

# LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

January 8, 2010

Texas' Premier Outdoor Newspaper

Volume 6, Issue 10



**One of several**  
A Gilmer man has taken several mule deer, but one stands out. **Page 6**

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State regulators might widen the slot limit for snook.

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Weather has not fully cooperated for crane hunting, but that hasn't hurt success.

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Texas chapters of Quail Unlimited recently broke off to form a new organization.

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### ■ LSONews.com

## A wintry winter dove season

### Cold fronts chill hunts up north; good shoots south

By **Ralph Winingham**  
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Wicked winter weather in North Texas has hampered wing shooters hoping for a few late season dove,

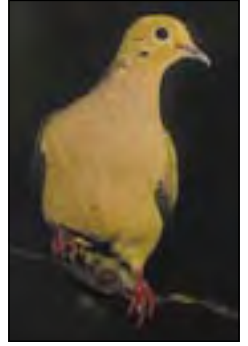
with South Zone hunters capitalizing on their cousins' cold climate plight.

"We're actually seeing a lot more birds this year," said Mike Hawks of the Nooner Ranch in Hondo. "Normally it is not worth hunting doves

in the late season."

But as long as the area has food and water, the birds will not move, Hawks said. "We even have some

See **DOVE**, Page 14



**COOL MOURNINGS:**  
Dove hunters are dealing with frosty weather during the winter season. Photo by LSON.

## Mighty deer



**TROPHY SEASON:** Several large buck white-tailed deer have been harvested this season, including one by a former football star and another by a rancher who manages his property for cattle — his livelihood — and not for deer. See the stories on Pages 6 and 26. Photo by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

## It's cold, but bass still biting

### Old tricks not necessarily working

By **Thomas Phillips**  
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

The late-fall, early-winter bass fishing at lakes Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend has been a little off, angler Chuck Sharp said. Much rain has fallen (though the lake is 6 inches below normal pool level), and the water temperature is already a chilly 44 degrees.

The conditions mean largemouth bass have not made their normal

move at the lake from down deep to up on the flats.

"It's been slow," Sharp said. "Slow" probably better refers to the preferred fishing method there. Sharp has been catching bass — 3- and 4-pounders. But to do it, he fishes jiggging spoons and half-ounce, blue-black football jigs in 20 to 50 feet of water.

As for structure, Sharp looks for

See **BASS**, Page 22



**LUNKER:**  
Debbie Baker of Wartrace, Tenn., caught this 13.26-pound largemouth bass Dec. 20 from Falcon Reservoir. Photo by Texas Parks and Wildlife/Debbie Baker.

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## CONSERVATION

# Texas chapters quit Quail Unlimited

New group will focus on research, habitat, education at home

By Thomas Phillips

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

All 11 Texas chapters of Quail Unlimited recently cut ties with the parent organization in December and formed a new group, with the goal of keeping more money in the state and continuing quail research.

"We just felt like the amount of money that they took for national administrative overhead and national programs was too high as a percentage of our total, and our members were telling us they wanted to keep more money local," said Joe Crafton, a leader with the new Quail Coalition, which is still in its formative stages.

Quail Unlimited has been mired in financial troubles for several months. President Bill Bowles said on QU's Web site the group will not file for bankruptcy, though it recently put its staff on furlough for two weeks and is said to have a large unpaid debt.

Bowles did not respond to a request for comment left on his cell phone.

With Quail Coalition, Texas hunters will see all of their money return to conservation efforts, Crafton said. The organization will have no paid staff or board members, and most of the work required for operating the parent organization will be performed by volunteers, he said.

The Quail Coalition will also support research on the birds, which have been in decline for decades. Quail Unlimited is moving away from research, Crafton said, and moving toward increasing education.

"We don't share the belief of QU that everything that needs to be known is known," Crafton said.

Individual chapters will decide how



**QUAIL AID:** Texas members of Quail Unlimited disagreed with the national organization on how money should be used, causing the groups to split recently. Photo by Texas Parks and Wildlife.

money they raise will be spent, said Crafton, who is on the board of the Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch in Roby. RPQRR has been one of the Texas QU chapters' biggest benefactors.

In addition to continuing research, Quail Coalition money will go toward education about quail management and habitat improvement. The organization will not allow chapters to spend money on perks for board members or to do anything inconsistent with the organization's bylaws, Crafton said.

Texas hunters who were members of Quail Unlimited through local chapters have a free membership in the Quail Coalition until the new organization's chapters hold their annual banquets. Then, they may attend the banquet and join the new group.

Crafton expects the 11 former QU chapters to join the new group, and he is hopeful the Quail Coalition will have 3,000 members when the organization is officially

formed this winter.

"We feel like they will feel well-connected to this Quail Coalition," he said.

Quail Unlimited is experiencing "major financial challenges," a former board member from Texas said. In addition to furloughing employees for two weeks this fall, QU put its 88-acre South Carolina headquarters up for sale.

"It's got some major financial challenges, and I wouldn't attribute all the challenges to the economy," said the board member, Tim Connolly of Wichita Falls. "I think it's not symptomatic of what we see in the economy (as much) as a series of bad decisions has led to the situation they're in today."

Revenue from advertising sales and banquet auctions was down this year, Connolly said, and several debts weighed on the nonprofit. Financial burdens weighing on QU include commitments to employee retirement plans, loans for holding national events over the last four or five years and the mortgage on the headquarters.

## Outdoor News in Brief

### Dallas Safari Club's annual show kicks off 2010

The Dallas Safari Club is holding its annual convention, this year called First Light, Jan. 7-10 at the Dallas Convention Center.

More than 1,100 exhibits will provide space for top outfitters and professional hunters from around the world. Gun makers, optics and gear companies, artists, jewelers, clothiers, furriers and others, all considered best in their field, will spread over more than 300,000 square feet.

Hunting and fishing authorities are scheduled to speak on a variety of topics in seminars. Notable speakers on the list include Larry Weishuhn and Chris Dorsey.

Daily seminars include topics such as white-tailed deer hunting, perfect safari rifles, building a custom trophy room, wilderness survival, wild game cooking, travel tips for hunters, reloading for heavy game and more.

The show serves as the primary fundraiser for the Dallas Safari Club.

— Dallas Safari Club report

### Deer group to host annual meeting in San Antonio

The 33rd annual meeting of the Southeast Deer Study Group will be held Feb. 28 through March 2 in San Antonio.

The theme for this year's meeting deals with quality and intensive deer management: "QDM to IDM: The Next Step or the Last Straw?"

The topic is meant to generate discussion on "the intentions and results of these intensive management programs," according to the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute in South Texas.

"In some instances we may ask ourselves, 'Have we gone too far?'" the institute said on its Web site. "Texas provides land managers with a number of options to intensively manage deer herds. We will look at these options and you can make the call at the shoot-from-the-hip session, 'Intensive Deer Management Techniques — A Path to Purgatory or Paradise?'"

The institute is co-hosting the meeting with Texas Parks and Wildlife and the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

— Staff report

# GUN SHOW

## Texas Gun & Knife Association Show Dates

### 2010

January 9-10	Abilene	Civic Center
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May 15-16	Abilene	Civic Center
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# NATIONAL

## La. man cited for snares for deer

A St. Landry, Louisiana man is accused of taking deer by illegal methods — by using a snare — and failing to properly tag and report harvested deer in mid-December.

In early November, Louisiana game wardens Sgt. Scott Fontenot and Senior Agent Steven Vidrine received information that Herbert David Messer, 57, was using snaring equipment to take deer in Evangeline Parish. The agents began a month-long investigation by setting up surveillance in the area and searching for the illegal equipment.

The snaring equipment was comprised of steel cables using a sliding cable lock system set in a loop fashion that would tighten up as tension was applied to the cables from unsuspecting deer or other wildlife.

Further investigation revealed that Messer had placed eight snares to take deer and coyotes, and he had allegedly used the snares to take two antlered deer on two different dates in November.

Messer was cited for two counts of taking deer by using illegal methods and four counts of failure to comply with deer tagging or harvest report card regulations.

— Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries report

## Iowa deer harvest slightly below 2008

As of late December, Iowa's deer harvest was about 4,000 animals behind the 2008 numbers, but the remaining deer seasons were likely to shrink that gap, said wildlife experts.

"The number of female deer taken is the critical measure, and it is only about 2,000 lower," said Willie

Suchy, supervisor for the Iowa Department of Natural Resource's wildlife research section. "We expect the overall harvest to inch lower since we have fewer deer."

Suchy said he has received a few inquiries about the DNR extending the shotgun season, as was done in 2007, but that scenario will likely never happen again.

"The 2007 shotgun seasons were unique with severe winter weather impacting hunter participation on the weekends in both seasons, and the harvest numbers were well below projections. Our just-completed second shotgun season had the highest harvest ever for the last weekend of the season since reporting started four years ago," he said. "Extending the season like we did in 2007 is less likely to be needed as deer numbers are close to the department's goals in many counties in the state."

— Iowa Department of Natural Resource

## First bear season a bust in Kentucky

A major storm system began dumping heavy snow over much of central and east Kentucky the day before its bear season was to begin. Up to 20 inches of snow broke trees, closed roads, stranded motorists, damaged homes and property and caused power outages to approximately 106,000 Kentuckians.

It also limited access in the three counties where Kentucky was having its first legal bear hunts in 100 years. No hunters reported taking a bear.

"Most secondary roads were impassable due to snow or fallen trees," said Kentucky State Bear Biologist Steven Dobe. "Hunters simply couldn't get to the areas they intended to hunt — and likely would have taken bears."

The two-day black bear season oc-

curred Dec. 19-20. Bear hunting was only allowed in Letcher, Harlan and Pike counties, which included some of Kentucky's hardest hit areas.

— Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources report

## Record bear harvest reported in Tenn.

A new record for black bear harvest has been established in 2009, according to Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency reports.

Through the various seasons this year, the 2009 harvest of 566 surpassed the previous record of 446 set during 2008.

Tennessee's black bear population has been steadily increasing over the past 40 years because of several management practices put in place by TWRA. These practices include establishment of a series of bear reserves throughout the bear habitat, protection of females and cubs, and setting the majority of the bear hunting season later in the year when most females have gone to their winter dens.

— Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency report

## Missouri sets record for muzzleloader

Hunters set a new record with 15,907 deer killed during the muzzleloader portion of Missouri's 2009 firearms deer season, Dec. 19-29. This year's record topped the previous one set in 2007 by 2,535. It topped the 2008 harvest by 5,653.

Good weather during the muzzleloader portion helped increase the harvest, and made up for bad weather during the November firearms portion, said Missouri Department of Conservation Resource Scientist Lonnie Hansen.

"We generally had great deer hunting weather for the muzzleloader portion, with snow, but not too much to keep hunters from the field, and temperatures that weren't too cold," Hansen said. "Lower harvests during the November portion of the firearms season may have also drawn more hunters back out for the muzzleloader portion."

Hansen, who is in charge of the MDC's deer management program, said heavy rain during four of the first five days of the 11-day November portion of the firearms season was a major factor in those lower harvest numbers.

"Adding to that were weeks of wet weather before the firearms portion, which forced farmers to leave a considerable amount of corn standing," he said. "This provided a refuge for deer and made them more difficult to find."

— Missouri Department of Conservation

## 51 permits for sale at Sheep Show

The Wild Sheep Foundation is planning to auction more state, tribal and provincial hunting permits than any other event during the Feb. 3-6 Sheep Show in Reno, Nev.

In 2009, the sale of special permits generated more than \$2 million in conservation funds. For the 2010 convention, the foundation expects to generate more by offering permits for desert bighorn sheep in Sierra del Carmen, Baja Sur, Sonora and Chihuahua, Mexico. The foundation will once again offer sheep permits from Alberta to Arizona and Texas to California and every state and tribal nation in between on its quest to raise \$3 million to help wild sheep, goats, and other wildlife across North America.

For a complete listing of the special sheep and other permits offered, visit [www.wildsheepfoundation.org](http://www.wildsheepfoundation.org).

— Wild Sheep Foundation report

### LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

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## HUNTING

# Old-fashioned rifle, old-fashioned ways — big buck

### Hunter says he's a rancher, not a deer manager

By Bill Miller

FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

A challenging hunt can turn a "cull" buck into a trophy.

But by all measures, Mike Gibson's non-typical whitetail, harvested recently with a Sharps buffalo rifle replica in northwest Texas, was a phenomenal deer.

Gibson, who runs a cow-calf operation on his family's ranch in Cottle County, had been watching this multi-point buck for a couple of years.

This season, however, the big deer stood out among the 170-class bucks on Gibson's ranch.

The buck, estimated at about 6 years old, scored 212 B&C.

"He lived in two draws not far from our headquarters, and we saw him quite frequently," Gibson said. "We picked up some of his shed horns.

He put on 50 inches."

And he got that way by himself.

Gibson's property is low-fence, with no supplemental feeding.

"He was just a native deer," the rancher said. "They have to make it on their own, just like the cows.

