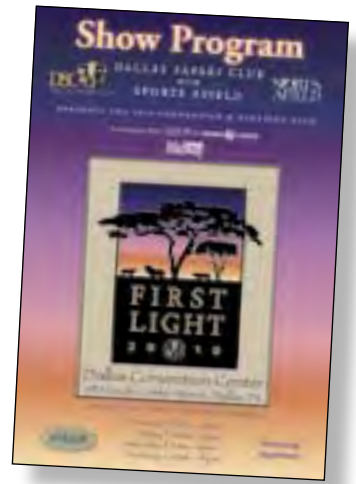


LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

December 25, 2009

Texas' Premier Outdoor Newspaper

Volume 6, Issue 9



INSIDE: Dallas Safari Club program '10

Inside



FISHING Big blues biting

Cold weather means catfish are on the move and biting in Texas lakes.

Page 8



HUNTING Game camera hunt

A giant buck repeatedly made appearances for Travis Ayers, like a big hunting tease.

Page 6

Waterfowl world

Plenty of ducks and geese have been pushed into Texas by recent winter weather.

Page 8

CONTENTS

Classifieds	Page 24
Crossword	Page 25
Fishing Report	Page 19
For the Table	Page 25
Game Warden Blotter	Page 10
Heroes	Page 17
Hunting season dates	Page 26
Outdoor Datebook	Page 20
Outfitters	Page 16
Products	Page 13
Sun, Moon and Tide data	Page 25

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Hunt awaits injured Fort Hood soldier

Outdoors takes a backseat to shooting victim's desire to serve

By Thomas Phillips
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Patrick Zeigler would love to hunt and fish more. The only problem is his dedication to serve his country keeps getting in the way.

That and four bullets he took in the shooting at Fort Hood.

Zeigler grew up the son of a Navy man. His father's career kept them from spending

much time in the outdoors, but they fished where his father, Pat, was stationed, in places such as Florida and Hawaii.

Now Zeigler, 28, is a military man himself, enlisted and working toward Officer Candidate School. That desire to serve took him further still from hunting and fishing on Nov. 5 at Fort Hood.

"I was actually six days away from going (to

See FORT HOOD, Page 16



Staff Sgt. Patrick Zeigler
Photo by Heights Studio.

Lucky buck



ACHING DESIRE: Do you ever wonder what might be standing in front of your blind when you are not there? With days remaining in deer season in northern Texas and a few weeks left in South Texas, hunters hope to keep finding big bucks. North Texas' deer season ends Jan. 3, and South Texas' ends Jan. 17. Photo by David J. Sams, LSON.

INSIDE ■ Caught on camera: A Hood County hunter finally harvested the deer on his game camera. Page 6

Deep waters giving up big tuna

Boats reporting catches of large yellowfin

By Diana Kunde
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Rick Laros walked off the *Pelican* at 7 a.m. Dec. 15 in Port Aransas with his limit of three yellowfin tuna, some blackfin tuna and "a couple of wahoo."

The Port Aransas man goes deep-sea fishing for the huge aggressive yellowfin three or four times a year, and hit good weather out by the oil rigs this winter.

"I couldn't have asked for better weather," Laros said. "We did outstanding."

The *Pelican*, from Captain Kelly's Deep Sea Headquarters, held 10 anglers this trip and brought in 25 yellowfin.

The tuna are out there, said anglers and guides. Obstacles this time of year include po-



FRESH FISH: Large yellowfin tuna are being caught off the coast. Photo by Lone Star Outdoor News.

tentially capricious winter weather, busy holidays and tight budgets.

"It's a good time of year to go," said Brian Nesbit, who runs a mobile auto repair business

See TUNA, Page 14

Hunters holding back on bobwhites

Some passing on harvest to help numbers

By Ralph Winingham
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

After a morning of cruising along senderos cut through the brushy South Texas ranchland near Falfurrias, hunting guide Foard Houston offered a grim assessment of this season's bobwhite quail prospects.

"We only saw a few birds, and some of them were only about three-quarters grown," said Houston. "I believe that we need to leave every bird this year so that we will have a good season next year."

"Most people that I have talked to are just not hunting quail this year at all."

See QUAIL, Page 12



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CONSERVATION

State to study big blues

Goal is to find what it takes to make a big cat

At a time when many anglers have put away their fishing gear in favor of picking up a deer rifle, a few avid anglers know the cold weather can provide a great opportunity to catch big blue catfish.

Although it is not necessary to endure 31-degree temperatures to catch big blue catfish, it might help.

Those were the conditions when Texas Parks and Wildlife Inland Fisheries staff arrived at Richland-Chambers Reservoir in mid-December as part of a special study on the fish.

The trip was the first of a series of winter research trips to help biologists better understand what it takes to produce big blue catfish at Richland-Chambers and two other Texas reservoirs. The research is designed to evaluate an experimental 30- to 45-inch slot length regulation geared toward enhancing the trophy catfish potential of lakes Waco, Lewisville and Richland-Chambers.

The regulation went into effect in September for the three lakes. It allows anglers a daily bag limit of 25 fish. Harvested fish may be any size below 30 inches, but only one fish over 45 inches is allowed as part of the daily bag.

The research is being directed by fisheries biologist John Tibbs of TPW's Inland Fisheries office in Waco, and it is being conducted by staff from fisheries offices in Tyler, Fort Worth and Waco.

During the study period, biologists are conducting simulated angler jugline sets to evaluate catch rates and size distributions of blue catfish. Length,



BLUE BIOLOGY: State wildlife biologists will study the effects of special regulations for blue catfish at three Texas lakes: Lewisville, Waco and Richland-Chambers. Photo by LSON.

weight and growth data are being collected from the fish to determine how long it takes blue catfish to grow to 30 inches and beyond in these reservoirs. Preliminary results indicate that it may take 10 years or more for a blue catfish to reach 30 inches.

Muscle tissue samples are being collected to evaluate bioaccumulation of toxins as the fish age.

Angler support for the regulation is also being evaluated as part of the study. Angler interest in fishing for large blue catfish has increased in recent years.

The three reservoirs were selected for the experimental regulation because of their ability to support a large population of blue catfish and their prior production of fish in excess of 45 inches.

Research will continue through 2016, and results will be used to evaluate whether the regulation is achieving the goal of increasing the number of large blue catfish in the reservoirs. If the lakes begin to produce larger fish, variations of the special regulation may be considered for other Texas reservoirs.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report

Outdoor News in Brief

State's inland fisheries director retiring from TPW at end of '09

Texas Parks and Wildlife's Inland Fisheries director is stepping down at the end of the year.

Phil Durocher is largely credited with taking largemouth bass off the dinner table and putting them back in Texas waters. During his 35-year career with TPW, Durocher has been a key player in promoting catch and release fishing for the top target species in the state.

"The biggest change, and it doesn't seem that significant now but it was then, was when we made a change with bass from a consumptive resource to a recreational resource," Durocher said. "It was the only way we could ensure bass fishing for the future."

As director of TPW's Inland Fisheries Division during the last 18 years, Durocher has also led a cultural change in fisheries management in Texas.

"People forget, we used to have nets in our rivers," he recalled. "We got permission to bring grass carp into the state to help landowners address aquatic vegetation problems."

Durocher began his career with the department in 1974 as a research systems analyst in the Data Processing Division. He transferred to the Inland Fisheries Division as a research analyst in 1977, where he helped develop the standardized Resource Monitoring Program still being used today.

From 1984 to 1991, Durocher worked as the director of fisheries management for Inland Fisheries, and during that time many of the length and bag limits still used today were implemented.

Durocher has also been a mainstay in two major initiatives: the creation of the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens and the passage of the Freshwater Fisheries Stamp legislation. The money from that stamp is being used to update the freshwater hatchery system, including the new John D. Parker East Texas State Fish Hatchery.

"The little part I played in building the national reputation of Texas' program, that's what I'm proud of," he said. "The battles we fought were hard but the people coming after us are going to have tougher battles, particularly with water allocation issues. The population is growing, and we don't have any more water. To maintain the fishery is going to be difficult, but we have dedicated professionals and some passionate supporters, so I feel good about leaving with a solid foundation to face the road ahead."

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report



Durocher

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NATIONAL

Missouri has new state-record brown

For Scott Sandusky, the most exciting fish in the world is the Missouri state-record brown trout he landed Nov. 20 at Lake Taneycomo.

Sandusky, 49, of Arnold, Mo., caught the 28-pound, 12-ounce fish on artificial bait and 4-pound-test line on a spinning rod and reel. The fish beat the previous record by more than a pound. It measured 37 inches long.

In September 1997, a Lake Taneycomo angler found a monster brown trout dead near the lake's 18-mile marker. The fish measured 41.75 inches long. Some estimated its live weight at 45 pounds.

"There is no telling how many world-class brown trout are swimming around in Lake Taneycomo," said Mike Kruse, fisheries administrative manager for the Missouri Conservation Department in Jefferson City. "The lake's natural food base is phenomenal, and it has an abundance of deep-water habitat that can hide big fish."

— Missouri Conservation Department report



SHOW-ME TROUT: Scott Sandusky caught this 28-pound, 12-ounce brown trout in November at Lake Taneycomo, setting a new Missouri state record for the species. Photo by the Missouri Department of Conservation.

club," Free said. "I look forward to trying to qualify for the World's against the men."

Free started calling ducks and competing at age 6. She has many titles and recognitions in duck calling, including being the 2005 Junior Women's World Duck Calling Champion.

In addition to competing in duck calling contests, Free also enjoys duck hunting with her dad, cheer-leading, competition dance, softball, water skiing and being active in her church youth group.

— Mossy Oak report

Bonefish's stock rises in Florida

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission voted earlier this month to elevate public awareness of the importance of Florida bonefish by declaring it a saltwater game fish.

"We took this action today to em-

phasize how important the bonefish fishery is to Florida anglers, visitors and South Florida's recreational fishing industry," said FWC Chairman Rodney Barreto.

It is illegal to commercially harvest and sell bonefish in Florida, and sport anglers are allowed to keep only one bonefish 18 inches in fork length per day.

To further protect bonefish populations in Florida, the commission also directed its staff to develop a draft rule for consideration in February that would add all species of bonefish found in Florida waters to FWC rules, extend FWC bonefish regulations into federal waters and require that bonefish be landed in whole condition.

"Bonefish are one of the premier sport fisheries in Florida and are known as 'gray ghosts of the flats' because they are stealthy, fast-swimming fighters that are challenging to catch," Barreto said. "That's why we recognize that conserving Florida's

bonefish resources will ensure that anglers worldwide can continue to enjoy fishing for this special species."

— Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission report

Court refuses to hear gun case

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday handed the firearms industry a victory by refusing to hear an appeal that centers on a 2005 law that protects gun makers from being liable for misuse of their products.

The decision lets stand lower court rulings that uphold the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act.

Monday's refusal is the third time this year the Supreme Court has denied a challenge to the PLCAA. In March, the center was also involved in the appeals of *Lawson v. Adames v. Beretta U.S.A. Corp.* and *city of New York v. Beretta U.S.A. Corp.*, both of which the court refused to hear.

The latest lawsuit, *Adames vs. Beretta U.S.A. Corp.* was filed by the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence on behalf of a family seeking to hold Beretta responsible for the shooting death of their son, who took his father's handgun without permission.

The case was originally dismissed by a Chicago trial court, reinstated in part by the Illinois Court of Appeals, and then found to be barred under the PLCAA by the Illinois Supreme Court.

"And so ends a long legal battle — from the trial court in Chicago, through the Illinois appellate courts and all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court — which served only to confirm what has been known since May 5, 2001, namely that this tragic shooting death was caused not by any defect in a Cook County Corrections Officer's Beretta pistol, but rather by its reckless misuse on that fateful day by his teenage son," said Beretta attorney Craig Livingston.

— National Shooting



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HUNTING

Birds blitzing through Texas

Second split of waterfowl season going well for many

By Ralph Winingham
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Freezing conditions and heavy snowfall in the Midwest earlier this month should serve as a starting flag to send flights of ducks and geese migrating south to Texas as the second part of waterfowl season kicks into high gear.

Taking advantage of this late season migration, waterfowl hunters across Texas are experiencing some excellent split-season scattergun action.

"The hunting has been just great," said Charlie Thompson, who was out opening weekend with his son and friends knocking down a variety of ducks and geese around farm tanks and feed lots in Karnes County.

"The only way it would have been better is if we had someone who could shoot," he said, adding that the birds "were decoying like crazy" to their two spreads of decoys at different tanks.

During one of their first hunts, Kyle Kenter, a Guadalupe River trout

fishing guide, dropped a banded bird and also shot his first bufflehead duck.

"Kyle is just eat up with duck hunting now," Thompson said. "There are just all kinds of birds, and they are all in good shape."

