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★ *r Mule Deer* ★ *Saving Austin's Woods* ★ *Copperheads*

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TEXAS

PARKS & WILDLIFE

The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS



GO FISH!

Angling Adventures
for all Ages

C O N T

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C O V E R S

Front: Lili Sams, 4, discovers the fun of coastal fishing. See tips for teaching children to fish beginning on page 16. Photo © David J. Sams.

Back: This youngster undoubtedly will continue to enjoy fishing after hooking a bass during an afternoon of pond fishing. Photo © Grady Allen.

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 Andrew Sansom

I played among the ruins as a child, beneath immense live oaks and pecans. Crumbling walls, cisterns and piles of plantation bricks were all that remained of the first permanent Anglo settlements in Texas. Even these few remnants of the 19th-century land-development scheme that changed the political, economic and cultural landscape forever have been almost entirely absorbed into the deep primeval forest now known as Austin's Woods.

Stephen F. Austin's colonists called these woods "canebrake forests." The dominant stands are live oak, elm, pecan and green ash; collectively, they are among the most magnificent specimens anywhere in the United States today. Their proximity to the Gulf of Mexico places them squarely in the flyway of migrating birds which, after spring's exhausting return flight across the water from Central and South America, make landfall in the forest.



**A 1999 acquisition
by Texas Parks and
Wildlife of nearly
2,000 acres of critical
habitat saved some of
the best available
woods and wetlands.**

In the mid-1990s, this area became a battleground between environmentalists and private landowners locked in an all-too-familiar lose/lose struggle over the future of the resource and control of the habitat. At the critical moment, then-Gov. George W. Bush stepped in and encouraged local leaders to develop a conservation initiative that would bring enlightened conservation to Austin's Woods using the energy and aspirations of local people and institutions. One stunning result was the acquisition in 1999 by Texas Parks and Wildlife of nearly 2,000 acres of critical habitat in a transaction that not only saved some of the best available woods and wetlands but, through a process known as mitigation, freed up development inside the gates of nearby Dow Chemical and throughout the highway infrastructure of the Texas Department of Transportation in the Houston area.



For these economic benefits, Dow and TxDOT not only paid for the purchase of the land but for its ecological development and management as well.

Lose/lose became win/win.

In one corner of the new preserve, on an area we now call the Nannie M. Stringfellow Wildlife Management Area, sits an old dogtrot house known as the McKroskey cabin, thought to be the oldest Anglo structure in Texas. It was donated to Texas Parks and Wildlife by Ms. Stringfellow's descendant, Percival Beacroft. Because of his generosity, that of Dow and TxDOT, and a lot of hard work by Texans taking care of Texas, my grandkids and yours will play and be inspired under the big trees of Austin's Woods.

Andrew Sansom

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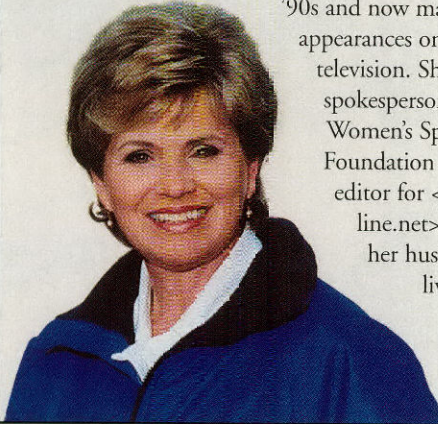
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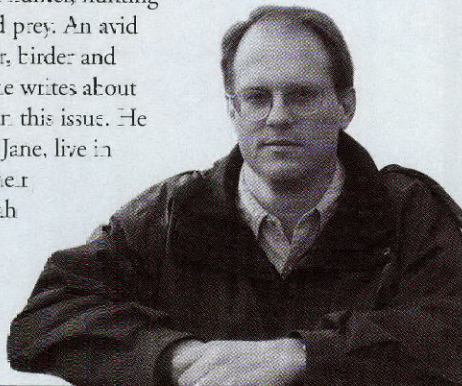
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Kathy Magers writes this issue's story on introducing children to fishing. Born and raised on Galveston Island, she inherited her family's love of the sport. She spent two decades competing on the women's professional bass tour and now promotes fishing through seminars and youth events. Kathy hosted two national television shows in the



'90s and now makes guest appearances on radio and television. She is spokesperson for the Women's Sportfishing Foundation and managing editor for <www.Fishingline.net>. Kathy and her husband, Chuck, live near Waxahachie.

Henry Chappell's work has been published in *Field & Stream*, *Sports Afield*, *Grass Sporting Journal*, *Gun Dog*, *American Hunter* and others. His recent book, *At Home on the Range with a Texas Hunter*, examines the bonds that exist between hunter, hunting dog, land and prey. An avid hunter, angler, birder and backpacker, he writes about river fishing in this issue. He and his wife, Jane, live in Plano with their daughter Sarah and German shorthaired pointer, Molly.

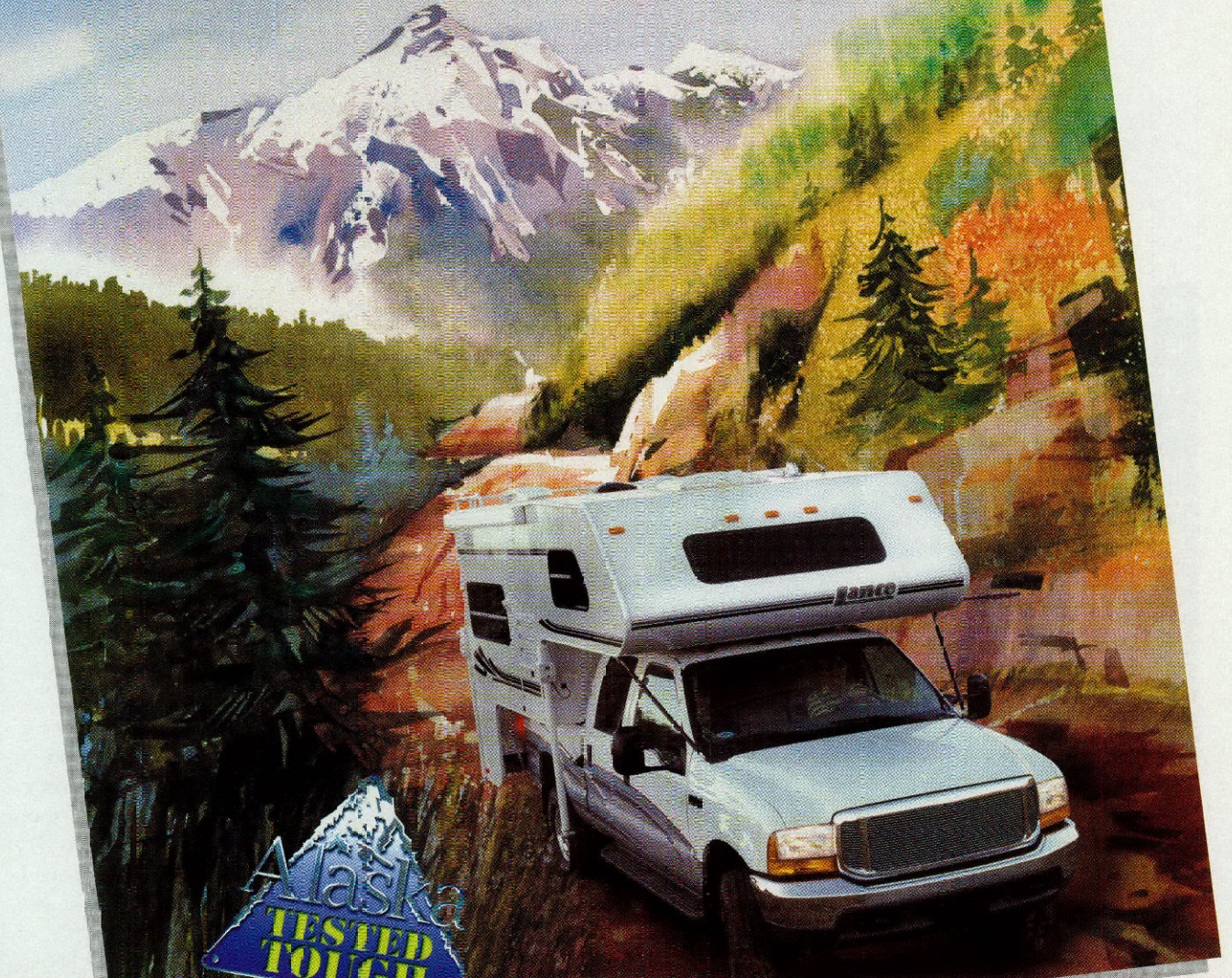


Ken Kurzawski, who introduces readers to river fishing in state parks in this issue, is a biologist in Texas Parks and Wildlife's Inland Fisheries Division. He was able to turn one of his two childhood passions, fishing (baseball didn't work out), into his profession. He works with freshwater



fishing regulations, posts fishing information on TPW's Web site, and coordinates freshwater fishing activities at Texas Wildlife Expo. He and his wife, Anne, and sons Andrew and Philip enjoy fishing and camping around Texas.

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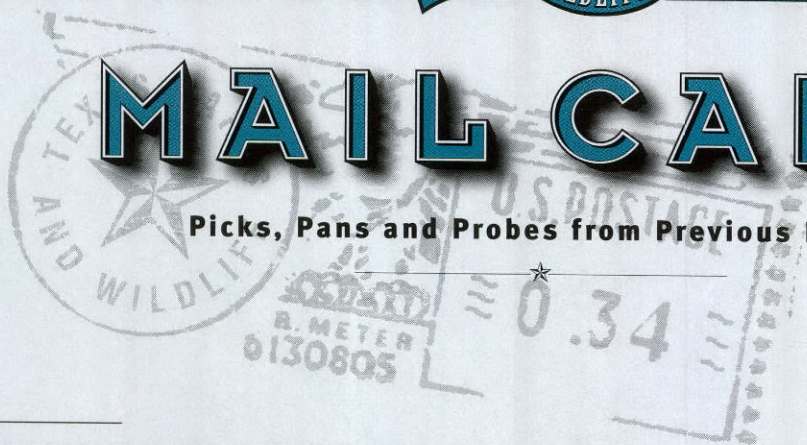
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MAIL CALL

Picks, Pans and Probes from Previous Issues



FORWARD

UNLIKE MANY OTHER MAGAZINES that come into your home, this magazine has a mission that is above and beyond profitability: to support Texas Parks and Wildlife's stated mission, "To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations." The magazine is also charged with consuming fewer and fewer dollars from state coffers, with the ultimate goal of relying only upon our subscription revenues, newsstand sales and advertising to do so. As paper and postage costs escalate, we will keep subscription increases as modest as we can, for our readership is our lifeblood, and we are here to serve you.

Our select advertisers mean less of those escalating costs are passed along to you; we seek out those manufacturers and retailers whose products and philosophies align with ours. With great pleasure, we welcome Academy Sports & Outdoors to *Texas Parks & Wildlife's* pages for the first time. Academy will appear opposite "At Issue" for the next 12 issues; we thank them for their faith in our mission and in the active, outdoors Texans we serve.

Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine has recently been honored with two Maggie Awards, from the Western Publishers of America. This competition includes all consumer magazines published west of the Mississippi. We won "Best Cover in 2000," and "Best Black & White or Duotone Layout" for the February 2000 cover story, "Lessons on Lake Lydia." Both were designed by Art Director Mark Mahorsky.

The Lake Lydia feature was photographed by *Texas Parks & Wildlife* staff photographer Earl Nottingham, with an aching tenderness. "I read Mariana Greene's story, and thought of it in age-old terms; of generations passing on a legacy," says Nottingham. "I was even more convinced when I got there and met the family. I had not done black and white in a while, and felt the only way I could bring this to life was to hand-develop my prints in the Old Ways. So I pulled out my enlarger and developing pans and set them up in the family bathroom. My wife, Paula, said 'Aren't we over this yet? All that digital equipment and you're going back to the Old Ways?'"

No, Paula, we are never over it. We learn new ways; we still struggle to master the Old Ways. Sometimes, the Old Ways are better. So thank you for stumbling over all the old, smelly equipment in your bathroom. Thank you, Earl — one of the best shooters I know — for leaving us empowered, impassioned and breathless for the next adventure with each issue — staff and readers alike.

Suzanne Short

LETTERS

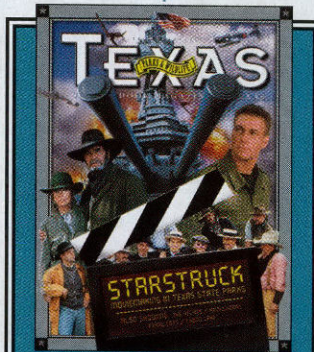
Cats on a Hot Tin Roof

Every cat owner worldwide should read Jim Anderson's article, "The Feline Factor" (May 2001). I live in the town of South Padre Island, and each year during the spring and fall I observe

large numbers of beautiful neotropical migratory birds slaughtered by the town's large population of domestic and feral cats. It is a tragedy that could easily be avoided, and is largely the result of ignorance on the part of cat owners. My wife and I have two cats that are never allowed outdoors. It has been my observation that indoor cats make much better pets. If a cat is not allowed outdoors, the owner's world becomes its world, and the cat will

provide much more companionship and entertainment.

An article by George H. Harrison entitled "Is There a Killer in Your House?" appeared in the October/November 1992 issue of *National Wildlife* magazine. The author described research conducted in Wisconsin estimating that in that state alone, cats kill 19 million songbirds each year. A study in Britain was described which estimated that



In regards to "Starstruck: Moviemaking in Texas State Parks" (May 2001), we have developed a Texas State Railroad page listing all the filming done at that park at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/railroad/tsrfilms.htm.

Phil Plata, Park Reservations
Texas Parks and Wildlife

MAIL CALL

Britain's 5 million house cats account for an annual toll of 70 million animals, 20 million of which are birds. House cats have been responsible for a number of extinctions worldwide. The American Bird Conservancy has a program called Cats Indoors! Information on the program may be found on its Web site at <www.abcbirds.org>, and written materials, including a brochure for cat owners, may be obtained there. It is time for cat owners to wake up, bring their cats inside permanently, and lobby their local governments to deal with the feral cat problem.

— Pete Moore

Up until now, I have thoroughly enjoyed *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine and looked forward to its arrival. The May 2001 issue contained an article, "The Feline Factor," that appalled and angered me. It was obviously written by a prejudiced cat hater. I am shocked that this publication would allow such propaganda to be published. Animals hunting animals is part of life and the balance of nature. Humans are the first, second and only risk to endangered birds. Felines have been around for millions of years in harmony with nature. Human intervention and destruction of habitat (drilling, dumping and dwelling) is the main factor in their decline. Let's put the blame where it belongs. Who made Jim Anderson ruler of nature, anyway? I say instead of cats, we confine Mr. Anderson indoors at all times.

— Dana Wachtel

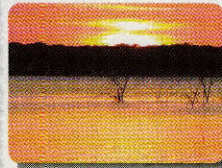
I have neighbors like the ones described in the last paragraph on page 48 of the May 2001 article, "The Feline Factor." We have numerous feral cats roaming the area. I'm a longtime subscriber and the magazine keeps getting better and better.

— A. W. Mohle, Jr.



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MAIL CALL

Don't Eschew Escherichia

In "Don't Drink That Water!" (May 2001), Henry Chappell included the full scientific name of the colon bacillus: *Escherichia coli*. Thanks!

During the past several years, I have seen and heard this germ referred to as *E. coli*. Too often, the respondent didn't have a clue as to the proper name.

— Dave Hoke

"Choked Up" with Memories

Several years ago, I discovered Choke Canyon ("Where the Wild Things Are," April 2001). I often spend hours birdwatching, canoeing, kayaking, biking or hiking. I take friends, and we all have a great time. I have a scrapbook started of memories of this lovely place.

The first year I was awed by the javelina and deer in the road and the variety and number of birds. On the next visit, my friend was riding her bike down a trail and a bobcat ran beside her on a parallel trail for several yards. She was enchanted. And we loved paddling a little solo canoe on the upper Frio past ball moss, cormorants, herons, egrets, coots and ducks. We came around a bend and found three tom turkeys on a little shelf. They took off, tails spread, and flew ahead of us to the next S-turn, where they flew up to the high bank.

I plan to make lots more memories there.

— Marilyn Kircus

Sound off for "Mail Call!"

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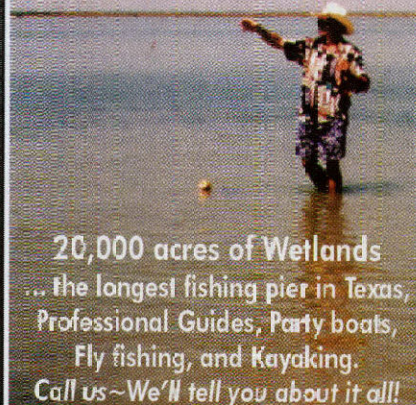
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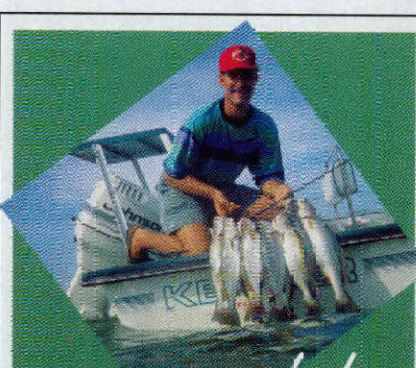
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NEWS AND VIEWS IN THE TEXAS OUTDOORS

WILD LIFE

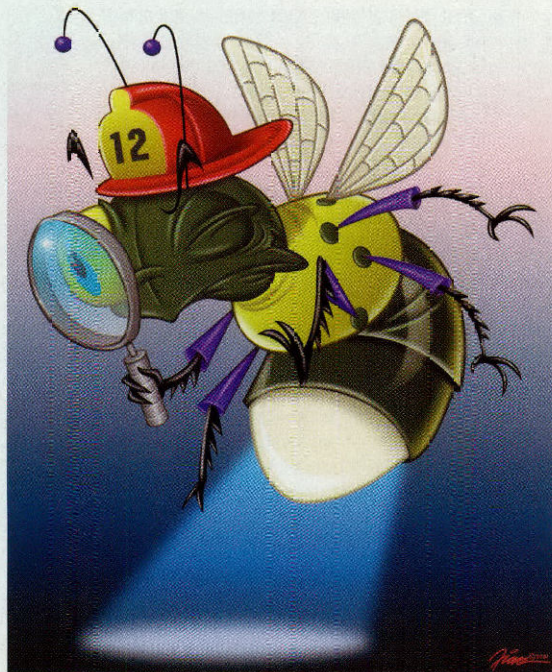
Where Have All the Fireflies Gone?

REMEMBER THE WARM SUMMER NIGHTS when you were a child? In the vanishing hours of daylight, parents congregated on the front porch to chat about the day's events while neighborhood children joined forces to catch fireflies in Mason jars.

Now, however, firefly chasing may become an endangered childhood ritual.

University of Florida entomologist and firefly expert James Lloyd is one of many scientists concerned about the possibility of declining firefly populations. Though no hard data is available right now, entomologists worldwide are working to determine if the decline is real and, if it is, to discover what is causing it.

Lloyd notes habitat loss, water pollution and the widespread use of chemicals as major factors possibly causing the decline. "With no sign of human population growth diminishing, I guess it's inevitable that we will take more wetlands, marshes and forests," says Lloyd. "The dropping level of water tables because of the



amount of water being pumped from wells has affected fireflies. Lowered tables mean loss of habitats."

Light pollution also affects fireflies. People often perceive that there are fewer fireflies around heavily populated areas, because they're hard to see amid the glow of city lights. Further, because fireflies use their lights for luring mates, deterring predators and warning other fireflies of danger, they tend to avoid brightly lit areas.

Fireflies are also collected in great numbers because the light-emitting chemicals in their tails are useful in

scientific research. This practice — in which they are collected for everything from diagnosing disease to illuminating points of activity on chromosomes — has eradicated some local populations and rare species.

There are a few ways to attract fireflies to your backyard. "To encourage fireflies, you should let the grass grow, cutting it only a couple of times a year to keep the woody plants out," says Lloyd. "Firefly larvae eat snails, slugs and worms, so whatever encourages these animals is good for fireflies."

It is important to protect them here, because Texas is home to some rare species — so rare, Lloyd says, that they haven't been officially named yet. "These [species] and others are generally found along river courses in otherwise dry West Texas, and also in far western Texas in the Davis Mountains and similar isolated places," Lloyd says. "My favorite localities are the streams and rivers that run off the Edwards Plateau." With any luck, our grandchildren will enjoy the magic of chasing those blinking lights on summer nights.

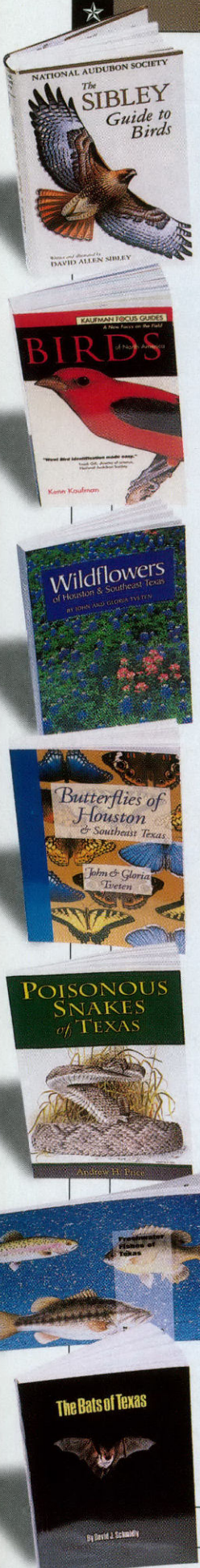
— Erica House



TEXAS READER

IN THE FIELD

Botanist and wildlife specialist Noreen Damude picks a few of her favorite field guides.



