873 <www.campelhar.org> E-mail: campelhar@hotmail.com	Resident and day camp Outdoor adventure	June 2 – Aug. 9	\$450 (1 week, resident) \$1,000 (2 weeks, resident)	Paddling, shooting, swimming, wildlife education, horseback, leadership development (ages 16-17)	Whether it's horseback riding or backpacking and rock climbing in a leadership course, there's something for every age and interest.
CAMP LAJUNTA P.O. Box 136 Hunt, TX 78024 (830) 238-4621 <www.lajunta.com> E-mail: lajunta@kfc.com	Resident camp	June 9 – 4 June 9 – 21 June 22 – July 4 July 7 – Aug. 1 July 7 – July 19 July 20 – Aug. 1	\$2,500 (4 weeks) \$1,350 (2 weeks)	Paddling, shooting, fishing, athletics	This all-boys' camp caters to each child's needs by allowing individual activity preferences and de-emphasizing head-to-head competition.
CAMP LANGSTON Route 3 Box 100 Mount Pleasant, TX 75455 (903) 572-3935 <www.camplangston.com> E-mail: skulodge@aol.com	Resident camp	June 23 – July 27	\$195/week	Paddling, shooting, fishing, swimming, wildlife education, horseback riding, watercraft	Campers choose their own daily activities, many of which concentrate on horseback and lakefront recreation.
CAMP MYSTIC FOR GIRLS HC 2 Box 257 Hunt, TX 78024 (830) 238-4660 <www.campmystic.com> E-mail: mystic@kfc.com	Resident camp	June 1 – 30 July 5 – Aug. 3 Aug. 6 – 18	\$2,700 (30 days) \$1,500 (13 days)	Paddling, shooting, swimming, snorkeling, fishing, athletics, crafts, horseback riding, nature study.	Outdoor activities or campwide competitions along the Guadalupe. The camp works to help each girl grow spiritually and become a better person.
CAMP OLYMPIA Rt. 2, Box 25B Trinity, TX 75862 (800) 735-6190 <www.campolympia.com> E-mail: campinfo@campolympia.com	Resident camp	June 3 – 16 June 17 – 7 July 8 – 28 July 29 – Aug. 11	\$1,920 (2 weeks) \$2,520 (3 weeks)	Paddling, shooting, fishing, athletics, water sports, challenge course, horseback riding	After sailing, waterskiing or windsurfing — and perhaps a race, or beach party — campers welcome the luxury of air-conditioned cabins.
CAMP RIVER BEND 2200 Third St. Wichita Falls, TX 76701 (940) 767-0843 <www.rbrw.org> E-mail: rbrw@wf.net	Day camp Wildlife and conservation	June 10 – 14 June 17 – 21 June 24 – 28 July 1 – 5	\$60 (members) \$70 (nonmembers)	Hands-on outdoor education, wildlife education (butterflies, wetland exploration), nature art	Children explore the outdoors and learn about ecosystems and conservation from certified teachers and ecology education experts.



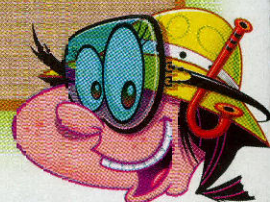
CAMP	SPECIALTY	SESSIONS	PRICE	ACTIVITIES	BEST REASON TO GO
CAMP STEWART FOR BOYS HC 1 Box 110 Hunt, TX 78024-9714 (830) 238-4673 <www.campstewart.com> E-mail: ina@campstewart.com	Resident camp	June 3 – June 29 July 3 – July 28 Aug. 3 – 17	\$1,625 - \$2,740	Paddling, shooting, swimming, fishing, athletics, horseback riding	The beautiful Guadalupe River provides the setting for swimming, water-skiing and sailing.
CHEVRON PHILLIPS SUMMER SCIENCE PROGRAM The Wetlands Center 1724 Market St. Baytown, TX 77520 (281) 420-7128 <www.baytown.org> E-mail: ssherman@baytown.org	Day camp Wildlife/marine biology/conservation/outdoor adventure	Week-long sessions from June 3 through 28 and July 8 through Aug. 2	\$125/week	Fishing, birding, wildlife education (wetland birds, mammals, fish), marine biology (bay fishing, fish identification), wetlands ecology	Campers gain hands-on experience identifying wetland species, using seines, dip nets, casting traps and fishing equipment in three wetland habitats.
COUNTRY DAY CAMP P.O. Box 208 Temple, TX 76503 (254) 773-6614 E-mail: campfire@vvm.com	Day camp	1- and 2-week sessions beginning June 3	\$70/week	Archery, swimming (off premises, once a week), arts and crafts, nature trails	It sure beats daycare! Children learn about the environment along five nature trails and a small creek.
HEART O' THE HILLS HCR 2 Box 250 Hunt, TX 78024-9420 (830) 238-4650 <www.hohcamp.com> E-mail: info@hohcamp.com	Resident	Session 1: June 3 – 28 Session 2: July 3 – 26 Session 3: Aug. 3 – 17	Session 1: \$2,615 Session 2: \$2,730 Session 3: \$1,675	Paddling, shooting, swimming, fishing, athletics, wildlife education, manual arts, performing arts	This air-conditioned, all-girls' camp along the Guadalupe offers more than 40 activities, family-style dining and a tradition of etiquette.
HILL COUNTRY NATURE SCIENCE SCHOOL OF WILD BASIN WILDERNESS PRESERVE 805 N. Capital of Texas Highway Austin, TX 78746 (512) 327-7622 <www.wildbasin.org> E-mail: hike@wildbasin.org	Day camp Wildlife/marine biology/conservation	Week-long half-day sessions May 28 – 31 June 3, 10, 17, 24 July 8, 15, 22	\$120 – \$140	Wildlife education (geology, insects, birds), drama, art	Campers use music and art — along with hands-on field experiences and exploration — to learn about nature.
HUNTERS CHASE FARMS 9101 Sisk Lane #11 Dripping Springs, TX 78620 (512) 264-3346 <www.hunterschasefarms.com> E-mail: marylauram1@cs.com	Resident and day camp Wildlife/outdoor adventure	Resident: May 26 – June 1, July 20 – 26 Day: June 3 – 28, July 8 – 19, July 29 – Aug. 9	\$589 (resident camp) \$225 per week (day camp)	Paddling, archery, wildlife education, swimming, fishing, nature hikes, horseback riding	Campers ride high in the saddle on more than 2,000 acres of horseback trails along Lake Travis.
KICKAPOO KAMP 216 Hummingbird Lane Kerrville, TX. 78028 (830) 895-5731 <www.kickapookamp.com> E-mail: hodge@kickapookamp.com	Resident camp	June 10 – 22 June 24 – 13 July 13 – Aug. 3	\$1,325 (2 weeks) \$1,825 (3 weeks)	Paddling, shooting, volleyball, basketball, water-skiing, drama, cheerleading, gymnastics	You won't get lost in the shuffle! This all-girls' camp limits enrollment to 100 girls per term, to emphasize individual attention.
KINGS BRIDGE FARM 710 CR 272 Leander, TX 78641 (512) 259-3479 <www.kbf.cc.m> E-mail: holly@kbf.com	Day camp	May 28 – Aug. 9	\$225/week	Swimming, daily English riding lessons, arts and crafts	A Friday horse show ends a week of instruction on basic horse care riding lessons, veterinary care and nutritional education.
MASTERSCHOOL Rt. 3 Box 30 • Manor, TX 78653 (512) 272-9910 <homepage.mac.com/jenscalo/masters> E-mail: terrymas@swtcell.net	Day camp Wildlife/marine biology/conservation	June 3 – 28 July 8 – 12 July 28 – Aug. 3	\$675 (4-week session) \$395 (adventure campout) \$1,300 (Mexico trip)	Swimming, fishing, wildlife education, conservation, creative thinking and problem-solving.	Campers work with wildlife biologists as they tag turtles. Summer sessions include a trip to Mexico and an adventure campout.



CAMP	SPECIALTY	SESSIONS	PRICE	ACTIVITIES	BEST REASON TO GO
MILAM COUNTY 4-H ECOLOGY DAY CAMP 100 E. 1st St. Cameron, TX 76520 (254) 697-7045 <www.milam-tx@tam.u.edu> E-mail: milam-tx@tam.u.edu	Day camp Wildlife/marine biology/conservation	July 1	Free	Wildlife education (study of ecology, soils, water, wildlife, plants)	Campers work with leaders to learn about ecology and how to enjoy and protect natural resources.
PARRIE HAYNES YOUTH RANCH Rt. 3, Box 209 Killeen, TX 76549 (254) 634-9761 E-mail: Karl@centraltx.net	Resident camp	Jun. 10 - Aug. 4	\$135 (1 week)	Hunter education, boater education, shooting sports, paddling, swimming, personal watercraft, fishing, ropes course	Campers learn outdoor ethics and skills in a nurturing environment for a modest fee. Scholarships are also available.
ROCKY RIVER RANCH P.O. Box 109 Wimberley, TX 78676 (800) 863-2267 <www.rrrcamp.com> E-mail: rrrcamp@aol.com	Resident camp	June 2 - Aug. 3	\$495 (1 week) \$925 (2 weeks) \$1,420 (3 weeks)	Paddling, shooting, swimming, fishing, athletics, nature study, rappelling, drama, waterskiing	From riflery and rappelling to synchronized swimming and horseback riding, girls ages 7-15 have an all-around sports experience.
SEA CAMP Texas A&M University at Galveston P.O. Box 1675 Galveston, TX 77553 (409) 740-4525 <www.tamug.tamu.edu/seacamp> E-mail: seacamp@tamug.tamu.edu	Resident camp Marine biology	Week-long sessions June 2 - Aug. 3	\$695 - \$750 (Texas-based) \$1,800 (international)	Coastal fishing, marine biology education, coastal photography, coastal camping, biology of Belize, coral reef ecology	Campers have access to research vessels, oceanographic equipment and laboratory facilities as they explore the marine and estuarine environments.
SEA WORLD ADVENTURE CAMPS 10500 Sea World Dr. San Antonio, TX 78251 (210) 523-3611 <www.seaworld.org>	Resident and day camp Wildlife/marine biology/conservation	Various dates in March, April, June, July, August and October	\$500 - \$1,350, depending on program	Wildlife education (endangered species and conservation), marine biology education	Activities may include water rides, dolphin encounters or a field trip to see a bat colony or Gulf Coast wetlands.
SKI 'N SCATS P.O. Box 577 Eustace, TX 75124 (903) 425-7115 <www.skiscats.com> E-mail: snsmud@aol.com	Resident camp	Monday - Saturday sessions beginning June 3	\$625	Paddling, archery, swimming, water-skiing, sailing, blob, teambuilding, ropes course	During a week of one-on-one waterskiing instruction, campers may even get to ski barefoot or slalom.
SKY RANCH 24657 County Road 448 Van, TX 75790 (800) 962-2267 <www.skyranch.org> E-mail: info@skyranch.org	Resident camp	Sunday - Saturday sessions beginning May 26 Special session Aug. 11 - 14	\$625 \$325 (special session)	Paddling, shooting, swimming, horseback, jet skis, waterslides, blob, sailing, climbing, ziplines	You never know what kind of outdoor adventures to expect, where fun is a catalyst for forming friendships and character building.
SPORTS COUNTRY CAMP P.O. Box 414 Dripping Springs, TX 78620 (888) 511-8400	Resident and day camp	Sunday - Friday sessions through June and July	\$625 (resident) \$195 (day)	Swimming, fishing, athletics, earth skills (archaeology, Native American studies, paleontology, birds, animals)	Perfect for campers with an unquenchable thirst for sports. Quality coaches and small groups make this camp a great choice for an action-packed week.
SWT AQUATIC STUDIES CAMP Southwest Texas State University Room 248, Freeman Bldg. San Marcos, TX 78666 (512) 245-2329 <www.eardc.swt.edu> E-mail: lg16@swt.edu	Resident camp Wildlife/marine biology/conservation	June 2 - July 29 (week-long resident) July 29 - Aug. 2 (2-day nonresident)	\$525 (week-long) \$100 (2-day nonresident)	Tubing/kayaking, swimming, fishing, freshwater biology, scuba/snorkeling	A trip to Sea World tops off a week of studying aquatic biology and water chemistry along the crystal-clear San Marcos River.



