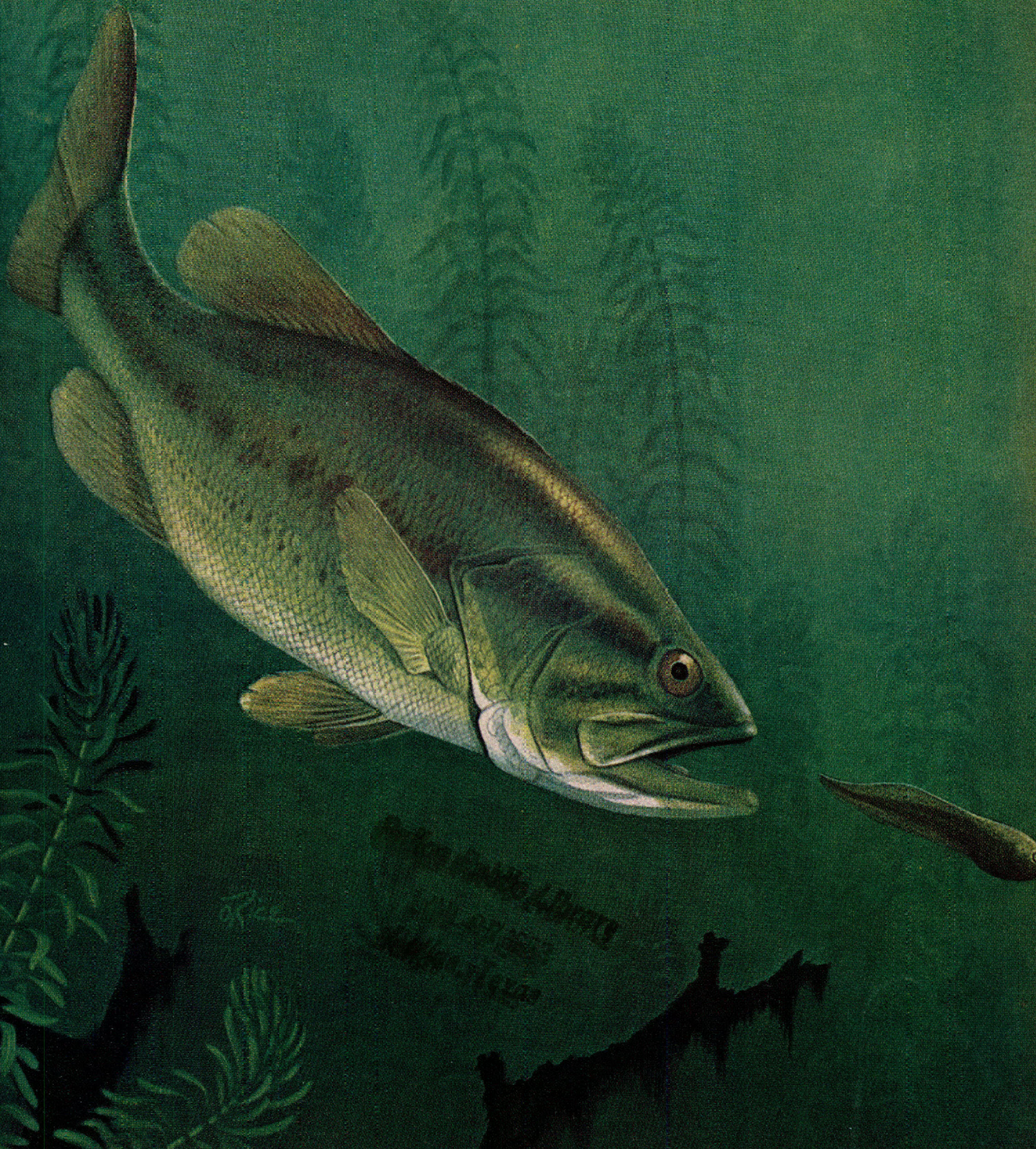


Texas Game and Fish

MAY

1953

TEN CENTS





Husband's Nightmare

Here's a good example of what can happen to embarrass husbands who teach their wives how to fish. Mrs. Joe Caruthers of Greenville got an early jump in this year's big fish derby February 25 when she landed this nine and three-quarter pound black bass at Greenville Club Lake. She was using a #2 Hawaiian Wiggler. At least Mr. Caruthers can claim to be a good teacher!

Texas Game and Fish

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF OUR NATIVE GAME AND FISH; AND TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF HUNTING AND FISHING IN TEXAS.

May, 1953

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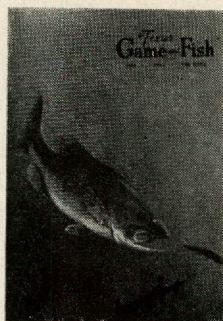
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★
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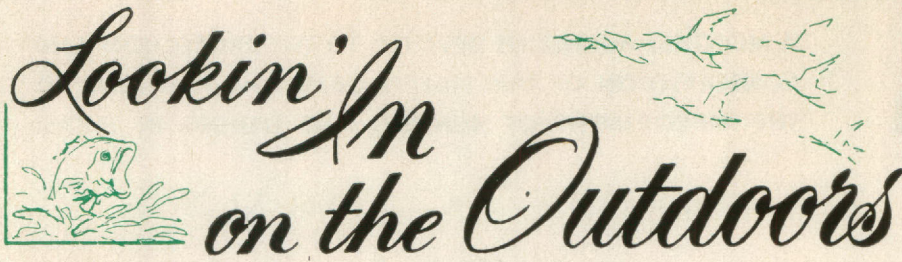
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The Cover

King of freshwater game fish—that's the title often bestowed on the largemouth black bass. Its wide range provides fishermen in every state a chance to thrill to the aerial acrobatics which has given this fish its fame. Orville O. Rice executed the black bass painting appearing on this month's cover.

Lookin' In on the Outdoors



With the Editor

Kids can pursue some peculiar pleasures. Take for instance David Johnson and Bobby Dooley, the snake-catching youngsters featured in the article on page 10.

They started catching snakes just about the time their age numeral reached two digits, and they've been at it ever since.

We remember hitting the same stage at about the same age. A summer-long visit to the big city of Memphis, Tenn., proved too much for a small-town boy accustomed to spending all his hours in the outdoors, so we began haunting Memphis' fine zoo. The curator of the snake house took a fancy to us, and we came back to Texas an enthusiastic snake fancier.

It almost led to a feud with the neighbors when we proceeded to fill a little house in the back yard with boxes containing as many as 28 snakes at one time. And Sis has never forgiven us for insisting on keeping two favorite snakes in a box under her bed.

The climax came when we found a sympathetic soul in a neighborhood youngster, Don Bell, who at that time was just four years old. We were a big boy of about 13. We generously lent Don one of our snake pets to carry around inside his shirt. The snake's presence slipped our minds when we went over to his house, and that's where we made a mistake. We still can see the horrified expression on Mrs. Jack Bell's face when, as her tiny son stood there talking innocently of baseball and such things, that snake poked his head out of the collar of Don's shirt!

But those experiences don't compare with one which David Johnson told about himself when he dropped by the office the other day to discuss the story in this issue.

This one happened when David

was about 15 years old. He had been on a snake-catching trip in Louisiana and was returning to Houston by train. He carried 16 precious snakes in a burlap bag.

Along about midnight he discovered to his dismay that somehow all 16 had escaped and were at liberty in the train coach among the peaceful, sleeping passengers!

Even today, David recalls his reaction as having been one of concern over losing his snakes rather than the possibility of a terrified riot among the passengers.

He began crawling on hands and knees along the floor of the half-lighted coach, seeking his elusive pets. He remembers brushing against the legs of one woman and awakening her. From a 15-year-old boy the explanation that he had dropped a dollar bill on the floor was sufficient.

One by one, David began to dig his crawling snakes out from the nooks and corners of the seats. It's still a little hard for him to believe, but finally he counted the sixteenth. All were back in the bag, and no one was aware of the near-catastrophe!

David learned a lesson. It didn't cure him of his fascination for snakes, but he has never tried to carry snakes on a train since.

Outdoor Fun

One of the newest and most successful of Texas' outdoor celebrations is the one held annually at fascinating Caddo Lake near Marshall. This year's dates are the week-end of May 23-24.

This will be the fourth. The second, when a barn dance, boat races, casting tournament, and fishing contest were added, drew such an overflow crowd that thousands were unable to reach the lake through the congested traffic that jammed lakeside roads.

Consequently, a whole new road was built prior to last year's event just to handle Caddo Lake Round-Up traffic!

The Round-Up is sponsored by the Marshall Chamber of Commerce and is all free. This year's Saturday afternoon program lists fishing contests lasting until Sunday noon for adults and youngsters, sightseeing boat trips, and a water ski demonstration. Saturday night is the gigantic barn dance in the Beer Field hangar. Sunday is devoted to a casting tournament and boat races with an air show at Beer Field, the big hard-surfaced air strip right on the lake shore.

If you've never seen beautiful Caddo Lake, that sight alone is worth the trip. And with the other fun, well . . .

Wildlife Pets

Springtime means time to gather baby wildlife pets to a lot of folks. It isn't often planned. Usually, it just happens. Someone finds a "lost" young animal, thinks it's interesting, and carts it home.

Take our word for it, that quite often is a serious mistake.

In the first place, that baby animal probably isn't lost. In the case of deer in particular, the mother often hides her young for a period of time and returns later. Many a fawn and doe have been separated because some well-meaning person tried to rescue the spotted cutie from "starvation."

Keeping wild pets also is often against the law and may lead to confiscation of the pet later. Then the game warden is faced with a problem. He has a wild animal on his hands, softened by civilization and ill-equipped to care for itself when returned to the wild. It's even tougher for the animal!

But aside from those two good reasons for not picking up young wildlife pets, there is another. It hits home even more forcefully. The fact is, as many have found out to their sorrow, that wildlife pets demand a terrific amount of care, they can become an unbearable nuisance, and as they reach maturity can be dangerous.

If you want to win a wager, then the next time a friend comes home with a wildlife baby, bet him he'll

be trying to give it away or even pay someone to take it away before it's over. In anywhere from a few days to a year, depending upon the kind of animal, he'll be wishing he'd settled for a nice quiet goldfish.

The mischievous antics of a 'coon or crow are fun for a while, but those cute tricks get old in a hurry. If you don't believe it, ask the man who has owned one!

And don't forget that the playful nip of a young squirrel, for instance, can become a painful and dangerous wound when inflicted by an adult squirrel and that a deer can slash a man to pieces when in a state of mental unrest during the mating season.

If you still insist on picking up that wildlife youngster, don't say we didn't warn you!

Black Bass

Stop and think a minute. Think back over the paintings of black bass you've seen. How many (or perhaps we should say how few) of them would you rate as being GOOD?

We have a particular weakness for black bass. Nothing that lives in fresh water can compare with the bass on the end of a line. Because of that fondness, we get a kick out of a good picture of a bass. We haven't gotten that kick very often. We think you will agree that good paintings of bass are few and far between. In fact, we can't recall more than three in a lifetime of looking.

One of them is on the cover of this magazine.

It seemed about time to have a black bass painting on TEXAS GAME AND FISH. So we asked Orville O. Rice to paint one. We gathered together a batch of other bass pictures. We went over them with Rice, noting the better features of the good ones, and pinpointing the poor parts of the bad ones.

When we got through, we put Rice squarely on the spot with three short sentences: "No more than half a dozen really good pictures of a black bass have ever been painted. We want the BEST for a cover of TEXAS GAME AND FISH. And you, Mr. Rice, are the one with the ability to paint that best one."

We like the outcome. What do you think?

New Tackle

The amazing improvements in fishing tackle since the war have amounted to nothing short of a revolution. Each year it seems that the ingenuity of manufacturers must surely have reached a peak, and each year brings finer new tackle.

Thousands of Texans got a firsthand look at the overall picture at sports shows in Houston and Dallas recently. For those thousands who couldn't make the trip, we'll hit some of the highlights. We'll start this month as space permits and finish the job next month.

A good starter is Weber's nylon fly reel. That's right—100 per cent nylon. Light, it weighs in at around two ounces and is unconditionally guaranteed against any kind of breakage, warpage, or corrosion. We've already latched onto one, and it's a dilly. Price, \$5.95.

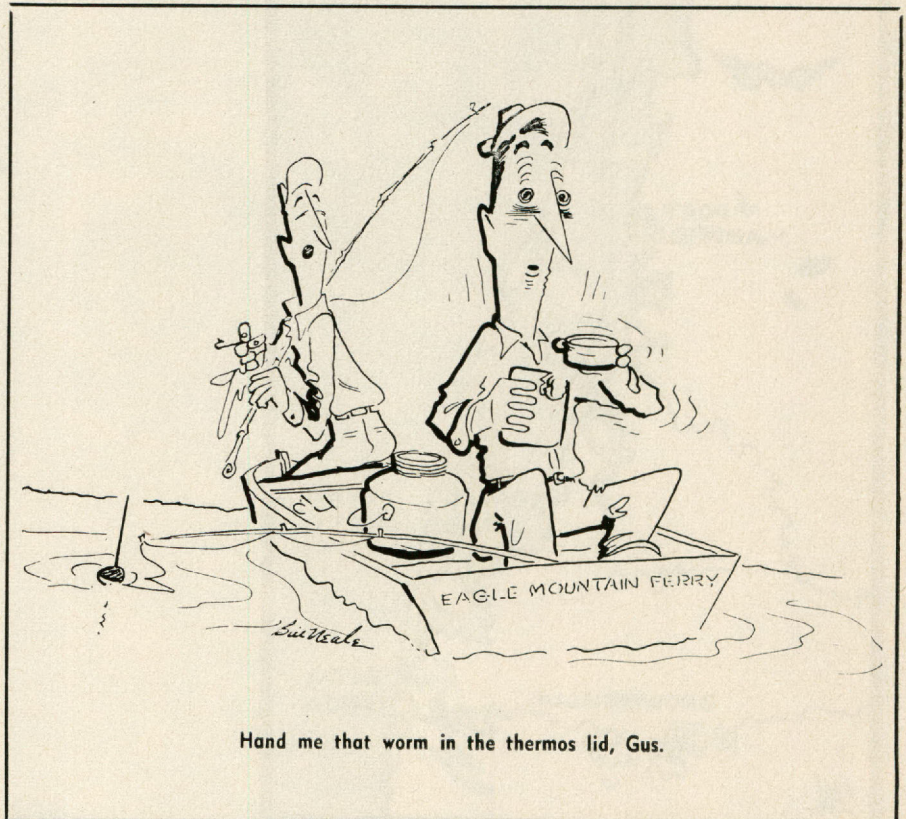
Weber Representative Bob Abb, who has authored a couple of articles for this mag, also was displaying some crackerjack fly rod lures. These are of soft gum rubber. The little

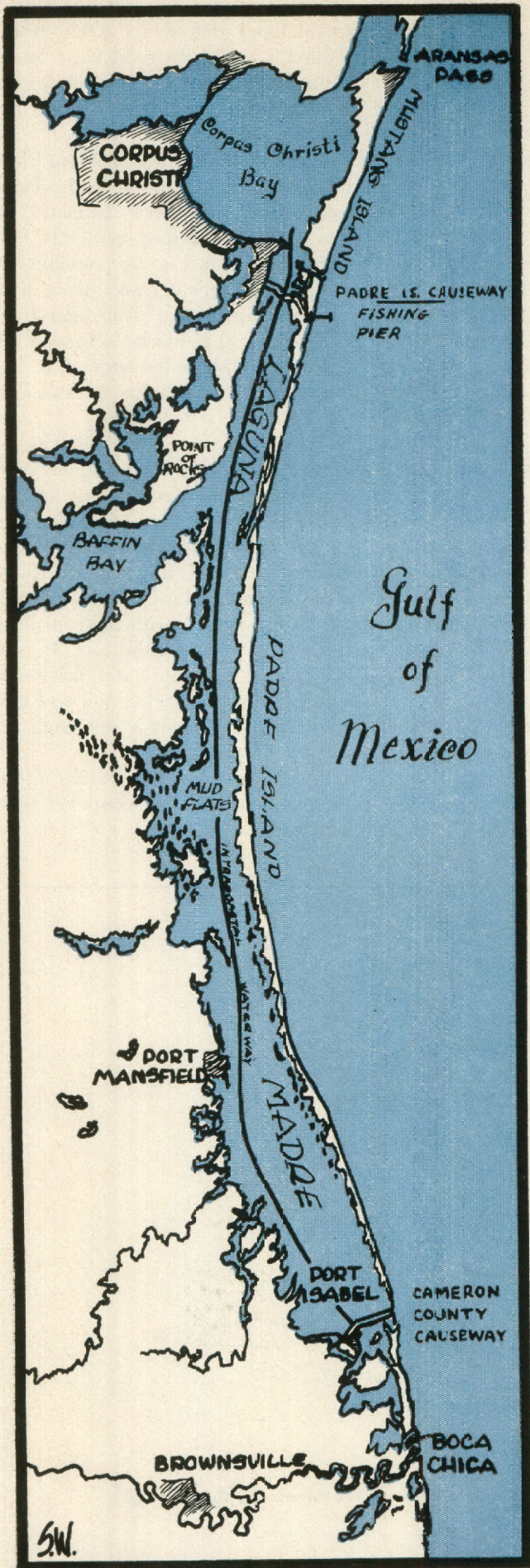
crawdad is a dilly, and there is a grasshopper that floats. Others included a nymph (a good bet a lot of Texans are passing up), hellgramite, cricket, grub, and frog. They sell for only 25 and 35 cents each.

