

Citizen Science | Land Stewards | South Padre

WWW.TPW MAGAZINE.COM / NOVEMBER 2013

TEXAS

PARKS & WILDLIFE

The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS

LONE STAR WALKABOUT

THE QUEST TO HIKE THE 130-MILE NORTHEAST TEXAS TRAIL



\$3.95

\$3.95US

11 >



0 71896 47805 1

PACKED TO WITH



*Let's
Go
Places*

The new 2014 Tundra. Available 5.7L i-Force V8? Check. Spacious leather interior with Entune technology and Bluetooth®? Check. All that remains is for you to check it out.

THE GILLS FEATURES



THE NEW TOYOTA

TUNDRA





Features

26 COVER STORY Lone Star Walkabout

By Cameron Dodd

A hiker sets off to be the first to walk
the 130-mile Northeast Texas Trail.

38 Log a Frog, Share a Snake

By Cullen Hanks and Natalie Reina

Citizen scientists play a role in conservation
by reporting wildlife sightings.

44 Two Lands, One Goal

By Mike Cox

Endangered and native species thrive at
ranches honored with top land steward award.

Visit our online archive at www.tpwmagazine.com. Find us on
Facebook. For the latest information on Texas' parks and
wildlife, visit the department's website: www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

N O V E M B E R 2 0 1 3

C O N T E N T S



Departments

8 At Issue

By Carter P. Smith

10 Foreword/Mail Call

Our readers share their ideas.

12 LIFT, DRIFT, POLE AND TROLL

By Stephanie Salinas

Seagrass protection helps sustain coastal resources.

14 WILD THING: BUTCHER BIRD

By Heidi K. Bailey

This songbird gets its name from the frightening way it stores food.

16 PARK PICK: A PARK FOR ALL SEASONS

By Linda Hedges

Balmorehea offers more than a summer splash in the state's coolest pool.

18 PICTURE THIS: USING SCALE IN LANDSCAPES

By Earl Nottingham

Scale objects and a sense of depth bring dimension to photographs.

20 FLORA FACT: PINKALICIOUS!

By Jason Singhurst

Both butterflies and young girls are crazy about palafox's color.

22 Three Days in the Field

By Melissa Gaskill

Watery Wonderland: South Padre Island offers aquatic adventures and wondrous views.

50 Legend, Lore & Legacy

By Steve Lightfoot

Raining Ducks: Looking back at 100 years of waterfowl hunting in Texas.

58 Parting Shot

By Chase A. Fountain



Covers

FRONT: Cameron Dodd makes his way down a path as he traverses Northeast Texas on the Northeast Texas Trail. Photo by Chase A. Fountain / TPWD

BACK: The ornate box turtle can be found across the state. The turtle's name comes from its colorful shell and its ability to completely shut the shell when threatened. Photo © Derrick Hamrick / rolfnussbaumer.com

PREVIOUS SPREAD: Grasses wave in the wind at Caddo National Grasslands in Northeast Texas. Part of the 130-mile Northeast Texas Trail runs nearby. Photo by Chase A. Fountain / TPWD

THIS PAGE: A kiteboarder rides the wind and waves off South Padre Island. Photo by Earl Nottingham / TPWD

TEXAS

THE OUTDOOR MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

NOVEMBER 2013, VOL. 71, NO. 9

GOVERNOR OF TEXAS

Rick Perry

COMMISSION

T. Dan Friedkin, Chairman **Houston**
Ralph H. Duggins, Vice Chairman **Fort Worth**
Roberto De Hoyos **Austin** S. Reed Morian **Houston**
Dick Scott **Wimberley** James H. Lee **Houston** Bill Jones **Austin**
Dan Allen Hughes, Jr. **Beeville** Margaret Martin **Boerne**
Lee M. Bass, Chairman-Emeritus **Fort Worth**

Executive Director Carter P. Smith
Communications Director Lydia Saldaña

MAGAZINE STAFF:

Randy Brudnicki Publisher
Louie Bond Editor
Russell Roe Managing Editor
Brandon Jakobeit Art Director
Mark Mahorsky Layout Design
Earl Nottingham Chief Photographer
Chase A. Fountain Photographer
Traci Anderson Business Manager
Catherine Groth Photography Intern

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Mike Cox, Steve Lightfoot, Rob McCorkle, Larry D. Hodge, Dyanne Fry Cortez

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Larry Ditto, Erich Schlegel, Derrick Hamrick

EDITORIAL OFFICES:

4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744
Phone: (512) 389-TPWD Fax: (512) 389-8397
E-mail: magazine@tpwd.texas.gov

ADVERTISING SALES OFFICES:

STONEWALLACE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
c/o TP&W magazine
4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744
Fax: (512) 389-8397
Jim Stone, Advertising Director (512) 799-1045
E-mail: jim.stone@tpwd.texas.gov

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

(800) 937-9393

Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine (ISSN 0040-4586) is published monthly with combined issues in January/February and August/September by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744. The inclusion of advertising is considered a service to subscribers and is not an endorsement of products or concurrence with advertising claims. Copyright © 2013 by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. No part of the contents of this magazine may be reproduced by any means without the permission of *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine. The magazine is not responsible for the return of unsolicited materials provided for editorial consideration.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$18/year; foreign subscription rate: \$27.95/year.
POSTMASTER: If undeliverable, please send notices by form 3579 to Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine, P.O. Box 421103, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1103. Periodicals Postage Paid at Austin, Texas, with additional mailing offices. **SUBSCRIBER:** If the Postal Service alerts us that your magazine is undeliverable, we have no further obligation unless we receive a corrected address within one year.

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



SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

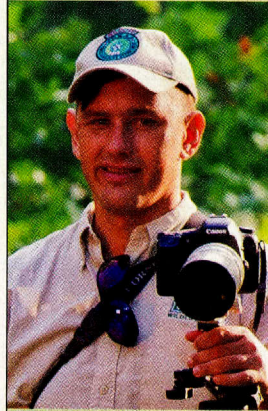
SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES ONLY, PLEASE.
PHONE: (800) 937-9393
7 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Monday-Friday



In the Field

CULLEN HANKS

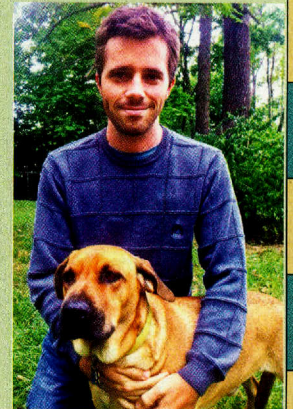
grew up in Texas hunting, fishing and birding — activities that led to a passion for nature and a career devoted to conservation. He studied biology at Cornell University and then worked on ornithology projects in Texas and Latin America before joining TPWD. With iNaturalist, Cullen found a



way to continue to develop his interest in nature as well as contribute to conservation. Photographing plants and animals and sharing the observations online has helped him identify species and learn about local ecosystems. "As a birder, I have always taken my binoculars everywhere I went. Now, it's my camera, and I'm always trying to find new species to post." iNaturalist has taken Cullen back to his roots as a naturalist, when he found joy in the hunt for discoveries.

CAMERON DODD

is a journalist and former *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine intern from Austin. While Cameron's journalistic interests are in culture, policy and international issues, he also has a passion for adventure, travel and the great outdoors (especially in Texas). His main interest is in storytelling in a variety of forms, and this month he takes us along on the new Northeast Texas Trail. Cameron is currently a graduate student at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Mo., where he lives with the dog he found on the trail. Cameron hopes to take the dog, whom he has named Karenin, on more adventures in the future.



STEVE LIGHTFOOT

who works in TPWD's news and information group, began hunting at an early age in East Texas but didn't shoot his first duck until he was in college. His passion for waterfowl has taken him across North America, pursuing ducks from Saskatchewan to the Yucatán, but his favorite hunting grounds are on the Texas coastal marshes. He has had the opportunity to share a blind in some of Texas' premier duck haunts, where skies were once darkened by huge flocks and legendary waterfowlers built their reputations. He has witnessed landscape changes to the coastal prairies and marshes but admits those changes pale in comparison to the ones that took place at the turn of the 20th century. His article in this issue takes a look back at the golden years of Texas waterfowl hunting.



AT ISSUE

FROM THE PEN OF CARTER P. SMITH

The gaggle of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department biologists, huddled intently outside the west wing of our headquarters, was a dead giveaway that something was up. Indeed there was. A keen-eyed colleague returning from a walk over the lunch hour had spotted and caught a juvenile western coachwhip nestled in a tuft of grass just yards away from the building's side door.

After a short examination of the snake's condition, the group's discussion quickly turned to where to release the snake in the adjacent McKinney Falls State Park. But, first, everyone agreed, the coachwhip's occurrence needed to be appropriately recorded in the Herps of Texas database, an online repository for amphibian and reptile sightings housed within the iNaturalist Web platform.

Yours truly got the honors. And, after a quick photo of the snake with my phone, an upload of the picture into my Flickr account and a cursory entry of details into the database on the species of snake, the nature and date of observation and its location, I was all done. The whole affair took about 10 minutes or so. It was my first foray onto iNaturalist and, specifically, the Herps of Texas Project site. It will not be my last.

The iNaturalist-Herps of Texas Project is the brainchild of a couple of biologists looking into novel ways to collect more biological data on the state's herpetofauna through the use of crowdsourcing. By tapping into the observations of the state's myriad nature and outdoor enthusiasts, the biologists hypothesized that they could capitalize on the burgeoning citizen science movement, engage more people in documenting needed information about species of concern and use technology as a way to engage more young people in the wonders of science and nature study.

They were absolutely right.

After just one short year in existence, the site has already documented well over 4,000 unique biological recordings of amphibians and reptiles around the state. This information is used by TPWD biologists, various universities and others to monitor and predict the distribution, habitat utilization and occurrence of species from salamanders to turtles.

It has also spawned another rivalry of sorts, one historically rooted on the football field. Biology professors from the University of Texas and Texas A&M have set up their own sub-sites under the iNaturalist-Herps of Texas Project, whereby students enrolled in field herpetology classes are required to collect and record their own sightings. The competition between schools is readily apparent. My last visit showed UT ahead by 1, with the Aggie professor exhorting his students to catch up and the UT professor exhorting his to maintain their lead. Johnny Football may have met his match with this merry band of herpetologists!

Texas is filled with residents who are keenly interested in the natural world around them. Through TPWD's Wildlife Diversity Program, and specifically our Texas Nature Trackers Program, they can contribute to our body of knowledge on a range of species from box turtles to tarpons to whooping cranes to our state's most famous herp, the horned lizard.

For more information about this unique way to experience and contribute to our science and conservation efforts, take a look at the accompanying article by my colleagues Cullen Hanks and Natalie Reina. Even better, show it to your kids or grandkids and get them involved in the nature of their nature.

Thanks for caring about our wild things and wild places. They need you now more than ever.



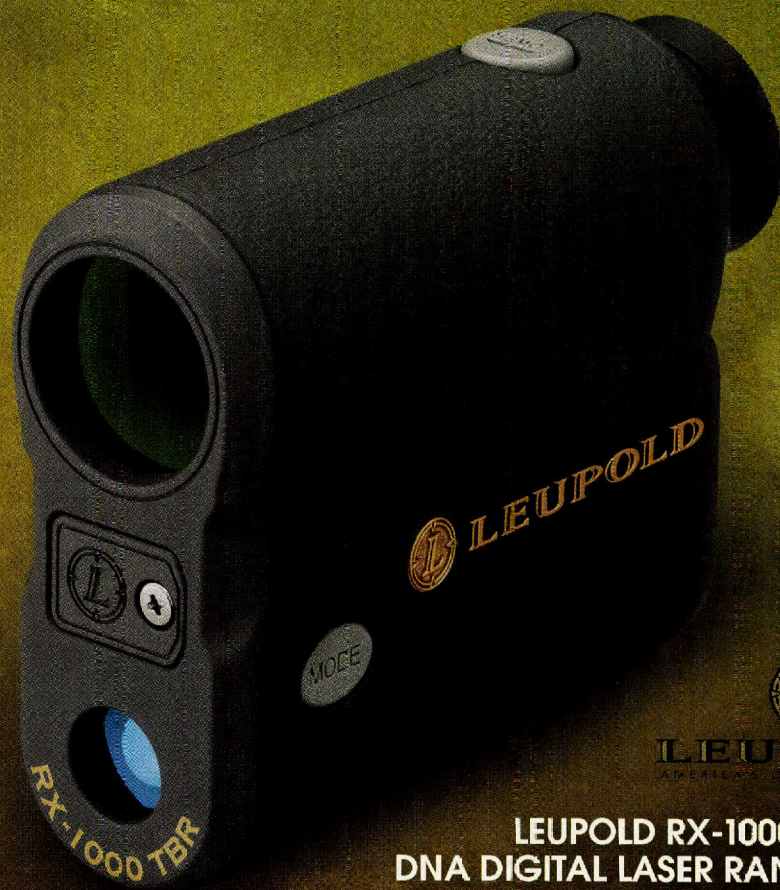
Carter P. Smith

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department mission statement:

To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

See the outdoors
in a whole new light.



Academy
SPORTS+OUTDOORS

RIGHT STUFF. LOW PRICE. EVERYDAY!

shop academy.com | stay connected [f](#) [y](#) [t](#) [p](#)

**LEUPOLD RX-1000i TBR WITH
DNA DIGITAL LASER RANGEFINDER**

- Multi-coated lens system delivers a bright picture image for accurate ranging low-light conditions
- 6x magnification gives you plenty of power while maintaining a wide field of view
- Advanced Organic Light Emitting Diode (OLED) technology is adjustable to match display intensity for changing light conditions
 - TBR technology matches incline, range-to-target and ballistics information to put you right on the mark
 - DNA (Digitally Enhanced Accuracy) delivers accuracy, speed and range
- Fast-focus eyepiece with precision clicks

MAIL CALL

PICKS, PANS AND PROBES FROM OUR READERS

FOREWORD

Loving wild things and wild places — that's our mission statement rolled into a manageable, bite-sized nugget. TPWD Executive Director Carter Smith frequently ends his monthly At Issue with similar words. If you take away our laptops and digital cameras, our spreadsheets and agendas, our equipment reports and budget estimates, you'll find our agency is filled with folks who basically just love wild things and wild places.

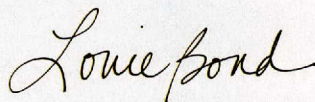
We show up to work every day to do our part to care for these beloved creatures and places. Along the way, we meet our counterparts out in the world, folks like you who share our love and passion. You share your stories with us, and we pass them on to others, in hopes of inspiring and informing the public.

The November issue demonstrates this notion in a variety of ways. Our cover story was born a few years ago when Cameron Dodd served as a *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine intern. Interns here don't just make the coffee and sort the mail. We don't just snag the prize minds of the college set and hang them on the wall like trophies. We're more into catch-and-release with these bright young people, giving them opportunities to spread their wings and hoping they'll lead us into a bright future. It never fails to pay off. The vision of our recently passed hero, John Graves, lives on in a new generation, whose members are discovering for themselves that they must travel down their own path (or river), spending time with their ponderings to find their real *raison d'être*. The profile photo (Page 7) with Cameron's own adopted "Passenger" clinched the deal for me.

Citizen science takes the simple sightings of wildlife lovers like you and me, and through the magic of modern technology, utilizes these "eyes on the ground" to improve the community's knowledge about various species. TPWD biologist Cullen Hanks first presented me this idea with all of his usual passion and enthusiasm. Intern Natalie Reina took a turn crafting some of the structure of the story and conducting some of the interviews that helped turn this article from vision to reality. We each learned lessons along the way.

I'll take a few moments to say thank you (but not goodbye) to our longtime Communications Director Lydia Saldaña. During her 23 years here, she has led a team into a new technological age while holding fast and strong to the highest of ideals. Luckily for us, she's agreed to write for the magazine while she transitions into a brand new life. I'll personally miss her as a mentor, cheerleader, friend, confessor, guidance counselor and funny bone tickler. So many times, when we are working on a promising project, I tell myself, "I can't wait till Lydia sees this!" Her big, full-throated laugh or delighted squeal while reviewing layouts was the cherry on the cake every month for me.

As we guide our interns with love and respect, so have we been guided. Happy landings, Lydia. We'll see you on these pages again soon.



LOUIE BOND
EDITOR

LETTERS

LOVED THE COVER

I loved your cover picture on the October issue of *Texas Parks & Wildlife*! It brought back memories of my niece, Ashley, trying to convince her grandfather, Troy Krennek, of how girls should be allowed to hunt just like the boys. (Dad always thought the girls should go shopping while the boys hunted.)

Fast-forward a few years, and Troy finally did agree to let Ashley hunt. Dad has now gone to heaven, but to this day I laugh thinking back to that day when my Dad finally agreed with Ashley and her resolve "that girls shoot as good as the boys!"

JOYCE KRENEK GOULDIE
Houston

HAVEN FOR BIRDERS IN BEAUMONT

I just wanted to send you a quick note after reading your October issue. I am enjoying your articles on birding! Even more so, I'm happy to see all the positive feedback from your readers in the Letters to the Editor. I also wanted to write and let you know about some tremendous developments happening at Cattail Marsh in Beaumont.

Cattail Marsh is a haven for bird watchers. More than 240 bird species have been identified there. The CVB is closely working with the City of Beaumont on a number of improvements — signage, trailheads, observation decks — that will improve accessibility and mobility. The hidden secrets of Cattail Marsh are getting out.

STEPHANIE MOLINA
Beaumont Convention & Visitors Bureau

Sound off for Mail Call

Let us hear from you!

Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine welcomes letters from our readers. Please include your name, address and telephone number.

Write to us at

Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine,
4200 Smith School Road,
Austin, TX 78744.

Email us at magazine@tpwd.texas.gov

We reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity.

Non-local firewood may contain tree killing pests!

Know Your Exotic Pests...



Asian Long-horned Beetle



Gold Spotted Oak Borer



Soapberry Borer



Emerald Ash Borer

Keep your neighborhood, campgrounds and
favorite places safe from invasive insects
and diseases.



TEXAS A&M
FOREST SERVICE

dontmovefirewood.org

BUY AND BURN ONLY FIREWOOD GROWN IN TEXAS

SCOUT

NEWS AND VIEWS IN THE TEXAS OUTDOORS

LIFT, DRIFT, POLE AND TROLL

Seagrass protection helps sustain coastal resources.

On the floors of Texas bays, flowering plants known as seagrass contribute to marine life in silent, sometimes unnoticed, ways. In fact, seagrasses provide numerous services to the coastal ecosystems including: erosion control, food for a wide variety of organisms and improved water quality by absorbing excess nutrients.

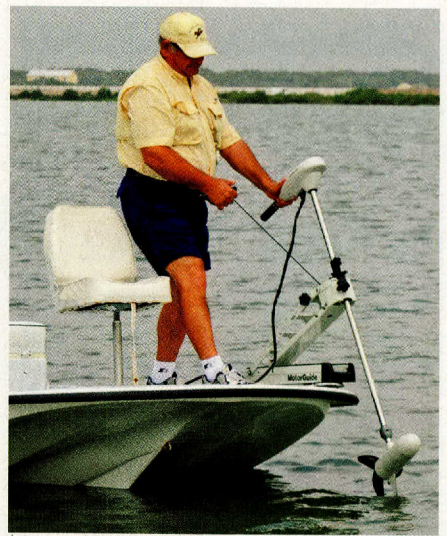
The importance of a healthy seagrass bed goes beyond what can be seen from the water surface. With its extensive root system, seagrass helps stabilize the

bay bottom and reduce coastal erosion. The plants have been found to help buffer currents, aid in water clarity and improve water quality. The grasses also provide hiding places for recreationally and commercially sought-after fish and shellfish.

Because of the significant role seagrasses play to ensure the sustainability of marine life in Texas, a new law was put in effect on Sept. 1 by the 83rd Legislature that prohibits the uprooting of seagrass with an outboard motor propeller. If the

grass is uprooted by the propeller of a boat within the coastal waters in Texas, the boater can be charged with a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum \$500 fine. Electric trolling motors are exempt from this regulation. TPWD encourages the use of trolling motors as a tool to minimize damage to seagrass.

When hit by outboard motor propellers, seagrass beds become scarred, requiring long periods of time to re-establish growth. Studies currently being conducted by TPWD in Redfish



Seagrass can be damaged when boats cut through it. Causing such damage is now against the law. In shallow areas with seagrass, boaters should use a push pole or trolling motor.



ment and the area they'll be boating in before heading out on the water.

"Those who have learned about the value and importance of seagrasses have demonstrated they still have successful fishing trips while they protect seagrass," he says.