"We are seeing lots of cinnamon teal, quite a few pintails and widgeons, and lots of white geese and speckled bellies — the geese are expected to just keep coming down," he added.

See **WATERFOWL**, Page 14



MAKE THE CALL: David Schuessler, right, calls ducks as Texas Ducks Unlimited Conservation Manager Todd Merendino watches near Seadrift. Photo by David J. Sams, LSON.

Through the lens, then the scope



Hunter watches deer through game camera, finally harvests it

By Craig Nyhus
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

When Travis Ayers of Dallas went to his 1,000-acre, low-fence lease in Hood County on Nov. 3, he thought his eyes were playing tricks on him. The images of the buck on his trail camera were like none he had ever seen.

From that day on, to say he was preoccupied is an understatement.

"I freaked out," said Ayers, a project manager for a concrete company. "I immediately called my dad."

The trouble was, his schedule was keeping him from hunting.

"I wanted to go back the next day," he said. "It took over my thoughts — I wanted to call in sick; the guys at work were saying they would have called in sick for a month."

A married man, Ayers' wife heard about the deer, too.

"We've dated since high school, and she's put up with me for eight years," he said. "I told her if I kill this

See **CAMERA BUCK**, Page 22

DIGITAL IMAGES: Travis Ayers became utterly distracted from life when a big buck started appearing on his game camera. After capturing images of it several times, he finally took it about a month after rifle season began.

Paddling for pintails: Kayaks popular for waterfowl hunters

Light, mobile craft call for added precautions

By Kendal Larson
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Duck hunters have for years used all manner of craft in the pursuit of their quarry: rowboats, skiffs, punts, jonboats, canoes, pirogues and airboats — all uniquely suited to help hunters reach their blinds or to slide silently up on ducks in a river. Technology has added a newcomer to the list of hunter transportation in the form of rotomolded sit-on-top kayaks.

The small plastic boats have become popular with the fishing crowd, and they are seeing increased use by duck hunters as well. It shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone, given their size, stability, ease of use and maintainability.

Hunters should keep a few things in mind when using a kayak to duck hunt. Most revolve around safety, but several other factors should be considered. A bit of camouflage net-

ting combined with native vegetation works to conceal a craft, and a dry bag will keep a cell phone and emergency blanket dry. Waterproof cases can keep a shotgun and ammo dry. A common practice is to lash a bag of decoys to the kayak, and then the shotgun on to the bag. That way in the unlikely event the kayak should capsize, the gun will safely float with the decoy bag.

It's important also to note that boating laws require paddlecraft (and motorboats) to have a 360-degree light on and visible when paddling during darkness.

Public land comes at a premium in Texas, but public coastal land is easily accessible via kayak. Capt. Jason Brou of Brew-Skies Shallow Water Guide Service in Rockport reports seeing numerous duck hunters in kayaks out on the flats when he's hunting.

"I've seen a lot of them," Brou said. "Most

See **KAYAKING**, Page 24

DRIFTING IN: Kayaks allow waterfowl hunters to slip in quietly to a hunting blind. Many also have the capacity to carry decoys, firearms and a retriever. Photo by Scott Sommerlatte, for Lone Star Outdoor News.



Outdoor News in Brief

Waterfowl die-off under investigation near Dalhart

State and federal officials are investigating the deaths of about 2,000 geese and ducks discovered in mid-December near Dalhart in the northwest Panhandle. Preliminary results of lab evaluations indicate naturally occurring avian cholera is a factor.

Avian cholera poses no threat to human health, and although the die-off could affect local waterfowl populations, wildlife officials said isolated events such as this are not uncommon for the area.

State biologists and game wardens observed about 1,000 dead geese Dec. 14 on Lake Rita Blanca, a 500-acre impoundment on the outskirts of Dalhart. An additional 1,000 dead geese and ducks were found on a nearby wetland.

Texas Parks and Wildlife officials suspect the die-off began during the first week of December, when temperatures in the area dropped to

near 0 degrees for lows and stayed near or below freezing during the day for about a week. Flocks of about 30,000 geese were on Lake Rita Blanca when temperatures plummeted, causing the lakes to freeze.

Biologists theorize the near-0 temperatures triggered stress in the geese, which often gives rise to disease outbreaks. In this case, early signs suggest avian cholera as a likely bacterial agent involved.

Avian cholera is highly contagious among most birds and can spread rapidly. Death may be so rapid that birds fall out of the sky or die while eating with no previous signs of disease.

The Panhandle has long been known for small and occasionally large disease outbreaks of avian cholera in waterfowl when severe cold begins to stress the birds. TPW waterfowl biologist Bill Johnson said he has seen these problems on an annual basis when the right conditions come into play, "but we are fortunate that severe cold usually does not last too long, and the problems are usually relatively small."

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report



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FISHING

Cool days, cold cats, hot bite

Anglers catching big catfish as winter season kicks off

By Thomas Phillips
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

For Donald Piper's recent outing on Lake Conroe, what was supposed to be a trip to fill the freezer turned into an extensive exercise in catch and release.

They had plenty to keep so they started letting every fish heavier than 10 pounds go.

"We caught so many box fish, we had more than enough fish for our fish fry and more than enough fish to take home," said Piper, of Conroe.

Piper was with a large group of 30 to 35 anglers out for a weekend of juglining. They caught more than 400 fish, including some giants.

The anglers arrived at Lake Conroe on Friday, Dec. 4, and were met with harsh weather: snow and wind. They put out their jugs that night after the weather calmed down.

When they checked the jugs Saturday morning, they had a 73-pound cat. On the Saturday-evening check, they boated a 60-pounder.

"When we get together, we always have more than enough fish," Piper said. "One thing about jugging, you can sure make a fish haul out of it."

The anglers baited their lines with shad and cut bream and set them in 12 to 40 feet of water. They looked for road beds, creek beds and other underwater structure.

They caught the 73-pounder on a submerged tram.

Although the trip began with inclement

See CATFISH, Page 18



CAT DAYS: Ron Pierce, left, and guide Clancy Terrill hoist a big catfish from a recent outing.



HELP FROM ABOVE: Rainfall totals along parts of the Texas coast are far above normal, which could mean good things for anglers in 2010. Photo by LSON.

Rains helping on coast

What drought? Precipitation hits double digits in some areas

By Diana Kunde
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Fall rains pummeling the Texas coast have made for soggy but good fishing, with a promise of better days to come, say anglers and guides.

"We haven't been doing creel surveys, but there's general agreement the fishing has picked up," said Christopher Mace, marine biologist for Texas Parks and Wildlife along the mid-coast. "What we've been seeing has been black drum and also red drum in the last two weeks as far as the fishing in Aransas."

South Texas was under drought conditions for more than a year, which pushed up the salinity levels in the estuary system of bays up and down the coast.

"The fish are used to that type of thing, but you are going to see changes in the fish you get," Mace said.

Historically, salinity in Aransas Bay has been about 15 parts per thousand, Mace said. Under the recent drought, it reached 35 to 37 ppt. Ever since rains like the 12 inches that poured down during mid-November, salini-

ty dropped down to "the 20s" in Aransas, he said.

"There's no doubt recent rains have helped," said Colby "Pops" Sorrells, author of "Flyfishers Guide to the Texas Coast," a manual for users of light conventional tackle and fly gear.

The freshwater inflow is extremely important to juvenile shrimp and crabs, the steak and lobster for game fish, Sorrells said.

"A lot of folks don't recognize that," he said. "That's a safe haven for them — that brackish water."

Although fishing has still been good in 2009, "basically all year long you didn't see the bait activity you'd seen in recent years."

"That's a real underappreciated part of the whole system," Sorrells said.

Judging from postings on 2CoolFishing.com, results have been good for those who braved fall's cold wind and rain.

"Fished Port O'Connor, got nine keeper reds and two flounder," said a Nov. 19 post-ing.

"Two limits by 9 AM," posted another, wade-fishing angler off Matagorda Bay.

Capt. Kris Kelly of Castaway Lodge in

Seadrift reported "blistering hot action" for redfish and black drum on the flats over Thanksgiving.

And "fishcatcherII" posted a photo of his 3-year-old son with his first catch — an 18-inch speckled trout — pulled in on a small rig in late November.

Capt. Robert Brooks, guiding out of Rockport, said fishing has been good for "a little of everything — reds, drum, sheephead."

"The rain did nothing but help us," Brooks said.

He's been using live shrimp and artificial lures such as plastic worms and topwater baits.

Fly-fishing guide Capt. Billy Trimble of Aransas Pass said "the freshwater end of the bay system is really going to be a big asset to us."

Reached by phone on a day when another cold front, with rain, was pushing through, Trimble said the bay would muddy up short-term.

"After this weather settles down, we'll have beautiful fishing for a week or two," Trimble said. "We're starting to see some trout."

Secret to trimming a boat takes practice

Experienced operators will know their boats' sweet spot by feel

By Dan Armitage
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Trimming a boat while under way is a non-issue for many anglers who simply don't have the power tilt option, let alone a jack plate or trim tabs, on their craft. It's safe to say that many boaters who do have the trim option don't exercise it, out of ignorance of the feature or fear of doing it incorrectly.

But for those so equipped and in the know, achieving the correct trim while running their rig is simple and smart.

The term "trim" refers to the boat's relationship to the water's surface, the an-

gle it assumes as it passes through and over the water. The term applies to both lateral (side to side) and longitudinal (bow to stern) angles. Although the former can be an issue if the boat is carrying a disproportionate amount of weight on one side or the other, when under way at running speed, boaters wanting the best performance and ride from their rig are most concerned with achieving the proper trim from bow to stern.

To find a rig's optimal trim or angle to the water once on plane, most anglers never move past the concept of trim-



FIND THE SWEET SPOT: Multiple conditions affect a boat's proper trim adjustments, and boaters should experiment with the trim features until they find the level where the boat moves the smoothest and most efficiently. Photo by Lone Star Outdoor News.

See TRIM, Page 18

Stingray tonight? It might already be on your plate

Underwater flyers can make a meal

By Thomas Phillips
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

It flies like a bird, stings like a bee and tastes like a scallop from the sea.

Perhaps the Texas coast's most underappreciated food fish is the lowly stingray.

"It's excellent eating," said David McKee, a professor at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

The wings of the cartilaginous fish contain circular muscles that resemble scallops in their flavor and texture, McKee said.

The "delicious" meat was common table fare during the early 1900s, McKee said. The fad apparently died out in Texas, but along the Eastern seaboard, stingrays have retained some popularity.

The fish can be found in markets on the East Coast, and they are popular in Asia, said McKee, who mentioned the edibility of stingrays in his book "Fishes of the Texas Laguna Madre."

Rumor has it that some restaurants sometimes serve stingray in place of scallops, unbeknownst to the consumer.

Jeff Rockow at Rex's Seafood Market in Dallas said he might have encountered stingray this way, under the guise of the meat being a small bay scallop.

Rockow was lacking for hard data on them and wouldn't begin to speculate on how much the meat sells for at market. He said he thinks he remembers the meat being stringy, and it would probably do best cooked in a moist heat.

He has seen it cooked in soup on



ALTERNATIVE SEAFOOD: Anglers often catch stingrays unintentionally, but many say the sea creatures make fine seafood. Photos by Scott Sommerlatte, for LSON.

When keeping a stingray to eat, McKee suggested cutting the tail off above the barb. The barb can pack a debilitating wallop. McKee once stepped on one that sent a barb through the sole of his Converse sneaker and 2 inches into his foot.

He had a severe allergic reaction that left him blacking out and coming to during a four-hour ride to medical care.

"I had such a reaction to that that had I been in deeper water I would have drowned," McKee said.

Many anglers wading on the coast try to avoid stingrays. They either fear stepping on one and enduring the same painful fate as McKee (although scientists have since learned that the effect of stingray venom can be reduced by applying heat). Or they unintentionally catch one while targeting other fish.

Many anglers shuffle their feet while wading so they do not step down on a barb. Reinforced boots are also available for wading in stingray waters.

But with the barb removed, the fish are harmless. And McKee said they are worth a try.

"Eat 'em, enjoy 'em," he said.

"Iron Chef" on the Food Network, but said, "I haven't heard of anybody having a stingray steak."

"Honestly, in 4 1/2 years, you're the first person to ask me," Rockow said.

Gauging the stingray market proves difficult, even with the power of the Internet. SeafoodSource.com,

a Web site Rockow recommended for finding more information, had no information readily available on stingrays.

The animals are physiologically similar to sharks. Although sharks have muscled out a place on the plates of American gourmet consumers, McKee said they have not

always been on the menu.

"It wasn't that long ago that sharks (became) known to be edible," McKee said.

McKee prefers frying stingray meat, but recipes on the Internet describe ways to barbecue it, turn it into soup and prepare it in a variety of other ways.

