

# LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS



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Wildlife stands out from Sally Maxwell's scratchboards. **Page 6**

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**Spring turkey season**  
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## Utahan is top caller

A Utah man proved himself the best elk bugler in the country in Fort Worth. **Page 6**

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### Giant shark caught

A Granbury man boated (barely) a huge shortfin mako shark in the Gulf of Mexico. **Page 8**

### Bolivar returning

Hurricane Ike did plenty of damage, but it didn't kill the Bolivar Peninsula's fishing. **Page 8**

## CONSERVATION



### Eagle Scout paddler

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Oklahoma recently approved hunting for black bear and pronghorn antelope. **Page 5**

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# Bonded by bass

Trio of Conroe anglers have deep connections



**LARGE MOUTH:** Anglers are catching big bass all over Texas. Three who know each other caught trophies at Lake Conroe, and other lakes are producing. Photo by David J. Sams, LSON.

**By Thomas Phillips**  
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

It's a small world full of big bass on Lake Conroe.

Three of the biggest bass caught there in the last 14 months have been caught by guys who know each

other. Two are related. The third is a close friend.

"I think it's pretty unbelievable," said Tyler Goetzman, who caught a 13.06-pound largemouth Jan. 8, 2008, on the lake north of Houston. "I know fishermen who fish their whole life and never catch one, and

to have three that know each other is pretty cool."

Goetzman, 16, and his father, Mark, 42, and Tyler's friend Kyle Nitschke, 16, all of Willis, landed their bass on different days, in different ways and

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## INSIDE

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■ **Gentle to the giants:** Handle big bass with care. **Page 12**

## BIG BEAST:

Jim Hartji of International Falls, Minn., spends his winters in Port Aransas. He landed this 43-inch black drum Feb. 27. Photo by Craig Nyhus, Lone Star Outdoor News.



## Black drum lure winter Texans

### Out-of-towners flock to coast for run

**By Craig Nyhus**  
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

At the seawall of Roberts Point Park — within a stone's throw of the ferry to Aransas Pass — anglers gather daily each winter with the hopes of landing a giant black drum.

And most of them are from somewhere

other than Texas.

Using live sea lice on circle hooks, they toss their bait into the 40-foot-deep channel and wait. And talk.

Herbert Tucker of Tullahoma, Tenn., fishes every day.

"We caught 17 of them yesterday," he said. "I got here at 2 o'clock this morning."

The determined Tucker isn't always successful, though.

"Last year I went 14 straight days without a bite," he said.

See **Winter Texans**, Page 15

## Public comments make difference

### TPW commission still taking feedback

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

Judging by the low attendance at some of the record number of public hearings on the proposed hunting and fishing regulation changes, many hunters and anglers may believe their

comments don't make a difference. Bowhunters in Grayson County and flounder fishing enthusiasts might disagree.

Comments, petitions and letter-writing resulted in Grayson County

See **COMMENT**, Page 13

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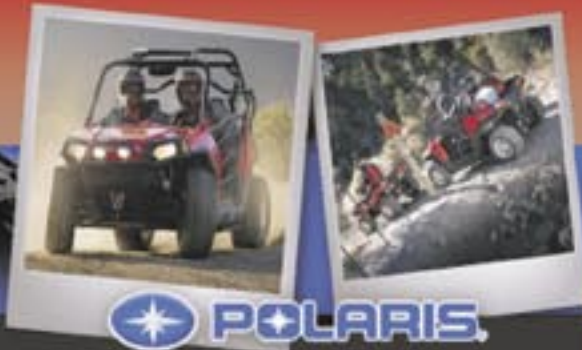
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## CONSERVATION

# Scout hits paddling trail to become Eagle

## Teen fixes signs in bay for project

By Craig Nyhus

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Dean "D.J." Thomas Jr., an 11th-grader at Aransas Pass High School, recently completed his Eagle Scout project — with conservation in mind.

Thomas, with help from his father and some good friends, replaced damaged and broken signs along the Lighthouse Lakes Paddling Trail within Redfish Bay, consisting of four loops ranging from 1.25 to 6.8 miles long.

"Once I got the project approved, I contacted Bob Spain (special projects program leader at Texas Parks and

Wildlife's Coastal Fisheries Division)," Thomas said. "He got the signs made by the prison system — that took a few months. Then I met with him, and we talked about how to put the signs up."

Thomas was assisted by his father, his friend Cody Angel, Angel's father, Randy, and Jason Brou of Rockport, who captained the airboat for the job.

"It was a two-day job," Thomas said. "We replaced and put reflective tape on the signs — a few of them were broken — and we had to replace some poles. We just went down the map of the trail and did the work."

The timing centered around duck season. Brou's airboat is used to guide duck hunters.

"We did the first day during the split in the season," Thomas said. "And we finished after duck season was over."

The first day was toughest.

"The tide was down 3 feet," he said. "We did a lot of walking in deep mud. The second day we could get the airboat right up to the signs."

Now that the project is complete, Thomas has to finish his paperwork to reach Eagle Scout status.

"That should take a month or longer," he said.

Thomas knows a thing or two about paddling and fishing. His parents own Slowride Guide Service, guiding kayakers fishing in the Aransas Pass area.

But D.J. doesn't share his father's passion for hard-core fishing, at least not yet.

"Fishing can be fun if you go with the right people," he said. "But it can be boring. Kayaking is fun, especially in rivers."



### HELPING HAND:

D.J. Thomas, right, and Cody Angel replace a sign on the Lighthouse Lakes Paddling Trail as part of Thomas' Eagle Scout project. Photo by Dean Thomas, for Lone Star Outdoor News.

## Conservation News in Brief

### Texas DU chapters set money records

Texas again dominated the President's Top 100 DU Chapter List. Sixteen Texas chapters made the 2008 list, the most in the ranking's history.

The President's Top 100 is calculated by adding chapter fundraising totals from all events over the calendar year. For equality purposes, no membership gift payments higher than the Life Sponsor level are counted in the President's Top 100 calculations.

The Texas chapters on the list are San Antonio, Cleveland, Corpus Christi, El Paso, Frisco, Galveston, Rockport/Fulton, Houston, Lee County, McKin-

ney, Mexia, Navasota, Bryan-College Station, Sherman, Fort Worth and El Campo. Mexia and Houston represented Texas on the national Top 10 chapter list. It was Houston's fifth year to reach the Top 10 and Mexia's first.

"Think about that for a moment," said David Schuessler, director of fundraising and volunteer relations. "A town the size of Mexia is one of the 10 biggest DU chapters in the country. It's incredible. It's a testimonial to what dedicated DU volunteers can accomplish when they put their minds to it."