TPWD will also spread the word to boaters through brochures, billboards, signs posted at boat access points and articles and advertisements in print media. Game wardens will be on the

water to educate the public about protecting seagrass, as well as to enforce the regulation. No areas will be closed for seagrass protection, so it's important for Texas boaters to play their part in protecting this natural resource and boat responsibly. ☆

—Stephanie M. Salinas

Bay, near Aransas Pass, suggest that propeller scars, also known as "prop" scars, can recover within one year, but that some scars may never recover. Recovery may depend on several factors, including the species of the grass that was affected, sediment type, water clarity and the direction of the scar in relation to the water currents.

Running boats through the grass beds can also cause damage to a boat's motor hull or propeller. To protect this important habitat and your boat, remember to "lift, drift, pole and troll."

The "lift, drift, pole and troll" mantra can be used to help boaters maneuver through shallow water and cause minimal damage to the seagrasses. If you find yourself in an area that is too shallow, move into deeper water by lifting the motor and drifting with the wind or using a trolling motor or a push pole.

Seagrass beds rank amongst coral reefs and rain forests as some of the most productive habitats on the planet. The food and shelter that these habitats provide make them vital nursery areas for fish and invertebrates, including game fish like spotted seatrout and red drum.

TPWD Coastal Fisheries Regional Director Ed Hegen recommends that boaters take a boater education course that includes seagrass protection and familiarize themselves with their equip-

Explore. Hunt. Fish.

All from the comfort of your Airstream.

Camper Clinic II
RV Super Center

Sales • Parts • Service
15855 South IH-35 EXIT 220, Buda, TX

www.CamperClinic2.com • 800-781-7848

TEXAS STAR-CUT BLUE TOPAZ



THE MOONLIGHT STAR

Our hand-crafted interlocking wire design features our own optically perfect hand-cut topaz.

12 mm Pendant PD-004 \$675
7 mm Earrings ER-004 \$825
*Chain sold separately



TEXAS BIRTHSTONE RING

If you were born in Texas, then the star-cut blue topaz is your birthstone. Each topaz is set in 14k two-tone gold and comes with a "Native Texan" birthstone certificate. Limited quantities, so be sure to order early! (8mm shown)

7 mm up to- RG-009 \$1325
11 mm Topaz up to \$2050



TEXAS EVENING STAR

The Lone Star has never looked so elegant. The state stone of Texas, blue topaz, radiates the beauty of a lone evening star. Set in 14k white or yellow gold with a 0.10ct diamond.

Small pendant PD-018 \$950
Earrings ER-018 \$1650
*Chain sold separately

C. Kirk Root Designs
Arboretum

10000 Research Blvd. #126
Austin, TX 78759

(800) 299-5475

GET MORE INFO AT

www.KirkRootDesigns.com

www.facebook.com/CKRDesigns

Financing Available!



Butcher Bird

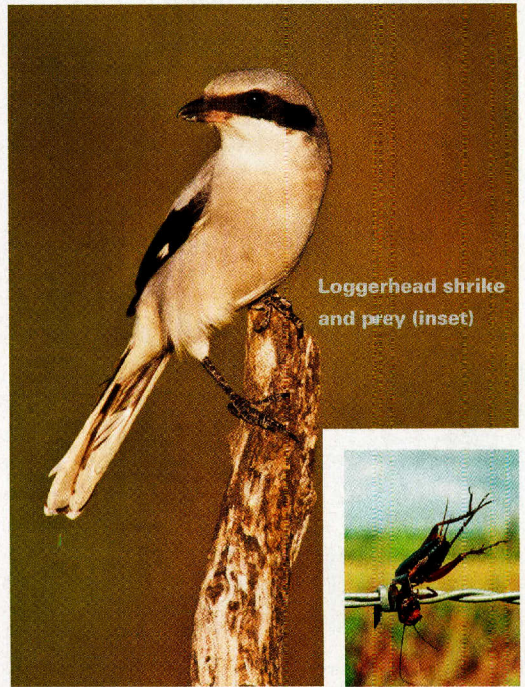
This songbird gets its name from the frightening way it stores food.

The first time I heard the name "butcher bird" it conjured up images of some sort of large raptor with sinister claws and a razor-sharp beak, ready to tear flesh from the bones of its unsuspecting prey. Who would've guessed that the bird the biologist was talking about was a songbird more likely to be mistaken for a northern mockingbird than some sort of hawk?

Butcher birds, more correctly called loggerhead shrikes, are hunters with a bizarre habit. They like to store insects, small mammals, reptiles, birds and other "prey of the day" by impaling them on sharp objects — hence the morbid nickname.

I saw loggerhead shrike calling cards long before I ever knew what made them. I was fixing fence on a ranch in East Texas and came across a large yellow grasshopper impaled on one of the barbs. I was mystified. Did the grasshopper make an unfortunate jump and not see the fence? Did some warped individual happen by here, catch the grasshopper and stick it on the fence? Yuck. I came across another impaled grasshopper, then another. Try as I might, I didn't come up with an answer to the dead bug question that day or for many years to come.

Fast-forward to my early days with TPWD as a wildlife technician. I was helping one of the biologists take down boundary markers from one of our leased annual public hunting lands and came across a very small, nearly skeletonized frog impaled on the wire holding the sign to the post. Remembering the grasshoppers from years before, I asked the biologist what he thought might do such a thing. He told me about the loggerhead shrike's nasty little habit of impaling insects and other prey on barbed wire, thorns, cactus spines and other sharp objects to save for later. He explained that not only was this a type of food storage, but that it was also a way for male shrikes to impress the females by showing off their hunting prowess.



Loggerhead shrike and prey (inset)

There's a third reason for this behavior as well.

"Loggerhead shrikes also do this to display to other shrikes that this territory is occupied," says TPWD wildlife biologist Clifford Shackelford. "It's like a sign that reads 'No Vacancy.'"

Loggerhead shrikes (*Lerius ludovicianus*) are one of two shrike species found in Texas. Although they are found throughout the state and can be year-round residents, they typically call Texas home only during the colder months. Loggerheads prefer open and semi-open habitats, especially those with plenty of perches from which to swoop down on prey. They are mid-sized songbirds, and their coloration is similar to that of a mockingbird but with one notable difference — a black mask.

These "bandit birds" will drop from their hunting perch and dive on prey on the ground or in midair. They dispatch most food items with several well-placed bites from a hooked bill to the back of the neck of the prey to sever the backbone and spinal cord. Food is then eaten on site or carried off to be stashed for a rainy day, leaving yet another gruesome whodunit mystery. ✧

—Heidi K. Bailey

Whole Earth Provision Co.



Outfitting Texans since 1970 for
Adventure, Travel & Fun!

STORE LOCATIONS

Austin · Dallas · Houston
San Antonio · Southlake



patagonia

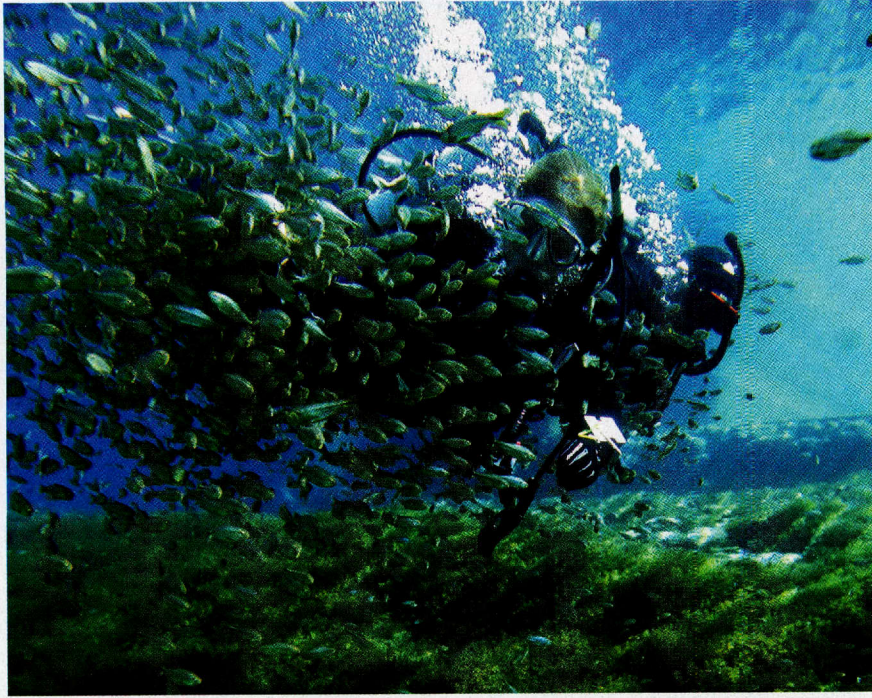
*Innovative designs
for the activities we love
and everyday life*

WholeEarthProvision.com



A Park for All Seasons

Balmorhea offers more than a summer splash in the state's coolest pool.



Balmorhea State Park is perhaps best known as a summertime destination when the park is filled with swimmers and other sun worshippers. But autumn and winter can be magical times to experience the park as well, with smaller crowds and a few hidden surprises.

What many people call the “swimming pool” at Balmorhea State Park is actually an impoundment of natural spring water built by the Civilian Conservation Corps between 1934 and 1936. The outflow of San Solomon Springs maintains a constant temperature of 72 to 76 degrees year-round — the average temperature of the underground rock layers through which the water flows. Though always refreshing, the water feels much warmer to the touch when the surrounding air temperature is lower. Thus, swimming during the cooler months can be surprisingly pleasant and “warm.” Just have plenty of towels ready to wrap up in when you emerge!

Occasionally during autumn and winter, the pool is enshrouded in fog that resembles wisps of smoke arising from the surface. This “steam fog” forms when cooler air moves over warmer water. As cold, dry air mixes with warm, moist air hanging just above the water, the warmer layer chills down until it reaches a humidity level of 100 percent, resulting in fog.

Park Superintendent Jacob Barton shares his delight in this natural phenomenon.

“I always enjoy swimming in the natural waters of San Solomon Springs, alongside the fish, turtles and other wildlife,” he says. “But there is something extra special about swimming

Texas **It's Time...**

Renaissance Festival

Adventure

Magic

Saturdays, Sundays, and Thanksgiving Friday

October 12th - December 1st

Discount tickets available at

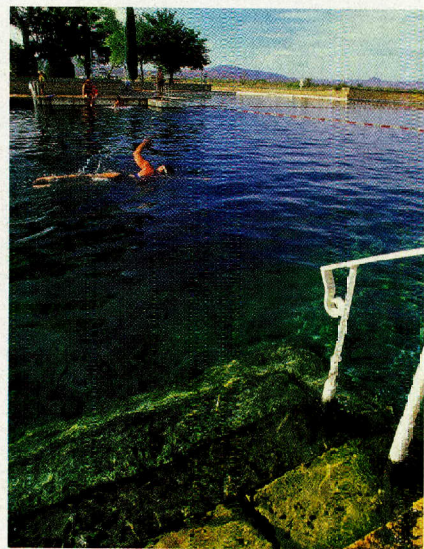
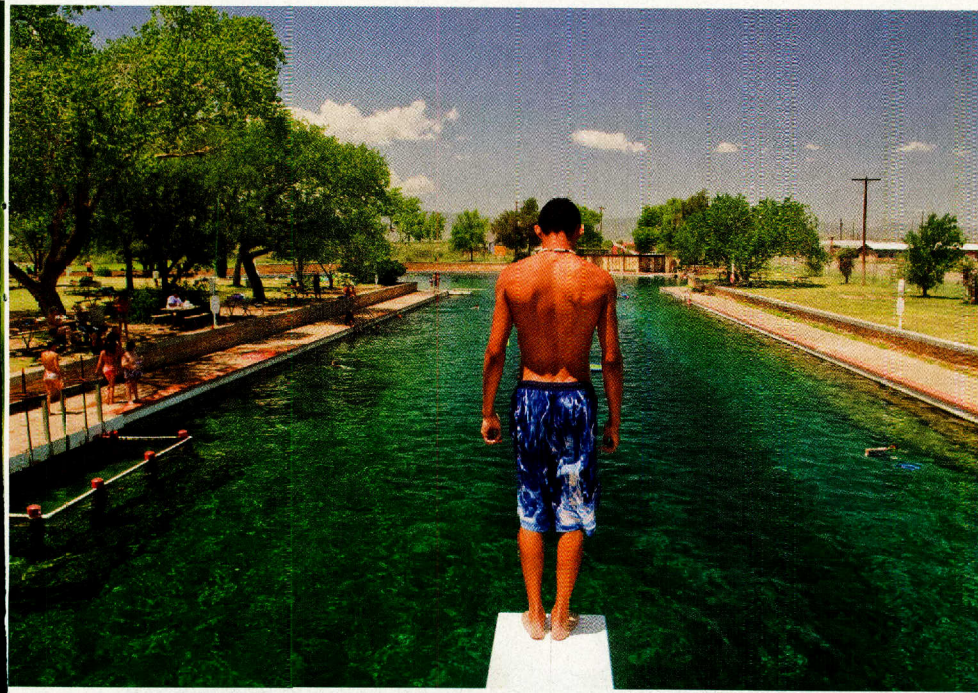
Randalls Walgreens

Merriment Romance

TexRenFest.com

Coca-Cola DeMontrond BUD LIGHT

SCUBA © ERICH SCHLEGEL; BRIDGE AND DIVING BOARD BY CHASE A. FOUNTAIN / TPWD; OTHERS BY EARL NOTTINGHAM / TPWD



↑ The spring waters of Balmorhea make it a haven for fish, birds and people. Swimming is most often done in the summer months, but winter offers its own rewards.

through tendrils of fog. The entire experience takes on a surreal quality.”

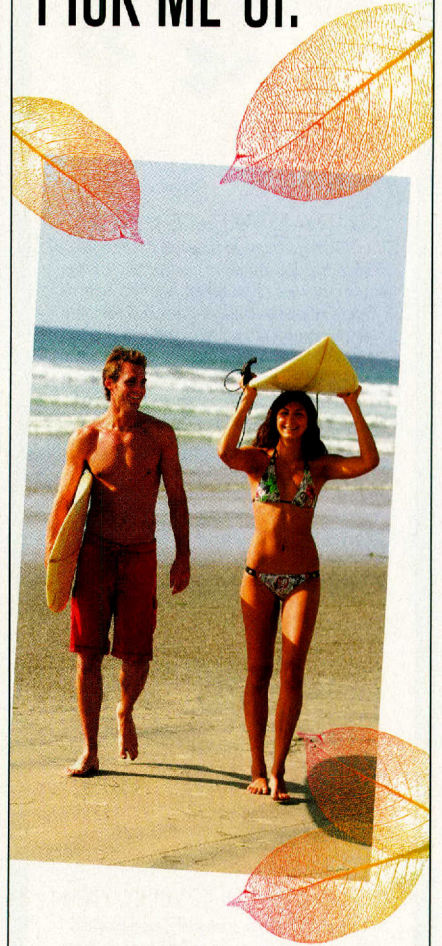
The park is a great birding destination at any time of year, but autumn and winter can be particularly interesting. Waterfowl abounds in the Balmorhea area in the colder months. Loons, grebes, cormorants and ducks take advantage of the park’s water resources, and a few individuals are often observed swimming and feeding in the pool. Great blue herons are common along the park’s irrigation canals and in the park’s re-created cienegas (desert wetlands), and if you’re lucky, you might also spot a bittern or night-heron. Keep your eyes skyward for a glimpse of a ferruginous

hawk or even an overwintering bald eagle. Test your identification skills on a wide variety of sparrows that inhabit brushy areas in search of seeds.

Balmorhea State Park is located four miles southwest of Balmorhea on Texas Highway 17, in Toyahvale. Facilities include a campground, picnic sites, an outdoor sports area and a playground. Pool hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week. For more information, call (432) 375-2370 or go to www.tpwd.state.tx.us/balmorhea. ★

—Linna Hedgcs

WHERE YOU GO
WHEN YOU NEED
A FALL
PICK-ME-UP.

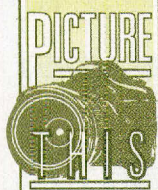


Texas.
Island Style.™
Port Aransas®
& MUSTANG ISLAND

Itineraries & Ideas for
Your Perfect
Fall Getaway at

WWW.PORTARANSAS.ORG

800-45-COAST



Using Scale in Landscapes

TEXAS WILDFLOWER COLLECTION



INDIAN PAINTBRUSHES

Over 20 years ago we created the first of our Texas Bluebonnets. In celebration of this anniversary we have taken another beloved Texas wildflower, the Indian Paintbrush, and recreated it using a varying array of fine sapphires, fancy yellow diamonds, and green garnets. Set in 18k yellow gold or palladium, it truly captures the vibrant colors of this distinct Texas native.

Pendant PD-185 \$1995
Earrings ER-185 \$3495

*Chain sold separately



BLUEBONNET COLLECTION

The official state flower of Texas comes alive in a unique design of diamonds, blue sapphires, green garnets and 18k yellow gold or palladium.

Lg. pendant PD-022 \$2275
Ear studs ER-007 \$3325

*Chain sold separately


C. Kirk Root Designs
Arboretum

10000 Research Blvd. #126
Austin, TX 78759

(800) 299-5475

GET MORE INFO AT

www.KirkRootDesigns.com

www.facebook.com/CKRDesigns



Financing Available!

Scale objects and a sense of depth bring dimension to photographs.

We all know that Texas is a big state with big and beautiful landscapes. Its mountaintop vistas, deep canyons, vast prairies and miles of shorelines attract photographers worldwide who attempt to capture its

visual majesty and magnitude.

For photographers standing on that mountaintop, surveying the landscape with their stereoscopic eyes, it's easy for them to look out over a three-dimensional scene and easily discern



Above, a hiker on the foreground rocks gives scale to the overall scene and informs the viewer of the relative size of objects. At right, a person at the base of the tree gives the tree a sense of scale.



PHOTOS BY EARL NOTTINGHAM / TPWD

just how big (or small) objects really are. Many times, however, the “wow factor” of a three-dimensional scene is often lost within the two-dimensional limitations of a photograph.

In order to create more of a dimensional presence in a photograph, there are two techniques that can be used when shooting.

The first is to enhance the feeling of perspective. Make sure that a scene includes foreground, middle ground and background elements such as rocks, hills, trees, etc. This will give the viewer a sense of depth. While this front-to-back arrangement can imply the size of objects, it can't let viewers know their size with certainty.

The second technique is the use of scale, which lets the viewer see an element's true size by comparing it to another object of known or recognizable size, most often a human form. Scale gives us a known visual “hint” that allows us to distinguish the relative sizes of objects. Understandably, it may go against the grain of many outdoor photographers to put a person in a landscape, so it's possible to include other recognizable objects such as an animal or a structure like a fence or barn.

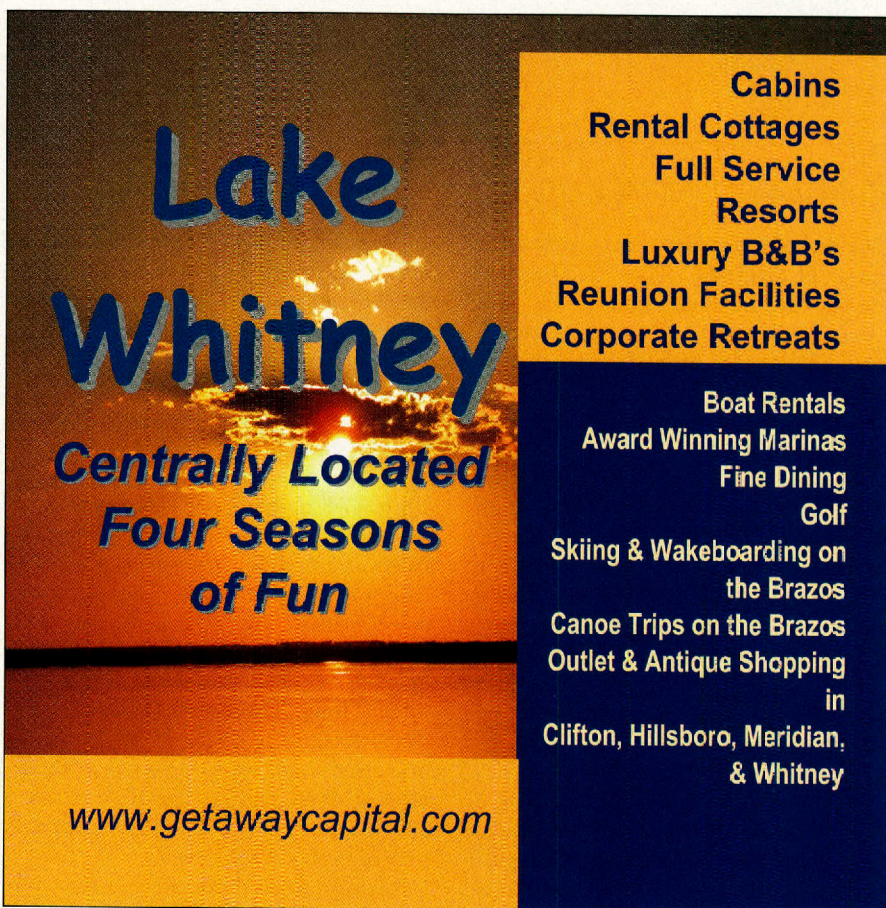
The use of scale can be enhanced if several objects of known size are included from the foreground to the background. Obviously, an image can easily get very busy with too many elements, so use them artistically and judiciously.