NAME	FEATURES	STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<p>The Sibley Guide to Birds National Audubon Society By David Allen Sibley Knopf, \$35, hardcover</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptions of 810 species. • An unheard-of 6,600 detailed color illustrations by the author — a truly fine artist. • Unlike in most other guides, illustrations, text and maps are grouped together on the same page. • Strong waterproof cover. 	<p>A new runaway bestseller — a guide that seasoned birders will hanker to own.</p>	<p>At a whopping 544 pages, it may be too hefty a book to lug about in the field.</p>
<p>Birds of North America By Kenn Kaufman Houghton Mifflin, \$20, paperback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great pictorial table of contents — excellent for beginners. • Clear, simple organization places groups of similar-looking birds together. • Brief, vivid descriptions capture each bird's field marks, habits, behavior and voice. 	<p>A concise, handy guide to surefire bird ID.</p>	<p>Weak individual species-habitat associations.</p>
<p>Wildflowers of Houston & Southeast Texas By John and Gloria Tveten University of Texas Press, \$21.95 paperback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 200 color photos. • Filled with interesting bits of information about plants. (Did you know the parsley family contains not just carrots and cilantro but poison hemlock?) • Excellent preliminary thumbnail sketches on distinguishing characteristics of plant families. 	<p>A good regional field guide, useful for a broad general audience.</p>	<p>What's a field guide without at least one map of the region covered?</p>
<p>Butterflies of Houston & Southeast Texas By John and Gloria Tveten University of Texas Press, \$45 hardcover, \$19.95, paperback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good descriptions of species and family characteristics, from swallowtails to skippers. • Includes other topics such as collecting, photography and butterfly gardening. • Wonderful discussion on butterfly biology, natural history, distribution and much more. 	<p>An easy-to-use and beautifully written guide to butterflies along the Upper Texas Coast.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, where's the map? • Similar species aren't shown side by side.
<p>Poisonous Snakes of Texas By Andrew H. Price Texas Parks and Wildlife Press, \$13.95, paperback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portraits of the 15 common Texas venomous snakes go beyond "Red and yella kills a fella." • Good, up-to-date advice on preventing — and treating — snakebites. (Don't make incisions over the bite marks; don't use a tourniquet, don't take aspirin.) 	<p>Rattlers and other venomous snakes move beyond objects of irrational fear to become objects of wonder and admiration. Great species coverage.</p>	<p>Might have covered some of the harmless snakes mistaken for poisonous snakes and killed unnecessarily.</p>
<p>Freshwater Fishes of Texas By Earl W. Chilton II Texas Parks and Wildlife Press, \$12.95, paperback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative, well-written text. • Painted illustrations so gorgeous you can almost feel the cool slipperiness of the scales. • Interesting information on biology, natural history, distribution and habitat. 	<p>A short guide to 46 of the most common of Texas' 247 species of freshwater fishes.</p>	<p>I can't wait for the sequel — <i>Freshwater Fishes II</i>.</p>
<p>The Bats of Texas By David J. Schmidly Texas A&M University Press, \$22.95, paperback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains the latest information on bat biology, natural history and conservation. • Learn about each bat's life history, habitat preferences, roosting sites and foraging strategies. • Excellent dichotomous keys that are user-friendly in the field. 	<p>A readable and fact-filled guide to the bats of the Lone Star State, host to 32 of the 41 species in the United States.</p>	<p>Black-and-white photos are OK, but this book cries out for full-color photographs of each species.</p>

FREE FISHING GEAR

AS WITH ANY BUDDING INTEREST, it's a good idea to "test the water" before investing in new equipment. Now you can find out if you like fishing by borrowing equipment — rods, reels, tackle boxes with hooks, sinkers and bobbers — from various Tackle Loaner Sites across Texas. Fishing gear can be borrowed for up to seven days, and some locations may require a deposit. Temporary fishing licenses are available for three or 14 days, depending on the type, for Texas residents. Youth under 17 don't need a fishing license, but they do need to bring an adult when they check out equipment.

For a listing of Tackle Loaner Sites, visit the Texas Parks and Wildlife Angler Education Web site at <www.tpwd.state.tx.us/edu/anged/tackloan.htm> or call (800) 792-1112, ext. 4755. Happy fishing!

— Erica House

Naturally Gifted

Outdoors literature in Lubbock? Why, naturally.

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY has acquired a literary archive featuring the personal archives of award-winning nature writers Barry Lopez (*Arctic Dreams*), William Kittredge, David Quammen (*The Song of the Dodo*) and poet and essayist Pattiann Rogers. "This growing American genre is concerned with the biological and spiritual fate of communities," says associate dean of libraries William Tydeman, "and assumes that the fate of nature and humanity are inseparable."

Why Texas Tech? The university will soon offer an undergraduate degree in humanities and natural history, and the collection will comprise a substantial portion of the curriculum. The archive will make the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library a prime research center for scholars and journalists researching the natural world and environmental issues. That's a welcome new feature in the flatlands landscape.

— Elaine Robbins

FIELD NOTES

Saddle Up, Cowboys & Cowgirls!

African American, Hispanic, Native American and European cowboys and cowgirls will compete for cash prizes at the San Antonio Cowboys of Color Rodeo on June 23 as the first stop on a five-city tour. Cultural entertainers will educate the audience about minority contributions to the settling of Texas, and the Texas Buffalo Soldiers Regiment will provide special exhibits and demonstrations. Proceeds benefit the National Cowboys of Color Museum in Fort Worth. The rodeo is held at Freeman Coliseum 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. It then moves to Austin July 14, Houston Aug 11-12, Fort Worth Sept. 1, and Mesquite Nov. 10-11. Call (817) 922-9999 for fees and reservations.

Music to Your Ears

Come experience the 36th season of TEXAS! Performed against a backdrop of a 600-foot cliff in the vast Palo Duro Canyon State Park near Amarillo, the musical drama, written by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Paul Green, showcases romance, conflict and triumph in the Panhandle in the 1800s. Preshow meal and entertainment are available. For more information, call (806) 655-2181 or visit <www.texasmusicaldrama.com>.

A Make-It-Yourself Fly Box

EVER WONDER what to do with those nifty Altoids mints metal tins? Try making your own handy fly boxes. All you need is a coat of spray paint, magnets and a penciled-on label.



1) Clean the tin surfaces lightly with rubbing alcohol to remove any residue.

2) Using Krylon matte-finish khaki spray paint, coat the interiors and exteriors and thoroughly dry in the sun.

3) Arrange a series of small ceramic magnets (available from most craft or hardware stores) in both the bottom and lid of the boxes.

4) Attach the flies so they do not crush each other, and label each box exterior with a soft pencil. You can erase and relabel the boxes if you change the contents.

These small tins are sturdy and fit easily into a shirt or vest pocket. Don't use them in saltwater, and be sure to open and dry any tins that accidentally get dunked while fishing.

— Gibbs Milliken

FIELD TEST

Block That Sun!

Strong sun protection for the sportsman.

BY GIBBS MILLIKEN



THE SUN'S ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION is the cause of premature aging and skin cancer. Even on overcast days, 80 percent of the sun's harmful rays pass through the clouds, and reflections off the water or sand only increase the risk of sunburn to normally protected areas.

To protect your skin from the sun, use a broad-spectrum UVA/UVB sunblock with an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least SPF 15 — or SPF 30 for active sports. (UVA are ultraviolet rays that contribute to cell damage and premature aging; UVB are the most dangerous, the major cause of sunburn. Both can contribute to skin cancer.)

One very effective sunscreen is **SmartShield**, which combines an SPF 30 with an aromatic cedar extract insect repellent (\$7.50, 4-oz spray bottle, \$7.50 for 4-oz lotion, \$7.95 for 4-oz gel, SmartShield Sunscreens, (800) 343-1504). SmartShield is popular with anglers because, unlike many sunscreens, it does not kill live bait upon contact. **All Terrain Herbal Armor** (\$10, 4 oz, Burleson Sporting Co., (800) 871-5346) is an SPF 15 lotion that contains the natural insect repellents citronella, peppermint, geranium and lemongrass oils.

From left: Mangrove Sungloves, SmartShield, Neutrogena Sensitive Skin Sunblock, Aloe Gator, All Terrain Herbal, Extreme Elements Gel and Lip Balm, SmartShield Spray, Banana Boat for kids.

Several other lotions have high SPF ratings and are specially formulated for people who spend a lot of time outdoors. Long-lasting SPF 30 **Extreme Elements Gel** (\$12, 4 oz., Burleson Sporting Co.) is absorbed quickly, leaving no greasy residue. Extreme Elements also makes an excellent-quality SPF 30 lip balm in a lanyard-attachable tube. For children, **Banana Boat Kids Sunblock Lotion** (\$7.99, 8 oz, Sun Pharmaceuticals, (800) 723-3786) is a good SPF 30 hypoallergenic sunscreen. **Aloe Gator SPF 40 Total Sunblock Lotion** (\$6.49, 3 oz, Aloe Gator Sun Care, (800) 531-5731) contains aloe vera gel and moisturizers.

People who are in constant sun, like lifeguards and park rangers, often choose the old tried-and-true white zinc oxide. The advantage of zinc oxide or titanium dioxide is their ability to block UVA and stay on the

skin, ensuring reliable protection. It is easy to notice if the white layer becomes thin or removed from critical areas like the nose and cheeks.

The effective ingredient PABA has been eliminated in most sunscreens due to allergic reactions, and nonallergenic, chemical-free sunscreens have gained a following. For sensitive skin, try **Neutrogena Sensitive Skin Sunblock** (\$8.99, 4 oz, Neutrogena, 800-421-6857), an SPF 30 lotion that is nonirritating, non-greasy and fragrance-, oil- and chemical-free.

The packaging of some of these sun products has been improved with the sportsman in mind. Many now come in flat, round-cornered, pocket-size containers with lanyards attached. Others are available as disposable towelettes packaged in individual packets.

For maximum protection, follow these tips:

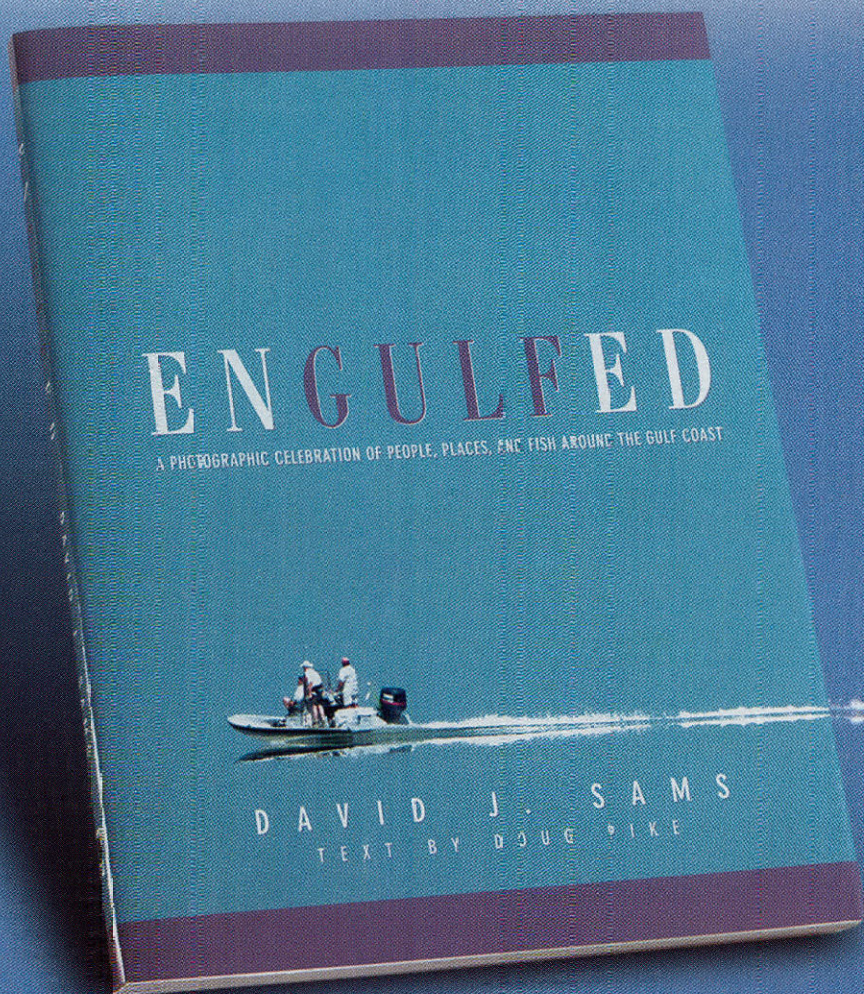
1. Apply sunscreen at least 15–30 minutes before going outside. This gives the ingredients a chance to bind with the skin proteins.

2. Reapply sunscreen every two hours, more frequently during vigorous activity.

3. Wear a hat and protective clothing. Many outdoor clothing manufacturers now offer clothing with SPF ratings. To protect your hands during fishing or boating, when sunscreen washes off, **Mangrove Sungloves** (\$14, Burleson Sporting Co., (800) 871-5346) are fingerless nylon/spandex hand coverings.

4. Use sunglasses instead of sunscreen in the delicate eye area.

The bottom line: There's no such thing as a healthy tan. But with proper protection, you can have fun in the sun without getting burned. ★



ENGULFED

A PHOTOGRAPHIC CELEBRATION OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND FISH AROUND THE GULF COAST

BY DAVID J. SAMS
INTRODUCTION BY DOUG PIKE

VIEW THE GULF'S 1,200-MILE COASTLINE from a fisherman's perspective with *ENGULFED, A Photographic Celebration of People, Places and Fish Around the Gulf Coast* by Texas photographer David J. Sams. This incredibly lush coffee-table book captures the essence of the relationship between fishermen and their catch on the shores of five states.

This is the perfect gift book or personal treat for every fisherman and those who just love the allure of the Gulf of Mexico. Available in specialty stores and bookstores after January 2001.

David J. Sams is the contributing photographer for

Field & Stream. He also regularly contributes to *Texas Parks & Wildlife* and *Ducks Unlimited* magazines. His work has been published in *Newsweek*, *Forbes*, *Time*, *Reader's Digest* and the *New York Times* magazine. Sams' work has earned him a nomination for the Pulitzer Prize. His first book about fishing the Gulf Coast, *Fly Fishing the Texas Coast: Backcountry Flats to Bluewater*, was published in 1999 and is now in its third printing.

9" x 12" hardcover; full color throughout. © 2000, David J. Sams. Retail price \$39.95; books autographed by the photographer, \$50 each. Please add \$5 per book S&H. Texas residents, please add 8.25% sales tax.

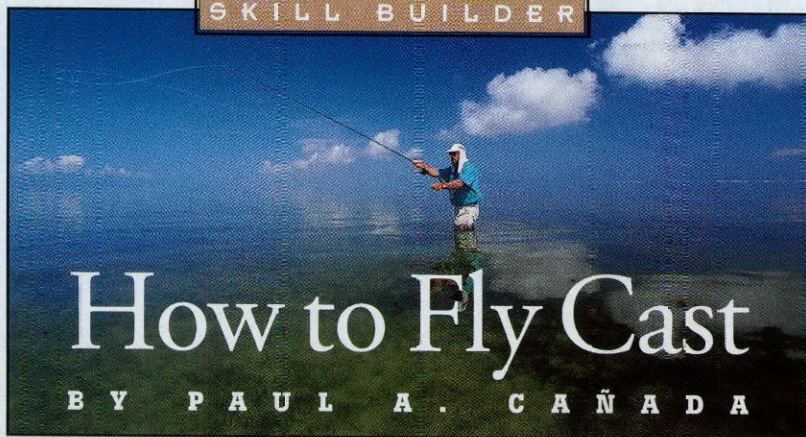
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SKILL BUILDER



How to Fly Cast

BY PAUL A. CAÑADA

IT TOOK ME 20 YEARS to learn to cast a fly line. I purchased my first fly rod in the late '70s, struggled with it for a couple of weeks and then put it in the closet. Approximately four years ago, I was challenged by a good friend to try it again. This time — thanks to a single casting lesson, an instructional video and a bit more determination — I succeeded at learning the basic casting stroke and a double haul. Admittedly, most anglers' learning curves are much shorter than mine.

Fly fishing is easier to learn than most think. With some preplanning, a lesson or two and some dedicated practice, you can learn to cast a fly line relatively fast. Here are some tips to get you started.

1. Hold off on purchasing your first fly outfit until you have completed a lesson or two. Equipment can be expensive, and it's best to test your interest in the sport before investing a great amount of resources.

2 Take an introductory fly fishing class. Most fly shops offer such courses in a small group format that is both affordable and informative. If you find you are serious about learning the sport, advance to one-on-one instruction. "The one-on-one lesson is really the best," says Craig Kautsch, the managing owner of Fort Worth's Mainstreet Outfitters.

Kautsch knows that very few master the basics of casting in a single lesson or two, so he focuses on teaching beginners the basics. "I want them to know what a good loop looks like and what a good casting stroke feels like," he explains. "If I can accomplish that, the beginner can practice on his or her own."

Dave Coleman, the managing owner of Westbank Anglers of Dallas, notes that men tend to require more one-on-one instruction than women do. "That's because women don't try to strong-arm the casting like men do," he says. "Casting a fly line is not a strength thing.

When casting, all you're trying to do is place the rod in the right position so that it can do what it was designed to do."

3. After completing a lesson or two and confirming your commitment, the next step is deciding on that first fly outfit. Purchasing your first fly outfit is similar to purchasing your first car. Years later, you either cherish the fine memories or curse the predicaments it puts you in.

The Rod. The fly rod is the most important purchase an angler can make. "I always recommend beginners put as much money into the rod as they possibly can," says Coleman. "A good rod makes learning to cast so much easier."

Both Kautsch and Coleman recommend that beginners start out with a medium-action or mid-flex fly rod. The medium-action rod requires less energy to load and tends to be more forgiving of poor casting mechanics. However, each individual has different muscle reflexes and coordination. Beginners should first try a variety of rods.

The Line. The second consideration is line weight. Fly rod, fly line and fly reel need to balance. Line weight affects the size of fly you can efficiently cast and the size of fish you can handle. Most shops

will recommend a 6- or 7-weight outfit as a first-time purchase because it is light enough for both trout and river small-mouth and yet under good conditions will cast smaller fly patterns to largemouth bass, redfish and sea trout.

A weight-forward, floating fly line is probably the most useful. The weight-forward line has a tapered tip, large-diameter level belly and a small-diameter level "shooting" section.

The Reel. The final element of a balanced fly outfit is the reel. "If you're fishing for saltwater species like redfish," suggests Coleman, "you want a reel that has an excellent drag system and is anodized. However, if you're fishing for freshwater species like bass or trout, a decent reel with a good drag is all you need. Again, as is the case with purchasing a fly rod and fly line, you get what you pay for."

4. Practice, of course, is the key to learning how to cast. Keep practice sessions short, 15 to 20 minutes. While practicing casting, carefully watch the fly line on both the back and forward casts. This allows you to spot the more common mistakes made by beginners. For example, anglers coming from a strong conventional angling background tend to overpower or force the casting stroke.

Use a practice fly. Without it, the leader and tippet won't respond correctly, and you risk not learning how to turn the leader over properly. A practice fly can be as simple as a piece of yarn tied to the tippet.

5. For additional help, integrate instructional videos with short practices. After watching a session of video instruction, move outdoors and practice the proper mechanics.

6. As useful as yard practices are, it's important to get in plenty of on-the-water sessions. After learning the basics of casting, move your practice sessions to productive water such as a sunfish-filled pond. Many casting and presentation skills are best learned under actual fishing situations. And nothing reinforces good casting mechanics like a sunfish slurping a bug off the surface or a bass slamming a small Clouser pattern streaking through the water. ★

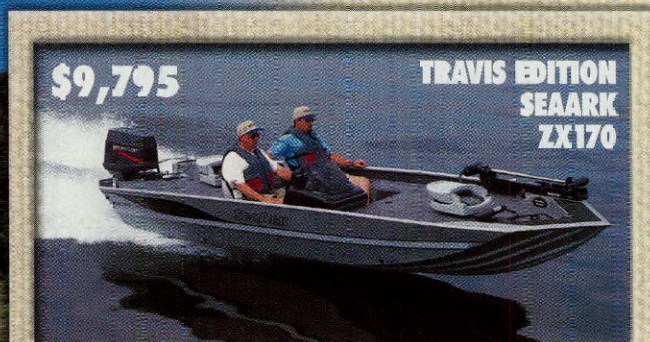


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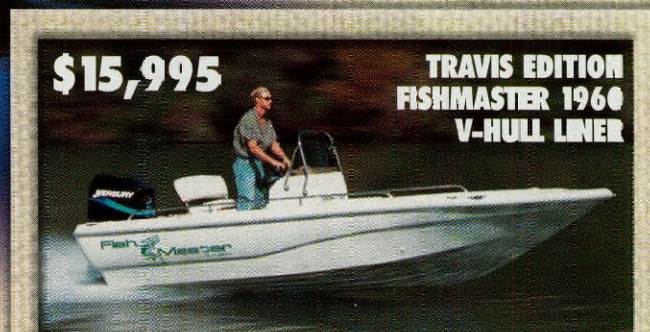
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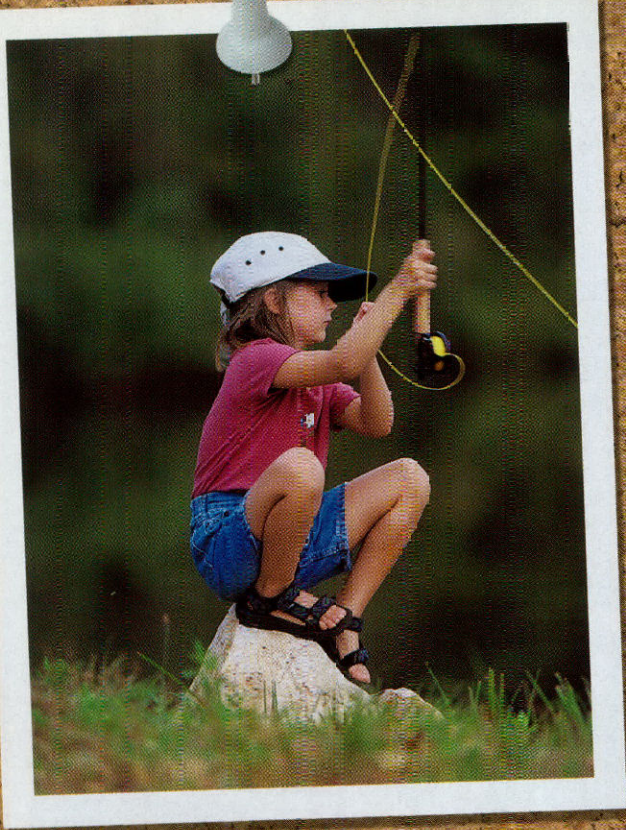
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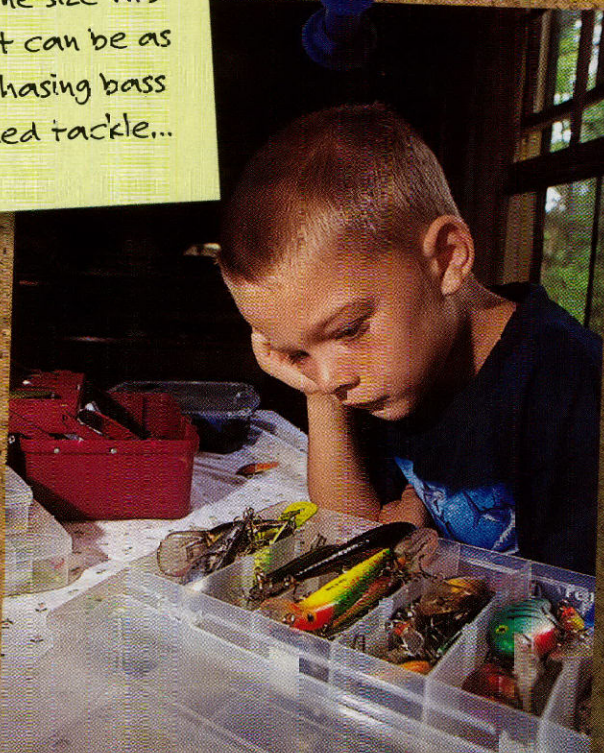
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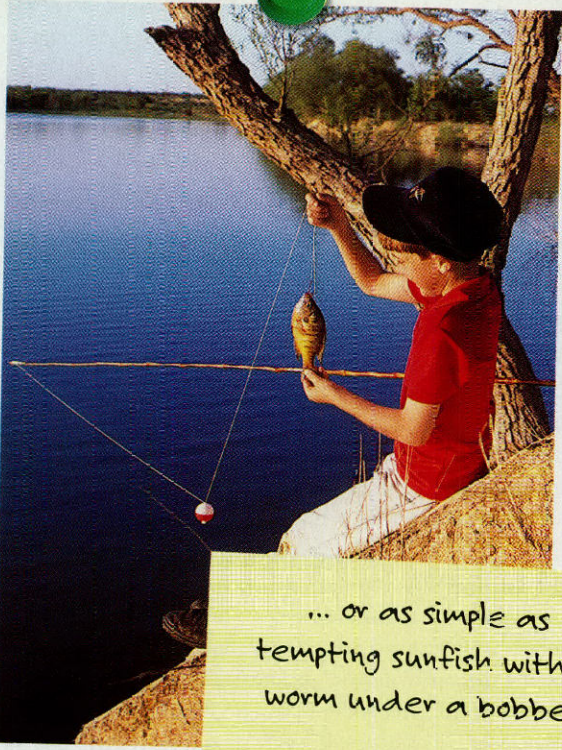


Catching trout on the Guadalupe River

SMALL FRY

Fishing is a "one size fits all" activity. It can be as involved as chasing bass with specialized tackle...