Gordon Hewlett was up from Florida with a new addition to the Penn line of saltwater reels. Demand by Texas anglers helped put this one over, and it's sure to be popular. It's the lightest saltwater reel we've seen with free spool, star drag, and level wind—just what has been needed for light tackle fishing for larger fish. It's labeled the Penn Peerless #9 and sells for \$13.00.

Probably of most interest to Texans at the Shakespeare booth was the new Ty-Bo drag. In effect, it puts an adjustable star drag type of mechanism on any of Shakespeare's direct drive casting reels. All you need to do is take off the standard handle and put the Ty-Bo handle with built-in drag mechanism back on the reel. If you like to fish for salt water fish with light bait casting tackle and feel the need for a drag, this is the thing. It sells for \$2.

It was invented, incidentally by a Texan, Ty Catron, Shakespeare representative.





Padre Island

By LEW FAY
And WES MABRITO

Reprinted from THE FISHERMAN Magazine

Fascinating Padre Island is
are discovering that it offers ev



You can wade in after 'em or keep your feet dry by fishing from the free Gulf Park fishing pier.

W E FISHED the booming surf of the Gulf of Mexico when we were kids, moving up and down the shell beaches with our home-cut poles and dollar reels, and always, even in our twenties, after a sortie down Mexico way or eastward along the west coast of Florida. We came back to Padre Island—for we knew that the best salt-water fishing in the world lay there within easy reach.

We've come home to Padre Island again, but we're not lonely fishermen roaming the Big Shell anymore. For time has brought changes to Padre—changes that make it of easy access now. Many thousands of fishermen annually find there what we've long known—that it is a "poor man's Paradise." On Padre Island a man can fish the surf or Laguna Madre, which separates Padre Island from the Texas mainland, for weeks on end. He needs only a modest outfit, a taste for salt-water fish, and a ten-dollar bill to pay for unforeseen expenses, if any.

Whether you catch 'em with spoon or plug or shrimp or mullet, Padre Island has big fish for everybody. It always did have, as we well remember from younger days. But now they're easier to get to. Because gradually, over long years of public lethargy, Padre Island is being recognized, even by Texans, as a prime outdoor spot. The new Padre Island causeway connecting to Corpus



A huge trout and big redfish top Gerry Mayfield's Padre Island string, which includes drum and snook for variety.

es from tip to tip and "even Texans"
d of surf fishing a man could want



Jean and Gerry Mayfield, who operate a beach "museum," live "off" Padre Island as well as on it.

"Halfacre" Warnock is another who found the enchantment of Padre Island too much to resist.



Christi is only two years old, it provides quick, easy access to the full length of the island—for a buck a car.

You see, the geography of the place is one of its fascinations. Padre and Mustang islands combine to form the longest island in the United States. Thus the two islands stretch southward (Padre) from Corpus Christi almost to Brownsville and northward (Mustang) as far as Port Aransas, where a ferry and causeway connect with the mainland. Once there was a deep-water pass between the two islands, called Corpus Christi Pass, it was not far from the official boundary and was generally considered as separating the two. But the sands of time brought real sand tumbling into the pass until now it's filled, and a car can drive from Port Aransas all the way to the southern tip of Padre and to Port Isabel.

The trip isn't all roses and honeysuckle at the moment. For down beyond Big Shell the sand grows a bit soft, and you may find yourself bogged down. It's well to check locally before driving south to learn the condition of the beach.

It's 131 miles, however, from island tip to island tip, and within that span of sand and spindrift there's every kind of surf fishing a man could want. He can stand on the pier, for example, at Padre Island's Gulf Park and fish from there. Or he can wade into the surf anywhere from there

along the 106 more miles to Point Isabel, taking due regard, of course, for sand sharks.

The Padre fishing pier (free) now extends three hundred feet into blue water. Soon it will be lengthened to six hundred feet with wings forming a "T" at the end.* If one must spend money, there's a fine motel on Padre Island, and, of course, many others at the Port Aransas end of Mustang, long tabbed the "tarpon capital of the world," where there are free piers and concrete-capped rock jetties as well.

At Gulf Park there are bait houses, a restaurant, a children's playground, and shelters for picnickers and campers. Also, there is the Padre Island museum, worth mention in itself. Presided over by Gerry Mayfield's wife, Jean, as hostess, the museum already contains a magnificent collection of odd driftwood pieces, relics from wrecked ships of all nationalities and all periods, arrowheads from the Indian days, and other items of historic interest.

Jean and her husband, Gerry, built their house out of what they could find on the beach. The lumber is a conglomeration of oak, gum, walnut, mahogany, and pine that lay in the surf and on the sand dunes. Much valuable lumber, Gerry says, remains

in the dunes, some pieces too large to be pried loose from the sand without heavy machinery.

The Mayfields found doors on the beach, promptly hung them; windows off wrecked boats provide a delightful sea view; a five-gallon can of paint lying imbedded in the wet sand nearly covered the house with color, and Gerry has his eyes peeled for another can of paint to finish the job. Cargo mats and fishing seines with floats, many of which may have floated all the way from Portugal, provide blinds and curtains for the house. Portuguese fishing floats, of colored glass, make attractive decorations in various places.

Nor are the Mayfields the only interesting fisherfolk you'll meet on Padre Island. There's Halfacre, for instance. Halfacre has a full name, but through disuse he's all but forgotten it. As W. D. Warnock, he traveled the South and Southeast for a number of years, selling fishing tackle. He moved about in a car with a huge trailer packed with fishing gear trundling along behind him. And he called on sporting goods stores from San Antonio to Jacksonville.

Came the day, a couple of years ago, when W. D. Warnock also said "to heck with it." He selected a few prized pieces of tackle and moved to Padre Island—to stay. There he operates a small grocery store called

*This extension and "T" now has been completed.—Ed.

the "Beachcomber's Supply House." The income from it helps ends meet, but he closes it whenever the urge strikes him—and goes fishing.

Warnock is known as "Halfacre" the length of the island and over most of southeast Texas. And he's as happy as a man can be who loves nothing more than the spindrift-capped rollers sweeping in under fluffy clouds, and a fresh breeze to cool the days and make the nights crisply invigorating.

Probably due to his background as a fishing tackle salesman, Halfacre rates as something of an island expert on such matters, including the question of what is an essential outfit for a few weeks of surf fishing.

"A tarp and a gasoline stove top the list," he says. "The tarp for shade because even in winter the Texas sun hits the blister point now and then; but in the shade anytime, winter or summer, there's breeze aplenty."

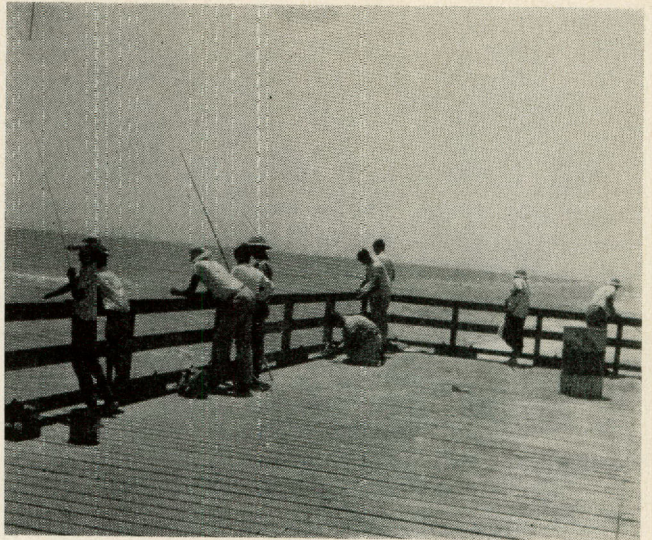
About stoves, Halfacre points out laconically that even with his mind on fishing, a man's stomach gets empty now and then and cooked fish taste better than raw ones. As for an open fire—well, the wind gets pretty brisk sometimes.

Unless one wants to burrow into unyielding sand, he'll need a cot; a folding chair would be handy for lazy fishing along the beach. A box, probably picked up along the water's edge, can be cleaned up and made to serve admirably as a dining table. A lantern, if one plans to fish at night, should be added as well, of course, as a water jug.

In Halfacre's opinion this just about wraps it up. At prevailing prices, the fisherman who happens to own none of these items can pick up the lot at somewhere from \$30 to \$35. Chances are most anglers already own an ample outfit.

In our thinking, however, one additional item is almost essential on Padre, and that's an ample ice chest, cost of which will vary from nothing up to \$35, depending on whether you whomp up your own or get a "store-boughten" model. Do as you please, of course, but for us this business of standing in shark waters, thigh deep, with a stringer dangling from your waist isn't all it might be. It's really a lot more satisfying to know

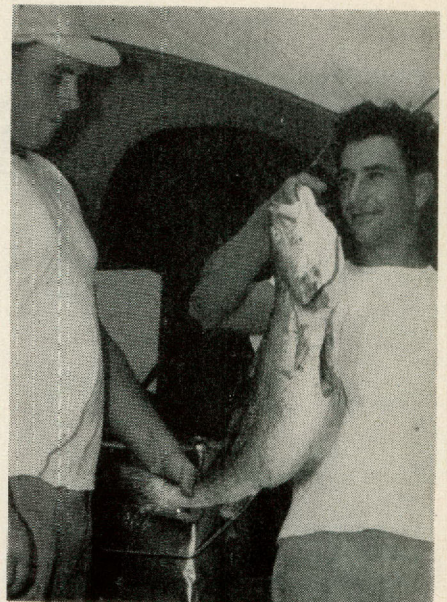
The free fishing pier at Gulf Park near Corpus Christi now has been lengthened into a 600-foot T-head.



that the beauties you've already caught are lying safe in your ice chest, rather than hanging from your belt as perfect shark bait.

You don't like the idea of a six-pounder as shark bait? Well, like it or not, brother, he is! Remember, these coast sharks have been seen and caught up to ten and twelve feet long. The larger ones don't ordinarily come in close enough for the fisherman to measure the distance between his eyes, but there have been exceptions.

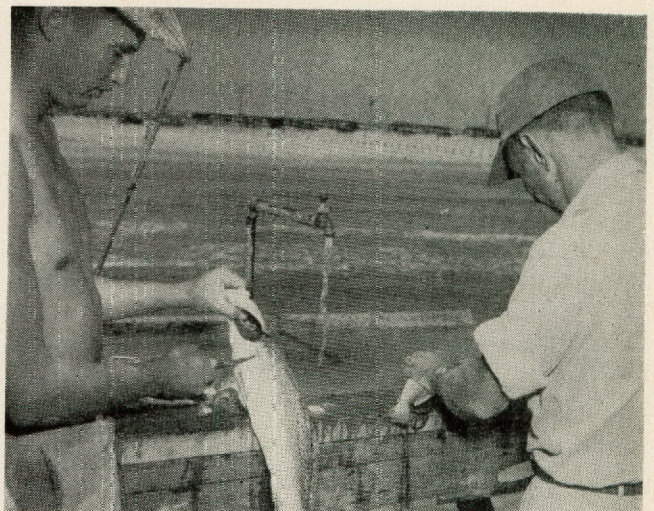
Don't ask us why, but sharks seem to like redfish, especially the size you catch nowadays. Redfishing on the Padre coast line, particularly in the Little and Big Shell vicinities, used to be a source of fabulous fish tales—much more so than now. These two beaches, lying some thirty miles below the new Padre Island causeway, are covered with shells, espe-



Who would argue that Al Smith and Alex Pavlas don't have a right to be happy with this 8-pound trout?

• Continued on Page 22

The Gulf Park fishing pier provides a convenient cleaning table with running water.



Seems like some bucks were just meant to be yours and no one else's. For instance . . .

"Bucks are the smartest, cleverest four-legged critters on the loose in the woods. About the time you have them all figured out, one will pull a trick on you that is not in the books."

That was Arch, the veteran deer hunter, talking around the camp fire on that last hunt of the season deep down south in Texas in the Rio Grande Valley area.

I had just arrived in camp with as fine a trophy as I have ever taken out of the woods but it was more of an accident or a twist of fate that I even had the buck at all—especially such a fine head.

"Arch," I said, "some bucks just carry your earmark. They are yours or they are not. And if they are not, you have to overcome tremendous odds in order to bag one.

Now this buck here had my tag on him for it was my third time to see him. I shot him on this hunt which was unexpected, as I thought I had closed out the season last week. This was really an anti-climax and I got my buck!"

The old veteran thought for a moment, stirred the coals in the fire and poured himself another cup of coffee. "Come to think of it, I've shot a lot of bucks that a blind man had about the same chance, and then I've missed other bucks that could have been stunned with a nigger shooter. Some bucks are ear-marked, huh . . . that isn't half as crazy as it sounds."

The first time I had seen my "marked buck" was the second day of the season. How well I remember it! I was

Some Bucks

are

MARKED!



By LLOYD H. GLOVER

on a favorite stand where deer and turkey also crossed. I had heard the turkeys clucking and gobbling that morning and was tempted to go after them. Finally I decided to bide my chances at the stand. There were two good crossings above me, each about 100 yards apart, the farthest about 200 yards away. Below me also were two good crossings, one very close at 75 yards and another at 300 yards.

Along mid-morning, my vigilance was rewarded. The deer crossings seemed to converge right out in front of me about 150 yards in the cactus covered brush, which had thousands of mesquites that towered about 15 feet above my head.

Through the corner of my eye I saw an object move far to the east—what, I couldn't tell except that it was an animal of some kind. It was 150 yards distant and angling away, to cross above me. Then I saw his antlers, moving majestically between the brush and cactus. How could he move along so effortlessly, without making a sound? The next three minutes were as long as a day at the Korean front. As he picked his way along, stopping now and then to "nose the wind" and listen, I held my sights in his general direction.

At last, after the old mossback had traveled some 100 yards at an angle, while my blood pressure went up with each yard, I leveled the sights and pressed the trigger. The buck jumped about 15 feet and was away with a bound. On his third jump, I sent another bullet after him.

I rushed to the spot, fully expecting to find a trail of blood but the large gash in the mesquite tree told the story. The bullet hit a tree six to eight inches in diameter directly in front of the deer.

Little did I think then that I was destined to see that very same sly old buck again within two weeks and within a few yards of this same ridge. Some bucks are marked, I tell you!

I had been hunting about a mile from this area and along noontime, angled back through the brush to come out at the stand. I was less than 200 yards from the crossing when I heard a rustling in front of me and then a large buck hove into full view less than 40 yards away. Here was

my buck again — same rack — same size—same area. I aimed quickly, too quickly, pulled the sights up to his shoulder and let him have it. But just as I touched the trigger, he bolted sharply to my right, resulting in a clean miss. The bullet passed his flank by six inches. The same buck! Another miss! I really hated to go into camp that day. Three shots at the same buck and still no deer.