"Having cattle and big deer are not mutually exclusive. You can have both, and I've been blessed to have that."

The land has also given Gibson an appreciation for the past, which is why he has been hunting with Sharps Shiloh rifles for 25 years.

The single-shot breechloaders are replicas of the hefty long-range rifles favored by buffalo hunters in the 1800s. (To understand their range, read "Life of Billy Dixon," about the famous buffalo hunter and cavalry scout, or rent

See SHARPS, Page 21



**HISTORY BUFF:** Mike Gibson shot a trophy buck at his cattle ranch in Cottle County using a Sharps buffalo rifle replica. Photo by Shonda Gibson.



**MULE DEER MAN:** Rick Meritt's Gaines County mule deer scored a whopping 223 Boone and Crockett, making it one of the biggest mule deer taken in Texas this season. The mule deer is one of several Meritt has harvested this season throughout his multi-state hunts.

# A giant among giants

### Gilmer man hunts the West for big mule deer — and bags them

By Thomas Phillips

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Rick Meritt has had a busy year of hunting, with many memorable trophies taken.

But his Gaines County mule deer stands out.

Hunting the McGuire Ranch, Meritt harvested a giant five-by-six buck Nov. 23 that had a gross score of 223. The deer might be the biggest mule deer taken in Texas this hunting season.

"Texas is not known for big mule deer," said Meritt, of Gilmer. "Everybody who sees that deer thinks he came from somewhere out west."

Meritt was hunting with a friend, Donnie

Starks of Liberty Hill, and guide Bill Emfinger when he shot the buck.

The deer had been bedded down on Conservation Reserve Program land not being used for farming, which much of the area is used for.

When Meritt shot it, the deer had stood, began moving away and turned to look at the hunting party.

Using his Weatherby .30-378, Meritt took the deer with one shot at 119 yards.

Initially, Meritt did not realize how big its antlers were. Coming from farm country, the deer had a massive body, weighing 400 pounds.

"His body was so big, it made his rack look small," Meritt said.

Later, someone put the rack from a buck Starks harvested during the same hunt inside the rack from Meritt's deer. Starks' scored 203.

The deer's extra point causes "a big deduction" from his net antler score, Meritt said. His net typical score comes to 192 4/8, Meritt said.

"If he didn't have that point, he would smoke the state record typical by 7 inches," he said.

Large mule deer are the rule, not the exception, in Gaines County. The state only opened the county to mule deer hunting in 2008.

See MERITT, Page 18

# Conditions add a twist to crane hunts

### Wet fields affect decoy selection for sandhills

By Craig Nyhus

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Sandhill crane hunting has been good in West Texas this season, albeit different. Heavy rains and snows made some fields inaccessible and others wet, and freezing temperatures have frozen some playa and saline lakes, scattering the birds.

With estimates of 500,000 wintering birds roosting and feeding from the tip of the Panhandle to the saline lakes near Big Spring, pursuing the prehistoric-looking bird with a 6-foot wing span is appealing to Texas hunters looking for something different. But this season, they should be ready to be both cold and wet.

Scott Curtsinger with Longneck Outfitters in Lubbock said the hunting has been good despite the elements. Like some other area outfitters, Curtsinger often uses "stuffers," taxidermy-mounted birds, to bring the sandhills closer.

"But this year, it's been so wet, we have used the sock decoys a lot more," he said.

Curtsinger said four big saline lakes south of Lubbock are holding 10,000 to 15,000 birds.

"Most are flying 10 to 12 miles to feed," he said. "So they tend to get scattered by the time they get to the fields."

See CRANE, Page 14



**MIXED RESULTS:** Sandhill crane hunters have found plenty of birds, but hunting has been made more difficult because of weather conditions. Photo by LSON.



**SHOWING OFF:** Brian Maynard, right, speaks with Gaby Flores at a Purina Wildlife Series event last year in Del Rio.

# Feed maker brings shows home

## Purina Wildlife Series puts speakers, vendors within reach of rural areas

By Thomas Phillips  
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

The big outdoors shows that occur every summer and winter in Texas cities have a baby brother that brings the good stuff into small-town America, too. "The Purina Wildlife Series allows local Purina dealers in rural parts of the state to bring an exciting wildlife-management-oriented program to their town which includes some of the best brands in the outdoor industry that exhibit their products at the event," said Scott Hohensee, a wildlife specialist for animal-feed maker Purina. "The Purina dealers in these small towns are the go-to source for wildlife management products, and this program is a great way to bring the community together for an evening of fun and (to) learn about wildlife."

The free events have three speakers who present seminars on wildlife management, big-name vendors set up booths to showcase outdoors products, and food is served. The idea is to create a family-oriented, fun atmosphere where attendees can learn about wildlife management.

"For us average guys it gives you a more in-depth understanding," said Justin Bryan of Fort Worth, a business developer and deer hunter who attended one of the shows in Decatur.

The seminars provided more information than a story in a magazine or some other source, Bryan said. That applies to the seminars and the vendors, too, he said.

"Obviously, I'm a deer guy myself so the more products the better," he said.

From the seminars, Bryan learned about when to make certain feeds available to deer and how feeds are different from each other.

But for Holly Helton, the retail coordinator for M&M Farm Supply, the shows are not an elaborate sales pitch for Purina. They are more about educat-

See SERIES, Page 21

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## FISHING

# More smuggling, and more know-how to fight back

### ON THE BORDER:

Anglers can avoid the violence of Mexico by following a few commonsense tips when boating on border lakes. Photo by Lone Star Outdoor News.



## Dangers can be avoided when going for big bass on Falcon, Amistad

By Bill Miller

FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

It's hard to imagine a time when the border between the U.S. and Mexico was not known for lawlessness.

People on both sides rustled cattle in the 1800s; later, crooks switched from moving booze and guns to sneaking dope and undocu-

mented workers into the U.S.

Smuggling continues today, but with extreme violence on the Mexican side as rival drug cartels slaughter each other for distribution routes.

Some anglers on choice fisheries such as Falcon Reservoir and Amistad Reservoir also fret about border crime.

Recent "threads" on some fishing Web sites complained about the thefts of bass boats near Falcon, in Zapata County.

"Rumors are going on a lot down here," said Jonathon Kibler, Falcon fishing guide and author. "You hear stuff like, 'Don't fish on Fal-

See **BORDER**, Page 20

# Snook slot limit might widen

## Goal is to let anglers keep more of 1 species

By Thomas Phillips

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

State wildlife authorities are considering ways to let anglers keep more of a species of snook.

Two snook species inhabit Texas coastal waters: common snook and fat snook. Texas Parks and Wildlife's goal is to increase the take of fat snook, which grow to a maximum size of about 23 inches.

"A little change in the regulations we think would be beneficial to anglers and allow them to keep more snook," said Tonya Wiley, a TPW fisheries outreach specialist based in Dickinson. "Now how we do that and what we do is what we determine in the scoping meetings."

An initial proposal is to widen the slot limit by lowering the minimum length. The new slot would be 22 to 28 inches, instead of 24 to 28 inches.

Meetings for gathering public comment are set for Jan. 12 in Dickinson, Jan. 13 in Corpus Christi and Jan. 14 in Port Isabel.

Although changing the slot limit has been proposed to the public, other ideas are also up for discussion, Wiley said. Another option is managing the two species separately, Wiley said. That might be difficult because the two species are difficult to differentiate, Wiley said. Identification problems could be overcome with increased education and identifying pictures in TPW's Outdoor Annual.

"Right now, we're just kind of throwing the ball out there and getting everybody's feedback," Wiley said.

Wiley did not have data to accurately describe the size of the snook



**TIGHT RESTRICTIONS:** Snook regulations might be relaxed slightly to allow anglers to keep more snook. State wildlife officials are gathering feedback on widening the slot limit for the warm-water fish. Photo by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

population (including both species) but said Texas has a "good population of them down south."

The snook population has in-

creased for the past several years, Wiley said, citing gill net surveys conducted by TPW.

Creel surveys show an extreme-

ly low harvest rate. Since 1982, only 33 snook have been recorded in creel surveys — where TPW workers at public boat ramps record the

fish anglers bring in. Compare that with about 190,000 redfish and al-

See **SNOOK**, Page 23

# For woman fly-angler, home is where the fish are

## Couple keeps trailer parked on river during winter for weekend fishing

By Diana Kunde

FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Gretchen Neubauer pointed with her fly rod to a spot along the Guadalupe River.

"Do you see what looks like a little peninsula there, right before the island?" she asked. "The water tends to back up a little there, and between the island and the bank is usually good fishing."

She should know. Neubauer and her husband, Greg, both avid fly-anglers, spend nearly every weekend from December through April in their trailer parked along the Guadalupe River — just so they can catch rainbow trout close to their Houston home.

"I love to figure out where the fish might be; the river



### WORLDWIDE

**ANGLING:** Gretchen Neubauer holds an Arctic char caught on the Tree River in Canada on one of her many fly-fishing trips around the world. Neubauer, of Houston, spends many of her winter weekends fishing the Guadalupe River.

See **FLY-FISHING**, Page 23



**COLD FISH:** Pro angler Jay Yelas fishes deep water to catch bass during winter, which requires anglers to change from their normal routine of casting to visible cover and structure. Photo by LSON.

# Think 'deep' to catch winter largemouths

Fish finder, persistence pay off in cold weather

By Jay Yelas

Fishing in deep water is still probably the most misunderstood type of fishing bass anglers have to deal with on a regular basis.

Deep water can be productive almost any time of year that bass aren't on the beds, but winter is when it can be especially effective.

One of the reasons many anglers struggle with fishing deep water is because we're all so accustomed to fishing around and casting to visible cover. This makes fishing around non-visual targets difficult for the average angler.

"Deep," of course, can be in the eye of the beholder. But to me, anything deeper than 10 feet can be considered deep. Most times, and only in certain fisheries during specific times of the year, will I explore anything more than 50 or 60 feet, though bass can be caught at greater depths in some fisheries.

See YELAS, Page 22

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## GAME WARDEN BLOTTER

### LICENSE REQUIRED, EVEN ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

A Midland County landowner was reported to have said a hunting license was not needed if hunting on personal property. After investigating, the landowner did not have a hunting license and had in his possession one quail and two doves. Game Warden Brooks Yeates issued citations and seized the birds.

### MYSTERY OF THE BLOOD TRAILS SOLVED

Culberson County Game Warden John Apgar and El Paso County Game Warden Dustin Barrett received a call from a landowner about a shot from a public road adjoining his property. The landowner gave a brief description of a pickup and said the occupants might have killed an elk. Apgar found a small blood puddle on the pavement and a faint reverse blood trail going back down the road, indicating something in the truck leaking blood before the puddle was formed. Back in Van Horn, the second truck he checked turned out to be the correct one. The surprised hunters had killed an elk, but they killed it on another ranch where they were legal to hunt. But the men had stopped, shot and killed a bobcat from a public road and trespassed on private property.

### FELON'S FIREARM TIPS OFF TRESPASSING CASE

Henderson County sheriff's deputies saw blood, a spotlight and a short-barrel rifle in the rear of a Suburban and called Game Warden Dustin Balfanz for assistance. The driver was arrested for being a felon in possession of a firearm. While obtaining a written confession from the driver's girlfriend, Balfanz found three buck deer heads and a caged raccoon at a residence. During a follow-up interview conducted by Balfanz and Game Warden Shawn

### Put a stopwatch on this rescuer

Calhoun County Game Warden Philip Bird was on routine patrol in Lavaca Bay when a dense fog set in. A call came in from

the sheriff's office informing him of boaters lost in the fog. As the boaters described their location, Bird realized they were a half-

mile away, tied to a gas well. Bird traveled to the well and found two fishermen surprised that their rescue had only taken 60 seconds.

Smith, the suspect identified two private ranches where the bucks were killed and a third party involved. The landowners signed affidavits saying they did not give consent for the people to hunt on their property. Felony charges of hunting without consent were to be filed.

### MEAT MARKET STOP AIDS IN POACHING INVESTIGATION

While investigating a case of poaching near Kingwood, Harris County Game Warden Karin Bailey interviewed the owner of a meat market in Houston. Bailey discovered a large amount of deer meat wrapped in the market's packaging. The owner admitted to processing deer meat without keeping a logbook and provided Bailey with more information for the poaching case. A citation was issued, and the poaching case continues.

### HALF-TON OF RED SNAPPER SEIZED IN GALVESTON COUNTY

Galveston County Game Warden Vu Nguyen, Ray Canales, Bobby Kana and Fred Ruiz seized 960 pounds of red snapper from a commercial long line boat for a violation of the individual fishing quota regulations. The fish were sold for \$4,224.

### FISH WEREN'T HITTING, BUT HE WAS

While speaking with anglers in a secluded area of Canyon Lake, Comal County Game Warden Michael McCall found one man's "hit pipe" on the ground next to where he was sitting. After a brief discussion as to

what exactly the pipe was, the man admitted it was his and that he had smoked marijuana because the fish weren't biting. The man was cited for possession of drug paraphernalia and released.