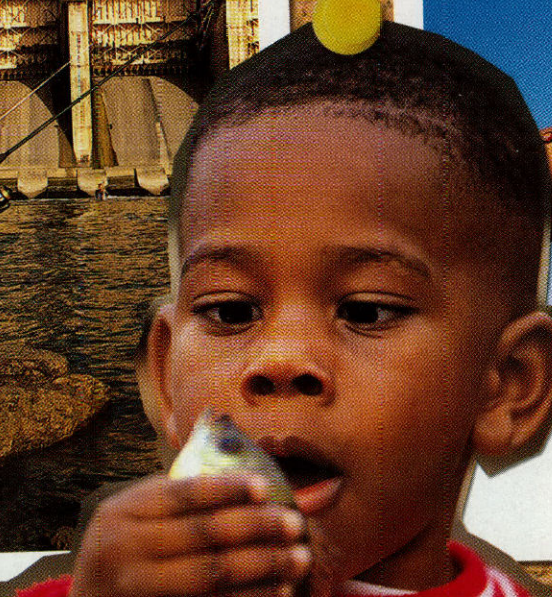
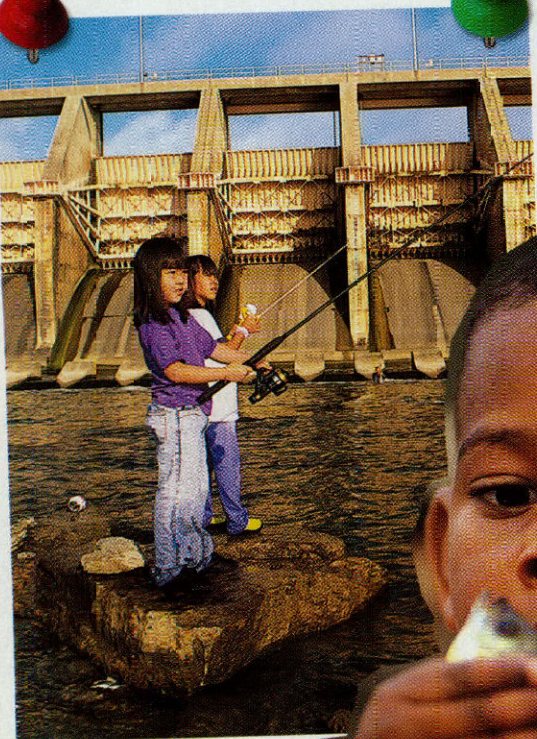
... or as simple as tempting sunfish with a worm under a bobber.



Following a few simple guidelines can help you lure young people into a lifelong love of fishing.

By Kathy Magers

FUN!



IT'S NEARLY 11 P.M.,

and my grandchildren keep giggling from the other room. "Better get some sleep if you want to go fishing tomorrow!" I tease in my fussiest voice. But secretly, I'm pleased. Many years ago I was the tiny giggler antsy to fish, and it's nice to see children who still get excited about it.

Many adults assume youngsters must catch fish to have a good time — but I sure didn't when I was a child. My fondest memories of my first fishing trip are of waking up in the middle of the night, eating breakfast in a restaurant while it was still dark, witnessing my first sunrise and, of course, steering the boat with Grandpa's hands over mine. I don't remember the size or number of fish we caught that day, but it didn't matter. Laughter and excitement blurred those facts forever. From day one, I was in love with fishing.

If you have a youngster you want to lure into fishing, here are some tips for getting started.

Safety first. Life jackets are imperative for all children, swimmers or not. Strap on a correctly sized jacket. Make sure it fits snugly and won't slip off. Never rely on air-filled water toys to replace a genuine, U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD). Texas law requires all children under 13 years of age to wear a life vest any time the boat is underway — which means any time it isn't anchored or tied to a dock. Even then, it's wise to keep them in their PFDs.

Sharp hooks are dangerous, so practice casting at home with harmless rubber "casting plugs." Teach beginning anglers to look behind them and shout "Going out!" before each cast to alert others to beware of flying hooks.

Start young. Fishing is big fun for little people, so start them young. Even babies enjoy a shoreline stroll or a chance to feed the ducks. Point out minnows swimming under the pier, or let them toss pebbles in the water. Let sights and sounds of the outdoors imprint on their minds so they'll look forward to future trips.

One for one. Plan to stay about one hour per year of age, up to age 8. Gauge trip length by the oldest child's age and bring snacks, books, puzzles or balloons to occupy younger children who lose interest first. But don't stay too long — leave before they ask to go. Leave them wanting more, and they'll soon be begging to go again. This is, without a doubt, the most important tip for encouraging youngsters to fish. Break this rule or force them to fish, and you'll risk souring them on the sport.

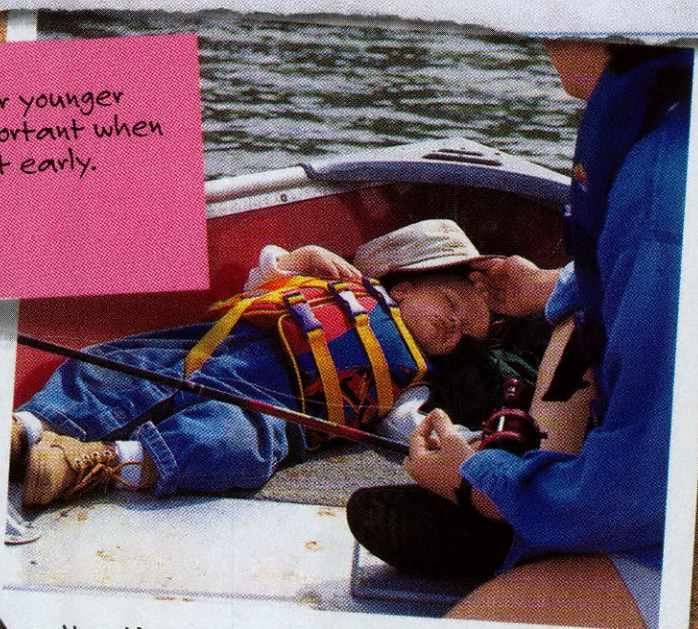
Dress for success. Nothing can make a child as miserable on a fishing trip as being too hot or too cold, so dress them comfortably in layers. Consider the early morning chill factor, and remember that humid lake air makes it cooler on water than on land. And remember that sunblock isn't just for summer — use it year-round, along with a billed cap and even sunglasses to protect their eyes and face. You're after sunfish, not sunburn.

Pick your spots. Small private lakes and ponds are the best spots for teaching youth to fish, since these small waters usually have large populations of unwary fish. (Translation: Easy to catch.) Be sure to get permission to fish in private waters. Larger bodies of water with public fishing piers also make good classrooms and often have wheelchair access. State parks with lakes usually have fishing piers as well as other child-friendly amenities such as restrooms and playgrounds. Even the most dedicated new angler likes a spin on a merry-go-round. Commercial fishing barges are another option. Most have baited brush beneath them to draw fish.

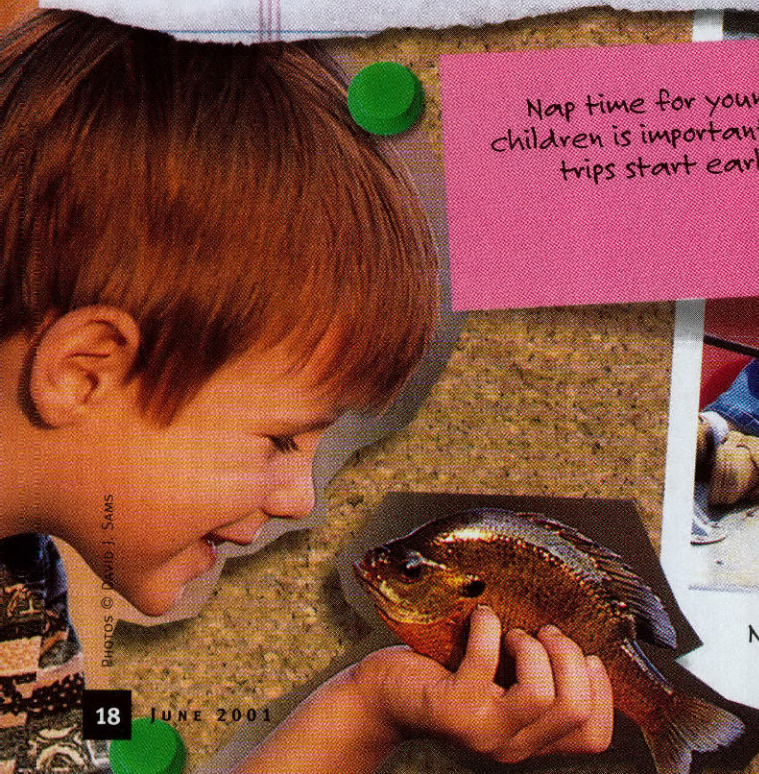
Gear for the pier. Choose gear appropriate to the age and skill level of the youth involved. Spincast reels are the easiest to use and seldom backlash. Spinning reels are fairly easy to use, but bait-casting reels will often backlash in beginners' hands. For the smallest child, a simple cane pole can provide all the excitement and challenge needed.

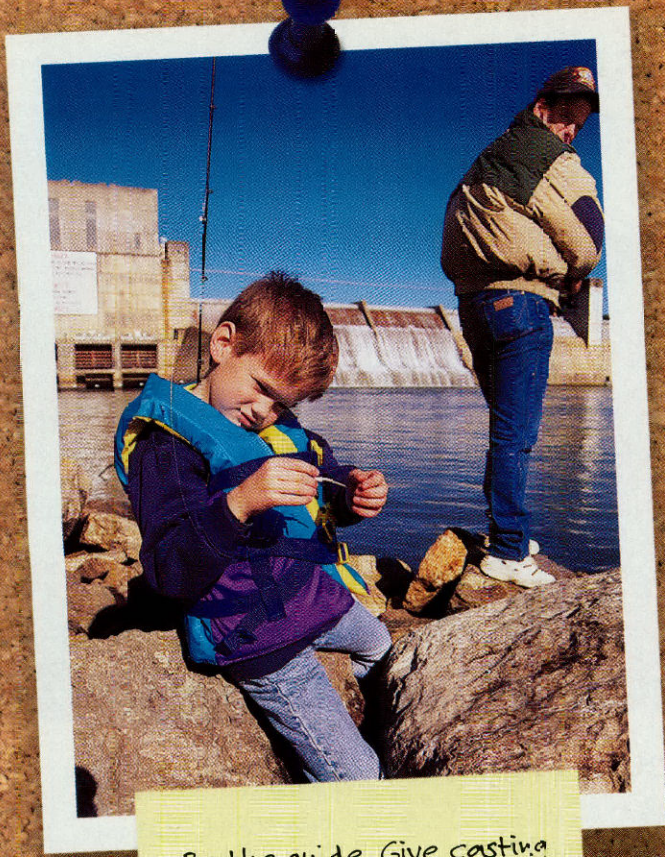
You need not buy fishing tackle to get started. Texas Parks and Wildlife, in conjunction with various national and local civic orga-

Nap time for younger children is important when trips start early.

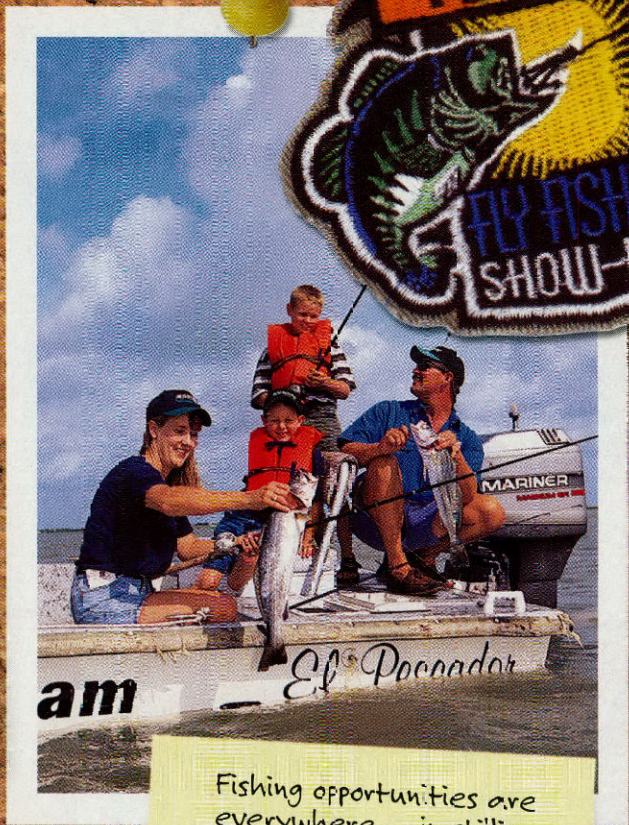


Nap time at Cooper Lake State Park

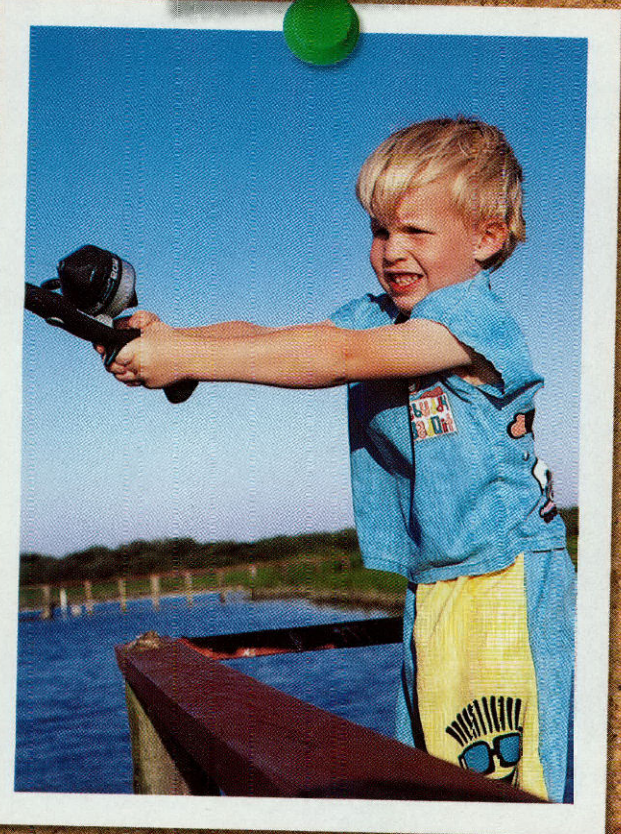




Be the guide. Give casting instructions, open soft drinks, net fish, remove hooks. And remember, compliments build self-esteem.



Fishing opportunities are everywhere — in stiling basins below dams, farm ponds, state parks and coastal bays.



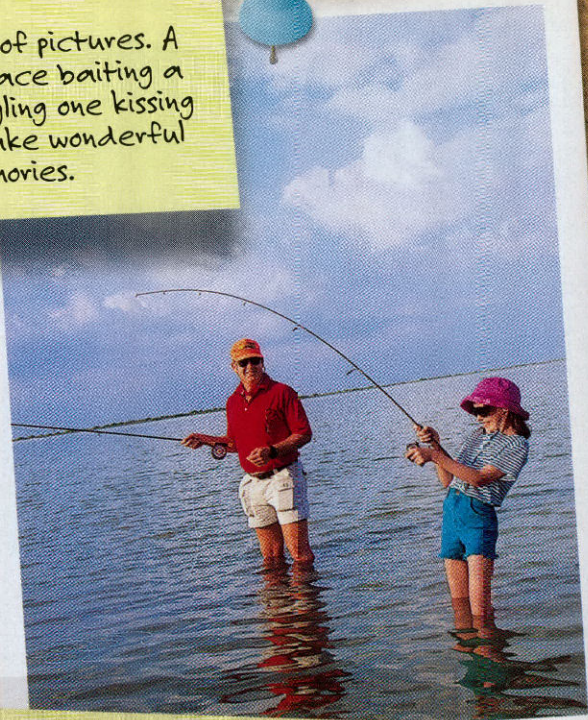
Summertime in the Rolling Plains

TOP PHOTOS © GARY ALLEN, DAVID J. SAMS; BOTTOM PHOTOS © GARY ALLEN, WYMAN MEYER



Fishing tournament at Toledo Bend

Take plenty of pictures. A squeamish face baiting a hook or a giggling one kissing a fish all make wonderful memories.



YOUTH FISHING ORGANIZATIONS

C.A.S.T. for Kids, (972) 913-2933, <www.castforkids.org>

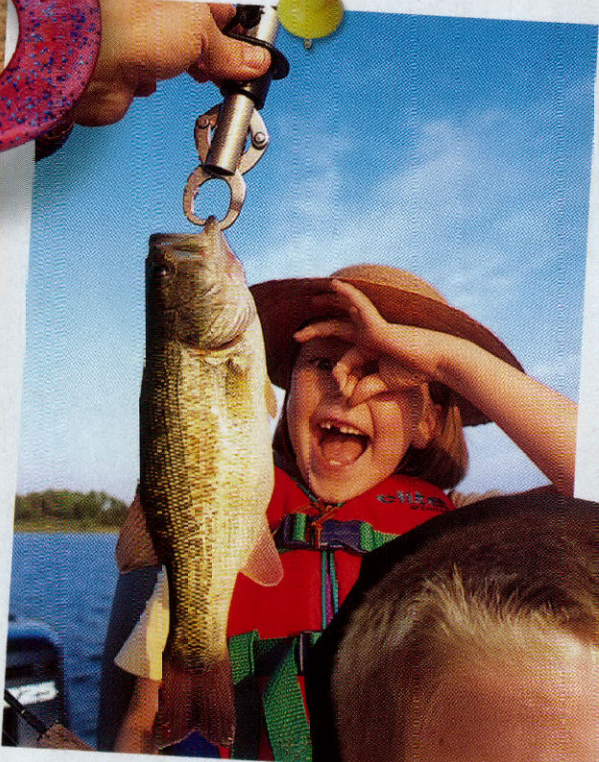
Casting Kids (B.A.S.S., Inc.), (817) 596-3712, <www.bassmaster.com>

Fish America Foundation, (703) 548-6338, <www.fishamerica.org>

Texas Parks and Wildlife Tackle Loaner Program, (800) 792-1112, ext. 4755, <www.tpwd.state.tx.us/edu/anged/tackloan.htm>

Kid Fish Foundation, (903) 677-4721, <www.kidfish.com>

Kids All-American Fishing Derby, (918) 782-4313, <www.kids-fishing.com>



First fishing trip — Purtils Creek

The editors of *DAVID J. SIMS*, © GRACE ALLEN, BOTTOM PHOTOS © DAVID J. SIMS

nizations (see sidebar) offers a fishing tackle loaner program allowing children to borrow everything they need for a fishing trip, much like checking out a library book.

Pick your target. To ensure young people a good introduction to fishing, avoid hard-to-catch species such as bass, and opt for more prolific panfish like sunfish and crappie. Look for them around shoreline cover such as brush, fallen logs, docks and piers. Catfish are also fairly easy to catch, especially in the summer months, but their fins can be dangerous to small children.

Go live. Since children seldom have the proper skills to work artificial lures correctly, use live bait. Earthworms from your backyard or a bait shop will produce many bobbing corks and pounding hearts. Use a small piece of worm (½ inch to one inch long) on the hook. Meal worms and minnows are great bait, too. Small children may need help, but older ones gain self-confidence by learning to bait their own hook. If you use prepared catfish bait, be sure to bring along hand cleaner. One smell and you'll know why.

Rig it right. Most product packaging has rigging directions on the back. One commonly used fishing rig consists of a small crappie or panfish hook at the end of the line with a split shot sinker pinched onto the line 6 to 12 inches above the hook. Use pliers, not your teeth, to pinch the shot onto the line, and caution children about the dangers of lead poisoning. A sliding cork or bobber above the sinker can be adjusted to allow the bait to rest at a particular depth. Most tackle store clerks will be glad to help with rigging advice. Two notes here: 1) Buy long-necked hooks, because they're easier to remove with pliers; and 2) A cork isn't mandatory, but without one, you'll be fishing the bottom, whether that's where the fish are or not.