CAMP	SPECIALTY	SESSIONS	PRICE	ACTIVITIES	BEST REASON TO GO
TEXAS CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CAMP P.O. Box 1400 Sinton, TX 78387 (361) 364-2643 <www.tctws.org> E-mail: welderwf@aol.com and/or mmiisstfyy@aol.com	Resident Wildlife/marine biology/conservation	June 23 – 29	\$200	Shooting, swimming, fishing, wildlife education (trapping, mist-netting, radio-telemetry, vegetation sampling)	Campers work with wildlife professionals to learn about conservation ethics, species diversity and game management.
TEXAS STATE AQUARIUM SEA CAMP 2710 North Shoreline Corpus Christi, TX 78402 (800) 477-GULF or (361) 881-2333 <www.texasstateaquarium.org> E-mail: sealab@txstateaq.org	Day camp Wildlife/marine biology/conservation	June 3 – Aug. 2 week-long	\$90 – \$130 (members) \$110 – \$150 (nonmembers)	Canoeing, fishing, athletics (games from Project WILD and Project Aquatic WILD), wetlands study.	With access to research vessels, oceanic equipment and a professional staff, campers explore the wonders of the deep blue sea.
TIME WALKERS RANCH 2781 U.S. Hwy. 181 Hobson, TX 75117 (830) 780-2410 <www.timewalkersranch.com> E-mail: timewalkersranch@excite.com	Resident Outdoor adventure	Varying dates in June and July	Settlers Camp: \$550 (1 week) Traildrivers Camp: \$1,400 (2 weeks)	Shooting, roping, wagon-driving, horseback riding, fishing, wildlife education, survival classes.	Campers live in the culture of the Old West, experiencing life as a pioneer on a wagon train or as a drover in 1878 on a cattle drive.
VISTA CAMPS –Rio Vista for boys, Sierra Vista for girls HCR 78 Box 215 Ingram, TX 78325 800-545-3233 <www.vistacamps.com> E-mail: riovista@kfc.com	Resident camp	2- and 4-week sessions beginning June 10	\$2,400 (4 weeks) \$1,400 (2 weeks)	Paddling, shooting, swimming, fishing, softball, basketball, golf, tennis, football, martial arts, wildlife education	The true spirit of the camp is brought out through exciting head-to-head competitions, where campers square off as members of two Indian tribes.
WALDEMAR HC1, Box 120 Hunt, TX 78024 (830) 238-4821 <www.waldemar.com> E-mail: campwaldemar@hotmail.com	Resident camp	2002 session dates: May 29 – Aug. 11	\$815 (1 week) \$3,030 (4 weeks)	Paddling, shooting, gymnastics, swimming, riding, tennis, golf, badminton, self-defense, soccer, field hockey, fencing, volleyball	Boasting many third-generation attendees, this camp along the Guadalupe River has offered a supportive environment for young women for more than 76 years.
WET & WILD ADVENTURE CAMP 6551 Fair Valley Trail Austin, TX 78749 (512) 892-2224 <www.wetandwild.ws> E-mail: lucygrant@hotmail.com	Day camp	May 27 – Aug. 2	\$200/week	Paddling, swimming, athletics, tubing, sailing, biking, rollerblading, bowling.	Plunge into summer! Campers spend all day swimming and exploring at cool spots like Krause Springs and Pedernales Falls State Park.
YMCA CAMP CULLEN 460 Cullen Loop, Suite A Trinity, TX 75862 (936) 594-2274 <www.campymca.org> E-mail: campcullen@campymca.org	Resident camp	June 9 – Aug. 2	\$438/week	Paddling, shooting, swimming, fishing, athletics, ropes course, nature studies, sailing, horseback riding	Nestled amid the towering pines of East Texas, Camp Cullen focuses on horsemanship, water sports and leadership development.
YMCA CAMP FLAMING ARROW & YMCA ROBERT'S RANCH P.O. Box 770 Hunt, TX 78024 (830) 238-4621 <www.campflamingarrow.org> E-mail: cfa@ymcasatx.org	Resident Wildlife/marine biology/conservation	Six 1- to 2-week sessions from June 9 through Aug. 10	\$455 (1 week) \$850 (2 weeks)	Paddling, archery, swimming, fishing, athletics, wildlife education, rock climbing, ropes course	The Guadalupe River and Hill Country scenery provide a backdrop to nature discovery, ropes courses, athletics and rock climbing.



"LEARN ABOUT..." Series from TPW Press

HELPING YOUNG NATURALISTS FROM 8 TO 14 LEARN ABOUT...THE TEXAS OUTDOORS!

The "Learn About..." books from Texas Parks & Wildlife Press have something to offer children of various ages. For young children, the books have learning and coloring activities. For somewhat older children, there are word puzzles and basic information. Plus — the scientific information in the books about birds, insects, and freshwater fishes is detailed and comprehensive enough to satisfy budding naturalists!

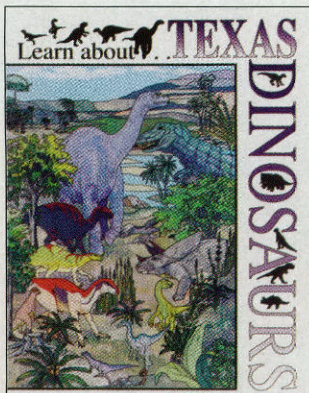
NEW! Learn About...Texas Freshwater Fishes

By Georg Zappler • Illustrated by Elena T. Ivy
Just published in Fall 2001!

Learn About...Texas Freshwater Fishes combines detailed drawings suitable for coloring with information on color, size, habitat and range for 102 species of fish, including popular game fish such as bass and catfish. The book also presents information on characteristics of fish, taxonomy, internal and external structures, and how fish sense their environment, swim and reproduce.

The individual species are grouped by family, and endangered and threatened species are identified. Puzzles, activities and a 16" x 21" coloring poster will provide hours of fun for children as they learn. Suggested for children ages 10 to 14.

96 pages, soft cover, profusely illustrated with black-and-white line drawings, 8 1/8" x 10 7/8"
Paperback, \$9.95



New! Learn About... Texas Dinosaurs

Revised in Fall 2001!

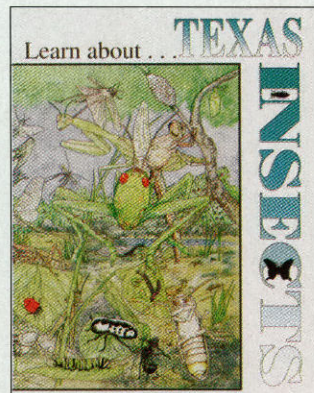
By Georg Zappler

Illustrated by Elena T. Ivy

Children can learn about the 21 kinds of dinosaurs that once roamed Texas. Line drawings, fun-filled games and a coloring poster build youngsters' dinosaur know-how.

Suggested for ages 8 to 10.

48 pages, soft cover, profusely illustrated with black-and-white line drawings, 8 1/8" x 10 7/8"
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ISBN 1-885696-37-X



Learn About... Texas Insects

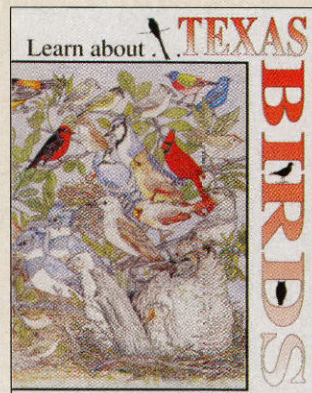
Compiled by Chris Durden

Illustrated by Elena T. Ivy

Welcome to the marvelous world of "bugs!" Youngsters can color detailed line drawings of both common and unusual insects. Easy-to-read text details insects' role in nature. Includes a coloring poster.

Suggested for ages 10 to 14.

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Learn About... Texas Birds

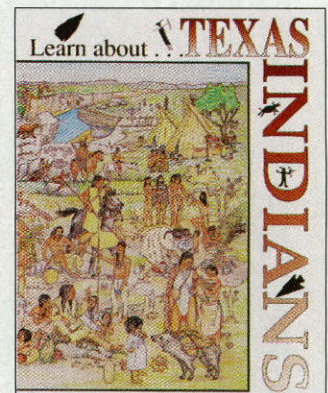
By Mark W. Lockwood

Illustrated by Elena T. Ivy

Youngsters can color detailed, realistic line drawings of various birds in typical habitats, and learn from the easy-to-read text. Instructive games are included along with a 16" x 21" coloring poster.

Suggested for ages 10 to 14.

48 pages, soft cover, profusely illustrated with black-and-white line drawings, 8 1/2" x 11"
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Learn About... Texas Indians

By Georg Zappler

Illustrated by Elena T. Ivy

Eye-catching line drawings invite children to color scenes from the diverse lives of Texas' Native Americans. Entertaining games and a 16" x 21" coloring poster add to youngsters' knowledge of Lone Star Indians.


Suggested for ages 8 to 10.

40 pages, soft cover, profusely illustrated with black-and-white line drawings, 8 1/2" x 11"
Paperback, \$7.95
ISBN 1-885696-02-7

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Order online anytime at www.utexas.edu/utpress or call toll-free (800) 252-3206 (M-F 8 to 4:30)



Take me fishing.
Because my wedding will
be sooner than you think.

Take me fishing.
And show me that worms
really aren't that icky.

Take me fishing.
You can think about
work later.

Take me fishing.
Because I get the giggles
when the boat bounces.