### ROAD SIGNS AND OTHER CLUES IN FRIO COUNTY PICKUP

Frio County Game Warden Mike Morse assisted the Frio County Sheriff's Office in locating a vehicle that was reported to have been running over traffic signs. Two people in the vehicle were intoxicated and in possession of several road signs. Upon inspection, Morse found dove feathers in the bed of the truck. Several doves were found by the warden behind the spare tire in the bed. The subjects admitted to having hunted doves out of season earlier that day. Numerous charges were filed on the two people, including driving while intoxicated, public intoxication, criminal mischief, unlawful possession of a weapon and possession of doves in closed season.

### KABOOM ATTRACTS OFFICERS TO DRUGS, POACHING

A caller reported a loud explosion on a ranch just north of Knippa to Uvalde County Game Warden Rachel Kellner. Kellner called the sheriff's office, and when she and sheriff's deputies arrived they encountered three people. One attempted to flee but was apprehended by Kellner. The property owner arrived on the scene and consented to a search of the ranch. Department of Public Safety narcotics agents were called to the

scene after Kellner found methamphetamine on the property belonging to one of the detained people. One person was identified as a female runaway. Also located on the property was a utility trailer possessed by the man who had attempted to flee. The three people were arrested, and numerous charges were filed against them, including possession of methamphetamine and marijuana, evading arrest and theft. The incident led to the investigation of an ammonia tank at a residence in Uvalde. While investigating, Kellner learned of ongoing deer hunting after legal hours on a property adjacent to the location. The poachers fled because of the large law enforcement presence in the area, leaving behind beer, a spotlight, a battery and a listening device. Also found at the scene was a used syringe. No deer carcasses or subjects were located after an intense search of the area. Shortly after, two people arrived at the scene and were quickly identified as the poachers. One of the poachers was in possession of 9 ounces of marijuana. He was arrested and booked into county jail. Kellner also issued citations for not having a hunting license and hunter education certification.

### LOADED BOAT ALMOST SINKS DURING CHASE

Border Patrol called Zapata County Game Warden Jake Cawthon asking for emergency assistance from game wardens. Border Patrol had attempted to make contact with a suspect vessel to conduct an immigration inspection but the vessel fled.

Cawthon and fellow Game Wardens Sam Padgett, Jake Philley and Will Hellums responded with two patrol boats. The vessel started taking on water and began to sink. The wardens rescued one person and recovered the boat, a Mexican commercial fishing vessel. The wardens also assisted with the recovery of 832.9 pounds of marijuana with an estimated street value of \$666,320.

### FLOUNDER BAG LIMIT EXCEEDED BY DOZENS

Galveston County Game Warden Ray Canales filed charges on five recreational fishermen who were in possession of 57 flounder. They were fishing at Sea Wolf Park. Cases pending.

### ILLEGAL DEER BREEDERS BROUGHT DOWN

McCulloch County Game Warden Bryan Baronet and Mason County Game Warden Cody Hatfield wrapped up a month-long investigation into a deer breeder, a nursery facility and a Stephens County breeder. What began with a tip from U.S. Marshal Dusty Pierce ended with 120 violations for transferring deer without permits, failure to tattoo, and falsification of state documents.

### BAKER'S DOZEN DEER NOT TAKEN LEGALLY

An anonymous caller told Somervell County Game Warden Joni Kuykendall and Bosque County Game Warden Mike Sibila about people poaching along the Bosque-Somervell county line. The wardens found 13 deer had been taken on a small piece of property by about five different hunters. Deer heads were in every tree around the house and in the back of every truck parked at the house. Five citations were issued, with more likely pending investigation of the other poachers who were not present at the time.

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# HEROES



**FREDDY** and **TREY TORRES** of Brownsville caught this black drum in South Bay on live shrimp using 8-pound-test line.



**TRAVIS GARRETT JR.** of Pilot Point shot the second deer of his life while hunting with his father on Thanksgiving weekend. The buck scored 145 B&C and is bigger than any deer that his father has ever taken.



**MATHEW ZUNIGA**, 15, of Rio Hondo recently shot his first deer, a five-point buck, during a hunt near Johnson City. Mathew used a .30-06 to harvest the buck at the Moody Ranch.



**MARK WALLS** was fishing with three friends when he caught this 26-inch speckled trout. They were drifting Copano Bay using dead shrimp.



**GARETT RUTKOWSKI**, 11, harvested an axis deer with antlers that was more than 24 inches wide and 32 inches tall. The deer field dressed at 162 pounds and was shot with a .270 north of Bandera.

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**JARED HASBROOKE** of Boerne shot his first deer this fall after moving to Texas the year before from Syracuse, N.Y. Jared and his father, Ron, hunted more than 20 days throughout the season, waiting on a mature buck. His deer has split G2s on both sides of his rack and scores in the 130s. See more about Jared's hunt at LSONews.com.

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### Crane

Continued from Page 6

The birds are feeding primarily on cut milo, with a few finding area peanut fields, he said.

Scouting, a big part of any outfitter's job, has been more difficult.

"We had more than 6 inches of snow at Christmas, and we still have some roads drifted over," he said. "We still have trouble getting into some of the fields."

"And it's been cold, and it's getting colder."

Curtsinger said all but four of his hunting groups have managed limits so far this season.

Bruce Moon of Fort Worth hunted out of layout blinds with a group of six near Big Spring over a large spread of full-body and rag decoys.

"We had one great day, and one was a little disappointing," he said. "The first day we shot our three-bird limits, but the second day was slow."

Moon said the conditions weren't great during the group's weekend hunt.

"It was a bright blue sky, the birds could hover and look everything over," he said. "The birds are getting smarter."

"Not to mention, it was pretty darn cold."

Moon's group was entertained by the dogs and the giant birds, which when downed but not out will peck at the dogs with their stiff beaks.

"One lab was the Dick Butkus version," he said. "He would just go full speed and knock the bird over."

The other dog wouldn't have it. "When a bird that wasn't dead would rise up, that dog would instantly turn around and run back to his master."

Seeing the big birds come close, though, is the hunter's favorite.

"For me, it's better than goose hunting," Moon said.

In Zone C near the Texas coast, sandhill crane season closes Jan. 24. In Zones A and B, including West Texas, the season is open until Feb. 7.

### Dove

Continued from Page 1

whitewings hanging around, which is unusual for this time of year," he said. "The birds are holding off migrating to Mexico."

Hunters across the southern sections of the Central Zone and in South Texas were offering similar reports of good concentrations of mourning doves and white-winged doves in many of the usual "honey hole" hunting spots.

The birds are apparently taking advantage of good weed seed crops, particularly croton, caused by drought-busting rainfall in the fall, and they are finding water in rain-replenished tanks and lakes.

As a result, the doves are hanging around a little later than normal to provide South Texas hunters some prime-time hunting opportunities.

However, the good hunting news in the southern part of the state is being countered by reports of tough hunting conditions in the north, with some outfitters reporting sparse numbers of doves and unfavorable hunting conditions as the season nears its end.

"We have some doves, but generally they are just not worth hunting," said guide Ted Taylor of Coleman.

"The cold fronts that have moved through here have pushed the birds south," he said. "The ones we are finding are hard to pattern. You fire a couple shots at them and they just leave."

The unfavorable conditions in the north are part of the reason one South Texas location is experiencing a unique situation this year — plenty of doves and a dramatic lack of quail.

For the first time in recent years, officials at the Chaparral Wildlife Management Area near Artesia Wells are permitting public hunting of doves Jan. 8-10, but all quail hunting has been cancelled.

"Last year we had 615 people here for the January hunt (both for quail and doves), so there is a lot of interest in the late season," said David Synatzske, area manager of the Chaparral.

He said that although good numbers of doves are being reported at the 15,000-acre facility, only a few adult bobwhite quail have been observed. The birds had no spring hatch, and the late hatch in September and October was disappointingly low.

The combination of few young birds from the late hatch and two years of drought conditions that have decimated the quail population prompted officials to hold off on any bobwhite hunting for the remainder of this season, which ends Feb. 28, as part of the rebuilding process.

"The quail have bounced back in the past and



**SAVED SEASON:** Although South Texas suffered through severe drought in early 2009, rains in late summer and fall helped plants that dove feed on develop for the birds to eat. Photo by Lone Star Outdoor News.

probably will again," Synatzske said. "In 1984, following another drought period, hunters killed 29 quail. Then after we had some rain, in 1987 the harvest was 12,000."

Only 13 quail were harvested at the Chaparral before the decision was made to cancel all bobwhite hunts.

Dove hunters who venture down to the area for public hunting this weekend should expect quality

wing-shooting action, he said.

"We have about five species of croton (also known as dove weed) that come on quickly if we have rain," Synatzske said. "This year we had some good rains in September and late October, and the dove numbers are pretty good."

The late dove season that started Dec. 26 will close Jan. 9 in the North and Central Zones, but it continues through Jan. 17 in the South Zone.

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# Some outdoors hosts changing channels

## Shifts come down to dollars for TV shows

By Alan Clemons  
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

If you're looking for your favorite outdoors television show but can't find it, it could be because it's moved to a different network or time slot.

Among the changes this month are the addition of "PigMan: The Series," hosted by Brian Quaca of Texas, which will appear on the Sportsman Channel. Also on the network is "Big Game in Argentina," hosted by Craig Boddington and believed to be the first big game hunting show shot entirely in Argentina.

The Pursuit Channel added Drury Outdoors and its new show, "Natural Born Killers," to its growing lineup that includes "Mossy Oak Classics" and "Alan Warren Outdoors" as new additions.

Television shows move for different reasons, including loss of sponsors, the chance for a better time slot, low ratings that mean a move to a less-prominent time slot or the chance to change networks.

Locally produced shows have been found for years on the "Big 3" traditional networks — NBC, CBS or ABC — on local affiliates. These sometimes have odd time slots, such as 6 a.m. or 10:30 p.m. on weekends, outside of prime time or when that time period cost isn't as high. Local shows also may have a strong following because they focus specifically on a few counties or a state instead of a larger region.

Shows found on the Outdoor Channel, Sportsman Channel, Versus, Pursuit Channel and ESPN often are more regional or national in scope. As with prime-time shows on the traditional networks, they encounter the same need for ratings and, relatively speaking, greater expenses for production as their popularity

grows. "It's sponsorship dollars and a chicken-egg deal," says Mark Davis, host of "Penn's Big Water Adventures" on the Outdoor Channel. "The bigger the network, the more money you have to have, and as you build your program you will need more. That's just the way it is."

"When I was (handling PR) with Shakespeare, we had guys who would come from a regional network and want to move to a larger network, but they needed more money. If we believed in the show and felt it had a good chance, we might commit to them. If not, we had to make a decision. Those kinds of discussions go on every year."

Jim Shepherd, executive producer of "Guns & Gear" on Versus and a 30-year veteran of television including years with CNN, said mainstream shows with a good following, such as "Jericho" or "Star Trek," may not earn strong enough ratings for big advertising dollars but can move to specialty networks and build on their viewership through syndication and spin-offs.

"Some outdoors shows are the same way, the hardcore fishing or hunting shows with impact shots that are good enough to survive on a limited budget on a limited network," Shepherd said. "So they move. The first year they're on one network and the show doesn't produce the numbers the network wants. It's a time-buy and they can't get the money to stay on the big network. So they move to a regional network."

"A show that may be more stable and has better advertising might move into a better slot, or may move to a theme block. Sometimes shows in the theme blocks may have good numbers alone, but coupled with other shows they all do better. Or they can't produce consistent numbers by themselves, yet if they lump them together they can get better numbers. It's a head game."

The block format has been successful in part because shows highlighting specific seasons,



**BIG FISH, BIG STAR:** "Penn's Big Water Adventures" host Mark Davis, left, vents a goliath grouper in Boca Grande, showing viewers not only where and how to catch fish and also offer conservation tips. Photo by Commonwealth Productions.

game species or fish can be promoted to viewers and advertisers. Weeknight and Saturday or Sunday blocks are popular.