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GAME WARDEN BLOTTER

HUNTER STUMPED BY ILLEGAL BUCK

A caller reported a hunter who hid a buck deer near a feeder because it was illegal to Lampasas County Game Wardens Jim Lindeman and Jeff Hill. The shooter admitted after a brief interview he had killed a buck that did not have the required 13-inch inside spread. He said he was going to drag the deer off deeper into the brush because he did not know what else to do. Citations issued and resource seized.

WARM DEER HEAD MEANS POACHER DIDN'T GO FAR

Eastland County Game Warden Zach Havens located the head of a freshly killed deer. Havens ran his finger in the deer's mouth and noticed the head was still warm. A knock on a nearby residence yielded a name, phone number and information that a hog had been killed. After a short telephone conversation, the hog turned into a deer, and three individuals were cited for hunting in closed season. Civil restitution on a 111 B&C deer and maximum fines are pending.

LAW SAYS KEEP THE MEAT — ALL OF IT

Kimble County Game Warden Lee Morrison was checking camps when he came into one where he found a spike head. When Morrison asked the hunters where the rest of the deer was, the hunters said the backstrap was in the house and the rest of the deer was in the gut pile. The hunters told Morrison they thought they only had to keep what they wanted to eat and the rest just had to be disposed of and not left in the field. A waste of game charge was filed.

QUAIL BETWEEN HUNTER LEADS TO INJURIES

A quail hunter was shot by a fellow hunter when a bird flew between them in Hunt County. Game Warden Dale

Like mother, like daughter

Tom Green County Game Warden Jason Huebner filed charges on a hunter for trespassing after she shot a buck and followed it

onto adjoining property without permission.

The adjoining landowner signed a complaint and said that the

week before, the woman's daughter had shot a deer across the fence and was cited for trespassing by projectile.

Waters investigated and found the victim injured in the arm and chest. He received treatment at the Commerce Hospital. The investigation continues.

STICKING OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB

While patrolling the Harleton area, Harrison County Game Warden Javier Fuentes saw a truck rolling slowly down a county road with a rifle sticking out the window. After making contact with the vehicle, Fuentes obtained a confession of hunting deer at night. The suspect also had a felony warrant out of Brazoria County and was transported to the Harrison County Jail.

GIRLFRIEND ALMOST STOPS POTENTIAL POACHERS

The Wood County Sheriff's Office called Game Wardens Derek Spitzer and Kurt Kelley concerning a hit-and-run accident. The wardens arrived at the scene to find out that three people had entered property without permission of the landowner to kill a deer. The landowner's girlfriend partially blocked the gate with her vehicle and confronted the trespassers. They said they were looking for the landowner to ask permission to hunt. The girlfriend had already called the landowner and told the group he was on his way. The driver of the trespassing vehicle was a convicted felon with a rifle who had been released from prison three months ago. He became nervous, rammed the girlfriend's vehicle and fled the scene. The landowner arrived in time to follow them to their residence. Both wardens, a state trooper

and a sheriff's deputy located the driver at the residence and took him into custody without incident. The other two people had left but were contacted by phone to return to the residence. Both arrived with the rifle and were placed into custody. All signed confessions. The driver was charged with assault with a deadly weapon (vehicle), and the landowner signed non-consent affidavits on all three men. Class A hunting without landowner's consent charges are pending. The landowner's girlfriend was not injured.

HARVEST LOG NOT FILLED OUT; WARDEN FINDS OUT

Hays County Game Warden James Michael was driving toward Kyle when he saw two men cleaning a deer across a fence. Michael slowed down and had to wait on traffic to turn around to go back. When he arrived at the location, the truck was gone. Michael went back up the road and unlocked the main gate to the property and headed to the ranch house. The truck and two males were located, and they admitted that they had seen the warden trying to turn around and were trying to fill out the harvest logs on their hunting licenses. They hadn't figured on the warden having the combination to the gate. Cases pending.

TRESPASSING BEGINS RAP SHEET IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

A caller reported two people possibly trespassing on a hunting lease in Montgomery County. Game Warden Dean Fitzpatrick went to several nearby houses and eventually found one suspect. Game Warden Brannon

Meinkowsky was called for assistance with locating the other person. After finding them, they were interviewed and it was confirmed that they were trespassing. They also had violations for multiple untagged deer, taking deer with rimfire ammunition, waste of game and not having hunter education certification. Cases pending.

WARDEN AIDS IN VEHICLE WRECK

Game Warden Shane Lewis was patrolling along the Canadian River just inside the Lake Meredith National Recreation area on a Saturday night when he overheard radio traffic about a vehicle rollover nearby. Lewis was the first officer to respond to the scene. He found that two people had been ejected from a pickup when the driver lost control and rolled the vehicle. Lewis made sure the victims were not moved, and monitored their status while directing rescuers to the scene.

WARDEN FINDS POT, WILDLIFE VIOLATIONS

Game Warden Matt Thompson slipped up on a camp and saw one subject run for the cabin. Thompson could smell a strong odor of marijuana, which is why the person ran. The camp proved to have multiple violations, including two untagged turkeys, four hunter education violations and three marijuana cases.

NEIGHBORS NOT HAPPY ABOUT POACHERS

Hays County Game Warden James Michael was patrolling near Henly when he heard several shots. Before

Michael could find the hunters, the neighboring landowner showed up to investigate as well. The landowner told Michael that there had been an issue with the hunters the previous weekend. Upon investigation, Michael found two men who had killed an eight-point buck with a firearm during the youth-only weekend. The landowner's wife had seen the hunters shoot toward their property across the fence. When confronted, the hunters denied shooting the deer across the fence. One of the hunters had also shot an 11-point buck the day before and processed it beyond quarters and given it to his uncle without a tag or proof of sex. Cases pending.

WACO CRAPPIE CATCH RETURNED TO LAKE

A caller reported a person keeping undersized crappie at the Lake Waco Dam to McLennan County Game Warden Kurt Slaughter. Slaughter surprised the person and found the undersized fish in two 5-gallon buckets. The person used the buckets to return the fish to the water. Slaughter wrote four citations for undersized crappie.

AFTER DECOY SHOT, CHASE BEGINS

U.S. Forest Service Officers Shawn Jones and Jimmy Freeman and Sabine County Game Wardens Henry Alvarado and Chad Gartman set up a decoy deer along the Sabine National Forest boundary and a farm-to-market road. Thirty minutes later, a vehicle stopped abruptly and shot the decoy. The U.S. Forest Service officers initiated contact, but the suspect vehicle fled into Newton County. The car chase ended at a residence as four people left the vehicle and ran away. All four suspects were located with the assistance of Game Wardens Randy Button and Justin Eddins and Sabine County Sheriff's Deputy Doug Howard. Statements were taken and numerous state and federal charges are pending.

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Quail

Continued from Page 1

The self-imposed ban on bobwhite hunting appears to be a familiar refrain being heard across the state, where a two-year drought broken by good rainfall in September and October has devastated the bobwhite population.

"If there are any quail out there, the folks just aren't hunting them," said Robert Perez, program leader of the Upland Game Bird division of the Texas Parks and Wildlife.

The dry conditions resulted in a lack of growth of late winter and early spring greenery, with limited production of insects such as grasshoppers that are a prime food source for growing chicks.

"Because of the drought, there was no hatch until late in the year, and then we had the cold and wet weather move in," Perez said. "That is particularly tough on young birds. They are very susceptible to exposure."

Brittany Huguley of Broken Wing Outfitters in Olton said the service is not letting its pheasant hunters shoot any quail this year.

"We are trying to let the populations come back," Huguley said. "We have birds but not many, and we want them to come back to the way it used to be."

But it was not easy for a recent group of hunters to resist when their dogs made some great points and flushes of bobwhites during a pheasant hunt.

The hunters said they understood the need to conserve and only grumbled about not being able to pull the trigger.

Good news in this year's tale about Texas quail involves scaled quail, also called blue quail, in West Texas and the Panhandle.

"The scaled quail numbers are above average, and there is a lot of opportunity for hunting on public land," Perez said. "It can be a little tough getting around out there, but hunters will find birds."



ON POINT: Hunters say blue quail numbers are strong this season, although their cousins the bobwhites are in a different situation. Some hunters are voluntarily not taking the birds, saying they do not want to harm their population numbers. Photo by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

At Black Gap Wildlife Management Area, one of the blue quail hot spots in Texas, wildlife biologist Dewey Stockbridge said hunter success was on track to make this season above average.

"We've had 456 quail harvested this year (as of the second week in December) with hunters averaging about six birds each," he said.

"Our big push of hunters came early, but we are expecting some good hunting throughout the sea-

son," Stockbridge said.

"We had two hatches, maybe three in some areas, so we have a good quail population."

Black Gap WMA covers about 115,000 acres in West Texas in Brewster County on the Rio Grande River adjacent to Big Bend National Park.

Earlier this year, surveys by biologists driving along established survey lines reported about three quail per mile, which is considered

a good number of birds.

"We had a good hatch this year, and the weather hasn't hurt them," Stockbridge said, adding that only a few days have been extremely cold, and the area has had no heavy snowfall.

"The most recent good year out here was the 2007-2008 season when we harvested 773 birds," he said. "We are expecting about the same harvest this year."

Perez said that despite the lack of

bobwhites across the state, the nearly 100,000 quail hunters who venture into the fields each year should be cautiously optimistic about next season.

"While there is nothing positive I can tell you about this year, I can say that the quail will be back," he said.

The statewide quail season continues through Feb. 28 with a daily bag limit of 15 and a possession limit of 45.

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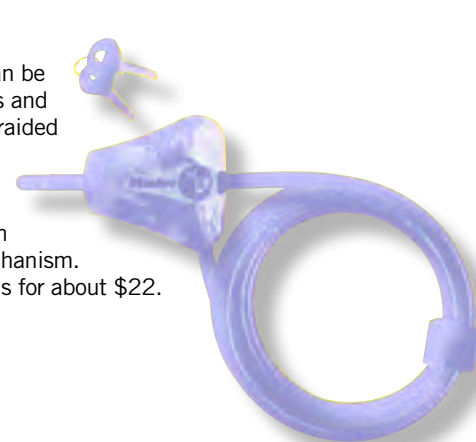


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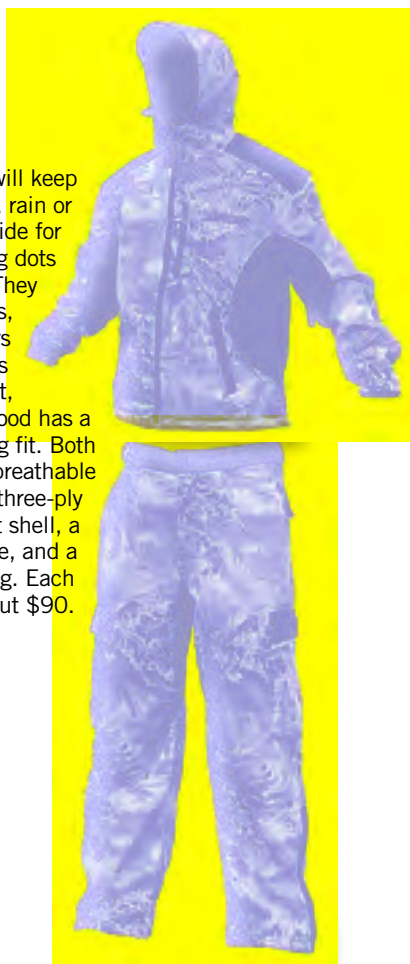
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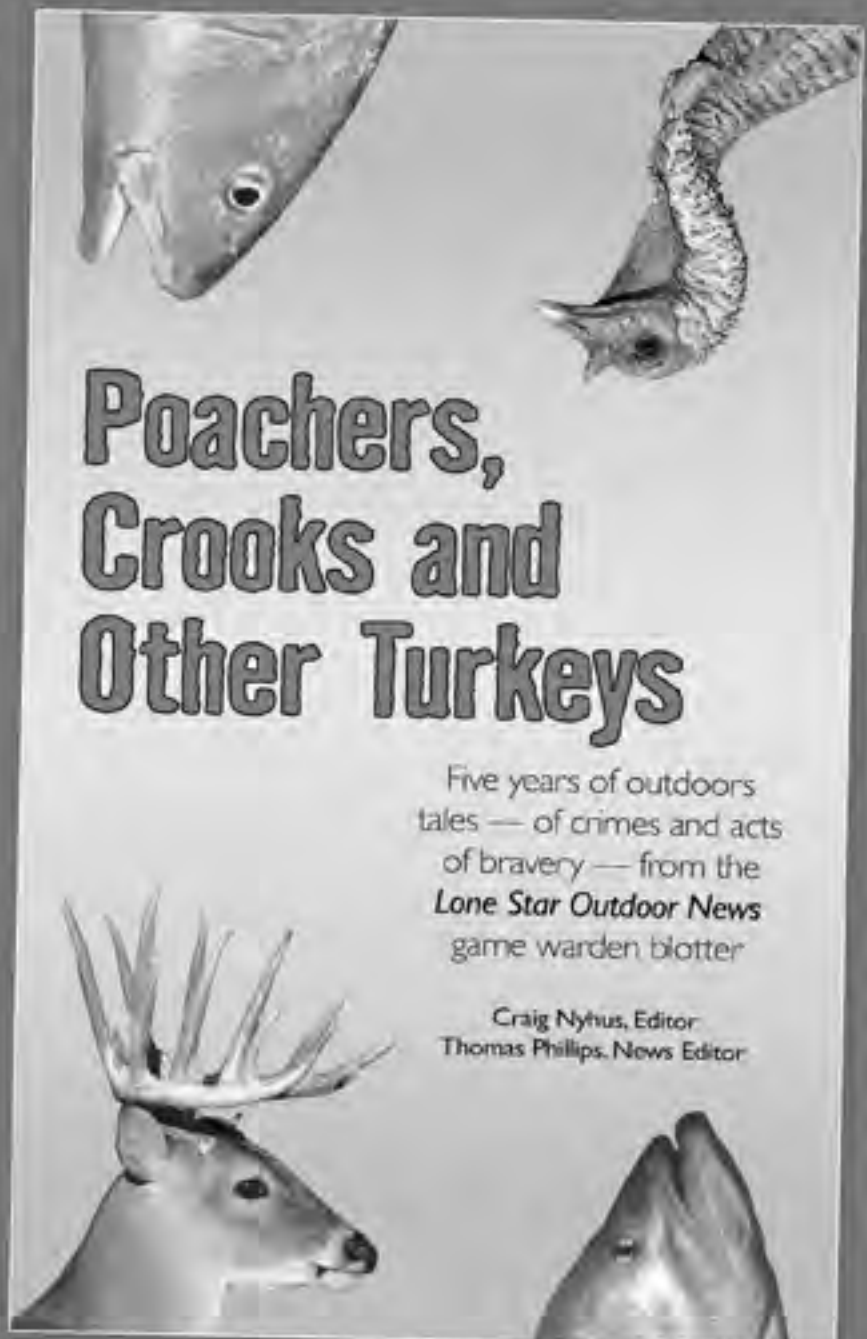
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Waterfowl