Take me fishing.
Because my wedding will
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Water works wonders

FOR FISHING, BOATING, AND
THE ENVIRONMENT



By Reginald Owens / Photos by Earl Nottingham

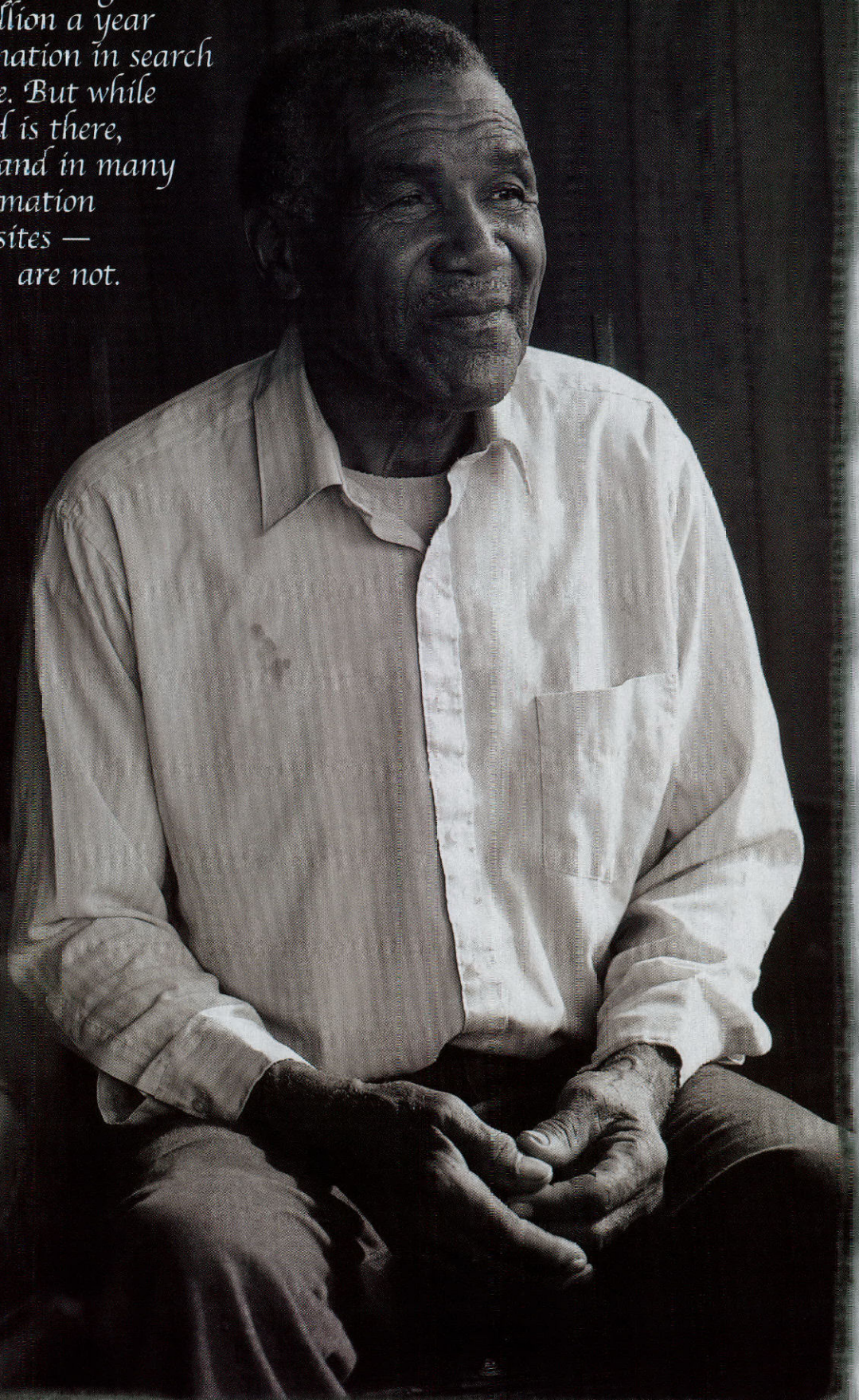
The Forgo



Written Story

*Uncovering the slave past
at Washington-on-the-Brazos.*

Millions of African Americans are spending about \$50 billion a year touring the nation in search of their heritage. But while the demand is there, the sites — and in many cases, the information to create the sites — are not.



Armstead Scales has had a good view

of Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Site ever since he was a little boy. Scales sat on a soft drink cooler looking out the window of his service station at the intersection of State Highway 105 and Farm Road 1155, the main road to the park.

"It was a big thing to go out into the park and get on the swings and slides," Scales remembers of his childhood during the 1930s, when the park was little more than a playground. A stranger can tell he is a working man and, at 73 years old, his 5-foot, 11-inch frame still looks physically strong.

He enjoys talking about local history and the park of his youth. "That was it, then," he says. "They didn't have anything like they have out there now." He laughs. "I have seen it grow a whole lot."

The simple park he knew as a child is now a 293-acre complex with much to offer visitors — from a museum with interactive displays on the history of Texas and shaded picnic areas to an authentic 1850s living history farm with real livestock.

Scales has watched the park and the community of Washington change through the years, and he has been a part of some of the changes. "When they put that museum out there in the 1960s, I helped build it," he says proudly. In addition to owning the service station, Scales did construction work, farmed and raised cattle to support his wife and five children.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Scales and other Washington residents of African American descent have seen the park undergo a drastic physical transformation. But the biggest change of late is not a physical one. It is a change in perspective. Texas Parks and Wildlife has joined with graduate students from the University of Texas at Austin to research local African American history in Washington and in communities adjacent to two other parks. The aim is to create historical displays and scripts so park interpreters can tell stories about African Americans.

"We need to tell the whole story," says Washington-on-the-Brazos complex manager Tom Scaggs. Scaggs and other TPW officials readily admit that the contributions of African Americans and others have not been talked about enough in park interpretations.

This move by TPW to focus on black history at heritage sites is part of a national trend that became evident following the 1976 publication of Alex Haley's best-selling book *Roots*, which chronicled one man's search for his African American family history that took him to Africa.

The trend is also fueled by a boom in African American heritage tourism. Millions of African Americans are spending about \$50 billion a year touring the nation in search of their heritage. In response, national, state and local government agencies, many in Texas, are publishing African American tourism guides, pointing eager tourists to churches, heritage sites, museums, historical markers and other locations touting the history and contributions of African Americans.

But while the demand for African American historical and

cultural sites is there, the sites — and in many cases, the information to create the sites — are not, Scaggs says. That has been the case at Washington-on-the-Brazos. Much of the historical information about African Americans is buried in records left by whites who may or may not mention an African American family or individual. Add to that, much African American history has not been recorded. A lot is lost in stories passed down by family members through oral history — and too often the next generation never hears them. It is a history largely not tapped. "We just don't have the people to go out and do the research," Scaggs says. "Part of the ability to tell a complete story always goes back to research."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

That is where professor Martha Norkunas and her team of graduate students from the University of Texas come in. In the past two years, through graduate seminar classes and student internships, Norkunas' students have done extensive research in communities near three sites, including Washington-on-the-Brazos.

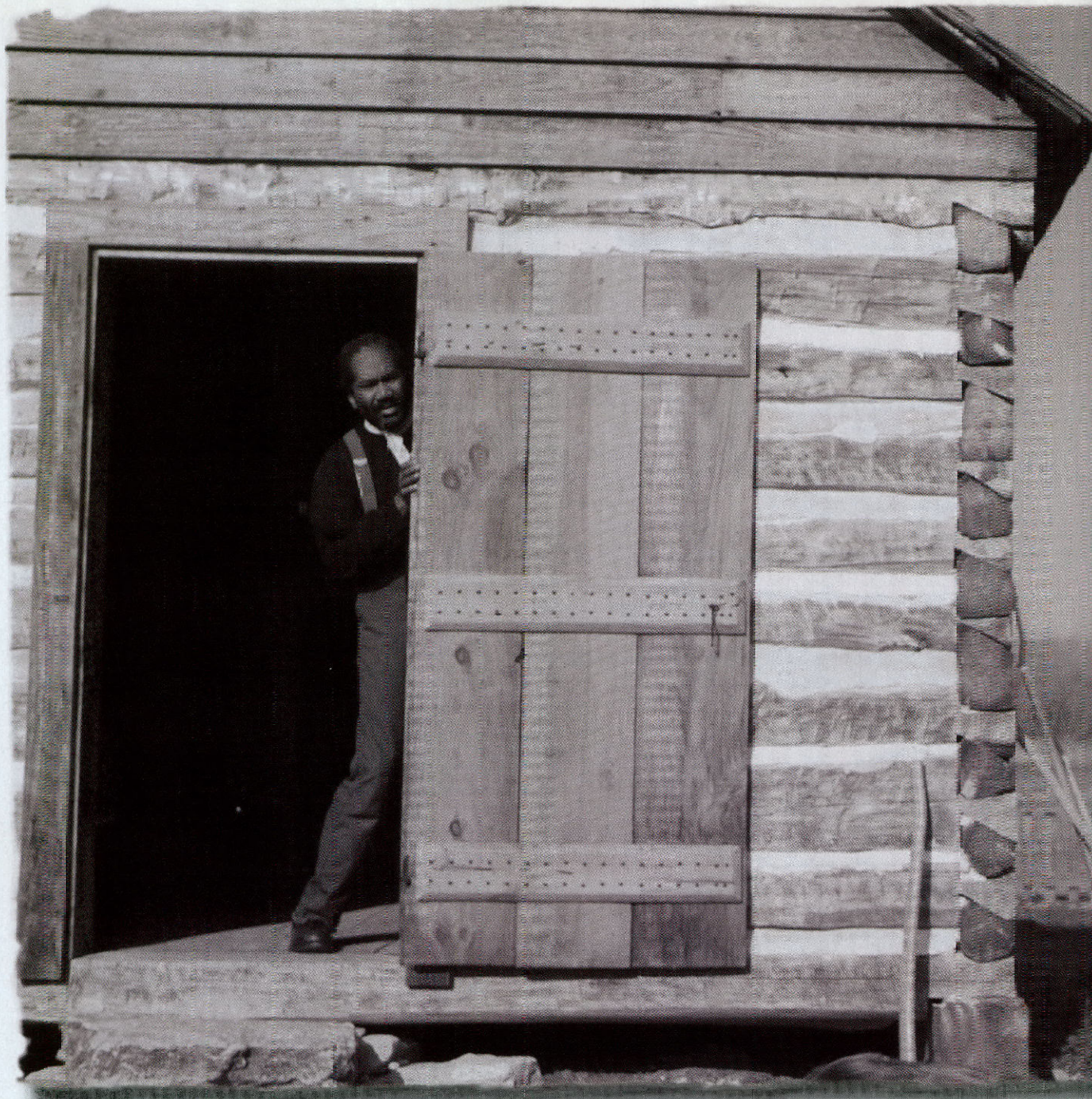
"We are going into the communities doing real-life projects," says Norkunas, who is white and has developed a passion for telling the stories of women and other groups left out of traditional approaches to history. Her students have developed new scripts for park interpreters at Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historical Site in Brazoria County and at Washington-on-the-Brazos. They also have created a Web site on Varner-Hogg that publishes information on slaves who worked there. One story chronicles the role of a female slave, the mistress of the man of the house, who essentially ran the plantation, much to the consternation of whites in the community.

To uncover this forgotten past, Norkunas' students conduct oral history interviews of local African American residents, scour musty courthouse records for legal documents, search old newspaper articles and books, and research private papers and diaries at university and state archives throughout Texas. The work is tedious and time-consuming, but rewarding to students like Cary Cordova, who researched and compiled the information for the Varner-Hogg Web site. For Cordova, the most gratifying experience was a call from a woman who used the site to connect with members of her family. Jeannett Livingston of Bremerton, Wash., said she cried when she discovered information about her great-grandfather on the Varner-Hogg Web site. She had been doing genealogical research for three years. "I never met my mother's people," she says. "All I knew was his name, Daniel Garrett."

Garrett was one of the slaves listed on the Web site. As a result, Livingston has visited family members in Houston and Dallas, spoken to a 101-year-old aunt, who gave her more information, and has attended a family reunion. "As a result of Cary's research, I found relatives I never knew I had," says Livingston.

At Barrington Living History Farm in Washington, the

A descendant of former slaves, Armstead Scales grew up near Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Site.



focus of student research is the lives of people who lived at the plantation of Anson Jones, the last president of the Republic of Texas. The Jones home was moved to Barrington Living History Farm as the centerpiece of an authentic working farm of the 1850s antebellum period. Interpreters dressed in period clothes and using traditional farming techniques recreate a 19th-century farm, complete with crops and livestock.

"One of the things I wanted to get across was that the enslaved had a family and home life like whites did," says graduate student Jessie Swigger, who just completed research on the women who lived at the farm. It was the sale of a slave named Lucy that opened her eyes "to the fragileness of the slave family structure" and how it could be broken up without regard to the family unit. Through another business record from Barrington, Swigger was able to track the move-

ment of a slave named Green who was essentially "rented" out to a neighboring plantation for months at a time. "That showed me how fragile life was, because at any moment your husband or wife could be sent away for an indeterminate amount of time or maybe even forever.