Watch for bites. A cork should float upright, bobbing in rhythm with surface wave action. A cork lying on its side means the rig is too long and your bait is on the bottom. Simply move the cork

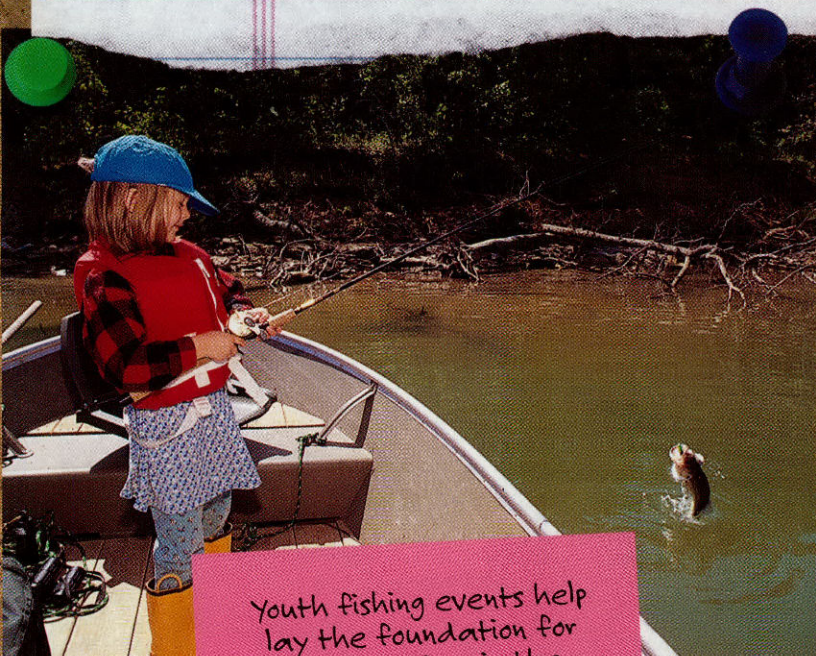
closer to your sinker. Since fish don't always hold at the same depth, alter the distance between cork and bait until you begin getting bites. If a cork bobbles, twitches, moves sideways or completely disappears, you have a bite. Depending on the child's age, you may need to assist by gently lifting the rod tip upward to set the hook. (Most beginning anglers will run back up the bank — usually screaming!) Then let them land the fish themselves and enjoy the moment.

Be the guide. No matter how skilled an angler you are, save your own fishing goals for another day and devote this one strictly to the youngsters. You probably won't have time to fish yourself if you're helping them sufficiently. Be prepared to pick out backlashes and dry tear-stained cheeks. Give casting instructions. Point out the beauty of nature around you. Open soft drinks, net fish, remove hooks. And remember, compliments build self-esteem.

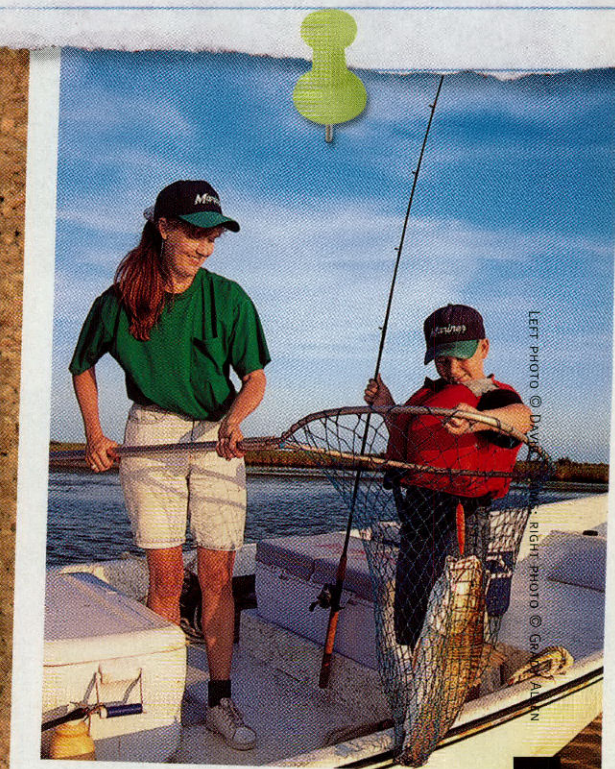
Remember why you're here. What matters most isn't the number or size of fish you catch, it's the memories you make. Long after everyone has forgotten the fish, children will recall when the dog ate the catfish bait or you found kite string on your best fishing reel. My children still remind me of the day I tossed out the anchor before I remembered it wasn't tied to the boat — and I neddle them about the time they rowed for 20 minutes before they realized the boat was anchored.

Bring the camera. Take plenty of pictures. Today's reusable cameras are simple, affordable and splashproof. Dress children in vibrant colors like red or yellow. Blue clothes against blue water and sky make dull photos for show and tell. Take closeups to capture emotions of both laughing and tearful subjects. A squeamish face baiting a hook or a giggling one kissing a fish all make wonderful memories.

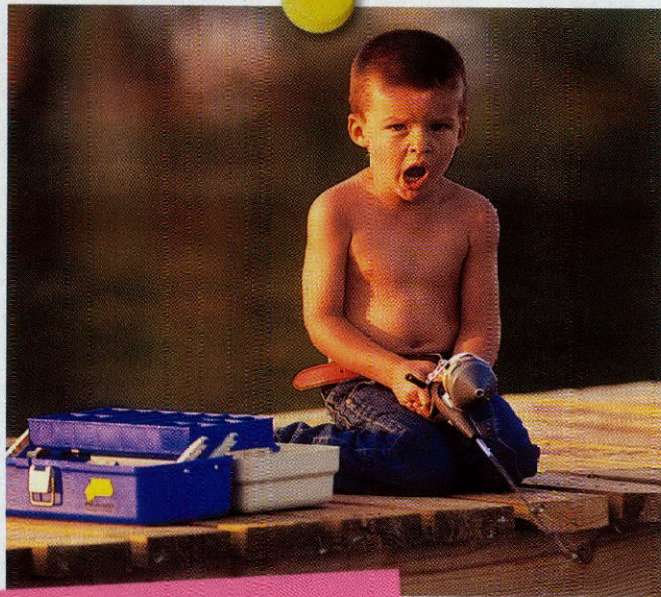
Raising children is hard work, but teaching them to fish is pure pleasure. And one day, before they know it, they'll be shouting to their own grandchildren, "You better get to sleep if you want to go fishing tomorrow!" ★



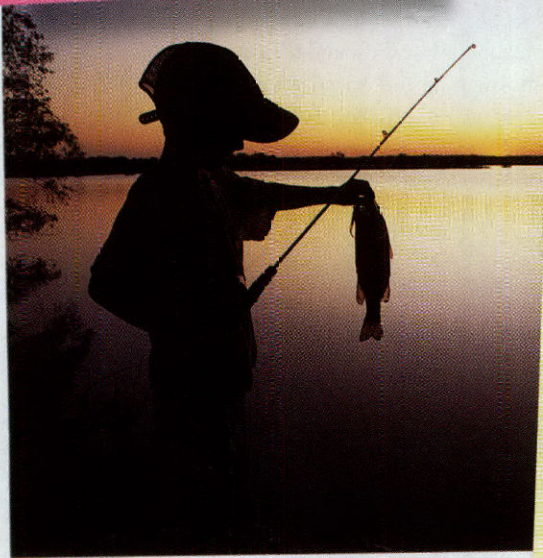
Youth fishing events help lay the foundation for family outings in the future.



LEFT PHOTO © DAVE... RIGHT PHOTO © GARY ALAN...



For children, it's not the size of the fish in the fun that counts, it's the size of the fun in the fish.



TOP PHOTOS © DAVID L. SAMS, GRABY ALLEN CENTER PHOTO © WYMAN MEINZER, BOTTOM PHOTO © DAVID L. SAMS



FAMILY FISHING RESOURCES

NATIONAL FISHING AND BOATING WEEK is June 1-10. On the first Saturday in June each year, no one needs a license to fish in the state of Texas. The rest of the year, persons under the age of 17 are not required to have a fishing license. Other age requirements also apply; contact Texas Parks and Wildlife at (800) 792-1112 or www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

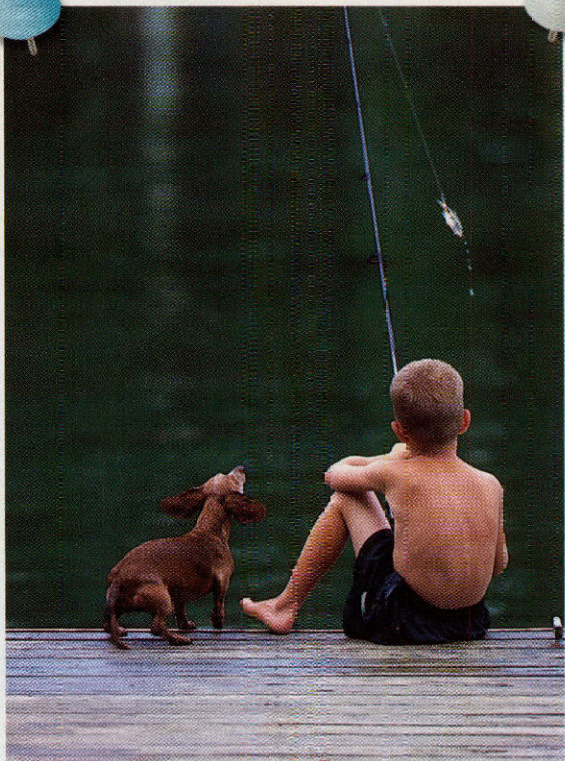
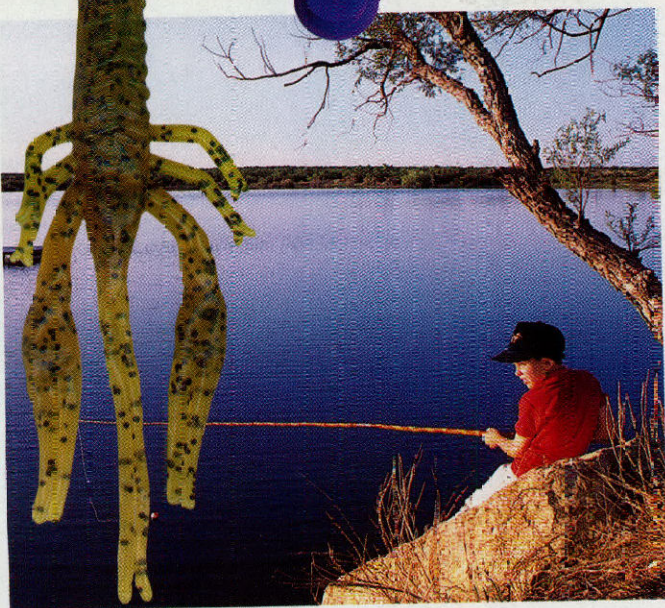
The Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens showcases freshwater fish of Texas in 300,000 gallons of freshwater aquatic exhibits. It also offers free pond fishing, equipment and bait furnished, no license required. Open Tuesday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Group rates and hatchery tours available. For information: (903) 676-2277 or www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fish/infish/hatchery/tfc/welcome.htm.

Sea Center Texas in Lake Jackson is a state-of-the-art marine fish hatchery and visitor center focusing on the marine life of Texas bays and the Gulf of Mexico. Facilities include an educational aquarium and the largest red drum hatchery in the world. Two 12-foot touch pools allow visitors to handle marine animals such as blue or hermit crabs, starfish, urchins, clams, snails and even anemones. Hatchery tours by reservation only. Open Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. For information: (979) 292-6100 or www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fish/hatch/seacenbr.htm.

Texas Parks and Wildlife offers the Junior Angler Program for beginning and intermediate students, teaching fishing basics such as tying knots, casting, fish identification and safety. Contact Chris Lena at (512) 389-4755 or chris.lena@tpwd.state.tx.us.

For information on boating safety and regulations, contact TPW at (800) 792-1112, menu 2, choice 3, or www.tpwd.state.tx.us/edu/boated/boated.htm.





Ponds and small private lakes are best for teaching youth to fish, since these small waters usually have large populations of unweary fish.



TOP LEFT AND BOTTOM RIGHT PHOTOS © WYMAN WILZENTZ; OTHER PHOTOS © DAVID J. STARS

River Fishing

I SWING THE CANOE OVER-HEAD, then ease the unpadded yoke onto my shoulders. The 16-foot Old Town balances nicely and provides far more relief from the midday sun than do the polarized fishing glasses perched on the end of my sweaty nose. By the time I carry the canoe 30 yards to the river, the glasses hang ridiculously on my upper lip.

No matter. The Brazos gurgles softly in the shade beneath the highway bridge. I set the canoe on the clean sand at the water's edge. On the far bank, oak leaves droop pale and dusty under the July sun. I wade in up to my waist, then lie back and drift with the current.

A few minutes later, soaking wet and refreshed, I paddle beneath the bridge, upstream toward a series of riffles. Beyond the head of the pool, the river is only inches deep — too shallow for

paddling. I stand and pole the canoe over a quarter-mile of sandy shoals. A great blue heron flushes from the edge of a gravel bar, and a painted bunting, my first sighting of the year, flits in the streamside brush. Oak-covered hills rise to my right.

After beaching the canoe on a small midstream island, I rig my fly rod, then wade to within easy casting distance of a line of shaded boulders just below a gentle riffle. I cast slightly upstream and let the current carry the olive woolly worm in among the rocks. Two quick strips produce a strike and a satisfying bend in the six-weight rod. After a brief tussle, I quickly admire and release an 11-inch spotted bass.

Two more bass take my fly as I work the bank. This little run always holds fish; I took a half-dozen white bass here last March. Another strike, another spotted bass, I assume. But as the fish draws near, it begins swimming in tight circles. It's a big sunfish, a red-breast sunfish, still resplendent in its spawning colors.

A few casts later, my line tightens again. I wonder: Spotted bass? Largemouth? Smallmouth? Sunfish?

Rivers keep me wondering. What's around the next bend? Up that little feeder creek? What might be finning in the deep, green pool beneath the willow?



Texas boasts about 80,000 miles of rivers and streams: tea-colored Pineywoods creeks; wild, roiling desert rivers; wide, turbid waters of the Gulf Coastal Plains; gentle, oak-lined Cross Timbers rivers; clear, spring-fed Hill Country streams. Little wonder so many older Texans remember when fishing meant floating or wading a stretch of moving water.

Today, however, no major river in Texas remains undammed. The large reservoirs draw millions of anglers per year while thousands of miles of river and stream are fished lightly or not at all. Certainly the big impoundments offer better odds for a trophy largemouth, but rivers offer solitude in wild

From tea-colored Pineywoods creeks to spring-fed Hill Country streams and roiling West Texas rivers, Texas' moving waters can stir the soul of any river rat.

By Henry Chappell

r ing's



PHOTO © DAVID J. SAMS

Bank on It

Going river fishing?

Here are some state parks with good riverbank access.

BY KEN KURZAWSKI

STATE PARKS ACROSS TEXAS provide bank anglers with additional opportunities to fish rivers and streams. These parks furnish excellent opportunities to add some fishing to your next camping trip, or could be the focus of a great day trip. Many of the bank angling spots are easily accessible.

Water, either too much or not enough, will play a major role in your fishing success on rivers and streams. High water or flooding can make angling difficult or even dangerous. Drought or low water will move fish to the deeper holes. Please check on current water-level conditions before you take your fishing trip at <www.tpwd.state.tx.us/texaswater/rivers/index.htm>.

Hill Country

The Hill Country gives you the biggest choice of state parks with river access. As a bonus, these parks are located on some of the more picturesque flowing waters found in the state.

A series of low-water dams, typical of Hill Country streams, has created 50 acres of fishable water in **Blanco State Park**, (830) 833-4333, located on the doorstep of the town of Blanco. Almost the entire shoreline is accessible. Largemouth bass, sunfish and channel catfish are the primary quarry. Blanco is one of the sites stocked annually with rainbow trout by TPW during the winter.

A big attraction at **Colorado Bend State Park**, (915) 628-3240, on the banks of the Colorado River, is the annual run of spawning white bass moving up from Lake Buchanan. Anglers can walk the bank or wade to pursue their quarry. After the spring run, anglers are successful catching catfish, especially at night during the summer, and freshwater drum using live bait such as crawfish.

Although known as a swimmer's paradise, the Frio River in **Garner State Park**, (830) 232-6132, also can be fished for bass, sunfish and catfish. The best (and safest) fishing is in areas not being used by swimmers and tubers.

Just north of Garner is **Lost Maples State Natural Area**, (830) 966-3413, known for its colorful fall display of bigtooth maples. The waters in this park, including the Sabinal River and Can Creek, are designated as a sanctuary for Guadalupe bass, the state fish of Texas. Biologists established this area to protect the genetic purity of Guadalupe bass, which can hybridize with smallmouth bass that are present in other Hill



and otherwise inaccessible country.

But there's more to stream fishing than aesthetics. Rivers yielded seven of the 10 largest striped bass ever caught in Texas, and spawning white bass, on their annual spring runs, provide Texans with more action per angling-hour than any other freshwater sport fish.

Most often, though, river fishing is a mixed-creel affair. In addition to striped and white bass, Texas rivers hold a variety of warm-water gamefish, including largemouth, spotted and Guadalupe bass, sunfish (bream) and catfish. "It's neat that you never know what you're going to catch," says Bob Narramore, co-author (with Ben Nolan) of the popular guidebook *Rivers and Rapids*. "Usually I fish rivers for bass, but I catch lots of sunfish, too, and, in the Brazos, I've even caught channel catfish on lures."

River anglers aren't limited to warm-water fishing. During winter, when bass and sunfish settle in deep holes and refuse to bite, TPW stocks trout in the tailrace below Possum Kingdom Reservoir. Anglers looking for more technical fishing can try North America's southernmost year-round trout fishery, the Guadalupe River immediately below Canyon Dam. There trout survive summer in the cold water released from the bottom of Canyon Reservoir. Although successful spawning has been documented, TPW and the Guadalupe River chapter of Trout Unlimited maintain the fishery through stocking.

"Rivers are alive, always changing, moving," says Guadalupe River fly-fishing guide Scott Graham. "On a reservoir, you have to consider weather, barometric pressure, water level and things like that. River fishing is more dynamic. You can nearly always fish on a reservoir, but on a river you have to worry about the level of flow and all of the safety issues that go with it."

Graham, who also guides on the Blanco and San Marcos rivers and the Gulf Coast, says that anglers will find a large area of river less intimidating if they'll break it into smaller pieces. "Look for things that are out of the ordinary. If you see a shoreline with

one log on it, you know it's going to have a fish on it. If a stretch of bank has 50 logs on it, look for the log sticking up at a different angle."

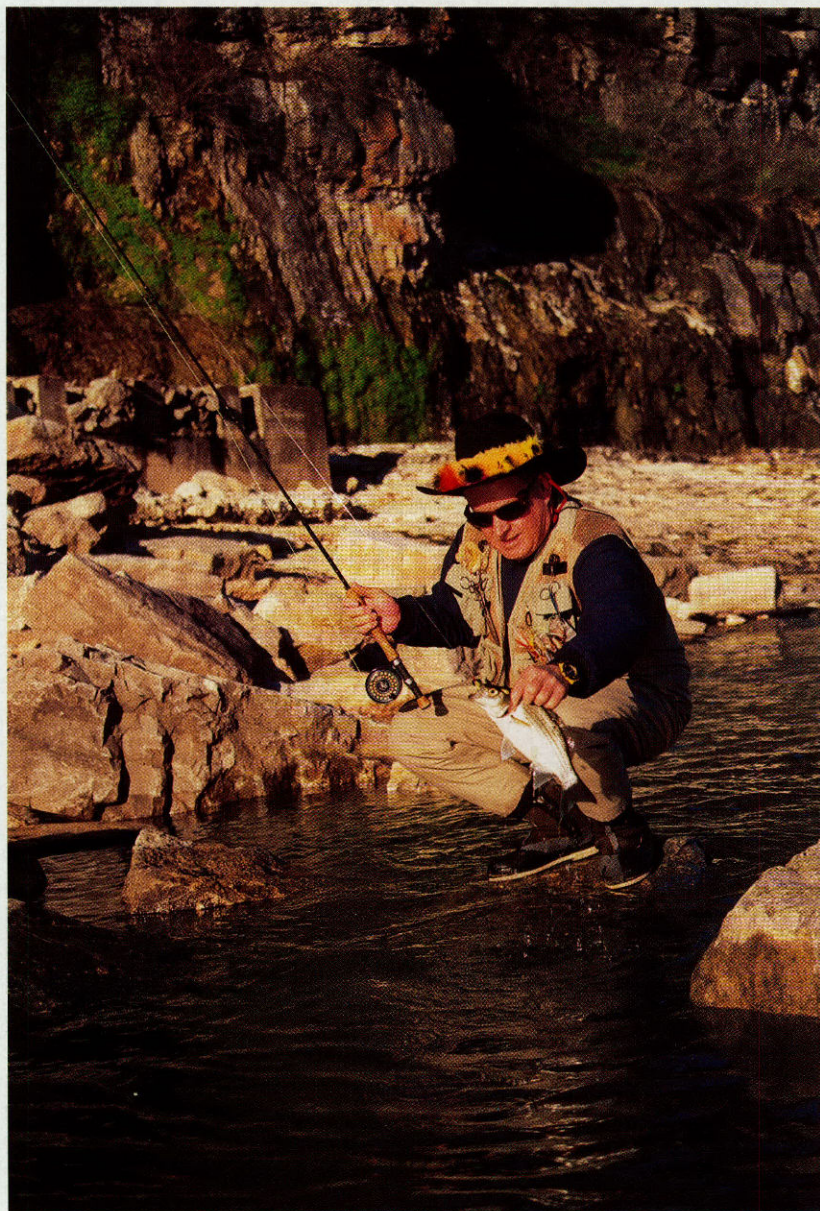
Brazos River guide Charlie Cypert coaches his clients to concentrate on the eddies — deep holes and seams between fast and slow water. "You have structure just like you have in a reservoir," he says. "But in a river, you have to think about the way it affects current. Look for logs, brush piles and rocks that break up the flow, or depressions where fast water drops off into deep holes," he continues. "Even when the fish aren't actively feeding, they'll hold in these places, and if the right

fly drifts by, they'll eat it."