Additionally, a wide-angle lens, with its natural tendency to stretch perspective, will accentuate the relative size and distance of two identical foreground and background objects. This can sometime create a very unnatural, or even comical, look, especially with people as subjects. How many times have we seen the vacation shot of someone pushing up the Leaning Tower of Pisa?

Consider adding a scale object to your next landscape. It might just make the difference between an OK picture and one that says “Wow!” ★

— Earl Nottingham

Please send questions and comments to Earl at earl.nottingham@tpwd.state.tx.us. For more tips on outdoor photography, visit the magazine's photography page at www.tpwmagazine.com/photography.



Lake Whitney
Centrally Located
Four Seasons
of Fun

www.getawaycapital.com

Cabins
Rental Cottages
Full Service
Resorts
Luxury B&B's
Reunion Facilities
Corporate Retreats

Boat Rentals
Award Winning Marinas
Fine Dining
Golf
Skiing & Wakeboarding on the Brazos
Canoe Trips on the Brazos
Outlet & Antique Shopping in Clifton, Hillsboro, Meridian, & Whitney



Brenham
Washington County

Children Laughing, Meeting Smile after Smile...

Nov. 1-3: 25th Annual Fall Festival of Roses
Nov. 2-3: Grand Art Trail & Sale
Nov. 16: Wine & Pottery Celebration
Nov. 23-24: Holiday Home Tour & Trunk Show
Dec. 6-7: Christmas Stroll/Lighted Parade/Scavenger Hunt
Dec. 14: Chappell Hill Holiday Home Tour
Dec. 14: The Nutcracker Ballet
Dec. 14: Candlelight Christmas

Visit BrenhamTexas.com
For a free Visitor Guide call 1-800-509-1752 • [Facebook.com/Brenham.Texas](https://www.facebook.com/Brenham.Texas)
On Hwy. 290, halfway between Austin and Houston



Pinkalicious!

Both butterflies and young girls are crazy about palafox's color.

My daughters, like many little girls, are in love with the color pink. Together, we've read the *Pinkalicious* series of children's books about a whimsical young girl who adores pink more than anything in the world. When I am traveling across Texas in late summer and fall, I see waves of *Palafoxia* (the pink-flowering member of the sunflower family) attracting scores of butterflies while reminding me of our precious girls.

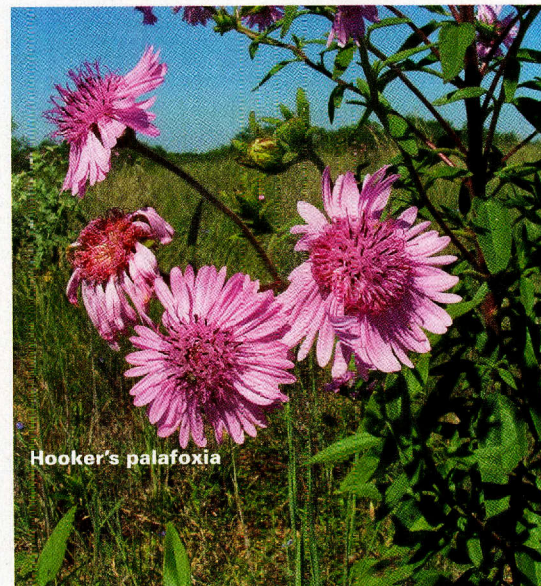
Texas is blessed with seven of the 12 species in the genus *Palafoxia*, an extremely eye-catching member of the sunflower family. These brilliant pink, reddish, purple and sometimes white *Palafoxia* are intoxicating and warrant a flurry of digital photos no matter how many times I encounter them.

Palafoxia, commonly called palafox or Spanish needles, are named after José de Palafox y Melzi, duke of Saragossa (1776–1847), a Spanish captain-general and patriot. *Palafoxia* species are very drought-tolerant. Palafox are annual or

perennial herbaceous plants that are often found growing in sandy plains, deserts, savannas and grasslands. All of the species of palafox are native to North America, found primarily in the southern United States and northern Mexico.

Palafox plants are erect and have a slender stem, and grow from 12 inches to just over 6 feet tall. Palafox plants usually branch in the upper part of the stem with the lower half sparsely leaved. Palafox stems and leaves are glandular or hairy on the upper parts. The leaves are lance-shaped, are alternately arranged on the stems and measure up to three-quarters of an inch wide and 1.5 to 3 inches long. The flower heads are terminal (occurring at the tip of the upper branches), and each flower has three narrow lobes. The narrow fruit (an achene) has featherlike hairs (the pappus) with several pointed scales.

Palafox attract butterflies, bees and birds and are used as food plants by the larvae of several butterflies and moths.



Hooker's palafoxia

There are a few moth specialists that feed solely on specific species of palafox. Rosy palafox (*Palafoxia rosea*) has been used for the treatment of fever, nausea and chills.

Palafox species are found throughout Texas. Showy palafoxia or Hooker's palafoxia (*Palafoxia hookeriana*) is a Texas endemic (found nowhere else but Texas). It grows along margins of woodlands on deep sands from the Pineywoods west through the post oak belt and south to the South Texas sand sheet.

Reverchon's palafoxia (*Palafoxia reverchonii*), another Texas endemic, is found in deep sandy soils in openings of post oak or pine woodlands. Rosy palafox (*Palafoxia rosea*) is found in sandy soils along the middle Gulf coast, the post oak belt, the Rolling Plains and High Plains. Sand palafox (*Palafoxia sphacelata*) is found in sandy soils throughout the High Plains, Rolling Plains and Trans-Pecos.

Rio Grande palafox (*Palafoxia riograndis*) is restricted to Big Bend and northern Mexico in sandy or silty soils along the Rio Grande. Texas palafox (*Palafoxia texana*) occurs in calcareous (usually rocky or gravelly) soils in South Texas and in isolated populations along the Caprock in the High Plains. Small palafox (*Palafoxia callosa*) is found in limestone glades, sandy areas and gravelly stream edges through most of Central Texas and North Texas.

Whether or not you know little girls who love pink, you will be amazed at the number of species of butterflies and moths that are attracted to palafox. If you have a chance, check out the amazing diversity of palafox that is displayed through Texas landscapes. ☆

—Jason Singhurst

SIGHTS & SOUNDS TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE TV AND RADIO



TELEVISION

LOOK FOR THESE STORIES IN THE COMING WEEKS:

Oct. 27–Nov. 2:

Texas horned lizard research; Possum Kingdom recovers from fire; a sprinting snail; responsibly reclaiming a coal mine; disappearing Bois d'Arc Creek.

Nov. 3–9:

Hunt for local foods feeds hunting; at-risk youth explore Big Bend; Brazos Bend wildlife; protecting the Daphne Prairie; TPWD celebrates 50 years.

Nov. 10–16:

Winter trout stocking;

wardens keep Texas waters safe; North Deer Island restoration; butterfly birth.

Nov. 17–23:

Texas' biggest birding contest; wade-fish the Texas coast; engaging Panhandle landowners and biologists; a fish on camera.

Nov. 24–30:

TPWD artist Clemente Guzman; geocaching as therapy; exploring habitat at the Thomson Foundation; fishing after dark; strutting turkeys.



Texas Parks & Wildlife artist-in-residence Clemente Guzman finds his inspiration in nature. Watch the week of Nov. 24–30.

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

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

www.tpwd.state.tx.us/tv



RADIO

YOUR RADIO GUIDE TO THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Passport to Texas is your guide to the great Texas outdoors. Any time you tune in, you'll remember why you love Texas. Go to www.passporttotexas.org to find a station near you that airs the series.

PASSPORT TO TEXAS

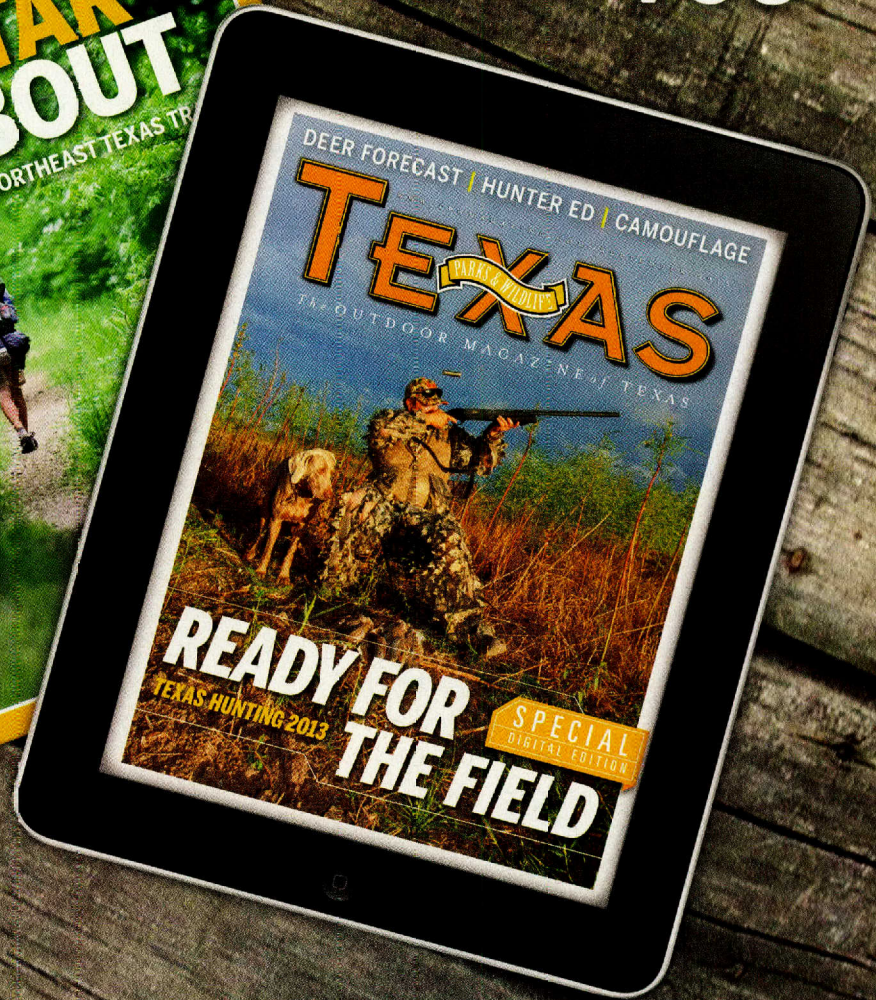
Join host Cecilia Nasti weekdays for a 90-second excursion into the Texas outdoors. Find a station near you, or listen on the Web, at

www.passporttotexas.org



PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL CARR / LADY BIRD JOHNSON WILDFLOWER CENTER

READ IT
YOUR WAY
AND TAKE
IT WITH
YOU



DON'T HEAD INTO
THE FIELD WITHOUT IT

Check out these digital offerings from *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine! *Texas Hunting 2013*, an online-only digital extra, contains our annual hunting forecast, complete with tips and details from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department experts, plus related TPWD videos and links to important TPWD resources. Find *Texas Hunting 2013* at www.tpwmagazine.com. Also, digital versions of the print magazine are available as a bonus for subscribers, providing access via smartphone, tablet or desktop. Subscribers can sign up here: www.tpwmagazine.com/digital/getdigital



Life's better outside.®

3 Days in the Field / By Melissa Gaskill

DESTINATION: SOUTH PADRE ISLAND

TRAVEL TIME FROM:

AUSTIN – 5.5 hours / BROWNSVILLE – 0.5 hours / DALLAS – 8.25 hours

HOUSTON – 5.5 hours / SAN ANTONIO – 4.25 hours / LUBBOCK – 10 hours / EL PASO – 12 hours



Watery Wonderland

South Padre Island offers aquatic adventures and wondrous views.



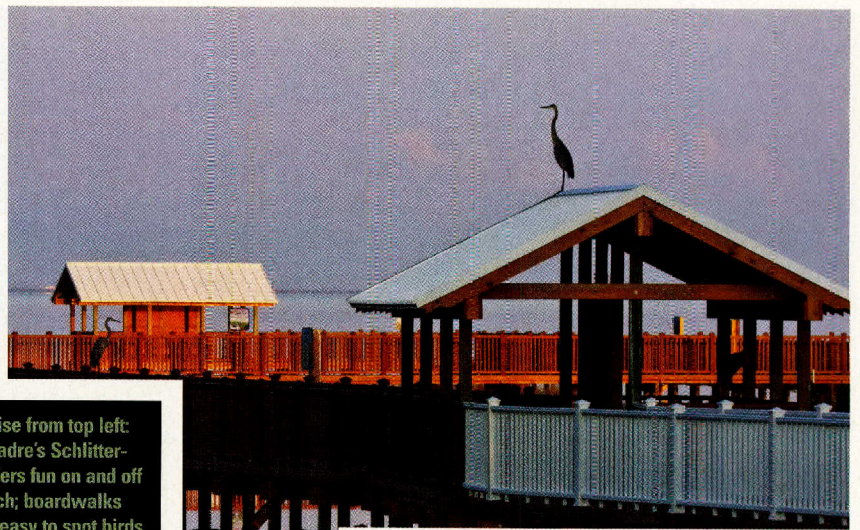
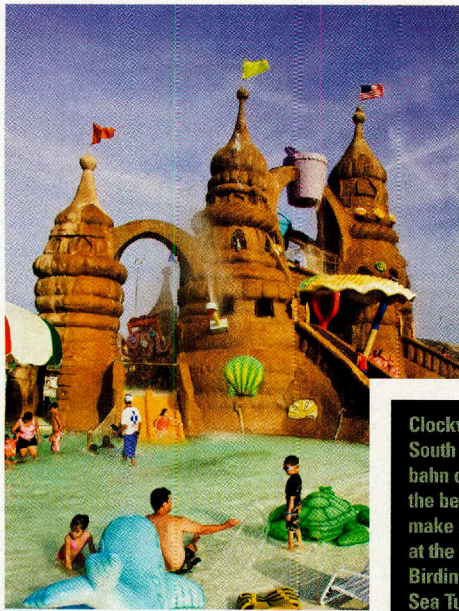
A rainbow touches down in the waters of the Laguna Madre.

On this barrier island off the south tip of Texas, it's all about the water. The shallow, salty Laguna Madre bounds South Padre Island on one side, and the warm, mellow Gulf of Mexico on the other. I came to take

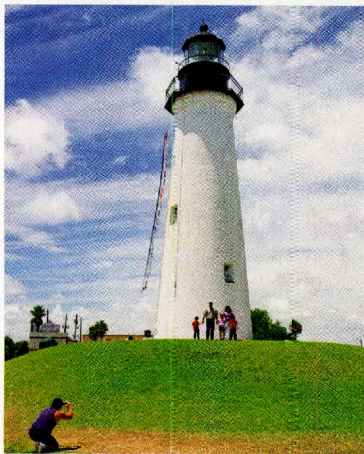
full advantage of both.

I kicked off my watery weekend with a sunset dinner cruise on the Southern Wave. My friends and I boarded the enormous catamaran behind Louie's Backyard, along with about 12

other guests, many bearing coolers of their favorite beverages. As we glided through the glassy bay, we were served grilled shrimp, fajitas and fresh fruit. A guitarist added live music, and the bay and houses along the



Clockwise from top left: South Padre's Schlitterbahn offers fun on and off the beach; boardwalks make it easy to spot birds at the South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center; Sea Turtle Inc. rescues injured turtles; sand castle masters transform large chunks of sand into stunning creations; Port Isabel's historic lighthouse is the only Texas lighthouse open to the public.



shore offered plenty of scenery. We had front-row seats for the spectacular show created when a giant orange sun set, its rays painting sky and water alike.

I then checked into Schlitterbahn Beach Resort, pleased to land a room overlooking the Gulf. The original hotel on this spot suffered at the hands of Hurricane Dolly and sat vacant until 2011, when Schlitterbahn completely remodeled it. The 221-room property now boasts furniture made by the company's craftsmen in New Braunfels, using wood from loblolly pines and other trees killed by the 2011 Bastrop area fires. The resort has its own heated, indoor, year-round water park and is next door to the outdoor water park. In short, lots of water.

After breakfast the next morning at the hotel's Seaside Grill, overlooking the beach (can't get enough of that view), I headed to Sea Turtle Inc. Founded in 1977 by "The Turtle Lady," Ila Loetscher, this nonprofit

rescues and rehabilitates sea turtles and educates the public about these endangered reptiles. It aims to release turtles back to the wild, but severe injuries mean permanent residency for some turtles, including Allison, who had only one flipper and became the first sea turtle to successfully use a prosthetic. These turtles help the public and school groups learn how injuries occur in the wild and how they can be prevented.

From April to August, Sea Turtle's staff and volunteers patrol South Padre beaches for Kemp's ridley nests, taking eggs into a protected corral for incubation. In the 2012 season, 72 nests were found, one containing 139 eggs, a state record. (Public hatchling releases take place June to August, at 6:30 a.m. at

County Beach Access 3; estimated dates are posted on Sea Turtle Inc.'s website, but call (956) 433-5735 at 6 a.m. to confirm.) My visit didn't coincide with a release, but videos on the website are almost as good. The gift shop carries unique items made in communities historically dependent on sea turtle poaching, providing locals with an alternative income. I bought nifty souvenirs for my kids and helped protect sea turtles at the same time.

Next stop was the South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, one of nine World Birding Center sites scattered across the Rio Grande Valley. Exhibits on the second floor cover the formation of barrier islands and the island's ecosystem, including a floor-to-ceiling tank recreating an offshore platform reef environment and models of 49 species of fish and invertebrates. Outside, 4,800 feet of boardwalk, a five-story birding tower and seven bird blinds make it easy to spot herons, ibises, roseate spoonbills,



Horseback riders enjoy a late-afternoon outing in South Padre; kiteboarders catch the wind off the island; the road ends in sand north of town.



rails, egrets and — depending on the season — warblers, tanagers and thrushes. I even saw an alligator.

If you want more nature, options include dolphin cruises, the nearby Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge and the University of Texas–Pan American Coastal Studies Lab in Isla Blanca Park, which has aquarium displays and an extensive shell collection.

For lunch, I enjoyed what is billed as the island's best beach cheeseburger (no argument from me) at Café on the Beach at the Palms Resort, which has — you guessed it — a great view of the beach. Then I headed for a sand castle building lesson with sand castle master Andy Hancock behind Boomerang Billy's. A jovial transplant from England, Hancock is a master with a straw and a pencil, two essential if unexpected sand castle tools. His lessons unfold under a shade tarp amid a half-dozen large barrels topped with sand (building castles while standing up saves the back and knees). Under his careful tutelage, almost anyone can transform a large chunk of sand into a stunningly detailed castle or some other creation.

When the lesson ended, I relaxed on the beach, watching folks on surfboards and kiteboards taking advantage of the island's ever-present wind and waves. Both activities looked tempting, and I did make time for a dip in the Gulf, but kayaking was next on my list of fun in the water.

South Padre Island Water Sports and Air Padre Kiteboarding, two establishments in one building, rent surfboards, kiteboards, stand-up paddle boards and kayaks. I took a leisurely paddle through channels lined with impressive homes and out into the bay, where I could look through my boat's glass bottom at fish in the seagrass below.

After washing off the sand and saltwater back at my hotel, I headed across the street to Pier 19, which stretches out over the water behind the KCA campground next to a fishing pier. The specialty is local, wild-caught seafood. I ordered six oysters on the half-shell and a seafood po'boy made with fresh grouper, and then took a stroll down the



boardwalk to the palapa bar at its end to look for dolphins and take in another gorgeous sunset.