There was a beautiful 8-pointer hanging up in camp when I came in, which soothed my feelings a little.

Then the memorable last hunt came—a hunt after the "last hunt" if you get what I mean. I had really quit for the season on the previous time out and did not expect to go any more but the opportunity afforded itself, and who was I to turn down another hunt, especially when I had not killed my buck that season.

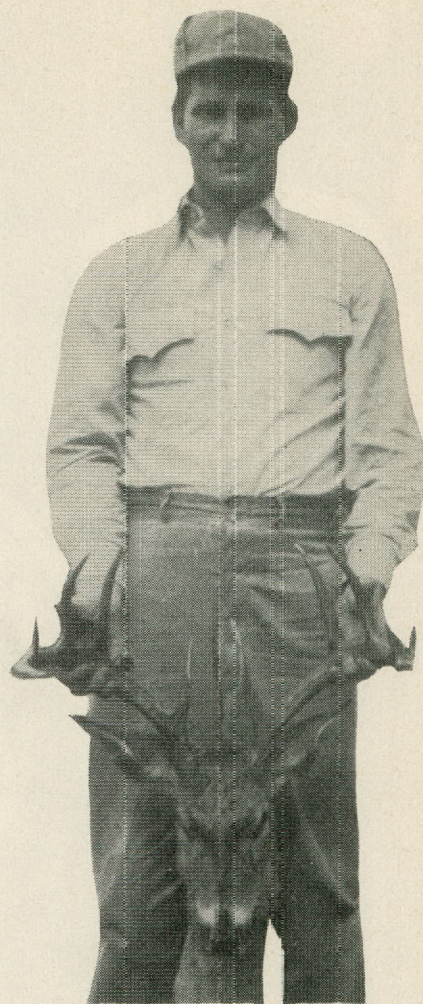
I had no plans for the hunt. It was the first and last time I can remember when I was not all keyed up on exactly how and where to hunt.

Arch went east and I tagged along. Each of us had a pair of antlers over our shoulders. We were going to try the old game of rattling up a buck, so common in the brush country. We decided to separate by a quarter of a mile, rattle horns occasionally.

The sky was just breaking. There were numerous signs. The trail was only 300 yards behind me when I got my first surprise and first thrill of this LAST hunt.

I was straining my eyes to see a feeding deer in the foggy, dark woods when I heard a great beating of strong wings right above me. I looked up, and to my amazement, there was a huge gobbler just leaving his perch and flapping vigorously away over the top of the mesquites. There was no chance for a shot, and I had a rifle anyway. He was gone in a twinkling of an eye. How that long-bearded gobbler let me get right under him was a mystery to me. And what was he doing on his roost at 8 o'clock, 45 minutes later than usual!

It was getting good daylight now. There was a little knoll ahead with fairly open brush. Deer always like to cross over or near any kind of a hill or rise in otherwise flat terrain. There is a well known saying that mossback bucks travel the ridges in



The author and his "marked buck," which was bagged on a "hunt after the last hunt" down in the brush country of the Rio Grande.

the early morning and the swales in the evening.

I squatted down by a bush on the ridge, firmly gripped the antlers, and rattled them vigorously for two minutes by the watch, then laid them aside, and picked up my gun. For ten minutes, I watched down wind, for I knew bucks almost always will come to the horns down wind.

I started to pick up the antlers to rattle again when I decided to look around once more. I saw something move in the brush 175 yards away. I could tell it was a deer, but it was not a large one. When it got 75 yards away, I saw it was a spike buck. His hair was on end, with every one sticking out like a porcupine. It was a sight never to be forgotten. Here was a buck with antlers less than six inches long, who was responding to the call of the wild in true buck fashion. He was bristled, looking for a fight. When he was within 40 feet, I

● Concluded on page 27



Houston Chronicle photos by Jo Mortellra

At an age when most Texas youngsters were mastering a slide into second base, these two were sliding their hands under rocks in quest of reptiles. That's why

From an article in the *Houston Chronicle Magazine* by Jack Weeks.

TO MOST youngsters summer brings thoughts of baseball, swimming, or fishing.

But to David Johnson, 18, and Bobby Dooley, 21, both of Houston, time on their hands means something entirely different.

At a time when most youngsters grab for an old worn baseball mitt or a cane fishin' pole, David and Bobby arm themselves with an ordinary grubbing hoe, a canvas sack, and streak out for their favorite pastime—snake hunting.

They consider themselves veterans—and they are. You might say they started when they were “young,” for both have been interested in snakes half their lives.

They formed their “partnership” in this strange hobby, enough to give most youths the same age a bad case of shudders, about four years ago when they met at the Houston Museum of Natural History snake exhibit. Each found the other already fascinated by reptiles.

Since that time, Bobby and David have hunted snakes just about everywhere within a 75-mile radius of Houston, and on several occasions their quest for reptiles has taken them into Mexico and as far as California.

“I was out there last summer on a museum trip and met Dr. L. M. Klauber,” Bobby said with the kind of enthusiasm which the average youth reserves for Doak Walker or Joe DiMaggio.

Their Best Friends

Are Snakes!

The obvious question was: "Who is Doctor Klauber?"

"Why he's just about the highest authority on snakes in the country," Bobby and David replied almost in unison. "He has about 30,000 species in the basement of his home in California."

Snake hunting is a cinch, the boys say—all you need are ordinary tools.

"We use a grubbing hoe with three prongs on it to turn over logs, and also to pinch down the poisonous snakes' heads so we can grab them behind their jaws," David explained. "We just reach down and grab non-poisonous ones."

The boys each take a glove which they sometimes wear on their right hands to handle the poisonous reptiles. Rounding out the paraphernalia is a canvas sack in which they carry their catch, and a snake-bite kit which is seldom used.

"So far, I've never been bitten," Bobby said, rapping on wood.

"I got nipped one time," David said. "My teacher wanted a copperhead, so I took one to school one day."

"On the way, the copperhead got loose. I grabbed at him and he bit me. It kinda made me sick at my stomach, but otherwise it didn't hurt."

David was suddenly nicked on the arm by a six-foot chicken snake as he readied the reptile for some photos. A small stream of blood trickled down

David's left arm as he continued to hold a snake in each hand.

"This bite doesn't count," he said. "We get bitten all the time by the nonpoisonous ones, but we don't pay any attention to that."

Bobby explained he naturally thought we were speaking of poisonous bites.

"We never go hunting that we aren't nicked by some of the non-poisonous snakes," he commented.

And the boys, who know their snakes, explained that Harris County has the dubious distinction of housing all four poisonous varieties found in the United States. That would be the rattler, the copperhead, the coral snake, and the cottonmouth moccasin.

"The copperhead is the most common poisonous snake around here," Bobby said. "We caught 39 on one trip. The least common is the coral snake. They are hard to find."

It isn't all hobby with Bobby and David. They get handsome prices from zoos, museums, and traveling shows for the snakes they catch. They now are becoming so well known that often they get special assignments to catch and deliver certain species.

Recently, when the Game and Fish Commission's Wildlife Exhibit went to Houston for its Sports Show, a couple of species of snakes turned up missing at the last minute. An S. O. S. was sent out to Bobby and David, and they came through within 24 hours.

David is now in the service and stationed at Bergstrom Air Base. But every chance he gets, he and Bobby get together for a snake hunt again, and that's almost every week-end.

They have begun to concentrate on rattlesnakes in a big way. Their favorite hunting locality for rattlers is along the coast from Galveston to Corpus Christi. They consider this area far more productive of the big deadly reptiles than West or South Texas.

"There are more rattlesnakes around Bryan Beach near the old Bryan mansion at Freeport than any other place I know," says David. A dozen or more in a day is just an ordinary hunt for them.

Both youngsters speak of snakes as others boys of their age speak of bathing averages and home runs.

"Boy, that Massasauga is a beautiful specimen," they will tell you. "That faded snake is a mean one." "The Indigo is definitely nonpoisonous." "That ornate whip snake is another beauty."

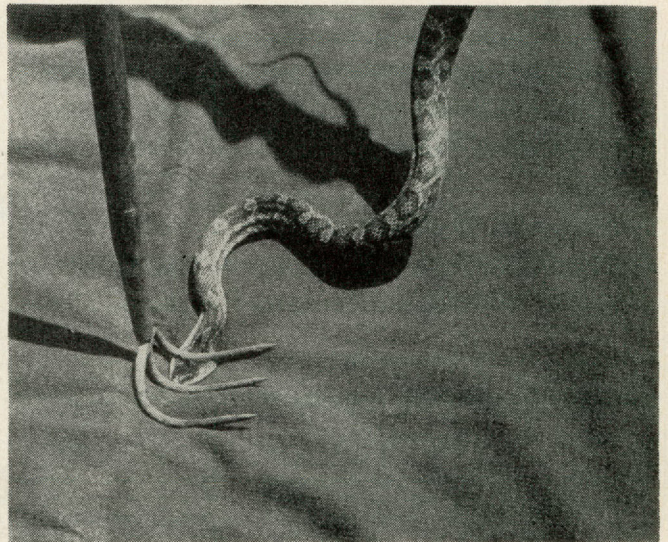
And—wouldn't you know it!—Bobby asked for and got for graduation from high school the latest book published on snakes. It has pictures of every snake known to man, and names them by their technical names—usually long tongue-twisters.

"Bobby couldn't pass Latin in school, but he knows nearly every snake by its Latin name," Mrs. Dooley chuckled.

Bobby makes a quick stab with gloved hand at a poisonous cottonmouth moccasin while David pins the reptile with a stick. The cottonmouth is one of four poisonous species in the United States.



Bobby and David use an ordinary garden tool to pin down poisonous snakes until they can be grasped by hand. They usually just "reach down and grab" non-poisonous snakes like this one.



The Game and Fish Commission's

Black Gap Wildlife



Management Area

Photos by Hunter's of Alpine

By JAY VESSELS

Assistant Director, Publications

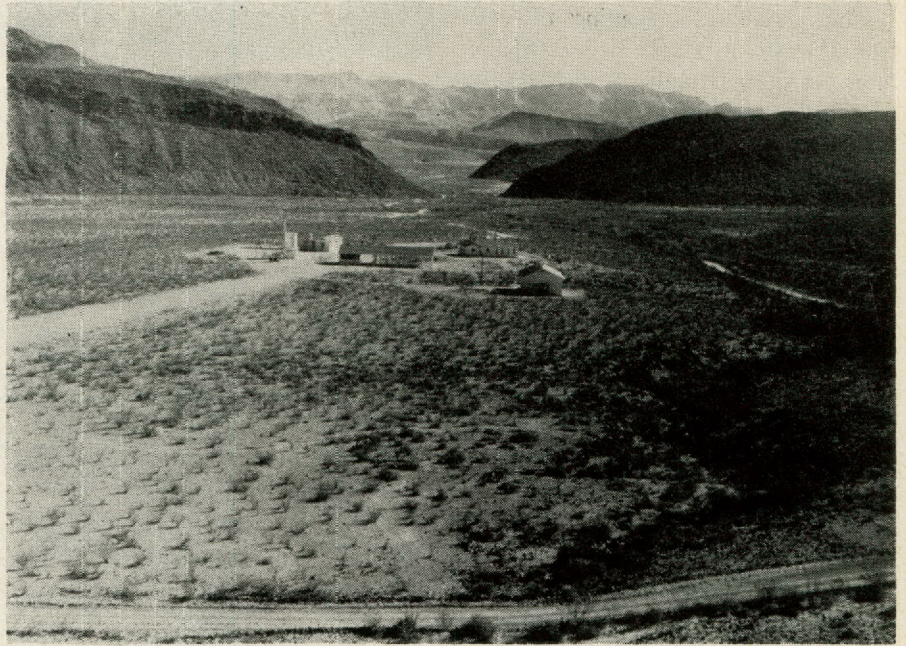
Flying Game Warden Frank Hamer, ex-U. S. M. C., slipped into the cockpit of the new Cessna 170 after tucking in his passenger. He gunned the engine to a reassuring purr, and they scooted off the giant hangar apron and out to the bomber-size runways which dwarfed the sturdy little aircraft.

Hamer got tower clearance, pro-saically pulled his mount off the concrete and asked for a weather report. The pilot did not like the fuzz that cloaked the long ridges and high peaks because that hampered sight-seeing and, frankly, it did cut into maximum safety.

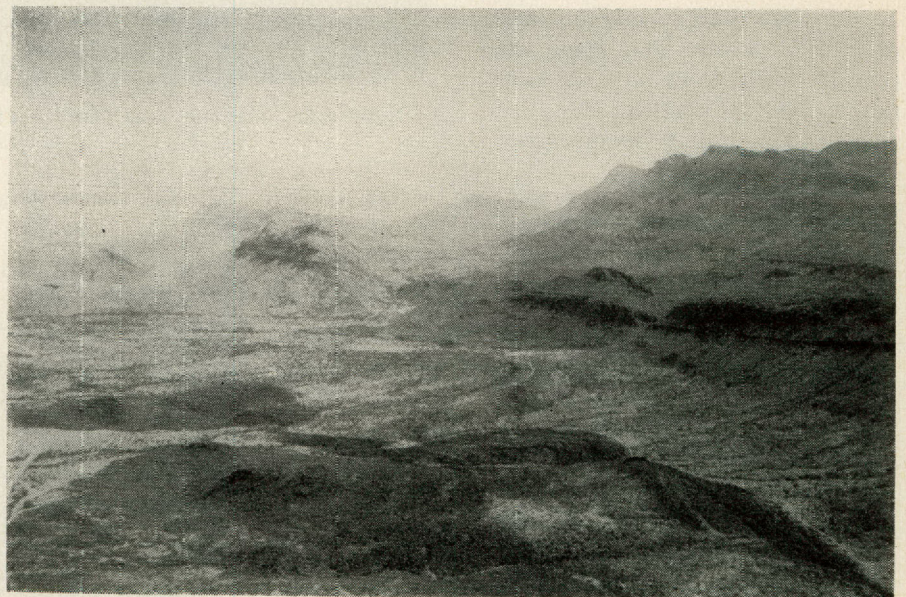
That was Hamer's concern, because the target was the remote Black Gap management area newly created by the Game and Fish Commission to help restore wildlife in the Big Bend country.

The trip was strictly routine for Hamer, personally. His aerial beat covers the isolated back country which is barely accessible to motor transport. This day of limited visibility he was just like any flying man feeling responsible for his passenger. But, once convinced the weather outposts would protect him from sudden "socking in" from dust, Hamer relaxed and began answering questions with the self confidence of a Fifth Avenue sightseeing bus driver.

The objective roughly was the Dead Horse Mountains. Landmarks along the way included Old Nigger Head, Persimmon Gap, Elephant Mountains and Dog Canyon, with a story about each which Hamer enthusiastically related.



Looking east through Black Gap from headquarters of the management area. Sierra del Carmins in the background.



Looking south into Mexico, the Sierra del Carmins appear in the background. Dead Horse range is on the right.

One of the Elephant points was capped with a flat white cloud. Something like a halo. "Yes, a halo with a rock in it," grinned Hamer. Things looked deceptive, since the deep dust-storm hangover draped valleys and elevations alike with a soft haze.