"A producer's job is to be a hunter, and he's chasing the consumer (the viewers), and they're slippery suckers," Shepherd said. "But

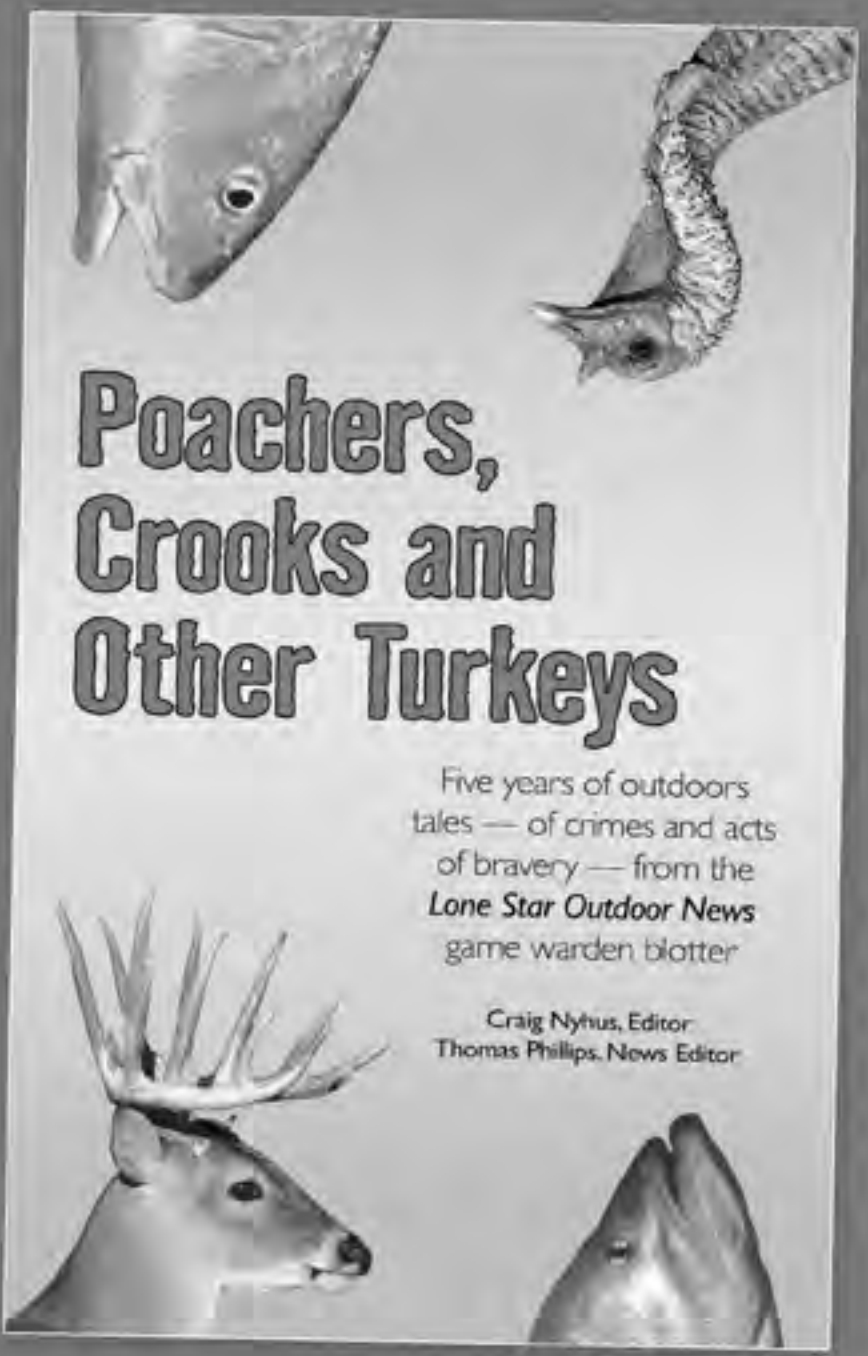
if you can figure out when they bed down or eat you've got them, so to speak. You get them at the bedding site at night and they're feeding on Saturday morning. If you can demonstrate you can hold them over a block, you've got something."

# Stories from the blotter

A new **book** out this fall compiles five years of the **Game Warden Blotter** from *Lone Star Outdoor News*.

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# Fishing for kings, trout good on coast

## Anglers searching muddy waters for speckled trout

By **Mary Helen Aguirre**  
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Kingfish action is strong on the middle Texas coast, and speckled trout are biting on the upper coast. Reports from those areas characterize the fishing these days as good to excellent.

Scott Garrison with Deep Sea Headquarters in Port Aransas said there is "really, really good fishing" offshore.

"What we're catching the most of is king mackerel and shark," Garrison said.

Anglers using sardines are going about 25 to 30 miles offshore for kingfish and vermillion snapper. Those traveling a bit farther offshore — about 60 miles or so — are reeling in blackfin tuna, amberjack and ling with live perch. And, Garrison said, the long-range trips — about 140 miles offshore — are yielding yellowfin tuna and wahoo.

"We're using topwater plugs and live bait (perch and blue runner)," he said.

As for the sharks, they're pretty much everywhere.

"We've been catching different species of shark with standard cut bait," he said.

Mike McNatt of Fisherman's Wharf reports his boats are fishing off the Aransas Banks, which are about 35 miles offshore, and are catching plenty of kings using ribbon fish, and they are catching a lot of vermillion snapper using squid. They also are catching some shark.

"Saturday, someone pulled in a 125-pound hammerhead shark," he said.

Meanwhile, out at the North Jetty, anglers using lures and live shrimp have been bringing in black drum, redfish, speckled trout and sheepshead.

"It's very good fishing in general," McNatt said.

In the upper coast, anglers in West Galveston Bay are finding an abundance of speckled trout.

Craig Lambert, a Galveston Bay fishing guide, said West Bay has really turned on in the last couple of weeks.

"On a fishing trip earlier in the week, we caught 40 speckled trout and three reds," Lambert said.

Avoid the clear water and head toward the warmth of the mud bottom to find these fish during winter.

Lambert said anglers have been catching speckled trout in the 2- to 5-pound range using 1/8-ounce jig heads and soft plastics in dark colors.

"We're catching the trout in 3 1/2 to 5 feet of water over shell and mud. The wade fisherman are catching them just a little bit bigger — in the 3- to 6-pound range — with imitation plugs," he says.

As for redfish, Lambert said it's been mostly fair. Anglers have been using gold spoons and plastic lures to catch redfish, which are primarily in the marsh.

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# Meritt

Continued from Page 6

The county produced the three biggest mulies taken in Texas last year. And, as evidenced by Meritt's buck and others, it will be a big producer in 2009 as well.

But the glory might not last. "I think Gaines County is going to be very short-lived," Meritt said.

Improper management, Meritt said, will likely be the undoing for the West Texas county, Meritt said. The season there lasts only nine days, but during that short span, trophy hunters are taking many mature deer, and landowners are taking many younger ones that would replace the trophies, Meritt said.

The McGuire Ranch, where Meritt last year harvested a buck that scored 191 2/8, is trying to manage the deer.

"Maybe they'll have deer longer than most of those farms will, but most of them will shoot them out pretty quick," Meritt said.

Whether Gaines County has any more mule deer down the road or not, Meritt will still be hunting them somewhere.

"Mule deer is my favorite species to hunt," Meritt said, adding that he loves the generally open country they tend to inhabit.

His passion for mulies took him around the country in 2009 to hunt for them. Meritt, who founded Out-back Wildlife Feeders in 1995, harvested a buck scoring 195 in Idaho, another scoring 193 in New Mexico and one near Kent, in West Texas, that scored 186. He shot and lost one in Alberta, Canada, too.

He also pursues white-tailed deer and other game. This year, he has harvested a whitetail that scored 240, one that scored 202 and an eight-pointer that had a 29-inch spread and scored 170.

"How could you not shoot a 29-inch-wide eight-point?" Meritt said.

In New Mexico, he hunted for an ibex but did not take one. At White



**TROPHY TRAVELER:** Rick Meritt of Gilmer has taken three mule deer — his favorite animal to hunt — this season. The photo at top right shows an eight-point white-tailed deer with a 29-inch spread he also harvested in South Texas this season.

Sands, he took a 36-inch oryx.

He harvested a 79-inch pronghorn antelope in West Texas, and he

used a knife to harvest an 8-foot alligator in Southeast Texas.

And he still has hunts planned for

this season. He hopes to take a couple more mule deer scoring better than 200.

"Those big mule deer are just hard to come by," he said. "That's what's good about Texas."

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# Sun | Moon | Tides

## Texas Coast Tides

### Sabine Pass, jetty

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Jan 8	3:42 a.m.	-0.7 L	12:17 p.m.	1.6 H	5:16 p.m.	1.3 L
Jan 9	4:35 a.m.	-1.1 L	1:35 p.m.	1.8 H		
Jan 10	5:23 a.m.	-1.3 L	2:29 p.m.	2.0 H		
Jan 11	6:07 a.m.	-1.4 L	3:12 p.m.	2.0 H		
Jan 12	6:48 a.m.	-1.4 L	3:49 p.m.	2.0 H		
Jan 13	7:25 a.m.	-1.4 L	4:17 p.m.	1.8 H	8:28 p.m.	1.4 L
Jan 14	7:59 a.m.	-1.3 L	4:37 p.m.	1.6 H		
Jan 15	12:04 a.m.	1.6 H	8:30 a.m.	-1.1 L	4:53 p.m.	1.6 H
Jan 16	12:48 a.m.	1.6 H	8:59 a.m.	-1.1 L	5:10 p.m.	1.4 H
Jan 17	1:33 a.m.	1.4 H	9:26 a.m.	-0.7 L	5:28 p.m.	1.4 H
Jan 18	2:26 a.m.	1.3 H	9:54 a.m.	-0.5 L	5:46 p.m.	1.4 H
Jan 19	3:37 a.m.	1.1 H	10:22 a.m.	-0.2 L	6:03 p.m.	1.3 H
Jan 20	5:18 a.m.	0.9 H	10:51 a.m.	0.2 L	6:14 p.m.	1.3 H
Jan 21	12:40 a.m.	0.2 L	7:20 a.m.	0.9 H	11:21 a.m.	0.5 L
Jan 22	1:29 a.m.	-0.2 L	09:32 a.m.	0.9 H	11:54 a.m.	0.7 L

### Galveston Bay entrance, south jetty

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Jan 8	4:08 a.m.	-0.6 L	1:04 p.m.	1.3 H	5:42 p.m.	1.0 L
Jan 9	5:01 a.m.	-0.9 L	2:22 p.m.	1.4 H		
Jan 10	5:49 a.m.	-1.0 L	3:16 p.m.	1.6 H		
Jan 11	6:33 a.m.	-1.1 L	3:59 p.m.	1.6 H		
Jan 12	7:14 a.m.	-1.1 L	4:36 p.m.	1.6 H		
Jan 13	7:51 a.m.	-1.1 L	5:04 p.m.	1.4 H	8:54 p.m.	1.1 L
Jan 14	12:03 a.m.	1.3 H	8:25 a.m.	-1.0 L	5:24 p.m.	1.3 H
Jan 15	12:51 a.m.	1.3 H	8:56 a.m.	-0.9 L	5:40 p.m.	1.3 H
Jan 16	1:35 a.m.	1.3 H	9:25 a.m.	-0.9 L	5:57 p.m.	1.1 H
Jan 17	2:20 a.m.	1.1 H	9:52 a.m.	-0.6 L	6:15 p.m.	1.1 H
Jan 18	3:13 a.m.	1.0 H	10:20 a.m.	-0.4 L	6:33 p.m.	1.1 H
Jan 19	4:24 a.m.	0.9 H	10:48 a.m.	-0.1 L	6:50 p.m.	1.0 H
Jan 20	12:14 a.m.	0.4 L	6:05 a.m.	0.7 H	11:17 a.m.	0.1 L
Jan 21	1:06 a.m.	0.1 L	8:07 a.m.	0.7 H	11:47 a.m.	0.4 L
Jan 22	1:55 a.m.	-0.1 L	10:19 a.m.	0.7 H	12:20 p.m.	0.6 L

### San Luis Pass

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Jan 8	5:04 a.m.	-0.3 L	1:34 p.m.	0.8 H	6:38 p.m.	0.6 L
Jan 9	5:57 a.m.	-0.5 L	2:52 p.m.	0.9 H		
Jan 10	6:45 a.m.	-0.6 L	3:46 p.m.	0.9 H		
Jan 11	7:29 a.m.	-0.7 L	4:29 p.m.	0.9 H		
Jan 12	08:10 a.m.	-0.7 L	5:06 p.m.	0.9 H		
Jan 13	08:47 a.m.	-0.7 L	5:34 p.m.	0.9 H	9:50 p.m.	0.7 L
Jan 14	12:33 a.m.	0.8 H	9:21 a.m.	-0.6 L	5:54 p.m.	0.8 H
Jan 15	1:21 a.m.	0.8 H	9:52 a.m.	-0.5 L	6:10 p.m.	0.8 H
Jan 16	2:05 a.m.	0.8 H	10:21 a.m.	-0.5 L	6:27 p.m.	0.7 H
Jan 17	2:50 a.m.	0.7 H	10:48 a.m.	-0.3 L	6:45 p.m.	0.7 H
Jan 18	3:43 a.m.	0.6 H	11:16 a.m.	-0.3 L	7:03 p.m.	0.7 H
Jan 19	12:13 a.m.	0.3 L	4:54 a.m.	0.5 H	11:44 a.m.	-0.1 L
Jan 20	1:10 a.m.	0.3 L	6:35 a.m.	0.4 H	12:13 p.m.	0.1 L
Jan 21	2:02 a.m.	0.1 L	8:37 a.m.	0.4 H	12:43 p.m.	0.3 L
Jan 22	2:51 a.m.	-0.1 L	10:49 a.m.	0.4 H	1:16 p.m.	0.3 L