The Laguna Madre covers more than 600 square miles, stretching from Mexico to the northern tip of North Padre Island. Originally one 100-mile-long barrier island, Padre became two when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredged the Mansfield Channel to create access from the Gulf to Port Mansfield and the Intracoastal Waterway. With no major rivers flowing into it, this sprawling estuary is hypersaline (saltier than the ocean). It's one of only six such environments in the world. The average depth is 2.5 feet, with maximum depths of about 5 feet, supporting marshes, algal flats and some 30 percent of the remaining seagrass habitat in Texas (see "Lift, Drift, Pole and Troll," Page 12).

All of this creates excellent fishing grounds for spotted seatrout, redfish, black drum and flounder. The bay offers incredible access as well. No need for a guide or boat — just wade out from the shore and cast your line. If you prefer a shady seat and cold beverages at hand, charters that ply the bay are available, and, if nothing is biting there, they will head out to the jetties for gray snapper and Florida pompano.

After an early morning fishing outing, I headed to the north end of town and South Padre Island Adventures, which most of us know as Horses on the Beach (it offers other adventures as well). The wrangler set me astride a handsome bay horse with a white star on her face. Rides are escorted, but not the standard nose-to-tail line typical of many stables. My steed and I trotted along with a group, splashing into the water occasionally, pausing to watch pelicans land and enjoying the wind through our respective manes. I rode for an hour, but one-and-a-half-hour early morning rides and one-and-three-quarter-hour sunset rides are also available.

On my way home from this island getaway, I made one last stop, just across the causeway in Port Isabel, to climb the historic lighthouse. The only lighthouse in Texas still open to the public, it affords a nice, 360-degree view of the bay and a wistful look back at the island and the shimmering Laguna Madre. ★

No Other Fruitcake Comes Close!

As different from ordinary store-bought as night and day!

Collin Street DeLuxe® Fruitcake

FREE!
Shipping on orders
over \$50.00



Each cake comes in its own handy reusable tin to ensure freshness. You haven't tasted REAL fruitcake until you've tasted Collin Street DeLuxe® Fruitcake! It truly puts ordinary fruitcake to shame. This is why people around the world have come back to us year after year, ordering our fruitcake as gifts for their families, friends—and themselves! We honor that trust with every single order, using the same time-honored recipe we started with in 1896. Every shipment guaranteed fresh, moist and delicious.

Our Customers Say –
"... It outstrips all cakes I have ever tasted (including my mother's)."
"Throughout the office it was unanimous that none of us had ever met a fruitcake we liked. We had one of your FABULOUS DeLuxe® Fruitcakes at work this past week and changed our tune."
"It is made just the way I like Christmas cakes to be, rich and moist, and totally packed with fruit and nuts – I am almost ashamed to say that I consumed one whole one myself – in the space of a week I hasten to add."

Apricot Pecan Cake

Pineapple Pecan Cake

Apple Cinnamon Pecan Cake

- No. 101 Regular Size DeLuxe® (1 lb. 14 oz., serves 16-20)\$27.95
- No. 102 Medium Size DeLuxe® (2 lbs. 14 oz., serves 24-30)\$40.90
- No. 113 Apricot Pecan Cake (1 lb. 14 oz., serves 16-20)\$37.75
- No. 175 Apricot Pecan Cake (2 lbs. 14 oz., serves 24-30)\$49.70
- No. 115 Pineapple Pecan Cake (1 lb. 14 oz., serves 16-20)\$33.50
- No. 149 Pineapple Pecan Cake (2 lbs. 14 oz., serves 24-30)\$47.50
- No. 169 Apple Cinnamon Pecan Cake (1 lb. 14 oz., serves 16-20)\$35.70
- No. 188 Apple Cinnamon Pecan Cake (2 lbs. 14 oz., serves 24-30) ...\$48.55

FREE STANDARD U.S. SHIPPING ON ORDERS OVER \$50.
 For orders under \$50, please add \$5.95 per U.S. shipment.
 Not valid on orders previously placed. Not valid with other offers.
 Offer expires December 10, 2013.

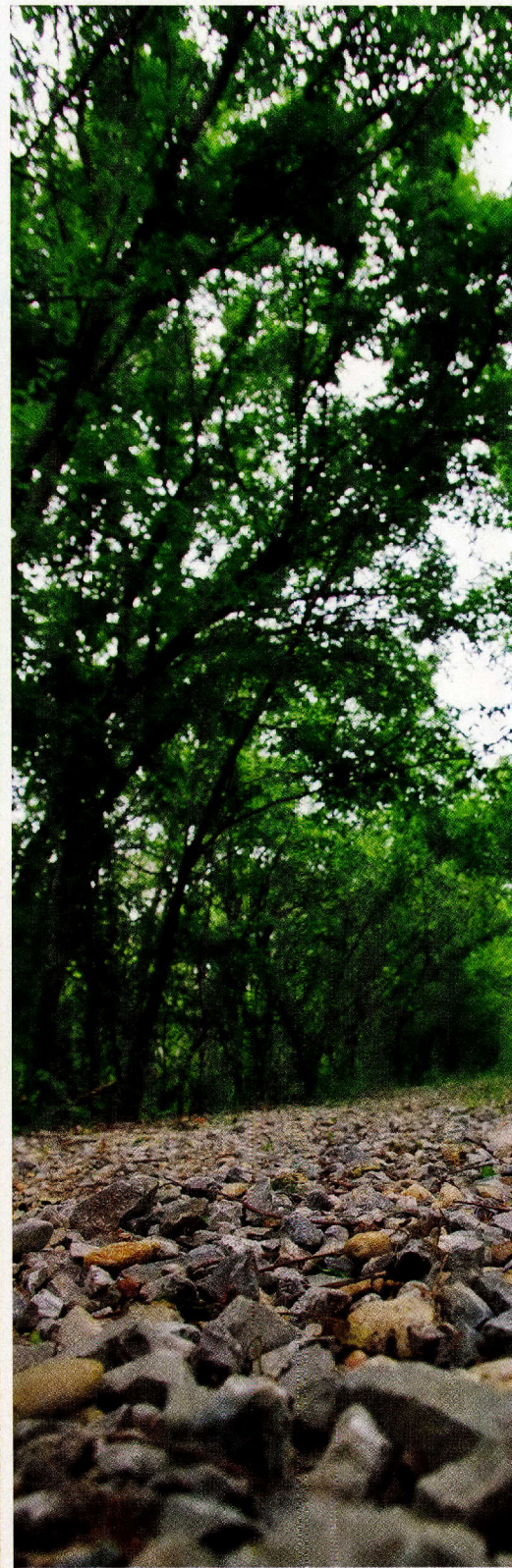
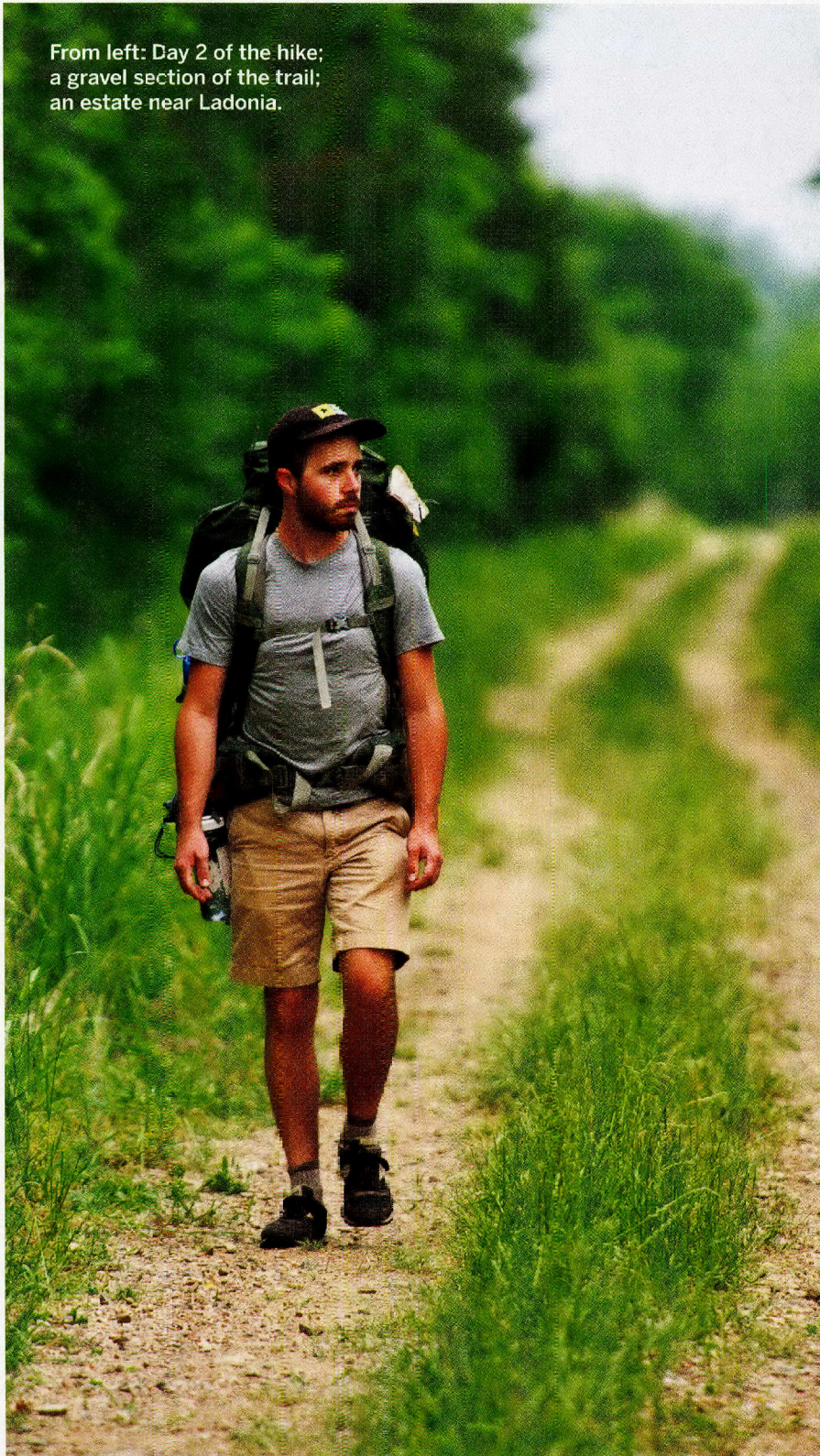
COLLIN STREET BAKERY *Since 1896*

Call Toll-Free 800-292-7400 or visit: www.CollinStreet.com

Name _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> American Express <input type="checkbox"/> Discover <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Street _____	FREE SHIPPING ON ORDERS OVER \$50.00
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	Please send order/gift is to:
Card # _____ Exp. ____/____	Collin Street Bakery
Signature _____	P.O. Box 79, Corsicana, TX 75151
	<input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> Money Order <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card

**KEYCODE
310419
REQUIRED**

From left: Day 2 of the hike;
a gravel section of the trail;
an estate near Ladonia.



LONE STAR WALKABOUT



A hiker sets off to be the first to walk the 130-mile Northeast Texas Trail.

By CAMERON DODD // Photographs by CHASE A. FOUNTAIN

The noon sun hits me from directly overhead, and I can feel beads of sweat form on my temples. I'm covered in mud and bug bites, but there's a scent of honeysuckle and rain in the air, distracting me from a nagging soreness in my knees and shoulders after lugging a 30-pound pack for four days. A muddy, tired dog that has adopted me follows faithfully behind.

I'm reviving the lost practice of foot travel, connecting the dots of isolated small towns and learning the effort needed to make long journeys through my own physical ability. In preparation, I've read John Graves' classic *Goodbye to a River*. I'm walking the Northeast Texas Trail, and, if all goes according to plan, I'll be the first to hike the entire 130 miles on foot.

The Northeast Texas Trail (NETT) rail-to-trail conversion project has been in the works since the 1990s, with various groups working on different legs of the trail. Union Pacific Railroad owns the trail land from Paris eastward to New Boston; the Santa Fe Railroad used the tracks in the western portion. The unused rail corridor was given to the trail development groups to prevent landowners from sectioning it off in case the railroad companies decide to return.

Some cities, like Farmersville, Paris and New Boston, have taken advantage of this already-cleared corridor and tied it into existing park areas to encourage recreation and ecotourism. Other towns, as I'd find out along my journey, weren't so enthusiastic about a trail bringing bike, foot and horse traffic to their area and have let their section of trail become overgrown and

mostly impassable.

I start my journey late in the day on May 14 in Farmersville, an hour north of Dallas. Here, the trail begins by Onion Shed Park and is paved and lined with streetlamps. Distances are marked every quarter-mile.

But indications appear quickly of how drastically the form and condition of the NETT vary. After the first mile, the lights disappear. Shortly after that, the distance markers stop, and around the third mile, the trail is no longer paved. I reach this point just as the sun sets but continue on, following the light of my headlamp. Before the sun dips completely beyond the horizon, the dense, albeit thin, lining of trees along the trail creates the illusion that I am walking through a thick forest. Being from the city and not knowing the validity of rumors I had heard of panthers in the area, I grip tightly in one hand the machete I had bought earlier that day. In the other hand I hold a fallen tree branch that makes for a crude but effective walking stick.

Walking alone in the dark of a forested trail is a good time to reflect on my motivation for making a 130-mile journey on foot by myself. In a way, I was searching for an element of freedom

The author begins his journey in Farmersville, at Mile 0.0 of the 130-mile trail.



Farmersville

FIND YOUR



Rough it in the Woods with:

BEST-IN-CLASS 30,000 LB TOWING¹ • BEST-IN-CLASS 850 LB-FT TORQUE²



1)When properly equipped. Comparisons based on latest competitive data at time of printing. 2)See dealer for a copy of the powertrain



Special Holiday Offer!

Subscribe now to receive 10 issues for \$20
and give a gift subscription at no additional cost.
That's two subscriptions for \$20!

My Subscription:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Please e-mail me new features and offers from *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine.

Check enclosed. Bill me later. Check here if you are ordering one subscription only.*

Gift To:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

ZIP _____

Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery of first issue. Offer good for new U.S. orders only.
*Cost if only one subscription ordered is \$12. Please list additional gifts on separate sheet of paper (\$10 each). 10 issues produced annually.

TEXAS
THE OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS

R3115B



tpwmagazine.com



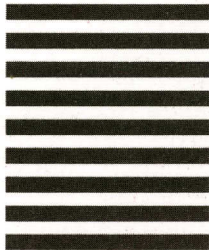
NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 633 PALM COAST, FL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE
PO BOX 421105
PALM COAST FL 32142-6458



get 2
for 1



Printed on recycled paper

tpwmagazine.com



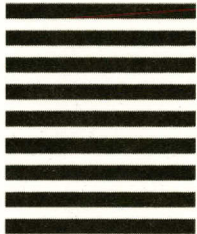
BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 633 PALM COAST, FL

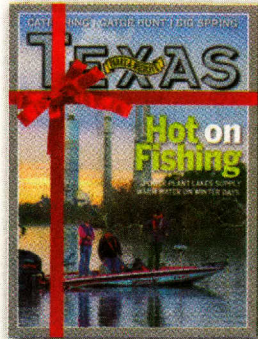
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE
PO BOX 421105
PALM COAST FL 32142-6458

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES



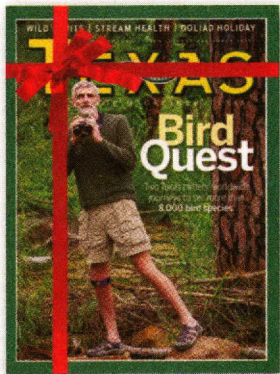
holiday
sale



TEXAS
PARKS & WILDLIFE

The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS

get 2 for 1



TEXAS
PARKS & WILDLIFE

The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS

holiday
sale

YES! I'd like a one-year (10 issues) subscription to *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine, and I'll give a one-year gift subscription to the person listed below.

I'll get both subscriptions for only \$20!

enter my subscription:

send a gift subscription to:

Name _____

Name _____

Address _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

City/State/ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Please e-mail me new features and offers from *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine.

Check here if you are ordering one subscription only.* Payment Enclosed Bill Me

Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery. This offer good for new U.S. orders only. *Cost if only one subscription ordered is \$12. Please list additional gifts on separate sheet of paper (\$10 each).

R311SH

OURSELF

in places where no one else can



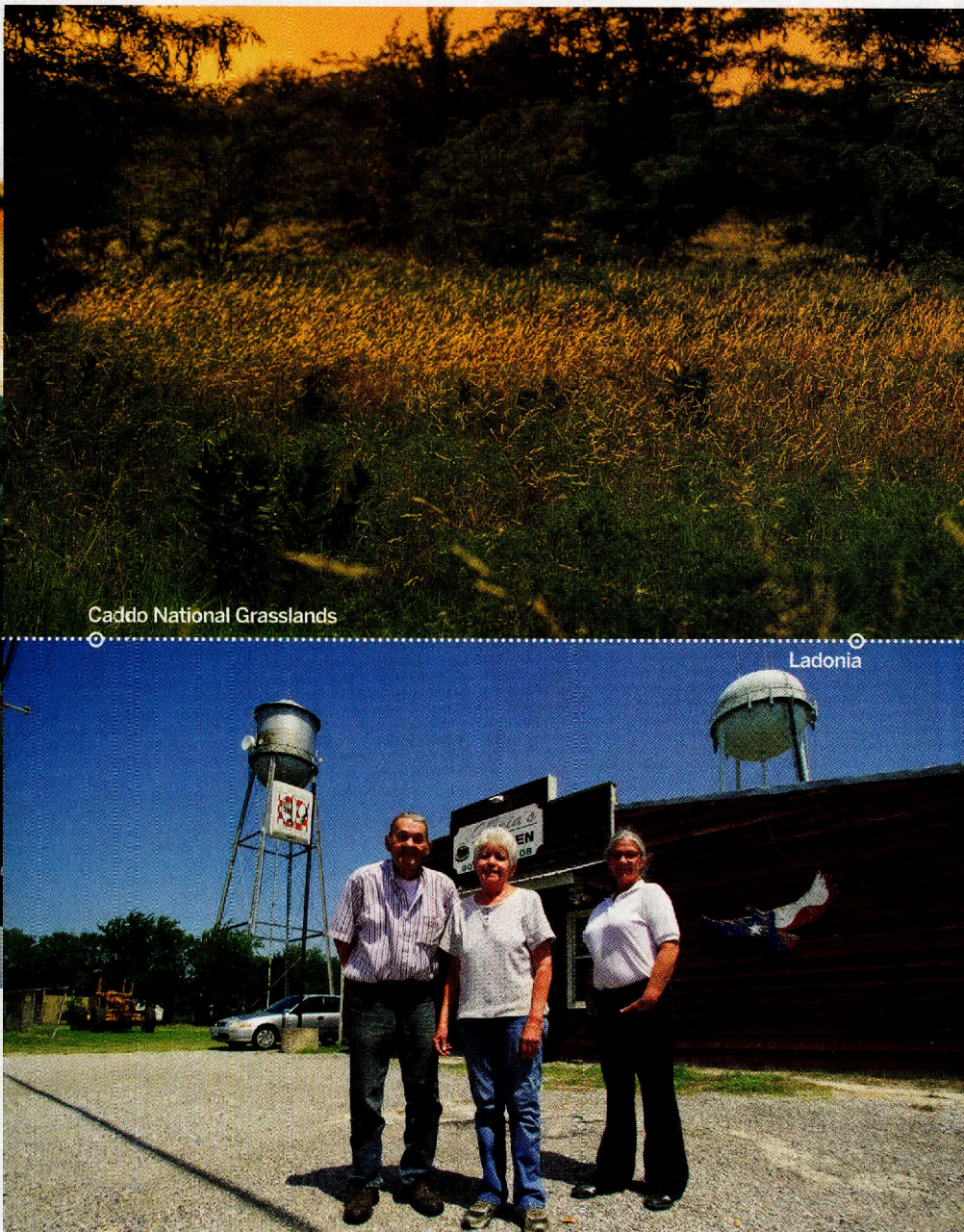
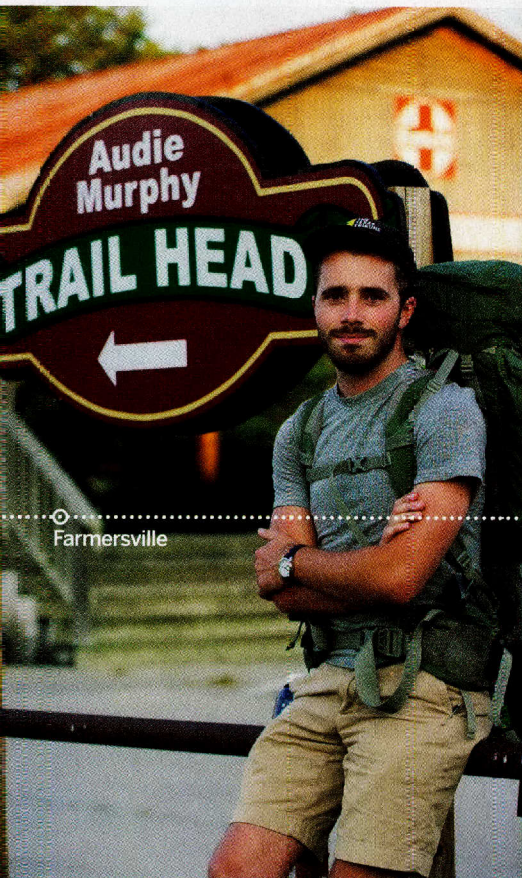
**HEAVY
DUTY
3500**

6.7L CUMMINS® TURBO DIESEL • 5-YR/100K-MILE POWERTRAIN WARRANTY

GUTS-GLORY



RAM



Top row: The author at the Farmersville trailhead; Caddo National Grasslands; rusted cars in Pecan Gap; the old train station in Roxton. Bottom row: Outside and inside Gloria's Kitchen in Ladonia; a former railroad bridge near Roxton.

that I had recently felt fleeting from my life. In the summer of 2012, after spending several months working on farms in rural France, I embarked on a weeklong trek down Spain's Camino de Santiago de Compostela. That journey took me over the Pyrenees and across Basque country, in the company of pilgrims from all over the world.