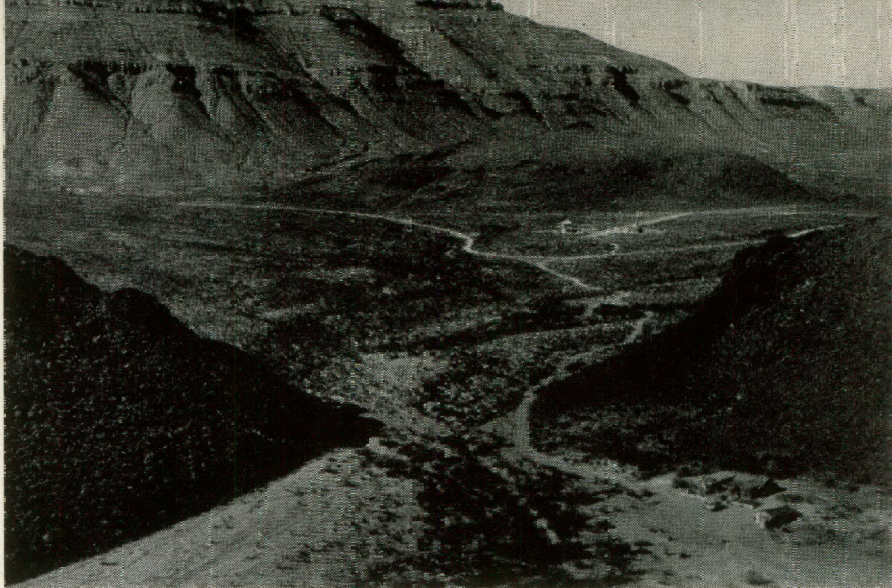
But the pilot knew his route in fair weather and foul. And the pride he expressed in his strategically located landing strips was not couched in apprehension. Just good insurance when there was a deadhead to look after. A deadstick landing always is a possibility.

The aerial trail, leading directly from the Alpine-Marfa airport, finally intersected the round-about highway heading toward Big Bend National Park. Shortly further on where a dirt roadway splintered off to the left, Hamer announced that Black Gap lay directly ahead.

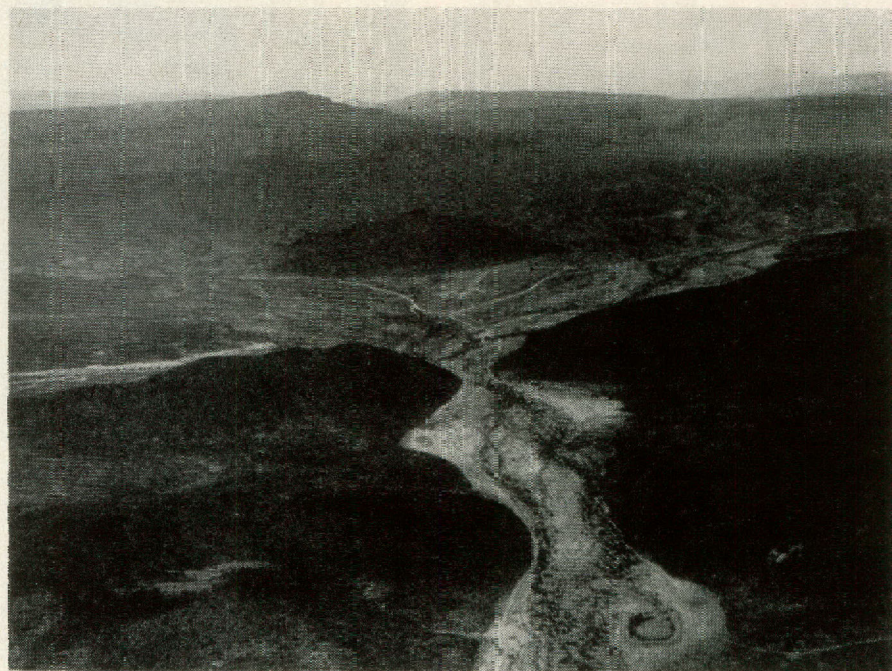
Long before the passenger caught on, Hamer's practiced eyes had spotted life on the rugged range below. It was a Game and Fish Commission Jeep. "There's their pickup," he said, indicating another vehicle off to the right. "Putting up fence," he observed, laconically.

He slipped the game little Cessna low into the valley, throttled back and waved to the four men working near the two vehicles. Pretty comforting to those folks, having this lone contact with the outside. However, Hamer expressed concern over the possibility that some day he might have to make an emergency landing on the truck trail to take out a sick or injured person. This acute situation developed from progress itself—they had picked his Dead Horse land-

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Dead Horse range appears in the background looking west past headquarters from the middle of Black Gap. The Dead Horse range divides the management area from Big Bend National Park.



House tank is in the foreground, Dead Horse Range in the background, the Rosillis mountains in the distance.

Flying Warden Frank Hamer finds his Cessna handy in patrolling this rugged country.



The Sant agc Range lies in the background looking north. Back Gap Range is at right.



My Husband Is A Hunter

By IRENE BLAIR



The hilarious experiences of a wife whose hunter-husband is "generous" enough to take her along.

Along about August every year my husband's eyes get glassy, his breath comes in short gasps, his hands start trembling, and he is a little difficult to live with.

The first time this happened I was sure he was coming down with something. But I soon learned these symptoms are the forerunner of the opening of the hunting season. Dove season opens September 1st, then in rapid succession comes duck season, quail season and deer season, with a stray bob-cat thrown in here and there.

I should have ben forewarned. When he was courting me we were sitting in a car besides a beautiful lake in the moonlight. Romance was in the offing. About that time a flight of geese went over. My then boy-

friend gunned the motor and we raced around to the other side of the lake to see where the geese landed. Right there I should have known. I have since learned that whether the geese are flying north for the summer or south for the winter, just let one honk and he's off. I could swear a flight of geese dipped their wings when they flew over our house the other day on their way to a nearby lake.

Along about August 1 of each year he begins to get his ammunition together, cleans his gun for the umpteenth time, leases his hunting place, calls all the boys together and briefs them on the meeting place and the starting time. All is in readiness. All we have to do now is wait a month.

I forgot to tell you that I always go on the hunts. Not that I shoot anything—my duties are really more than he could get a good dog to do. I not only retrieve—I am the beater and the picker. My women friends tell me how lucky I am to be invited to go—that their husbands never take them. I don't know about that, about being lucky, I mean. It's all in your point of view. I have often thought if he could find a good dog that could pick as well as retrieve that I would be out of a job.

I will never forget my first hunting trip. It was during our courtship. I was very anxious to show how indispensable I could be if just given the chance. We stopped at the edge of a

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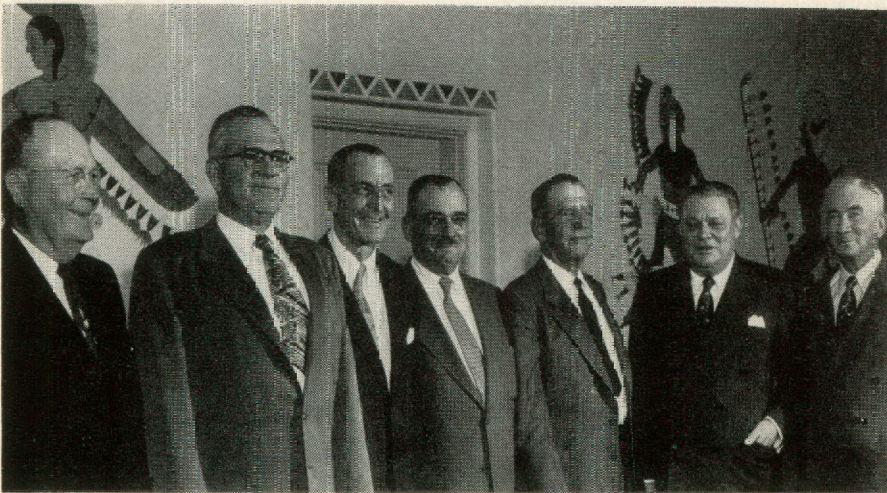


Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, generally regarded as the nation's top wildlife authority, delivered the address. To his left are Joe Hale, Jr., president of the Northwest Texas Field and Stream Association, and Macor Boddy, president of the Wichita Farm and Ranch Club.

At Wichita Falls

Record Crowd Attends Wildlife Banquet

Wichita Daily Times photos.



The banquet honored members of the Game and Fish Commission. Shown left to right are Commissioners J. W. Elliott, Mexia; Frank M. Wood, Wichita Falls; V. F. Neuhaus, Mission; Walter W. Lechner, Fort Worth; R. M. Kleberg, Sr., Kingsville; Herman F. Heep, Buda, and W. T. Scarborough, Kenedy. Commissioners unable to attend were W. Scott Schreiner, Kerrville, and Shelby Kritser, Amarillo.

Outdoor sportsmen, ranchers, and farmers from all over Texas made up what is believed to be the largest group of its kind ever to attend a formal banquet in the state when the First Annual Texas Wildlife Conservation Conference was held in Wichita Falls in April.

They came to hear a man regarded by many as the nation's top authority on wildlife management, Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, president of the Wildlife Management Institute and former director of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The banquet, given in honor of the Texas Game and Fish Commission, was co-sponsored by the Northwest Texas Field and Stream Association, the Wichita Farm and Ranch Club, and the Wichita Falls Chamber of Commerce. Its purpose was to afford outdoor sportsmen and farmer-ranchers a chance to get acquainted with each other's problems.

Sharing as a feature of the banquet with Dr. Gabrielson's speech was the announcement of two scholarship awards in wildlife management and two trophies to be given by Frank M. Wood, Wichita Falls member of the Game and Fish Commission. The four-year scholarships will go to two high school seniors, the trophies to

adults who forward the cause of wildlife production and conservation.

Dr. Gabrielson in addressing the more than 1000 persons present discussed farmer-rancher-sportsmen relationships and how they could be solved and were being solved in Texas and other states.

"The real problem in providing better hunting and fishing is not in the management of the wildlife—it's trying to manage the wild people!" he declared.

In referring to the decline of game, he reminded listeners that wildlife is the product of the land. "It is the ultimate, the highest product of the land, and therefore, it is the first to suffer when use of the land is altered," he pointed out. "The future of our game is in the hands of the landowner."

Dr. Gabrielson observed that in most countries the game belongs to the landowner. However, in North America we are more fortunate, he said, for the wildlife here belongs to the state or to the people.

"This does not give the licenseholder complete rights to do as he wishes in taking that game, though," he emphasized. "Our democratic way of life also gives a man the right to control the land he owns through the trespass law."

It is this ownership of game by the people, running parallel to the right to control land that causes the conflict between the sportsman and the landowner, Gabrielson continued.

He expressed regret that so many states have found it necessary to pass laws rigidly restricting the conduct of hunters and fishermen on private property and added that good sportsmanship actually amounts to courtesy and common sense. These characteristics are being encouraged by local clubs and official state agencies, he noted, and he said he was encouraged by a general movement throughout the nation on the part of sportsmen's organizations to require their members to pass examinations involving proper handling of guns and accurate identification of game.

Gabrielson took a crack at what he called "barber shop biologists" and urged hunters to get out into the field during the off-season. "If the average sportsman would take the

Wildlife Scholarships, Trophies Offered Texas Students, Adults

Frank M. Wood, Game and Fish Commissioner from Wichita Falls, has announced that he will award two competitive scholarships in wildlife management to Texas high school seniors. In addition, two trophies will be awarded to the Texas man or woman who is judged to have contributed most to wildlife restoration and conservation in this state.

The awards will be made at the second annual Texas Wildlife Conservation Conference, scheduled at Wichita Falls in the early spring of 1954.

The scholarships will go to the boy and girl presenting the best essay on wildlife management and conservation. The scholarships will be good for four years in any accredited college or university in Texas.

Details of the competition and awards have not been completed.

It is probable that one scholarship will go to a boy or girl who lives in a rural area and the other to one who resides in a town or city. Similar conditions likely will accompany awards of the trophies to the adults.

Mr. Wood has indicated that activity on the part of the individual competitor and his or her contribution to wildlife management, production, and conservation may play an important part in the awards. He also has expressed a desire that membership in a local sportsmen's or wildlife club or in one of the farm and ranch organizations promoting conservation practices be considered in judging the winners.

Complete details of the awards, competition, and methods of judging will be announced as soon as possible.

trouble to observe and study about wildlife at times other than when he is hunting, he would have a much better understanding of the problems of wildlife production. He also would learn to appreciate to a greater extent the role played by the landowner in providing the game he hopes to kill."

In discussing farmer-rancher-sportsman relationships, Gabrielson noted that his observations in many states indicated that the most strained relations exist invariably in a direct proportion to close proximity to population centers. "Signs of 'no hunting' or 'no trespassing' are found in greatest abundance near cities and these diminish to almost non-existence in extreme rural areas."

The record-breaking banquet was the feature of the first annual Texas Wildlife Conservation Conference and was given in honor of the Game and Fish Commission. The Commission held its regular quarterly meeting the following morning.

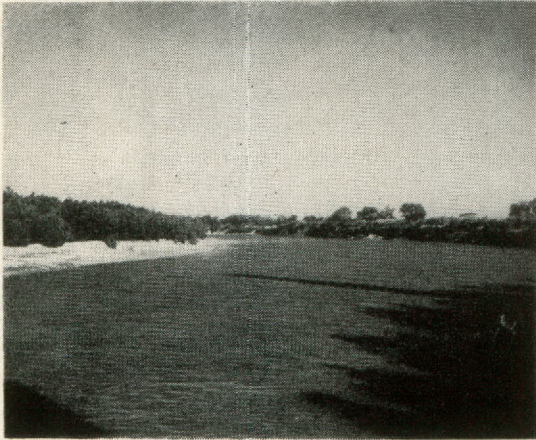
Present, in addition to Executive

Secretary Howard D. Dodgen and Assistant Executive Secretary W. J. Cutbirth, Jr., were seven of the nine non-salaried members of the Commission. They were V. F. Neuhaus, Mission; J. W. Elliott, Mexia; Herman F. Heep, Buda; W. T. Scarborough, Kenedy; Walter W. Lechner, Fort Worth; R. M. Kleberg, Sr., Kingsville, and Mr. Wood. Unable to attend were Shelby Kritser, Amarillo, and W. Scott Schreiner, Kerrville.

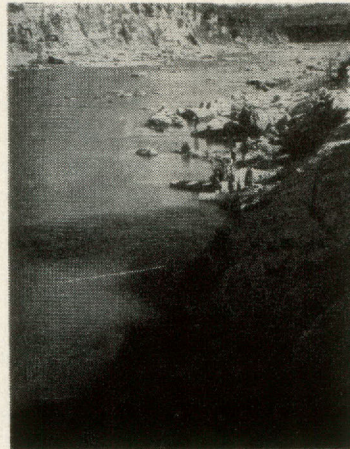
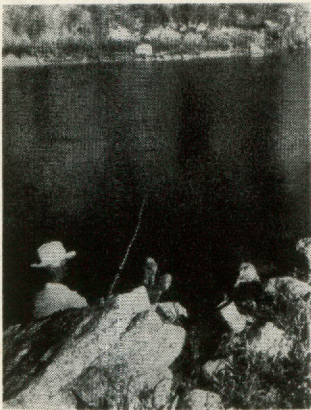
So successful was this first Conference, the three sponsoring groups are laying plans for an expanded program next year, when announcement of the scholarship and trophy winners will be made. Highlighting future plans is a proposed one-day wildlife management clinic to be held the day of the banquet.

It is hoped that the Conference can be established as an annual affair to stimulate interest among sportsmen, farmers, and ranchers in the problems of wildlife production and management.

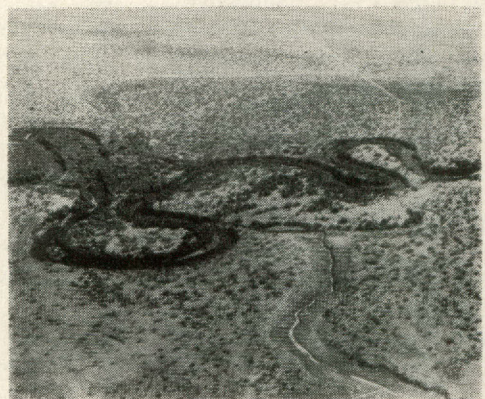
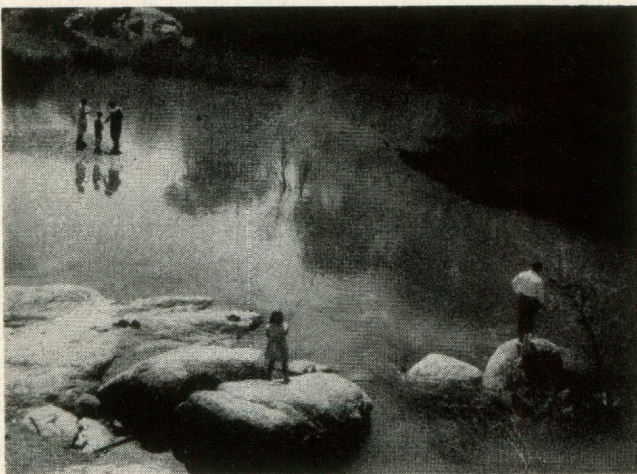
TEXAS RIVERS



From the banks of Texas rivers sprang civilization, history and legends.