### Freeport Harbor

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Jan 8	4:05 a.m.	-0.4 L	12:26 p.m.	1.1 H	5:39 p.m.	0.6 L
Jan 9	4:58 a.m.	-0.5 L	1:44 p.m.	1.2 H		
Jan 10	5:46 a.m.	-0.6 L	2:38 p.m.	1.4 H		
Jan 11	6:30 a.m.	-0.7 L	3:21 p.m.	1.4 H		
Jan 12	7:11 a.m.	-0.7 L	3:58 p.m.	1.4 H		
Jan 13	7:48 a.m.	-0.7 L	4:26 p.m.	1.2 H	8:51 p.m.	0.7 L
Jan 14	08:22 a.m.	-0.6 L	4:46 p.m.	1.1 H	8:25 p.m.	0.7 L
Jan 15	12:13 a.m.	1.1 H	8:53 a.m.	-0.5 L	5:02 p.m.	1.1 H
Jan 16	12:57 a.m.	1.1 H	9:22 a.m.	-0.5 L	5:19 p.m.	1.0 H
Jan 17	1:42 a.m.	1.0 H	9:49 a.m.	-0.4 L	5:37 p.m.	1.0 H
Jan 18	2:35 a.m.	0.9 H	10:17 a.m.	-0.3 L	5:55 p.m.	1.0 H
Jan 19	3:46 a.m.	0.7 H	10:45 a.m.	-0.1 L	6:12 p.m.	0.9 H
Jan 20	12:11 a.m.	0.3 L	5:27 a.m.	0.6 H	11:14 a.m.	0.1 L
Jan 21	1:03 a.m.	0.1 L	7:29 a.m.	0.6 H	11:44 a.m.	0.3 L
Jan 22	1:52 a.m.	-0.1 L	09:41 a.m.	0.6 H	12:17 p.m.	0.4 L

## Moon Phases

Full Jan. 11



Last Jan. 18



New Jan. 26



First Feb. 2



### Port O'Connor

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Jan 8	6:39 a.m.	-0.4 L	08:29 p.m.	0.5 H		
Jan 9	7:40 a.m.	-0.5 L	08:31 p.m.	0.6 H		
Jan 10	08:38 a.m.	-0.6 L	08:47 p.m.	0.6 H		
Jan 11	09:32 a.m.	-0.6 L	09:13 p.m.	0.6 H		
Jan 12	10:24 a.m.	-0.7 L	09:48 p.m.	0.6 H		
Jan 13	11:11 a.m.	-0.7 L	10:31 p.m.	0.6 H		
Jan 14	11:54 a.m.	-0.6 L	11:20 p.m.	0.5 H		
Jan 15	12:32 p.m.	-0.6 L				
Jan 16	12:15 a.m.	0.5 H	1:06 p.m.	-0.6 L		
Jan 17	1:18 a.m.	0.4 H	1:36 p.m.	-0.5 L		
Jan 18	2:39 a.m.	0.3 H	2:00 p.m.	-0.4 L		
Jan 19	4:21 a.m.	0.2 H	2:15 p.m.	-0.2 L	10:56 p.m.	0.1 H
Jan 20	1:58 a.m.	0.0 L	6:18 a.m.	0.1 H	2:07 p.m.	-0.1 L
Jan 21	3:16 a.m.	-0.1 L	09:42 a.m.	0.0 H	12:09 p.m.	-0.1 L
Jan 22	4:21 a.m.	-0.2 L	6:41 p.m.	0.3 H		

### Rockport

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Jan 8	7:33 a.m.	-0.33 L	9:56 p.m.	-0.02 H		
Jan 9	8:19 a.m.	-0.38 L	10:31 p.m.	-0.00 H		
Jan 10	9:08 a.m.	-0.40 L	11:18 p.m.	-0.00 H		
Jan 11	10:00 a.m.	-0.42 L				
Jan 12	12:12 a.m.	-0.01 H	10:55 a.m.	-0.42 L		
Jan 13	1:09 a.m.	-0.02 H	11:49 a.m.	-0.42 L		
Jan 14	2:03 a.m.	-0.03 H	12:38 p.m.	-0.42 L		
Jan 15	2:51 a.m.	-0.04 H	1:19 p.m.	-0.42 L		
Jan 16	3:33 a.m.	-0.07 H	1:50 p.m.	-0.41 L		
Jan 17	4:12 a.m.	-0.10 H	2:12 p.m.	-0.39 L		
Jan 18	4:51 a.m.	-0.15 H	2:29 p.m.	-0.37 L		
Jan 19	5:43 a.m.	-0.20 H	2:38 p.m.	-0.33 L	10:29 p.m.	-0.22 H
Jan 20	4:05 a.m.	-0.25 L	7:43 a.m.	-0.24 H	2:36 p.m.	-0.30 L
Jan 21	5:17 a.m.	-0.31 L	11:49 a.m.	-0.27 H	1:31 p.m.	-0.27 L
Jan 22	6:01 a.m.	-0.36 L	9:14 p.m.	-0.17 H		

### Port Aransas, H. Caldwell Pier

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Jan 8	3:47 a.m.	-0.3 L	12:57 p.m.	1.0 H	5:21 p.m.	0.5 L
Jan 9	4:40 a.m.	-0.5 L	2:15 p.m.	1.1 H		
Jan 10	5:28 a.m.	-0.5 L	3:09 p.m.	1.3 H		
Jan 11	6:12 a.m.	-0.6 L	3:52 p.m.	1.3 H		
Jan 12	6:53 a.m.	-0.6 L	4:29 p.m.	1.3 H		
Jan 13	7:30 a.m.	-0.6 L	4:57 p.m.	1.1 H	8:33 p.m.	0.6 L
Jan 14	08:04 a.m.	-0.5 L	5:17 p.m.	1.0 H	8:07 p.m.	0.6 L
Jan 15	12:44 a.m.	1.0 H	8:35 a.m.	-0.5 L	5:33 p.m.	1.0 H
Jan 16	1:28 a.m.	1.0 H	9:04 a.m.	-0.5 L	5:50 p.m.	0.9 H
Jan 17	2:13 a.m.	0.9 H	9:31 a.m.	-0.3 L	6:08 p.m.	0.9 H
Jan 18	3:06 a.m.	0.8 H	9:59 a.m.	-0.2 L	6:26 p.m.	0.9 H
Jan 19	4:17 a.m.	0.7 H	10:27 a.m.	-0.1 L	6:43 p.m.	0.8 H
Jan 20	5:58 a.m.	0.6 H	10:56 a.m.	0.1 L	6:54 p.m.	0.8 H
Jan 21	12:45 a.m.	0.1 L	8:00 a.m.	0.6 H	11:26 a.m.	0.2 L
Jan 22	1:34 a.m.	-0.1 L	10:12 a.m.	0.6 H	11:59 a.m.	0.3 L

### South Padre Island

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Jan 8	3:20 a.m.	-0.3 L	1:58 p.m.	1.2 H		
Jan 9	4:14 a.m.	-0.6 L	2:53 p.m.	1.4 H		
Jan 10	5:08 a.m.	-0.7 L	3:39 p.m.	1.4 H		
Jan 11	6:01 a.m.	-0.8 L	4:22 p.m.	1.5 H		
Jan 12	6:51 a.m.	-0.8 L	5:03 p.m.	1.5 H		
Jan 13	7:36 a.m.	-0.7 L	5:41 p.m.	1.5 H		
Jan 14	08:18 a.m.	-0.6 L	6:12 p.m.	1.4 H		
Jan 15	08:54 a.m.	-0.5 L	6:33 p.m.	1.4 H		
Jan 16	09:26 a.m.	-0.3 L	6:42 p.m.	1.3 H		
Jan 17	09:54 a.m.	-0.1 L	6:40 p.m.	1.2 H		
Jan 18	10:20 a.m.	0.0 L	6:30 p.m.	1.1 H		
Jan 19	12:06 a.m.	0.8 L	2:57 a.m.	0.9 H	10:46 a.m.	0.2 L
Jan 20	12:25 a.m.	0.6 L	4:49 a.m.	0.8 H	11:13 a.m.	0.4 L
Jan 21	12:54 a.m.	0.4 L	7:03 a.m.	0.7 H	11:42 a.m.	0.6 L
Jan 22	1:31 a.m.	0.1 L	5:18 p.m.	0.9 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

2010	A.M.	P.M.	SUN	MOON
Jan	Minor Major	Minor Major	Rises Sets	Rises Sets
08 Fri Q	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 4:25p
14 Thu >	4:11 10:23	4:35 10:48	7:17 5:42	6:52a 5:21p
15 Fri N	4:59 11:10	5:22 11:34	7:16 5:42	7:31a 6:17p
16 Sat >	5:46 11:31	6:08	7:16 5:43	8:06a 7:13p
17 Sun >	6:33 12:22	6:54 12:43	7:16 5:44	8:37a 8:06p
18 Mon	7:18 1:08	7:39 1:29	7:16 5:45	9:06a 8:59p
19 Tue	8:04 1:54	8:24 2:14	7:16 5:46	9:34a 9:51p
20 Wed	8:49 2:39	9:09 2:59	7:15 5:47	10:01a 10:44p
21 Thu	9:34 3:24	9:55 3:45	7:15 5:48	10:30a 11:40p
22 Fri Q	10:21 4:09	10:43 4:32	7:15 5:48	11:02a NoMoon
23 Sat	11:08 4:56	11:33 5:21	7:15 5:49	11:38a 12:38a
24 Sun	11:58 5:45	6:12	7:14 5:50	12:20p 1:40a
25 Mon	12:22 6:36	12:51 7:05	7:14 5:51	1:09p 2:44a
26 Tue	1:15 7:30	1:45 8:01	7:13 5:52	2:07p 3:48a
27 Wed	2:10 8:26	2:41 8:57	7:13 5:53	3:13p 4:50a
28 Thu >	3:07 9:23	3:38 9:54	7:12 5:54	4:24p 5:47a

### Dallas

2010	A.M.	P.M.	SUN	MOON
Jan	Minor Major	Minor Major	Rises Sets	Rises Sets
08 Fri Q	5:49	6:14	7:30 5:35	1:37a 12:28p
09 Sat	12:23 6:36	12:48 7:01	7:30 5:36	2:41a 1:06p
10 Sun	1:09 7:22	1:35 7:47	7:29 5:37	3:42a 1:49p
11 Mon	1:55 8:08	2:21 8:34	7:29 5:37	4:40a 2:36p
12 Tue	2:42 8:54	3:07 9:20		

## Border

Continued from Page 8

con Lake at night. They're running drugs like crazy, and they'll put a gun to your head and make you haul their drugs for them.'

"It is dangerous to be at the wrong place at the wrong time."

Law enforcement officials assure that criminals lurk in waters along the border, but boating and fishing continues with very few crimes against anglers and other recreational users.

"There is a lot of gang activity on the Mexican side, and drug activity, too," said Deputy Bill Haynes of the Val Verde County Sheriff's Office, which patrols Amistad.

"As long as there is a demand (for drugs), there will always be a supply," he added. "It has always been that way, and I'm sure it will always be that way."

"But we haven't had any reports on our lake at all, as far as I know, of (Americans) being robbed, assaulted or accosted in any way."

"Of course, you should always keep your guard up, regardless."

Zapata County Sheriff Sigifredo Gonzalez Jr., who patrols areas around Falcon, said boats are occasionally stolen around the lake, but the problem is not widespread.

"Can it happen?" he said. "Yes. One was stolen here not long ago from a home in Zapata, and it was taken to Mexico."

But Gonzalez said much of the trouble involves Mexicans attacking their countrymen.

"We got information not long ago, unconfirmed, that in Mexico, you have to pay a tax to the cartels if you want to move humans or dope," Gonzalez said.

Those who don't pay face a big risk, according to the unconfirmed report.

"So," Gonzalez said, "the cartels are telling Mexican fishermen, 'If we see you out there, dusk to dawn, we will shoot you out of the water.'"

But Gonzalez and Haynes said that although the lakes have a lot of drug running, smugglers usually try not to draw attention.

Haynes said they are particularly active during fishing tournaments or holiday weekends, when they make their watercraft look like regular bass boats.

"I will tell you this," Gonzalez said. "There are a lot of fishermen who see smuggling going on, and they get out of the area and report

it. We would like to get more of that."

Violent attacks south of the border have caused the U.S. State Department to issue travel warnings to citizens, but people, including anglers, still go.

"Brother, I haven't been to Mexico for 12 to 15 years," Haynes said. "There's nothing I need over there. But folks go over to Acuña every day."

"They do their grocery shopping; they buy their liquor, their curios ... and they come back."

But the State Department urges Americans to only travel on main thoroughfares and not to leave well-known tourist areas.

"If you have common sense and you use it, you shouldn't have a problem," Haynes said.