Walking at my own pace and sleeping wherever I pleased in the ever-changing scenery, living off chorizo sandwiches and meeting interesting travelers from across the world — this was a life I wanted to live forever. But reality hit after I returned to Texas and started working 9-to-5 again. Looming ahead was a commitment to an intensive two-year

graduate school program. So in setting off on this long hike, I was looking to regain some of the wonder and freedom of being a young man traversing the world on his own terms, perhaps for the last time in my foreseeable future.

The first day I cover six miles, camping near a cemetery just inside the town limits of Merit. On the second day, I intend to make it to Ladonia, covering a 24-mile segment that might prove to be an overly ambitious undertaking. By the time I enter the Caddo National Grasslands, I am wet with rain and my pack weighs heavy on my shoulders.

I consider bedding down on the trail. There's a lot of tree cover that might offer a little respite from a storm that's

clearly forming overhead. But I'm determined to stay on schedule, no matter what. Motivated by the desire for a cold beer to ease my tired body into sleep, I press onward.

With sore knees, wet feet and the beginnings of blisters on my soles, I follow the trail into town, where I'm planning to camp. Storm clouds continue to form overhead, and I'm eager to set up camp for the night. Just as I begin unpacking my tent, a man from a nearby house walks over. I assume he's going to chase me off, but to my surprise he greets me cheerfully and asks if I'm hiking the rail-trail.

The man introduces himself as Harold, and explains that he works for



Pecan Gap



Roxton



the city and knows all about the trail. He tells me there's a store open until 8, and an old rodeo arena just past it where I'll find better shelter for my tent. Harold goes back to his house to get me a better walking stick, and returns with his son, who seems surprised that someone would willingly walk 130 miles.

As I approach the rodeo area, Harold and his son pull up in their truck. Harold had called the mayor, who, either out of genuine concern for my safety or worry that a dead hiker would be bad for her town, instructed Harold to find me and take me to Rick Barrett, another city employee, who kindly lets trail cyclists stay in a cabin on his property.

Barrett is out, but by phone he tells

me I am welcome, and to help myself to the beer in the mini-fridge. At last, I drink my long-awaited beer with Harold and his son.

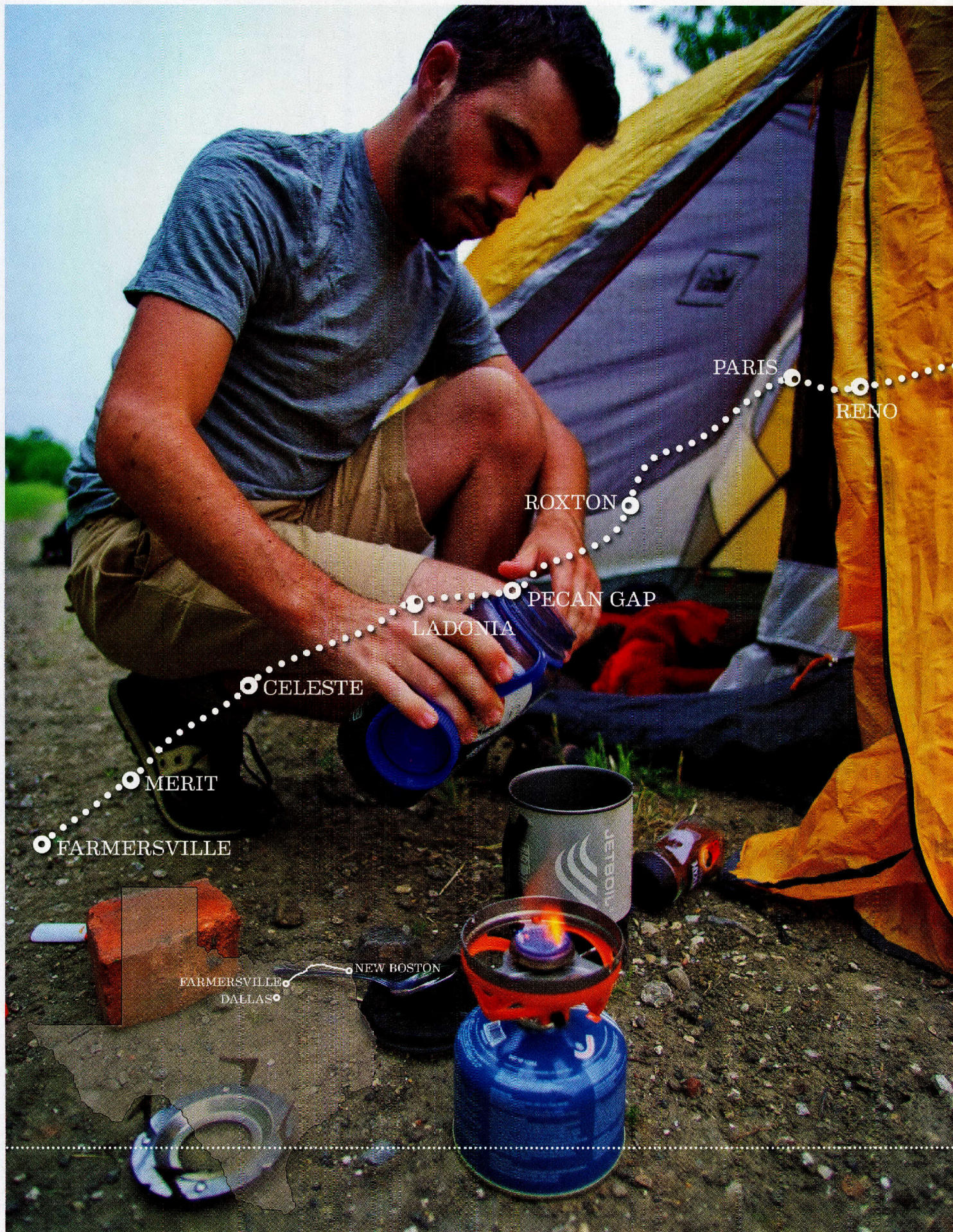
The dog shows up while I'm making dinner. I'm sitting on the covered porch, heating up beans on my Jetboil stove, when a brown dog of undetermined breeding pops out of the rain. Assuming it's Barrett's dog, I shove him away from my dinner and tell him to go back to the main house.

I awake the next day to find it still raining. Half upset for the setback and half glad I can rest my legs a little longer, I slowly pack up and wait for the storm to quit. Around 8, I set out, hoping I might at least make it five miles to Pecan

Gap, but I get only as far as the store on the other side of town before it starts raining again.

I continue to hide from the storm until lunch, when I walk to Gloria's Kitchen, a local restaurant. On my way, the dog appears again and begins to follow me. Harold shows up at the restaurant, and I ask him about the dog. He says people sometimes abandon dogs around there, but that this one locks attached to me and will probably make a good trail companion.

Giving up on walking anywhere that day, I head back to the cabin with the dog and read on the porch. Before going to sleep, I tell the dog that if he wants to go with me, I'll be setting out





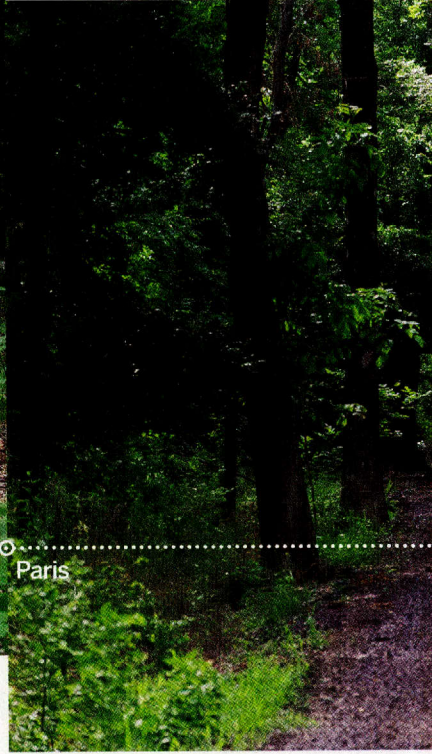
BLOSSOM

CLARKSVILLE

AVERY

NEW BOSTON

When I take breaks in the towns, locals often ask about what I'm doing. Some even offer me a hot meal. But as long as the weather's clear, I prefer to drop my pack and rest out in the middle of nowhere.



around 6. Sure enough, he appears on cue as I make coffee and follows me off onto the next leg of my journey.

ANYONE FAMILIAR WITH THE HISTORY of small American towns can tell you the same story. How the ones lucky enough to have the railroad run right through their town experienced prosperity, only to later lose out when the highways bypassed them. A walk on the Northeast Texas Trail is a history lesson that underlines this point. Celeste, Ladonia, Pecan Gap — all these little towns, though populated by kind souls and hard workers, bear the scars of economic hardships.

One of the main selling points for allowing the trail to run through a town, and for maintaining it, is the economic benefit it brings for places that otherwise don't offer much for tourists. With 130 miles being too far to carry a week's worth of provisions, it is perfect that, with few exceptions, the towns I traverse on the NETT have grocery and convenience stores, cafés and restaurants. I like to imagine each of my little pit stops for beef jerky, cans of beans and the occasional diner meal along my journey as demonstrations, albeit small ones, of

the potential flow of tourist dollars across the region. A few cyclists have posted on the Internet about making "credit card rides," meaning all they carried along the trail were credit cards, staying in hotels and eating at restaurants along the way. I am more frugal, camping in public parks and eating mostly what I buy at grocery stores.

When I take breaks in the towns, locals often ask about what I'm doing. Some even offer me a hot meal. But as long as the weather's clear, I prefer to drop my pack and rest out in the middle of nowhere. I sprawl out on the grass, and the dog lies down next to me, panting heavily. I feel connected to travelers who might have crossed this way before by foot, early settlers or even Caddo Indians out hunting.

AFTER MY RAINY SOJOURN IN Ladonia, I am well rested, and my new companion follows close behind on a good, clean stretch of trail. In the cool air after the storm, walking is easy. Crimson cardinals dart across the trail, and the dog chases after the occasional rabbit, only to reappear empty-jawed out of the brush a few yards down the trail. Sometimes we spot

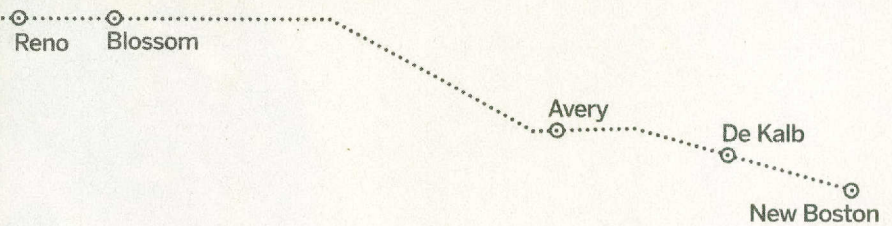
other creatures, like an armadillo rooting around in the grass for grubs.

I'll confess here that I will not become the first person to walk the entire Northeast Texas Trail. We make it six miles to Pecan Gap in an easy two hours. But, as soon as the trail meets FM 904, it disappears into a mess of brush, tall grass and trees. To make up for lost time and to avoid spending the day walking on a paved road, I catch a ride with a state transportation worker named Larry to the town of Roxton, where I pick the trail up again.

Roxton has maintained the trail well. There's a restroom beside it and several shops nearby selling provisions, but five miles outside of town a landowner has set up a gate across the trail. The gate is easily scaled, but the overgrown grass is swampy. Heeding a warning about snakes, I opt to take the muddy country road around. After going several miles out of our way, we cross the trail again. It's open here, but still very overgrown. I bushwhack for a few hundred feet, but it becomes too difficult to determine which way to go. So I backtrack and again follow the country road a few miles to the main farm-to-market road, and flag down another ride.



From left: A walker hits her stride on the Trail de Paris, the Paris portion of the Northeast Texas Trail; trees line a section of trail near Paris; pastoral scenes are plentiful along the trail.



The driver who picks me up turns out to be James Cooper, mayor of Roxton. While giving me a ride to Paris, he says he had seen me walking through town earlier and was curious how far I could get on the trail. The residents of Roxton are enthusiastic about the trail, he explains, and the city has invested a lot in it. He shares my disappointment that some landowners are not as enthusiastic about the project.

I camp in Paris, and Earl Erickson meets me early the next morning. Erickson is the chair of the steering committee for the Trail de Paris bike ride and has been instrumental in writing grant applications and promoting the trail. We'd been in contact during my trip planning, and he'd even sent over his son, a doctor the night before our meeting, with supplies for me to drain my blisters.

Erickson and I walk together to where the NETT meets a series of nature trails that wind through an old-growth forest to the east of Paris and connect the main trail to the large Paris Sports Complex. Erickson is confident that soon they'll persuade the landowners and reluctant town officials to take down their fences,

maintain their sections of the corridor and connect the entire trail.

From Paris, through Reno and to Blossom, around 10 miles, the trail is easy, mostly paved and totally clear. I had been warned that the trail becomes difficult after Blossom, but I'm still hopeful I can manage it. Trouble arises quickly, however, behind a Shell station in Blossom, where the path disappears into thick woods.

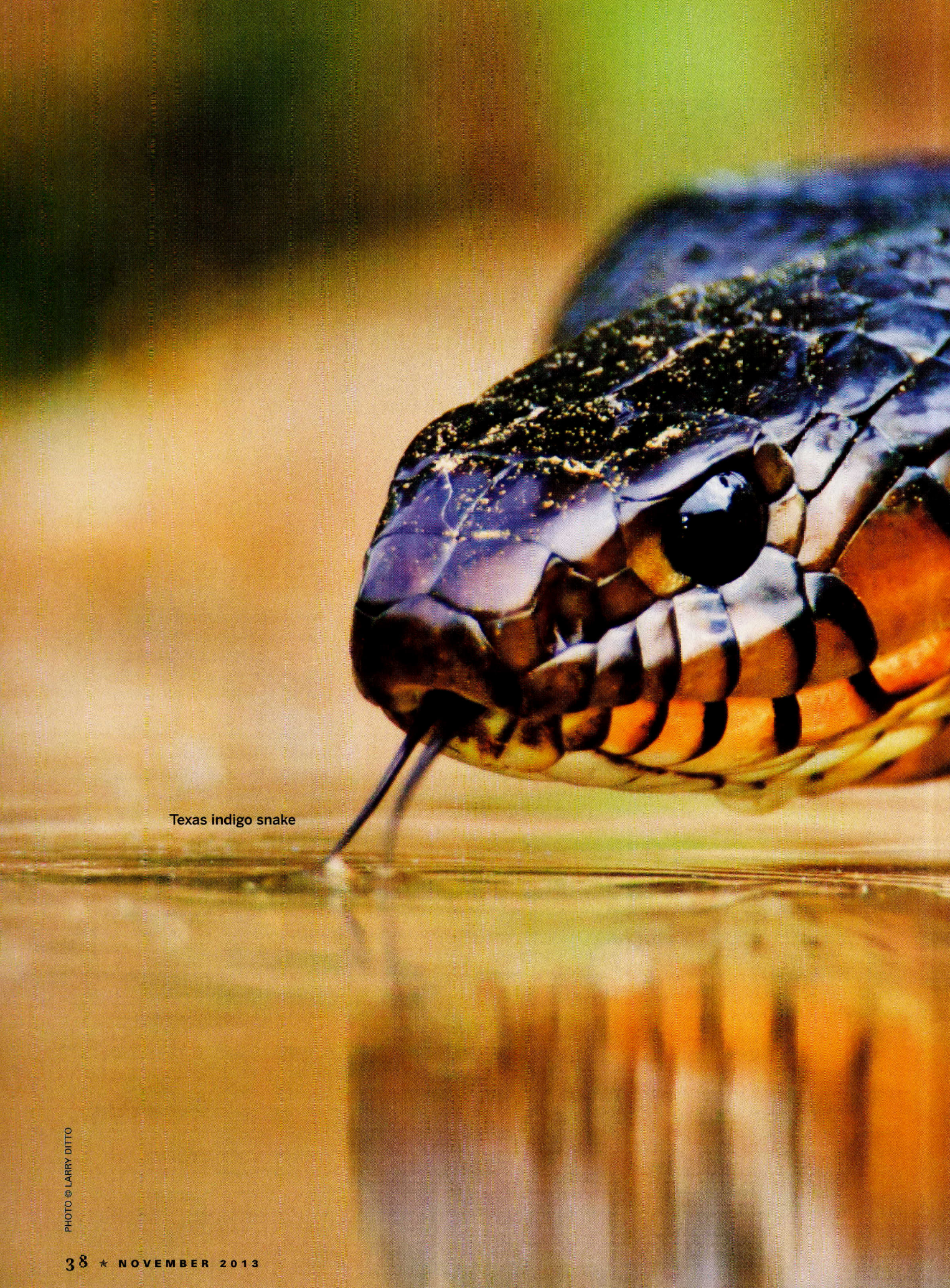
Here I accept my last ride, from a kind schoolteacher on her way to Avery to see her grandchildren. From Avery to New Boston the trail is just as easy as the beginning in Farmersville. I hike another seven miles that afternoon and camp on a baseball field in De Kalb, just 12 miles from the New Boston trailhead.

THE ACT OF RAIL-TO-TRAIL conversion is significant for reasons other than the recreation and tourism that it allows. One of the initial promises of the railroad, and by extension industry in general, was safe and quick passage through the wilderness. Personal journeys on foot were replaced with blurred views of trees and hills in speeding vistas. Now the

trail has returned to nature, and travel is done at a more deliberate pace. Walking is nowhere near as fast, but the journey is more than just getting somewhere fast. It's an exploration, both of the land and the self.

When I reach the trailhead in New Boston where I'd left my car, there's no finishing line tape to break through, no rain of confetti, not a single soul to congratulate me on having walked (most of) a 130-mile trail in six days. It's late in the afternoon, and the stagnant air holds the heat and humidity like a sauna. The dog, still following faithfully, finds a place in the shade and watches as I pack the car. For a dog that has willingly followed me for the last hundred miles down overgrown trails and into strangers' truckbeds, he takes a surprising amount of coaxing to jump into my car.

OK, so I wasn't the first to walk the entire Northeast Texas Trail. But driving back down U.S. Highway 82, which for a while runs almost beside the trail, I know I've momentarily lived at peace in the wild, taking away new lessons and new connections. Someday, perhaps, I'll be able to return to finish what I've begun. ★



Texas indigo snake



LOG A FROG, SHARE A SNAKE

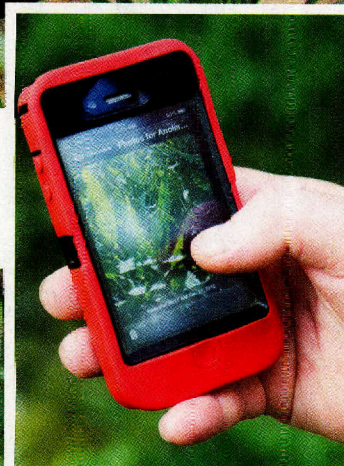
CITIZEN SCIENTISTS PLAY A ROLE IN CONSERVATION
BY REPORTING WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS.

BY CULLEN HANKS AND NATALIE REINA



State herpetologist Andy Gluesenkamp (with phone) and TPWD biologist Cullen Hanks record an observation of a yellow mud turtle using iNaturalist.