By J. L. BAUGHMAN



THOUSANDS of Texans each year take time out to visit their Texas rivers for fishing, hunting, boating, swimming—or just loafing.

Rivers today play an important part in commerce and pleasure, but in the past they meant many more things—a barrier to cross, a landmark, a means of transportation, a defense against enemies.

The legends and history surrounding Texas rivers provide an interesting chapter of our past.

The first white man ever to see any of them, of course, was Cabeza de Vaca, who, during the course of his journey crossed the San Bernard and Brazos, lived for a while on the Guadalupe, and then crossed the Nueces and the Rio Grande upon leaving Texas.

At the mouth of the San Bernard, where he found one of the wrecked ships of his expedition, the town of that name was later established, and for many years, under Spanish rule, it was the only legal port in Texas by decree of the Spanish king. Tradition among the old settlers of Texas named this a haunted stream. Long ago, they say, Count Ramon, a grandee of Spain, built a home on the banks of the river, where he lived alone with his violin, which he was adept at playing. As the early colonists came, he was frequently asked to play for their dances, but, one day when a party of men came seeking him, they found him dead, and buried him with his violin, whose strains may still be heard. Sometimes at night, and again just as the sun rises above the trees at dawn, its plaintive music is occasionally heard.

In the old days the Bernard bottoms were a favorite hunting ground for the early Texans. Ducks, deer, squirrels and black bears were plentiful, and there is a story still told about a big black bear that totally disrupted a service at the old "Mother Zion" Negro church. The congregation were at their devotions when a big black bear entered through the front door, interrupting the doxology, as the congregation left by the most convenient windows.

Unlike the San Bernard, the Brazos has no legendary history, but never-

theless, it has played an important part in the life of Texas. The story behind its name is that a Spanish priest, and his flock, fleeing from hostile Indians, crossed the turbulent stream in safety, but their followers, like the Egyptians who followed Moses and the Children of Israel, were swallowed up. Seeing the destruction of the enemy, the priest, with uplifted face, gave deep and heartfelt thanks to God, and christened the stream Los Brazos de Dios, or the Arms of God.

On the Brazos was founded the old town of Washington-on-the-Brazos, the cradle of Texas independence, and on the fertile soil along its banks were built some of the most famous plantations of Texas. A few miles west of Rosharon is the site of the once famous Halcyon Plantation, founded by General Coffee, a close friend of Sam Houston. A silver bell cast from the family plate called the slaves to work in its fields. The present day Clements State Prison Farm is the site of Lon-Wood Plantation, home place of the Mills brothers, whose four other Brazos bottoms plantations made them among Texas' early millionaires.

At Eagle Island was located the Wharton plantation. Mrs. Wharton was a daughter of Jared P. Groce, father of cotton planting in Texas, and the plantation was part of her inheritance. The plantation possessed a sugar mill, and was famous for its excellent library.

Peach Point, on the lower Brazos, was the home of Mrs. James F. Perry, sister of Stephen F. Austin, and it was at Peach Point that Austin died. Nine miles west of Columbia, on Chance's Prairie, was the Sweeny Plantation and Thomas J. and William B. Sweeny, descendants of the founder, were two of the men in Sam Houston's army at the Battle of San Jacinto.

The show place of all was the Granville McNeil place. The big house of this place had 31 rooms. China Grove, the home of Albert Sidney Johnston, was another, and at the Orizombo plantation, near Brazoria, there stood a great oak tree,

to which Santa Ana was chained, while a prisoner after the Battle of San Jacinto.

Old Fort Tenoxtitlan, built in 1831, with convict labor, where the Old San Antonio Road crossed the Brazos in Burleson County, was another interesting spot.

The San Jacinto is another river which owes its name to the early Spanish friars in Texas. A party of them, attempting to cross it, found it so choked with water hyacinths that they were almost unable to do so. Recalling the Greek legend of St. Hyacinth, they promptly christened it by this name, and this later became San Jacinto, the Spanish equivalent. In the early days boats ran up this river as far as Cinncinatti, the home of Sam Houston, 12 miles above present day Huntsville, and it was from Cinncinatti that cotton was shipped, via the river, to Sabine.

Buffalo Bayou, which joined the San Jacinto near Morgan's Point, has today become the Houston Ship Channel, but there was a time when it was navigable only to shallow draft river steamers and in that interesting old book "On a Mexican Mustang Through Texas," the author says "The country on each side is level prairie, but we could see very little of it, as both banks were high and covered with a dense growth of timber. Often the overhanging branches brushed against the smoke stack, and, as we leaned over the rail, while the steamboat made a sharp curve, we could pluck the gorgeous, wax-like flowers of the magnolia. Flowers of every hue and fragrance lined the banks, and high above all towered the lofty oaks, from the branches of which dangled festoons of Spanish moss."

If the Brazos, the San Jacinto and Buffalo Bayou have no legends connected with them, there are other Texas rivers that have.

The Sabine, whose name means "cypress," because of the trees that lined its banks, in the early days of Texas, furnished a convenient means of transportation for the colonists on its banks. Great rafts of logs were floated down-stream, flat boats carrying cotton navigated its waters, and it is recorded that the steamer "Uncle

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By JAY VESSELS

STOP THE PRESS

One South Texas sports editor talked his reluctant chief into sponsoring a big fish contest. Enthusiasm ran high. Entries were numerous. So were the scandals. The anglers did everything but manufacture a fish to win. Fishes' tummies were stuffed with sinkers or rocks. One species was streamlined and pawned off for another—almost. One rigger, supported by affidavit, measured his entrant NOT from tip of tail to end of nose. No suh, he determined its size by following the contour of its body with a tape measure—up and around the fins, over and around its belly. The scrambled sports editor says, yes, fishing is here to stay but count him out on weights and sizes, liars or not.

NAG IS NICKED

Game Warden Supervisor E. M. Sprott of Lufkin noted the February *Game and Fish* magazine item about a New Mexico hunter shooting a horse from under a game warden and recalled a similar event in Texas years ago. He said a part time warden named Walter Robinson was just leaving his home about 12 miles from Lufkin for patrol duty when a night hunter picked up his mare's eyes in his spotlight and fired. One pellet hit the mare in the head so hard it staggered her. Another glanced off Robinson's legging. Before he could fire back, the culprit fled in his car.

SNAKE POLICES HATCHERY

Although water turkeys prey on the fish and mud hens mess around until they are driven off, some species help balance negative wildlife angles at the Brownsville state fish hatchery. One principal contributor, according to Hatchery Superintendent H. A.

Maples, is the Indigo snake. Several patrol the hatchery grounds, catching rats and mice as well as the common moccasin which eats the precious black bass. The cooperating reptiles live under buildings and are frequently seen about the grounds, but Maples has issued rigid orders against molesting them. He says they get to be eight feet long and have enormous appetites for their favorite food. Above all, they don't like fish, although they relish frogs.

BUCK TECHNIQUE

John E. Hearn, Predator Control Chief for the Game and Fish Commission, is noted widely for his successful technique in trapping mountain lions and other enemies of wildlife. He has one other distinction. He hunts deer backward; that is backwards in the eyes of most big game hunters.

Most gunners hunt into the wind so their scent will not rout the prey before they get there. Hearn hunts with the wind so that his scent will be certain to stir up the bucks. He said this gives him more shots since the deer smell him in advance, often-times get up from their hiding places to see what is approaching and thus provide set up shots.

ONE WAY ROAD

The wildlife box score in Bastrop county carried nothing but zeros not so long ago. There was no game to speak of, a small amount of fish, and no game warden for the county. Warden Dave Sellstrom was assigned to the county. Now there are at least deer to see in Bastrop State Park. Quail are coming back. Residents are giving doves a buildup break. Yes, another county heard from and coming along fast in the right direction.

DELL DISCOUNTED

They exploded the myth about those Paul Bunyan black bass bulging the banks of ancient Dell Tank in the Black Gap area of far West Texas. Natives jabbered about the legendary beauties, "big as tarpon." Airplane pilots briefed pop-eyed passengers on the fabulous spot. Then, one day a while back they needed brood bass for the San Angelo state fish hatchery. So they seined Dell Tank. Took out everything but the tadpoles. And they got some nice blacks, mostly five pounders but some going to six and seven pounds . . . The job confirmed the inevitable for small fish trapped in a limited area. They found 2000 blue gills, all about four inches long, varying not over quarter of an inch. No future for the stunted panfish; just fodder for the bass, which were having a hard time on their own in such crowded conditions. Worst off was a handful of channel cats—simply starving yet lucky at escaping the voracious bass, bored as the latter were with a straight blue gill diet.

DIVE-BOMBING TERROR

A few days after a Game and Fish Commission news release cautioning Texans about hazards of trying to make pets of wildlife appeared this Portland, Ore., AP dispatch in the Fort Worth *Star Telegram*:

"Benny is a crow that decided to do something about people. He's been chasing them ever since. A city-bred crow and a pet of 73-year-old Michael Hintz, Benny lived nearly three years in peace with Hintz's neighbors. Then came the personality change which Hintz blames on rock-throwing, arrow-slinging kids. Benny became a raucous, dive-bombing terror. He found out people would run. He caught one boy carrying a violin on a bicycle. Boy, bike and violin flew

Press Views

Game Notes

in different directions. He chased mothers from yards. He zipped around one youngster until he had him cowering in a corner, then settled down to pecking at the youngster's toes. When he couldn't find people, he would pull clothespins off lines, dropping clothes to the ground."

TURKEYS RELEASED

Bill Thompson reported in the *Paris News*:

"Eleven big, bronze turkeys went whistling off into the Red River Valley underbrush near Byarly Community this last week . . . They're the first of 25 ticketed to re-stock that area . . . Emmett Smith, Texas Game and Fish Commission trapper, snared the 11 in South Texas.

"Picking a spot in the Red River bottoms, Smith carefully lifted the latch on each of the 11 cages. One by one each of the bronze giants shot out of their wire prisons and flew into the underbrush with something like the speed of a quail. As far as onlookers could see, they were still flying."

OUT OF BOUNDS

News item in *Corpus Christi Caller*—

"The public is being warned to stay away from Lydia Ann and South Bird Islands during the nesting season of shore and water birds. The warning was issued by Louis Rawalt, warden for the National Audubon Society. Lydia Ann Island in Aransas Bay near St. Joseph and Harbor Islands and South Bird Island 12 miles south of Padre Island Causeway, are the primary rookeries of white pelicans, American egrets and several species of terns and herons, Rawalt said. If these birds are disturbed in their nest during the breeding season they will desert them, causing their young to

die. Visiting the bird islands without permission is a Federal offense, and signs are prominently displayed in their areas. Rawalt said people interested in observing the birds should call him at 5-9463 (Corpus Christi) for permission and instructions."

WOLVES ON INCREASE

Warden Oma Puckett of Annona reports that wolves, called coyotes by some, are becoming increasingly bothersome in northeast Texas, especially in counties up and down the Sulphur River. He said they are preying on such domestic livestock as sheep, pigs and goats as well as chickens, and also are manhandling wildlife. Puckett has noted the increase despite efforts to control the predators by trapping.

EVEN TURKEYS DROWN

Game Warden Bill Garrett of Comfort says wildlife is more vulnerable to weather extremes than most laymen realize. He referred to the loss of wild turkeys from drowning during last September's deluge in the Hill Country. It rained steadily for 24 hours where Garrett lived, with no letup whatever and with the water coming down in sheets. The veteran warden said the big birds succumbed when they became soaked, could not fly, and lost their grips on wind and flood lashed tree tops because of chilling and hunger. Garrett found six wild turkeys in one stretch of drift. He recalled a similar tragedy farther west in the Edwards Plateau region in 1932.

By the way, Garrett is called the champion on detecting hen turkeys from gobblers, which alone are legal prey during the big game hunting season. Garrett is confident of his own talents. "Think I could tell 'em apart even after they were already in the skillet," he laughed.

PIGS GOOD POSERS

William Jennings, wildlife biologist for the Game and Fish Commission, was steady as a stick when he crept to within 20 feet of a javelina female and her four young. This was shown by a very clear photo taken with an ordinary Speed Graphic. It's not extremely rare for javelina to have four young, but it is very rare that anyone has had the good fortune to catch

on film the quadruplets and their mother. Jennings made his photographic conquest on the Lacoma Ranch near Edinburg.

PS: Attention laymen. Do not construe this to mean that photographing is a simple matter. Jennings has been making extensive studies of javelina and their habitat and knows better than anyone the patience and skill required to snap the wary wild hogs.

LLANO LOOKS AHEAD

Llano dispatch in *Austin American*:

"A plan to acquaint the youth of Llano County with all types of wildlife is taking shape under the auspices of the Lion's Club. The plan is to work through local schools and arranges for field trips to show various forms of wildlife and how it may be preserved and perpetuated. This plan is particularly applicable to children of the elementary school level and concentration will be placed on grades one through six, according to Lester Inman, local businessman and co-chairman of the committee appointed for the purpose."

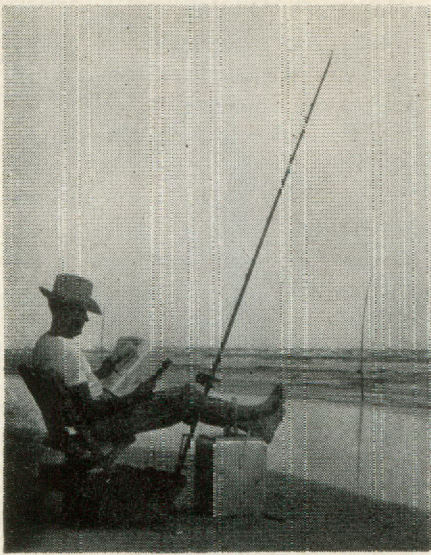
GONE GOSLING

The famed wild geese concentration down in Colorado county cleared out without a thank you to protector Tom Waddell. But the veteran Eagle Lake game warden said the big birds left many happy memories. He estimated at least 4,000 of the 40,000 geese wintering in the local rice fields helped provide goose dinners and allowed that "several thousand" persons shared in the hunt.

THE BEST FISHIN'

E. C. (Doc) Osborn writes in his *Valley Morning Star* sports column:

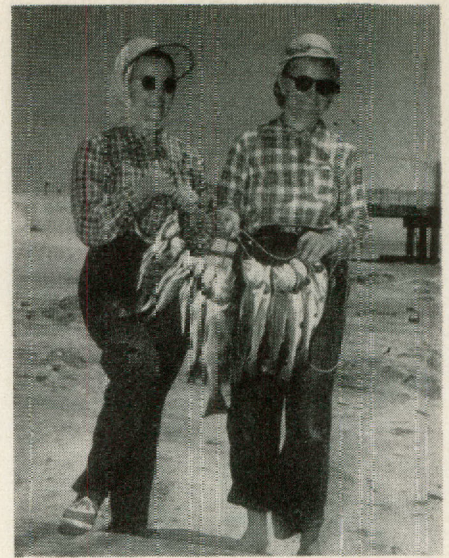
"Hart Stilwell of Austin, formerly of Brownsville and one of Texas' best known sportsmen-authors, has picked his favorite fishing spot. You know where it is? Laguna Madre of the Texas Gulf Coast. And that actually means the bay near Port Isabel. Stilly was asked, along with other ace fishermen and authors to write about the one place in the world he would pick. His article in the April issue of *Field and Stream* tells all about the tarpon, snook, speckled trout, jackfish, Spanish mackerel and drum that one can catch in the Laguna."