Continued from Page 6

Dave Morrison, program leader for the Waterfowl Division of Texas Parks and Wildlife, said the late-season cold weather in the Midwest stretching into Canada "makes us look like geniuses" because of the department's decision to split the duck season.

"The timing (of the storms) couldn't have been better," he said. "It will push a lot of birds down here, and we are expecting a very good split season."

The duck season in both the North and South Zones ran from Oct. 31 through Nov. 29 as the first part to the split season and kicked off on Dec. 12 as the start of the second season. Ducks will be fair game through Jan. 24, which is also the end date for light and Canada geese hunting in the East Zone.

Earlier this year, some Texas waterfowl hunters were finding heavy concentrations of ducks in areas that had received drought-breaking rainfalls in September and October, but geese were scarce across most of the state.

The Panhandle was the first area to reap the benefit of the birds pushed south by the frosty conditions in the north. TPW biologists reported excellent hunting success on Canada and snow geese, with mallards and gadwalls providing prime duck action.

Guide Clifton Tyler, who operates the oldest hunting club in the Eagle Lake area, said he would reserve judgment on whether the cold conditions up north would fill Texas skies with ducks and geese.

"The season so far has been below average but still good," said the 50-year veteran of guiding waterfowl hunts. "What we are seeing are more dark geese. About every hunt we are killing two specklebellies and one Canada goose. We never dreamed 15 years ago that we would ever be shooting dark geese down here."

Morrison said that although the drought-breaking rainfall this fall filled in a lot of waterfowl-attracting low areas and lakes, the moisture came too late to produce a good food crop for waterfowl.

"There are just not a lot of groceries out there in the coastal area because of the high salinity early this year," he said. "In



HAPPY HUNTER: Mike Jolley and his retriever Black Jack return from a hunt at Pintail Farms. Photo by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

East Texas there is so much water that it has scattered the birds."

However, the overall prospect for waterfowl hunters remains promising, Morri-

son said. "We suspect that the hunters will be out in force and will be seeing lots of birds," he said.

Tuna

Continued from Page 1

in Dallas and fishes for yellowfin off the Texas coast several times a year.

"The only thing you've got to fight is the Gulf of Mexico," he said. "She's a fickle woman."

The last time he was out, in mid-October, Nesbit limited and said his group was catching yellowfin between 50 and 75 pounds.

"We had to go quite a ways, about 180 miles south-east of Port Aransas, but we got into a lot of fish and came back with limits."

Nesbit said he mostly uses jigs on a specialized rod and reel. What does he love most about landing a yellowfin tuna?

"The explosions are about 100-fold compared to a fish like bass," he said.

Laros used a variety of baits and lures on his December trip.

"When trolling, I used Iland lures and ballyhoo, and when regular fishing I was using topwaters, live bait and chunk bait," he said.

Capt. Ronnie Hale, of the *Scat Cat* out of Fisherman's Wharf in Port Aransas, took his last December trip the first week in the month and plans to go out again Jan. 16.

"This is a great time for catching nice-sized yellowfin, but we have to battle the weather elements," he said.

Hale's last trip came in with about 27 yellowfin and 125 blackfin tuna for about 20 anglers, he said. Despite the good winter fishing, "because of the holidays and hunting season being on, that takes a lot of our fishermen."

"In winter the yellowfin are bigger, and maybe in the summer more plentiful," he said.

The floating oil rigs off the coast have been a bonanza for deep-sea anglers, Hale said. The cover they provide "brings in all kinds of sea life — from small fish to bigger bait and then all kinds of predator fish."

Angler Mike Hagee of San Antonio has been taking two to four tuna fishing trips a year since 2002.

"The months I like are October and November, generally," he said. "But I don't mind going anytime if I can see the weather opening coming up. The tuna are there."

Hagee said he always goes on a bigger boat, given that it's not uncommon to go out 150 miles to find big yellowfin.

He went out twice in October and limited out both trips.

"The yellowfin likes a good fight and doesn't give up until he's in the boat," Hagee said. "And I love to eat yellowfin tuna."

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Outdoor News in Brief

Nominations sought for Fishing Hall of Fame

Texas Parks and Wildlife is accepting nominations for the next class to be inducted into the Texas Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame.

Individuals or organizations that have made a lasting contribution to freshwater fishing in Texas may be nominated through Feb. 26.

The nominee must be a Texas resident or Texas organization. Individuals may be either living or deceased. One nominee will be chosen by an independent selection committee and formally inducted during the annual hall of fame banquet at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens.

Previous inductees include Floyd Mabry, Jackie Hewlett, R.D. Hull, Bob Kemp, Charlie Inman, Sugar Ferris, Earl Golding, the Sabine River Authority, Michael "Shorty" Powers, Ray Murski, Richard M. Hart, Charlie Pack and Paul Hinton.

Nomination forms are available on the TPW Web site and by calling (903) 670-2228.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report

World Fishing Network to be distributed by AT&T

World Fishing Network recently joined the AT&T U-verse TV high-definition channel lineup.

WFN HD will be available on channel number 1679 in 22 states, including Texas.

"Fishing is one of the most popular leisure activities in many of these areas, so we are delighted that AT&T recognizes WFN as the best option to satisfy this underserved community," said Mark Rubinstein, president of WFN.

— WFN report

Fort Hood

Continued from Page 1

OCS) before this happened," Zeigler said. "I was actually waiting in line to do paperwork to make sure I could go do that when I got shot."

Zeigler sustained four gunshot wounds in the attack. A lone gunman opened fire on a roomful of soldiers and civilian personnel at the Central Texas base, killing 13 and wounding dozens.

Zeigler, a staff sergeant, took one bullet to the right side of his head, two bullets in his left arm and one bullet in his left hip. He expects to recover 99 percent, but the road ahead will be long and difficult, he said.

A major surgery is planned for January to implant a plate in his head to replace the portion of his skull that was destroyed. Beyond that he has months of rehab.

He is almost walking unassisted with a walker, and he is working to regain the use of his injured arm.

Although he has spent two and a half years since 2005 fighting in Iraq, his experience as a cavalry scout in combat were unlike what happened at Fort Hood.

"I wish I could say otherwise, but, honestly, nobody had weapons, you know?" Zeigler said. "We were all unarmed. We were just sitting there doing paperwork, and my first instinct was that it was a training scenario, that they were using fake guns, and it wasn't real."

"Then I got hit, and next thing I know I'm on the ground bleeding pretty badly and saw a lot of people around me bleeding, hit."

After that, he faintly remembers trying to crawl to safety, and then he woke up in a hospital.

"There was no time or anything, no way to really react," he said. "Like they say, it was just

kind of like a massacre. The guy just popped up and started shooting rounds off."

Back in action

Zeigler has had a mixed bag of hunting and fishing experiences.

He likes to fish offshore, and coming from Florida, he likes catching tarpon, too. He shot a small six-point buck as a teenager, but said he has not "been on a good deer hunt in a long time."

Fort Hood is open for hunting, and although he has been based there about five years, he has not hunted on post. He is interested in turkey hunting there but has heard the deer are mostly small.

Being in Texas has spurred his interest for pursuing different species. He said he would like to hunt here for pheasant or a bobcat, or to try other new species and styles of hunting.

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation heard about Zeigler and learned he wanted to go elk hunting. So the national organization set him up with one.

"When I heard Patrick's story, I knew our members would jump at the chance to help this guy," RMEF President and CEO David Allen said in a press release. "As soon as he's able to go, we have a donated elk hunt waiting for him. I'm humbled at the sacrifices that Patrick and his family have made, and pleased that we can offer him something meaningful to help him through a difficult time."

Although his injuries might seem extensive, Zeigler said he should still be able to hunt and fish once he recovers.

"Oh, yeah, I'm going to be able to walk fine, and I'll be able to hold a gun and everything," he said. "It's just a matter of what kind of schedule I'll be on. If I'm still in the military, who knows what kind of time I'll have for that."

A fund has been set up to help cover ex-

penses relating to Zeigler's care. Money may be sent to SSG Zeigler, Patrick Trust Account, American National Bank of Texas, 5809 Wesley St., Greenville, TX 75402.

The shooting at Fort Hood and two tours in Iraq have not discouraged Zeigler from continuing his service. He still wants to go to Officer Candidate School, which would obligate him to another four or five years in the military. The shooting didn't change that.

"It's thrown off all my plans and stuff, so now I've got to readjust and reassess the situation," he said. "Like I said, I have at least one major surgery to get through and possibly more because I still have three rounds in my body."

Support system

Zeigler's father said his son is upbeat and has a good attitude despite the circumstances.

The elder Zeigler, who lives in Lone Oak, is focused on his son's rehab, not the shooting.

"This is not going to sound right," he said. "I'm not concerned about it right now. And the reason is because I've got a 28-year-old who's got his life in front of him."

The father said his son likes to deer hunt, and they have been trout fishing together in Arkansas.

"He just really likes the outdoors, and when the elk guys got a hold of us, he was really excited about it," he said, adding that he appreciates what the foundation has done for them. "David Allen and those guys have been great."

Zeigler had not been interested in hunting big game such as moose or elk before the offer was made, but the gesture means a lot to him.

"A lot of people like that are a little more conservative and really patriotic type of people," he said. "It's crazy that they just have all this outpouring of support and donations or whatever they can do."

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Hunters took big bull elk this fall while hunting with TnT Outfitters, a Texas-based service. The company also offers hunts in the Hill Country near Kerrville.

TnT reports great elk season

Colorado hunts packed with excitement

Taylor Horton and a hunting client could hear an elk bugling from their position high in the Colorado Rockies near Durango. Horton called back, hoping to attract the bull in.

"Every time I'd scrape a tree, these little satellite bells in front of us would go to fighting," Horton said.

Then he arrived. A big six-by-six bull charged through the trees toward them. He stopped 9 yards away and screamed in their face. He let out a lip-curling bugle, and then began to step away.

Horton's client shot the bull at 30 yards and put the biggest feather in the cap of TnT Outfitter's first full season of guiding hunts.

"We had a great season, a fun season," said Horton, who owns the service. "We led clients on some thrilling hunts in beautiful country in Colorado and Texas, and we look forward to many memorable hunts next season, too."

TnT Outfitters, based in Mountain Home, near Kerrville, is a full-service hunting service. Clients can pursue game at TnT's Hill Country ranch and at its private hunting land in southwestern Colorado.

In Colorado, the 2009 hunting season went well on several species. TnT hunters took several large elk.

Mule deer and bear hunts also brought in trophy animals.