WHEN PEOPLE POST AN OBSERVATION ON INATURALIST, THE PROGRAM ASKS THEM FOR FOUR PIECES OF INFORMATION: WHO, WHAT, WHEN AND WHERE.



PHOTOS BY CHASE A. FOUNTAIN / TPWD

FROM A YOUNG AGE, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS STUDENT EMILY POWELL HAS BEEN FASCINATED WITH WILDLIFE. AS A CHILD, SHE WAS CONSTANTLY ON THE HUNT FOR INSECTS, LIZARDS AND FROGS IN HER BACKYARD, SPARKING A PASSIONATE INTEREST IN REPTILES.

"I was always interested in finding wild animals, but I think I was also motivated when I was younger because I wanted to keep reptiles as pets, and my parents would not let me for years," Powell, a biology major, says. "I contented myself with observing them in the wild."

A field herpetology course taught by University of Texas professor Travis LaDuc introduced Powell to the Herps of Texas (HOT) Project on iNaturalist. The project is an effort to map the distribution of reptiles and amphibians through crowdsourced observations. The iNaturalist platform allows people to share their photos of plants and animals, and in the process, it gives them the opportunity to learn about what they are seeing and contribute to conservation efforts.

"During the semester, we logged over 300 observations of 87 species," Powell says. "I have only been using it for five months now, but I have found it to be a very useful program."

iNaturalist is the perfect tool for anyone who wants to know more about wildlife. The website allows users to post observations as well as explore other observations. In addition, the iNaturalist mobile app allows people to report sightings when they are far from a computer or even a cellphone tower.

When people post an observation on iNaturalist, the program asks them for four pieces of information: who, what, when and where. These basic ingredients of an observation aid identification and allow biologists to create large, meaningful sets of data that can support conservation efforts.

"Who" is the observer, the person posting the observation.

"What" is the species identification. Fortunately, the platform is set up for naturalists of all skill levels, so observers don't need to know what species it is.

"If you are unsure of what species you saw, you can upload the photo, ID it as 'frog' or 'bird,' and mark it for an expert to help you," Powell says. Once the photo appears on iNaturalist, the comments section becomes a forum where others will chime in to identify the animal. When identified, the species observation is automatically linked to the profile page where you can learn more about it.

"When" is the date. Recording the date of observation is important with reptiles and amphibians, since they're active only during certain seasons. The iNaturalist app can extract time, date and location information from data associated with smartphone pictures.

"If I am pressed for time, I'll just snap a picture of the animal, record the location and save it to add later," Powell says.

"Where" is especially valuable, as it helps biologists better understand what habitats support wild populations. The location is also essential for creating automated checklists for counties, parks and states on iNaturalist, a valuable resource for the amateur naturalist. The iNaturalist app automatically assigns the location using the phone's GPS, or observers can mark the location using a Google map on the iNaturalist website.

Harnessing the power of the crowd, iNaturalist is constantly updating the profile of each species based on new

observations coming in.

"You can find range maps of animals in books," Powell says, "but iNaturalist is much more reliable because you have proof that the species was seen in that location recently."

iNaturalist users can include additional details about the animal in the "description" tab. They can list the number of animals, the habitat in which the animal was found, the animal's identification marks, the weather, behavior and more. These details enrich the experience of other iNaturalist users and add value to research. For example, if the animals have young, the population or the habitat may be more valuable to conservation efforts.

The HOT Project on iNaturalist was started in September 2012 as an experiment, but it has exceeded the curators' best expectations. In the first year, the project has accrued 250 members and documented more than 4,000 observations. Perhaps more significantly, the project has documented more than 200 species, which is more than 90 percent of the reptiles and amphibian species found in Texas.

The success of the project has been due in large part to the high caliber of the three curators (well-respected professional herpetologists from major research and conservation institutions) who are managing the project: Toby Hibbitts, curator of amphibians and reptiles at Texas A&M University; LaDuc, assistant curator of herpetology at the University of Texas at Austin; and Andy Gluesenkamp, state herpetologist for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. This team has not only introduced the project to the naturalist community, but also has been very active in providing feedback on people's observations. Every observation submitted to the HOT Project is validated by at least one of these three expert curators (in addition to the feedback from the iNaturalist community).

So why are these professional herpetologists taking time to check all of these observations? One major reason is that they enjoy it.

"As a child, I was always thrilled to

see reptiles and amphibians in the wild,” Gluesenkamp says. “That passion has never waned, and much of what I do as a parent and as state herpetologist involves sharing my love of nature with others.”

Another reason for their participation is the sense that this project could have a revolutionary impact on research and conservation for herps in Texas. While the first year has been an impressive success, it is still only scratching the surface of the power of the crowd to generate and identify observations. To understand that potential, we can look at what has been accomplished for birds with an online platform called eBird.

Started in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society, eBird is an online bird checklist that allows birders to upload observations via smartphone or computer. By unlocking the power of the crowd, eBird has compiled more than 140 million observations of birds from around the world. In Texas alone, birders have reported more than 7.5 million observations.

eBird has proven to be an invaluable resource for birders, as well as for research and conservation. Even though the data is not collected with a stan-

dardized methodology, the sheer volume of observations allows researchers to discover patterns in populations that were not detectable before. For example, although ornithologists thought there was a single population of indigo buntings in the United States, they have discovered that there are actually two populations with very different migratory strategies.

“If the HOT Project results in just

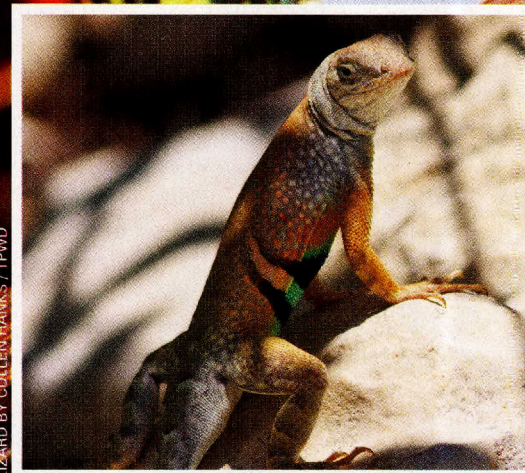
1 percent of the volume that eBird has achieved, it will have a profound impact on our knowledge of reptiles and amphibians in Texas,” Gluesenkamp says. “It has already started to refine our understanding of the distribution of wild populations through observations beyond the expected range.”

For example, the recent observation of an unknown rattlesnake posted to HOT proved to be of one of the easternmost occurrences of the ornate black-tailed rattlesnake. With enough observations, this data can be used to model the distribution of each species using geographic information systems, or GIS. These models will fine-tune range maps and highlight regions where populations were thought to exist but actually may not exist.

On a finer scale, these models are helpful for identifying habitats that are essential to certain species. This will provide powerful baseline data for understanding how species could be affected by changes in habitat or climate. This is why all observations are valuable, and no species is “too common” to report.

The power of the crowd will also be an important early detection system for changes in ranges and colonization

Red-eared slider and greater earless lizard (inset)



LIZARD BY CALLEN HANKS / TPWD

events. This is especially important with non-native and potentially invasive species. Already, the project has detected undocumented non-native species like a bearded dragon found in a Fort Worth park. In such cases, early detection can be critical to responding to the introduction of a non-native population. The project has also helped map the distribution of known non-native species like the Cuban brown anole. Should this population start to really grow, the project will detect it.

Of course, any observation of a rare species is valuable. In many cases, species are thought to be rare because of a lack of information. As an example, the Texas tortoise is considered a declining species, but the HOT Project could show that it is more common than once thought.

On the other hand, an observation of a truly rare species is a significant conservation opportunity. Rare species are often passed off as common species because they are not often encountered, but such an observation is likely to be recognized in the HOT Project. For example, the spot-tailed earless lizard has not been detected throughout the southern half of its range despite a concerted effort to find it. A single observation would offer an opportunity to study where the lizard is persisting and to better understand the reasons for its decline.

No matter how common or rare the species, the observation is valuable.

"Using iNaturalist makes me feel I am doing my part to provide information for researchers and conservationists," Powell says. ★

TPWD CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS

TPWD is involved in several citizen science programs. These programs make up TPWD's Texas Nature Trackers, associated with the Texas Master Naturalist program. Unlike iNaturalist, these programs are tailored toward specific animals, but like iNaturalist, these programs help us learn more about animals and their habitat distribution. The animals include tarpon, mussels, horned lizards, box turtles, whooping cranes and many more. Here are a few of the programs:

Texas Nature Trackers: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/trackers

Texas Horned Lizard Watch: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/hornedlizards

Texas Whooper Watch: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/whoopingcranes

Texas Mussel Watch: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/mussels

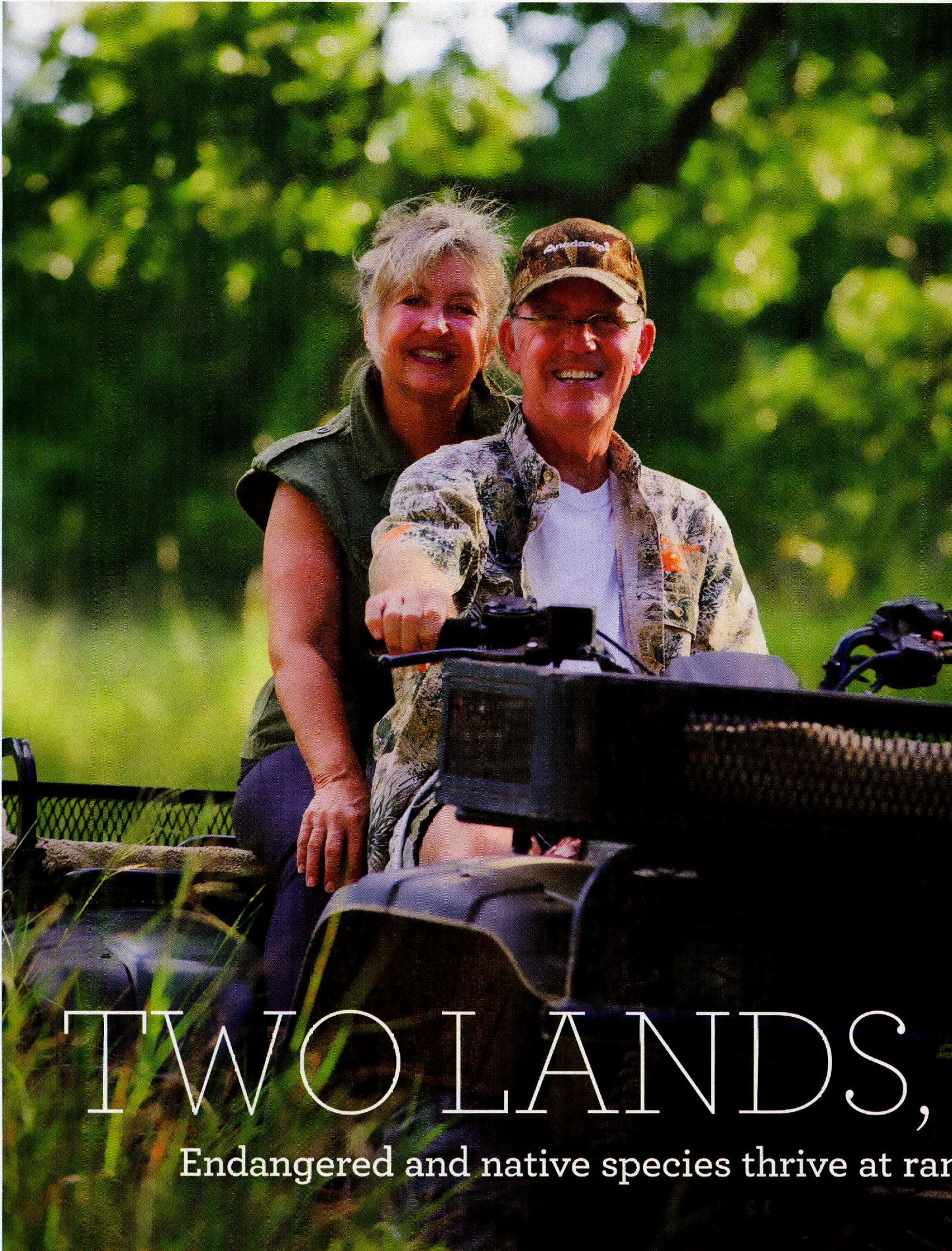
Tarpon Observation Network: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/tarpon

Box Turtle Survey Project: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/boxturtles



Texas horned lizard

OF COURSE, ANY OBSERVATION OF A RARE SPECIES IS VALUABLE. IN MANY CASES, SPECIES ARE THOUGHT TO BE RARE BECAUSE OF A LACK OF INFORMATION.



TWO LANDS,

Endangered and native species thrive at ran



Jan and Jack Cato take a ride in the pecan bottom of their Buckhollow Ranch. Endangered Texas snowbells were reintroduced on the ranch.

ONE GOAL

ranches honored with top land steward award.

BY MIKE COX

PHOTOS BY CHASE A. FOUNTAIN / TPWD

THEY ARE 90 MILES APART

and in different ecological regions of the state, but the two ranches have one very important thing in common — both are owned by a couple who have worked hard to rejuvenate their land.

The Buckhollow Ranch in Uvalde and Real counties on the Edwards Plateau and the Stockard-Sirianni Ranch on the South Texas plains of Frio County belong to the family of Jack and Jan Cato of Houston. In the spring, the couple won the 2013 Leopold Conservation Award, Texas' highest honor for private land conservation, in recognition of the conservation measures they have taken to improve their two special pieces of Texas.

Given in honor of storied conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award is conferred each year by the Sand County Foundation, an international nonprofit organization devoted to private land conservation, in partnership with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as part of its Lone Star Land Steward Awards program. In Texas, the Leopold award is sponsored by the Lynde and Harry Bradley Fund for the Environment, Silver Eagle Distributors and the Lee and Ramona Bass Foundation.

In 2004, the Catos received a regional land steward award for their accomplishments on the 6,000-acre Buckhollow Ranch. Two years later, they were singled out for a second award for what they have done with the Stockard-Sirianni Ranch, which covers 2,900 acres.

"Winning two regional land steward awards and now the Leopold award is a phenomenal accomplishment, never achieved in Texas, and a true testament to their dedication to land stewardship," TPWD Executive Director Carter Smith says. "The Catos have dedicated an extreme amount of time and personal

sacrifice in an effort to reach their wildlife and habitat management goals."

The Catos accepted the crystal Leopold award and a check for \$10,000 at the annual Lone Star Land Steward Awards dinner in Austin on May 21.

"Aldo Leopold comprehended the necessity of the private landowner providing and improving habitat. The Catos have done that in spades, and, probably, with spades," says Brent Haglund, Sand County Foundation president. "We know many 'tools' have been used by the Catos to make their land a much more wildlife-rich part of Texas, and we are glad to be part of this partnership recognition."

The couple inherited an interest in the Frio County property from Jan's father 35 years ago and have owned the Buckhollow Ranch since 1997. The Stockard-Sirianni Ranch is held by a family limited partnership. Even so, the Catos became the driving force in ramping up conservation efforts.

"We thought, 'What can we do to make it enjoyable for everyone, mainly us and wildlife?'" Jack Cato says.

Born in Galveston and raised near Hermann Park in Houston, he traces his love of the outdoors to his early teenage years, when an uncle often took him fishing and hunting on a 50-acre tract near Rosharon, south of Houston.

"I was around 14 years old, the perfect time to turn bad or turn good," he says, laughing. "I enjoyed that time, though it was less important for a while after I discovered girls and had to wade through high school."

After graduating from the University of Texas with a degree in history, Cato got drafted and served in the military for 20 months. Not long after that, working in downtown Houston, Cato met his future wife. A mutual love for crossword puzzles, coffee, the outdoors and wildlife led to a relationship and later marriage.

Proving that a college major is not necessarily the predictor of someone's future career, Cato became an oil and gas landman, acquiring leases for exploration and drilling. He later expanded into real estate and other aspects of the petroleum business.

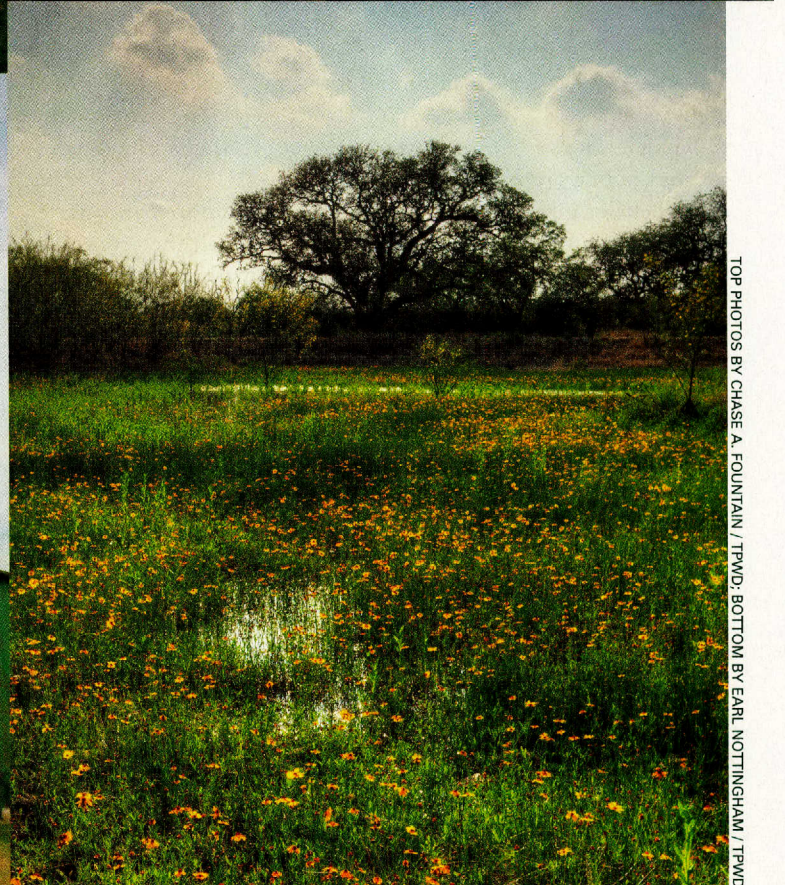
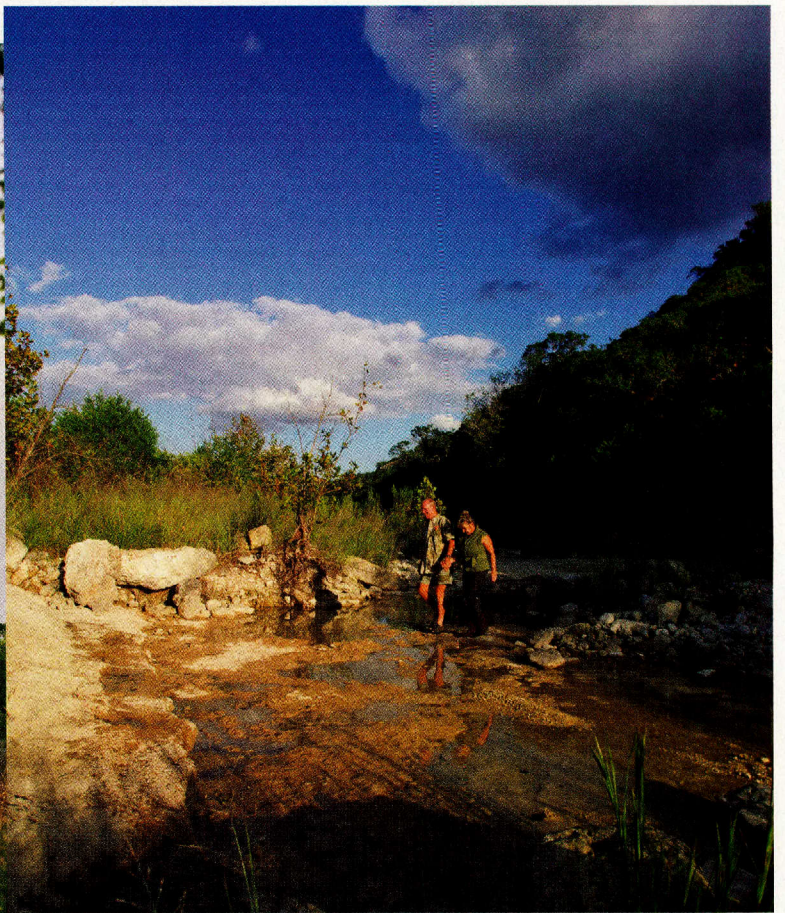
Over time, Cato rekindled his interest in wildlife and developed a passion for wildlife viewing and birding.