There's more than one way to catch a fish on Padre Island. Harry Boyd takes it easy.



Fran Graham, who runs a bait business on the Padre Causeway, goes after mullet with a cast net.



Two hours of fishing on the pier paid off in a nice string for these lady anglers.

Padre Island

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cially small coquinas, which are a favorite food of the redfish. And they used to lure the big boys in close.

Nowadays, the reds don't frequent the area in the numbers or the sizes they did a decade ago. But they can be found, and then the fun begins. And unless you look sharp, you can get into shark trouble.

We happened to find reds the day we were there. And it's a fair statement to say we didn't need a stringer—not because we didn't catch fish, but because we did. We preferred stowing 'em in the ice chest, rather than having 'em dangling for sharks to swallow.

There was a time a number of years back when one came in close enough to scare heck out of us. We'd been fishing a spell. There wasn't anything very big on the stringer, mostly rat reds and croakers, but they must have looked big to this baby with the razor teeth and the under-shot jaw. We were mincing our business, tight line out, when we felt a tug at the stringer. It wasn't hard. Could have been the upsweep of a roller—we were standing thigh deep as it was. So for another minute or so we went on fishing blithely. Then something prompted up to look down. The stringer was empty! Stark, staring empty, shredded and frayed at the bottom end.

We looked around, startled. And there five feet away, black and awesome as it streaked through the water, was a sharp, ugly-looking dorsal fin. Our yell probably scared the shark as much as it scared us. One leap landed us on the beach, with our useless stringer and some dearly garnered experience.

Nowadays, and from that moment on, we stick 'em in an ice chest. To heck with the stringer in shark waters!

Seeing that shark reminded us again of what we've long known: that there is no limit to the size and variety of fish to be taken from the Padre Island surf. That's the beauty of fishing in those parts. There's no time of year when something big and sporty won't have a fling at your lure. Maybe you eat him, when and if you haul him ashore; or maybe you throw him back. In either case, you can count on a set of tired and sore muscles and a glowing memory of your fishing trip to Padre Island.

But, getting back to those reds, or channel bass as they're called in some parts of the country, we caught a couple of dozen between us, with a third of them easily topping six pounds. They're known to get as large as thirty-five or forty pounds, but we'll let the old-timers who fished there even before our time tell about them. One of ours went eighteen pounds that day, and we figured that was plenty good.

Reds are primarily bottom feeders and usually take out mullet, dead or live shrimp, sand crabs, or small live fish. We'd heard that most anglers overfish the shell beaches: that is, wade out too far to do their casting, and we found this was easy to do. The first gut, or maybe the second, in any case not more than sixty or seventy feet from the edge of the foam, proved best. Reds are skittish, so it's a good plan to hold your wading and splashing and general noise-making to as low a level as possible.

Here's something, too, we learned at Padre, something we'd heard all our youth and paid little attention to. If you ever get one of those big ten-pound-plus reds into ankle-deep water and he breaks loose, it's well worth the effort to take out after him. You have at least as much chance as he does in shallow water.

We found it out for sure. We worked one of the big boys almost onto the beach when he broke away; we scrambled after him on hands and knees, splashing foam and blue water sky high. We finally encircled the blamed thing with body and arms and came walking proudly out of the surf, carrying a huge redfish like one carries the family cat on the way to the back door. We figured our catch was something of a feat, a real triumph of brain and brawn over finny canniness.

But what fish, specifically, are to be had at Padre Island? We won't

attempt a catalogue. It would take pages, plus some sage advice from the Game and Fish Commission, to identify 'em all. Halfacre, incidentally, even came up with an octopus last summer, even though he didn't know what to do with the thing when he hauled it in. Let it go that there are three main "seasons," insofar as the likelihood of catching any particular fish is concerned—winter, summer, and year around. As might be expected, good fishing shades over into the next season for seasonal types.

Winter finds bull redfish—the whoppers—most bountiful. Around wrecked boats and pilings, sheephead abound in the winter, and you're a cinch to snare a take or two of big drum and flounder.

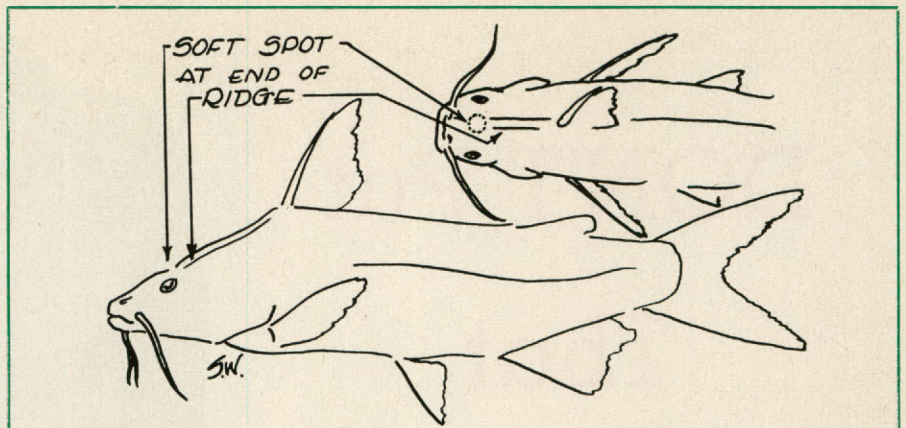
Pompano, which turn up at \$3.50 a plate in our better restaurants, can be had for free at Padre Island in the summer, especially early and late summer, shading from spring and into fall. Then there are bluefish and skip-jacks—all common enough in summer. And once in a while the summer months will toss a manta ray beachward, within grabbing distance of your lure.

Year around, spotted seatrout and sand seatrout like your bait, with croaker, whiting, and gaff-topsail catfish, as well, available.

The gaff-topsail catfish is good eating, but, unfortunately, he has a near cousin who isn't. And the two are occasionally confused, to the chagrin, and sometimes the physical pain, of the angler. A word of warning to the prospective Padre visitor might be timely—regarding the hardhead catfish.

Fishing with small bait around Padre will produce reds, seatrout, flounder, pompano, croakers, and whiting. But sooner or later, too, it brings up the bugaboo of all Texas coast fishermen, the hardhead catfish.

The hardhead, or scavenger as he is frequently called around docks and ships, is a dangerous little monster with a dorsal and two pectoral fins well coated with pain-inflicting poison that causes nausea and potential infection at the slightest scratch. He seldom exceeds fourteen or fifteen inches in length, but he infests the Gulf by the millions and usually will



How to Handle Hardheads

After reading "Padre Island" when it first appeared in *THE FISHERMAN*, Ed S. Jackson of Houston came up with a "cure" for handling catfish. George Fichter, editor of *THE FISHERMAN*, called it to our attention, and Jackson obligingly passed a sketch along to *TEXAS GAME AND FISH*.

Jackson says:

"This was taught to me by my Indian playmates as a boy, and it's surprising how few sportsmen are acquainted with it.

"Examine any species of catfish, and you will note a ridge running along the top of the head from the base of the dorsal fin to a spot between the eyes. This spot is soft.

"Turn an eye on one end of a foot-long piece of 1/16th-inch welding rod and sharpen the other end. Now catch the catfish by the upper jaw with pliers. Insert the rod's point in the soft spot and thrust back toward the dorsal fin. The cat will be killed at once and completely relaxed. It will be almost impossible for you to get stuck."

bite if nothing else will.

He's a pest, a felonious bait stealer, detested mainly for the difficulty of freeing him from the hook if caught, with the needle-sharp tips of his fins uppermost in the mind of any fisherman who has caught one before. The fin, once embedded in the flesh, is tough to remove because of its serrated edge. It easily punches through a fisherman's skin but is almost impossible to jerk out without tearing skin and muscle tissue.

How well we know! As a boy we encountered one—and nearly died as a result. But that's another story. Let it go that the Gulf Coast angler will do well to recognize the hardhead as soon as possible after he strikes and to get rid of him—but fast. Even a hook and a few feet of line are small price to pay to get out of having to handle one.

But don't make the mistake of classifying all catfish under the hard-

head label. You could throw away a gaff-topsail with that line of thinking. Many fishermen do. It's not uncommon to see many fine "gafftops" lying on piers and jetties amid the scavengers. Ask the anglers perched on the rocks or leaning on the pier rails, and some will say, "It's a catfish, so it ain't fit to eat!" But, brother, that just isn't so!

Granted, catfish have one nauseous characteristic. Both kinds are slimy and unpleasant to grasp; and after every handling you'll have need for a hand-wiping rag. That's something, by the way, that could well be a part of every "gafftop" fisherman's gear.

Padre Island tales range from accounts of lassoing a huge drum to other equally fantastic but authentic stories the guides tell. Gerry Mayfield also serves as a guide, incidentally, and he tells of one fishing party he masterminded down the seaward side

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DON'T Put That Gun Away!



Varmints offer plenty of off-season shooting fun. And ridding the outdoors of pests gives a boost to farmers, ranchers, and wildlife.

By EDWARD D. HYMAN

Thousands of Texas hunters miss the best hunting every year because they put their gun away at the end of the season and either ignore or don't realize the pleasure derived from varmint hunting. If you would like to enjoy some off season shooting, you might find that varmint hunting pays dividends in pleasure and real sport. It offers a real challenge and also helps decrease the number of predatory animals that prey on our game.

As for that challenge, the field is wide open to the enterprising sportsman. There are more ways and methods to hunt the individual varmint than we can mention, yet there is no set method to bring any one of them into the cinch class. It takes brains and cunning, on the part of the hunter, to even get a shot at the average varmint. You might work out some new tricks to get that shot, but the shot itself will prove, as a rule, to be at a small target at pretty long range.

When you start varmint hunting it is wise to find out what kind of predators abound in your locality. Texas, being the large state that it is, has many kinds of



Buzzards on the wing with a rifle? Here's the author with one.

varmints, some predominant in certain areas, some in others. It is always a good idea to see your local game warden and ask him which of the predators are most prevalent in your particular area. Many varmint hunters travel great distances to pursue their sport, but you will find that regardless of where you live, there will be some type of off-season animal or bird in the immediate locale to offer plenty of sport and shooting practice.

One of the greatest game destroying predators, the wild house cat, can be found in any part of Texas, usually in large numbers. For many reasons, the wild house cat has become a real threat to our game birds. Young quail, being much easier to catch than mice and rats, have made the call of the wild sound like sweet music to the thousands of farm cats who have deserted the barns for the meadows. Another reason cats have become so numerous in the field is that many city dwellers, when they find Tabby with a litter of kittens, take the unwanted new additions of the household out to the country and turn them loose in some farmer's field to fend for themselves. This they do very well! The farmer could tell you, in a few short and possibly unprintable words, the effect they have on the quail population, and frequently his young chicks.

Another varmint found in all parts of the state is the buzzard. For years there was a great deal of controversy about the buzzard concerning its good and bad qualities. At one time they were protected by state law, but that law was repealed some years ago. Since then, whether to shoot them or not has been left to the discretion of the hunter.

We will state the case here, and leave it to you to decide if you want to pick the buzzard as an off season target.

About all to be said for them is that they eat carrion, which is a good service any way you look at it.

On the other hand, buzzards don't care what their meal died of, and they will eat a diseased carcass as readily as any other. You can see the opportunity this affords them to spread disease to other animals. Their claws get covered with filth from a

disease ridden animal, they fly to the nearest water hole for an after-dinner drink, stand in the water, dip in their beak, and pollute some rancher's stock tank. On the same side of the ledger, any sheep rancher will tell you how the buzzards take their toll during lambing time. New born calves are not exempt from the table fare of these birds, either.

Personally, I take a crack at buzzards whenever the opportunity presents itself. You will find excellent wing shooting practice on flying buzzards, especially with a small caliber rifle. Don't get discouraged if you shoot at a few hundred before you bring one down, as any veteran buzzard shooter will tell you they are mighty hard to kill on the wing with a rifle.

Generally speaking, the rest of the varmints to be found in Texas come under the heading of "Restricted to Locale." Of course, the locale can consist of thousands of square miles and still be only a comparatively small portion of our state. This does, however, confine the hunter's choice of targets to his area, unless he is in a position to travel for sport.

I'll not try to designate the area where each of the following can be found. As mentioned before, it is best to ask your local game warden which are prevalent in your vicinity. Much of this information can be found in "Principal Game, Birds and Mammals of Texas," published by the Game and Fish Commission of Texas.

Here is a partial list of varmints found in the state: cougar (also known as mountain lion, puma, Mexican lion, and panther, depending on locale), bobcat, wolf, coyote, crow, woodchuck, Cooper's hawk, goshawk, sharpshinned hawk, great horned owl, jackrabbit, ground squirrel, prairie dog, ocelot, weasel, and golden eagle.

When the subject of varmint hunting is brought up, it is always followed by a discussion of the type of guns used for the job. As in any other kind of hunting, you can find as many different types of guns as hunters. Generally speaking, you can use your deer gun on the larger varmints. The average deer gun will do very well on coyotes, cougars, wolves, and bobcats, and, if used for this purpose,

will give you excellent practice in both handling and shooting. Some deer rifles can be used on all varmints, large and small. These include the 250-3000, 257, 270, and the 30.06 in the 110 grain bullet.

It might be well to point out that although it is not necessary to buy a special high powered small caliber rifle for vermin, there are certain desirable features that should be incorporated. One of the most important is a small bullet of light structure that will blow up on contact with the ground. Varmint hunting is usually done in fairly well populated locales, therefore it is best not to have a lot of ricocheting slugs whining over the next hill. Another excellent feature is a flat trajectory, especially when the vermin consist of small targets such as crows, owls, buzzards, and wild house cats. Since these targets are usually shot at over a hundred yards, it is best not to have to worry with high trajectories.

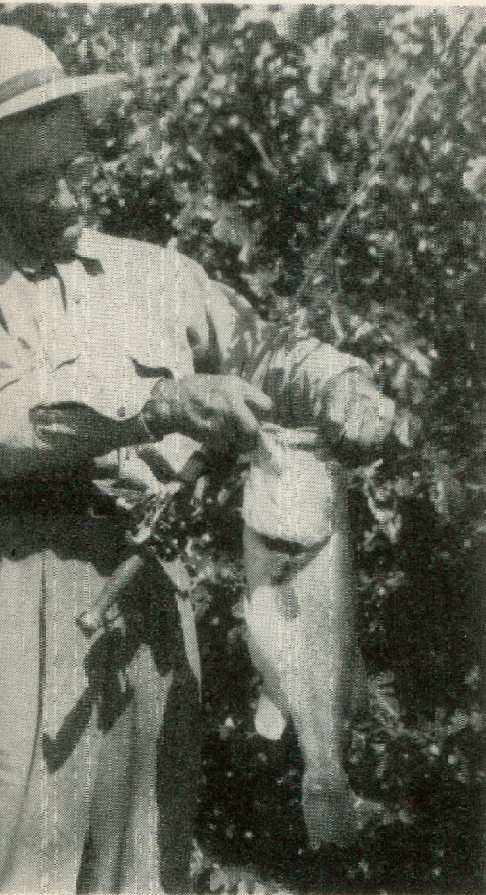
Besides the above mentioned calibers, there are some very fine varmint guns in the 22 class, such as the 220 Swift, 219 Zipper, and 22 High Power. There are also some excellent wildcat loads, for example the 22 Varminter, 2R Lovell, and the 250 Magnum. These could be considered high-priced cartridges, and only for the sportsman who can afford to spend ten cents or more a shot.

For the more conservative hunter there are a few excellent calibers in the two-to-four cent bracket. The 22 Hornet and the 218 Bee are probably the best in this class. Both are very accurate and are shot in light easy-to-handle rifles.

I, personally, use a 218 Bee, Model 65 Winchester, lever action, and find it adequate for everything from coyotes to crows. It should go without saying, that a good scope is a very handy sight to use for all varmint shooting.