Texas A&M, one of 70 college chapters in the U.S. and 12 in Texas, was the top college chapter in the country for the fifth straight year.

— Ducks Unlimited report

### Budweiser cuts ties with ShareLunker

Anheuser-Busch has ended its relationship with Texas Parks and Wildlife and its official nonprofit partner, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, in sponsoring the ShareLunker program.

Since 1994, the company provided close to \$15 million for programs such as the TPW Expo, Big Time Texas Hunts, Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, Coastal Fisheries Bay Team, Crab Trap Cleanup, tarpon research and the Texas Big Game Awards. Last year, Belgium-based InBev purchased Anheuser-Busch.

— Staff report

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# NATIONAL

## National News in Brief

### Pennsylvania has banner bear season

Hunters in Pennsylvania harvested 3,458 bears this season, the second highest harvest since the record keeping began.

The total accounts for 69 harvested during the second archery bear season, 2,951 during the statewide three-day season and 438 during the extended season open in select areas of the state.

In 2005, hunters set a record harvest of 4,164 bears. Hunters took 2,360 bears during 2007.

— Pennsylvania Game Commission report

### Interior Department budget at \$12 billion

The 2010 federal budget includes \$12 billion for the Department of the Interior to promote energy security with a focus on clean renewable sources and strategies to address climate change, protect and preserve America's national parks and public lands, enhance outdoor opportunities for young people and conserve wetlands and wildlife habitat.

Projects include:

- More than \$50 million to promote renewable energy projects on federal lands and waters.

■ More than \$130 million in additional funding to monitor, manage and assess the impacts of climate change.

■ \$100 million in additional funds to operate and maintain national park facilities and resources and \$25 million to leverage private donations for park projects.

The budget also anticipates future costs for catastrophic wildfires with a new contingent funding reserve of \$75 million for the department.

— Interior Department report



**RANGE REGS:** Hunters may now harvest pronghorn in select counties of the Oklahoma Panhandle. Photo by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

## Okla. to have bear, pronghorn seasons

The Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission recently changed regulations to allow hunting for black bear, antelope and elk.

A black bear season was adopted in Latimer, LeFlore, McCurtain and Pushmataha counties in southeast Oklahoma. The season quota will be limited to 20 bears. Legislation to establish a bear-hunting license is pending and needs to be approved before the season can be implemented Oct. 1.

"We believe there are upwards of 400 bears in LeFlore County alone," said Alan Peoples, chief of wildlife for the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. "A limited bear harvest will create great new opportunities for hunters while helping to address nuisance bear issues in southeast Oklahoma."

The commission also approved a 14-day September archery season for pronghorn antelope in Cimarron County and that portion of Texas County west of Highway 136. Licenses would be sold over the counter, and landowner permission would be required.

"Our population of pronghorn antelope in the Panhandle is thriving, and we are looking forward to providing sportsmen yet another unique hunting opportunity," Peoples said.

Elk season will be expanded with a private lands elk season in northeast Oklahoma, specifically in Sequoyah, Muskogee, Adair, Cherokee, Delaware and Mayes counties. Written landowner permission will still be required while hunting.

— Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation report

### NWTF member buys Pennsylvania elk tag

Pennsylvania National Wild Turkey Federation Board Member Jim Nyce, of Green Lane, Pa., purchased the Pennsylvania Game Commission's inaugural conservation elk tag at the NWTF's National Convention in Nashville, Tenn., for \$28,000.

As part of its live auction, NWTF put up for bid the antlered elk license, which is valid for use in any management zone open for Pennsylvania's upcoming elk hunt, Nov. 2-7.

In September, the agency will conduct its annual public drawing to award 59 elk licenses to those who submit an application, along with a \$10 nonrefundable fee. The application period will open in May.

Under a new law, Pennsylvania Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe announced that he had selected the NWTF to auction a single conservation elk tag to be sold during its national convention.

— NWTF report



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## HUNTING

# Long-timer finally wins elk calling title

Fort Worth hosts annual contest at RMEF show

By Craig Nyhus

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

One hour before the start of the World's Elk Calling Championships, the exhibit hall at the Fort Worth Convention Center sounded like a September morning in the Colorado Rockies.

Bull and cow elk calls resonated from all corners of the darkened building March 8 as the 25 finalists in the six divisions warmed up before the hall opened at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's national convention.

The professional division and its six competitors drew most of the attention from the crowd of

300-plus there for the event.

Al Morris of Payson, Utah, won the title and the \$2,500 prize by one point over Rockie Jacobsen, the 2007 World Elk Calling Champion.

Morris has been calling in the championships since 1993 and had come close but never won the title.

"I couldn't be happier," he said. "After 15 years of competitive calling, to finally win it — wow."

The pros were required to imitate the cow mew, cow bugle, lost calf call, bull hoarse call, bull growl and bull alarm call and chuckle, along with 30 seconds of freestyle calling of both the bull and the cow.



**BEST BUGLER:** Al Morris won the 2009 World Elk Calling Championship in Fort Worth. Photo by David J. Sams, LSON.

### Winning callers

#### Pro Division

Art Morris, Payson, Utah  
Rockie Jacobsen, Kamiah, Idaho  
Joel Turner, Eatonville, Wash.

#### Men's Division

Bryan Langley, McMinnville, Ore.  
Patrick Whitaker, Lebanon, Ore.  
Cody Rich, Dallas, Ore.

#### Women's Division

Audrey McQueen, Eagar, Ariz.  
Misty Waggener, Priest River, Idaho  
Crystal Hulse, Luna, N.M.

#### Pee Wee division (under age 10)

Brayden Langley, McMinnville, Ore.  
Wyatt Shearer, Great Falls, Mont.  
Cole Burford, Fort Worth

#### Youth Division (age 10-17)

Ross LeValley, Hotchkiss, Colo.  
Morgan Love, Salida, Colo.  
Jared Hansen, New Harmony, Utah

#### Voice Division

Greg Hubbell, Jr., Belmont, Calif.  
Samuel Valentine, Springer, N.M.  
Michael Hatten, Elko, Nev.



**WILD ART:** Sally Maxwell uses scratchboards as the medium for her art. Animals stand out from black India ink on the clay-coated hardboards, which she has engraved to make the lines of her subjects. Photo by Craig Nyhus, Lone Star Outdoor News.

# Made from scratches

La Grange artist uses rare medium for animal images

By Thomas Phillips

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Randy Shapiro's Big Five of African game animals hangs on the wall of his Arlington trophy room. They're all there: Cape buffalo, leopard, elephant, lion, black rhino.

They stand out from a pitch-black background in the 2,500-square-foot space, soft enough to touch, appearing very much alive.

But they never were.