"Sometimes at museum sites, we look at the enslaved as a group instead of as individuals with stories about their lives," Swigger continues. "Even though I didn't find all their stories, the farm has a lot of information" that can be used to weave the stories of individual slaves into interpretations, she says.

"There are these family stories we need to get to, and since I couldn't get to them through the records, we are going to have to get to them through oral history," Swigger says. Many descendants of slaves who worked at Barrington and other area plantations still live in Washington and surrounding

“One of the things I wanted to get across was that the enslaved had a family and home life like the whites did ... at any moment your husband or wife could be sent away....”



counties. These descendants, Swigger suggests, are the ones who need to dig into their oral history for their past.

Last fall, Norkunas and her students conducted an oral history project with five Washington County youngsters, who went into their communities armed with digital video cameras to record history told to them by elders.

“If you don’t know your history, then you don’t know anything about yourself, really,” says Limas Sweed Jr., a lanky, 6-foot, 5-inch high school junior who is usually more at home on the basketball court than behind the microphone. “It makes you feel better as a person to know what your parents [and ancestors] did and all that they went through. They went through slavery and stuff. Right now I am thankful I don’t have to go through all that — picking cotton and stuff.”

Last fall he interviewed his cousin, Mrs. Martha Sweed



Talking Back Living History Theater, an African American group from Houston, brought history to life at Barrington Living History Farm’s grand opening in March 2000. Additional performances depicting African American life within the living history farm are planned for the future. Call the park for dates and times.

Walker, 92, the titular head of the Sweed family. He and his elderly cousin have often talked about local and family history. "I am real close to her," he says. "In her time, there was racism."

This first assignment for this young video crew was to interview relatives at the annual Sweed Family Reunion last October. Some of the activities of the reunion were held at the Blessed Virgin Catholic Church, the 150-year-old church that many of their relatives have attended since slavery. The video recordings will be compiled and edited to produce a special program for use at the park.

University of Texas graduate students Tony Cherian and Mark Westmoreland, who co-authored the proposal for the documentary project, want the teenagers to talk to each other about their history so they can get involved in how it should be told. "We want to show that these are real people," says Westmoreland. "They have names. They have history."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The rich farmland that straddles the Brazos River running through the Washington, Grimes, Madison and Waller county region, made agriculture — especially cotton farming — the basis of a local economy that depended on slave labor, and lots of it. Thousands of slaves were brought to this area by white settlers when they imported the plantation economy from the Deep South in the 1830s. Given this, there has always been a strong African American presence in the area, says Howard Jones, professor of history at nearby Prairie View A&M University.

"With an overwhelming African American population in the antebellum era, African Americans could not help but to have shaped the culture of the region," says Jones, whose specialty is Reconstruction. "So there is a lot of black history to be found there. Blacks contributed greatly to making this area rich in Texas tradition and history."

After the Civil War, many of the former slaves settled in the

Washington-area students Regina Shelton and Brittane Sweed, who are gathering local history, pause a moment to reflect at Barrington.

area. During Reconstruction, many descendants of former slaves, like Scales' grandfather, bought land, where they raised cotton and other crops to survive.

In the 1870 and 1880 censuses, blacks made up more than 50 percent of the population, says Jones. "During Reconstruction, blacks essentially ran those counties," he says. From 1870 to 1881, three blacks were elected from that region to the state legislature.

The children of those original slaves still live in the area, where they now make up between 20 and 30 percent of the population. Another goal of these projects is to build a stronger relationship with these residents, says Scaggs. "One of my big hopes is that the program will spark a new interest in the park on the part of the community," he says. "We want to get folks interested in their own history and heritage right here in their back yard."

Scaggs realizes that talk of slavery makes some people uncomfortable. "When you talk about the topic, some will want to listen and some will not," he says. "But we are not letting that slow us down."

As for the topic of slavery at the park, Armstead Scales says that doesn't bother him at all.

"It's sort of sad, I would say," he says as he peers through the window of his service station, where he no longer sells gas but keeps busy fixing flats and doing oil changes.

He pauses for a moment, then adds, "The young people know about it, but they just don't understand. Things are mostly good now. They think things have always been like this. So if the park people are letting the younger people know what went on, then I don't find any fault in it. That's what it was then." ★



GETTING THERE

WASHINGTON-ON-THE-BRAZOS State Historical Park/Barrington Living History Farm is off State Highway 105 between Brenham and Navasota. From Brenham, take State Highway 105 east 14 miles and turn right on Farm Road 912 to the park. The park is open daily; Barrington Living History Farm is closed Monday and Tuesday.

Established as a state park in 1916, the complex now includes the Barrington Living

History Farm, a reconstructed Independence Hall, the Star of the Republic Museum, a Visitor Services Complex with conference facilities, two picnic pavilions that can be reserved for groups, a gift shop and shaded picnic areas.

For more information call the park at (936) 878-2214 or go to www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/washingt.

FURTHER RESOURCES

FOR MORE INFORMATION on state parks and other resources on slavery, consult the following Web sites:

Texas state parks and historical sites: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park

Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historical Site: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/varner

Varner-Hogg Plantation Slavery Project: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/varner/slavery/index.htm

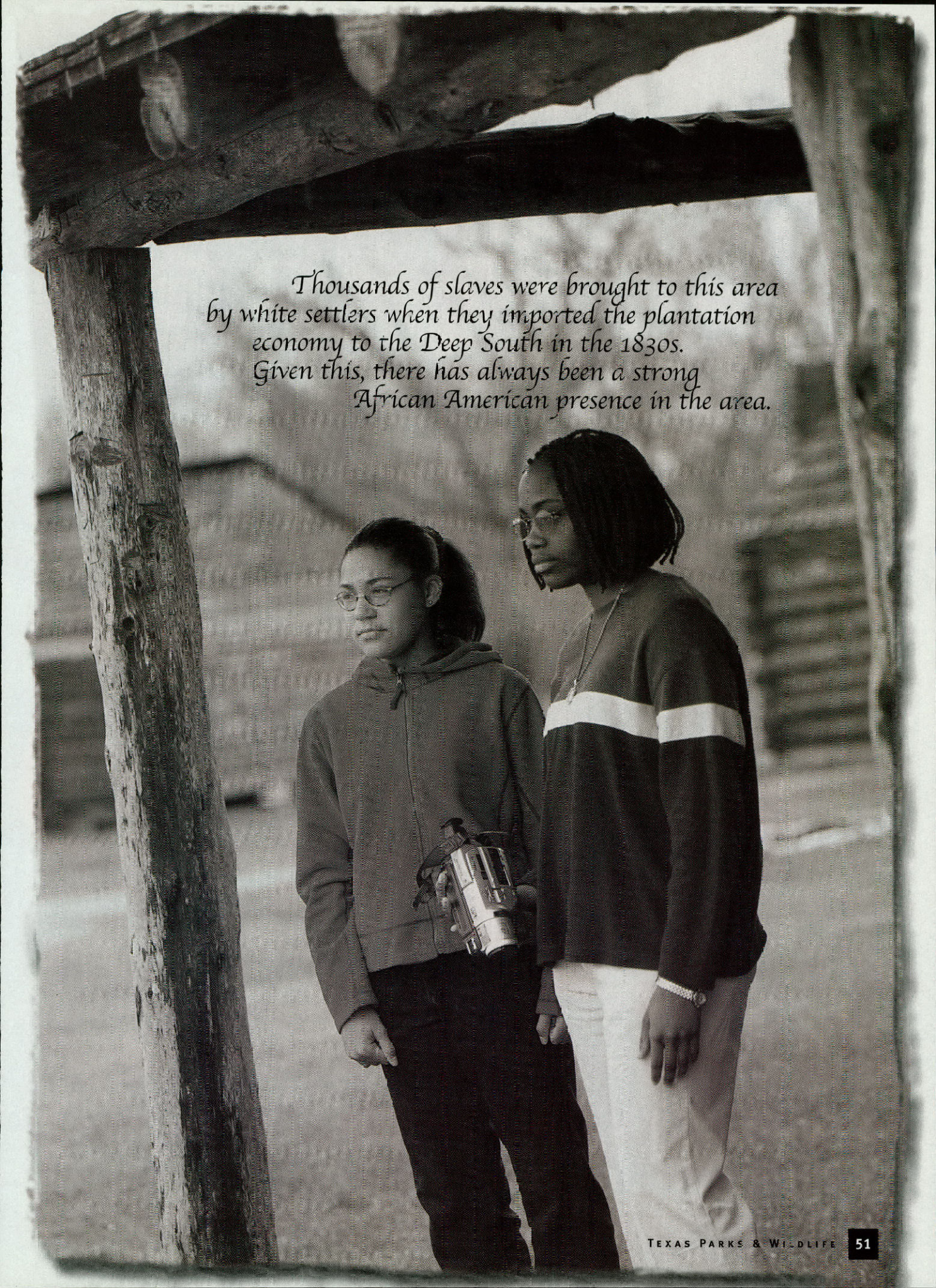
Washington-on-the-Brazos State

Historical Park: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/washingt

The David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the African Diaspora: The center maintains a site with compilation of annotated links to a number of academic and other slavery resources. www.mith.umd.edu/driskell/index.htm

River Road African American Museum: Located on the grounds of a former plantation, this museum pays tribute to the thousands of Africans enslaved on the plantations of Louisiana. Visitors to the museum can research African American ancestry in the extensive records housed here. www.eatel.net/~aamuseum

Texas Slavery Project: This site provides a multitude of resources on the subject of slavery. The Texas Slavery Project is multi-disciplinary and includes resources from several institutions. www.texaslaveryproject.uh.edu



Thousands of slaves were brought to this area by white settlers when they imported the plantation economy to the Deep South in the 1830s. Given this, there has always been a strong African American presence in the area.

The future looks rosy for shrimp farms in Texas, which claim more than \$18 million of the booming shrimp market and are credited with improving environmental standards. How they got there from an embattled start is a success story worth telling.

THE SHRIMP WARS

BY MARSHA WILSON / PHOTOS BY EARL NOTTINGHAM



FOR SUCH A SMALL CREATURE, THE SHRIMP HAS BEEN AT THE CENTER OF A HEAP OF TROUBLE IN TEXAS. CONTROVERSIES OVER SHRIMP FARMING HAVE SET NEIGHBOR AGAINST NEIGHBOR, CAUSED TENSION AMONG STATE AGENCIES AND OCCUPIED THE ATTENTION OF SEVERAL SESSIONS OF THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE. YET OUT OF THE TURMOIL HAVE COME IMPROVED PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT REGULATORS THAT MAY SERVE AS A MODEL FOR RESOLVING CONFLICTS IN OTHER AREAS.

SMALL CREATURES, BIG PROBLEMS

Shrimp became a problem because people like to eat them — lots of them. Demand for table shrimp far outstrips the amount the world's oceans are able to supply.

In 2000 the United States imported more than 760 million pounds of shrimp, much of it farm-raised in Central and South America. Some 30 percent of the shrimp served in U.S. restaurants is raised on farms, according to George Chamberlain, president of Global Aquaculture Alliance, a nonprofit trade association dedicated to advancing responsible aquaculture. And Texas, with nine commercial shrimp farms on the coast and four in West Texas, ranks number one in the United States in shrimp farm production, annually producing about 5.6 million pounds of shrimp worth some \$15 million to \$17 million.