"At some point in your life," he says, "you realize you are mortal, that you're not going to go around but this one time. And that time is right now. You have to appreciate life for what it is, something so varied and diffuse that we're never going to understand all of it."

In the early 1990s, the Catos began looking for ranchland. Over a seven-year period, their real estate agent showed them numerous properties all over the Hill Country and South Texas before they finally settled on Buckhollow Ranch. They wanted a place with water on it (Jan wanted something that reminded her of childhood time spent at Camp Mystic in Kerr County), and preferred the Edwards Plateau to the more arid ranch country farther south toward the border.

"When we had the good fortune to

"WINNING TWO REGIONAL LAND STEWARD AWARDS AND NOW THE LEOPOLD AWARD IS A PHENOMENAL ACCOMPLISHMENT, NEVER ACHIEVED IN TEXAS, AND A TRUE TESTAMENT TO THEIR DEDICATION TO LAND STEWARDSHIP," TPWD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARTER SMITH SAYS.



TOP PHOTOS BY CHASE A. FOUNTAIN / TPWD; BOTTOM BY EARL NOTTINGHAM / TPWD

The Buckhollow Ranch, top photos, is in the Edwards Plateau, and the Stockard-Sirianni Ranch, bottom photos, is in the South Texas plains. Stockard-Sirianni manager Oscar Gonzales, left, is following in the footsteps of his uncle, who served as foreman for decades.



Rolling hills dot the landscape at the Buckhollow Ranch. At right, the Catos relax at a spring-fed pool at the Buckhollow.

come across the Buckhollow,” Jack Cato says, “we knew we had finally found the right ranch.”

Though Cato says he’s never had an abstract of title prepared for the property, he believes it has had only four or five owners since it was first established in the 19th century. Part of the Buckhollow used to be owned by the flamboyant Houston oil tycoon Glenn McCarthy along with several other Houston oilmen who wanted a Hill Country getaway. A later owner, the individual from whom the Catos purchased the ranch, raised cattle on the place, as had all the previous owners other than the oilmen.

The Buckhollow overlooks the Dry Frio River and has wildlife ranging from the Guadalupe soft-shell turtle to numerous bird species to axis deer and native whitetails.

“The ranch is well-watered in the Frio canyon, and the place never looks bad, with no animals beating it down and overgrazing it,” Cato says.

Located just west of Garner State Park, Buckhollow features a main ranch house and several other structures built on a for-hire basis by the same Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps workers who constructed

the facilities at Garner.

“When we got Buckhollow,” Cato says, “we continued what we started on the family ranch. We leased it out one year for cows, but then we said ‘no more,’ and started clearing cedar. We left the cedar piled in low rows for small animal cover. We’re not interested in growing big deer; we’re interested in all wildlife, from insects to birds to whitetails.”

That involves managing the land to improve wildlife diversity and to provide optimum habitat for that wide range of creatures.

As retired TPWD biologist Richard B. Taylor said in his nomination of the Catos for the Leopold award, “The emphasis is on improving the native habitat through proper range and wildlife management, and to maintain healthy, native wildlife populations — with an emphasis on nongame, threatened and endangered species.”

Goals for the Stockard-Sirianni Ranch, the biologist continued, “are to maintain as healthy an ecosystem as possible, while allowing and maintaining maximum biodiversity through innovative habitat management.”

On that ranch, which is owned and

operated by multiple heirs, the manager uses cattle as a wildlife management tool. Stocked conservatively, the ranch is managed for maximum diversity of South Texas wildlife.

One thing Cato says he learned in studying history is that people make the same mistakes over and over again, and that’s particularly true when it comes to the land.

“It’s amazing what land will do if just left alone,” Cato says. “It’s kind of reassuring. If man would just let the land alone, without trying to corrupt it, the land will heal itself.”

But since acquiring the Buckhollow Ranch, the Catos have hardly left it alone. Taylor’s nomination listed these accomplishments:

- Because of excellent habitat management, endangered species such as the black-capped vireo, golden-cheeked warbler and Tobusch fishhook cactus are increasing on the Buckhollow Ranch. Natural springs are returning to life, and flow volumes have increased since the Catos purchased the ranch. Because of the ample ground cover that has become established through sound management practices, water penetration has



PHOTOS BY CHASE A. FOUNTAIN / TPWD

improved, runoff has slowed, and soil erosion has noticeably diminished.

- Native plant populations have been surveyed on Buckhollow by the Texas Nature Conservancy and monitored by various agencies including TPWD and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Texas snowbell, an endemic native plant, was reintroduced several years ago in an attempt to re-establish it in its historical range.

- On the Stockard-Sirianni Ranch, twice-yearly helicopter surveys are conducted to assess populations of white-tailed deer, coyote, feral hog, javelina, turkey and quail. Incidental herpetological surveys have also been conducted by the landowners, TPWD and ranch visitors. Plant surveys targeting native grasses have been undertaken by South Texas Natives and TPWD. Bird populations are also monitored throughout the year by various bird watching groups and individuals, including the Catos, who are active birders.

- The Catos have participated in a prescribed burn school and numerous wildlife seminars to better educate themselves on habitat management and environmental issues. Most of their

knowledge has been directly applied to the landscape.

- Water guzzlers (mechanical watering devices) installed throughout Buckhollow Ranch continue to benefit wildlife by improving species distribution and decreasing dependence on natural springs, rivers and streams.

- Extensive stands of ashe juniper have been removed to increase spring flow, and four solar-powered water wells have either been retrofitted or drilled. Water diversion berms have been created across all hillside roads to prevent soil erosion, and one small holding tank has been created to capture seasonal water for wildlife. This has helped reduce negative impacts to sensitive areas.

- As a result of extensive habitat management on Buckhollow Ranch, native grasses such as little bluestem are returning at an increasing rate, slowly replacing the non-native King Ranch bluestem that previous owners planted. Browsing pressure on woody plants such as live oak has decreased dramatically, allowing ample regeneration.

- At the Stockard-Sirianni Ranch, the Catos have replaced fences and instituted a rotational grazing system. This has benefited the native habitat and

improved livestock production. In addition, a roughly 20-acre wetland has been established for resident and migratory waterfowl, complete with levees and pipelines to maintain water levels. More than 100 bird nesting boxes have been put up on the property, including bluebird boxes, screech owl boxes, wood duck boxes and purple martin houses. Bat boxes have also been installed.

- Beyond the work they have done on their land, the Catos have been generous in sharing their properties with others — including local residents, neighbors, conservation groups, universities, and state and federal agencies. They have been actively involved with TPWD, NRCS, the Nature Conservancy, West Texas A&M University and Southwest Texas Junior College by allowing these agencies or institutions to use the ranches for meetings, field days, research projects, demonstrations and educational programs.

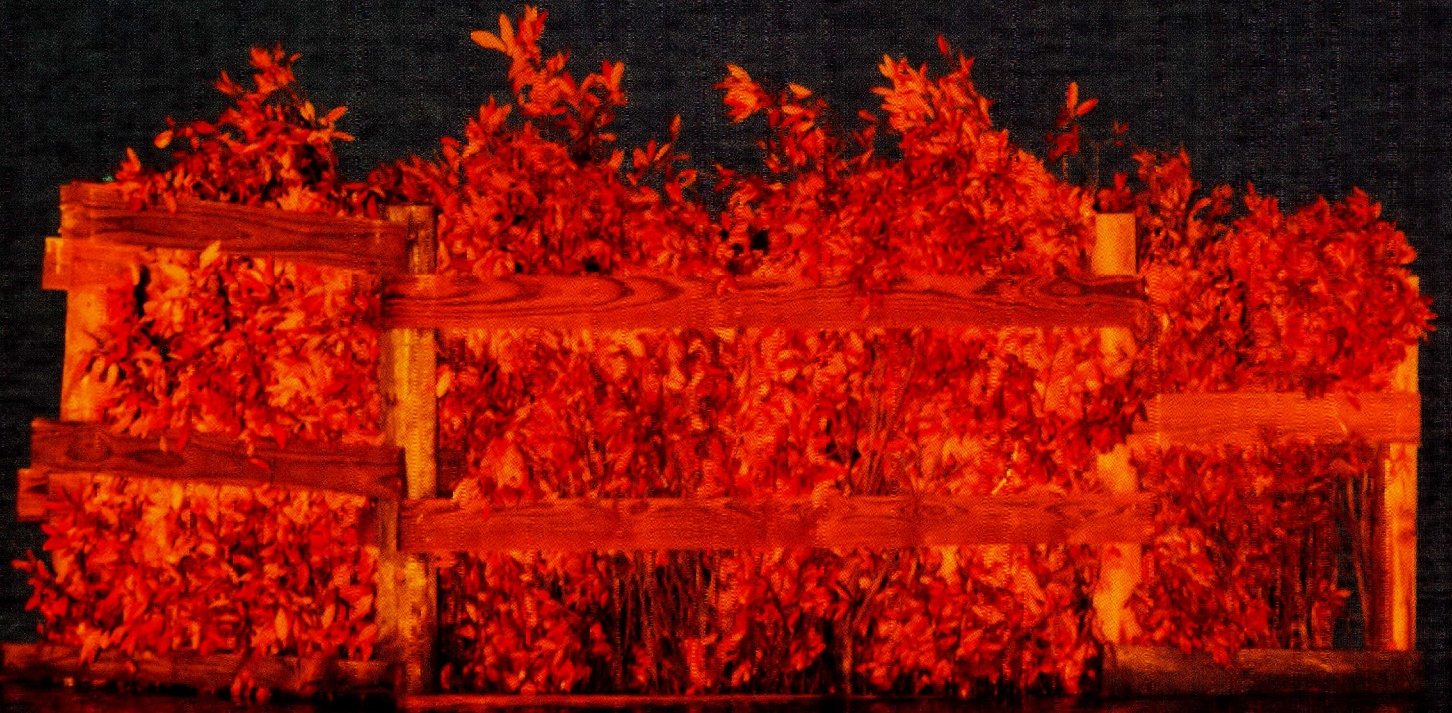
Earlier this year, the Catos placed the Buckhollow Ranch under a perpetual conservation easement with the Nature Conservancy.

At 67, Cato says he doesn't have a bucket list. "I just want to see our native habitat thriving." ★

RAINING DUCKS

Looking back at 100 years of waterfowl hunting in Texas.

BY STEVE LIGHTFOOT



A waterfowl blind
in St. Charles Bay
near Rockport.

The birds fell in heaps — ducks and geese, cranes and swans, shorebirds of all sizes. They were shot both night and day by any means imaginable and unimaginable — targeted by sportsmen aboard trains, in boats and from behind livestock. Yes, livestock.

A century ago, the Texas coastal landscape looked a lot different, and so did waterfowl hunting. Both were unregulated, untamed and unreachable, unless you had the means and the desire. Back before the Intracoastal Waterway carved an industrial swath along the coast and before South Padre Island became an international vacation hot spot, duck hunting was the trend for recreation and commerce on the Texas coast. Ducks helped shape the coast.

“It’s an untold story,” says Rob Sawyer, a duck hunter who grew up read-



steeped in big business. Ducks have always carried value of one kind or another, whether for sustenance, trade or pleasure. Early settlers relied on the annual winter migrants for food, feathers for pillows and rendered lard for cooking. Then came the market men who saw waterfowl as a pure commodity to be harvested for profit. In the early 1900s, market hunting in Texas was outlawed, and the ducks were left to sportsmen and businessmen, who saw a different value in a duck.

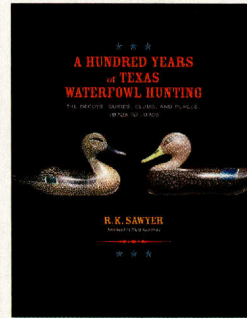
Exclusive private hunting clubs began springing up along the

Texas coast as early as the 1870s and served as an oasis for the well-heeled sportsman. Today, a typical waterfowl hunt might consist of a half-day slog in and out of the marsh, but it wasn’t uncommon for a waterfowler a century ago to spend a month

or longer on a waterfowl hunting getaway. Travel to duck country took days from Dallas or San Antonio before the railroads and automobiles. Ardent sportsmen from Chicago and points east traveled by steamer or schooner for weeks to reach the birds and were at the mercy of the weather.

Much of the early development and infrastructure along the coast was born out of duck hunting.

Legend has it that the city of Port



Waterfowl hunting helped shape the Texas coast. After market hunting was outlawed in the early 1900s, the ducks were left to sportsmen such as these in the 1920s. Rob Sawyer spells it out in his book.



Arthur got its start in a duck hunt. In 1899, barbed-wire magnate John Warne Gates killed 900 ducks in the area in one morning and was so impressed with the hunting that he decided to stay. He built a magnificent two-story colonial mansion that he called his hunting lodge and traveled there each fall from Chicago along the Mississippi River aboard his 100-foot yacht. Gates then constructed a manmade impoundment below Sabine Lake and built more infrastructure, including a three-story lodge and a spur road off

A CENTURY AGO, THE TEXAS COASTAL LANDSCAPE LOOKED A LOT DIFFERENT, AND SO DID WATERFOWL HUNTING.

ing about waterfowl hunting on Chesapeake Bay, where he lived, and along the eastern seaboard. “I moved to Louisiana and bought books about the rich waterfowl hunting heritage there, but when I got to Texas there really were no books about it. That meant either there was no history or it hadn’t been told. I’m a history buff and figured the only way I’m going to read the book I wanted to read was to write it. So I did.”

In his book, *A Hundred Years of Texas Waterfowl Hunting*, Sawyer presents in images and words an insight into an era far removed from the conservation ethic represented in hunting today. It is neither an endorsement nor condemnation of the actions of those early sportsmen who saw skies darkened by massive and seemingly endless flocks of birds. The book is, as he puts it, “a gumbo of fact, legend and lore that is Texas waterfowling history.”

If Texas has a duck hunting legacy, it is arguably one

the Kansas City Southern rail line that dropped his guests off at the door. Granted, that early foundation for Port Arthur was soon overshadowed by the discovery of oil at the Spindletop oil field, but it was an example of how duck hunting on the coast sparked development by prominent industrialists of the era.

"Those duck clubs were designed for pleasure and for business, big business. They were the country clubs of today, and they followed the railroads," Sawyer says. "As soon as businessmen learned in San Antonio in 1896 that the rails would connect to Rockport, even before the rails were laid, they started building on the coast. From Ingleside south, every single major land development was centered on fishing and shooting, and that's how they marketed them."

Proprietors of these exclusive hunting resorts carved out luxurious accommodations in an otherwise hostile environment to ensure the comfort of their guests. Private gamekeepers, whose job was to keep local hunters off prime shooting areas, were also called fence riders or game wardens and were often confused in the early 1900s with the real lawmen by the same name.

The elite sportsmen of the day rode in fancy private Pullman cars accessorized with dog kennels, gun racks, dining room and kitchen, as well as staff to cater to their needs. The trains were even used as a part of the hunt.

On some lines, the conductor would stop along the route to allow hunters to shoot prairie-chickens, quail and deer. On the Gulf and Interstate Railway between Galveston and Beaumont, hunters could get off and sneak up on mallards while the other passengers cheered

and jeered. In South Texas, ducks along the tracks of the Rio Grande Railway bridges between Port Isabel and Brownsville were shot from windows of the slow-moving train; the conductor would then stop to permit the hunters to retrieve their game.

The railroad played a huge role in getting hunters to the marsh. It wasn't uncommon for hunters to carry camping gear, and the train conductors would stop anywhere along the line to allow them to get off and go hunt for a few days. When ready to go home, the hunters would follow the rail tracks and flag down a train for the ride back.

Trains weren't the only means hunters used to get close to the birds. Some enterprising waterfowlers inland on the prairies used trained livestock as moving "blinds" to creep within shooting range. Steers and oxen were taught to move in slow circles as if grazing, all the while getting closer to unsuspecting feeding waterfowl.

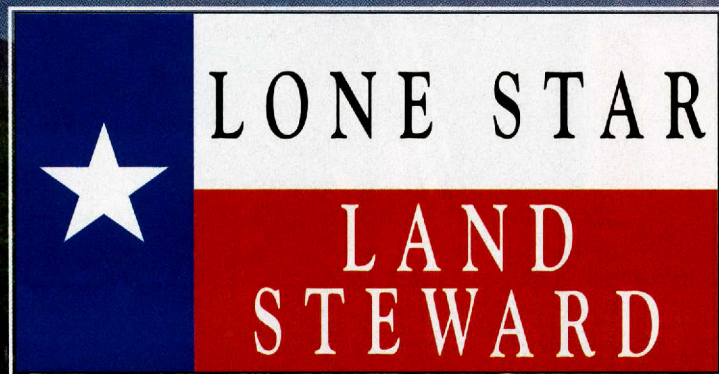
The introduction of the gas-operated engine became a game-changer for moving waterfowlers to and from the marsh. Automobiles and outboard motors enabled hunters to reach the ducks from all sides. Rather than taking weeks, waterfowlers could take day hunts.

"Waterfowlers were among the first to embrace the gasoline engine and what it could do to help get them to the birds," Sawyer says.

Looking at vintage photos of marsh buggies and early airboats in Sawyer's book is reminiscent of the 1960s movie classic, *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines*.

Sawyer's book is available through Texas A&M University Press (www.tamupress.com). ★

Thanks to our 2013 sponsors



To find out more about becoming a sponsor of the Lone Star Land Steward Awards, or to learn how to nominate a deserving landowner for recognition, please visit www.tpwd.texas.gov/lsls or contact Linda Campbell at (512) 389-4395 or linda.campbell@tpwd.texas.gov

Nominations must be submitted by November 30.



Proud Sponsor

Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Karen and Tim Hixon

Bronze Sponsors

Katharine Armstrong
Cammack & Strong, P.C.
Capital Farm Credit
Dorothy Drummer & Associates
Frost
Gardner Appraisal Group, Inc.
Llano Springs Ranch, Ltd.
Lower Colorado River Authority
Nature Blinds
Nueces River Authority
Oncar
San Antonio River Authority
Texas A&M Forest Service
Texas Agricultural Land Trust
Texas and Southwestern Cattle
Raisers Association
Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
Texas Wildlife Association
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service

**HOT
OFF THE
PRESS!**

ATTENTION BIRDERS!



We've updated the 3 coastal birding maps – more sites, new info, and GPS coordinates.



Find 980 places to view wildlife on self-guided driving tours throughout Texas:

- Parks
- Nature centers
- Zoos
- Lakes
- Private ranches
- Scenic drives

**\$5 each OR get the
WHOLE SET of 9 maps for \$25**

ORDER ONLINE OR
PRINT MAP LOOPS FOR FREE!

www.tpwd.texas.gov/wildlifetrails



Life's better outside.®

GOODS AND SERVICES FOR THE OUTDOOR ENTHUSIAST

OUTDOOR

M A R K E T P L A C E

CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION & MECHANICAL SPECIFICATIONS: (512) 799-1045

HUNTING



FEEDERS

MAGNUM
HUNTING PRODUCTS
- MORE FOR YOUR BUCK



BLINDS
4X4 - 4X6



6V
Controllers



Timers




12V
Controllers

www.magnumhunting.com

Or Call
281-261-0803

FREE CATALOG
at our web site

GRANITE OAKS RANCH
MASON, TX



TROPHY DEER HUNTS

Check out our website:
Graniteoaksranch.com
325-258-4447



Yearling



Immature



Immature



Mature

Field Guide for Buck Deer

12" X 15" Laminated poster details physical characteristics for Yearling, Immature, Mature and Post Mature Buck Deer

\$6.95 ea
idea for deer blinds!

(830)257-4538
Wildlife Enterprises, Kerrville, TX

www.wildlifeenterprises.com

Deer Aging Plaque

Handcrafted plaque displays dental wear patterns to determine age



great gift!

(830)257-4538
Wildlife Enterprises
Kerrville TX

www.wildlifeenterprises.com

FISHING

Rockport RedRunner

Captain Chad Verburg



- Full Day / Half Day
- Baffin trips
- Kayak Rentals
- Kayaks Shuttle Drop off / pick up
- Nature Boat Trips for Photography and Private Whooping Crane Tours

Call (361) 463-6545
rockportredrunner@yahoo.com
www.rockportredrunner.com

Specializing in shallow water flats fishing for redfish, trout & flounder.