Don't let all this talk about "hot guns" discourage you! Though the above mentioned guns are desirable, it is not necessary to have one to hunt varmints. A 22 single shot, with long rifle hollow points, is a good killer of small game, and the user of one will have just as much enjoyment hunting varmints as a man with a two-hundred dollar rig.

Second in a series about how to catch big bass



LAST month we discussed in a general way some of the know-how and tricks necessary to fool big bass—the kind who somehow manage to outwit anglers year after year.

No doubt you've seen how some of the big rascals can rise to the surface, smash down on a plunker lure, go right on up in the air, chew the hooks off, and toss it back to you. It happens so fast you hardly know what happened.

This article is the story of just such a fish, a seven-pounder which lived in a small creek near Canyon, where I do a lot of my experimenting with artificial lures and big bass that have been educated by heavy fishing pressure.

This big fellow to my knowledge had made its home for at least two years under a large submerged stump, which protruded out of a cut bank on one side of a narrow pool. It was an ideal home for a big bass.

Fishermen around there knew about him. Many had had lures slapped neatly and expertly out of the water by this wise old bass, and he had learned to steal live minnows off a hook as fast as they were dropped down to him.

One morning in late July, I decided to catch that bass on an artificial lure and my light tackle or drown myself

trying. I figured there was no use trying regular lures anymore. That fish knew them all by name and stock number. So I delved into my tackle box and came up with an old well-worn crayfish from which all the fin- ish had been chewed by a big bass in a former year.

Then I got the idea that I might camouflage the thing to look like a frog. I did this by attaching a three-inch strip of split pork rind to the back end. I used a four-foot tinted leader to attach this to my line.

Moving stealthily to the opposite side of the creek, I began wading into the shallow water toward the bass' hideout.

When I got to within 40 feet of the other bank I stopped and made my cast. I dropped the plug up on the bank, about two feet above the water and just to the left of the submerged log. The plug stuck lightly in the mud just as I had hoped it would.

With a slight twitch of the rod tip, I freed the plug and it rolled down into the water. As it dipped in, I gave it another twitch and began reeling rapidly, starting the plug on a fast dive.

I found out long ago that it takes a quick, a very quick, jerk to set the hooks in one of these wise old bass, and I knew this one wouldn't waste a fraction of a second getting rid of the plug if given a chance. I was alert and ready . . . if he hit.

Wham! He hit!

With a quick twitch I set the hook. The big boy headed for deep water, down, down . . . then suddenly he was back up and in the air in a

fooling a seven pounder

By H. C. GENTRY

frantic effort to toss the thing back at me.

Down he crashed, thrashing the water as he went. He headed for his log retreat. I put all the pressure I dared on my tackle against his weight and power, and he zoomed out of the water again, gill covers flared in anger and desperation.

He was clever, all right, that fellow. But this time he was hooked for good. A few more smart acts, and he began to weaken.

I battled him in closer, and he finally yielded, exhausted and broadside up. I reached down and clinched his lower jaw between forefinger and thumb, just as I have always landed lunkers, for I have never used a net.

The procedure of flipping a plug up on the bank and slipping it off into the water is not new. It has produced many big bass for many fishermen, and it will work for you. Remember it, and use it whenever you can. Fish are accustomed to having food fall or crawl into the water from the bank, and the trick will fool even the big ones.

Next month I'll tell about a lunker that saw me coming. He refused my first offering, but a few minutes later he fell to a different lure, camouflaged on the spot to take advantage of his weakness.

Some Bucks Are Marked

broke a twig under one foot. He snorted and raced back over his same trail, like an old mossback buck would do.

"This my last hunt," I moaned, "and I rattle up a little spike."

I tucked the antlers in my belt and started out. In a quarter of a mile I came out onto some very open territory with lots of sand, some tall grass, and long winding trails—cow trails. This would be an ideal place to catch a buck crossing from one side of the pasture to the other. I had no more than had the thought when I saw a deer with black, tall antlers, crossing a glade in front of me.

My buck, I muttered, as I raised my rifle. The same high antlers, the same spread, the same large deer—and he was headed toward his favorite crossing and bedding-down place.

I pulled a fine bead on him and squeezed off the trigger. He went

Texas Rivers

Ben" made five trips up the river to Shelby County, returning with 1,000 bales each trip.

In early times there was no pass between Sabine Lake and the Gulf, but, said the Indians who lived in that area, one was formed in the following fashion. A chief of one of the tribes, although old, looked upon Kisselpoo (She whose beauty is like unto that of the full moon), a daughter of the Chitimachas, and desired her. While he was asking for her hand in full council, a man of the Attakapas, with whom she was in love, carried her away, under the protection of his patron goddess, the moon. Pursued, Kisselpoo and her lover attempted to swim the lake and were drowned. Enraged, the moon goddess sent a storm, wiping out the village, and tearing open the channel which, today, we call Sabine Pass.

Very few rivers in Texas are without their stories of buried treasures.

After the battle of Resaca de los Palmas, the Mexican army fled across the Rio Grande, but, so great was their haste, that they were unable to carry all their baggage with them. According to J. Frank Dobie, who had the story from Bob Nutt of Sabin, who got it from an old Mexican ferryman named Ramon, "down

down like something had tripped him. But he bounced right up again like he was on spring. Then he went right back down. I ran toward him rapidly with gun ready. Just as I got up to him, he made one last super effort to run and then collapsed.

I had made a marvelous neck shot at 115-yards. He was an exceptionally heavy buck for South Texas—he weighed 144-pounds field dressed. His antlers were long and thin, with seven on one side and six on the other—a really fine buck.

"Some bucks are marked!" And this old patriarch of the brush country surely wore my deer tag. He gave me enough chances, but I had to use a hunt after the 'last hunt' in order to bag him.

"Yes," the veteran Arch murmured as we doused the campfire, preparing to leave. "I know some bucks are marked—but definitely."

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on the Rio Grande, there is still some of their treasure buried at Resaca de los Palmas, for," said Ramon, "they did not have time even to bring back the Senor General's chest of money or any of the silver plates he ate out of. There was a great bundle of it, and it was left at Resaca de los Palmas," where three tall palms make a triangle, in the middle of which the money is buried.

A pirate treasure has been hidden in the marshes of the Neches, according to ancient Spanish legend, and Lafitte and his men are supposed to have buried gold on Kellar's or Cox's Creek in Jackson County.

Gold is not the only treasure of our Texas rivers for there is the story of Thomas Longest, a native of New York City, who, while looking over the country along the Salt Fork of the Brazos, discovered a ledge of ore, from which he broke off a piece weighing about four pounds and a half. When the ore was later assayed in New York, it proved to be 70% pure lead. However, Longest died, before he could return to his find and it has never since been rediscovered. J. Frank Dobie, who tells the story, thinks that the ledge was located in Stonewall or King Counties, more probably in the latter.

Magazine Change Nears Completion

We sincerely hope that this issue of the magazine is the last one which will reach readers late. It's happened three months in a row now during the time the new system of handling subscriptions and mailing was being installed.

The circulation department got behind in regular routine while working overtime on the new setup. The editorial department got behind while helping out. Now the changeover is almost complete.

It's been a headache for all, including our readers. But when the new system gets rolling, it should mean better, faster, more accurate service for all.

Thanks for your patience. And beginning with June issue, we hope once more to have your magazine to you each month before the 15th.

Maybe the Shrimp Was Scared!

Marine Biologist Ernest Simmons reports: A founder tagged in 1951 when it was 12½ inches long and weighed one and one-quarter pounds was caught 11½ months later when it was 18½ inches long and weighed four and one-half pounds. It had traveled seven miles before being caught at the Padre Island Causeway.

Aquatic Biologist Ken Jurgens reports: A commercial fisherman caught a tagged channel catfish near Bull Creek in Lake Austin

that had been released three months earlier. Weight gain was from four to five pounds, length gain from 21⅝ inches to 23 inches. Distance traveled was two miles.

Marine Biologist Howard Lee reports: A tagged shrimp released off Port Aransas, was re-taken 26 days later near the mouth of the Colorado River, 78 miles distant.

The winnah! The poor little shrimp which moves with the pace of a turtle.—Jay Vessels.

Padre Island

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of the island past Big Shell beach.

He loaded the gear and the party into his four-wheel-drive truck and set out across the sand. Eight miles past Big Shell they set up camp, waded a short way into the surf and cast out lines. From here on, Gerry remembers his own fishing experience better than that of the others in the party. His first cast drew a seven-pound redfish; then a six-pound red grabbed another man's cut mullet bait. A two-pound trout snapped at the other angler's lure before Gerry had what he calls his "big strike."

What a wallop it turned out to be! Gerry was fishing with a whole mullet from which he ripped the gill covers to give it a more tantalizing appearance. He'd waited maybe fifteen minutes, patience ebbing, as the eight-ounce sinker held the line taut at sea. He was ready to release a few more yards and go ashore for a rest when it happened.

Experienced at the game, Gerry felt the line go slack, and he pictured the fish picking up the bait. It was too early to tell what it was, but in those waters he well knew it could be almost anything. Seconds seemed hours then, but Gerry held off until he was sure the time had come to set the hook, but good.

He yanked hard. The rod bent double, and he drew back on what felt like a watersoaked log. There was no give whatsoever.

At this instant, forty yards of line stood between Gerry and his catch. There was a breathless moment while

Gerry fought to tighten the line. Then "it," whatever it was, took off, and the line sang its way into the surf; his 175-yard spool of 65-pound test line shrank until the metal hub sparkled through the last few remaining strands of line.

There were three wraps of line on the spool when Gerry succeeded in turning the fish. Another foot of dash would have freed the big boy and left Gerry with a broken line or gazing sadly at an expensive rig trailing out to sea.

The surf battle to end 'em all began then. For four hours Gerry and his two companions, taking turns at holding the rod, walked up and down the beach—over some five or six miles of it—as their still unknown catch continued his desperate bid for blue water.

After they worked the fish into the second gut, it seemed to dig in or "suck bottom," as Gerry called it, and for long minutes there was nothing they could do but keep a tight line. They pounded on the rod and made whatever other racket they could that might be transmitted through the tight line to the fish.

Finally, it released its hold and they reeled in past the first breaker, and then saw its wing tip as water broke over its back in a slashing, snarling foam of spray. Only then did they recognize a giant manta ray, and they figured it weighed somewhere between 700 and 800 pounds. It was about fifteen feet wide.

One angler dashed to the truck and returned with a .22 rifle, lobbed a couple of shots at the ray. This might

have been the fault. Whatever it was, the ray, enraged, made one final—and successful—break for deep water. The charge, like a bull elephant's, snapped the tired line, and the ray grabbed himself a hunk of freedom as he leaped through the surf, almost porpoise-like, in his dash.

Surf fishing at Padre needn't be all to the stronghearted, however. Even the lazy guy who likes to combine relaxation with his fishing can do so with the "Dutchman." This simple but ingenious little device (a sand spike) acts as a pole holder and keeps sand out of the reel.

We came onto Harry Boyd, from up Austin way, parked in a camp chair on the beach, his feet cocked up on the ice chest in which already lay a couple of beautiful trout, his hat well forward and his attention buried, for the moment, in an outdoor magazine spread on his lap.

"Sure, it's lazy fishin'," Harry admitted. "But why wade around and take a pounding from the surf? I like it this way!"

His way wasn't too bad, either. By the end of the day, Harry had a fine mess of fish—already on ice.

A more expensive rig that calls for some surf wading before you start to fish occasionally turns up along the beach at Padre. It's a derrick-type outfit made out of light metal tubing, or sometimes wood; it's carried out into the water and set upright. The fisherman who wants to keep dry and lazy then climbs onto the thing and sits there, much like a swimming-pool lifeguard, perched high above the spindrift.

There's something for everyone on Padre Island. If fishing doesn't appeal, perhaps hunting will. And farther down the island toward Brownsville, small game is plentiful. Beachcombing is a sometimes profitable venture even for the casual visitor.

We managed only a day at Padre Island this time. But we're going back. Perhaps we'll stay much longer than we intend. Others have. It's a good life there—under smiling skies, winter and summer, with the salt breeze in your nostrils and the pounding surf in your ears, and the hearty tug of God-knows-what hauling your lure in a mad rush toward blue water.

Things You May Not Know

A bird's two eyes often weigh more than its brain. The ostrich's eyes often weigh more than twice the weight of its brain.

* * *

There are very few red flowers which are fertilized by bees, probably because bees seem to be color-blind to red.

* * *

Beavers can work under water sawing poles with their teeth without getting water in their mouths. The lips are so designed that they close in back of the long, front incisor teeth. Their ears and nostrils are also provided with valves which keep out water when submerged.

* * *

Contrary to common belief, raccoons do not wash all the food they eat.

Black Gap _____

continued from page 14

ing strip as the camp building site.

Hamer wheeled and buzzed the truck road, measuring it for length and smoothness and always watching carefully for any obstruction such as a challenging mountain peak in the landing or takeoff pattern.

A pre-trip briefing in Austin headquarters by Wildlife Biologist Earnest G. Marsh helped illuminate the aerial observation. Sure enough, there was an old abandoned stockman's well being restored. Over here was a tank, now dry and dilapidated, being reinforced to catch hoped-for rainwater.

One remembered the emphasis by the briefing biologist on the ultimate dream-to-come true; an expanded Black Gap management area, functioning to attract surplus wild game from the adjoining Big Bend Park where hunting is forbidden. A natural harvest setup.

Certainly, the clinching point by the technician was pertinent. He envisioned the time when some life-harassed city denison could sit on a high point overlooking a valley; sit there with his powerful rifle and powerful scope, hoping, and with reason, for a deer, an antelope, or a wild



Two Whitetail Bucks Tangle With a Tree

The two buck white-tailed deer pictured above met death when they tangled not only with each other but with a tree as well.

Game Warden George Miller, Lampasas, who submitted the photo, says "According to the disturbance around the scene of the fight, the two bucks got tangled in the tree and could not move in any direction except in a circle around the tree . . . The tree is skinned up quite a bit."

Miller said both were nice bucks "that any hunter would have been glad to have bagged."

Pictured with the dead deer are Warden Miller and Denny Bell, who, with Elzie Williams, found the bucks last fall on the ranch of Russell Adams about four miles east of Briggs.

The neck of one deer was broken.

hog; a big horn sheep, a mountain lion, or a black bear to amble into his sights.

Such an optimist very definitely could find the elevation and he could find the valleys. It's up and down and all around. "Looks like Mother Nature just dumped a sack full of mountains, and some landed on their edges and stayed that way," confided Hamer.

That hunter of the future, helping out with the varied game harvest, had better take along a reliable compass and an extra canteen of water. It's a pretty forbidding land for a neophyte, and there might not be a sharp-eyed pilot around to show him the way to go home onward through the Dog Canyons and Persimmon Gaps and out past the Old Nigger Heads and Dead Horse Mountains.

ARE YOU CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS

Then please fill out the following form and send to TEXAS GAME AND FISH, Walter Bldg., Austin, Texas, so that you will continue to receive your copies of the magazine. Allow six weeks for processing.

Name.....

Old Address.....

City....., State.....

New Address.....

City....., State.....

My Husband Is a Hunter —

continued from page 15

corn field. The corn had long since been gathered and the stalks were dead. The day was an unseasonably hot day in October. He looked the situation over and suggested it might be a good idea if I circled the field and scared the birds out.

Being a city gal I had no way of estimating the size of the field and enthusiastically started walking. I walked and walked and walked, finally found the fence line, and walked and walked and walked back. Not a bird flew out. When I returned to the starting place I found the guy sitting under a tree impatiently waiting for me so we could go on to another place. That was my first lesson as a beater.

The nearer we get to September 1 the worse things are. When the day finally arrives everybody is in a state of almost complete exhaustion. The season opens at 12 o'clock noon. By 11 we are backing out the driveway. Everything has been ready since 6 o'clock that morning. The safari is about to start. Of course the birds will not begin to fly until just before sundown and we don't have but ten miles to go, but that is beside the point. We can take our positions and

wait, can't we? A stray might come over.