Shapiro's Big Five is a piece of artwork by La Grange artist Sally Maxwell. It shows each animal fitted together into the shape of Africa, surrounded by black India ink, on one of Maxwell's scratchboards.

"It's really nice," Shapiro said. "She has got a lot of talent."

Scratchboards are clay-coated hardboards coated with black India ink. The India ink can be removed to leave different textures, and the clay is bright white in contrast to the black India ink.

The black areas of the painting become the negative space, which is generally different from other art. Scratchboards retain their deep blackness and bright whiteness where a canvas loses them. Mixing paint colors and applying them to white canvas muddies their brilliance, Maxwell said.

Having the lines engraved in the scratchboard further increases a piece's sharpness, she said.

"It's like art on HD," she said, comparing the medium with the crystal clarity of high-definition television.

She often works from photos of wildlife — her main subject — and sometimes borrows photos from clients.

She can take her own photos and see the muscles, horns, hairs and whiskers of her own Big Five when she visits the Kruger National Park area of South Africa later this year.

Maxwell doubled her efforts on a trip to South Florida earlier this month. Before showing her works at the Naples National Art Festival, she made a side trip to the Everglades to photograph wildlife and go fishing.

Maxwell began her career in earnest back in school, some 40 years ago. Everyone around her, except her, knew it was what she should do, she said.

"Finally I had a Latin teacher that told me I just needed to take art."

She took her first job in commercial art in Milwaukee. In commercial art, she discovered scratchboards, which were often used in magazines.

Since then, she has been trying to turn scratchboards from commercial art to fine art.

"I just love the scratchboard so much that it's become my life's passion," she said.

What started out as doodles beside math and science notes in college has evolved into a career for Maxwell, albeit in a lonely field.

"She is the foremost scratchboard artist in the world," said Karen Vernon, co-owner of the Gallery at Round Top, which sells her work.

Maxwell uses animals as her subjects, though not always wildlife. She

See ARTIST, Page 15

# Gray wolf removed from Endangered Species list

Groups opposed to hunting threaten to sue for relisting

Cheers from the crowd at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's national convention welcomed the U.S. Department of the Interior's decision to remove some gray wolf populations from protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced he would uphold the decision by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to delist wolf populations in the northern Rockies and western Great Lakes states of Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Utah and Wisconsin, plus portions of Washington, Oregon and Utah.

"The recovery of the gray wolf throughout significant portions of its historic range is one of the great success stories of the Endangered Species Act," Salazar said. "The successful recovery of this species is a stunning example of how the act can work to

keep imperiled animals from sliding into extinction."

Wyoming's wolf management plan was not approved, and wolves in the state will continue to be protected under the act.

The Fish and Wildlife Service will monitor the delisted wolf populations for a minimum of five years to ensure that they continue to sustain their recovery. At the end of that time, they will decide if relisting, continued monitoring or ending service monitoring is appropriate.

The delisting faced opposition from anti-

hunting environmental groups, and some are threatening further lawsuits to thwart the effort.

But state game and fish departments and sportsman's groups praised the long-awaited decision.

"Secretary Salazar made the right call on delisting the gray wolf," stated Rob Sexton, vice president for government affairs at the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation. "This decision is based on sound science, not politics."

— Staff report

# Hog hunters battle wind, cold to fight hunger

## Conditions not great for state's annual expo

By Bill Miller  
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

There probably aren't a lot of state-wide hog hunting contests, but Texans who run one each year on the first weekend of March agreed that conditions were horrible for the 2009 event.

Summer-like temperatures prevailed across the state when the third annual Wild Boar Hunting Expo and Hog Hunting Tournament began Feb. 27, headquartered at the Wilbur Baber Complex in Hallettsville.

But within a few hours, the state was swept by a north wind that blew all weekend and brought nighttime temperatures down to the low 30s.

"We had very tough hunting circumstances," said Paul S. McDonald of Houston, one of the organizers. "We've had a drought for two years, and dogs

don't hunt well when it's dry.

"And then we had a howling wind, which blows scent everywhere."

Yet the 2009 event has been dubbed a success, with five-hog "stringers" from across the state totaling 28,657 pounds of field-dressed pork, topping last year's 20,000 pounds.

McDonald, representing the charity Hunters' Harvest of Houston, said this year's total would be winnowed to about 14,000 pounds of boned meat that will be converted into sausage and divided among four charities that feed the hungry. Recipients are Youth Reach, Victory Home and Open Door Mission, all of Houston, and Teen Challenge of San Marcos.

It was also sponsored by the Texas Dog Hunters Association, which handled the tournament, and Wild Boar USA, organizer of the expo.

Seventy-three teams participated this year, up from 40 last year.

The hog-slaying duo "Jeff and Brandon of Yoakum," took the top prize for the five biggest hogs, with the biggest sow for a bonus. The team's cash prize was \$3,350.



**28,657** pounds of field-dressed pork collected at this year's expo

**20,000** pounds collected during last year's expo

**14,000** pounds of meat collected this year to be made into sausage for four charities in Texas

Hunters harvested many of the hogs in South Texas, although one team came from Amarillo, which meant the Panhandle pigs had to be driven about

10 hours to Hallettsville.

This year's goal was 30,000 pounds of meat, but organizers were not complaining.

"It's huge," McDonald said. "If the average person eats 8 ounces of meat per meal, you can do the math and see how many meals we produced."

But McDonald said it was "tough duty" in Hallettsville weighing the 276 hogs and processing the meat.

"It was nippy," he said. "But I was impressed with these animals. There was an inch and a half of fat on many of them."

"We had 20 animals that were over 200 pounds."

Cody Weiser of Hallettsville, founder of Wild Boar USA, said 32 vendors hawked hunting-dog supplies, traps and other gear at the expo.

TDHA has had a tournament for five years, said Douglas Mason of Columbus, president of the group. This, however, was the third year it was paired with the expo, he said.

"It has grown every year," Weiser said of the expo and tournament. "Even with the economy the way it was, vendors were happy."

"We've already booked (the Baber Complex) again for next year — first weekend in March."

Mason added that plans are in the works to have two more tournaments next year to help the needy, one in East Texas, the other in Fort Worth.

The Hallettsville event alone could become the largest charity meat drive in the nation, Weiser said.

"You couldn't get that kind of weight with anything but hog," he said.

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## FISHING

# Bolivar bouncing back from Ike's devastation

Hurricane damage still evident, but life returning to area

By Craig Nyhus

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

On the Bolivar Peninsula northeast of Galveston, evidence of Hurricane Ike's handiwork still lines the coast. But even more evident is the restoration work underway —

and completed — along with the attitude of the people who have returned.