Each black bear hunter harvested an animal, Horton said, and all were large for

black bears. The smallest was 6 feet long and weighed 300 pounds. The biggest stretched to 6 feet, 8 inches and weighed 420 pounds.

For mulies, the average antler score was 171, and hunters had plenty of bucks to choose from. Horton and his guides put hunters on a 200-acre alfalfa field, and they were seeing 15 to 20 bucks every afternoon.

One rifle hunter from Dallas passed up a five-by-six buck on his first morning, thinking he would hold out for a larger one. That afternoon, he and Horton returned to the alfalfa field, where they watched several bucks. Then, the biggest buck of the season came into view from over a levee.

"I told him, 'Don't look at the horns; just get on the body and shoot,'" Horton said. "We got over there, and the thing was just a giant."

The deer scored 188. Hunts are still under way at TnT's two Hill Country locations. Grand Oaks Ranch is about 25 miles west of Kerrville, and the second property is about 45 miles west of Kerrville.

A hunter in the Hill Country also harvested a big bull elk, with an antler score of 370.

TnT is booking hunts now for the Colorado elk, mule deer and bear season, and for Texas white-tailed deer season. For more information, call Horton at (979) 777-0328 or visit www.TnT-Outfitters.com.

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HEROES



ANDREW MARKS of Azle was fishing with Greg Wolf of Len's Sportfishing when he caught this 6-foot, 120-pound sturgeon on the Fraser River in British Columbia.



STEVE SLEDGE of Dallas shot this ram on the first morning of his first bow hunt.



STEPHANIE LOWRIE of China Spring recently harvested her first deer, a buck, in Bosque County.



JAMIE POPE of Garland shot this white-tailed deer in the Panhandle on opening morning. The deer scored about 174 and weighed more than 280 pounds. It was in full rut when Pope harvested it.



TANNER WINN, 5, of San Antonio recently shot his first buck. The 10-point weighed 200 pounds on the hoof.

Share an adventure
 Want to share hunting and fishing photos with other **Lone Star Outdoor News** readers? Send them to us with contact and caption information.
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GUS WHEELER shot his first turkey during a spring hunt in Atascosa County. The gobbler's beard measured 9 3/16 inches, and Wheeler shot it with a 12 gauge at 25 feet.

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Catfish

Continued from Page 8

conditions, the weather ultimately cooperated. The wind mostly died, and the sun came out, but the temperatures stayed low.

"They (blue catfish) like it cold," Piper said. "The colder it is, it seems like the bigger the fish we get."

Piper took three people on his boat who had little, if any, experience with juglines. But they, too, caught fish.

"It was fun," Piper said.

Larry Akers has been having fun too, fishing at Lake Ray Roberts and Lewisville Lake, but he has been catching quality more than quantity.

"I have been a few times lately and caught some nice fish, but haven't been really loading them up," said Akers, of Sanger.

Before North Texas' first freeze this fall, catfish were congregating in shallow water, down to 5 feet deep, Akers said.

"If you want to find the shallow fish, go to where the wind is blowing towards the bank or some flooded timber, bushes or some kind of structure," Akers said, adding that anglers should use fresh cut

shad, perch or buffalo fillets on their rod and reels.

And if the biting does not begin in 15 or 20 minutes, anglers should find a new spot, Akers said.

"There will be some places that will hold a lot of fish and some that may just have one or two," Akers said. "When you find that magic place, it can be nonstop action for a good while. Then you may have to move again."

At Lake Buchanan, guide Clancy Terrill has begun his cold-season ritual of targeting big blue catfish.

"I've been doing pretty good with large blue cats," Terrill said. "This has always been the time of the year they start in."

Terrill targets steep drop-offs and rock piles. He fishes at about 10 feet deep in the morning and moves to 35 feet later in the day.

He uses fresh cut bait for blue catfish, but switches to live bait for flatheads and yellows.

His cut baits are usually seriously big. If he catches a 16-inch gizzard shad in his cast net, he will cut it in half and put an 8-inch hunk of fish on his hook.

"And when I say 'big,' some people think it looks ridiculous," Terrill said.

Trim

Continued from Page 8

ming the engine down until it reaches plane, then trimming it up until hearing it cavitate, and then trimming it down little by little until the cavitation stops. To be honest, that's not a bad technique for finding a decent trim.

So many factors influence a boat's relationship to the water at any given time, a driver can't simply say a particular boat and motor package's trim angle at 3500 rpm is best at one position or another because it was true one day.

Water, wind and weather conditions vary, as does the weight of the boat, constantly. Yes, a boater can dial in a range of trim guidelines at various rpm for a rig that normally carries about the same load in particular water conditions, but getting just the right trim always takes some tweaking to find.

When trimming a boat, the operator is adjusting the angle of the outboard's propeller, and therefore its thrust, against the water at the stern. That angle affects how much and where the boat's hull contacts the water, and at what angle.

The term "up on the pad" is often heard associated with higher performance fishing boats; it refers to a flat area on the hull just forward of the transom, called "the pad," which, when the engine is properly trimmed, may be the only part of the hull actually in contact with the water at high speed.

When a boat is on plane and properly trimmed, the least amount of hull is in contact with the water, and the boat travels as efficiently as possible, at that particular speed, through the water.

Although weight distribution is a factor in the boat's fore-to-aft angle as well, it can often be compensated for, and the proper trim achieved while under way, by using the power tilt function on the boat's outboard or stern-drive engine. The trim on smaller outboards and those without the power tilt option can be set with an adjustment rod on the mounting bracket, which holds the lower unit at a particular angle with relation to the transom. Once set, however, that angle cannot be changed while the boat is under power.

Varying that angle to the transom is what the power-tilt function does as well, but with the ability to make precise angle adjustments while the boat is under way. And that's key, for the only way to find the proper trim angle is while the boat is moving and up on plane.

Most often, an engine's power trim adjustments are made with a rocker switch mounted on the throttle control arm in a position handy to the operator's thumb. On high-performance craft, the control may be mounted on the steering wheel to allow the operator to keep both hands on the wheel while tweaking the trim.

FISHING REPORT

HOT BITES

LARGEMOUTH BASS



CANYON LAKE: Very good on Rat-L-Traps and plastic stickbaits over flats and along break lines creeks and bays in 2-10 feet and on green pumpkin soft plastics on jigheads and Texas-rigged blue flake worms on shaky head jigs along bluffs inside secondary points.

HOUSTON COUNTY: Very good on artificial minnows on jigheads in 20 feet.

BELTON: Good on topwaters in coves.

COLEMAN: Good on tequila sunrise soft plastics and fair on spinnerbaits and crankbaits.

POSSUM KINGDOM: Good on watermelon soft plastics and swim baits worked at 10-20 feet depth on points in the southern coves.

WHITE, HYBRID, STRIPER



CEDAR CREEK: White bass are good on slabs.

GREENBELT: White bass are good on live bait.

MEREDITH: White bass are good on live bait.

CONROE: Striped bass are good on live minnows and green striper jigs.

CATFISH



FALCON: Channel and blue catfish are excellent on cut bait and doughbait.

FAYETTE: Channel and blue catfish are excellent on stinkbait and shrimp over baited holes in 14-18 feet.

BASTROP: Channel and blue catfish are very good on stinkbait, chicken livers and nightcrawlers.

CALAVERAS: Channel and blue catfish are very good on chicken livers, shrimp and cut shad.

GRANGER: Blue catfish are good on prepared baits in 5-15 feet.

O.H. IVIE: Channel catfish are good on live bait.

CRAPPIE



LIVINGSTON: Very good on minnows in creeks.

HUBBARD CREEK: Good on jigs and minnows.

ALAN HENRY: Water lightly stained; 50 degrees; 1.75' low. Black bass are fair on live baits, shad-colored crankbaits and black/blue jigs along tree lines. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair on live bait.

AMISTAD: Water clear; 58 degrees; 2.11' low. Black bass are good on soft plastics in 18-25 feet. Striped bass are good. White bass are good. Catfish are good on trotlines baited with live perch in 18-30 feet. Yellow catfish are good on trotlines baited with live perch.

ARROWHEAD: Water lightly stained; 53 degrees; 6.94' low. Black bass are fair on crankbaits or black/blue jigs 1-4 feet deep near rocky structures. Crappie are good. White bass are good. Blue catfish are fair on cheese bait while drift fishing or anchored in 8-10 feet depth.

BASTROP: Water clear. Black bass are good on chartreuse and chartreuse/white soft plastics, spinnerbaits and crankbaits. Crappie are fair on minnows.

BELTON: Water fairly clear; 61 degrees; 0.33' low. Hybrid striper are fair on live shad early and late. White bass are slow. Crappie are fair on minnows. Channel and blue catfish are good on nightcrawlers, doughbait and stinkbait.

BOB SANDLIN: Water stained; 47-52 degrees; 0.06' high. Black bass are slow to fair on jigs and Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are fair on jigs and minnows. White bass are fair to good on slabs. Catfish are fair to good on prepared bait and cut shad.

BRAUNIG: Water fairly clear; 62 degrees. Black bass are slow. Striped bass are fair on live shad. Redfish are fair on live perch and shad near the dam. Channel catfish are good on chicken livers, shrimp and cut shad. Blue catfish are good on cut bait.

BROWNWOOD: Water stained; 57 degrees; 7.65' low. Black bass are fair on black/blue jigs, crankbaits and 3/16 oz. shaky heads with redbug and watermelon red 4" worms along docks, around rocks and over brush piles in 8-15 feet. Hybrid striper are slow. White bass are fair. Crappie are good. Channel catfish are fair.

BUCHANAN: Water clear; 61 degrees; 24.52' low. Black bass are good on Rat-L-Traps, Texas-rigged weightless watermelon/blue flake soft plastics, pumpkin/chartreuse jigs and smoke/red flake grubs on stump flats in 2-8 feet. Striped bass are good. White bass are fair. Crappie are fair. Channel catfish are slow. Yellow and blue catfish are fair on trotlines baited with live goldfish.

CADDO: Water murky; 47-52 degrees; 1.67' high. Black bass are fair on Texas rigs and jigs. White bass are fair on slabs. Channel catfish are good on nightcrawlers and cut shad.

CALAVERAS: Water fairly clear; 62 degrees. Black bass are slow. Striped bass are fair on live shad. Redfish are fair on live perch, shad and spoons in 15-25 feet. Crappie are slow.

CANYON LAKE: Water clear; 60 degrees; 9.85' low. Striped bass are fair to good vertically jigging artificial minnows in the lower end of the lake and on swimbaits. Smallmouth bass are good. Crappie are fair. Channel catfish are slow. Yellow and blue catfish are fair on live bait.

CEDAR CREEK: Water stained; 49-52 degrees; 0.05' high. Black bass are slow to fair on jigs and Carolina rigs. Hybrid striper are fair on live bait and slabs. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs over brush piles. Catfish are fair to good on prepared bait and cut shad.

CHOKE CANYON: Water clear; 59 degrees; 9.51' low. Black bass are good on watermelon and pumpkinseed soft plastic worms in heavy grass and in 12-20 feet. White bass are slow. Crappie are slow. Drum are fair on live worms. Channel and blue catfish are good on punchbait in 2-7 feet. Yellow catfish are fair on live perch.

COLEMAN: Water clear; 62 degrees; 10.38' low. Hybrid striper are good on minnows and white/blue Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are good on minnows and chartreuse tube jigs. Channel and blue catfish are fair on stinkbait, nightcrawlers and frozen shrimp.

COLETO CREEK: Water stained; 63 degrees (77 degrees at discharge); 0.04' low. Black bass to 5 pounds are fair on soft plastics and topwaters in 8-14 feet. Striped bass are slow. White bass are slow. Crappie are slow. Channel and blue catfish to 7 pounds are fair on trotlines baited with liver, shrimp and dead minnows. Yellow catfish to 10 pounds are fair on trotlines baited with perch.

CONROE: Water fairly clear; 0.12' high. Black bass are good on watermelon red and watermelon gold soft plastics, spinnerbaits and Rat-L-Traps in 20-30 feet. Crappie are good on minnows. Catfish are fair on stinkbait, liver and shrimp.

COOPER: Water off-color; 47-52 degrees; 0.95' high. No report available due to cold weather conditions.

FALCON: Water clear; 63 degrees. Black bass are fair on football jigs, large soft plastic worms, 7" Carolina-rigged Senkos and slow-rolling spinnerbaits in 14-18 feet. Striped bass are slow. Crappie are slow.

degrees; 0.57' high. Crappie are slow. Bream are good on live crickets in 1 foot. Channel and blue catfish are slow.

HUBBARD CREEK: Water lightly stained; 54 degrees; 7.99' low. Black bass are fair on shad-colored spinnerbaits and black/blue jigs worked along grass lines and in timber. White bass are good on live bait. Catfish are fair on live bait.