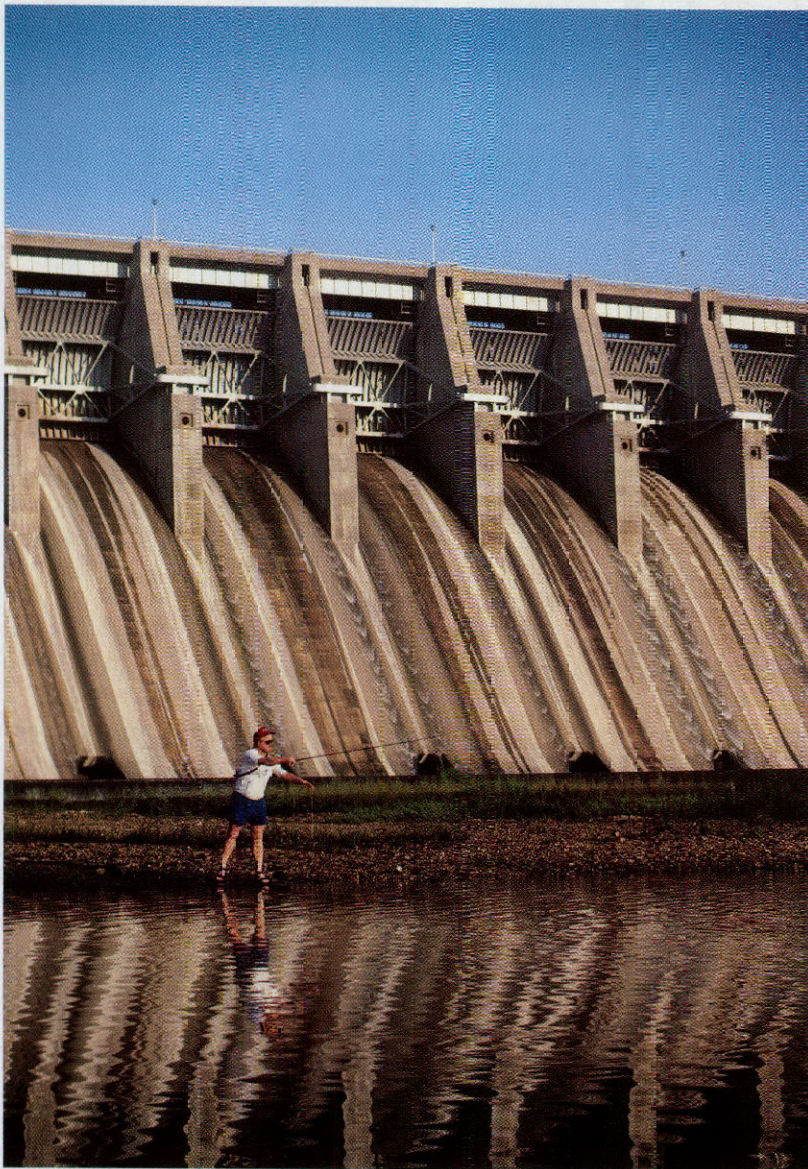
On hot summer days, Cypert concentrates on shady spots along banks. In July and August, he sometimes fishes the Brazos in the middle of the night after the water running across the shoals has cooled a few degrees. "I've seen huge schools of stripers holding along the edges of shoals at two or three in the morning," he says. "You can catch one or two before you scare the rest into deep water."

Compared to modern reservoir fishing, river angling is refreshingly simple. For general use on the Brazos, Cypert recommends a small johnboat and trolling motor and perhaps a five- or

Aesthetic pleasures are just part of the appeal of the Brazos, left, and Colorado, below.



LEFT PHOTO © DAVID J. SAMIS; RIGHT PHOTO © GRADY ALLEN



These two views of the Brazos show the peaceful solitude of river fishing.

six-horsepower outboard motor for upriver travel during heavy dam releases. During times of low water, he prefers canoes, which can be easily dragged over shoals.

Bob Narramore, a two-time state canoe racing champion and Texas Water Safari veteran, recommends 16- or 17-foot canoes for two anglers and 12- to 15-foot canoes for solo paddlers. Canoes made of wood, fiberglass, polyethylene or Royalex are preferable to noisy aluminum models.

The best river canoes have smooth bottoms — no keel, in other words. Although a keel is useful for holding a line on flat water, it can cause a canoe to flip when turned across the current. And keels wear out quickly in the shallow, rocky Texas streams.

Fly-fishers will find 5- to 7-weight rods and 8- to 12-pound-test tippets adequate for most stream fishing, although sunfish, trout and smaller bass will be sportier played on lighter rods. A selection of streamers (such as Cicusers, woolly buggers and muddler minnows) and a variety of poppers, sliders, terrestrials and woolly worms sizes 4 to 10 will cover the bass and sunfish fishing nicely. Serious tailwater trout anglers fishing below dams typically go with small nymph patterns or match the hatch with dry flies and emergers.

Floating lines work well most of the time, but sink-tip and full-sinking lines are sometimes essential for reaching fish in the deeper holes.

Graham recommends medium-

Going with the Flow

EXCEPT FOR SHORT STRETCHES in national forests and public parks and access points along public roads, Texas' rivers flow through private property. Tension between landowners and anglers increases along with streamside development and recreational use of our rivers. While some confrontations result from the landowner's lack of understanding of the law, many others stem from trespassing, littering and boorish behavior by river runners and anglers.

The old axiom "If you can float it, you can legally fish it" generally holds. Except for rare cases involving Mexican land grants and title transfers, Texas retains title to the beds of all navigable streams. (In general, a stream with an average width of 30 feet or more from its mouth on up is considered to be a navigable stream.) An island in the bed of a navigable stream belongs to the state as well.

Private property begins at an imaginary boundary located midway between the top and bottom of the cut bank. Every situation is different, but in all probability, public domain does not extend to the landowner's fence.

Anglers can legally access rivers at highway bridges or low-water crossings, parks and other public access points, or by acquiring landowner permission to cross private property.

On long float trips, camp only on islands or sancbars. On some heavily used stretches of river, such as the Guadalupe below the Canyon Dam tailrace, any camping at all outside of established campgrounds is an invitation to meet an irate property owner.

If challenged, stay in the river and don't argue. Quickly and politely offer your regrets for the misunderstanding, then move on.

For more information on Texas water navigation law as well as flow rates, safety and other topics, check the Texas Parks and Wildlife River Guide page at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/texaswater/rivers/index.htm.

— H.C.

Bank on It

Country streams. Anglers can fish for Guadalupe and largemouth bass, but should note that fishing for these two species is catch-and-release only.

If you want to fish the Guadalupe River upstream from Canyon Lake, you have two choices. **Guadalupe River State Park**, (830) 438-2656, is 30 miles north of San Antonio. Bank anglers catch catfish and some smaller bass and sunfish in deeper holes. The river in **Kerrville-Schreiner State Park** (830) 257-5392, is wider and more lake-like due to a low-water dam. Two good spots to try are a lighted fishing pier and the river walk. Anglers catch the usual fishes: bass, sunfish and catfish.

Two parks west of San Antonio provide stream fishing. West Verde Creek winds through the **Hill Country State Natural Area**, (830) 796-4413, for three miles. The best angling for bass and sunfish is in the fall and winter, when water levels in this clear creek are higher. The Medina River can be accessed through **Landmark Inn State Historical Site**, (830) 931-2133, in Castroville. Mowed trails lead to the water's edge where anglers catch bass, sunfish, catfish, gar and carp.

Anglers can access the Pedernales River at two parks. West of Johnson City, three low-water dams widen the Pedernales within **Lyndon B. Johnson State Historical Park**, (830) 644-2252. Anglers can catch a variety of fishes including largemouth, smallmouth and Guadalupe bass, catfishes, sunfishes and crappie. Access is restricted on some stretches of the river, so check with the park headquarters before fishing. Farther downstream and east of Johnson City, **Pedernales Falls State Park**, (830) 868-7304, provides around five miles of river fishing in a series of pools and riffles created by limestone ledges.

Onion Creek, where it flows through **McKinney Falls State Park**, (512) 243-1643, south of Austin, is the farthest east anglers can have a Hill Country stream fishing experience. Pools below the two main waterfalls harbor largemouth and Guadalupe bass, catfish and sunfish.

Last but certainly not least, the spring-fed South Llano River near Junction provides classic Hill Country stream fishing as it winds for two miles through **South Llano River State Park**, (915) 446-3994. Guadalupe and largemouth bass, catfish and sunfish can be caught under the shade of pecan trees lining the banks of the river. Some of this area is closed from October 1 through March 31, as the pecan trees serve as a roosting area for Rio Grande turkeys.

Big Bend Country

If you're looking to fish some wide-open spaces, **Big Bend Ranch State Park**, (915) 229-3416, is your place. Anglers have bank access to the Rio

Bank on It

Grande through designated areas at the Colorado Canyon, Madera (Monilla) Canyon, Grassy Banks and Arenosa camping/access areas. Catfish are the quarry of choice on this portion of the Rio Grande.

Prairies and Lakes

Although lake fishing gains most of the notice in this region, four parks provide riverbank fishing. Texas' first state park, **Mother Neff State Park**, (254) 853-2389, is located on the Leon River upstream from Lake Belton. Fishing for white bass can be fast and furious during the spring spawning run. During other times of the year, catfish and crappie provide the action.

Most state parks feature small-stream fishing; however, **Stephen F. Austin State Historical Park** near Sealy, (979) 885-3613, gives bank anglers fishing access to the Brazos River. River fish such as catfish, buffalo and gar can be caught along with some sunfish.

Fort Parker State Park and **Confederate Reunion Grounds State Historical Site** near Mexia, (254) 562-5754, are located on the banks of the Navasota River. Areas on the river both above and below Fort Parker State Park are accessible. The area immediately below the dam is popular with local anglers. Bass, catfish, crappie, and white bass are the targets of anglers' pursuits.

Gulf Coast

Anglers willing to "take a hike" of two miles will be rewarded with some good fishing on Peach Creek in **Lake Houston State Park** near New Caney, (281) 354-6881. White bass fishing is popular in spring with bass and sunfish providing action in the remainder of the year.

Panhandle Plains

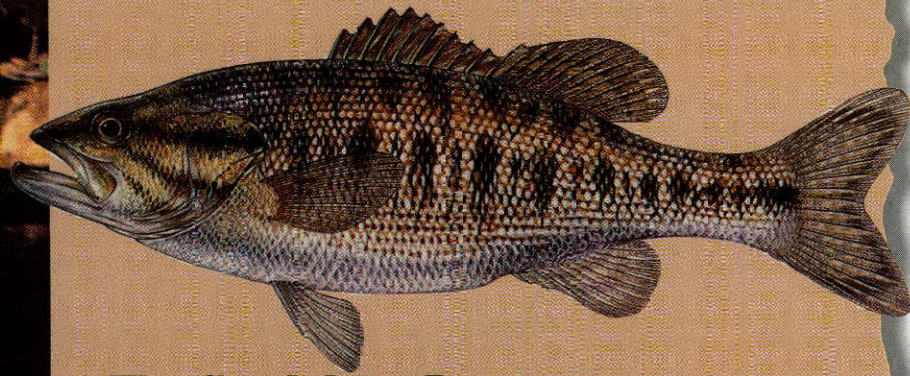
Visitors to **Fort Griffin State Historical Site** near Albany, (915) 762-3592, can add angling to a list of activities that will probably include seeing the ruins of old Fort Griffin and a portion of the official Texas longhorn herd. With about one mile of frontage on the Clear Fork of the Brazos River, catfish angling is an added attraction.

Pineywoods

Anglers can step back in time at **Village Creek State Park** near Beaumont, (409) 755-7322, and fish for bass, catfish and sunfish in Southeast Texas in the area known as the Big Thicket. Within the mile of creek frontage in the park are several spots for bank angling on both Village Creek and adjacent sloughs.

To reserve campsites in state parks, visit the TPW Web site at <www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/admin/res/> or call (512) 389-8900.





The Guadalupe Bass

THE GUADALUPE BASS, our official state fish, is pure Texan. It's found only in the streams and reservoirs of the Texas Hill Country and portions of the Brazos River drainage and the lower Colorado.

Unlike largemouth bass, which keep to sluggish water, Guadalupe bass thrive in current and are muscled accordingly. "When you hook a Guadalupe bass, it won't try to get out of the fast water," says TPW fisheries biologist Gary Garrett. "It'll turn sideways in the current and let the river pull it. You'll think you're catching the fish and half the river."

Like its kin — the largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass — the Guadalupe isn't a true bass, but a member of the sunfish family. It closely resembles the spotted bass, and, in fact, wasn't recognized as a distinct species until 1955. Both fish have green sides and dark blotches along the lateral line. Generally, the Guadalupe's spots are more distinct and diamond-shaped, and the dark coloration extends lower on its body.

An average specimen weighs about half a pound. A two-pound specimen is exceptional. The state record, which weighed three pounds 11 ounces, was taken from Lake Travis in 1983.

Unfortunately, Guadalupe bass and smallmouth bass readily interbreed. Smallmouth bass aren't native to Central Texas waters but were introduced in the 1970s. Today, 30 to 40 percent of the so-called Guadalupe bass in the Guadalupe River are actually smallmouth/Guadalupe hybrids. In the Colorado River the figure runs 30 to 50 percent.

Garrett and his colleagues at the Heart of the Hills Research Station in Ingram hope to numerically overwhelm the hybrids by stocking genetically pure Guadalupe bass. "We're hoping for a little help from nature as well," he says. "The Guadalupe bass has evolved for hundreds of thousands of years in Hill Country streams. Hybrids are less specialized; they may do okay for a few decades, but over time the day-to-day stresses may simply weed them out."

What does Garrett like best about fishing for the Guadalupe bass? "You catch them only in beautiful places."

— H.C.

weight bait-casting gear for fishing plastic worms and lizards, and light spinning gear for casting small surface lures. The same crankbaits, topwater plugs and spinner baits that catch fish on reservoirs will work in rivers, although at times smaller sizes will work best.

Swift current and rapidly changing water levels can be deadly. Narramore minces no words: "I think the law should require all canoeists to wear life vests, even on flat water. Even on the calmest rivers, people turn over, usually in deep water."

Texas rivers lead to wild, remote country. Prepare for the worst, then look forward to the best. In cool weather, keep a change of clothes and fire-starting material in a waterproof bag. Bring plenty of drinking water, food and a first-aid kit. Tie in all gear.

Always check flow schedules before heading to the river. A dam release can quickly raise a river several feet, making upstream paddling difficult or impossible. Tailraces are especially dangerous. When the siren goes off, indicating an imminent dam release, don't dally. Head for high ground.

Deceptively fast current can make wading hazardous. Felt-soled boots and a wading staff are essential for wading on slick rocks in fast water. "People need to remember that, even at a low flow, a river can be dangerous," Graham says. "You can get too confident because you can see the bottom; then you step off a ledge into eight feet of water. Be honest with yourself about your age and physical condition." A fast current can take you under even if you're in top condition.

Texas' wildest waters, the Rio Grande and Devils River, are best left to experienced river runners. Most canoe and kayak shops can direct novices to reputable guides and outfitters.

Long, reflective float trips are a precious part of our angling heritage. With simple courtesy, sensible safety precautions and proper respect for land and landowner, we can ensure that the tradition passes to the next generation. ★

Rolling on the River

Regulations/Fishing Information/ Trout Stocking Schedules: Texas Parks and Wildlife, (800) 792-1112, <www.tpwd.state.tx.us>

Guidebooks:

Bud Priddy's Fly-Fishing the Texas Hill Country, (830) 234-3250

Rivers and Rapids by Bob Narramore and Ben Nolan, (572) 272-3353

Guides:

Capt. Scott Graham (Guadalupe, San

Marcos and Blanco rivers and Gulf Coast) (877) TXTROUT, <www.flyfishingtexas.com>

Charlie Cypert (Brazos River, Lake Whitney, and Grand Chambers), (254) 694-3422, <www.cypertsguideservice.com>

River Flow Information:

<www.tpwd.state.tx.us/texaswaters/rivers/flow.htm>

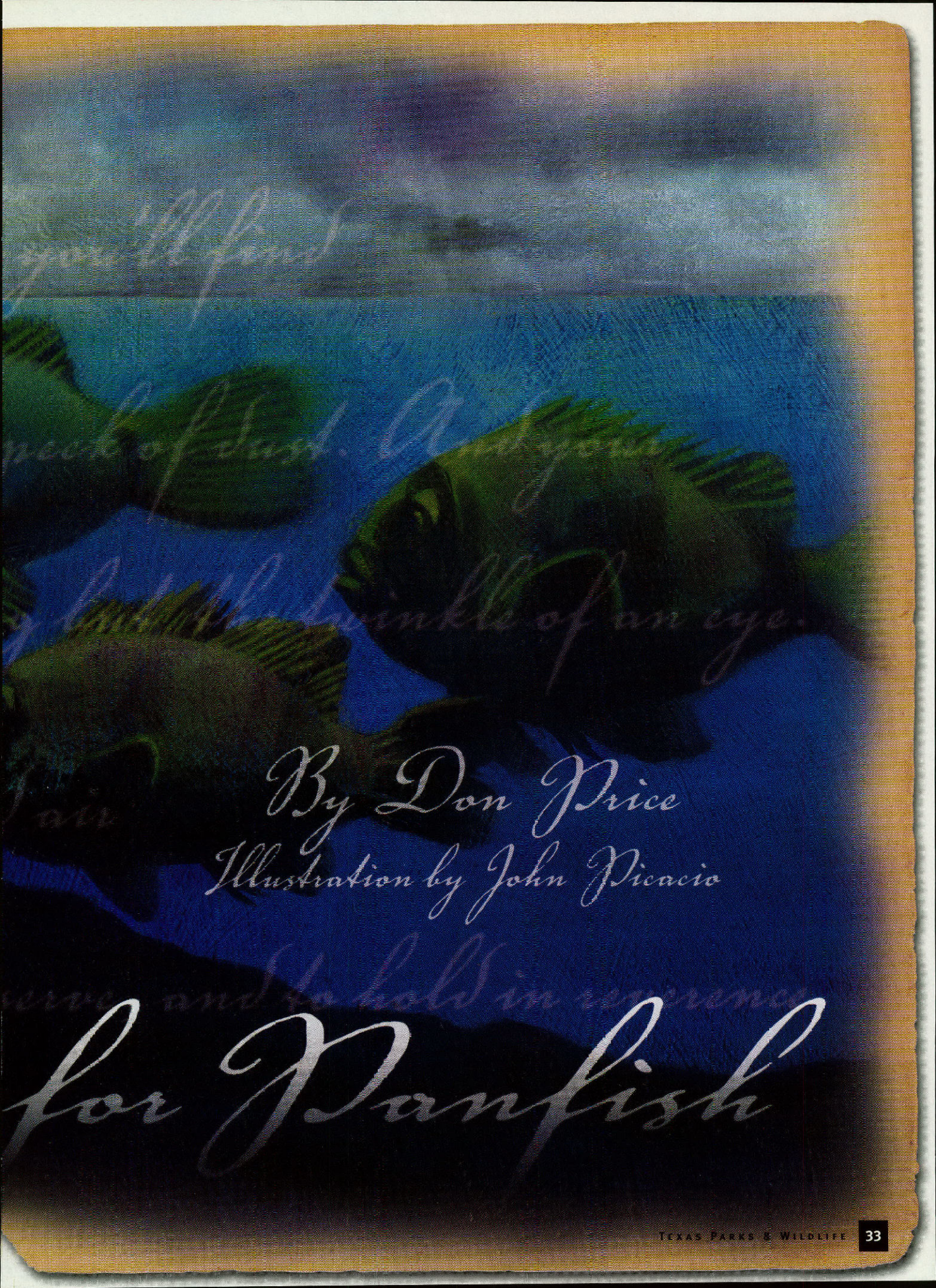
As the dawn expands and then



He left a gift of pure water

for ever and a day

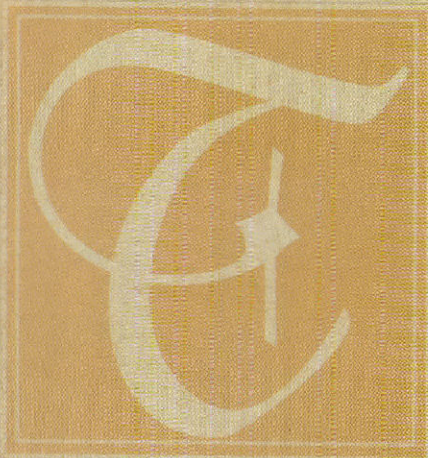
Poetry



By Don Price
Illustration by John Picacio

for Panfish

Perhaps the fisher may be troubled
fly fishing has been
Yet while standing knee-deep in
conducts the maestro's roll
is rewarding enough, even though



THE ALARM CLOCK JOGGLED on the dresser top. Already wide awake because he hadn't been able to sleep, hadn't been able to cope with the thought of a misty fishing trip, the angler got out of bed and began dressing hurriedly.

Town was slumbering. Outside the sky was indigo, the morning cool. It was a motionless time, an early time, the sweetness we all seem to miss, the leaves limp in the oak.

The fly fisher thought about what Henry David Thoreau had said: "Only that day dawns to which we are awake." While the battered coffeepot splashed amber, the fisherman checked carefully his 5x leader, honed to prick-sharpness the hooks of panfish flies, then waxed his yellow fly line. Everything seemed right for a morning of solitude, just an angler and maybe a few cows, an escape to seek introspection, to see one's reflection in watercress.

Many drive a thousand miles or more to fish, even to a foreign land, seeking professional guides and proper regalia. But this fisher's choice is hardly a dozen miles from the town where he's lived since boyhood, long enough to have discovered the good spots.

His driving time was only a few minutes. Shutting off the pickup truck engine, he paused to gaze at the slick surface of a farm pond — a stock tank in Texas vernacular. The fisherman was making an attempt to cultivate his thoughts, making room for solace, something to make him stronger in the game of life when he needed it. Often overlooked in competition, the world of Izaak Walton's contemplation was more meaningful to him than a contest winner's perch.

Although a fishing trip is always exciting, he tried to control himself, pausing to hear tree frogs and crickets, spring warblers and what he thought was a wren. Even a faint insect tremolo, a frantic moth caught in a garden spider's web. A faint clatter of rocks behind the stock tank's earthen dam brought thoughts of trail drivers Oliver Loving and Charles Goodnight, riding sorrels at first light, seeking mavericks in this rolling Palo Pinto region in the 1860s, really not that long ago.

Still sitting in the cab of his pickup with the window down, mesmerized with morning's sounds, he saw an orange ball gradually dapple the pasture. A fish shattered the surface, breaking the trance, a focus back to reality. Only then did he crawl out of his pickup to fit together the four pieces of glass rod, a 7½-footer that had been packed in a small aluminum tube, a backpacking fly rod he'd purchased for a Montana trip, never dreaming he'd be using it in his own backyard.

He threaded his very light tapered leader through the guides and carefully tied to it a universal favorite, a pattern Ernest Hemingway used with success in Spain, circa 1925: the classic McGinty, the fly Hemingway's protagonist used in *The Sun Also Rises*.

Without a lot of effort he pushed the gossamer through the
fly hook's eye, all the while pondering something about a
rich man and a camel.

Thinking that 56 years spent
fruitless for his soul, just a waste of time.
Texas stock tank, he softly
The art of this fisher in early sun
the harvest could be nil.

The McGinty is black-and-yellow-ringed, not unlike a bumblebee, only much smaller, and murderous on panfish. During spring spawns there is nothing more effective than a #12 McGinty, the fly fisher's choice.