And the fish? They never left. "Fishing's been good," said Capt. David Harris (www.galvestonbayfishing.com). "The water conditions in East Bay are great, and there aren't very many obstructions. West Bay has more debris in it, though. This winter was better than average, although the big fronts kept us off of the water a lot. But we're seeing good numbers of big trout."

What Harris hopes for is more fishermen. "The biggest problem is everyone here is too busy rebuilding to have time to fish," he

said, adding that he hopes the spring break crowd will want to wet a line.

"Spring break is usually the best barometer for what our season is going to be like," he said.

But those expecting to see depressed residents on the peninsula will be surprised. Although only a few restaurants and convenience stores have reopened, nearly everyone you stop shares their excitement about rebuilding.

The community has even adopted a new slogan, "Bring Back Bolivar," and billboards are going up soon.

"Everyone was in shock for a long time," Harris said. "Now everyone is saying, 'Let's get this stuff rebuilt.'"

A Mardi Gras parade confirmed the attitude.

"It was the biggest ever, more than 35 floats," Harris said.

Another morale boost hit the community when Stingaree, a popular restaurant and marina, reopened. New boat slips are in the works, and several RV sites are complete. The launch is open and bait is being sold.

See BOLIVAR, Page 21

# Near-record shark

Granbury man lands massive mako in Gulf

By Thomas Phillips

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Bill Walters came about 12 hours from holding the new world record for shortfin mako shark Feb. 25, he figures.

But the fish was too big, and the boat too small, and not nearly fast enough to race back to shore and certified scales.

Once on land, it weighed 1,149.5 pounds, coming close but not eclipsing the world record of 1,221 pounds.

"It was probably a little bit bigger if we had gotten it weighed at the time of the catch," said Walters, of Granbury.

Sharks can lose body weight when they leave the water, which could have put Walters' fish close, he said.

Walters, a dog trainer, was fishing on the *Sea Spray* out of Orange Beach, Ala., with about seven friends on a three-day tuna trip.

Their first day on the water they caught 22 tuna weighing at least 70 pounds each. The next day, the day Walters caught the shark, they were trying for wahoo.

The *Sea Spray* carried a rod and reel rigged for shark, but the thought had not crossed Walters' mind, he said.

"I was excited about seeing what wahoo was all about," he said.

The boat fished its way through oil platforms on its way to the wahoo grounds near the mouth of the Mississippi River. It arrived about midday, and once there the anglers hooked two wahoo.

And that's where the wahoo fishing ended.



**SHARK FLIGHT:** Bill Walters' shortfin mako shark, a species known for its jumps, takes to the air while Walters fights the fish last month in the Gulf of Mexico. The fish weighed 1,149.5 pounds at the dock. Photo by Randy Crow.

"One of the lines went completely limp," Walters said. "And we look up, and we see two fins, a dorsal fin and a tail fin, and a blood boil."

"We knew we had a shark."

The crew began chumming the water to keep the shark in the area, and the shark rig was

readied.

"And I was up next," Walters said.

Within minutes the shark had taken the bait, and Walters had set the hook.

The mako, known for its aerial acrobatics, didn't disappoint. It jumped three times during

the fight.

"We all looked at each other and said, 'What did we just do?' It felt like a Buick," Walters said.

After the first hour, Walters pulled the shark up to the boat. The crew grabbed the 10-foot

See SHARK, Page 21

# Decision time for Cedar Bayou

Corps of Engineers taking comments on reopening pass

By David Sikes

FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Lynn Edwards, with Save Cedar Bayou Inc., has spent about two decades and collected an estimated \$450,000 to reopen the historic pass that once separated San Jose and Matagorda islands north of Rockport.

But numerous obstacles stand in the way. The permit to dredge the Gulf pass now is in the hands of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for review and public comment. March 26 is the deadline for comment.

Over many years the historic pass has been reduced to a trickle of its former self, threatening everything from whooping cranes and the crabs they eat to shrimp and fish.

Biologists are not certain whether a closed pass is having an adverse impact on marine species. But Edwards cites microbiologists, including Dr. Rita Colwell, a professor at the University of Maryland at College Park and at Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, who believe that an improved exchange of Gulf waters could offset the bacteria concentrations, including the flesh-eating *Vibrio vulnificus*, in a sluggish bay with a healthy inflow of nutrients.

Edwards said biologists generally agree that increasing the flow through Cedar Bayou would benefit the water quality and overall productivity of the Aransas-Mesquite estuary.

Many factors contributed to the silting of the

See CEDAR BAYOU, Page 21

# Kayaker boats new record sand trout

Fish beats buddy's record

By Thomas Phillips

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

State records are given to an individual angler or hunter, not a group. But if the rules were changed, the sand seatrout catch and release record might belong to a club.

Clint Barghi caught the new record, measuring 18 3/8 inches, 1

3/8 inches better than the former record, on Feb. 14. He was fishing with Vincent Rinando Jr., a teammate on Team Ocean Kayak. Rinando was talking on his cell phone with Filip Spencer, another member of Team Ocean Kayak who in moments would become the former record holder.

"That's probably the best part of it all, is being with my buddies," said Barghi, of Friendswood. "It's about bragging rights."

Barghi caught the fish while jigging a Gambler Flapp'n Shad about 9 feet deep from a kay-

ak in Dickenson Bay, part of the Galveston Bay system. The area where he caught it is a transitional area that fish pass through when moving to different water for the summer.

"We're just fishing this one group of fish that's real, real, real deep," said Barghi, adding that he and his friends primarily fish muddy waters.

The group of anglers has fished the spot eight to 10 times this winter, and the group of trout showed

See SAND TROUT, Page 13

**RECORD TROUT:** Clint Barghi of Friendswood holds the new catch-and-release state record sand trout he caught Feb. 14.



# Hybrids to help Waco drinking water taste

## Phytoplankton put foul flavor in water

By Travis Phillips  
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Waco residents have long paid two water bills — one to the city and one to the bottled water companies. Why? The drinking water has a distinctly bad taste.

In the ongoing battle to improve the water quality of Lake Waco, the city's water source, the city has teamed up with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Texas Parks and Wildlife to implement a new plan. Stocking hybrid striped bass may be the key to a better tasting glass of water.

The problem begins upstream. Runoff from dairy farms drains into the Bosque River. The runoff, rich with manure, runs downstream and fertilizes phytoplankton in the lake. Although harmless, the phytoplankton is the source of the bad taste.

Stocking hybrids is part of a three-pronged attack that also calls for increasing aeration and planting native aquatic vegetation. Aerators will be added to the existing one across the face of the dam to increase the lake's oxygen levels. Through a coordination of local volunteers, water willow is to be planted to provide cover for existing predator fish. The hybrids will be introduced to control one of the lowest organisms in the food chain: phytoplankton.