JOE POOL: Water off-color; 48-53 degrees; 0.22' high. Black bass are fair to good on Texas rigs, crankbaits and jigs. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. White bass are fair to good on slabs and live minnows. Catfish are fair on prepared bait and cut shad.

LAVON: Water stained; 47-51 degrees; 0.76' high. Black bass are fair on Texas-rigged Baby Brush Hogs, jigs and medium-diving crankbaits. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair to good on nightcrawlers and prepared baits.

LBI: Water stained; 62 degrees; 0.11' low. Black bass are very good on 1/8 oz.

catfish are fair on shad and perch.

O.H. IVIE: Water lightly stained; 52 degrees; 21.42' low. Black bass are fair on shad-colored crankbaits, black/blue soft plastics and live bait worked along rocky points and Carolina-rigged green pumpkin soft plastics. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on live bait and white crankbaits. Smallmouth bass are fair on live bait.

OAK CREEK: Water lightly stained; 51 degrees; 7.74' low. Black bass are slow on live bait. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. Catfish are good on live bait.

POSSUM KINGDOM: Water stained; 55 degrees; 4.74' low. Crappie are fair on live bait and jigs. White bass are good on silver jigging spoons in Tree Island area on humps in 12-18 feet depth. Strippers are good on silver spoons and shad-colored crankbaits. Catfish are fair on live shad and cut liver in the north area along the river.

PROCTOR: Water fairly clear; 59 degrees; 7.04' low. Black bass are good on black/purple and chartreuse soft plastic worms and crankbaits. Striped bass are slow. White bass are good but small on minnows, small Rat-L-Traps and roadrunners. Crappie are good on minnows and chartreuse tube jigs in 15 feet. Channel and blue catfish are good on juglines baited with cut shad.

RAY HUBBARD: Water fairly clear; 47-50 degrees; 0.04' high. Black bass are fair to good on Rat-L-Traps, Carolina rigs, crankbaits and drop-shot rigs. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. White bass are fair on slabs. Hybrid striper are fair on slabs and live shad. Catfish are fair to good on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

RAY ROBERTS: Water lightly stained; 49-52 degrees; 0.57' high. Black bass are slow on 4F Bomber crankbaits and small Booyah jigs. No reports on crappie. White bass are good on C.C. jigging spoons worked slow on the bottom. Catfish are good on cut shad and prepared baits.

SAM RAYBURN: Water stained; 62 degrees; 1.98' low. Black bass are good on tequila sunrise soft plastic worms, spinnerbaits and crankbaits. White bass are fair on minnows and white striper jigs. Crappie are fair on minnows. Bream are fair on worms. Catfish are good on stinkbait, shrimp and minnows.

TAWAKONI: Water fairly clear; 47-51 degrees; 0.77' high. Black bass are fair on shad pattern crankbaits, Rat-L-Traps and Texas rigs. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs around bridge pilings. Catfish are good on live shad and nightcrawlers. White bass are fair on slabs. Striped bass and hybrid striper are fair on live shad and slabs.

TEXOMA: Water off-color; 48-51 degrees; 0.23' high. Black bass are fair to good on Texas and Carolina rigs, medium-to deep-diving shad pattern crankbaits and drop-shot rigs. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs around bridges. Striped bass are fair on slow-rolled Sassy Shad and live shad. Catfish are fair to good on cut shad and nightcrawlers.

TOLEDO BEND: Water stained; 60 degrees; 1.60' low. Black bass are fair on soft plastics, spinnerbaits and Rat-L-Traps. Striped bass are slow. White bass are fair on minnows. Crappie are fair on minnows over brush piles. Bream are fair on worms. Channel and blue catfish are good on liver, shrimp and stinkbait.

TRAVIS: Water stained; 60 degrees; 26.63' low. Black bass are good on crawfish crankbaits, watermelon worms and jigs in 15-38 feet. Striped bass are slow. White bass are fair on white jigging spoons and minnows in 28-45 feet. Crappie are fair on minnows and pink tube jigs in 20-40 feet. Channel and blue catfish are slow.

WHITNEY: Water stained; 3.56' low. Black bass are fair on watermelon, watermelon red and watermelon gold spinnerbaits, crankbaits and Rat-L-Traps. Striped bass are fair on minnows and white striper jigs. White bass are fair on minnows and jigging spoons. Crappie are good on shrimp, liver and stinkbait.

HOT SPOT



Trinity Bay

Trout are good for drifters working pods of shad and mullet on Bass Assassins, Trout Killers and Sand Eels. Redfish are good at the spillway on crabs and mullet.

FAYETTE: Water clear; 61 degrees. Black bass are fair but small on electric blue Carolina-rigged Finesse worms in 10-16 feet and on spinnerbaits along the outside edges of grass.

FORK: Water stained; 48-52 degrees; 0.16' high. Black bass are fair on spoons, jigs and Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair to good on prepared bait and cut shad.

FORT PHANTOM HILL: Water clear; 53 degrees; 5.11' low. Black bass are fair on live bait and slow-rolled white spinnerbaits. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on live bait and small crankbaits. Catfish are fair on live bait.

GRANBURY: Water clear; 0.54' low. Black bass are fair on watermelon red and pumpkinseed soft plastics. Striped bass are slow. White bass are slow. Crappie are fair on minnows and blue tube jigs. Catfish are good on shrimp, stinkbait and live minnows.

GRANGER: Water murky; 55 degrees; 0.34' high. Black bass are slow. White bass are slow. Crappie are slow.

GRAPEVINE: Water stained; 48-51 degrees; 0.75' high. Black bass are fair on Texas rigs, Rat-L-Traps and crankbaits. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs over brush piles. White bass are fair on slabs. Catfish are fair to good on prepared bait.

GREENBELT: Water stained; 40 degrees; 32.88' low. Black bass are slow on Carolina-rigged watermelon soft plastics and live bait worked along timber and rocks. Crappie are fair on jigs and minnows. Smallmouth bass are slow on live bait. Walleye are fair on live bait. Catfish are good on live bait.

HOUSTON COUNTY: Water clear; 54

buzzbaits, Bleeding Shad Rat-L-Traps and wacky rigged green pumpkin soft plastics in 2-6 feet. White bass are fair vertically jigging artificial minnows under birds. Crappie are good on crappie jigs and live minnows over brush piles in 12-15 feet. Channel catfish are fair on minnows under crappie docks.

LEWISVILLE: Water stained; 47-50 degrees; 0.55' high. Black bass are fair to good on shaky head rigs, jigs, drop-shot rigs, jigs and crankbaits. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs over brush piles. White bass are fair to good on slabs. Hybrid striper are fair on shiners and chartreuse (use Worm-Glo) nightcrawlers.

LIVINGSTON: Water fairly clear; 59 degrees; 0.23' high. Black bass are good on crankbaits, buzzbaits and spinnerbaits. Striped bass are slow. White bass are slow. Blue catfish are good on trotlines baited with shad.

MACKENZIE: Water lightly stained; 42 degrees; 79.32' low. Black bass are slow on live bait along timber and rocky outcrops. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. White bass and striped bass are fair on live bait and chrome jerkbaits. Smallmouth bass are slow on live bait. Walleye are fair on live bait. Catfish are good on live bait.

MEREDITH: Water stained; 41 degrees; 77.63' low. Black bass are slow on black/blue jigs and live bait worked along rocks and grass edges. Crappie are good on jigs and minnows. Smallmouth bass are fair on live bait. Walleye are good on live bait. Channel catfish are good on live bait.

NAVARRO MILLS: Water murky; 56 degrees; 0.03' high. Black bass are slow. White bass are slow. Crappie are slow. Channel catfish are fair on stinkbait. Blue

SALTWATER SCENE

NORTH SABINE: Trout and redfish are fair while drifting mud and shell. Waders have taken better trout on the Louisiana shoreline on slow-sinking plugs.



SOUTH SABINE: Redfish are fair on the edge of the channel on mullet. Sheepshead and black drum are good at the jetty on live shrimp.

BOLIVAR: Trout are fair to good on the south shoreline on slow-sinking plugs. Black drum and redfish are good at Rollover Pass.

TRINITY BAY: Trout are good for drifters working pods of shad and mullet on Bass Assassins, Trout Killers and Sand Eels. Redfish are good at the spillway on crabs and mullet.

EAST GALVESTON BAY: Trout are fair to good on the south shoreline on Corkies and MirrOlures. Whiting and sand trout are good on the edge of the Intracoastal on fresh shrimp.

WEST GALVESTON BAY: Waders have taken trout in the mud and shell on MirrOlures and Corkies. Sheepshead, redfish and black drum are good at the jetty on shrimp and crabs.

FREEPORT: Sand trout and sheepshead are good on live shrimp on the reefs. Redfish are fair to good at San Luis pass on cracked blue crabs.

EAST MATAGORDA BAY: Trout are fair for drifters on live shrimp over humps and scattered shell. Redfish are fair to good on the edge of the Intracoastal on crabs and mullet.



WEST MATAGORDA BAY: Redfish are fair to good on the south shoreline in the guts and bayous. Trout are fair on shell on soft plastics.

PORT O'CONNOR: Trout and redfish are fair on Corkies over soft mud in waist-deep water in San Antonio Bay. Trout and redfish are fair for drifters working the back lakes with live shrimp and topwaters. Redfish are good at the mouths of drains.

ROCKPORT: Trout are fair on the edge of the ICW on glow DOA Shrimp. Redfish are fair to good on the Estes Flats on mullet and shrimp.



PORT ARANSAS: Redfish are fair to good on the East Flats on Gulps and mullet. Sand trout are good on shrimp in the channel. Tuna are good offshore.

CORPUS CHRISTI: Redfish are good in the Humble Channel on crabs and table shrimp. Trout are best on the edge of the flats on live shrimp and DOA Shrimp.

BAFFIN BAY: Trout are fair to good in mud and grass on Corkies and Catch 2000s. Trout are fair to good in the guts along the King Ranch shoreline on Corkies. Redfish are good in the Land Cut on natural baits.

PORT MANSFIELD: Redfish are fair to good on DOA Shrimp and Gulps under a popping cork around grass holes. Trout are fair to good on mud along the edge of the ICW on Corkies and MirrOlures.

SOUTH PADRE: Trout and redfish are fair to good on the edge of the Intracoastal on DOA Shrimp and Gulps. Redfish, black drum and mangrove snapper are fair to good in the channel on shrimp.

PORT ISABEL: Snook are fair in the Brownsville Ship Channel on free-lined shrimp. Trout are fair on the edge of the flats on soft plastics under popping corks.



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www.houstonsafariclub.org



Jan. 8-10

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www.houstonboatshows.com

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Trout Days
Nueces River
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Jan. 8

National Wild Turkey Federation
Panhandle Leadership Convention and Banquet
Amarillo, Ambassador Hotel
(806) 353-7343
cheai4202@aol.com



Jan. 22-24

Coastal Bend Marine Dealers
Boat Show & Sale
Corpus Christi, American Bank Convention Center

Jan. 23-24

Mud Hole Rod Building Class
Marriott Houston Airport
(866) 790-7637

Jan. 23

Eagle Lake Ducks Unlimited
Fundraiser
Eagle Lake Community Center
(281) 414-4597



Jan. 27

Cottonwood Creek Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation
Fundraiser
Stonebrier Country Club, Frisco
(469) 525-6551

Jan. 14-17

Austin Boat Show
Austin Convention Center
(512) 494-1128
www.austinboatshow.com

Jan. 14

Dallas Woods and Waters Club
Monthly meeting and dinner with fishing guide Richie White
Sheraton North Dallas Hotel
(214) 570-8700
www.dwwcc.org



Feb. 4-6

Wild Sheep Foundation Sheep Show
Reno-Sparks Convention Center, Reno, Nev.
(307) 527-6261



Feb. 5

Nacogdoches National Wild Turkey Federation
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Camera buck

Continued from Page 6

one, I'm done getting up at 4 in the morning when it's raining."

Ayers returned the second weekend of the deer rifle season, but when he went to check the camera, his laptop was dead.

"I had to take the cards home and then come back," he said.

Then other plans kept him away.

"I had to go to the Baylor-Texas A&M football game on the 21st," he said. "Sure enough there were pictures of him on the afternoon of the 22nd.

"I didn't say anything to anyone, but I was kicking myself thinking I should have canceled my trip."

It wasn't just his inability to hunt that concerned him. The lease had seven other members.

"I only told my dad and my cousin, though," he said. "I guess I'm a bad lease-mate."

Ayers' next chance to hunt was the weekend of Dec. 5-6. The camera had four or five frames of the buck, but he didn't see the deer during his hunts.

But there was good news. The trail camera showed the deer was making an appearance during daylight hours.

"On Nov. 28, he came at 5:30 in the afternoon," Ayers said. "And on the 29th he came out around 8 a.m. I knew I could maybe have a shot at him."

Ayers was glad his cousin had planned to hunt that weekend but didn't.