Shrimp farms in Texas began on a limited scale in the 1970s. South Texas was an attractive place for such ventures because it had ample cheap, level, low-lying land close to seawater. But the spark that ignited a shrimp-farm building boom was a 1986 ruling by the then-Texas Water Commission that shrimp farms did not have to apply for a wastewater discharge permit because they were not expected to create water quality problems.

That ruling was dead wrong, considering what scientists now know about the environmental impact of shrimp farms — at least the way they were managed in the 1980s. "The type of shrimp farming they did was kind of a high-intensity feedlot," says Larry McKinney, senior director of aquatic resources for Texas Parks and Wildlife.

"Their whole approach was to stuff as many shrimp as possible onto the farms and run the facility as long as the habitat and water would hold out. After nine years or so the ponds would be so toxic as to be unusable. They were interested in coming to Texas and they did not want to be subject to wastewater quality requirements."

The first large-scale shrimp farms began operation in South

Texas on the Arroyo Colorado in 1989 and 1990, dumping waste into area waterways at a daily rate nearly three times that of local agriculture and 10 times that of permitted point-source discharges. TPW and the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC) began to receive complaints from the public about massive pollution, odors and silt that clogged boat docks. Concern also grew about the possibility of negative impacts on native wildlife and fish habitat. The

shrimp farms were discharging their wastes into the Arroyo Colorado, which empties into the Laguna Madre, an environmentally sensitive estuary that serves as a nursery for a significant portion of Texas' native shrimp and fish.

In 1991 the Texas Water Commission reversed itself and requested that the two shrimp farms in operation along the Arroyo Colorado apply for wastewater discharge permits. Before that happened, one of the farms released huge quantities of exotic shrimp, sparking fears of possible damage to the native shrimp fishery.

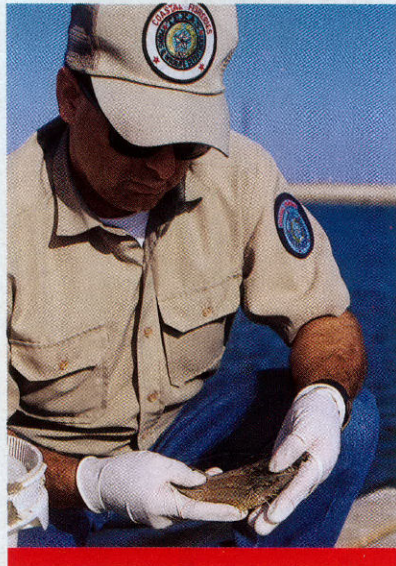
Other state agencies joined the battle to push for stricter regulation of the shrimp farms. But the industry resisted, saying it would put them out of business. A division of responsibility among a number of agencies hampered regulatory efforts, since some agencies were more interested in economic development than in environmental protection. Nevertheless, TPW and TNRCC were successful in imposing wastewater discharge standards.

In 1995 the issue reached the Texas Legislature, where the shrimp farmers tried to get themselves exempted from regulation. Opposing them were representatives of the shrimping industry and

environmentalists, who wanted to shut them down completely.

"We were in the middle, trying to broker a deal," recalls Mike Ray, deputy director of coastal fisheries. "The legislature wanted the shrimp farms to exist, but it wanted them to behave. It got pretty ugly." In the end, the proposed legislation failed. The sides seemed to have fought to a bloody draw.

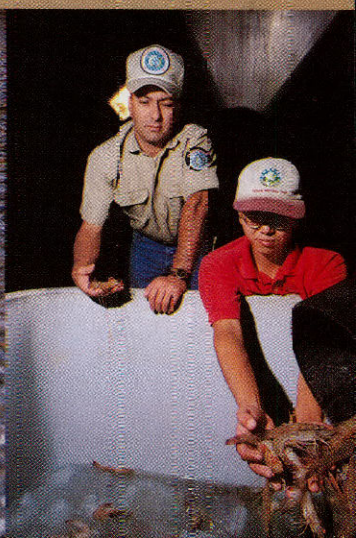
Then came Taura.



IN 1995 THE ISSUE REACHED THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE, WHERE THE SHRIMP FARMERS TRIED TO GET THEMSELVES EXEMPTED FROM REGULATION. THEN CAME TAURA.



Workers harvest shrimp by slowly draining the sloped ponds. Shrimp are then put into chilled water for transportation.





Bags filter incoming water to Loma Alta Aquaculture. Much of the water is recirculated and purified through wetlands.

Shrimp farms in Texas are permitted to culture only one type of shrimp, *Litopenaeus vannamei*, commonly known as Pacific white shrimp. These shrimp grow rapidly to a larger size than native shrimp and are thus more profitable, making them highly desirable as a crop.

Pacific white shrimp are also vulnerable to a variety of viral diseases such as white spot and Taura syndrome. In 1995 Taura struck, destroying a \$40 million crop. Suddenly shrimp farmers found themselves in danger of going out of business. For help they turned to their former adversaries: state agencies such as TPW and TNRCC.

"The shrimp farmers brought the outbreak to our attention and quarantined themselves," says Mike Ray. The farms stopped discharging wastes and brought in experts to study the problem. "They stepped up to the plate and played in a very constructive way," Ray recalls. "They didn't want to ruin our natural resources, because they knew it could lead to the end of shrimp farming in Texas. So they helped us tremendously to get up to speed on how to solve the problems. A wonderful working relationship came out of what could have been a catastrophic issue."

Fearing spread of exotic diseases to native shrimp, TPW began a three-year study of shrimp and blue crabs in every bay system on the Texas coast. To everyone's relief, no evidence was ever found of contamination of wild stocks. "Actually, the danger seems to be more with shrimp farms pumping disease from the wild onto their property," says Ray.

FROM MEAN TO GREEN

Taura struck again in 1996 and 1997. Meanwhile, TPW and the shrimp farming industry continued to cooperate in developing, testing and modifying regulations that would both protect the environment and allow the farms to make a profit.

"We went through an 18-month process during which we put rules in places, tried them, found out what worked, and changed the parts that didn't," says TPW's McKinney. "Communication was a big deal. We got over the combat and reached a pretty good accommodation. They changed their whole method of operating. We learned a lot and now we are at a point where shrimp farms are using less water than ever before, are not polluting, are not having serious disease outbreaks and are making money."

"Efforts to regulate the industry led to them working with researchers to solve the problems," says Mike Ray. "What people first said was impossible happened in two years. Water use went down, and water quality went up."

A visit to the Lone Star Hatchery in Port Isabel furnishes an example of the care taken to prevent disease or other environmental damage. Tucked away on a back road bordering a wetlands area on the Lower Laguna Madre, the unobtrusive facility ironically faces a shrimp fleet often idled by seasonal shrimping restrictions.

Hatchery manager Samir Kuri has managed shrimp farms in Ecuador and knows from experience the devastation disease can cause in this fragile crop. "This is a sterile environment," he says. He makes sure visitors step in a chlorine footbath every time they enter a new room. Visitors must also don surgical rubber gloves, sterile plastic and a white plastic apron.

The water used here is from the nearby Laguna Madre. However, it must be filtered repeatedly for the baby shrimp to thrive. "We filter the water five times," says Samir. "The filters include one that is .31 microns, one .035 microns and one that is filled with diatomaceous earth."

Clean water is needed for two primary purposes: growing baby shrimp and feeding them. Water-filled tanks and bottles are used for growing the brown algae that is fed to the grow-

**"WHAT PEOPLE FIRST SAID
WAS IMPOSSIBLE HAPPENED IN
TWO YEARS," SAYS MIKE RAY.
"WATER USE WENT DOWN, AND
WATER QUALITY WENT UP."**

ing shrimp larvae. Other tanks are filled with tiny brine shrimp to feed the larger shrimp.

The "growing rooms" contain seven large concrete tubs filled with tiny shrimp larvae. Each tub contains about 3.5 million baby shrimp — creatures so small they look like tiny pieces of lint as you scoop them up to view them.

Shrimp are grown to market size between March and October in outdoor ponds. The scale of some operations is staggering. The Harlingen Shrimp Farm in Los Fresnos, for example, has 420 acres of "grow-out" ponds averaging 40 acres each. Each pond is surrounded by a 6-to-10-foot clay wall and can hold 2 million to 2.5 million mature shrimp. Intake and discharge pipes are covered with fine netting to prevent the accidental release of exotic shrimp into public waters.

In the past, shrimp farms filtered millions of gallons of bay water, used it, then filtered it again before returning it to the bay. Research proved that this process was not only wasteful but actually detrimental to encouraging maximum yield. In 1992 it took 9,000 gallons of water to produce 2.2 pounds of shrimp. Today it takes only 1,000 gallons to do the same job.

Even more impressive is the fact that shrimp farms are now able to recycle the water they use, thanks to the innovations of Texas A&M's Tzachi M. Samocha and other researchers. Loma Alta Aquaculture on the Lower Laguna Madre recirculates the water it uses from the Hidalgo Drainage Ditch, which is tidally influenced by the bay. The linchpin of the operation is a wetland filled with colorful blue-winged teal, mallards, native grasses and an occasional cow that slips past the nearby fencing to graze. This wetland area absorbs the wastewater generated by the shrimp farm, purifies it and provides nutrient-rich water that recirculates into the shrimp ponds.

TPW biologists Robert Adami and Ya-Sheng Juan work closely with the shrimp farmers to protect both the expensive crop and the delicate environment. Ya-Sheng Juan is a native of Taiwan who used to work on a shrimp farm. "My relationship with the shrimp farmers has been a tremendous help," says Juan. "I know all the growers, and I know all of the signs of diseased shrimp. My biggest challenge is inspecting all the shrimp ponds in a timely manner to determine the health of the shrimp and to insure that the regulations are being followed."

"The Shrimp Farm Inspection Program was initiated in 1998 and has worked exactly as we envisioned it would," says TPW's Osburn. "The program has proven to be beneficial to the shrimp farm managers, as it provides for early disease detection, and it has provided the oversight needed to ensure the farms are operated in a manner that protects the environment and marine natural resources."

GOING NATIVE

Even though the Texas experience with shrimp farms has turned out very well, McKinney feels the greatest benefit of what has been learned may lie in the future. TPW is currently involved in a contentious attempt to protect native wild shrimp from the effects of overfishing. Shrimpers see regulations such as the use of devices to reduce the bycatch of endangered sea turtles and other fish as a threat to their livelihood. Competition from shrimp farms also rankles.

But McKinney views the problems facing shrimpers in a larger context. "Farm-raised shrimp does set the market, and that hurts the native shrimpers — they still get the same price they got 20 years ago," he says. "But the shrimping industry is overcapitalized. They have a huge investment in equipment, and they have to fish. If they don't catch the shrimp, someone else will. Shrimpers are saying the same thing the shrimp farmers said: Your rules and regulations will put us out of business. We can't operate under them.

"All we can do with the shrimpers is what we did with the shrimp farms: put the rules into place and work with them, modifying the rules when necessary as we go," he continues. "It will take some trust on both sides and some openness to make changes. The shrimpers will not be able to operate as they did in the past, because at this point they are affecting other fisheries. I believe we can reach a point where they can make a profit without negatively impacting the environment. Shrimpers are not at that point yet, but we hope to get there, and we can point to the example of the shrimp farms as how to do so." ☆

Galveston writer MARSHA WILSON last wrote "Crabbers Sing the Blues" for Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine.

THREATS TO A FRAGILE RESOURCE

Shrimpers and fishery managers struggle to save a resource in jeopardy. Aquaculture is seen as one possible solution to a larger, more serious global environmental problem: a decline in wild fish stocks. The race to supply fish and shellfish to a growing world population has led to bigger and more efficient boats. These boats use various gear and fishing methods that have attracted attention for their potential impact on the environment.