Hybrids feed on gizzard shad, which feed on and zooplankton. Zooplankton feed on phytoplankton. If the hybrids cut down on the gizzard shad, the beneficial zooplankton can prey upon the phytoplankton.

The first stocking will take place this spring and release 42,325 fingerlings into Lake Waco. It is estimated that in three years the fish will have grown to 18 inches long. Statewide regulations require that the fish must be at least 18 inches to harvest, and the daily bag limit is



**WACKY WATER:** Officials hope hybrid bass will help control phytoplankton, which gives the drinking water pulled from Lake Waco a bad flavor. Photo by Travis Phillips, for Lone Star Outdoor News.

five. Stocking will cover a span of 5 years with the same number of fish stocked annually. Progress will be monitored by electro-shocking surveys and angler surveys.

A few local anglers voiced concerns about what effect the new fish might have on the largemouth bass population. John Tibbs, the local Inland Fisheries district supervisor with Texas Parks and Wildlife, told anglers at a meeting near the lake Feb. 16 that the largemouth bass fishery will not be harmed and will be monitored through the next five years. If any adverse effects on the largemouth are noticed, the stocking program will be terminated, Tibbs said.

Other anglers support the plan. "As a small business owner I welcome the chance to expand my operation," said Bob Maindelle, a fishing guide.

Members of the local Bass Anglers Sportsman Society chapter also support the move and have volunteered their time and energy to assist the project.

"These fish are an excellent way to introduce kids to the sport of fishing and in doing so provide a future resource to help in the improvement of the lake's water quality," Maindelle said.

## Outdoor News in Brief

### STAR tournament ready for its 20th anniversary

More tagged redfish will be released this year as part of the 20th annual State of Texas Anglers Rodeo, set to begin May 23 and run through Sept. 7.

Instead of the 60 tagged redfish normally released, the Texas Ford Dealers Board approved a 50-percent increase to celebrate the 20th anniversary, meaning 90 tagged fish will be released.

According to the Coastal Conservation Association, on average about one-third of the tagged redfish are caught each year, most by anglers who weren't registered for the tournament at the time of catch. In 2008, 17 tagged redfish were caught, but only three registered anglers drove home the prize: a truck-boat combo.

This year's top prize will be a 2009 Ford F-150 Texas Edition truck with a Haynie 23 Big-foot boat.

Participants who sign up by May 22 also will

have a shot at the Early Bird drawings, including a 21-foot Shoalwater Catamaran with a Mercury 150 motor and McClain trailer, for those 21 and up, and 20 other prizes.

— Staff report

### Anglers aid struggling lunker bass at Lake Fork

Lake Fork guide James Caldemeyer and clients Brian Ketterer and Shannon Spear of Conroe recently helped revive a 14.68-pound largemouth bass that will be used in the state's breeding program.

Caldemeyer saw the struggling fish swimming slowly near the surface, and caught it with his net, he said.

They took the fish to Lake Fork Marina, where its air bladder was punctured to release air so it could submerge and swim upright.

After checking with game wardens, the fish was accepted into the ShareLunker program.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report

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## GAME WARDEN BLOTTER

### QUARTER-TON OF POT FOUND AT FALCON

Game wardens found almost 550 pounds of marijuana on a boat attempting to cross Falcon Lake from Mexico into the United States. About 6 p.m., Jim Hogg County Game Warden Brad Meloni and Zapata County Game Warden Roy Martinez spotted a boat enter Texas waters from Mexico. Meloni contacted Zapata County Game Warden Jacob Philley and Starr County Game Warden John Palacios to tell them of the vessel. Shortly after, Philley and Palacios observed the vessel heading toward the back of a cove. Philley and Palacios attempted to contact the vessel, but the operators refused to stop. A short pursuit ended when the men beached the boat and fled on foot. Philley pursued the two men through brush and arrested one of them. Upon inspection of the abandoned vessel, Philley and Palacios discovered 23 bundles of marijuana hidden under old blankets. The drugs, boat and motor were seized.

### DEALER CITED FOR ANIMAL, PELT

A Crockett County resident was reported to be buying fur without a retail fur dealers license. Game Warden Mark Blount presented evidence to the suspect, who was then willing to sign the citations issued. Three cases were filed: two for purchasing a fur-bearing animal without a license and one for purchasing an untagged bobcat pelt. Cases are pending.

### WEBB COUNTY RANCH NOT THEIRS TO HUNT

Three hunters fell victim to men selling hunts on South Texas land, where they didn't have permission to hunt. The hunters purchased the hunt on a popular online classified ad. They became suspicious of their guides when they meticulously cleaned out deer blinds after use and covered up blood spots with dirt. At one point, a hunter asked one of the guides if they were hunting on another person's prop-

### It's a thief, it's a crook, it's a ...

Nueces County Game Wardens Jimmy Lindsey and Les Casterline received a strange call for assistance relating to removing an unwanted subject from a jewelry

store. The wardens arrived at the store to find a large crowd gathered and yelling, "It's inside!" The wardens cautiously entered the store to find a brown pelican stroll-

ing up and down the display case doing its best to get to the shiny objects behind the glass. The wardens removed the pelican and released it to a more natural area.

erty, and the guide replied yes. Webb County Game Wardens Michael Hummert, Colt Gaulden and Capt. David Murray investigated, and six warrants were issued for the guides. The men turned themselves in to Hummert and Gaulden and were booked into the Webb County Jail. Cases are pending for hunting without landowner consent and taking game without landowner consent for a javelina and a 12-point white-tailed buck.

### PET DEER SHOT IN LUBBOCK

Three men were arrested in connection with the death of a pet fallow deer at a Lubbock County petting zoo. The deer was shot from the roadway, and the three men were apprehended. Felony charges will be filed. Lubbock County Game Warden Don Taylor worked on a joint investigation with the Lubbock County Sheriff's Office.

### FISH TRUCK, BUYER NOT LICENSED

While checking for commercial licenses, Grayson County Game Warden Jim Ballard stopped a fish truck from Arkansas that was hauling and selling fish at all of the local feed stores. It was determined that neither it nor the place of business had a license to sell fish. Cases pending.

### FISHING TRIP CUT SHORT

A Trinity River angler lost time on the water when a game warden discovered an arrest warrant for him. San Jacinto County Game Warden Brian Scott checked the man, who did not have his license with him. The man

had an expired Texas ID card and said he had a current fishing license. After checking with the communications office, it was determined the man did have a current fishing license but also had a warrant for a probation violation.