The next hunt was planned the weekend of Dec. 11-12. But in the interim, Ayers had sent the images to some reliable friends to help him score

the deer.

"Everyone said he was between 190 and 215," he said. "And a biologist I know said he would definitely top 200."

That's when Ayers became nervous.

"I've never had buck fever from looking at photographs," he said. "But I had it. I would wake up each night thinking someone had got him."

The hunt from his pop-up blind on Dec. 12 was almost anti-climactic.

"I got to the blind at 6:30 — it was drizzly and rainy," he said. "The buck walked out at 7:10, and I saw his drop tine through my binoculars. It was him. He was facing me and quartering away like something was wrong. I shot him at 7:11."

The buck dropped in his tracks, and Ayers' emotions finally got the best of him.

"I started screaming like a little girl," he said.

The buck rough-scored 209 and is still leading the Los Cazadores Whitetail Deer Contest with three weeks to go.

But that's not the end of the story about the buck. It turned out Ayer's nervousness about the deer being taken by others wasn't unwarranted.

"I got a call from a guy at the neighboring lease," he said. "They had been hunting that buck for two years. They are great guys and were real nice about it, but one guy was sick — he had hunted for that buck for 31 days this season and only seen him once. I would be sick, too."

The thought of taking a 200-plus buck in Hood County is still sinking in.

"I had heard of some 160- to 170-class deer in the area, but I had never seen any," Ayers said. "This deer was crazy big."

As for Ayer's wife, she is just happy it's over.

"She kind of understands how big of a deal this is," he said. "But not really."

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CO-OP grants go to 18 Texas schools, nonprofits

Money helps groups promote outdoor activities

A recent round of grants from the state will help schools and child-focused nonprofits enjoy overnight camping, fishing and environmental education opportunities.

Eighteen Community Outdoor Outreach Program grants totaling \$627,678 will go to projects around Texas.

CO-OP grants help fund outdoor recreation activities and the purchase of equipment and supplies for youth outings. Each year, the state makes available \$1.25 million to tax-exempt organizations around the state to introduce children and families to the world of nature and the outdoors. Funds are appropriated by the Texas Legislature for this purpose using a dedicated portion of the state sales tax attributed to sporting goods.

Some recipients are listed below.
 — Texas Parks and Wildlife report

Texas Junior Anglers
 Thirteen community-based fishing events are planned for local municipalities allowing participants to learn about fishing laws and fishing. (\$40,975)

San Juan Diego Catholic High School
 Students at the Austin school will learn outdoor skills such as camping, fishing, kayaking and orienteering. Their service project will include creating a new walking path at Lockhart State Park. (\$41,700)

Dallas Bass Hookers
 Youth and senior citizen outings are planned as well as the Texas Buffalo Soldiers experience. Activities include hiking, archery and camping skills. (\$16,622)

YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas
 Students from three area schools will participate in Texas Outdoor Family camping, learn how to fish and participate in Project Wild activities. (\$44,094)

Dawson Independent School District
 Students will visit state parks, the Texas Freshwater Fisheries and participate in wildlife photography, outdoor cooking and fishing. (\$32,333)

City of Lancaster Parks & Rec
 Fifth graders from Lancaster ISD will participate in the Environmental Education Academy at Bear Creek Nature Park. Activities include a family fishing day, camping, Buffalo Soldiers and wildlife conservation. (\$13,955)

Kayaking

Continued from Page 6
 of them are pulling their kayaks up onto land, brushing them and then hunting out of them."

This year's duck season has been excellent, Brou said.
 "There are more birds than we've seen in a few years — most are red-heads," he said. "When the tide's lower, we're seeing good numbers of pintails."

Private land is also a great place to use a kayak for hunting. A 10-foot kayak is an ideal size to throw in the bed of a pickup, and it can be easily launched in a stock tank to set dekes or retrieve downed birds.

Duck hunters know that it's likely to be cold during duck season, and many are right at home in waders. Although some will quarrel, generally it's agreed that waders can be safely worn in a kayak as long as the paddler wears a personal flotation device and a tightly cinched wading belt. The belt keeps the waders from filling like a water balloon, and the properly fitted PFD will keep the wearer afloat.



Sun | Moon | Tides

Texas Coast Tides

Sabine Pass, jetty

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Dec 25	3:52 a.m.	0.2 L	11:31 a.m.	1.3 H	1:56 p.m.	1.1 L
Dec 26	4:14 a.m.	-0.4 L	12:49 p.m.	1.6 H	4:30 p.m.	1.4 L
Dec 27	4:46 a.m.	-0.7 L	1:39 p.m.	2.0 H		
Dec 28	5:25 a.m.	-1.3 L	2:22 p.m.	2.1 H		
Dec 29	6:08 a.m.	-1.6 L	3:06 p.m.	2.3 H		
Dec 30	6:56 a.m.	-1.8 L	3:51 p.m.	2.3 H	7:31 p.m.	2.0 L
Dec 31	7:45 a.m.	-2.0 L	4:35 p.m.	2.3 H	7:53 p.m.	2.0 L
Jan 1	12:00 a.m.	2.1 H	8:35 a.m.	-1.8 L	5:05 p.m.	2.1 H
Jan 2	1:08 a.m.	2.1 H	9:25 a.m.	-1.6 L	5:39 p.m.	2.0 H
Jan 3	2:23 a.m.	2.0 H	10:16 a.m.	-1.3 L	6:10 p.m.	1.8 H
Jan 4	3:53 a.m.	1.6 H	11:07 a.m.	-0.7 L	6:37 p.m.	1.6 H
Jan 5	12:14 a.m.	0.7 L	5:44 a.m.	1.3 H	12:00 p.m.	0.0 L
Jan 6	1:34 a.m.	0.2 L	7:54 a.m.	1.3 H	1:03 p.m.	0.5 L
Jan 7	2:43 a.m.	-0.4 L	10:13 a.m.	1.3 H	2:44 p.m.	1.1 L
Jan 8	3:42 a.m.	-0.7 L	12:17 p.m.	1.6 H	5:16 p.m.	1.3 L

Galveston Bay entrance, south jetty

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Dec 25	4:18 a.m.	0.1 L	12:18 p.m.	1.0 H	2:22 p.m.	0.9 L
Dec 26	4:40 a.m.	-0.3 L	1:36 p.m.	1.3 H	4:56 p.m.	1.1 L
Dec 27	5:12 a.m.	-0.6 L	2:26 p.m.	1.6 H		
Dec 28	5:51 a.m.	-1.0 L	3:09 p.m.	1.7 H		
Dec 29	6:34 a.m.	-1.3 L	3:53 p.m.	1.9 H		
Dec 30	7:22 a.m.	-1.4 L	4:38 p.m.	1.9 H	7:57 p.m.	1.6 L
Dec 31	8:11 a.m.	-1.6 L	5:22 p.m.	1.9 H	8:19 p.m.	1.6 L
Jan 1	12:47 a.m.	1.7 H	9:01 a.m.	-1.4 L	5:52 p.m.	1.7 H
Jan 2	1:55 a.m.	1.7 H	9:51 a.m.	-1.3 L	6:26 p.m.	1.6 H
Jan 3	3:10 a.m.	1.6 H	10:42 a.m.	-1.0 L	6:57 p.m.	1.4 H
Jan 4	4:40 a.m.	1.3 H	11:33 a.m.	-0.6 L	7:24 p.m.	1.3 H
Jan 5	12:14 a.m.	0.6 L	6:31 a.m.	1.0 H	12:26 p.m.	0.0 L
Jan 6	2:00 a.m.	0.1 L	8:41 a.m.	1.0 H	1:29 p.m.	0.4 L
Jan 7	3:09 a.m.	-0.3 L	11:00 a.m.	1.0 H	3:10 p.m.	0.9 L
Jan 8	4:08 a.m.	-0.6 L	1:04 p.m.	1.3 H	5:42 p.m.	1.0 L

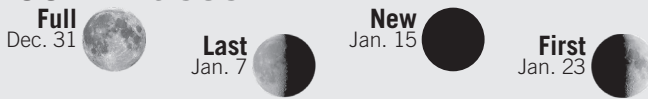
San Luis Pass

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Dec 25	5:14 a.m.	0.1 L	12:48 p.m.	0.6 H	3:18 p.m.	0.5 L
Dec 26	5:36 a.m.	-0.2 L	2:06 p.m.	0.8 H	5:52 p.m.	0.7 L
Dec 27	6:08 a.m.	-0.3 L	2:56 p.m.	0.9 H		
Dec 28	6:47 a.m.	-0.6 L	3:39 p.m.	1.0 H		
Dec 29	7:30 a.m.	-0.8 L	4:23 p.m.	1.1 H		
Dec 30	8:18 a.m.	-0.9 L	5:08 p.m.	1.1 H	8:53 p.m.	0.9 L
Dec 31	9:07 a.m.	-0.9 L	5:52 p.m.	1.1 H	9:15 p.m.	0.9 L
Jan 1	1:17 a.m.	1.0 H	9:57 a.m.	-0.9 L	6:22 p.m.	1.0 H
Jan 2	2:25 a.m.	1.0 H	10:47 a.m.	-0.8 L	6:56 p.m.	0.9 H
Jan 3	3:40 a.m.	0.9 H	11:38 a.m.	-0.6 L	7:27 p.m.	0.9 H
Jan 4	12:14 a.m.	0.5 L	5:10 a.m.	0.8 H	12:29 p.m.	-0.3 L
Jan 5	1:36 a.m.	0.3 L	7:01 a.m.	0.6 H	1:22 p.m.	0.0 L
Jan 6	2:56 a.m.	0.1 L	9:11 a.m.	0.6 H	2:25 p.m.	0.3 L
Jan 7	4:05 a.m.	-0.2 L	11:30 a.m.	0.6 H	4:06 p.m.	0.5 L
Jan 8	5:04 a.m.	-0.3 L	1:34 p.m.	0.8 H	6:38 p.m.	0.6 L

Freeport Harbor

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Dec 25	4:15 a.m.	0.1 L	11:40 a.m.	0.9 H	2:19 p.m.	0.5 L
Dec 26	4:37 a.m.	-0.2 L	12:58 p.m.	1.1 H	4:53 p.m.	0.7 L
Dec 27	5:09 a.m.	-0.4 L	1:48 p.m.	1.4 H		
Dec 28	5:48 a.m.	-0.6 L	2:31 p.m.	1.5 H		
Dec 29	6:31 a.m.	-0.8 L	3:15 p.m.	1.6 H		
Dec 30	7:19 a.m.	-0.9 L	4:00 p.m.	1.6 H	7:54 p.m.	1.0 L
Dec 31	8:08 a.m.	-1.0 L	4:44 p.m.	1.6 H	8:16 p.m.	1.0 L
Jan 1	12:09 a.m.	1.5 H	8:58 a.m.	-0.9 L	5:14 p.m.	1.5 H
Jan 2	1:17 a.m.	1.5 H	9:48 a.m.	-0.8 L	5:48 p.m.	1.4 H
Jan 3	2:32 a.m.	1.4 H	10:39 a.m.	-0.6 L	6:19 p.m.	1.2 H
Jan 4	4:02 a.m.	1.1 H	11:30 a.m.	-0.4 L	6:46 p.m.	1.1 H
Jan 5	12:37 a.m.	0.4 L	5:53 a.m.	0.9 H	12:23 p.m.	0.0 L
Jan 6	1:57 a.m.	0.1 L	8:03 a.m.	0.9 H	1:26 p.m.	0.3 L
Jan 7	3:06 a.m.	-0.2 L	10:22 a.m.	0.9 H	3:07 p.m.	0.5 L
Jan 8	4:05 a.m.	-0.4 L	12:26 p.m.	1.1 H	5:39 p.m.	0.6 L

Moon Phases



Port O'Connor

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Dec 25	7:29 a.m.	0.1 L	7:48 p.m.	0.5 H		
Dec 26	7:42 a.m.	-0.1 L	7:46 p.m.	0.6 H		
Dec 27	8:16 a.m.	-0.3 L	8:16 p.m.	0.7 H		
Dec 28	9:00 a.m.	-0.5 L	9:02 p.m.	0.8 H		
Dec 29	9:48 a.m.	-0.6 L	9:58 p.m.	0.9 H		
Dec 30	10:37 a.m.	-0.7 L	11:04 p.m.	0.9 H		
Dec 31	11:27 a.m.	-0.8 L				
Jan 1	12:11 a.m.	0.9 H	12:11 p.m.	-0.7 L		
Jan 2	1:28 a.m.	0.8 H	12:54 p.m.	-0.6 L		
Jan 3	2:49 a.m.	0.6 H	1:33 p.m.	-0.5 L		
Jan 4	4:19 a.m.	0.5 H	2:04 p.m.	-0.3 L	10:47 p.m.	0.3 H
Jan 5	2:19 a.m.	0.2 L	6:16 a.m.	0.3 H	2:21 p.m.	-0.1 L
Jan 6	4:13 a.m.	0.0 L	9:25 a.m.	0.1 H	1:53 p.m.	0.0 L
Jan 7	5:32 a.m.	-0.2 L	08:38 p.m.	0.4 H		
Jan 8	6:39 a.m.	-0.4 L	08:29 p.m.	0.5 H		