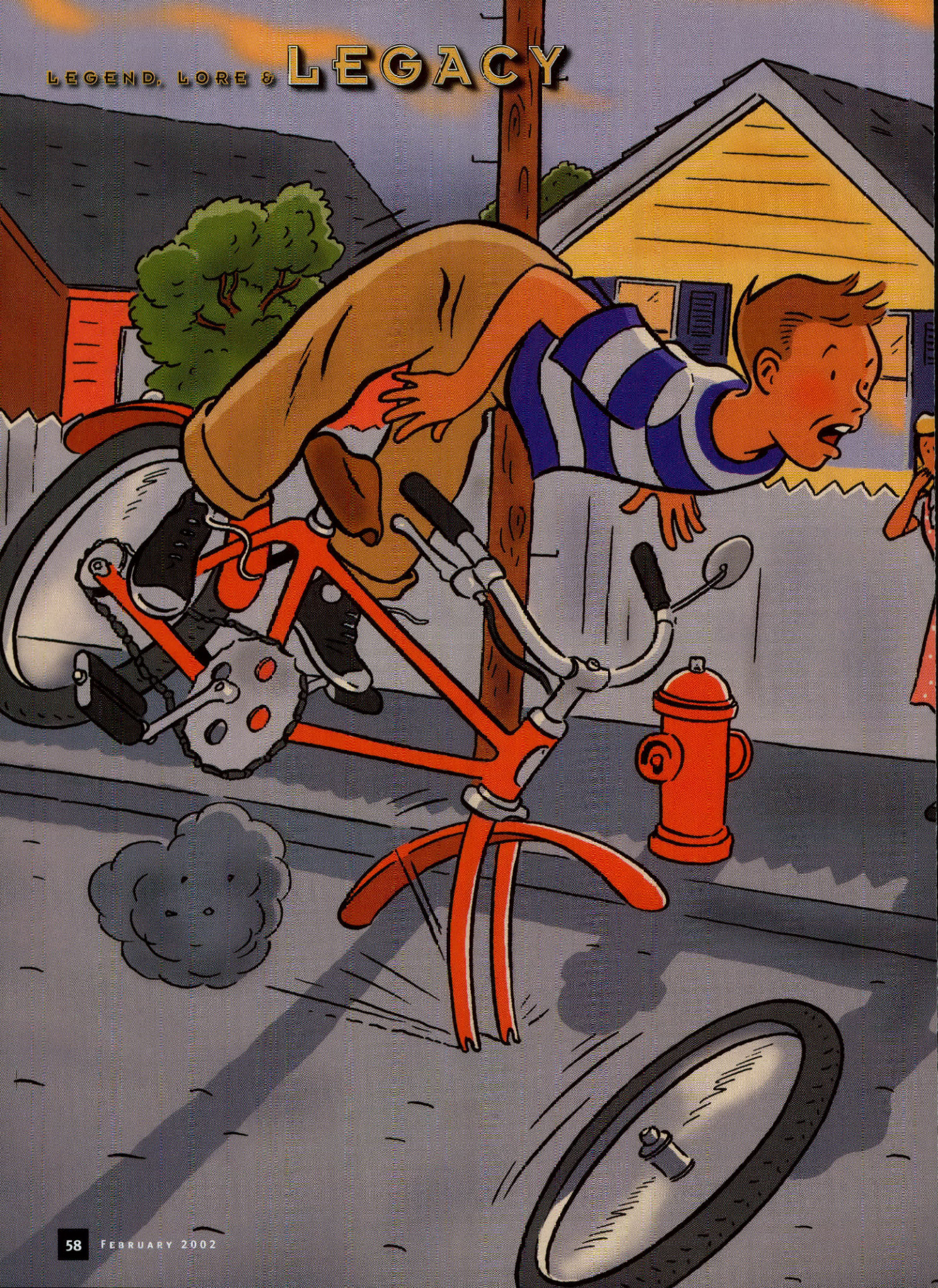
The Federal Accounting Office report "2000 State of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture" points to problems with the following methods:

- **TRAWLS.** Shrimp trawls are nonselective and can take considerable bycatch, which is often discarded. In addition, trawls sometimes scrape the sea floor, causing irreversible damage to ecosystems.
- **PURSE SEINES.** These vast nets can catch mammals and juvenile fish.
- **LONGLINES AND GILLNETS.** Longline and gillnet boats catch seabirds, and lost gillnets can continue to catch and kill fish unintentionally.

Texas Parks and Wildlife has been aggressively addressing one of the problems confronting local fisheries: the harvesting of Gulf shrimp to near maximum yields. It implemented the Texas Shrimp Fishery Management Plan in 1989, and the plan was further refined last year.

"The plan calls for reducing overall shrimping effort to reduce overfishing problems on shrimp stocks and other bycatch species," says Hal Osburn, director of coastal fisheries. "We want to provide proactive management and achieve optimum benefits from the public marine resources in Texas."

LEGEND, LORE & **LEGACY**



The

ARANSAS BIKE

During one boyhood summer in Aransas Pass, trouble started the way it so often does: in a seemingly innocent manner.

By Leslie Kelly / Illustration By A.J. Garces

THE DRILL WAS THE SAME EACH YEAR. The day school was out for the summer would find me ready to go stay with my grandparents in Aransas Pass. I would have counted the days for weeks as school wound down with the blazing speed of a glacier. On the day I was finally paroled for the summer, we headed straight for the bus station. I'd be clutching my ticket in my sweating hand, palpably excited as I headed for the promised land. Even if the Aransas Pass of the 1950s wasn't actually the promised land, it was close enough for me. My grandma considered me an angel, so I could pretty well get away with murder. The ground rules were simple. Make it to dinner on time with no actively bleeding wounds and no police calls and you were pretty much good to go.

It was actually pretty easy staying out of trouble because Grandma always believed me and, since her grandson was perfect, I usually got off scot-free. Things at Grandma's were as close to perfect as we'll ever see. Their huge, old two-story house was on a lot that took up half a city block. On one end was a horse lot with my mom's and aunt's horses, and on the other was their beautifully landscaped yard. Four blocks toward town was Hovey's tackle shop, and three blocks past that was Cenn Brown Harbor, an Aransas Pass kid's equivalent of Disneyland. Four or five blocks the other way was Marnot and Mac's baitstand. My grandfather's boat was in a boat barn there, and it was one of our favorite places to spend the day.

Bicycles were an absolute necessity. There wasn't a lot of concrete or pavement in Aransas. Sidewalks were mostly

sand, and roads were mainly oyster shell. It was not exactly the ideal terrain for our bare feet. There were also grass burrs we called goat's heads. They would leap from their hiding places, wrestle you to the sand and stab you repeatedly with huge spines — spines that would puncture an automobile tire. Besides the safety factor, our Aransas Pass bikes were more like tools, used mainly to transport us and our stuff from where we were to where we were going. They were lessons in utilitarianism rather than beauty and usually loaded down with fishing gear. Rods bristled out like a rumped porcupine, with bait buckets, tackle boxes and cast nets banging against our legs as we pedaled contentedly to the waterfront.

Rods bristled out like a rumped porcupine, with bait buckets, tackle boxes and cast nets banging against our legs as we pedaled contentedly to the waterfront.

After returning home from a summer in Aransas Pass with rusted bikes one year, it was decreed that our good bikes would stay at home and our Aransas bikes would be just enough to get around on in the summer. Our Aransas bikes were homemade. The home they were made in was, unfortunately, the home of a demented Chinese gentleman who hated kids. He rated his bikes by the number of stitches they would be responsible for in an average month. "Gotta really numba one ten stitcher over there," he'd say, smiling slyly as he tugged at his goatee. "Only five dollar. Very good bike."

These bikes were thoroughly trained in evil before they left his shop. My bike had no chain guard, and its favorite attack was to jump up and grab my pant

leg. As it gobbled its way toward my nether regions, it would be a game to see if I could free the pants while keeping the bike from crashing into whatever was handy. The bike was so proud of this trick, it showed it off every chance it got. One of its best performances happened at the seawall south of town. Riding on the shoulder of the highway, we were loaded down with an all-day supply of fishing and crabbing gear. On my handlebars, balanced precariously, was a five-gallon bucket with perch and mud minnows we'd trapped. The bike attacked without warning. I bent over, frantically trying to rip the pants loose, when I hit the curb. My crabbing net bounced out of its holder and came

down between the front spokes. The bike stopped right there. Unfortunately, most of the gear and I stopped somewhat farther along down the road.

Another favorite trick of that particular bike was to suddenly bounce the front tire off. This would launch me over the handlebars into position for the bike to land on top of me. I'm sure anyone witnessing this performance would have believed it was choreographed. This stunt invariably happened while I was looking in another direction, often toward some young lovely. "Hey Betty Lou, would you like to go to the movies? We can go on my biiiiieei." It was difficult to maintain an aura of cool as you plucked burrs from your anatomy. You were a lot better off just meeting her where you were going, although

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TEXAS
The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS

several points were lost for unsuaveness.

Even through all the trials and tribulation connected to the Aransas bike, it usually got the job done. It was my working bike. My good bike was sitting in my garage in Bay City. It would be waiting when I got home at the end of the summer, shiny and not rusted. The Aransas bike looked like the remains of some terrible accident, and often it was. The only good thing about the bike was the fact that everyone's bike was in the same condition. The caustic Aransas atmosphere ensured bicycle equality for all.

The only time I found the Aransas bike really lacking was when they dredged the Intracoastal Waterway and built the Dale Miller Bridge over it. It was the highest point in the whole county and, during its construction, a bicycle magnet. You could come off the top of that bridge and be going at least a thousand miles an hour when you hit the bottom. It was magnificent fun and the cause of literally acres of road rash. Riding the bridge was our main thing that summer.

The workmen on the bridge chased us away during the day, but after they quit, the construction site became our race-track and playground. The point of the game was to come racing down the bridge and see who could coast the farthest without having to pedal. The goal was to coast all the way to Commercial Street, the main drag. The fly in this ointment was that the last block of this course took us past the police station. After a few of us came zipping by, it was declared by Chief Turnbough to be a no-no. The chief was a malhumorous, rubicund old coastal lawman. He brooked no guff from any man, and certainly none from any kid. He considered us all to be young hoodlums and wasn't far wrong in several instances. We were barely tolerated, just barely.

The trouble started, as trouble so often does, in a seemingly innocent manner. The fish house was remodeling and had thrown out an old stuffed sailfish that had hung on its wall since the beginning of time. The bill and tail had both been gone for years and the rats had eaten most of the sail. It was magnificent, and I had to have it. With much shrewd haggling — "Yeah kid,

get it gone and you can have it" — the mount was mine. Now I just had to figure how to get it gone.

After much deliberation, it was decided that tying the fish on behind me would easily enable me to transport the mangy sailfish. Once we got started, I found the fish to be much heavier than I had first believed. I'd be dead if I had to pedal the remains of this fish all the way home. It would be much smarter to coast as far as possible. With the fish tied securely to my back, we puffed and panted and pushed our bikes to the top of the bridge.