### CAST NET CATCH NOT HIDDEN WELL ENOUGH

Poachers at Lake Casa Blanca tried to hide their catch from Webb County Game Wardens Michael Hummert and Colt Gaulden, but they were found anyway. Hummert and Gaulden were patrolling when they noticed a boat tied near private land. Two juvenile occupants said they were waiting for their uncle and his friends to return from fishing. Four fishermen told the wardens they had caught nothing, but a stringer of fish containing numerous flathead catfish, undersized bass and tilapia were found in the brush where they had tried to hide them. The only equipment the men had were cast nets. Multiple citations pending, and the equipment was seized.

### HABIT OF STEALING CATALYTIC CONVERTERS MIGHT NOT BE BROKEN

A man's hunt led to his charges against him for stealing catalytic converters. Montgomery County Warden Brannon Meinkowsky received a call about three men who had just shot a deer from a public road. The men, in possession of a yearling buck, were detained by the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office until Meinkowsky arrived. In their vehicle, Meinkowsky found four catalytic converters. When a criminal history was run on one of the men, it was found that he had previously been arrested for stealing cata-

lytic converters in Conroe. Although no converters had been reported stolen recently in Conroe, a check through the sheriff's office showed that several catalytic converters had been stolen in the area within the previous few days. Charges are pending.

### PAINT-CAN CODES TELL ALL

Palo Pinto County Game Warden David Modgling used codes on paint cans to find who illegally dumped them. Modgling discovered the cans and found the purchaser's name and address at the store where they were sold. After visiting with the resident, cases were filed on two men the homeowner had hired to paint his house. Cases pending.

### CAST THE LURE, NOT THE ROD

While checking bank fishermen at Lake Benbrook, Tarrant County Game Warden Ronald Mathis observed two men fishing, each holding a fishing pole. When Mathis approached, only one was fishing and the second fishing pole was gone. The second man admitted to throwing his pole in the water because he did not have a fishing license. Case pending.

### TOO LATE FOR TURKEY AT RUNNELS COUNTY BAR

A man who shot a turkey out of season was found in a bar with the turkey in the bed of his pickup. Runnels County Warden Lane Pinckney received information about the hen and saw it. The pickup's owner admitted to shooting the turkey earlier in the day. Case pending.

### BOATER ARRESTED AT LAKE CASA BLANCA

While checking boats on Lake Casa Blanca, Webb County Game Wardens Michael Hummert and Colt Gaulden were approached by a fisherman and his daughter. The man said that a maroon and white ski boat was driving recklessly. The boat had passed by so closely that it pulled line off his reel and rocked his boat violently. While looking for the boat, the wardens were stopped by another fisherman, who complained about the same boat. The wardens located the boat and stopped it to perform a water safety inspection. The driver was arrested for boating while intoxicated, refused a breath analysis and was transported to the Webb County Jail. Case pending.

### NO CONSENT TO HUNT FOR FUTURE SERVICE MEMBERS

Two individuals who apparently shot a black buck antelope without the landowner's consent nearly had their plans of serving in the military dashed. The landowner reported a window on his residence had been broken by a rifle shot. Gillespie County Game Wardens Sam Harris and Scott Krueger, with Kerr County Game Warden Kenny Lee, followed the bullet's trajectory and discovered the shot came from behind the house and a privacy fence. Blood and hair were found on the back fence with a drag going across a field into a neighboring ranch. While investigating, the officers contacted the two individuals while they were driving an ATV on the adjacent property. The men told the officers they had shot the antelope across the fence with a high-power rifle and climbed the 8-foot fence to retrieve it. The shot had traveled through the animal, through a privacy fence, through a deck chair and through the homeowner's window. The two were young adults who were scheduled to enter the military within the next few months. The landowner and the prosecutor deferred to the charge of hunting without landowner consent instead of the deadly/reckless conduct charge the duo could have faced. Cases pending.

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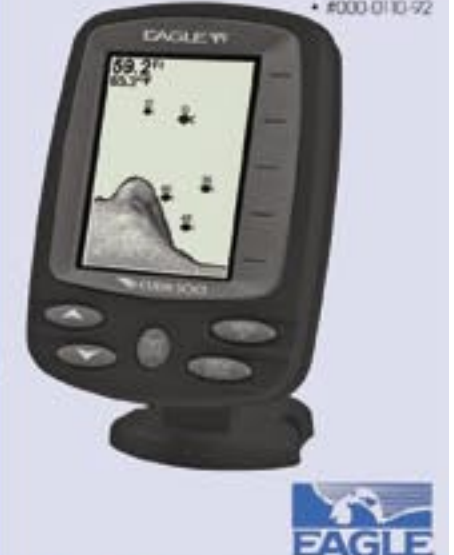


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## LARGEMOUTH BASS

# Off the beaten path, in between the kings

## Lesser-known lakes produce big bass around state

By Craig Nyhus  
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

When it comes to big bass fishing, famous lakes come to the mind of most anglers. Fork. Choke Canyon. Falcon. Amistad. Big Sam. And, especially this year, Conroe. But worth a try are a few of the more hidden hotspots scattered across Texas, well-known to locals and some hard-core others, that produce good numbers of lunker largemouths.

### Lake Raven

Mark Taylor of Groveton has fished the catch-and-release only Lake Raven, located in Huntsville State Park in Walker County, for years with his friend, Matt Miliff.

"We go there at least once a week this time of year," he said. "It's a great place for a person to catch a big bass. It's a small lake (203.5 acres), and it gets some pressure on the weekends so we try to go during the week."

The 46-year-old Taylor said the lake level has been drawn down for some repairs, changing the fishing approach.

"We usually fish tubes and off-brand senkos, but with the level down we were fishing points and ravines near the points, and we're using different baits."

On Feb. 1, Taylor decided to go with a crankbait — and it paid off with an 11-pound, 11-ounce largemouth, netted by his friend.

"There are good bass in there,"



**HIDDEN TREASURES:** Some of the lakes anglers drive past on the way to the more famous bass fisheries hold their share of big bass. Photo by David J. Sams, LSON.

he said. "And in the summer you get some huge blow-ups throwing a topwater frog over the lily pads."

### Lake Somerville

David Doonan, a recreational and tournament angler, fishes the 11,456-acre lake in Washington County regularly. Thanks to good spawns and stocking efforts, the bass fishing has hit its stride, he said.

"Also, the greatly reduced numbers of white bass in the lake have helped the shad numbers flourish

— that has helped the black bass population greatly," he said. "It isn't uncommon in the summer to have days where you catch 40-50 fish in an afternoon."

"The lake has low water levels this year and is fishing very differently. Usually this time of year anglers target creeks and coves with reeds and lily pad stems, but those areas are high and dry."

This year, Doonan is focusing on brush piles and rocks.