Rockport

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Dec 25	7:58 a.m.	-0.12 L	10:47 p.m.	0.06 H		
Dec 26	8:25 a.m.	-0.19 L	10:42 p.m.	0.08 H		
Dec 27	9:01 a.m.	-0.25 L	10:57 p.m.	0.11 H		
Dec 28	9:47 a.m.	-0.29 L	11:32 p.m.	0.12 H		
Dec 29	10:40 a.m.	-0.33 L				
Dec 30	12:22 a.m.	0.14 H	11:38 a.m.	-0.37 L		
Dec 31	1:20 a.m.	0.14 H	12:36 p.m.	-0.39 L		
Jan 1	2:15 a.m.	0.13 H	1:25 p.m.	-0.38 L		
Jan 2	3:09 a.m.	0.10 H	2:10 p.m.	-0.37 L		
Jan 3	4:00 a.m.	0.05 H	2:44 p.m.	-0.33 L		
Jan 4	4:51 a.m.	-0.02 H	3:03 p.m.	-0.28 L		
Jan 5	5:50 a.m.	-0.10 H	2:54 p.m.	-0.23 L	10:23 p.m.	-0.12 H
Jan 6	5:53 a.m.	-0.19 L	9:31 a.m.	-0.18 H	1:35 p.m.	-0.19 L
Jan 7	6:47 a.m.	-0.27 L	9:36 p.m.	-0.05 H		
Jan 8	7:33 a.m.	-0.33 L	9:56 p.m.	-0.02 H		

Port Aransas, H. Caldwell Pier

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Dec 25	3:57 a.m.	0.1 L	12:11 p.m.	0.8 H	2:01 p.m.	0.5 L
Dec 26	4:19 a.m.	-0.2 L	1:29 p.m.	1.0 H	4:35 p.m.	0.6 L
Dec 27	4:51 a.m.	-0.3 L	2:19 p.m.	1.3 H		
Dec 28	5:30 a.m.	-0.5 L	3:02 p.m.	1.4 H		
Dec 29	6:13 a.m.	-0.7 L	3:46 p.m.	1.5 H		
Dec 30	7:01 a.m.	-0.8 L	4:31 p.m.	1.5 H	7:36 p.m.	0.8 L
Dec 31	7:50 a.m.	-0.8 L	5:15 p.m.	1.5 H	7:58 p.m.	0.8 L
Jan 1	12:40 a.m.	1.4 H	8:40 a.m.	-0.8 L	5:45 p.m.	1.4 H
Jan 2	1:48 a.m.	1.4 H	9:30 a.m.	-0.7 L	6:19 p.m.	1.3 H
Jan 3	3:03 a.m.	1.3 H	10:21 a.m.	-0.5 L	6:50 p.m.	1.1 H
Jan 4	4:33 a.m.	1.0 H	11:12 a.m.	-0.3 L	7:17 p.m.	1.0 H
Jan 5	12:19 a.m.	0.3 L	6:24 a.m.	0.8 H	12:05 p.m.	0.0 L
Jan 6	1:39 a.m.	0.1 L	8:34 a.m.	0.8 H	1:08 p.m.	0.2 L
Jan 7	2:48 a.m.	-0.2 L	10:53 a.m.	0.8 H	2:49 p.m.	0.5 L
Jan 8	3:47 a.m.	-0.3 L	12:57 p.m.	1.0 H	5:21 p.m.	0.5 L

South Padre Island

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Dec 25	3:40 a.m.	0.4 L	7:01 p.m.	1.2 H		
Dec 26	4:08 a.m.	0.0 L	2:13 p.m.	1.2 H		
Dec 27	4:44 a.m.	-0.3 L	2:50 p.m.	1.4 H		
Dec 28	5:27 a.m.	-0.6 L	3:36 p.m.	1.6 H		
Dec 29	6:15 a.m.	-0.9 L	4:26 p.m.	1.7 H		
Dec 30	7:05 a.m.	-1.0 L	5:16 p.m.	1.8 H		
Dec 31	7:56 a.m.	-1.1 L	6:04 p.m.	1.8 H		
Jan 1	08:46 a.m.	-1.0 L	6:28 p.m.	1.7 H		
Jan 2	09:36 a.m.	-0.8 L	6:51 p.m.	1.6 H		
Jan 3	10:26 a.m.	-0.5 L	7:01 p.m.	1.4 H		
Jan 4	12:26 a.m.	1.0 L	2:49 a.m.	1.1 H	11:14 a.m.	-0.2 L
Jan 5	12:53 a.m.	0.7 L	5:14 a.m.	0.9 H	12:01 p.m.	0.2 L
Jan 6	1:37 a.m.	0.4 L	7:52 a.m.	0.9 H	12:48 p.m.	0.6 L
Jan 7	2:27 a.m.	0.0 L	11:01 a.m.	1.0 H	1:37 p.m.	0.9 L
Jan 8	3:20 a.m.	-0.3 L	1:58 p.m.	1.2 H		

Solunar | Sun times | Moon times

Legend: Major=2 hours. Minor=1 hour. Times centered on the major-minor window. F=Full Moon, N=New Moon, Q=Quarter => = Peak Activity. For other locations, subtract 1 minute per 12 miles east of a location, and add 1 minute per 12 miles west of a location.

Houston

2009-10	A.M.	P.M.	SUN	MOON
Dec-Jan	Minor Major	Minor Major	Rises Sets	Rises Sets
25 Fri	11:41 5:30	5:52	7:13 5:27	12:30p 12:52a
26 Sat	12:01 6:13	12:24 6:36	7:14 5:28	1:04p 1:50a
27 Sun	12:44 6:57	1:10 7:23	7:14 5:28	1:43p 2:52a
28 Mon	1:31 7:45	1:59 8:14	7:15 5:29	2:30p 3:57a
29 Tue	2:22 8:38	2:53 9:08	7:15 5:30	3:25p 5:03a
30 Wed	3:19 9:35	3:51 10:07	7:15 5:30	4:28p 6:08a
31 Thu	4:20 10:36	4:52 11:08	7:15 5:31	5:38p 7:09a
01 Fri	5:24 11:39	5:55	7:16 5:31	6:50p 8:03a
02 Sat	6:28 12:13	6:57 12:42	7:16 5:32	8:02p 8:51a
03 Sun	7:31 1:17	7:58 1:44	7:16 5:33	9:12p 9:32a
04 Mon	8:30 2:18	8:56 2:43	7:16 5:34	10:18p 10:09a
05 Tue	9:27 3:14	9:51 3:39	7:16 5:34	11:21p 10:44a
06 Wed	10:19 4:07	10:43 4:31	7:17 5:35	NoMoon 11:17a
07 Thu	11:09 4:57	11:33 5:21	7:17 5:36	12:24a 11:51a
08 Fri	11:56 5:44	6:09	7:17 5:37	1:26a 12:28p
09 Sat	12:17 6:30	12:43 6:55	7:17 5:37	2:28a 1:08p
10 Sun	1:03 7:16	1:29 7:42	7:17 5:38	3:28a 1:51p
11 Mon	1:49 8:02	2:15 8:28	7:17 5:39	4:26a 2:39p
12 Tue	2:36 8:49	3:02 9:15	7:17 5:40	5:19a 3:31p
13 Wed	3:23 9:36	3:49 10:01	7:17 5:41	6:08a 4:29p
14 Thu	4:11 10:23	4:35 10:48	7:17 5:42	6:52a 5:21p

Dallas

2009-10	A.M.	P.M.	SUN	MOON
Dec-Jan	Minor Major	Minor Major	Rises Sets	Rises Sets
25 Fri	11:47 5:36	5:58	7:27 5:25	12:32p 1:01a
26 Sat	12:06 6:18	12:30 6:42	7:27 5:26	1:04p 2:00a
27 Sun	12:50 7:03	1:16 7:29	7:27 5:26	1:42p 3:04a
28 Mon	1:36 7:51	2:05 8:19	7:28 5:27	2:27p 4:10a
29 Tue	2:28 8:43	2:58 9:14	7:28 5:27	3:22p 5:18a
30 Wed	3:24 9:40	3:56 10:12	7:28 5:28	4:25p 6:23a
31 Thu	4:25 10:41	4:57 11:13	7:29 5:29	5:

New shotgun debuts for high hunting society

Beretta Gallery celebrates Xplor with in-store launch party

By Thomas Phillips
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Only in Dallas would a gun shop have a wine-and-hors d'oeuvres launch party for a new shotgun.

Beretta Gallery celebrated the arrival of the A400 Xplor on Dec. 9 at its location in the Highland Park Village shopping center.

"It went fantastic," said Ian Harrison, who recently took over as manager of the store. "We probably had about 75 guests. Everybody was pretty enthusiastic about it."

Guests at the party mingled and could handle the gun, which the company introduced in early November. The 12-gauge automatic has an innovative new receiver capa-

ble of firing a range of rounds, from 2 3/4 inches to 3 1/2 inches.

"It's the hottest gun out there," Harrison said. "The specs speak for themselves. It's a good all-around field gun."

The Dallas store made the gun's first sale in North America, Harrison said. Greg Rohmer of Muenster bought it to have a lighter gun that he could use for a variety of game, such as geese and pheasants. He used it not long after the purchase.

"I couldn't even feel it kick," said Rohmer, 46. "It was awesome."

The party guests, dressed in their best holiday attire, also enjoyed watching Bowie dog trainer Russ Pankey's dogs pointing pen-raised quail in the store.



Beretta salesman Ron Slama, left, points out some of the features of the new shotgun to Kathleen White, center, as Lesly Sherman, right, looks on at the Beretta Gallery's launch party for the new Xplor shotgun. Photos by Tim Sharp, for Lone Star Outdoor News.



One of professional dog trainer and breeder Russ Pankey's dogs points a quail in the doorway at Beretta Gallery. Pankey is in the background.



Beretta Gallery manager Ian Harrison, left, and Dr. Richard Meyer



Jim and Jeanette Huff of Dallas



Craig Miller, left, and Buddy Campbell



Lesly Sherman

2009-10 Hunting Season Dates

DOVE
North Zone and Central Zone: Sept. 1-Oct. 25, Dec. 26-Jan. 9
South Zone: Sept. 18-Nov. 3, Dec. 26-Jan. 17
Bag Limit: 15 birds and not more than two white-tipped doves.
Special White-winged Dove Area: Sept. 5, 6, 12-13, Sept. 18-Nov. 3, Dec. 26-Jan. 13
The daily bag limit in the SWWDA is 15 birds, not more than four mourning doves during the first two weeks and splits and two white-tipped doves. Once the general season opens, the aggregate bag limit will be 15.

WHITE-TAILED DEER
Archery-Only Season: Oct. 3-Nov. 6
Special Youth Season*: Oct. 31-Nov. 1, Jan. 4-17
General Season: Nov. 7-Jan. 3
North Texas (206 counties): Nov. 7-Jan. 3
South Texas (30 counties): Nov. 7-Jan. 17
Late Antlerless and Spike: Edwards Plateau (39 counties): Jan. 4-17
South Texas (30 counties): Jan. 18-31
Mizzelcocker (57 counties): Jan. 4-17

PHEASANT
Panhandle (37 counties): Dec. 5-Jan. 3
Chambers, Jefferson and Liberty: Oct. 31-Feb. 28

SQUIRREL
Special Youth Season**: Sept. 26-27
East Texas (51 counties): Oct. 1-Feb. 7, May 1-31
Other Open counties: Sept. 1-Aug. 31

MULE DEER
Archery-Only Season: Oct. 3-Nov. 6
General Season: Nov. 21-Dec. 6
Panhandle (38 counties): Nov. 21-Dec. 6
SW Panhandle (110 counties): Nov. 21-29
Trans-Pecos (119 counties): Nov. 26-Dec. 13

QUAIL
Statewide (all counties): Oct. 31-Feb. 28

RIO GRANDE TURKEY
Archery-Only Season: Oct. 3-Nov. 6
Fall Season: Oct. 31-Nov. 1, Jan. 16-17
Youth Season*: Oct. 31-Nov. 1, Jan. 16-17
North Zone (122 counties): Nov. 7-Jan. 3
South Zone (26 counties): Nov. 7-Jan. 17
Brooks, Kennedy, Kinberg, Wilbrey: Nov. 7-Feb. 28

Puzzle solution from Page 25

W	I	P	E	R	B	B	R	I	T	T	A	N	Y
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LONE STAR
OUTDOOR NEWS

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