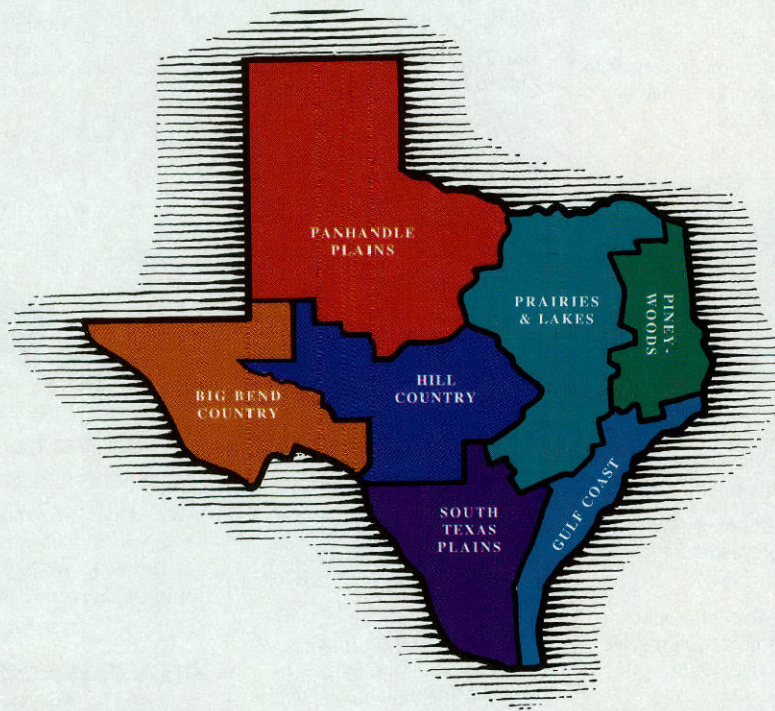
Remounting, I blasted off down the hill, the extra weight pushing the bike to unheard-of speeds. As I passed the bottom of the incline, I was going faster than I'd ever gone on a bicycle. That was when the chain ate my pant leg up to my knee. I bent over as far as I could, frantically trying to free my pants from the teeth of the evil bike while keeping the whole mess pointed in the generally correct direction. The fish began slipping from side to side, causing me to scream hysterically.

By the time I reached the police station, I was still traveling at a blazing speed. How was I to know the chief would pick this exact time to step outside for a smoke? He was hunched over, trying to refire the cigar butt clenched between his unsmiling lips when I let out another scream, this one to warn him of our impending collision. He looked up and saw me coming at a high rate of speed with a huge bill-less sailfish looking over my shoulder, and that's when he sucked the cigar butt into his mouth.

At the last second, I managed to avoid a collision by scant inches. It was hard to concentrate with all the screaming going on, especially since most of it was mine. I made the turn toward Grandma's just as the bike tired of its game and released my pants. I could still hear the chief roaring and coughing, and it encouraged me to pedal even harder. The sailfish had worked loose from its ropes, and it tumbled into the high grass as I made the last turn. Good riddance, I thought. That sailfish wasn't so cool after all. It would undoubtedly be best if the bike-riding sailfish and I had never been connected. ★

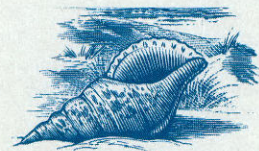
GETAWAYS

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



Feb. 17: Bird Identification Tours, Hueco Tanks SHP, El Paso, (915) 849-6684.

Feb. 17: Farrier and Leather Workshops, Fort Leaton SHS, Presidio, (915) 229-3613.



GULF COAST

Feb.: Sea Center Tours, every Tuesday through Saturday, Sea Center Texas, Lake Jackson, (979) 292-0100.

Feb.: Weekend Programs, every Saturday and Sunday, Brazos Bend SP, Needville, (979) 553-5101.

Feb.: Wednesdays through Sundays: Plantation House, Barn and Grounds tours, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHP, West Columbia, (409) 345-4656.

Feb. 1, 15, 18: Intracoastal Whooping Crane Tour, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, (361) 983-2215.

Feb. 2, 3, 24: Whooping Crane Bus Tour, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, (361) 983-2215.

Feb. 8: Annual Kids Fishing Derby, Lake Corpus Christi SP, Mathis, (361) 547-2635.

Feb. 9, 23: Wild Boar Safari, Fennessey Ranch, Bayside, (361) 529-6600.

Feb. 16, 17: Beach-combing and Shelling Tour, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, (361) 983-2215.

Feb. 16, 17: Remember the *Maine*, Battleship Texas SHS,



BIG BEND COUNTRY

Feb.: Phantom Cave Springs and San Solomon Cienega Hike, every Saturday, Balmorhea SP, Toyahvale, (915) 375-2370.

Feb.: Desert Garden Tours, by reservation only, Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center, Terlingua, (915) 424-3327.

Feb.: Bouldering Tours, every Saturday and Sunday, also available Wednesday through Friday by advance request, Hueco Tanks SHP, El Paso, (915) 849-6684.

Feb.: Pictograph Tours, every

Saturday and Sunday, also available Wednesday through Friday by advance request, Hueco Tanks SHP, El Paso, (915) 849-6684.

Feb.: Nature Hikes, call for dates, Davis Mountains SP, Fort Davis, (915) 426-3337.

Feb.: White Shaman Tour, every Saturday, Seminole Canyon SP, Comstock, (888) 525-9907.

Feb.: Fate Bell Cave Dwelling Tour, every Wednesday through Sunday, Seminole Canyon SP, Comstock, (915) 232-4464.

Feb.: Bird Walks, call for dates, Davis Mountains SP, Fort Davis, (915) 426-3337.

Feb. 1-3, 22-24: Desert Survival, Big Bend Ranch SP, Presidio, (877) 371-2634.

Feb. 1-6, 11-24: Quail Hunting, Black Gap WMA, Alpine, (915) 376-2216.

Feb. 1-6, 11-28: Fishing on the Rio Grande, Black Gap WMA, Alpine, (915) 376-2216.

Feb. 2-3, 16-17: Trail Walks, Franklin Mountains SP, El Paso, (915) 566-6441.

Feb. 2, 16: Presa Canyon Tour, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, (915) 292-4464.

Feb. 3, 10: Big Bend Lecture Series, Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center, Terlingua, (915) 424-3327.

Feb. 3, 17: Upper Canyon Tour, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, (915) 292-4464.

Feb. 9: Stories of Spirits, Magoffin Home SHS, El Paso, (915) 533-5147.

Feb. 9: V V 75 Tour, Seminole Canyon SHP, Comstock, (915) 292-4464.

Feb. 15-17: Artist Weekend, Big Bend Ranch SP, Presidio, (915) 229-3416.



La Porte, (281) 479-2431.

Feb. 23: History Tour, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, (361) 983-2215.



HILL COUNTRY

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

Feb.: Birdwatching, daily except when park closed for hunting, Pedernales Falls SP, Johnson City, (830) 868-7304.

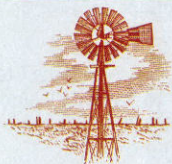
Feb.: Walking Wild Cave Tour, every Saturday and Sunday, weather permitting, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, (915) 628-3240.

Feb. 2: Crawling Wild Cave Tour, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, (915) 628-3240.

Feb. 2: Birdhouse Day, Lyndon B. Johnson SHS, Stonewall, (830) 644-2252.

Feb. 16: Enchanted Rock Trail Project Day, Enchanted Rock SNA, Fredericksburg, (512) 445-3862.

Feb. 18: Austin Fly Fishers meeting, Austin, (512) 918-1832.



PANHANDLE-PLAINS

Feb.: Nature Walk with Llamas, by reservation only through Jordan Llamas, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, (915) 651-7346.

Feb. 9: History Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

Feb. 9: Guided Nature Hike, X

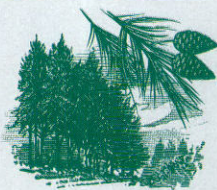
Bar Ranch, Eldorado, (888) 853-2688.

Feb. 9: Stargazing Party, X Bar Ranch, Eldorado, (888) 853-2688.

Feb. 9-10: Winter Mountain Bike Ride, X Bar Ranch, Eldorado, (888) 853-2688.

Feb. 16: Campfire Tales, Abilene SP, Tuscola, (915) 572-3204.

Feb. 23: Canyon Critters, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.



PINEYWOODS

Feb. 1, 15: Nature Slide Program, Village Creek SP, Lumberton, (409) 755-7322.

Feb. 2: Birdhouse Day, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, (409) 384-5231.

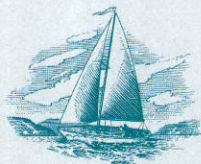
Feb. 2-3: Rocky Raccoon 100/50 Trail Run, Huntsville SP, Huntsville, (830) 535-6492.

Feb. 3, 10, 24: Walk on the Wild Side, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, (409) 384-5231.

Feb. 9: Eagle Fest 2002, Rains County Fairground, Emory, (800) 561-1182.

Feb. 9, 23: Guided Nature Trail Hike, Village Creek SP, Lumberton, (409) 755-7322.

Feb. 16: Floating the Forks, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, (409) 384-5231.



PRAIRIES AND LAKES

Feb.: Kreische Brewery Tours, every Saturday and Sunday, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, La Grange, (979) 968-5658.

Feb.: Evenings at the Amphitheater, every Saturday, Stephen F. Austin SHP, San Felipe, (979) 885-3613.

Feb.: Historic and Scenic Tour, by reservation only to groups of 10 or more, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, La Grange, (979) 968-5658.

Feb. 1-28: Wetlands, Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, Athens, (903) 676-BASS.

Feb. 2-3, 10, 16-17, 23-24: Guided Tours, Fanthorp Inn SHS, Anderson, (936) 873-2633.

Feb. 3, 10: Kreische House Tours, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, La Grange, (979) 968-5658.

Feb. 9: Winter Tree Identification, Cedar Hill SP, Cedar Hill, (972) 281-5940.

Feb. 9: Stagecoach Days, Fanthorp Inn SHS, Anderson, (936) 873-2633.

Feb. 16: Evening Campfire and Sing-Along, Cedar Hill SP, Cedar Hill, (972) 281-5940.

Feb. 16: Penn Farm Tour, Cedar Hill SP, Cedar Hill, (972) 281-5940.

Feb. 16-17: Smithing in Texas, Washington-on-the-Brazos SHS, Washington, (936) 878-2461 x 245.

Feb. 21: Fish: It's Fine Food, Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, Athens, (903) 676-BASS.



SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

Feb.: Kiskadee Bus Tour, every Tuesday and Friday, Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, Mission, (956) 519-6448.

Feb. 2: 1880s Wild West Extravaganza, Presidio La Bahía, Goliad, (361) 645-3752.

Feb. 9, 23: Bird Identification Tour, Choke Canyon SP/Calliham Unit, Calliham, (361) 786-3868.

Feb. 23: 13th Annual Earthwise Living Day, Leon Valley Community Center, San Antonio, (210) 681-1232.

SP	STATE PARK
SHS	STATE HISTORICAL SITE
SHP	STATE HISTORICAL PARK
SNA	STATE NATURAL AREA
WMA	WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

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State Parks Offer Public Hunts

A number of state parks will offer special permit hunting this year. 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 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Feb. 8-10 (partial)
Matagorda Island SP
(361) 983-2215



SIGHTS AND SOUNDS



The Front Line of News and Views

TELEVISION

Look for These Stories in the Coming Weeks:

Jan. 27 – Feb. 3:

Vietnamese fishermen making a living in Texas; spiders; TPW's Game Warden Academy; hunting leases.

Feb. 3 – 10:

Visually impaired Texans enjoying the outdoors; sun protection; an environmental message in song; one rancher's conservation efforts.

Feb. 10 – 17:

The geology of Big Bend Ranch; feral hogs; Guadalupe River trout fishing; saving coastal seagrass.