"The predominant color has

been junebug soft plastics, but red shad and green pumpkin also works well," he said. "Lately, the go-to lure has been jigs in PB and J and variations of green pumpkin."

Steven Vela of Lyons landed a 13.6-pound largemouth on March 4, a new lake record. He was using a jig.

### Lake Brownwood

The 6,490-acre lake located in Brown County is known to its anglers as a good lake for numbers of quality fish, although giants are uncommon.

"The lake is old (built in 1931) and doesn't have much vegetation," said Tully Hair, former president of the Brownwood Bass Club. "But if you want to catch fish, it's real good."

Because the lake has little structure, Hair said, anglers focus their attention on boat docks and heading upriver.

"There are two major creeks, Pecan Bayou and Jim Ned, and you can go five miles up each of them," he said. "It's like real river fishing with a lot of hanging willows and lay-down logs."

Most people pitch jigs or worms on the lake, and Hair recommended spinnerbaits upriver, but said not to forget about the rocks.

"The lake has rocky banks," he said. "Throwing crankbaits there and off the points brings quality bass."

### Medina Lake

The 96-year-old lake 40 miles northwest of San Antonio used to be a top Texas bass lake. A 13.5-pound largemouth landed in 1943 held the state record until 1980.

The 5,426-acre lake has received

less attention more recently, but regulars say the fish are still there.

"It has a decent population," said Richard Drake, president of the San Antonio Bass Club. "It's a real pretty lake, too, with deep, clear water. It's like a mini-Amistad."

Drake said finesse fishing rules at the lower end of the lake, with light line and often drop-shot rigs.

"At the upper end, more traditional methods work," he said. "And upriver you can find off-colored water."

Last spring, Drake received a 9-pound surprise.

"I was pulling the kids on wake boards," he said. "They were taking their time so I pulled a rod out and made one cast with a senko and it hit. The big motor was still running. I landed the fish and went back to pulling them."

### Fayette County Reservoir

The power plant 10 miles east of La Grange has become popular with area fishermen, but many still don't know about its production of good bass.

"I think the slot limit (14-24 inches) is one of the reasons, said Mike Lott of Humble, who won a benefit tournament on the lake last month. "And the lake has a lot of structure with rocks in water that drops from 2 to 18 feet, and it has a lot of grass and vegetation."

Lott said the constant current is a plus on the lake as well. The warmer water has the spawn almost complete, and Lott said shaky heads with 4-inch worms are the best bet.

"I would fish the dam side at 5- to 6-foot depths," he said. "And I would fish the rock line near the discharge and Texas rigs around the timber."

## Babying bass helps survival

The handling of bass, especially large ones, influences their survival rate. Excited anglers who want to show off their trophies should use care to keep their lunker alive.

Removing fish from the livewell or holding tank for photographs stresses the fish, increases the chance the fish will get fungal infections where touched and multiplies the risk of serious injury such as a broken jaw.

"If anglers would just take one or two pictures and then leave the fish alone, it might not get as stressed," said TPW biologist Juan Martinez. "Other problems we see are fish coming in with missing scales or scrapes, which might come from being held in a wire basket or small container, from spawning activity or brushing against trees."

The following tips for handling big bass will help anglers avoid injuring them.

- Touch the fish as little as necessary.
- Wet your hands before handling the fish.

- Using your dominant hand, grip the fish with your thumb inside the mouth and your fingers locked on the outside of the mouth. Support the rear of the fish with your other hand placed beneath the fish just forward of the tail.

- Lift the fish out of the water in a horizontal position using both hands for support.

- Do not hold the fish by the lower jaw in a vertical position. This can dislocate or break the jaw, practically guaranteeing the fish will not survive, because it will not be able to eat.

- Handle the fish only when putting it into a livewell or holding tank. Do not keep the fish out of water or keep removing it from the water for photographs.

- If you must handle the fish, try to do so out of the wind. Wind can dry out the eyes very quickly and result in damage.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report

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## Spring Turkey Season Dates 2009

### Eastern Turkey

East Texas (43 counties): **April 1-30**

**Mandatory check stations**

### Rio Grande Turkey

North Zone (101 counties): **April 4-May 17**

\*Special Youth Season: **March 28-29 and May 23-24**

South Zone (54 counties): **March 21-May 3**

\*Special Youth Season: **March 14-15 and May 9-10**

One-Turkey Bag Limit (eight counties): **April 1-30**

\*No Special Youth Season



## Sand trout

Continued from Page 8

up in late December or early January.

"We had potentially tied or broken the record five or six or seven times," Barghi said.

But many of the fish sizes were questionable, he said, and none was definite until

the record fish was landed.

They will keep fishing the area, Barghi said, and a defensive Spencer might join them.

"That guy has more body of water records than anybody I've met," Barghi said. Holding the sand trout record is "just kinda like bragging rights until Fil gets his record back."

## Speak out

To make a public comment on proposed regulations changes ...

... write to Public Comment, TPWD, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744

... call (800) 792-1112

... e-mail robert.macdonald@tpwd.state.tx.us.

The public comment period ends March 25. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission will make final determinations on the proposed changes at its meetings March 26-27.

## Comment

Continued from Page 1

remaining the state's sole archery-only county despite proposals to allow rifle hunting. Flounder anglers faced potentially more severe restrictions, but current proposals are less stringent after scoping meetings and public comments.

But at the public hearing in San Antonio on March 3, only two people signed up to speak.

Kurt Hintze of San Antonio told Texas Parks and Wildlife officials that he believed a proposal to reduce the take of trophy alligator gar from the current unlimited bag limit to one per day has been understudied.

"I have heard from a lot of people (at TPW), and not one of them can define what is a trophy gar," he said. "I believe there should be some restrictions, but I have been bow hunting gar for 20 years, and I see greater numbers now than I ever have in the past."

Kyle Spiller, leader of the Coastal Fisheries Division Upper Laguna Madre Ecosystem, had opened the meeting by stating that department officials have determined the alligator gar population is declining.

Studies in other Southern states indicate populations of the slow-growing alligator gar have declined — especially the larger, older fish — and Texas may be the last place to fish for a trophy.

Hintze disagreed.

"I can go out on any given night and see three to 15 alligator gar," he said. "I do think you

should protect those that are 7 feet long or longer, particularly the females. Maybe you should try a tag system like you do with redfish."

Proposed flounder regulation changes to reduce recreational and commercial bag limits and to close the season during November were on Mark Peterson's mind.

"I understand that the resource needs to be protected," Peterson said. "But I think it is kind of a heavy-handed approach for the recreational fisherman."