The limit is ten birds and we usually get the limit. I'm pretty busy retrieving and picking and watching for more birds. We usually hunt at a water tank in a cow pasture. I try to watch where I'm stepping and to keep a clear place in front of me for when he yells "Down" I had better be ready to fall or I'm liable to get shot. There have been times when I have been unable to find a clear spot to fall, with most disastrous results. But I've learned not to let a little thing like that bother me. I'm one of the lucky ones—not many men take their wives with them.

When dove season ends we have a breather of two weeks before duck season starts. That helps a little. You have time to recuperate.

In re: ducks. I have never been able to understand a duck's mind. When the days are crisp, clear, and beautiful, there isn't a duck in sight. They are all gone into the wild blue yonder. But let the day be cold, with a little sleet falling, the trees covered with ice and the sky overcast, obviously not fit weather for man or beast—that's when the duck hunter is in his glory. Have you ever sat in a leaky boat in a duck blind surrounded with decoys and cattails, in freezing weather when you had absolutely no feeling in any part of your body, waiting for the ducks to give the word? Maybe I'm not a true sportsman, but I keep thinking about a nice warm room with pots of hot coffee and a good mystery story to read.

Of course the best time to look for the elusive birds is just at daylight. I have fixed many a breakfast for hunters at 4 o'clock in the morning, and I might add that I am not at my best at that hour unless I've been up all night.

Next comes quail season. One year a friend of ours told my husband about several coveys of quail up near the Oklahoma border. We live in central Texas, a distance of several hundred miles, but a trivial matter. He took off in the worst blizzard of the year, tracked down his game and brought them home to mama.

Incidentally, have you ever sat on the back seat of a car on a cold, rainy

Letters . . .

Editor:

I note that a concerted effort is being made in Texas to create a special season for bow and arrow hunters. I am of the opinion that the bow and arrow should never be used in the hunting of deer.

A great many deer are wounded and left to die through poor marksmanship among ordinary gunners, and very few archers are able to kill a deer with bow



day, with a friendly wet bird dog? If you haven't, brother, you've really missed a lot. The first time this happened to me my enthusiasm for the great outdoors was dimmed just a trifle. My place is in the back with the dog. The shooters sit in the front so they can fall out fast if a bird should fly up.

As of this date my husband hasn't gone in for deer hunting. One reason is that all of his vacation is used up before deer season opens. That probably accounts for it. I'm really glad about this. I'm not the best tracker in the world, and I would hesitate to try to track down a running deer.

Before I get shot for writing this little article let me add that it has all been done in fun. I probably would raise Old Ned if he ever went hunting and left me at home.

LIST YOUR CLUB

The Game and Fish Commission has frequent requests from various agencies, organizations, and individuals for a list of local wildlife or sportsmen's organizations and names and addresses of their officials.

In the past, the Commission has tried to act as a clearing house for such information, and its master list is being revised.

If you are a member of some local club, will you please assist by asking your club president or secretary to send the following information to TEXAS GAME AND FISH?

1. Name and address of your club.
2. Names and addresses of two or three principal officers, including the one to whom correspondence should be addressed.

... to ...

... the Editor

and arrow. It is quite possible to drive the arrow into a deer's flesh, inviting later death through an attack of blowflies.

We have more than one friend among the Indians who are able to slay deer with a well-directed arrow, usually placed in the heart region. But we are of the opinion that we palefaces should restrict our activities mostly to killing rabbits, rattlesnakes, and other small game (with bow and arrow).

I am enclosing a photo of Baldwin Parker, son of the famous Comanche Indian chief, Quanah Parker, and Tahqueche. The latter has killed many deer with bow.

I possess a fine bois d'arc bow which was presented to me by Quanah Parker's son and which I use quite often. I also have a highly-decorated bow which belonged to Geronimo. Associates of Geronimo identify the old bow as being fashioned of locust wood. A. E. Butterfield, the old missionary, bought the bow from Geronimo's wife in 1894 and he presented it to me in 1943. It probably never will be strung again—naturally, it is pretty precious . . .

Ben Moore, Sr.
O'Donnell, Texas

(It is not the purpose of the magazine to take sides on the bow and arrow question, and of course we are happy to present both sides.)

Naturally, proponents of bow hunting argue that they take care not to shoot at a deer out of range, and that gunners wound as many deer as the bow hunter. At any rate, it is the job of the Legislature to investigate all angles and to decide on the proper laws regarding bow hunting.)

Editor:

Enclosed find \$1 for a subscription to TEXAS GAME AND FISH. The magazine will go to my barber shop, where I feel it will be widely read and enjoyed by my customers. A lot of them are duck hunters and fishermen.

Milton Bellot
1100 East 17th St.
Port Arthur, Texas

(A lot of barbers, physicians, dentists, and business offices are finding TEXAS GAME AND FISH gives pleasure to waiting visitors and a real bargain at \$1 per year.)

Editor:

. . . My library contains every issue of TEXAS GAME AND FISH since the first issue.

And the magazine is getting better all the time. Keep up the good work.

D. W. Britain, Sr.
Panhandle Outdoor Sportsmen's Club
Amarillo, Texas

(We have been wanting to hear from someone who has a complete file of TEXAS GAME AND FISH, beginning with the December, 1942, issue. One reader previously made this claim then was amazed to discover that the magazine was over 10 years old. His files were about half complete.)

Does anyone else have a complete set?)

Editor:

Your article "The Lust to Kill" in the October, 1952, issue made everyone who read it stop and think.

. . . I believe the "lust to torture" is the most hideous of all afflictions of the twisted human mind.

. . . I would like to tell you of a true incident.

Two of us were fishing from a concrete sea wall, when an expert caster came along. We had been bothered by hungry sea gulls, and they began stealing his bait, too, as he cast his shrimp into the water.

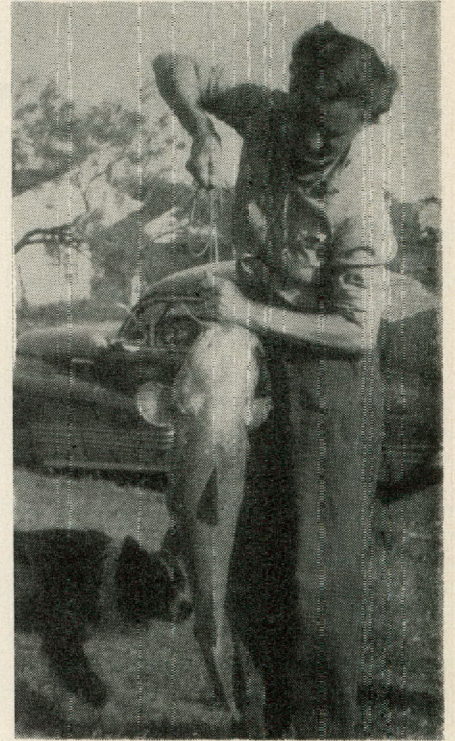
We still admired his skill with a rod and reel when, with a deft twist of his wrist, he managed to lasso a gull as it swooped down on his bait in midair. But this is where the fisherman ceased to be a sportsman.

With his pliers, he nipped off the screaming gull's lower beak, then turned the bird loose to die of starvation and pain!

Reuben Hunter
245 Larchmont Drive
San Antonio, Texas

Editor:

I am sending you a photo of a friend of mine, Mrs. Albert Lehmborg, and a



large catfish she caught.

The catfish weighed over 19 pounds, but Mrs. Lehmborg landed it on a light rod and reel with a 15-pound test line and catgut leader!

The fish was caught in the Llano River in Llano County.

Mrs. Sid Johnson
308 College
Llano, Texas

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BOOKS

GONE FISHIN' by Charles Elliott. 291 pages, chapter heads illustrated with drawings. Published 1953 by The Stackpole Co., Telegraph Press Building, Harrisburg, Penn. \$5.

It's a little difficult to describe this book. It's in a class by itself for the real down-to-earth fisherman, who just enjoys talking about fishing and fishing adventures.

The author is a Southerner, and he writes in the soft, easy language of his region. The tales he relates are the best of a lifetime of fishing, and Texans will enjoy them particularly since most are about the kind of fish Texans catch.

"Gone Fishin'" is a tantalizing collection of humor, excitement, and the thoughts of one fisherman or all fishermen. And all fishermen should enjoy it.

FISHING FOR WOMEN by Eugene Burns. 96 pages well illustrated with photographs by Clyde Childress. Published 1953 by A. S. Barnes and Company, 232 Madison Ave., New York 16, New York. \$1.75.

This is the book you gals have been waiting for. The most amazing part of this fine little volume, another in Barnes' never-ending popular Sports Library series, is how Burns has been able to pick out just the things the feminine angler wants to know and to explain it in her kind of language.

Then, since Burns is a man, he is able to give the girls some sage advice on what goes on inside the male angler's mind and

is able to provide valuable council on how to handle these wild-eyed creatures.

Of course those are just "extras" the book offers, for the heart of it is basic fishing and the selection and use of tackle appropriate to the lady angler. There are discussions on the different methods of fishing, rods, reels, knots, lures, clothes, the outdoors in general, and a fascinating closing chapter on fish talk, including terms both real and imaginative.

Burns, one of the nation's most experienced anglers, does his usual superb job of writing.

THE SPORTSMAN'S OUTDOOR GUIDE by Charles B. Roth. 170 pages illustrated with numerous drawings by John Eugene Coulter. Published 1953 by Prentice-Hall, Inc., 70 Fifth Ave., New York 11, New York.

Roth's camping philosophy is based on the idea that "know-how" can keep a camper comfortable with a few basic needs, while a tenderfoot will be miserable even if he "carts along . . . the contents of a small sporting goods store."

The author is a veteran who knows that camping can be a pleasant way of living while in the outdoors on a hunting or fishing trip or can be fun in itself. He makes reading about it so pleasant, drawing on his vast experiences and his ability as an established writer, that you'll be calling him plain Charlie when you finish.

Roth's "actual experience" tales of how he learned the lore of living in the open, step by step, carry you along through the

book. There's a fascinating chapter about the marvelously simple "emergency" foods, a few ounces of which can sustain a man for weeks. There's another debunking the average "hunting" knife, others about running and walking and another about fishing for food, plus the more usual camping lore.

If you like to camp, you'll like this book. If you aren't a camper, Roth may convert you.

GUNSMITHING SIMPLIFIED by Harold E. MacFarland. 302 pages generously illustrated with 20 photographs and numerous line drawings by Forrest Christensen. Published 1950 by the Combat Forces Sportsman's Press, 1529 18th Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. \$6.95.

This book, aimed at the needs of the small-shop gunsmith without elaborate ex-

A Time-Tested Favorite

pensive equipment, offers a fine combination of off-beat gunsmithing techniques

and a round-up of standard practices. The author hung out his "Expert Gun Repairing" shingle when only 17 years old and never met another gunsmith for 20 more years. This accounts for the many new and unusual time and money saving tricks included.

The book is an N.R.A. Library Book, meaning that it has been accepted as a standard work on the subject by the National Rifle Association.

It covers the customary subjects relative to the field, including tools and shop, metal working, parts manufacture, and sights and sight mounting. And the author has turned over a chapter concerning stock making to M. J. (Cap) Ahlman and one about stock checkering and inlay to Bob Ellsworth, both nationally-known experts in these specialties.

Valuable sidelights include directories of gunsmithing supply houses, gun manufacturers, and others connected with guns and gunsmithing and a group of helpful tables. One interesting chapter discusses cartridge design and chambers and another gives a frank appraisal of American guns, both providing information not generally available.

Unusual Photo Pictures Bass Eggs

Not even in the natural state will you get as good a look into the nest of a black bass as is shown by these remarkable photos. They were taken at the Game and Fish Commission's San Angelo hatchery by Willard White of the San Angelo *Standard-Times*.

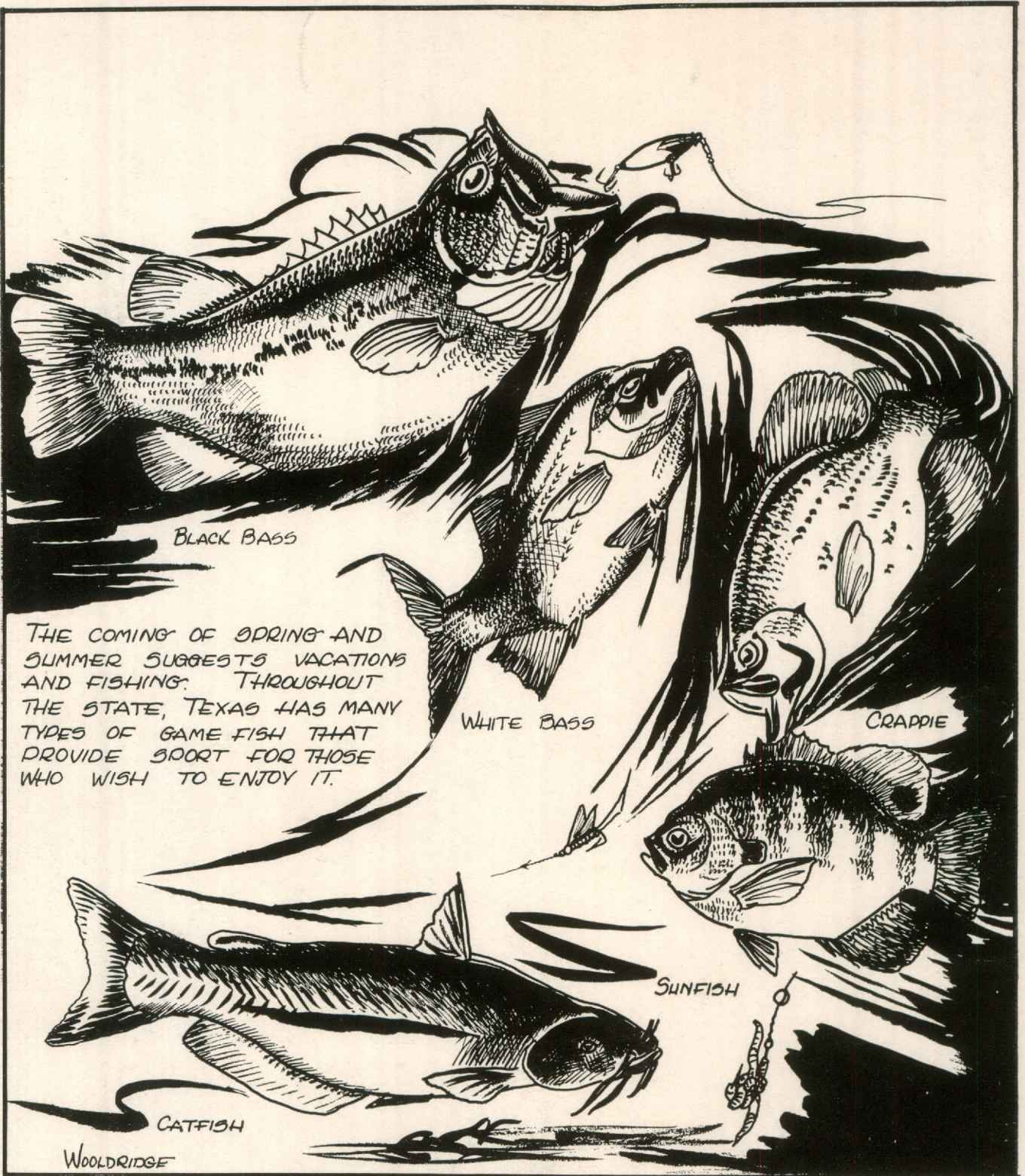
Only way such pictures could be taken would be to drain the water off a nest after the eggs were laid—not an easy job in ordinary circumstances. White took advantage of an unusual situation to get these.

The long West Texas drouth just about wiped out possibilities of spring bass production at San Angelo because of the water shortage. Hatchery superintendent Luke Proctor was holding on to his brood bass with his last remaining bit of water. Then came welcome spring rains, and the pond was drained to gather the brood stock for distribution into newly-filled nesting ponds. A few already had spawned. White snapped pictures of a nest before the eggs had dried.

Note that the eggs are just smaller than the pencil tip.



◀◀ **Black Bass Nest**
(Large photo actual size)



BLACK BASS

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