Feb. 17 – 24:

A day on the water with Texas Game Wardens; wetlands' importance for humans and animals; swimming holes; birds of prey make a comeback.

Feb. 22 – March 3:

Tarpon; urban wildlife at Armand Bayou Nature Center; arresting poachers; the Marfa Lights; Martha Daniels cooks crawfish étouffé.

"TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE"

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



Join Texas game wardens for a day on the water. Watch the week of February 17.

- Amarillo:** KACV, Ch. 2 / Sat. 3:30 p.m.
- Austin:** KLRU, Ch. 18 / Sun. 10 a.m. / Mon. 12:30 p.m. KLRU-TOO, Cable Ch. 20 / Tues. 11 p.m.
- Bryan-College Station:** KAMU, Ch. 15 / Thurs. 7 p.m. / Sun. 5 p.m.
- Corpus Christi:** KEDT, Ch. 16 / Sun. 11 a.m. / Thurs. 11:30 p.m.
- El Paso:** KCOS, Ch. 13 / Sat. 5 p.m.)
- Dallas-Fort Worth:** KERA, Ch. 13 / Fri. 1:30 p.m. Also serving Abilene, Denton, Longview, Marshall, San Angelo, Texarkana, Tyler, Wichita Falls, Sherman
- Harlingen:** KMBH, Ch. 60 / Thurs. 8:30 p.m. Also serving McAllen, Mission, Brownsville
- Houston:** KUHT, Ch. 8 / Sun. 5 p.m. / Fri. 1 p.m. Also serving Beaumont/Port Arthur, Galveston, Texas City, Victoria
- Killeen:** KNCT, Ch. 46 / Sun. 5 p.m. Also serving Temple
- Lubbock:** KTXI, Ch. 5 / Sat. 6:30 p.m.
- Odessa-Midland:** KOCV, Ch. 36 / Sat. 5 p.m.
- Portales, N.M.:** KENW, Ch. 3 / Sun. 2 p.m. Also serving West Texas/Panhandle area
- San Antonio & Laredo:** KLRN, Ch. 9 / Thur. noon
- Waco:** KWBU, Ch. 34 / Sat. 3 p.m.

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

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- Abilene:** KACU-FM 89.7 / 7:06 a.m. & 1:44. 6:01 p.m., KWKC-AM 1340 / 6:00-6:30 a.m.
- Alpine:** KSRC-FM 92.7 / Thurs. – Sat. 9 p.m.
- Amarillo:** KACV-FM 89.9 / 11:20 a.m.
- Atlanta:** KAQC cable channel 22 / 8:15 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.
- Big Spring:** KBST-AM 1490 / 8:25 a.m., cable ch. 23 / 8:25 a.m., KBST-FM 95.7 / 8:25 a.m.
- Brady:** KNEL-AM 1490 / 7:20 a.m. / Sat. 7:50 a.m., KNEL-FM 95.3 / 7:20 a.m. / Sat. 7:50 a.m.
- Bridgeport:** KBOC-FM 98.3 / 1:15 p.m.
- Bryan:** KZNE-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:** KDTE-AM 930 / TBA
- Coleman:** KSTA-AM 1000 / 5:15 p.m.



SIGHTS & SOUNDS

Columbus: KULM-FM 98.3 / 7:20 a.m.,
KNRG-FM 92.3 / 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.

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

Cuero: KVCQ-FM 97.7 / 6:50 a.m.

Del Rio: KWMC-AM 1490 / 5:50 p.m.

Denison/Sherman: KJIM-AM 1500 /
9:04 a.m.

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

Dumas: KDDD-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 / 5:51 a.m. &
5:51 p.m., KATX-FM 97.7 / 5:51 a.m. &
5:51 p.m.

Edna: KGUL-FM 96.1 / 6:50 a.m.

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

El Paso: KXCR-FM 89.5 / 12:20 p.m.

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

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

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

Fort Worth: KTCU-FM 88.7 / 8:50 a.m. &
5:50 p.m.

Galveston: KGBC-AM 1540 / 11:45 a.m.

Greenville: KGVL-AM 1400 / 8:15 a.m.

Hallettsville: KHLT-AM 1520 / 6:50 a.m.,
KTXM-FM 99.9 / 6:50 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 / 11:30 a.m.

Huntsville: KSHU-FM 90.5 / 11:55 a.m.,
5:55 p.m.

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

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

Kerrville: KRNH-FM 92.3 / 5:31 a.m. &
12:57, 7:35 p.m.

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

Levelland: KLVT-AM 1230 / 12:05 p.m.

Lubbock: KJTV-AM 950 / 6:50 a.m.

Marble Falls: KHLB-AM 1340 / 7:20 a.m.

Marshall: KCUL-AM 1410 / 6:39 a.m.,
KCUL-FM 92.3 / 6:39 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/Odessa: KCRS-AM 550 / 6:15
a.m. & 5:50 p.m.

Mineola: KMOO-FM 99.9 / 5:15 p.m.

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

New Braunfels: KGNB-AM 1420 /
6:52 a.m.

Ozona: KYXX-FM 94.3 / 6:22 p.m.

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

Rockdale: KRXT-FM 98.5 / 5:04 a.m. &
6:35 p.m.

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

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

San Augustine: KCOT-FM 92.5 / TBA

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

Sonora: KHOS-FM 92.1 / 6:22 p.m.

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

Texarkana: KTXK-FM 91.5 / noon hour

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

Victoria: KVRT-FM 90.7 / 5:34 p.m.,
KTXN-FM 98.7 / 6:50 a.m., KZAM-FM
104.7 / 6:50 a.m.

Waco: KBCT-FM 94.5 / 6:05 a.m.

Wichita Falls: KWFS-AM 1290 / 6:15 a.m.

Yoakum: KYKM-FM 92.5 / 6:50 a.m.

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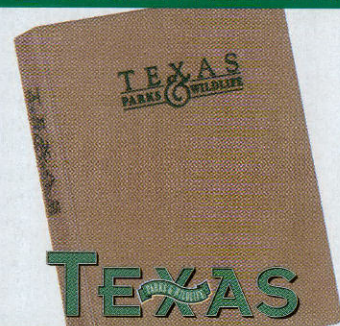
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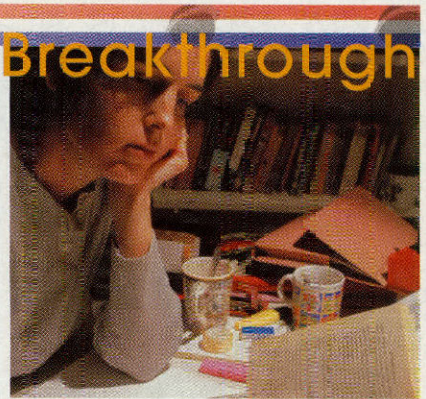
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The VERILUX® HappyEyes™ Floor Lamp brings the benefits of natural daylight indoors for glare-free lighting that's perfect for a variety of indoor activities.



The VERILUX® HappyEyes™ Floor Lamp will change the way you see and feel about your living or work spaces.

Ever since the first human went into a dark cave and built a fire, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. Unfortunately, since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has remained relatively prehistoric. Modern light fixtures do little to combat many symptoms of improper lighting, such as eye strain, dryness or burning. As more and more of us spend longer hours in front of a computer monitor, the results are com-

Use the VERILUX® HappyEyes™ Floor Lamp...



...for hobbies...



...for reading...



...for working...



...and when you need a good source of light for close-up tasks.

not always shine. So to bring the benefits of natural daylight indoors, VERILUX, The Healthy Lighting Company™, created the VERILUX HappyEyes Floor Lamp that simulates the balanced spectrum of daylight. You will see with more comfort and ease as this lamp provides sharp visibility for close tasks and reduces

pounded. And the effects of indoor lighting are not necessarily limited to physical well being. Many people believe that the quantity and quality of light can play a part in one's mood and work performance. Now VERILUX®, a leader in healthy lighting since 1956 has developed a better way to bring the positive benefits of natural sunlight indoors.

The VERILUX® HappyEyes™ Floor Lamp will change the way you see and feel about your living or work spaces. Studies show that sunshine can lift your mood and your energy levels, but as we all know the sun, unfortunately, does



You don't need the Sun to get the natural benefits of daylight

- Replicates the balanced spectrum of natural sunlight
- See with comfort and ease
- Creates natural, glare-free light
- Provides sharp visibility
- Uplifting, cheerful and bright
- Flexible gooseneck design
- Instant-on, flicker-free light

Technology revolutionizes the light bulb



- 5,000 hours bulb life
- Energy efficient
- Shows true colors
- Two light levels

eyestrain. Its 27-Watt compact fluorescent bulb is the equivalent to a 150-Watt ordinary light bulb. This makes it perfect for activities such as reading, writing, sewing and needlepoint, and especially for aging eyes. For artists, the VERILUX HappyEyes Floor Lamp can bring a source of natural light into a studio, and show the true colors of a work. This lamp has a flexible gooseneck design for maximum efficiency and two levels of light, with an "Instant On" switch that is flicker-free. The high fidelity electronics, ergonomically correct design, and bulb that lasts five times longer than an ordinary bulb make this product a must-see.

This light can change the way you live and work

I love it! Reading is so much easier on my eyes. It's also great for doing crafts. The lamp's light weight allows me to bring it anywhere.

—Karen R. CA

It really brightens up my office. Thank you.

—Jan L. GA

I use my computer all the time and WOW what a difference. I just put it up and I can see!

—Kathy N. CA

It is really nice and eliminates the glare!

—Nita P. CA

It is a nice sunny product for a windowless office.

—Edith L. NJ

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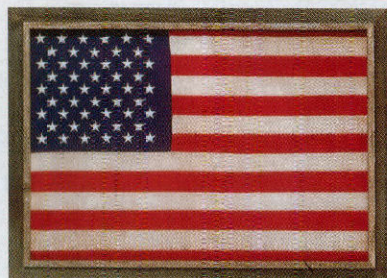
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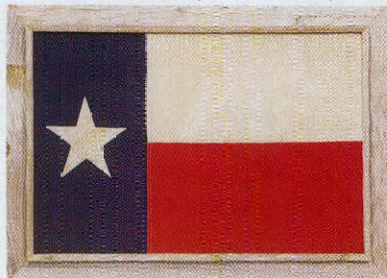
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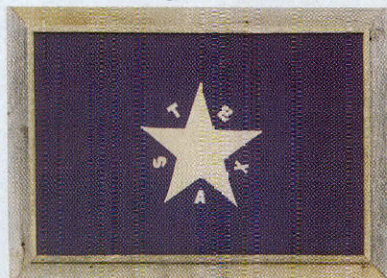
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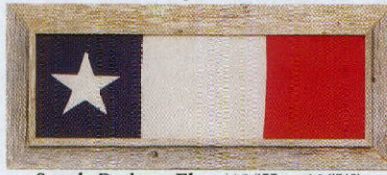
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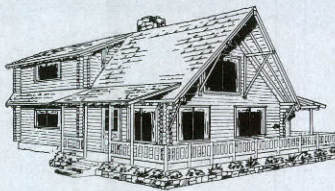
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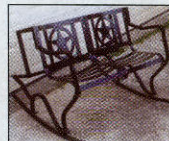
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Houston photographer Therese Chandler expected dew-covered subjects as the summer sun rose, but instead found dry conditions. As the sky grew lighter she spotted this lynx spider. Chandler spent an hour and a half photographing the arachnid with a 90mm macro lens and a 36mm extension tube. As this nymph came near the spider, she witnessed a predator at work. "I was blessed with calm conditions and superb backlighting," she says.

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