Business operators who depend on border-lake anglers worry that reports of south-of-the-border violence hurt legitimate commerce on the U.S. side.

Take, for example, El Paso, which had fewer than two dozen homicides in 2009.

Nevertheless, officials for the Sun Bowl football game in the city had a hard time selling tickets because, according to a poll, fans feared spillover crime from Juarez, where homicides last year soared to 2,500.

A bad perception isn't helped by rumors, said Tom Bendele, who operates a tackle shop at Falcon.

He said he is aware of a two recent boat thefts, but, like Gonzalez, he believes the problem isn't out of control.

He noted that smuggling has drawn a lot of federal and state law enforcement officers to Zapata County.

"This county has seven game wardens," he said, "and we've got Border Patrol climbing all over this area."

"I feel more secure here than I have for years, and I've had a cabin here since 1985."

On the other hand, Bendele said, the extra security is no excuse to abandon common sense.

"Look, I'm not going to take my 12 rods and GPS to Amistad, Falcon, Lake Fork or anywhere and leave them on the boat," he said. "I'm sorry, they're prized possessions."

"That's like leaving \$100 bills on the deck of your boat. Its easy prey."

Kibler, who wrote "Lion Tales," a book about puma hunting in the southwest (Safari Press), said he hasn't been attacked by smugglers, but he also takes precautions.



**SAFE CASTING:** While headlines about violence in Mexico are alarming, authorities said anglers and recreational users at border lakes have little to fear. Photo by Lone Star Outdoor News.

"If we see guys coming toward us, and we don't know who they are, we pull up the trolling motor, crank up the big engine and leave,"

he said. "How many times does it have to happen to be dangerous?"

"Well, if it happens to you, it's dangerous."

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### Series

Continued from Page 7

ing wildlife managers, she said.

"These guys come, and they're there to learn something," Helton said. "My approach is we're not trying to sell something."

One of the seminar speakers at an M&M show spent too much time hawking his products, which Helton will work harder to avoid next year.

"I'm going to be more active in what the speakers are going to talk about, and I'm going to be more involved to make sure the vendors do a good job," she said.

M&M stores in Cameron, Franklin and Norman-gee hosted shows. One of their biggest attractions was not the speakers, the vendors or the food. It was a snake handler.

"They all loved the snake pit," Helton said. "That was the big winner."

M&M also had something unfeasible for the big shows: valet service.

Drivers operating Bad Boy Buggies picked attendees up at their automobiles and took them to the front door of the host facility.

For M&M's stores, the shows paid dividends in their wildlife sales. They sold more deer stands and feeders.

"People started taking us more seriously on the wildlife end," Helton said.



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Jason Phillips of Owens Outdoor Sales speaks about Nikon binoculars to attendees at a Purina Wildlife Series event.

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### Sharps

Continued from Page 6

"Quigley Down Under.")

"I have always had a love for history," Gibson said, "and I've been around where some of those buffalo hunters camped. I picked up a lot of their spent cartridges."

Gibson uses shooting sticks because the guns weigh up to 16 pounds, but that's it.

He lines up with iron sights on open ranges. There are no deer blinds on his land.

Although the guns are long-range instruments, Gibson prefers shots not much farther than a football field.

That's because the trajectory of the big rounds can rise 12 feet after 100 yards, Gibson said.

"It puts the challenge back into the hunting," he said. "It's not a carbine, so it doesn't swing easy. But once you get it on the sticks, it stays there."

Gibson shoots a .45-110 (2 7/8)-caliber rifle on deer-size game and a .50-caliber gun on larger animals.

He has used them to take mule deer, an elk in Idaho, an Alaskan brown bear and lots of 170-class Texas whitetails.

He went after his latest trophy with his friend, Texas photographer Wyman Meinzer of Benjamin.

"It was just a beautiful, cold day," Gibson said. "Wyman and I had been out trying to get some good pictures of him, and we got a few, but he slipped away."

"I came out later and saw him with a couple of does. I set up sticks and took the shot, about 120 yards."

The deer went about 15 yards and collapsed, which might surprise some shooters, because the gun can drop a buffalo at 500 yards.

"It's like the old timers said, 'You can eat right up to the bullet hole,'" Gibson said. "But there's not a lot of blood-shot meat."

The big buck may have sired plenty of ancestors.

"We've noticed some bucks with similar horn characteristics," Gibson said. "He was just a great deer."

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# Yelas

Continued from Page 9

When searching for places to focus your fishing efforts in deep water, remember the difference between cover and structure. Cover is some physical object separate from the actual bottom contour. Structure is the actual bottom contour, such as breaks, drops or humps. These structure elements serve as a kind of thoroughfare for bass to travel from one place or another in search of food and optimum water conditions. The presence of cover on some form of structure is what you should be looking for.

## Start 'fishing' early

Most shortcuts to finding deep-water structure occur long before you get to a body of water. Start with a contoured lake map and identify all of the depth changes and bottom features, marking them with different colored pens or markers. Once these areas are identified, you can begin finding bass by understanding that their entire life cycle revolves around two core areas: their spawning areas (flats) and their wintering areas (deep water vertical break areas).

The structure breaks that connect these two areas are their migration highways. For the most part, the bass winter in the deepest water and vertical break areas available, usually in the main lake.

When I arrive at a lake and get into the areas I want to fish, I will "fast idle" the area in a zigzag pattern, keeping a constant eye on my electronics. I will look for any irregularity of signs of activity such as cover on the bottom (brush piles, weeds) or pods of bait that appear as black clouds. I keep zigzagging in the potential area until I find something that I like. When I do, I will throw a marker buoy on the area and continue to circle it to establish my boundaries. If I see something else or find a definite end to something I will drop a second buoy.

Using a search-type of bait, such as a lizard on a Carolina rig or a big jig, I begin to fan cast the entire area. I am trying to establish contact with the bottom or with cover or near bait. It's important that as you catch fish, you keep mental or written notes of the area you are in. Take note of the water depth at which you are fishing, water temperature, water clarity, wind — anything that might help you in



**STRATEGIC FISHING:** When looking for wintertime bass, pro angler Jay Yelas employs a handful of tactics: scouting lake contour maps, scanning with his fish finder and fishing deep. Photo by Lone Star Outdoor News.

the future. Also look around and take visual note of landmarks so that you can more easily find your newly discovered honey hole the next time you hit the water.

## General guidelines

There are also some general guidelines for fishing deep-water structure. During periods of active feeding, such as low light, rain or wind, the fish generally move shallower and hold looser to cover. During periods of high pressure or under adverse conditions the bass tend to be a little deeper and tighter to cover.

Structure with hard cover on it, such as shell or rock is better in the spring and late fall. Structure with soft cover and areas where debris has been deposited by current are better in the summer.

Structure areas with more vertical breaks are better during the winter periods. Generally, the same sweet spots on structure tend to produce each year.

One of the best ways to get and keep a bait in front of fish relating closely to structure in

winter is with a drop shot. This finesse presentation is especially suited to clear water and heavily pressured areas.

Using 6- or 8-pound-test line, a spinning reel and 7-foot-6-inch medium-action rod, I will rig a small, wide-gap hook using a traditional drop-shot setup. With a tungsten weight anywhere from 6 inches to 2 feet below the hook, I will either nose hook (in open water) or bury the hook, Texas-rig style (in and around heavier cover), a Berkley Gulp! bait. These baits disperse scent so powerfully in the water, it helps me catch bass even when I don't put the bait right in front of the fish. By shaking the rod tip, I am able to give the bait a lifelike appearance without moving it out of the strike zone.

Winter can be a great time to catch fish. With cold temperatures, most anglers and boaters are content to stay off the water, leaving most of the best spots with little fishing pressure. With a little homework and the right gear, you can be catching the big ones while everyone else is sitting at home.

# Bass

Continued from Page 1

deep-water drop-offs, rivers and creeks.

In a normal winter, bass on those lakes will move up on the flats, where the fishing is faster using Rat-L-Traps, Sharp said. Now, fish follow that pattern only on sunny days, Sharp said.

Another odd occurrence has happened in Choke Canyon Reservoir, in South Texas.

The lake tried to turn over this fall, lowering oxygen levels. A couple of cold snaps have hit. And the lake level dropped during drought conditions over the summer, said Ed Calderone of Beeville.

But none of that has kept anglers from bringing in big fish.

"Over the winter, there's been several 10-, 11- and 12-pound fish that have been caught," Calderone said.

Big fish might be found, but great numbers are another story. At a recent tournament, the top angler only needed 12 pounds to win, Calderone said.

Across South Texas on the Mexican border, International Falcon Reservoir shows no signs of slowing down.

"Fishing has been outstanding on Falcon, even in the winter months," Calderone said.

Anglers are catching Falcon bass on deep-diving crankbaits and soft plastics.

Debbie Baker of Wartrace, Tenn., boated a fish weighing 13.26 pounds in late December at Falcon. Baker was fishing in 25 feet of water with a Brush Hog shortly after noon.

Baker's fish was one of several yet to come from the reservoir, said Texas Parks and Wildlife Inland Fisheries Biologist Randy Myers.

"We had a major habitat improvement in 2003 and 2004 due to rains," Myers said in a press release from TPW. "It takes seven to 10 years for a bass to reach 13 pounds, and fish in that lake can do it in seven. Falcon is going to pump out a bunch of big ones in the next few years."

At Lake Alan Henry, Ronnie Sharp of Lubbock caught eight fish by 1 p.m. the last time he went out. But since then, winter has arrived in full force. And although the fish might be biting, it's rough days on the water for anglers.

"It's cold and snowing," he said.

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# Snook

Continued from Page 8

most 720,000 speckled trout over the same time period

The disparity could be interpreted as representing an abysmal snook population, but other factors should be weighed. Snook have a limited range and low relative abundance in general compared with redfish and trout.

They are not as numerous as their more popular cousins, redfish and speckled trout. Snook, which live in warm water, are usually only found as far north as Matagorda Bay.

Experts disagree on how widening the slot limit will affect the snook populations.

Wiley said it would not drastically affect them.

Richard Kline, a snook researcher at the University of Texas at Austin, agreed.

“On first thought, I would say it’s not going to do much to harm the population,” Kline said.

But making a firm determination is difficult, Kline said, because of the lack of data. Little is known about how fat snook and common snook compete. Taking out more fat snook could benefit common snook, which grow bigger and are generally of greater appeal to anglers, Kline said.

Lowering the minimum length limit could also increase the harvest of male common snook. Both species change sex as they mature. Younger fish are generally male, and



**TIGHT CONTROLS:** Capt. J.R. Ellis fishes in the Brownsville Ship Channel. Proposed regulations changes for snook, found most often in deep South Texas coastal waters, would loosen the rules. Photo by Lone Star Outdoor News.

older fish are generally female.

Taking more male common snook would not hinder the species’ ability to maintain its population, Kline said.

Nicky Runnels, president of the Rio Grande Valley Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association, does not want the regulation

changed.

“I just don’t think people catch enough of them down where we are,” he said.

He said Texas does not have high numbers of snook like Florida does, and “lowering the slot wouldn’t help.”

Some anglers know how to catch

them, but average recreational anglers catch them “out of luck,” Runnels said.

“It’s not something you see at the docks a lot,” he said.

Gilbert Vela, a fishing guide based in Port Isabel, said lowering the minimum length limit 2 inches will not have TPW’s desired impact.

“There’s no way that we are opening the door for fat snook captivity or being able to keep fat snook,” he said.

Fat snook do not often grow that big, Vela said.

“They don’t meet 22 inches,” he said. “In my books, they just don’t.”

What the change would do is increase the harvest of common snook, he said.

Wiley will take comments at the scoping meetings, but people may also call or e-mail her to voice their opinions or find more information. Most calls after TPW announced the meetings in late December were inquisitive, she said.

No one has adamantly opposed lowering the minimum, she said. Callers have said they want TPW to manage the species separately, increase the bag limit or do nothing.

TPW did nothing with snook until 1987, when they were designated a game fish. Then, the state implemented a slot limit of 18 to 30 inches with a bag limit of five fish, a possession limit of 10, and the only legal means of harvesting them was with rod and reel. Until then, the fish were unregulated.

The regulations became stricter again in 1990, when the slot limit became 20 to 28 inches, with bag and possession limits of three and six, respectively.

The current slot limit of 24 to 28 inches was implemented in 1996. Since then, the bag limit has been one fish, and the possession limit has been two.

# Fly-fishing

Continued from Page 8

changes every year,” Neubauer said.

She turned on to fly-fishing nine years ago, on a trip to Montana with Greg.

“Greg had lived in Colorado, so he had tried fly-fishing but never caught very many,” she said

The Montana trip, fishing in and around Yellowstone National Park, was different.

“He started catching, and I got involved,” she said.

Her first catch of a mountain whitefish — not especially prized by trout anglers — nevertheless got her hooked on the sport.

“Because of that trip, Greg got on the Internet, and we bought property on the Madison River,” she said.