Slowly he sauntered down a slope to the stock tank's shoreline and paused for a moment to savor the morning. He was alone and therefore not embarrassed at his own idiosyncrasies. And then he planted his feet firmly in the ruck of the pond's watermark. There were no people to banter with — just a few cows, and the beavines apparently hadn't picked up on the technology, not a cell phone in sight. Not one jackhammer could be heard breaking concrete, only a woodpecker breaking bark. Just nature's sweet cadence.

The fisherman wasn't in a hurry this time. For he moved slowly, pausing for introspection in the lucid pond, then perhaps he might go after a fish or two.

He palmed the cork grip of the little glass rod. Fastened below the cork grip was a sturdy single-action reel, an old South Bend, its spool covered with yellow fly line, a floating rocket taper #WF6F.

*In retrospect the fisher could have been troubled in his
twilight years, pondering over 56 years of obsessed
fishing, fruitless for his own soul, just a waste of time.
And yet while standing knee-deep in a Texas stock tank
he conducted a poetic roll without awareness.*

*The art of perfect rhythm in the early sun is rewarding
Enough even though the harvest may be lean or nil*

A gray fox barbed, but nothing else was heard. Everything seemed to stop for this moment in time, as if it had been part of a plan.

While wading in to his knees, he began false casting, pulling line from his old reel, whipping an arc back and forth until he'd worked out enough line. His nine-foot 5X tapered leader didn't have a single wind knot. The fisherman has passed the test of perfect timing, and everything seemed right. He felt good that a lifelong bent of patiently honing his skill was rewarding him with pleasure and satisfaction. He had no money, but he was content knowing he'd mastered the art of fly fishing.

When he felt things at the pond were right, he laid gingerly his McGinty near a stump whose black top was sticking a few inches above the surface. The ringlets had hardly time to widen as the proven pattern riding high for only an instant vanished in a frothy boil. Reflexively he snapped his wrist, setting the honed steel.

No sooner had he set the hook than his rod bent in a strong arch, an intense feeling of pleasure even down to the resiliency of its core. Presently he brought the tough little fighter to bay. It was a redear sunfish, pound for pound a much more stubborn fighter than its cousin the black bass. With a green back and yellow belly, a red trademark bearing the gill cover and brown specks

peppering the body, this handsome fish is an eye-catcher.

Pausing for a few seconds, savoring it for later memories, the angler held this redear at arm's length to let rays from the early sun reflect an iridescence of silvery hues. It was almost surreal; it almost took the fisher's breath away.

*As the dawn expands,
suddenly you'll find
yourself infinitesimal,
a speck of dust. And your
lifespan is nothing but
the twinkle of an eye.*

He'd lucked upon a nest of fat sunfish: the next cast yielded a chunky bluegill, proudly displaying a bright orange belly. A little more saucer-shaped than the redear, this bluegill held a distinct blue color on its gill cover, and with greenish sides, but turning to rust on large specimens.

And then came the rarest of moments: a feeding frenzy, the serendipity of a spring morning. The bluegills were slabs of rust with black backs and bulging eyes. In roiling water you'd spotted them, in water so shallow their backs were sticking out like circling dolphins, even whale-like. A half-dozen of those starving specimens spotted your McGinty at the same time, all of them zeroing in on a hopeless fly in silvered flashes of pure savagery. Let Hemingway's choice simply work for you, he thought.

Most of the sunfish weighed a third of a pound, some larger, every inch gamefighters when one is grasping a four-piece backpacking wand.

Small is beautiful, he must have thought.

The fly fisherman wanted to savor the wine, every precious moment of the spawn. After catching several of these panfish, he paused to pour himself a cup of steaming black coffee, to soak in rays of sunlight. It was difficult to do, but he laid his rod on the grassy bank. This was without question an epiphany.

*Nature was created by
the sure hand of an artist.
He left a gift of pure water and air
for each of us to preserve,
and to hold in reverence.*

The angler wound up with a stringer of bluegills and redears, pumpkinseeds and goggle-eyes, even a couple of barn-door crappies. It was a good catch.

He thought about what he would do with the fish. Finally he decided to take them to town and give them to a woman he knew. Scale them first, remove the head and entrails, float the panfish in grease to serve with cornbread sticks and fresh green onions, along with a pot of slowly cooked red beans. There's not a tastier meal to be had by kings, he would tell her.

He hesitated to leave this idyllic setting. Reluctantly he strolled back to his pickup with his fly rod, book of tiny flies, coffee jug and hefty stringer. He paused occasionally to glance back at the pond's old black stump where he'd been conducting poetry for panfish, perhaps five minutes ago. ★

DON PRICE of Mineral Wells has been fishing since his uncle handed him a cane pole in 1944. Fly fishing is his life's passion.



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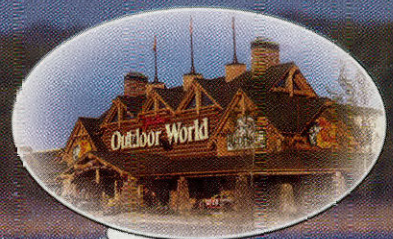
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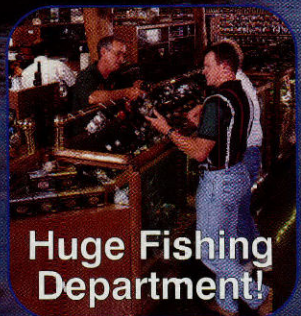
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THE SUN RISES OUT OF THE SEA AND

ACRES OF COASTAL MARSH AT PEASE

Saving AUs

In the 1820s, Stephen F. Austin's colonists found solace among the pristine

AREA NEAR BRAZOSPORT. ON THE W

DUCKS AND GEESE HAVE TRADED

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CH POINT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

tin's Woods

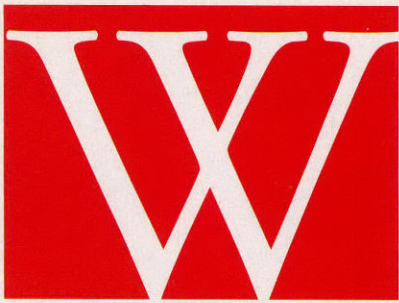
coastal hardwoods. Today birders from around the world can do the same.

By Tom Harvey

ATER, THOUSANDS OF WINTERING

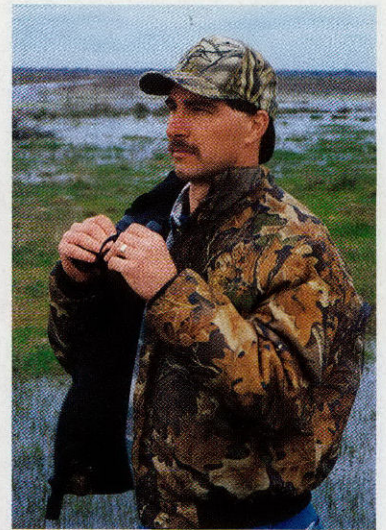
CANADIAN SUMMER FOR TEXAS

E OF NATURE'S NOISIER SPECTACLES.



Wildlife biologist Todd Merendino swings open his pickup door and eases his tall, lean frame out from behind the wheel, lifting a pair of binoculars to scan the scene. Where most hunters and birdwatchers

see simple abundance, Merendino's trained eye sees experiments in land management. For the past few years, as Central Coast Wetlands Ecosystem leader for Texas Parks and Wildlife, he has led efforts to bring in more surface water, remove exotic



Biologist Todd Merendino oversees the marshes and forested wetlands known as Austin's Woods. Birds are a top priority at Peach Point Wildlife Management Area, part of Austin's Woods. Two miles of trails, right, lead visitors through the woodland.

plants and otherwise work to enhance or restore the natural landscape on seven state wildlife management area units between Galveston and Corpus Christi. Like the waterfowl he loves, Merendino understands a bit about transcontinental migration. He grew up near Beaumont, where his daddy took him duck hunting on the J.D. Murphree Wildlife Management Area. He later earned his Ph.D. in Canada from the University of Western Ontario, studying how habitat features like water quality and vegetation affect mallard and black duck breeding.

A few miles inland from Peach Point, Merendino now also keeps watch over one of Texas' last great stands of coastal hardwood forest. Here, big live oak trees, centuries old,

extend gnarled branches skyward in the drier uplands, while green ash, cedar elm and willow dominate the forested wetlands on lower ground. As I follow Todd through the dappled shade, he explains how in springtime this wood comes to life with calls of colorful neotropical migrant songbirds, feathered bundles of energy that fly nonstop across the Gulf of Mexico to land exhausted in this wooded refuge.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

These prime patches of woods and waters are known as Austin's Woods, named after Stephen F. Austin's pioneer settlement in the region. They are noteworthy, not only for their international significance but also for the way they came to be protected.

In 1999 Texas Parks and Wildlife

(TPW) acquired 6,745 acres of land for the Austin's Woods project in two parcels — coastal marsh and forested wetlands. This was achieved with help from the Dow Chemical Company, the Texas Department of Transportation and the private, nonprofit Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas.

The project added 3,193 acres of coastal marshes for waterfowl to Peach Point, one of 50 wildlife management areas run by TPW for research, demonstration, public hunting, birdwatching and other use. Dow purchased and donated the land to TPW and is funding wetlands enhancement on it as mitigation to offset impacts to wetlands on its plant property nearby.

Just to the west of Peach Point, also in Brazoria County, the project created

TOP PHOTO BY TOM HARVEY; BOTTOM PHOTO BY EARL NOTTINGHAM

Mitigation: How It Works

MITIGATION IS A WAY TO AVOID or reduce adverse impacts to wetlands or other habitat that result from land alteration or development projects. Although conservationists would prefer to avoid environmental impacts in the first place, the reality is that human development is taking place and does cause impacts. Mitigation can allow developers to compensate for the loss of habitat, usually wetlands, and it's become an important tool for conservation in Texas and around the world.

Wetlands sometimes are protected by federal, state and local regulations, such as the federal Clean Water Act, because they are a valuable part of healthy ecosystems, providing flood control, water-quality improvement, erosion control, groundwater recharge and wildlife habitat.

For certain types of development projects that impact wetlands (primarily only those that "fill" wetlands), applicants must first

try to avoid or minimize wetland losses before compensatory mitigation is considered. Compensatory mitigation means creating, enhancing or restoring wetlands. The Dow project for Austin's Woods is an example. After considering alternatives for building more production facilities, the best alternative was consolidation of new development around existing facilities, with wetland compensation off-site.

"Mitigation Banking" is a way to leverage large-scale projects. Instead of developers mitigating for each individual project at or near the project location, mitigation credits can be "banked" by establishing large conservation projects that may cover a region of impacts within a specified area. Instead of a piecemeal approach with lots of little mitigation sites spread all over, conservation planners can add up their chits and focus on big projects in locations where the needs and opportunities are greatest, like Austin's Woods.

Currently Texas has several mitigation banks approved or in various stages of planning. The Coastal Bottomlands Mitigation Bank used with the Texas Department of Transportation for the Austin's Woods effort is an example of mitigation in advance of proposed impacts. Foreseeable, typical transportation projects can potentially be offset by preservation and habitat improvements using the bank if avoidance and minimization won't work.

Like most natural resource issues, mitigation and mitigation banking are not free from controversy. Biologists, regulators and developers continue to search for ways to improve the current system and help protect wetlands.

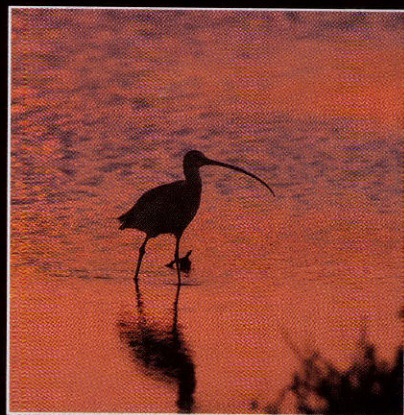
—T.H.



TOP PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION. BOTTOM PHOTO BY EARL NOTTINGHAM



Springtime brings birds and flowers to the woods and wetlands. Among the avian migrants are, from top, the long-billed curlew, blue grosbeak and least bittern.



Enjoying Austin's Woods

THE FACILITIES at Peach Point WMA are more developed than those at the Stringfellow WMA, with a paved road leading to a headquarters complex of buildings. This is where hunters check in, and there are several ways to hunt this coastal wetlands site, which is popular with urbanites from nearby Houston because of the location and low cost. It's best known for waterfowl, but there are also drawn hunts for youth deer and feral hogs.

Every July TPW mails the *Application for Drawings on Public Hunting Lands* booklet free to anyone who requests it. Application forms and instruction are in the booklet to apply for special drawn hunts for limited groups on set dates at all WMAs, including Peach Point. You can buy the \$40 Annual Public Hunting Permit, which gets you into any of TPW's 50 WMAs, at any of the 3,000 hunting license retailers in Texas.

For birders, hikers and picnickers, Peach Point has a picnic area just off Highway 36 west of Freeport. A half-mile paved trail winds away under the oaks. Another two miles of unpaved trail leads through the forest. Peach Point is a designated stop on the



Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail.

There is no cost to use the picnic area and trails near the highway, but you'll need a permit to enter the main area of Peach Point, which has a locked gate and is only accessible at scheduled times. There are several permit options, the least expensive being the \$10 Limited Public Use Permit that you can use to access WMAs like Peach Point year-round for birding, hiking, photography or similar activities. You can also access WMAs with a Texas Conservation Passport or an Annual Public Hunting Permit.

At Nannie M. Stringfellow WMA, there is a proposal in the works to hold public youth hunts for deer, squirrels and feral hogs in fall 2001. Also planned are birding tours of



Stringfellow and Peach Point WMAs in connection with the Lake Jackson Migration Celebration in May 2002.

To get to Peach Point WMA from Houston, head south on U.S. 288 to Freeport, turn right on State Highway 36 and look for the Peach Point entrance sign on the left just before the town of Jones Creek.

For details on either property, phone Todd Merendino in the TPW Wildlife Division, (979) 244-7697, or call the Wildlife Information hotline, (512) 389-4505. For information on birding in Brazoria County, including tours of Stringfellow WMA, call the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, (979) 480-0999.

—T.H.

the new Nannie M. Stringfellow WMA, acquiring 3,552 acres of bottomland forest, a vital but steadily disappearing habitat type. The site will be managed by TPW as a wetland mitigation bank for the Texas Department of Transportation, thus expediting TxDOT's wetlands permit process in the Houston area for the next 20 years.

The two new parcels became part of a mosaic of existing national wildlife refuges and other public and private properties that provide wildlife habitat within the Austin's Woods conservation zone in Brazoria, Wharton, Fort Bend and Matagorda Counties. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service calls this one of the rarest and most threatened ecological areas in the nation.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In the 1820s, when Stephen F. Austin's colonists began settling in the Brazos, San Bernard and Colorado river bottomlands, they found rich hardwood forests growing along the winding rivers, oxbows and the many swamps and creeks. (Fittingly, the new Stringfellow WMA property includes an 1800s cabin built by a tanner in Austin's colony. Peach Point WMA is named for Peach Point Plantation, where Austin family members once lived.) The colonists began clearing the forests for homesites and farmland, a process that has continued to this day. Few people, then or later, realized these coastal woodlands were vital for millions of migratory birds.

Today, the region attracts birders from around the world. Peach Point and Stringfellow WMAs and the San Bernard, Big Boggy and Brazoria National Wildlife Refuges offer close to 90,000 acres of prime habitat. The nonprofit Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, sitting on 32 acres provided by Dow through a no-cost lease, is also here, in Lake Jackson. The observatory is raising money for a new interpretive center and educational facility for youth and adults that will stress the importance of the Austin's Woods region to migratory songbirds and resident birds.

During peak migration in April, binocular-toters thrill to the sights and sounds of northbound migrants like

the scarlet tanager, Blackburnian warbler and painted bunting, which splash a small riot of rain forest hues against the gray-green Texas landscape. According to Cecilia Riley of the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, avid birders are particularly drawn to see several species, such as the Swainson's warbler, that breed almost exclusively in southern bottomland forests.

Even as the region's popularity among birders has soared, an increasing weight of scientific research in recent years has documented how important it is for birds.

In the mid-1990s, Texas A&M University researcher James Webb studied the loss of bottomland forests in the Austin's Woods region. Comparing aerial photographs, he found that forested areas dropped from 305,914 acres in 1979 to 254,269 acres in 1995 — a 16.9 percent dip. Webb also confirmed that "the area is a significant stopover destination and staging area for many neotropical migrants during their migration across the U.S. and the Gulf of Mexico."

The value of this coastal habitat reaches far beyond the state's borders. Dwindling Texas coastal forests are essential stopover habitat for some of the best-loved songbirds that migrate between the Americas. Many of these neotropical migrants, including tiny hummingbirds, fly 600 miles nonstop across the Gulf of Mexico. If there's nowhere for them to hide from predators, and to rest and refuel, these birds might never see Canada or Costa Rica.

For many biologists, the clincher was concentrations of migrating birds at Austin's Woods that were so huge you could see them on weather radar. In 1992, Sidney Gauthreaux, a Clemson University biology professor who heads the school's Radar Ornithology Lab, started work in Texas. "When we first saw it, we had no idea what the habitat was. All we knew was there was something there extremely attractive to migratory birds," Gauthreaux said. "It has since come to represent in my eyes the most important habitat along the entire Texas coast in terms of its intensive structure. It's one of the few places with old-growth woodland coming all

the way up to the Gulf of Mexico. It's a magnet not only for Trans-Gulf migrants, it's also important for birds flying along the Texas coast in spring."

For these reasons, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began to get really interested in the Austin's Woods region. In 1994, the service launched what it then called the Columbia Bottomlands initiative. Initiative partners set a goal to acquire some 28,000 new acres of bottomland forest in the four-county target region and protect a total of 70,000 acres of forest through lease, public ownership or private stewardship.

Although the service intended to acquire land only from willing sellers and never envisioned any condemnation of private property, its well-intentioned plan nevertheless met with apprehension from some locals, who feared a federal land grab. As a result, the plan stalled and was later renamed the Austin's Woods initiative.

With the 1999 acquisitions for Peach Point and Stringfellow WMAs, state and local officials, with help from private industry, were able to move the project forward in a way that showed "Texans Taking Care of Texas." To date, close to 9,000 acres have been acquired through state, federal and private efforts.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Back at Peach Point, on this particular January morning, a wildlife graduate student has set out bait grain trying to lure mottled ducks within range of a capture net. As Merendino and others wait quietly, they spot a loggerhead shrike employing its trademark food storage technique — attempting to impale a large insect on a yaupon twig for later consumption. After banging its prey against the twig repeatedly with no success, the shrike finally gives up and decides to eat the thing then and there. This elicits a chuckle from the observers, who note the relevance of the episode to their own work. Some things just can't be put off, and for the remaining habitat on the Texas coast, tomorrow could be too late. ★

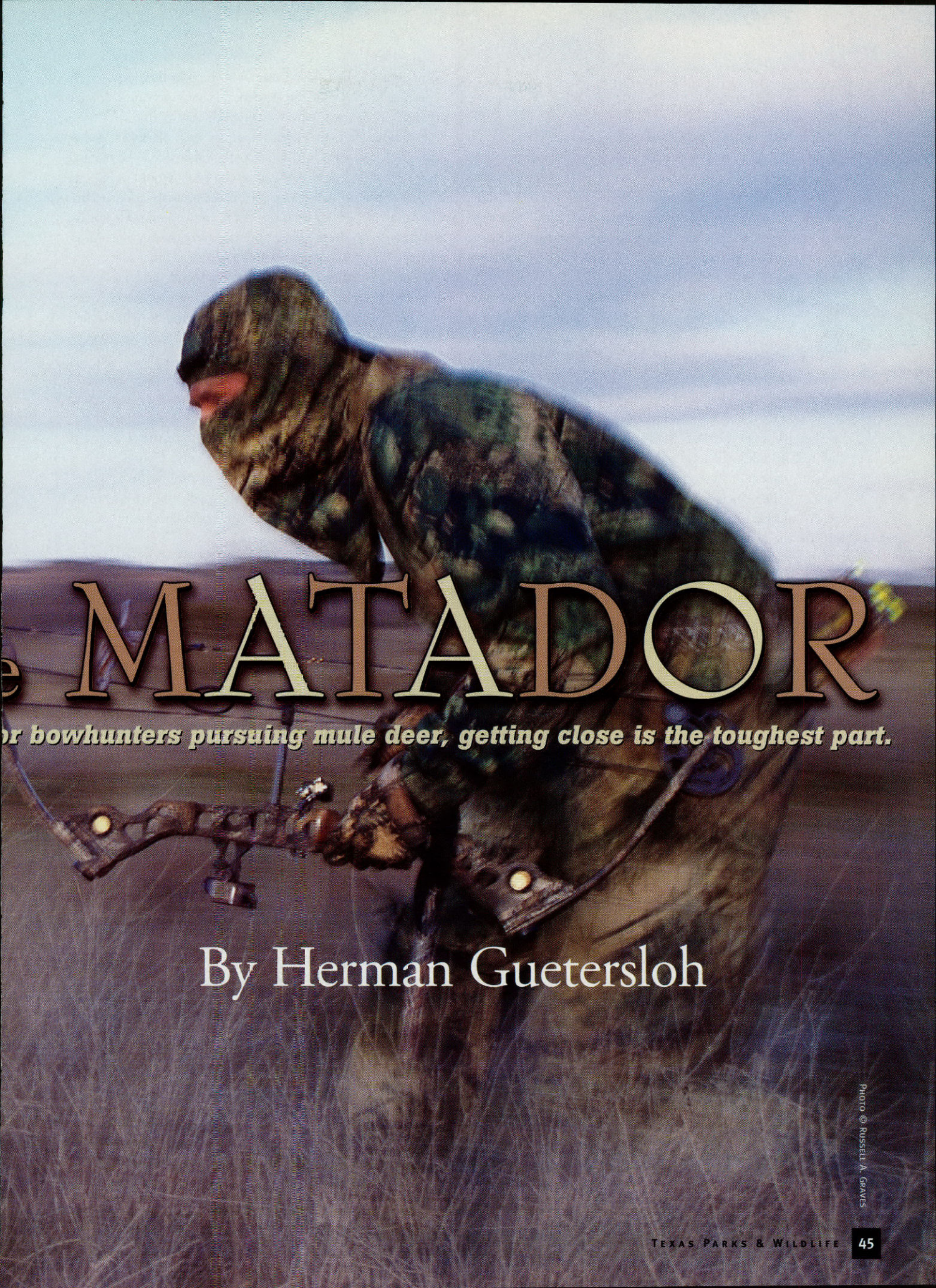
TOM HARVEY, *news and information director at Texas Parks and Wildlife, enjoys both birding and hunting.*

WE RAISE OUR BINOCULARS in the pickup cab and watch a mule deer standing in a patch of shin oak at the Matador Wildlife Management Area near Childress. He stares back with his head high and proud. At about 200 pounds, he is bigger than his cousin, the white-tailed deer, and not as wary. A well-muscled neck supports a large rack with main beams that fork out and extend beyond his mule-like ears. About 30 minutes of light remain on the day before the 1999 archery season at the Matador, and the animal is curious.