FOR SALE

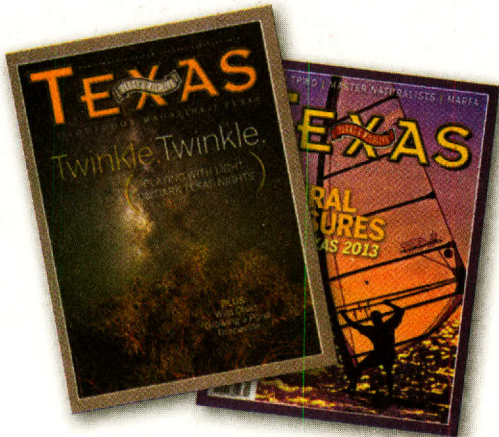
Country Retreat
267 Acres Near Athens
Hunt-Fish-Entertain-Relax
pineywoodsretreat.com

FOR ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

Contact Jim Stone / 512-799-1045
JIM.STONE@TPWD.TEXAS.GOV

TEXAS

The OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS



Yes! Send me *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine at 70%* off the cover price!

Great Deal → 10 Issues for \$12

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Please e-mail me new features and offers from *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine.

Payment enclosed Bill me later

TEXAS

THE OFFICIAL OUTDOOR MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

TEXAS

THE OUTDOOR MAGAZINE of TEXAS

Celebrate Nature!

TPWD makes life better outside for 50 years.

**Save
70%***
off the cover
price

Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.
This offer good for new U.S. orders only.
Ten issues produced annually.
*Based on regular newsstand price of \$3.95.

6311SW

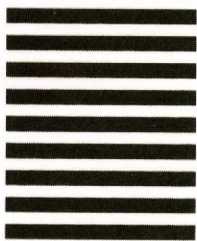


Printed on recycled paper

Visit us at
tpwmagazine.com



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES



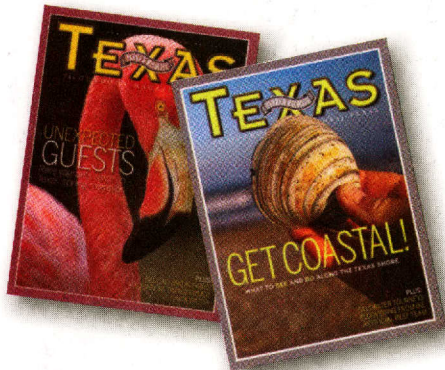
BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 633 PALM COAST, FL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE
PO BOX 421105
PALM COAST FL 32142-6458



ORDER NOW!
SAVE 70%
OFF THE COVER PRICE



TREKR® Jungle Travel Washcloth.

Rinses clean and stinky free.

2 pack \$8

www.lunatecgear.com



CRAWFORD & COMPANY



Hand Crafted, Personalized Boot Jacks and Coaster Sets.

P.O. Box 126, Uvalde, TX 78802
 Visa/Mastercard Call to order a Free Brochure
 Toll Free (888) 301-1967
 www.crawjacks.com

The Fastest, Easiest Way EVER to

**HALT
INVASIVE TREES**



The Patented
DR® TREE-CHOPPER™
 is like a pipe cutter for trees!

Attach the Tree-Chopper™ to your ATV and drive into trees up to 4" thick. Circular discs slice through the trunk, while a rear trailing blade shears the stump flush to the ground.

- **CUT UP TO 300 TREES PER HOUR**
- **ELIMINATE RED CEDAR, MESQUITE** and other invasive trees.
- **CUT TREES UP TO 4" IN DIAMETER** flush to the ground.

Call for a **FREE DVD and Catalog!**

TOLL-FREE
888-200-1626
 DRTreeChopper.com



**DR® LEAF and
LAWN VACUUM**

**FREE
SHIPPING**
 For a Limited Time

**Leaves Nothing in
its Path Except the
Competition.**

Put an end to fall cleanup hassle!

UNSTOPPABLE POWER Collect & shred acres of leaves, pine cones, pine needles, grass clippings.

HUGE CAPACITY Exclusive shredding action reduces debris, for more vacuuming and less unloading.

BUILT TO LAST Beefy steel frame, large hoses, hard shell collector, commercial engine options.

LIMITED-TIME OFFER
**1*YEAR
TRIAL**

Call for a **FREE Catalog & DVD!**

TOLL-FREE
888-200-1626
 DRleafvac.com



81217X © 2013

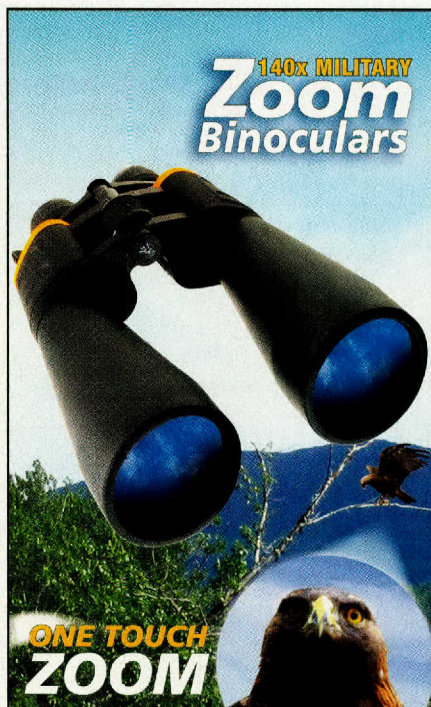
**OUTDOOR RUSTIC
COOLERS AND STUFF**



Unique outdoor and indoor coolers available
 Hand made out of real "barn wood"
 Hand-crafted in Texas
 Includes Official Igloo Brand Ice Chest
 Customize your cooler with adornments

OUTDOOR RUSTIC COOLERS.COM
 800-833-5998

81218X © 2013



**140x MILITARY
Zoom
Binoculars**

**ONE TOUCH
ZOOM**

See the color of an eagle's eye...

From a mile away! – Used by federal agencies and armed forces throughout the world, these Military Zoom Binoculars by Spion bring life 20 to 140 times closer. Ideal for bird watching, boating, surveillance—even star gazing! They are the only binoculars with the power and precision to bring the world right to you with just a touch of your finger. Feel like you're in the middle of the action at sporting events. See the distant world with such sharpness and clarity that you'll forget you're miles away.

MEASURES:
 12" x 9" x 4"

FEATURES:
 70mm Precision Lens System
 One-Touch 20x to 140x optical zoom



SPECIAL LIMITED TIME OFFER!

Be one of the first 500 to order and **Save \$50.00** off your **SPION Military Zoom Binoculars!**

Military Zoom Binoculars
 TC243.....~~\$199.95~~
Now \$149.95

Binocular Tripod
 TC243TP.....\$29.95

Coupon Code: **MX8LDN6**

SPION
 www.spionusa.com/MX8LDN6
 or call (800) 429-0039

FOR ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

CALL JIM STONE 512-799-1045 / JIM.STONE@TPWD.TEXAS.GOV

TEXAS

PARKS & WILDLIFE

November Advertisers

- Brenham/Washington County, pg. 19**
www.VisitBrenhamTexas.com
- Camper Clinic II, pg. 13**
www.camperclinic2.com
- Collin Street Bakery pg. 25**
www.collinstreet.com
- Kirk Root Designs, pg. 14 and 18**
www.kirkrootdesigns.com
- Lake Whitney, pg. 19**
www.getawaycapital.com
- Patagonia/Whole Earth Provision, pg. 15**
www.WholeEarthProvision.com
- Port Aransas, pg. 17**
www.visitportaransas.org
- Texas Forest Service, pg. 11**
www.dontmovefirewood.org
- Texas Renaissance Festival, pg. 16**
www.texrenfest.com

STRIPER



STRANGLER



Litter poses a threat to the health and safety of wildlife, natural areas, people, and communities.

Want to improve the waterways in your community? The Lake and River Cleanup Program provides Texans with FREE materials needed for cleanup events.

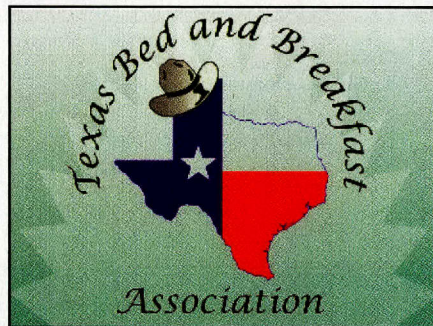


WHO KEEPS TEXAS BEAUTIFUL YOU DO.



KEEP TEXAS BEAUTIFUL
www.KTB.org 1-800-CLEAN-IX

Thanks to The Dow Chemical Company for its media sponsorship. The freshwater fish illustration was provided by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.



TX BED & BREAKFAST ASSOCIATION (TBBA)

COMFORT

★ **Meyer B&B.** On Cypress Creek, Hill Country, mid-1800s stage stop, Texas landmark. Pool, hot tub, fireplaces, golf.
www.meyerbedandbreakfast.com (888) 995-6100

FREDERICKSBURG

★ **Palo Alto Creek Farm.** Landmark historic German-Texas farmstead on the creek. Ancient oaks, abundant wildlife, Hill Country tranquility. Beautifully renovated log cabin, barn, farmhouse, all with private spa therapy rooms.
www.paloaltocreekfarm.com (800) 997-0089

★ **Settler's Crossing Bed and Breakfast.** Private historic log cabins and cottages spread over 35 park-like acres, just minutes from town.
www.settlerscrossing.com (800) 874-1020

GRUENE

★ **The Lamb's Rest Inn.** Located on the Guadalupe River. Featuring garden with fountain, pool, and hot tub, private balconies and fireplaces. Delightful breakfasts often served al fresco.
www.lambstrestinn.com (888) 609-3932

NEW BRAUNFELS

★ **Historic Kuebler-Waldrup Haus & Danville Schoolhouse.** 43-acre deer haven near Gruene, rivers. Getaways, reunions, weddings, corporate retreats. 10 luxurious rooms, Jacuzzis. Delicious breakfasts.
www.kueblerwaldrup.com (800) 299-8372

ROCKPORT

HOOPES' HOUSE
ROCKPORT, TEXAS
(800) 924-1008
www.hoopeshouse.com



NATIONALLY HISTORIC VICTORIAN HOME. EIGHT ROOMS EACH WITH PRIVATE BATH. FULL BREAKFAST INCLUDED. CALL FOR BROCHURE.

REAL ESTATE

EDNA TO EDEN.

LANDTX
BEST RANCHES. BEST FOLKS.

➤ RANCH BROKERAGE, CONSULTING AND EVALUATION

➤ CUSTOM HIGH-END RANCH MAPS

➤ AUCTION/PRIVATE TREATY SALES

www.landtx.com - dec@landtx.com
210.422.4676 - 830.997.8616
FREDERICKSBURG - MASON

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR HOLIDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, BIRTHDAYS, COMPANY GIFTS ETC...
TBBA
Gift Certificates
ORDER ONLINE ON A SECURE SERVER
WWW.TEXASBB.ORG

SUBSCRIBE TO TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE MAGAZINE TODAY
at www.tpwmagazine.com

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

1. Publication Title: Texas Parks and Wildlife
2. Publication Number: 0040-4586
3. Filing Date: 9/23/13
4. Issue Frequency: Monthly with combined issues in Jan/Feb and Aug/Sept
5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 10
6. Annual Subscription Price: \$18.00
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer): 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer): 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank):
Publisher (Name and complete mailing address): Randy Brudnicki; 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744
Editor (Name and complete mailing address): Louie Bond; 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744
Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address): Russell Roe; 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744

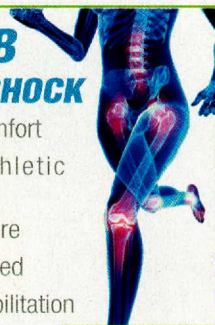
10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a proprietor, give the name and address.)

Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	4200 Smith School Road Austin, TX 78744

11. Publication Title: Texas Parks & Wildlife
12. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: Aug/Sept 2013

13. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	157,496	154,966
b. Total Number of Copies (Net press run) (1)	126,890	125,975
c. Paid and Unpaid Distribution Outside the Mails (2)	0	0
d. Paid Distribution Outside the Mails (3)	1,359	1,162
e. Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS or a Private Carrier (4)	0	0
f. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of c, d, and e)	128,249	127,137
g. Free or Nominal Rate Publications Outside the Mails (5)	25,374	25,406
h. Free or Nominal Rate Publications Outside the Mails (6)	0	0
i. Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed or Carried Through the USPS (7)	0	0
j. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (8)	1,812	800
k. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of f, g, h, i, and j)	27,186	26,206
l. Total Distribution (Sum of b, k, and l)	154,076	152,181
m. Copies not Distributed (Sum of a minus l) (9)	2,020	1,623
n. Total (Sum of l and m)	157,496	154,804
o. Payment For Circulation (10)	83	83

14. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: *Randy Brudnicki, Publisher*



ABSORB HARMFUL SHOCK

- Relieve discomfort
- Increase athletic performance
- Improve posture
- Feel rejuvenated
- Ideal for rehabilitation



The All New NEXTA

TB9001MBU
Men's Blue

Comfort-Fit
Removable Insole

Smart Memory
Master Shock Absorber
Adjusts to Your Weight

Twin Stabilizers

X-ray view simulated

IMAGINE LIFE PAIN FREE

ABSORB THE HARMFUL SHOCK THAT MAY CAUSE PAIN IN YOUR FEET, KNEES, BACK OR JOINTS

Experience relief from standing on hard surfaces with a shoe that makes every step pillow-soft. As you age, the cartilage protecting your joints becomes dehydrated, thinner and less resilient. Movements you've done all your life—even those as simple as walking or going up and down stairs—can tear or bruise this vulnerable tissue leaving you suffering with sore joints.

If you dream of a healthier more active you, free from the stress and discomfort caused by leg pain, knee pain, or joint pain, then you're ready for Gravity Defyer. It is the wellness footwear that will not only help today, but protect your body for a better tomorrow.

Dr. Arnold Ross, DPM

"I recommend Gravity Defyer shoes to my patients and friends... I wear them myself!"



Associate Clinical Professor: Western University College of Podiatric Medicine, Private Practice: West Los Angeles Board Certified, ABOPPM

Walk more, be more active and stay on your feet longer with the ultimate in comfort and protection!

Now, for a limited time only, try Gravity Defyer shoes **Free for 30 Days**.* If you're not completely satisfied, return them and pay nothing—but we know you'll love them. Call or visit our website today. This offer will not last!

NEXTA \$129.95



MEN Sizes 7 - 15
A. TB9001MBS

B. TB9001MWBB



WOMEN Sizes 5 - 11
C. TB9001FBS

D. TB9001FWP

SPECIAL LIMITED TIME OFFER!

Try them Free for 30 Days*

Don't miss this chance to change your life forever!

www.gravitydefyer.com/MX8LDM6

or call (800) 429-0039

Coupon Code: **MX8LDM6**



FREE RETURNS • FREE EXCHANGES

MEN

MARSEILLE II
Size 7.5-15 \$145
TB841L

WOMEN

NANET
Size 6-11 \$160
TB7055FL

JENDA
Size 5.5-11 \$139.95
TB747FL



VS2 VersoShock™ Sole
Exclusive Shock Absorbing System



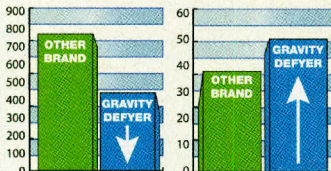
ABSORBS SHOCK ON HEEL STRIKE

PROPELS YOU FORWARD

Our all-new VS2 VersoShock™ trampoline sole will help guard your joints against harmful shock, reducing peak forces so your body can adjust more naturally. Feel rejuvenated as the hidden shock absorbers propel you forward: restoring energy!



scan to learn more



40% LESS Harmful Impact
19% MORE Energy Return

SHOCK ABSORPTION STUDY HPW Biomechanics, 2012
*Shock absorption: Measurement of maximum pressure (KPI).
Energy return: Measurement of energy returned (Joules).

*Deferred billing for 30 days from date shipped and is an optional selection during checkout; not available at retail locations. Offer excludes outbound S/H. Credit card authorization required.

Over 300 Styles for Men and Women Available Online

PARTING SHOT

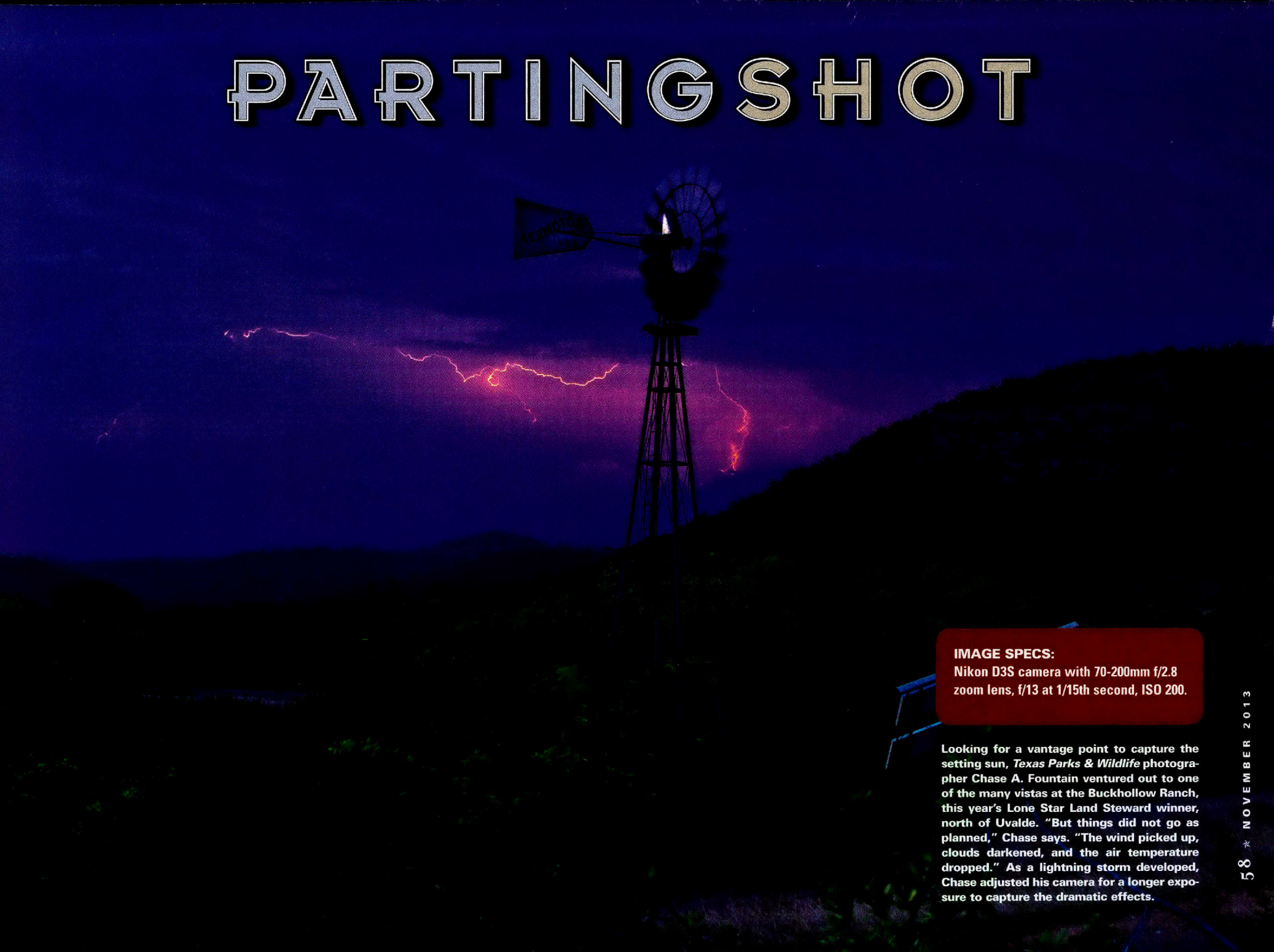


IMAGE SPECS:

Nikon D3S camera with 70-200mm f/2.8 zoom lens, f/13 at 1/15th second, ISO 200.

Looking for a vantage point to capture the setting sun, *Texas Parks & Wildlife* photographer Chase A. Fountain ventured out to one of the many vistas at the Buckhollow Ranch, this year's Lone Star Land Steward winner, north of Uvalde. "But things did not go as planned," Chase says. "The wind picked up, clouds darkened, and the air temperature dropped." As a lightning storm developed, Chase adjusted his camera for a longer exposure to capture the dramatic effects.

GEICO KNOWS RVs



GEICO® *for your RV*

GEICO is the right choice for you. You'll find competitive rates, plus all the coverages you'd expect from a great RV insurance company. You'll work with people that know and love RVs as much as you do, so you'll know you're being taken care of by an enthusiast who understands your needs.

geico.com

[1-877-434-2678](tel:1-877-434-2678)

local office