That same year, they also discovered the Guadalupe River chapter of Trout Unlimited and the chance to fish stocked trout in the 10 miles of protected water on the river — the southern-most trout fishery in the United States.

A year later, the couple pulled their trailer into a leased spot along the Guadalupe and have been hitting Interstate 10 on Friday evenings after work during winter weekends ever since.

The Neubauers, both computer scientists working in the oil and gas industry, have spent vacations fishing in Chile and Alaska, among other fly-fishing destinations. In April, they’ll head to Brazil in pursuit of peacock bass.

On New Year’s weekend 2010, Neubauer hosted an outing for Texas Women Fly Fishers,

a statewide group of more than 100 women and men who hold fishing get-togethers around Texas, searching out new places for fishing and learning more about the sport.

“Groups like TWFF put me and my husband, Greg, in touch with some fantastic people with whom we can share our love of fly-fishing,” Gretchen said.

Gretchen joined TWFF about five years ago and recently finished a two-year stint as treasurer. Greg is a past president of GRTU.

“Gretchen is helpful and enthusiastic,” said TWFF president Rozlynn Orr. “She and Greg have been very active in the fly-fishing community. They’re big supporters of the Guadalupe, and they usually catch a lot of fish down there.”

Neubauer helps out as a volunteer on Texas retreats for Casting for Recovery, a TWFF-supported national effort that provides breast cancer survivors with a fly-fishing experience, Orr said.

“Gretchen’s love of fly-fishing has led her all over the state of Texas and the U.S., as well as other countries, on a quest for fly-fishing adventures,” Orr said.

On New Year’s Day, Gretchen was asking questions for fishing guide Alvin Dedeaux, featured speaker at TWFF’s Friday night “mullet mixer.”

The best flies on the Guadalupe lately have been small, size 20 midges trailing a larger fly on a dropper, Dedeaux told the group. The river’s flow was down, at about 115 cubic feet per second, and stocked rainbows have been congregating in big holes — not in more shallow riffles



**LADY ANGLER:** Gretchen Neubauer has a passion for fly-fishing. She and her husband park a camper trailer along the Guadalupe River during winter so they can spend weekends fishing there.

that are typical trout water.

Yes, the air temperature would be a cold 27 degrees on Saturday morning, and the fish probably wouldn’t hit well until it warmed up a bit, but it would be best to go out early, find a good hole and stake your claim, Dedeaux said.

“You can fish one good hole almost all day,”

he said.

Despite a Friday night toast to the New Year and good fishing, Saturday’s fishing was tough, outside of a few good spots that were packed early on with anglers. Takes for the TWFF group were one or two fish each for those who caught trout, unusually low for these anglers.

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# DATEBOOK

**Jan. 7-10 Dallas Safari Club**  
 Convention and Sporting Expo  
 Dallas Convention Center  
 (972) 980-9800  
 www.biggame.org



**Jan. 15-17 Houston Safari Club**  
 Annual show  
 Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel, The Woodlands  
 www.houstonsafariclub.org



**Texas Fishing, Hunting and Outdoors Show**  
 Arlington Convention Center  
 (469) 459-0673

**Jan. 22-24 Coastal Bend Marine Dealers**  
 Boat Show & Sale  
 Corpus Christi, American Bank Convention Center

**Jan. 8-17 Houston Boat Show**  
 Reliant Center  
 (713) 526-6361  
 www.houstonboatshows.com

**Jan. 23-24 Mud Hole Rod Building Class**  
 Marriott Houston Airport  
 (866) 790-7637

**Jan. 8-10 Hill Country River Region**  
 Trout Days  
 Nueces River  
 (800) 210-0380  
 www.thcrr.com

**Jan. 23 Eagle Lake Ducks Unlimited**  
 Fundraiser  
 Eagle Lake Community Center  
 (281) 414-4597



**Jan. 8 National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Panhandle Leadership Convention and Banquet  
 Amarillo, Ambassador Hotel  
 (806) 353-7343  
 cheai4202@aol.com



**Feb. 4-6 Wild Sheep Foundation Sheep Show**  
 Reno-Sparks Convention Center, Reno, Nev.  
 (307) 527-6261



**Jan. 14-17 Austin Boat Show**  
 Austin Convention Center  
 (512) 494-1128  
 www.austinboatshow.com

**Feb. 5 Nacogdoches National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 VFW Hall, Nacogdoches  
 (936) 554-8421

**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. 6 Puddle for the Ducks Bicycle Ride**  
 Sun & Ski Sports at Katy Mills Mall, Katy  
 (713) 669-9810

**Graham Ducks Unlimited**  
 Fundraiser  
 Young County Arena  
 (940) 521-0985

**Shelby County Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 Center Country Club, Center  
 (936) 488-1616

**Feb. 11-13 Big Country Celebrity Quail Hunt**  
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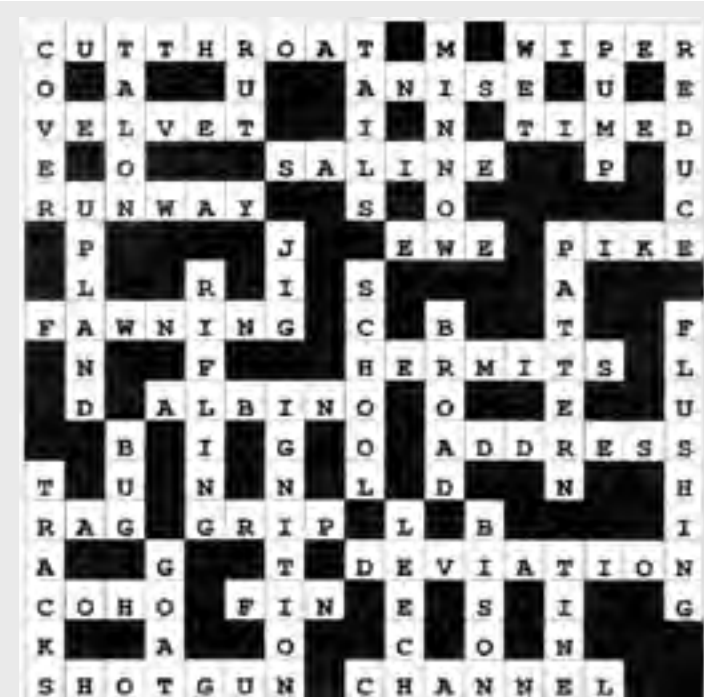
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## 2009-10 Hunting Season Dates

<b>DOVE</b>	North Zone and Central Zone	Sept. 1-Oct. 25, Dec. 26-Jan. 9
	South Zone	Sept. 18-Nov. 3, Dec. 25-Jan. 17
	Bag limit: 15 birds, and not more than two white-tipped doves.	
	<b>Special White-winged Dove Area</b>	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 week-ends and two white-tipped doves. Once the general season opens, the aggregate bag limit will be 15.	
<b>WHITE-TAILED DEER</b>	Archery-Only Season	Oct. 3-Nov. 6
	Special Youth Season*	Oct. 31-Nov. 1, Jan. 8-17
	<b>General Season</b>	
	North Texas (206 counties)	Nov. 7-Jan. 3
	South Texas (30 counties)	Nov. 7-Jan. 17
	<b>Late Antlerless and Spike</b>	
	Edwards Plateau (39 counties)	Jan. 4-17
	South Texas (30 counties)	Jan. 18-31
	Mexico-Ledger (57 counties)	Jan. 8-17
<b>MULE DEER</b>	Archery-Only Season	Oct. 3-Nov. 6
	<b>General Season</b>	
	Panhandle (38 counties)	Nov. 21-Dec. 6
	SW Panhandle (10 counties)	Nov. 21-29
	Three Rivers (19 counties)	Nov. 28-Dec. 13
<b>QUAIL</b>	Statewide (all counties)	Oct. 31-Feb. 28
<b>RIO GRANDE TURKEY</b>	Archery-Only Season	Oct. 3-Nov. 6
	<b>Fall Season</b>	
	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
	Bryans, Kennedy, Kinberg, Wilcox	Nov. 7-Feb. 28
<b>PHEASANT</b>	Panhandle (37 counties)	Dec. 5-Jan. 3
	Chambers, Jefferson and Liberty	Oct. 31-Feb. 29
<b>SQUIRREL</b>	Special Youth Season**	Sept. 26-27
	East Texas (51 counties)	Oct. 1-Feb. 7, May 1-31
	Other Open counties	Sept. 1-Aug. 31



Puzzle solution from Page 19



# FISHING REPORT

## HOT BITES

### LARGEMOUTH BASS



**BROWNWOOD:** Very good on spinnerbaits, craw jigs, crankbaits and artificial snakes along the shorelines of creeks and off points in coves in 1-5 feet.

**CANYON LAKE:** Very good on Texas-rigged red drop-shot worms, watermelon red soft plastics and tubes on jigheads between fronts in 10-15 feet in the stickups and along bluffs.

**AMISTAD:** Good on soft plastics in 18-25 feet.

**BUCHANAN:** Good on Texas-rigged blue flake worms, watermelon red curl tail grubs on jigheads and suspending blue back Fat Free Shads along ledges and points in 10-20 feet.

### WHITE, HYBRID, STRIPER



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

**STAMFORD:** White and striped bass are good on live bait and chrome/blue jerkbaits.

**ARROWHEAD:** White bass are good off rocky points.

**CEDAR CREEK:** White bass are good on slabs.

**COOPER:** White bass are good on slabs.

### 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.

**COLEMAN:** Channel and blue catfish are good on stinkbait, liver and frozen shrimp.

**GIBBONS CREEK:** Catfish are good on shrimp and nightcrawlers.

**GRANBURY:** Catfish are good on shrimp, stinkbait and live minnows.

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

### CRAPPIE



**LAVON:** Crappie are good on minnows and jigs around bridge columns.

**PROCTOR:** Good on minnows and chartreuse/black tube jigs.

**RICHLAND CHAMBERS:** Good on minnows.

**ALAN HENRY:** Water lightly stained; 51 degrees; 1.73' low. Black bass are fair on live baits 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. Striped bass are good on jigging spoons under birds in 40-60 feet. White bass are good on jigging spoons under birds in 40-60 feet. 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; 6.97' low. Black bass are fair on crankbaits or black/blue jigs 1-4 feet deep near rocky structures. Crappie are good on black and green plastics off the derricks in 20-25 feet. 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; 1.17' low. Black bass are good on topwaters in coves. Hybrid stripier 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; 43-48 degrees; 0.06' high. Black bass are fair on spinnerbaits, Senkos, wacky rigs and Texas rigs. White bass are fair to good on slabs. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair around creek channels with timber.

**BRAUNIG:** Water fairly clear; 61 degrees. Black bass are slow. Striped bass are fair on live shad and silver jigging spoons. Redfish are good on live perch and shad near the dam. Channel catfish are good on liver, frozen shrimp and cut shad. Blue catfish are good on cut bait and shad.

**BRIDGEPORT:** Water fairly clear; 42-49 degrees; 8.6' low. No Black bass are fair on shad pattern crankbaits, Rat-L-Traps and 4" Yum Dingers. White bass and hybrid stripier are fair on slabs and live bait. Catfish are fair to good on cut bait.

**BROWNWOOD:** Water stained; 57 degrees; 7.71' low. Hybrid stripier are slow. White bass are very good on L/I Fishies and crawdad crankbaits. Crappie are very good on L/I Fishies and tube jigs over brush piles in 12-15 feet. Channel catfish are slow.

**BUCHANAN:** Water clear; 61 degrees; 24.39' low. Striped bass are good drifting live shad and jigging swim baits and artificial minnows around Garrett Island in 25-40 feet. White bass are fair on jigs. Crappie are slow. Channel catfish are slow. Yellow and blue catfish are slow.

**CADDO:** Water murky; 43-48 degrees; 1.67' high. Black bass are fair on Senkos, flukes, spinnerbaits and Texas rigs. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair to good on nightcrawlers and cut shad.

**CALAVERAS:** Water fairly clear; 61 degrees. Black bass are fair on small crankbaits. Striped bass are fair on live shad. Redfish are fair on live perch and shad in 15-30 feet. Crappie are slow. Channel and blue catfish are good on liver, frozen shrimp and nightcrawlers.

**CANYON LAKE:** Water clear; 59 degrees; 9.71' low. Striped bass are fair jigging artificial minnows and trolling Gizz 4s or Shad Raps on down-riggers in the lower end of the lake over humps in 40-60 feet. White bass are fair but small on black baits along main lake bluffs. Smallmouth bass are very good on tomato red grubs, smoke/red flake tubes on jigheads and smoke drop-shot worms along main lake points and bluff ledges. Crappie are slow. Channel catfish are slow. Yellow and blue catfish are slow.

**CEDAR CREEK:** Water stained; 43-49 degrees; 0.05' high. Black bass are fair on medium running shad pattern crankbaits, Texas rigs and drop-shot rigs. Hybrid stripier are fair on live shad and large slabs jigged vertically. Crappie are fair to good on minnows. Catfish are fair drifting cut shad.