MULEYS on the

The 28,000-acre Matador WMA exemplifies the Rolling Plains and

Another pickup eases to a stop behind us, and three sets of binoculars lean out of its cab. Five sets of 50mm eyes now transfix the animal. But the deer soon tires of the game and hops off as if bouncing on a pogo stick. He doesn't stomp and snort or raise his tail when he flees, the way a whitetail would. The pogo gait is a mule deer's defense, biologists say. By hopping on all fours, the animal can survey the entire area as it escapes. Plus, the sound warns the other deer.



the MATADOR

For bowhunters pursuing mule deer, getting close is the toughest part.

By Herman Guetersloh

PHOTO © RUSSELL A. GRAVES

Binoculars

shrink back into the cabs, and Jeff Sechler of Wichita Falls drives us toward camp. Dust trails up from the rear.

Back at camp, a subdivision of tents and camping trailers springs up. A new truck arrives every five minutes. Each time, men wearing camouflage and jeans pop out and stake their turf with foldout picnic tables, barbecue grills, propane stoves, lawn chairs and 160-quart coolers. High winds mask the sounds of work and chatter.

By the end of opening day, 194 bowhunters register at the check-in station. The week will total 265 hunters. (Matador WMA has since begun to limit the number of hunters.)

For bowhunters everywhere, getting close is the tough part — a task especially difficult in the Matador's 28,000 acres of dry, noisy country. For even the most skilled archers, 40 yards is a long shot. The rest of us limit shots to 25 or 30 yards. Yet even at 40 yards, deer see, hear and smell so acutely that the slightest mistake will send an animal darting for cover. This pressures archers to take the first legal animal that lacks the instinct to flee. Such dynamics replicate natural selection to a tee. An old Eskimo saying goes, "The caribou feeds the wolf, but it is the wolf who keeps the caribou strong."

Sechler is an old hand at hunting mule deer in Colorado, though this season marks only his third with a bow. "It changes the way you think," Sechler says as he looks out the window on the way to our afternoon perch. "I've changed my

Some tents lay half folded over, whipping in the wind.

Sechler heads home. So do others, saying no one will have any luck in the high winds. Everybody knows that.

Everybody but the deer. Mid-morning observers gather around 19-year-old Curt Redden of Stephenville as he hangs a mule deer from a tree so the meat can cool. Would-be experts congratulate him and comment on the animal's good health. They draw imaginary lines across the carcass and offer tips on how best to process it. Skin it and trim away the fat, one hunter suggests. Quarter it and stuff it in a cooler, another says.

Three deer hang from trees by day's end, and the camp thins to 16 tents, 10 trailers and as many pickups. A week later, the harvest rises to three mule deer, one white-tailed deer and one feral hog. The high winds had hurt nothing.

Wide-open bowhunting for mule deer is no longer the norm at the Matador, says David Dvorak, Texas Parks and Wildlife area manager. With hunting pressure increasing annually, biologists felt compelled to limit access to randomly drawn hunters. "We didn't like having to restrict access, but our first concern is with the mule deer," says Dvorak.

Mule deer do not breed as early or as prolifically as whitetails, and they're easier to hunt, especially the young ones. Hence a six-point harvest restriction and archery-only tackle, plus a limited number of hunters.

Mule deer's habitat needs are more specific than whitetails'. They prefer open, hilly country where they can see a long way. They thrive in places with widely dispersed forage, such as the canyons of the Rolling Plains. "Mule deer have always

Mule deer prefer open, hilly country where they can see a long way. They thrive in the canyons of the Rolling Plains.

attitude toward hunting. I'm not as greedy as I used to be."

He points out the window to "bowls," or recessed places in the ground where the animals feed. Mule deer hang below the ridge, where they watch for predators and rely on the wind to warn them when danger approaches from the rear.

The trick to hunting mule deer, Sechler says, is to perch on a point of land overlooking an area and spot a deer by using binoculars, then plan a stalk. When in unfamiliar territory, he throws a daypack on his back and scouts game trails. Where the trails intersect, he stops and lays an ambush. "It's more of a real hunt," he says, "more of a stalk. It's fair."

We have no luck the first day, and rumors circulate that night at camp. Someone claims to have seen all kinds of game from Wednesday through Friday, very little on Saturday morning and none the evening of opening day. As always, legal bucks are the first to disappear.

The next morning high winds rock my tent, and the air feels like winter. Deer stay pinned down in such weather, I reason. So I sleep in. When I finally stumble outside, the camp is filled with pickups of those who thought likewise.

been a part of the Rolling Plains," says TPW biologist Jerry Cooke, who wrote his doctoral dissertation on mule deer.

The Matador exemplifies the Rolling Plains, an ecosystem that encompasses the eastern third of the Texas Panhandle and extends below the Caprock to the Hill Country. The country is characterized by mesquite, shin oak, eroding soil and rough, broken terrain. Whitetail and mule deer thrive here. So do tons of hogs, which move along the river bottoms.

Though best-known for hunting opportunities, the Matador, like other Texas WMAs, also serves as a research area. Biologists have undertaken a feral hog study and a quail study. They document the effects of hunting and promote the area for nonconsumptive uses like hiking, bike riding and birding. "It's an untapped resource," Dvorak says.

NOTHING MOVES but the arc of the sun that afternoon. The smell of dust fills the air. I find deer signs by a

A high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicle is required in parts of the rugged Matador WMA.



windmill near a point overlooking the bottoms. Below lies a confidence-shattering labyrinth of rocky ravines. "Where to set up?" I ask myself.

I study the lines on a topographical map and return that afternoon. I brake slowly, ease out of the pickup without slamming the door and walk quietly to a point I had selected. A 30-something man with a beard and a bow walks the same dirt road. He makes no sound.

The wind sings alone as I take up a position and glass the ravines with binoculars. A forkhorn and several does bounce across a recessed area. Brow tines, if he has them, would boost the buck's rack to six points, making it a legal harvest. Several does follow the buck over a ridge, then stop inside the brush along a ridgeline. For a good 20 minutes, three does watch from behind cover for whatever spooked them.

I glass the area and see the bearded hunter still hunting a game trail in the direction from which the deer fled. Two more hunters stand silhouetted on a ridgeline (a big no-no), oblivious to the herd below, and point to who knows what.

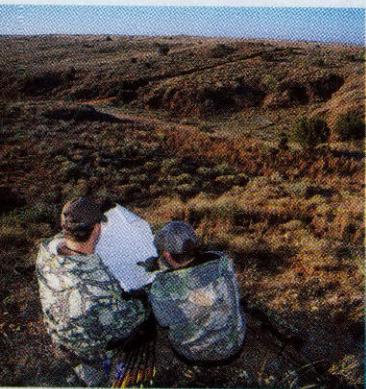
I back out and try to cut off the herd from another direction. I want to get close. I want to see if the buck has four points or six. If it has six, then the serious work will begin. I will watch from a distance and wait for them to bed down, then spend hours getting within 35 yards, the farthest shot I dare risk. But by the time I make it around the ridge, the herd is long gone. Frustrated, I head back to camp.

"It just takes time and experience," Jay Perrotta says during lunch. This year marks the first trip to the Matador for Perrotta and his hunting partner, Charlie Yocum, both from Clyde. They shoot recurves and say they teach archery to 4-H youths. The heavy hunting pressure on public lands doesn't bother them. "Naw, we like it," Yocum says, as he leans against his van and turns to Perrotta. "Don't we, Jay?" They say they let the crowd work for them and ignore the conventional wisdom of other hunters. "You see people who think that the farther they get from the road the better," Perrotta says. "But everybody does that."

They usually hunt Lake Meredith National Recreation Area, open-access public land about 20 minutes from Amarillo. Last year, they found a spot where other hunters drove deer right to them.

ONE AFTERNOON, Jim Ramos from Wichita Falls invites me to ride with him to a point neither of us have tried. He clears assorted gear from the passenger seat of his pickup. He keeps a GPS device in his pocket and spare camouflage clothing behind the seat. Three sets of gloves decorate his dashboard. "I don't get to go hunting much," he says, "so I want to make sure I have enough gear when I go."

We crouch inside cedar bushes on one of Matador's highest points, overlooking mesquite flats where game trails wind through the brush. From a sharper and sharper angle, the sun penetrates the shadows. In a draw below, two does and a fawn walk in the shade. They move around and then behind mesquite trees and disappear beneath the canopy. Mule deer country is like that. Somewhere between the high and low altitude lies a plane of green that indicates where roots reach the water table below the ground. In the deepest, greenest



"Bowhunting for mule deer is more of a stalk,

The Middle Pease River runs the length of Matador WMA; it and its side canyons harbor a wide variety of wildlife.

parts, deer signs are the thickest.

The wind dies, and sounds carry for miles. We dare not move. As the day loses strength, colors grow more vivid. Yellow flowers dot the landscape, and all shades of green rise from the earth to compete for the last rays of sunlight. A bright orange bluff turns deep red, then brown. The sky bleeds red and dies.

The next morning I find Ramos sitting at a folding table inside a cabin-size tent. Clean-cut with dark hair and trim moustache, he is eating scrambled eggs and sausage. A propane stove sits in an alcove, and a lantern hangs from the tent frame. He admits to sleeping in. The night has been rough with “raunchy snoring” coming from a tent next door and with camp neighbors complaining half the night about a noisy generator.

“Besides, it’s my vacation,” he says between bites. Then he offers me eggs and lukewarm coffee. “It won’t take long to reheat it,” he says. “I like it best lukewarm.”

A week later, Ramos and his future father-in-law stumble onto all kinds of mule deer just off dirt roads, he tells me. They almost got off a shot, he says. “We were trying too hard,” he admits.

He would appreciate what Robert Ruark had to say in *The Old Man and the Boy*: “The best part of hunting and fishing was the thinking about going and the talking about it after you got back.” ★

HERMAN GUETERSLOH is a Missouri-based freelance writer who grew up hunting and fishing in Texas.

Getting the Lowdown on Public Hunts

HUNTING PUBLIC LANDS can be frustrating, especially on draw hunts. By the time you scout and learn where you should be hunting, the hunt is over.

The Official Guide to Texas Wildlife Management Areas is a partial solution to that problem. Based on visits to all 50 Texas wildlife management areas and interviews with biologists and hunters, the book discusses the species available for hunting on each area and suggests the best places to hunt and methods to use. The book is available online from tpwpress.com or by calling (800) 252-3206. The cost is \$29.95 plus tax and shipping.

Purchasers of a \$40 Annual Public Hunting Permit receive a map booklet showing all the public hunting areas offering access under the permit. Persons interested in applying for draw hunts may obtain a free application booklet by calling TPW at (800) 792-1112 (menu choice 5, selection 1) or by visiting a TPW office. Information for the coming season is generally available after July 1 each year. Application forms that may be printed out and mailed are also available online at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/hunt/newphs/welcome.htm.

—Larry D. Hodge



says one hunter. “It’s fair.”



MASTER of CAMOUFLAGE

Beware! A copperhead's rust- to copper-colored pattern makes it difficult to distinguish among shadows and leaf litter.

By R. Michael Burger

IN A SECLUDED STAND of red oak, colors come alive as sunlight slowly filters downward through the canopy. Shadows begin to develop into a complex pattern of silhouettes, while the slightly crisp aroma of oak leaves permeates the quiet, moist air. Within this tranquil setting, however, a venomous inhabitant of our Texas woodlands is carefully concealed.

Three subspecies of copperhead, each variable in color and markings, are found within the boundaries of our state. In eastern Texas, the southern copperhead, *Agkistrodon contortrix contortrix*, can be recognized by its distinctive reddish-brown bands, which taper toward the spine, suggesting a dumbbell or hourglass shape. From the Red River south through the Hill Country and the Gulf Coast lives the broad-banded copperhead, *Agkistrodon c. lativinctus*. As its common name suggests, this snake has broad, reddish-brown bands. Perhaps the most attractive of all the subspecies is the Trans-Pecos copperhead, *Agkistrodon c. pictigaster*. Ranging from Val Verde County westward through the Davis Mountains and the Big Bend region, this snake superficially resembles the broad-banded copperhead but is considerably richer in tone and has a strikingly patterned dark belly. Averaging about two feet in length, the largest copperhead thus far recorded from the state is four feet, four inches, according to Texas Parks and Wildlife herpetologist Andrew H. Price, author of *Poisonous Snakes of Texas*.

Occasionally referred to as the dry-land moccasin, high-

stepped on, set on, or touched an unseen snake. While considerably less dangerous than its closest relative, the water moccasin, a copperhead has a severe bite that may produce local pain, swelling, hemorrhaging, edema and nausea. Anyone unfortunate enough to receive a bite should immediately seek medical attention.

Although the copperhead has heat-sensitive facial pits that give it the ability to detect warm-blooded prey, it will consume almost anything. Mice are preferred, but it will eat insects, birds, frogs, lizards and snakes. At Davis Blowout Cave in Blanco County and Bonnie Hills Ranch Cave in Kerr County, copperheads capture free-tailed bats. John Werler, former director of the Houston Zoo, found a number of copperheads in trees bordering the Colorado River near Wharton. At heights of 20 to 40 feet, these predominantly terrestrial snakes apparently were seeking one of their favorite seasonal foods — recently emerged cicadas.

Males often mate with a number of females throughout the spring, and sometimes engage with other males in confrontations known as combat bouts. Similar to the aggressive interactions seen between bighorn sheep or deer, these wrestling-like bouts help establish dominance for reproductive purposes. Females give birth from July through October to an average of four to eight young, though as many as 21 have been recorded in a single litter. The young are delivered in membrane-like sacs and are confronted immediately with a cold, harsh fact: they must fend for themselves. Luckily, at

[A copperhead *may lie motionless on a trail while hikers walk over it.*]

land moccasin, rattlesnake pilot, red eye, thunder snake, or *zoluata* (in Spanish), the copperhead is relatively well known in the eastern, central and southwestern sections of Texas. Frequently observed close to human habitation, it can be remarkably abundant in certain areas. A single acre of prime deciduous forest-meadow in Central Texas may support as many as seven copperheads, according to Alan Tennant, author of *A Field Guide to Texas Snakes*. In other parts of the state, it is one of the most commonly seen venomous snakes.

Considered cold-blooded by most, the copperhead is more correctly termed a poikilotherm, an animal that maintains a variable body temperature that is usually higher than the temperature of its environment. Primarily observed in the daylight hours during the spring and fall, it becomes predominantly nocturnal as the heat of the summer draws close. With a penchant for favoring cool, damp conditions, the copperhead occasionally will take to water. Seasonally active, the copperhead is known to overwinter in communal dens, often hibernating with other snakes such as rattlesnakes, water moccasins, racers and rat snakes.

The copperhead's rust- to copper-colored pattern makes it difficult to distinguish from leaves and other ground cover. A copperhead may lie motionless on a trail while hikers walk over it. Bites have been reported by those who have

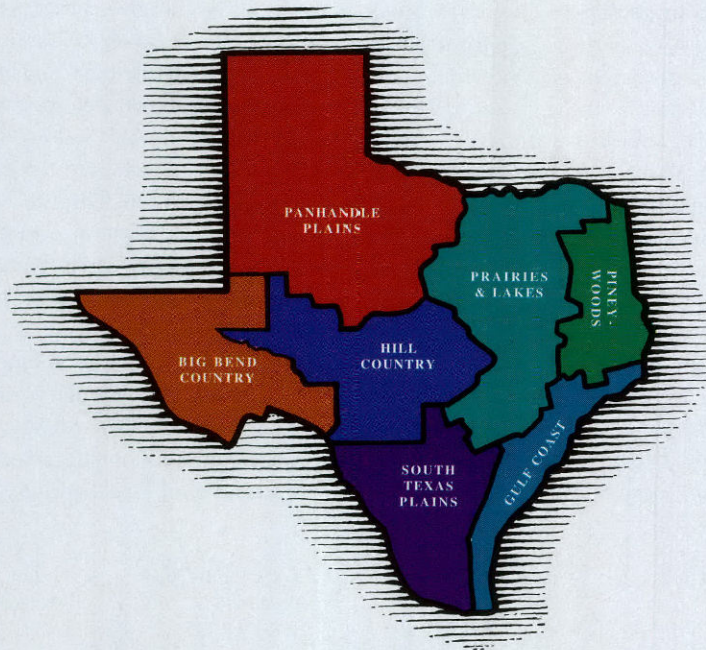
least from a copperhead's perspective, the neonates are born fully functional and capable of injecting venom.

The copperhead is deeply entrenched in American history and folklore. During the Civil War, Southern sympathizers living in the North were known as Copperheads — a name based on the common belief that copperhead snakes were stealthy and treacherous. An old tale still occasionally heard involves the mistaken belief that a copperhead will swallow its young in order to protect them. Because the copperhead gives birth to living young, this bit of lore probably originated when live young were discovered in the bodies of freshly killed females. Another fictitious belief is that recently slaughtered copperheads will wriggle their tails until sundown. Snakes have a reflex action that remains viable for an extended span of time, but is not linked to any particular period of the day. The musk that a copperhead expels when alarmed has been compared to the smell of cucumbers. While this serpent does indeed have a distinctive odor, its musk can be more appropriately described as pungent or disagreeable.

A considerable number of people are bitten each year while trying to kill a snake. What's the best offense against copperhead bites? Simply a good defense. Wear protective clothing, pay attention to the ground ahead of you — and leave these reclusive copper beauties alone. ★

GETAWAYS

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



BIG BEND COUNTRY

JUNE EVENTS

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

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

June: Pictograph Tours, every Saturday and Sunday, Hueco Tanks SHS, El Paso, (915) 849-6684.

June: Fate Bell Cave Dwelling Tour, every Wednesday through Sunday, Seminole Canyon SHS, Comstock, (915) 292-4464.

June: Fishing on the Rio Grande, call for more information during business hours, Black Gap WMA, Brewster County, (915) 376-2216.

June: Desert Garden Tours, call for dates and times, Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center, Terlingua, (915) 424-3327.

June: Tour Phantom Cave Springs and San Solomon Cienega, by reservation only, Balmorhea SP, Toyahvale, (915) 375-2370.

June: Trail Ride, call for more information during business hours, Black Gap WMA, Brewster County, (915) 376-2216.

June 2, 3, 16, 17: Guided Tours, Franklin Mountains SP, El Paso, (915) 566-6441

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

June 9: Panther Cave Boat Tour, Seminole Canyon SHS, Comstock, (915) 292-4464.

June 10: Upper Canyon Tour, Seminole Canyon SHS, Comstock, (915) 292-4464.

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

June 22: Ice Cream and Bats, Fort Leaton SHS, Presidio, (915) 229-3613.

JULY EVENTS

July: Pictograph Tours, every Saturday & Sunday, Hueco Tanks SHS, El Paso, (915) 849-6684.

July: Bouldering Tours, every Saturday & Sunday, Hueco Tanks SHS, El Paso, (915) 849-6684.

July: Amphitheater Programs, every Wednesday through Saturday, Davis Mountains SP, Fort Davis, (915) 426-3897.

July: Maravillas Canyon-Rio Grande Equestrian Trail Ride, call for dates, Black Gap WMA, Brewster County, (915) 376-2216.

July: Fishing on the Rio

Grande, call for dates, Black Gap WMA, Brewster County, (915) 376-2216.

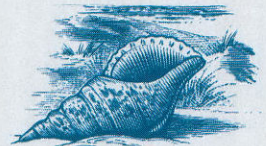
July: Desert Garden Tours, by reservation only, Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center, Terlingua, (915) 424-3327.

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

July 7-8, 21-22: Guided Tours, Franklin Mountains SP, El Paso, (915) 566-6441.

July 14: Stories of Spirits, Magoffin Home SHS, El Paso, (915) 533-5147.

July 15: Bird Identification Tours, Hueco Tanks SHS, El Paso, (915) 849-6684.



GULF COAST

JUNE EVENTS

June: Plantation house, barn and grounds tours, Wednesdays through Sundays, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHS, West Columbia, (979) 345-4656.

June: Weekend Nature Programs, most weekends, Lake Texana SP, Edna, (361) 782-5718.

June: Nature Programs, every weekend, Brazos Bend SP, Needville, (979) 553-5101.

June 2: Fishing at Sea Center on National Fishing Day, Sea Center Texas, Lake Jackson, (979) 292-0100.

June 8, 10: Beachcombing and Shelling Tour, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, (361) 983-2215.

June 9: History Tours, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, (361) 983-2215.

June 16: Flag Retirement Ceremony, Lake Texana SP, Edna, (361) 782-5718.

JULY EVENTS

July: Plantation house, barn and grounds tours, Wednesdays through Sundays, Varner-Hogg Plantation SHS, West Columbia, (979) 345-4656.

July: Nature Programs, every weekend, Brazos Bend SP, Needville, (979) 553-5101.

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

July 1, 19, 20: Beachcombing Tour, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, (361) 983-2215.

July 4: Fourth of July Fun Day, Lake Texana SP, Edna, (361) 782-5718.

July 21: History Tour, Matagorda Island SP & WMA, Port O'Connor, (361) 983-2215.



HILL COUNTRY

JUNE EVENTS

June: Guided Tour, every Saturday, Honey Creek SNA, Spring Branch, (830) 438-2656.

June: Wild Cave Tour, call for dates and times, Kickapoo Cavern SP, Brackettville, (830) 563-2342.

June: Birding at Kickapoo, call for dates and times, Kickapoo Cavern SP, Brackettville, (830) 563-2342.

June: Bat Flights at Stuart Bat Cave, call for dates and times, Kickapoo Cavern SP, Brackettville, (830) 563-2342.

June: Sinkhole Bat Flight Tour, call for dates and times, Devil's Sinkhole SNA, Brackettville, (830) 563-2342.

June: Stumpy Hollow Mystery Hike, every Saturday, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, (512) 793-2223.

June: Gorman Falls Tour, every Saturday and Sunday, weather and resources permitting,

Colorado Bend SP, Bend, (915) 628-3240.

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

June: Flying with the Freetails, every Thursday and Saturday, Old Tunnel WMA, Comfort, (830) 644-2478.

June: Birdwatching, daily, Pedernales Falls SP, Johnson City, (830) 868-7304.

June 2: National Trails Day, X Bar Ranch, Eldorado, (888) 853-2688.

June 2, 9: Crawling Cave Tour, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, (915) 628-3240.

June 2: Birdwatching Walks, Kerrville-Schreiner SP, Kerrville, (830) 257-5392.

June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Close Encounters of a Natural Kind, Kerrville-Schreiner SP, Kerrville, (830) 257-5392.