**CHOKE CANYON:** Water clear; 59

degrees; 9.57' 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; 60 degrees; 10.45' low. Black bass are fair on spinnerbaits and crankbaits. Hybrid stripier are fair on minnows. Crappie are good on minnows.

**COLETO CREEK:** Water stained; 63 degrees (77 degrees at discharge); 0.03' low. Black bass 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 are fair on trotlines baited with liver, shrimp and dead minnows. Yellow catfish 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

degrees; 9.57' low. Black bass are good on Texas rigs, Texas rigs, crankbaits and spinnerbaits. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on slabs. Catfish are fair to good on cut bait and nightcrawlers.

**GREENBELT:** Water stained; 40 degrees; 32.92 low. Black bass are slow on Carolina-rigged black/blue soft plastics worked along channel and drop-offs and live bait worked along timber. Crappie are fair on jigs and minnows. White bass are good on live bait. Smallmouth bass are slow on live bait. Walleye are fair on live bait and chrome jerkbaits. Catfish are good on live bait.

**HOUSTON COUNTY:** Water stained; 54 degrees; 0.52' high. Black bass to 7 pounds are good on black/purple glitter and watermelon Brush Hogs around stumps near drop-offs in 10 feet. Crappie are fair on minnows near the dam in 15-18 feet. Bream are good on live crickets in 1 foot. Channel and blue catfish are slow.

**JOE POOL:** Water off-color; 42-48 degrees; 0.22' high. Black bass are slow

degrees; 0.11' high. Black bass are fair on Texas rigs, jigs and crankbaits. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair on prepared bait. Bream are fair on worms. Hybrid stripier and white bass are fair to good on slabs.

**POSSUM KINGDOM:** Water stained; 53 degrees; 4.77' low. Black bass are good on watermelon soft plastics and swim baits worked at 10-20 feet depth on points in the Southern coves. 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. Stripiers are good on silver spoons and shad-colored crankbaits. Catfish are fair on live shad in the north area along the river.

**PROCTOR:** Water fairly clear; 58 degrees; 7.30' low. Black bass are fair on black/purple and chartreuse soft plastic worms. Striped bass are slow. White bass are slow. Channel and blue catfish to 4 pounds are good on frozen shad.

**RAY HUBBARD:** Water fairly clear; 43-49 degrees; 0.04' high. Black bass are fair on spinnerbaits, crankbaits and Texas rigs. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. White bass are fair to good on slabs. Hybrid stripier are fair on slabs. Catfish are fair to good on cut shad and chartreuse (use Worm-Glo) nightcrawlers.

**RAY ROBERTS:** Water lightly stained; 43-49 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.

**RICHLAND CHAMBERS:** Water off-color; 43-50 degrees; 0.08' high. Black bass are fair on medium running shad pattern crankbaits, Texas rigs and spinnerbaits. White bass and hybrid stripier are fair to good on slabs and live shad. Catfish are good on nightcrawlers and cut shad.

**SAM RAYBURN:** Water stained; 62 degrees; 2.19' low. Black bass are good on tequila sunrise soft plastic worms, spinnerbaits and crankbaits. White bass are fair on minnows and white stripier jigs. Crappie are fair on minnows. Bream are fair on worms. Catfish are good on stinkbait, shrimp and minnows.

**STAMFORD:** Water lightly stained; 52 degrees; 3.66' low. Black bass are fair on live bait. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are good on live bait.

**TAWAKONI:** Water fairly clear; 44-51 degrees; 0.77' high. Black bass are fair on spinnerbaits, jigs and Texas rigs. Crappie are fair on minnows. White bass are fair on slabs. Striped bass and hybrid stripier are fair on live shad and slabs. Catfish are fair on prepared bait.

**TEXOMA:** Water off-color; 43-50 degrees; 0.23' high. Black bass are fair on chatterbaits, spinnerbaits, crankbaits and Texas rigs. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Striped bass are fair to good on live shad and Storm WildEyes. Catfish are fair to good on chartreuse (use Worm-Glo) nightcrawlers and cut shad.

**TOLEDO BEND:** Water stained; 60 degrees; 1.96' 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; 59 degrees; 26.13' low. Black bass to 4 pounds are good on lavender shad crankbaits, black worms and smoke grubs in 10-24 feet. Striped bass are slow. White bass are fair on minnows and chrome spoons in 30-42 feet. Crappie are fair on minnows and pink tube jigs in 12-28 feet. Channel and blue catfish to 6 pounds are fair on nightcrawlers and cut bait in 25-38 feet.

**WHITNEY:** Water stained; 4.15' low. Black bass are fair on green pumpkin and tequila sunrise spinnerbaits, crankbaits and Rat-L-Traps. Striped bass are fair on minnows. White bass are fair on minnows. Crappie are good on minnows and chartreuse tube jigs. Catfish are good on shrimp, nightcrawlers and stinkbait.

## HOT SPOT



### Livingston

Water fairly clear; 59 degrees; 0.05' low. 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. Crappie are good on minnows.

feet. Crappie are good on minnows. Catfish are fair on stinkbait, liver and shrimp.

**COOPER:** Water off-color; 42-48 degrees; 0.95' high. Black bass are fair on Texas-rigged blue fleck worms, drop-shot rigs and slow-rolled spinnerbaits. Crappie are fair to good on jigs and minnows over brush piles. Hybrid stripier are fair to good on slabs and live shad. Catfish are fair on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

**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.

**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; 42-48 degrees; 0.16' high. Black bass are fair to good on slow-rolled spinnerbaits, spoons and Texas-rigged 10" Power Worms. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are good on prepared baits under roosting cormorants.

**GIBBONS CREEK:** Water clear. Black bass are fair on tequila sunrise soft plastics, spinnerbaits and crankbaits. Crappie are fair on minnows.

**GRANBURY:** Water clear; 0.53' 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.

**GRANGER:** Water murky; 55 degrees; 0.22' high. Black bass are slow. White bass are slow. Crappie are slow. Blue catfish are good on prepared baits.

**GRAPEVINE:** Water stained; 43-49 degrees; 0.75' high. Black bass are

to fair on Texas rigs, spinnerbaits and wacky rigs. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs over brush piles. White bass are good on slabs. Catfish are fair to good on nightcrawlers and prepared baits.

**LAVON:** Water stained; 42-49 degrees; 0.76' high. Black bass are fair on Texas rigs, spinnerbaits and shallow running crankbaits. White bass are good on slabs. Catfish are fair to good on cut shad and nightcrawlers.

**LBJ:** Water stained; 61 degrees; 0.23' low. Black bass are good on pumpkin drop-shot worms, PBJ colored Snag Proof jigs and green pumpkin tubes on docks and seawalls. Striped bass are slow. White bass are fair to good on silver artificial minnows and Spoiler Shads in the channel around the power plant. Crappie are fair on minnows in brush piles under heated docks. Channel catfish are fair on minnows and worms. Yellow and blue catfish are slow.

**LEWISVILLE:** Water stained; 43-50 degrees; 0.55' high. Black bass are fair on slow-rolled spinnerbaits, chatterbaits, Texas rigs and Carolina rigs. White bass and hybrid stripier are fair to good on slabs. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are good on cut shad and prepared baits.

**MONTICELLO:** Water fairly clear; 52-88 degrees; 0.48' high. Black bass are good on Rat-L-Traps, split-shot rigged flukes, Texas and Carolina rigs.

**O.H. IVIE:** Water lightly stained; 53 degrees; 21.46' low. Black bass are fair on shad-colored crankbaits, black/blue soft plastics and live bait worked along rocky points. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on live bait and white crankbaits. Smallmouth bass are fair on live bait and crankbaits.

**PALESTINE:** Water lightly stained; 47-51

## SALTWATER SCENE

**NORTH SABINE:** Trout are fair to good under the birds when the wind allows.



Redfish are good in the marsh on small topwaters and Stanley Ribbits.

**SOUTH SABINE:** Sheepshead and black drum are good at the jetty on live shrimp. Trout are fair around the Reef on live shrimp.

**BOLIVAR:** Trout are fair to good on the south shoreline on soft plastics and 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 topwaters and soft plastics. Whiting and sand trout are good on the edge of the Intracoastal on fresh shrimp. Flounder are good on the edge of the channel on finger mullet.

**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. Bull redfish are good in Cold Pass and San Luis pass on cracked blue crabs. Sheepshead are good from the piers on shrimp.



**EAST MATAGORDA BAY:** Trout are fair for drifters on live shrimp over humps and scattered shell. Redfish are 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. Flounder are fair to good on soft plastics over muddy bottoms and on the edge of the ICW.

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



**PORT ARANSAS:** Sheepshead are good at the jetty on shrimp. Redfish are fair to good on the East Flats on Gulps and mullet. Sand trout are good on shrimp in the channel.

**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. Redfish are good in the Land Cut on natural baits. Trout are fair on the spoil banks on mullet.

**PORT MANSFIELD:** Trout are fair to good on DOA Shrimp under a popping cork around grass holes. Redfish are fair to good while drifting pot holes and while wading spoil islands. Trout are best on muddy shorelines and on the edge of the ICW on Corkies.

**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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**STAR HUNTER:** Former Baylor and NFL quarterback Brad Goebel recently harvested a white-tailed deer scoring 199 in Texas, adding another trophy to his collection.

## Former BU football star scores big buck

### Goebel's deer stands out like his playing days

By Thomas Phillips  
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Brad Goebel played in big games as a quarterback at Baylor and in the NFL. He never won a championship, but, if he had, the experience might not compare with harvesting the buck he took Dec. 4 at the Shiner Ranch in South Texas.

"That deer was like winning the Super Bowl," said Goebel, 42, of Horseshoe Bay.

Goebel shot a buck white-tailed deer that scored about 199 while hunting with friend Bill Glendening, who invited him to the Frio County ranch.

"After about a week of hunting, this deer stepped out," Goebel said.

The rut was in full swing, and the men saw many mature bucks chasing does. They also saw lots of buck fights.

"Which was exciting to see," Goebel said.

Goebel had not seen his buck until he shot it, though the ranch's owners had seen him earlier in the year.

When Goebel saw it, it came into view chasing a doe. It jumped a cross fence, and soon Goebel had his shot.

Although he had top-notch coaches to turn to in high-pressure football games, Goebel turned to his friend for advice in combating buck fever. Glendening offered this wisdom: "Whatever you do, when

you put that scope up, don't look at his horns."

"So I tried not to look at his horns," Goebel said.

Goebel fired on the deer at 125 yards using a Winchester .270, and the deer was his.

The buck was the biggest Goebel has taken. His previous personal best scored 174.

"I thought that would be the buck of my lifetime, the biggest buck I'd ever shoot," he said.

His latest trophy would have scored higher but for a broken tip on one point.

Glendening also came out a winner during their stay at the Shiner Ranch.

"It just so happened that during that same week of hunting with Bill that he shot a 212 Boone and Crockett," Goebel said.

The bucks were some of the biggest to come from the ranch, Goebel said.

Goebel, a Cuero native, played five seasons in the NFL from 1991 through 1995 before retiring. He helped fill in for an injured Randall Cunningham with the Philadelphia Eagles during the 1991 season, according to the team's Web site.

After that, he spent three seasons with Cleveland before playing his last season with Jacksonville.

Goebel said he no longer has much involvement with pro football, but he is still a big supporter of Baylor. In Waco, Goebel played for the Bears from 1987 to 1991.

"Those were some good times, and we had some good teams," Goebel said.

Today, Goebel's hottest gridiron moves come during the football camp he hosts every summer for children in Horseshoe Bay.

## Outdoor News in Brief

### Trade show set for fly-fishing only

The trade association for fly-fishing will host a new trade show in 2010 focused solely on the sport, according to a press release.

The American Fly Fishing Trade Association's board of directors unanimously voted Dec. 15 to begin forming the International Fly Tackle Dealer show.

The show will debut Sept. 9-11 at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver.

"Throughout our careful and deliberate evaluation, it became abundantly clear that a general fishing tackle show or a general outdoor show would not serve the best interests of the of the fly-fishing trade," said AFFTA Chairman Alan Gnann stated. "It was also very apparent

that the newfound interest in fly-fishing by these organizations was not aligned with AFFTA's mission, making the decision very clear."

Since initially discussing the show with a small number of potential exhibitors, the new International Fly Tackle Dealer show has already received the endorsement and support of the following manufacturers, media and outdoor travel companies — Scott Fly Rods, Sage, Redington, Rio, Orvis, Umpqua, Ross Reels USA/Ross Worldwide, Scientific Anglers, R.L. Winston, Solitude Flies, Cloudveil, Lamson/Waterworks, REC, Nautilus Reels, Smith Optics, Yellow Dog Fly Fishing, Frontiers International, Fly Fishing in Saltwaters magazine, The Drake magazine, and Fly Fisherman magazine among others.

— American Fly Fishing Trade Association report



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