June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Let Us Gather At the River, riverside entertainment, Kerrville-Schreiner SP, Kerrville, (830) 257-5392.

June 7, 14, 21, 28: Devil's Waterhole Canoe Tour, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, (512) 793-2223.

June 16: Watching the Wild, Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve, Austin, (512) 327-7622.

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

June 18: Austin Fly Fishers meeting, Austin, (512) 916-4393.

June 19: Hill Country Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association membership meeting, New Braunfels, (830) 905-2589.

June 30: Island Assault 1944, National Museum of the Pacific War SHS (Admiral Nimitz), Fredericksburg, (830) 997-4379.

June 30: Dinner Series, X Bar Ranch, Eldorado, (888) 853-2688.

JULY EVENTS

July: Kickapoo Cavern Tour, by reservation only, Kickapoo Cavern SP, Brackettville, (830) 563-2342.

July: Let Us Gather at the River, every Saturday, Kerrville-Schreiner SP, Kerrville, (830) 257-5392.

July: Close Encounters of a Natural Kind, every Saturday, Kerrville-Schreiner SP, Kerrville, (830) 257-5392.

July: Wild Cave Tour, every Thursday through Saturday, Longhorn Cavern SP, Burnet, (877) 441-2283 or (512) 756-4680.

July: Flying with the Freetails, every Thursday & Saturday, Old Tunnel WMA, Comfort, (830) 644-2478.

July: Geology Programs, every Thursday, Longhorn Cavern SP, Burnet, (877) 441-2283 or (512) 756-4680.

July: Mountain Biking for Beginners, every Monday, Kerrville-Schreiner SP, Kerrville, (830) 896-6864.

July: Somethin' Fishy Going On, every Saturday, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, (512) 793-2223.

July: Honey Creek Tour, every Saturday, Honey Creek SNA, Spring Branch, (830) 438-2656.

July: Saturday Evening Programs, every Saturday, Guadalupe River SP, Spring Branch, (830) 438-2656.

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

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

July: Stumpy Hollow Mystery Hike, every Saturday, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, (512) 793-2223.

July: Guided Hiking Trail Tours, every Saturday, Longhorn Cavern SP, Burnet, (877) 441-2283 or (512) 756-4680.

July: Birdwatching, daily, Pedernales Falls SP, Johnson City, (830) 868-7304.

July 1: Island Assault 1944 Living History Program, National Museum of the Pacific War SHS (Admiral Nimitz), Fredericksburg, (830) 997-4379.

July 4, 7-8: Summer Bike Ride, X Bar Ranch, Eldorado, 888-853-2688.

July 5, 12, 19, 26: Devils Waterhole Canoe Tour, Inks Lake SP, Burnet, (512) 793-2223.

July 7: Crawling Wild Cave Tour, Colorado Bend SP, Bend, (915) 628-3240.

July 13: Dinner Show, X Bar Ranch, Eldorado, (888) 853-2688.

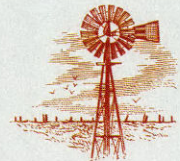
July 14: 2001 Southwestern

Tour-Austin Cowboys of Color Rodeo, Austin, Texas, (817) 922-9999.

July 16: Austin Fly Fishers meeting, Austin, (512) 916-4393.

July 17: Hill Country Chapter, Coastal Conservation Association membership meeting, New Braunfels, (830) 905-2589.

July 21: Enchanted Rock Trail Project Day, Enchanted Rock SNA, Fredericksburg, (512) 445-3862.



PANHANDLE PLAINS

JUNE EVENTS

June: "Texas," every Thursday through Tuesday, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 655-2181 or (806) 488-2227.

June: Worship Service, every Sunday, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June: Palo Duro Pioneers, every Saturday, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June: Llama Treks, by reservation only through Jordan Llamas, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, (915) 651-7346.

June 1: Canyon Chat, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 2: Free Fishing Day, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, (806) 455-1492.

June 2: National Trails Day Hike, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, (806) 455-1492.

June 2: Free Fishing Day, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, (940) 839-4331.

June 2: National Trails Day Observance, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, (940) 839-4331.

June 2: Petroglyph Tour, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, (915) 949-8935.

June 2, 9, 16, 23: Sunset Nature Walks, Big Spring SP, Big Spring, (915) 263-4931.

June 2, 23: River Walk, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.


Continued on page 57

So, what
does *your*
summer
look like?

Come and see what you've been missing! Texas has more than 120 diverse state parks to explore. Whether you like to camp, fish, hike, observe wildlife, visit historical landmarks or just relax outdoors, we've got the park for you. So, this summer take the whole family to a Texas State Park. You'll be glad you did!



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STATE PARK



MOTHER NEFF
STATE PARK



LAKE BROWNWOOD
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SANDHILLS
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Call (800) 792-1112 for more information,
(512) 389-8900 for campsite reservations
or visit www.tpwd.state.tx.us

TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS



The Front Line of News and Views

TELEVISION

Look for These Stories in the Coming Weeks:

May 27 – June 3:

Tracking bats; college students learning about wildlife research; a Fire Ant Festival; the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens.

June 3 – 10:

Outdoor heritage of East Texas; a trail for folks with disabilities; birdwatching at the dump; a West Texas spring goes dry.

June 10 – 17:

A summer camp for kids battling cancer; Olympic coach Bela Karolyi at his Texas ranch.

June 17 – 24:

Wildlife photographer Wyman Meinzer; fishing despite freezing weather; wildlife rehab in suburban Houston.

June 24 – July 1:

Saving Balmorhea Spring; a turkey decoy that deters poaching; a dad who hunts with his four young sons.

"TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE"

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



Brazos Bend State Park's special nature trail will be featured the week of June 3.

Amarillo: KACV, Ch. 2 / Sat. 5:30 p.m.

Austin: KLRU, Ch. 18 / Sun. 10 a.m. / Mon. 12:30 p.m. KLRU-TOO, Cable Ch. 20 / Tues. 11 p.m., 12 p.m.

Bryan-College Station: KAMU, Ch. 15 / Thurs. 7 p.m. / Tues. 10 p.m. & 11:30 p.m.

Corpus Christi: KEDT, Ch. 16 / Sun. 11 a.m. / Thurs. 10 a.m.

El Paso: KCOS, Ch. 13 / Sat. 5:30 p.m. (check local listing)

Harlingen: KMBH, Ch. 60 / Thurs. 8:30 p.m. / Sun. 12:30 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. 4 p.m.

Also serving Temple

Lubbock: KTXT, 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

San Antonio & Laredo: KLRN, Ch. 9 / Wed. 4 p.m. / Thur. noon

Waco: KWBU, Ch. 34 / Sat. 3 p.m.

Schedules are subject to change, so check local listings.

RADIO

"PASSPORT TO TEXAS"

Your Radio Guide to the Great Texas Outdoors

Join Joel Block weekdays for a 90-second Journey into the Texas Outdoors. Producer Kathleen Jenkins. Check this listing for a station near you or tune in on our Web site:

www.passporttotexas.com

Abilene: KACU-FM 89.7 / 7:06 a.m. & 1:44, 6:01 p.m., KWKC-AM 1340 / TBA

Alexandria, La.: KLSA-FM 90.7 / 5:33 a.m.

Alpine: KSRC-FM 92.7 / Thurs. – Sat. 9 p.m.

Amarillo: KACV-FM 89.9 / 11:20 a.m.

Austin: KUT-FM 90.5 / 1:58 p.m., (12:58 p.m. Fr.), KVET-AM 1300 / 6:15 a.m. (Sat.) • *Austin American-Statesman's* Inside Line 512-416-5700 category 6287 (NATR)

Beaumont: KLVI-AM 560 / 5:20 a.m.

Big Spring: KBST-AM 1490 / 6:40 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: KDET-AM 930 / 5:15 p.m.

Coleman: KSTA-AM 1000 / 5:15 p.m.

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.

SIGHTS & SOUNDS

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: KMRE-FM 95.3 / 10:30 a.m., KDDD-AM 800 / 10:30 a.m.
Eagle Pass: KINL-FM 92.7 / 7:15 a.m.
Eastland: KEAS-AM 1590 / 5:51 a.m. & 5:51 p.m., KATX-FM 97.7 / 5:51 a.m. & 5:51 p.m.
El Campo: KULP-AM 1390 / 2:00 p.m.
El Dorado, Ark.: KBSM-FM 90.9 / 5:33 a.m.
El Paso: KXCR-FM 89.5 / 1:20 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.
Gainesville: KGAF-AM 1580 / 7:00 a.m.
Galveston: KGBC-AM 1540 / 11:45 a.m.
Greenville: KGVJ-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.
Lufkin: KLDN-FM 88.9 / 5:33 a.m.
Malakoff: KLVQ-AM 1410 / 6:45 a.m.
Marshall: KCUL-AM 1410 / 7:10 a.m., KCUL-FM 92.3 / 7:10 a.m.
McAllen: KHID-FM 88.1 / 4:58 p.m.
Mesquite: KEOM-FM 88.5 / 5:30 a.m. & 2:30, 8:30 p.m. M-Th. (5:30 a.m. & 4:45 p.m. Fr.)
Midland: KCRS-AM 550 / 6:43 a.m. & 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.
Palestine: KLIS-FM 96.7 / 6:20 a.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.)
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Victoria: KVRT-FM 90.7 / 5:34 p.m., KTXN-FM 98.7 / 6:50 a.m.
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Continued from page 53

June 5, 19, 26: Sunset Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 6: Canyon Heritage, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 8, 27: Night Noises, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 9: Smilin' Sunshine Adventure, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, (940) 256-0769 or (940) 839-4331.

June 9, 23: Dinosaur Walk, San Angelo SP, (915) 949-8935.

June 9, 30: Nature Challenge, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 13, 29: Canyon Critters, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 15: Wildflower Safari, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 16: Family Nature Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 16: Dark Sky Viewing, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, (806) 455-1492.

June 16: Longhorn and Bison Seminar, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, (915) 949-8935.

June 16: Birding 101, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, (806) 455-1492.

June 20: Canyon Rock, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 22: Trail Talk, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

June 23: Stargazing, Big Spring SP, Big Spring, (915) 263-4931.

June 23: Starwalk, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, (940) 839-4331.

June 30: Evening Interpretive Presentation, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, (806) 455-1492.

JULY EVENTS

July: "Texas," every Thursday through Tuesday, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 655-2181 or (806) 488-2227.

July: Llama Treks, by reservation only through Jordan Llamas, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, (915) 651-7346.

July: Worship Service, every

Sunday, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 4, 14: Nature Challenge, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 6: Canyon Critters, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 6, 20: Fireside Tales, Abilene SP, Tuscola, (915) 572-3204.

July 7: Trailway Adventure, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, (806) 455-1492.

July 7: Petroglyph Tour, San Angelo SP, (915) 949-4757.

July 7, 14, 21, 28: Palo Duro Pioneers, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 7, 28: Family Nature Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 10, 17, 24, 31: Sunset Hike, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 11: Insects of the Canyon, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 13: Wildflower Safari, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 14, 28: Dinosaur Walk, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, (915) 949-4757.

July 18, 27: Canyon Heritage, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 20: Trail Talk, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 21: Star Walk, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, (940) 839-4331.

July 21: Longhorn and Bison Seminar, San Angelo SP, San Angelo, (915) 949-8935.

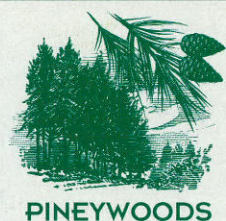
July 21: River Walk, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 21-31: Annual Summer Art Exhibition, Copper Breaks SP, Quanah, (940) 839-4331.

July 25: Bat Mania, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Canyon, (806) 488-2227.

July 28: Evening Interpretive Presentation, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, (806) 455-1492.

July 28: Kids' Day, Caprock Canyons SP & Trailway, Quitaque, (806) 455-1492.



PINEYWOODS

JUNE EVENTS

June 2: 11th Annual Kids' Fish Flop Tournament, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, (409) 384-5231.

June 2: Kids Fish, Tyler State Park, Tyler, (903) 597-5338.

June 2, 16: Steam Engine Shop Tours, Texas State Railroad SHS, Rusk, (800) 442-8951 or (903) 683-2561 outside Texas.

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

June 8, 22: Slide Presentation, Village Creek SP, Lumberton, (409) 755-7322.

June 9: Defensive Camping, Tyler SP, Tyler, (903) 597-5338.

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

June 16: Guided Nature Hike, Tyler SP, Tyler, (903) 597-5338.

June 16, 30: Guided Nature Trail Hike, Village Creek SP, Lumberton, (409) 755-7322.

June 30: Campfire Program, Tyler SP, Tyler, (903) 597-5338.

JULY EVENTS

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

July 6, 20: Slide Presentation, Village Creek SP, Lumberton, (409) 755-7322.

July 7, 21: Steam Engine Shop Tours, Texas State Railroad SHS, Rusk, (800) 442-8951 or (903) 683-2561 outside Texas.

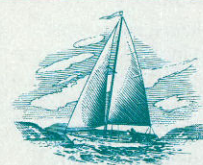
July 14, 28: Guided Nature Trail Hike, Village Creek SP, Lumberton, (409) 755-7322.

July 21: Floating the Forks, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, (409) 384-5231.

July 21: Texas Big Game Awards Regional Banquet, Lufkin, Texas, (800) 839-9453 extension 114.

July 28: Campfire Programs, Martin Dies, Jr. SP, Jasper, (409) 384-5231.

June 30: Campfire Program, Tyler SP, (903) 597-5338.



PRAIRIES AND LAKES

JUNE EVENTS

June: Guided Tours, every weekend, Fanthorp Inn SHS, Anderson, (936) 873-2633.

June: Historic and Scenic Tour, by reservation for groups of 10 or more, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, LaGrange, (979) 968-5658.

June: Kreische Brewery Tours, Saturday and Sunday, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, (979) 968-5658.

June 2: Kids' Fishing Day, Cooper Lake SP/South Sulphur Unit, Sulphur Springs, (903) 945-5256.

June 2: Fish and Play Day, Purtil Creek SP, Eustace, (903) 425-2332.

June 3, 10: Kreische House Tours, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, LaGrange, (979) 968-5658.

June 8: Workshop for Teachers of Gifted and Talented, McKinney Roughs (LCRA), Bastrop, (800) 776-5272 ext. 8004 or (512) 912-7025.

June 8-10: Texas Equestrian Expo, Belton, (254) 933-5353.

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

June 9: Night Sounds, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, (940) 328-1171.

June 9-10: A Country Fair, Washington-on-the-Brazos SHS, Washington, (936) 878-2213.

June 9, 23: Guided Nature Hike, Cooper Lake SP/Doctors Creek Unit, Cooper, (903) 395-3100.

June 16: Guided Nature Hike, Cooper Lake SP/South Sulphur Unit, (903) 945-5256.

June 16: Stargazing — Beginning Astronomy, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, (940) 328-1171.

June 23: Cowboy Campfire, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, (940) 328-1171.

June 30: Kids' Wilderness Survival, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, (940) 328-1171.



JULY EVENTS

July: Guided Tours, every weekend, Fanthorp Inn SHS, Anderson, (936) 873-2633.

July: Nature, Education and Interpretive Programs, call for dates, Lake Somerville SP & Trailway/Birch Creek Unit, Somerville, (979) 535-7763.

July: Nature, Education and Interpretive Programs, call for dates, Lake Somerville SP & Trailway/Nails Creek Unit, Ledbetter, (979) 289-2392.

July: Weekend Programs, every Saturday, Cedar Hill SP, Cedar Hill, (972) 291-3900.

July: Historic and Scenic Tours, available by reservation only to groups of 10 or more, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, LaGrange, (979) 968-5658.

July: Kreische Brewery Tours, every Saturday & Sunday, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, LaGrange, (979) 968-5658.

July 4, 8: Kreische House Tours, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, LaGrange, (979) 968-5658.

July 3: Cowboy Campfire –

Music and Poetry, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, (940) 327-8950.

July 4: HEB Presents Fireworks on the Brazos, Washington-on-the-Brazos SHS, Washington, (936) 878-2214.

July 7: Guided Nature Hike, Cooper Lake SP/South Sulphur Unit, Sulphur Springs, (903) 945-5256.

July 7: Night Sounds, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, (940) 327-8950.

July 8: Summer Evening Concert and Picnic Series, Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS, LaGrange, (979) 968-5658.

July 9-11: Texas Buffalo Soldiers-Cowboys of Color Trail Ride, McKinney Roughs (LCRA), Bastrop, (512) 912-7113.

July 10-13, 17-20: Fish Camp, Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, Athens, (903) 676-BASS.

July 11-13, 18-20, 25-27: Junior Ranger Camp, Washington-on-the-Brazos SHS, Washington, (936) 878-2214.

July 14: Kids' Wilderness Survival, Lake Mineral Wells SP & Trailway, Mineral Wells, (940)

328-1171.

July 14: Stagecoach Days, Fanthorp Inn SHS, Anderson, (936) 873-2633.

July 14-15: Taste of Days Gone By, Sebastopol SHS, Seguin, (830) 379-4833.

July 15: Hi-Tech Adventure Race, Cedar Hill SP, Cedar Hill, (817) 707-8866.

July 21: Guided Nature Hike, Cooper Lake SP/Doctors Creek Unit, Cooper, (903) 395-3100.

July 28: Texas Big Game Awards Regional Banquet, Fort Worth, Texas, (800) 839-9453, extension 114.

June 23: 2001 Southwestern Tour — San Antonio Cowboys of Color Rodeo, Freeman Coliseum, San Antonio, (817) 922-9999.

June 23: Texas Big Game Awards Regional Banquet, San Antonio, (800) 839-9453 ext. 114.

JULY EVENTS

July: Fish Camp for Kids, call for dates, Coletto Creek Reservoir and Park, Fannin, (361) 645-1227.

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



SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

JUNE EVENTS

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

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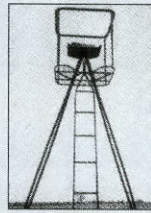
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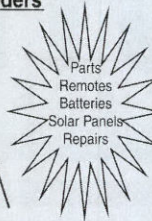
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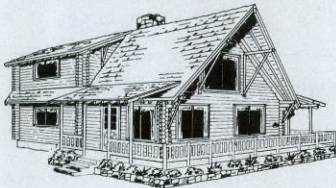
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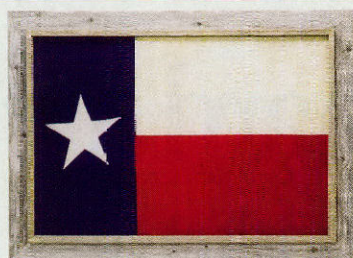


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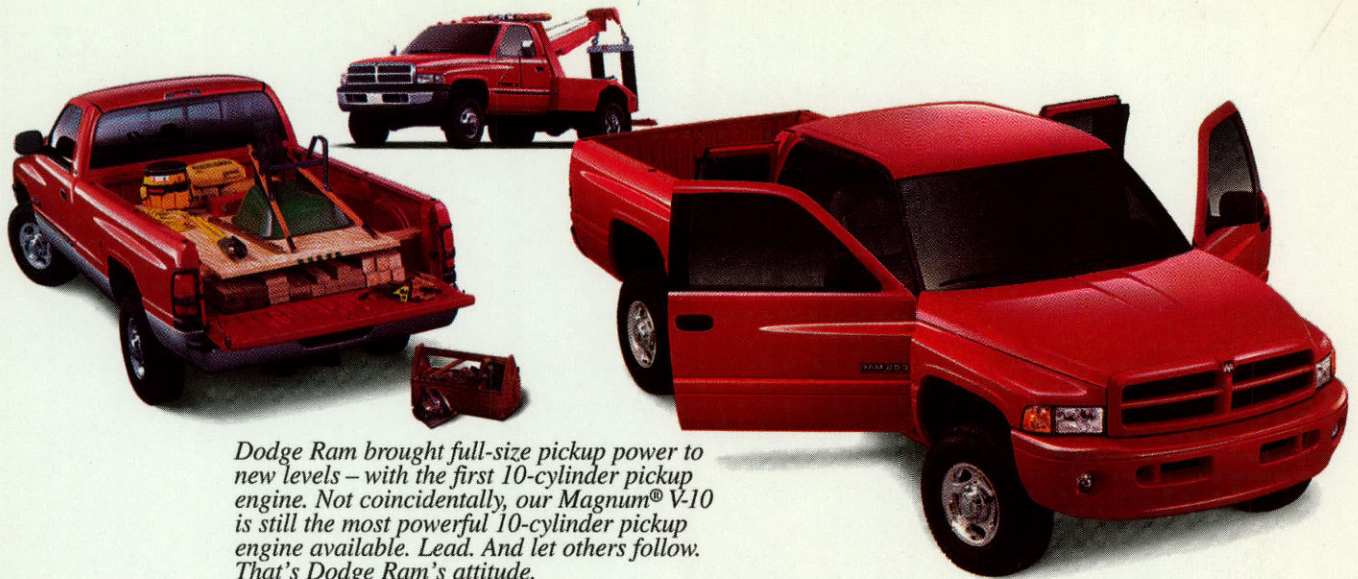


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PARTINGSHOT

Teaching a child to fish is an investment in a lifetime of pleasure, and our article in this issue offers some tips to help you get started with the youngsters in your life. This eight-year-old boy has taken his elders' love of the sport to heart, and is striking off on his own on this summer day.





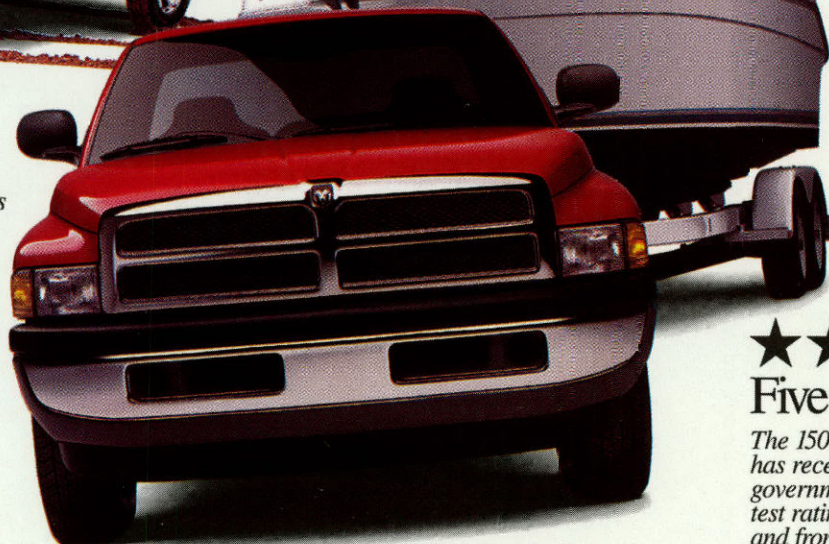
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