The proposal calls for the recreational bag limit to be reduced from the current 10 to five per day and for the commercial bag to be cut from the current 60 to 30 per day. The proposed November ban on all flounder fishing is designed to protect the species during its breeding season.

"It appears that the recreational fishermen and commercial fishermen are being impacted the very same way," Peterson said.

Comments at meetings in Childress and Lufkin focused on deer regulations. Some attendees in East Texas didn't like the antler restrictions proposed for Angelina and other counties.

The *Lufkin Daily News* reported that Lewis Stewart, a local deer hunter, had concerns.

"The new rules will put hunters who make an honest mistake at odds with game wardens," he said. "In our hunting club you can be kicked out if you receive a ticket."

Most hunters at the meeting asked for and received clarification of the proposed rule changes in their areas.



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March 26-29 <b>DIAMOND DRIVE</b> Lake Dardanelle - Russellville, Arkansas	June 3-6 <b>TENNESSEE TRIUMPH</b> Kentucky Lake - Paris, Tennessee
April 2-5 <b>DIXIE DUEL</b> Wheeler Lake - Decatur, Alabama	June 11-14 <b>RIVER RUMBLE</b> Mississippi River - Ft. Madison, Iowa
April 23-26 <b>BLUE RIDGE BRAWL</b> Smith Mountain Lake - Moneta, Virginia	August 13-16 <b>CHAMPION'S CHOICE</b> Onesta Lake - Syracuse, New York

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# HEROES



**SHANA SMITH**, 10, of Clarendon shot a 10-point buck with a 20-inch spread in the Panhandle.



**FORREST EASON** of Montgomery, **MIKE EASON** of McKinney and **GREG EASON** of The Woodlands bagged several pheasants near Aberdeen, S.D.



**ANTHONY WITEK**, 11, of Cibolo shot an 8-point mule deer buck, his first buck, in the Panhandle.



**DEVLIN MARK MILLS**, 11, of Pearland shot his first deer, an eight-point buck white-tail, in South Texas.



**MARK TAYLOR** caught a largemouth bass weighing 11 pounds, 11 ounces at Lake Raven in Huntsville State Park.

## SHARE AN ADVENTURE

Want to share your great hunting or fishing photos with the *Lone Star Outdoor News* family? Send your photo, phone number and caption information to [editor@lonestaroutdoornews.com](mailto:editor@lonestaroutdoornews.com) or **Heroes, Lone Star Outdoor News, 9304 Forest Lane, Suite 114 South, Dallas, TX, 75243.**

## This Month's Youth

# SnapShot

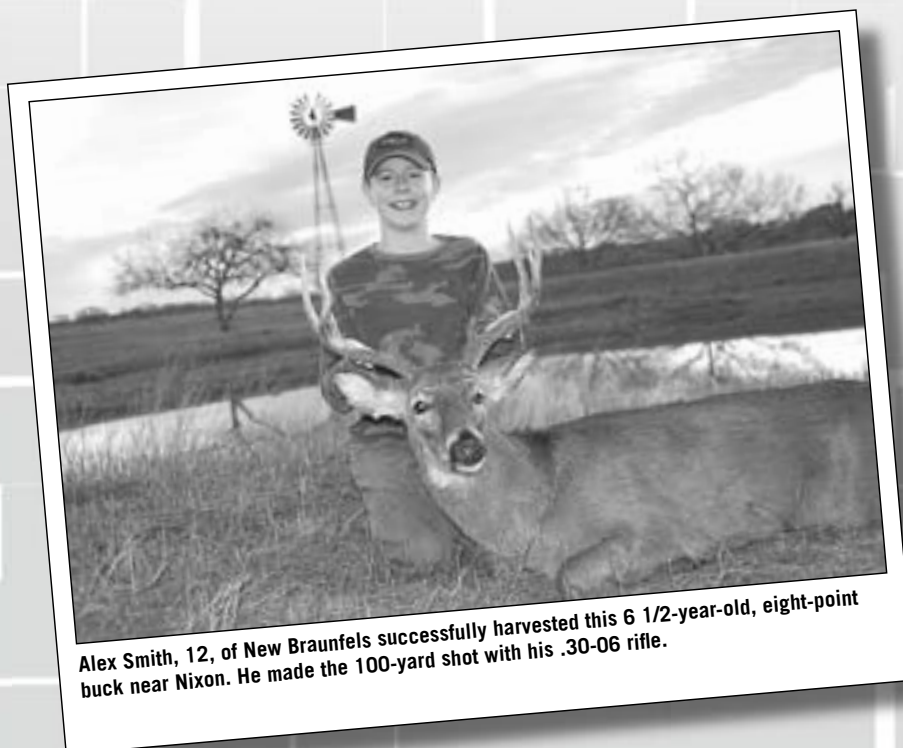
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Alex Smith, 12, of New Braunfels successfully harvested this 6 1/2-year-old, eight-point buck near Nixon. He made the 100-yard shot with his .30-06 rifle.



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# DATEBOOK

**March 14**  
**Dog Snakeproofing Clinic**  
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 Ennis  
 (972) 878-2600

**Billy Sandifer Big Shell Beach Cleanup**  
 Padre Island National Seashore  
 Malaquite Pavilion  
 Billysandifer@stx.rr.com

**Casting for Recovery Benefit**  
 Sportsman's Finest  
 Austin  
 (512) 263-1888

**March 17**  
**Texins Archery Club**  
 After School Archery Program (six weeks)  
 Dallas  
 www.dallasarchery.com

**March 19**  
**Dallas Safari Club**  
 Monthly meeting  
 Bent Tree Country Club  
 (972) 980-9800  
 www.biggame.org

**Frisco Ducks Unlimited**  
 March Madness Raffle  
 Fundraiser  
 3rd Base Sports Bar  
 (214) 403-3825

**Guadalupe County National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 Seguin Guadalupe County Coliseum  
 (830) 491-8730

**Alvin Ducks Unlimited**  
 Fundraiser  
 Knights of Columbus Hall  
 (281) 393-1100

**Big Country National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 Whitney Theater  
 Albany  
 (325) 795-2887

**Texins Archery Club**  
 After School Archery Program (six weeks)  
 Dallas  
 www.dallasarchery.com

**March 20**  
**Abilene Intercollegiate Ducks Unlimited**  
 Fundraiser  
 Lytle Bend Ranch  
 (325) 665-9928

**March 21**  
**Bass Champs South Region**  
 Tournament  
 Choke Canyon Reservoir  
 (817) 439-3274  
 basschamps.com

**March 22**  
**Lake Fork Team Trail**  
 Tournament  
 (214) 477-8673  
 luke@lakeforkteamtrail.com

**March 24**  
**Hopkins County National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 Hopkins County Civic Center  
 (903) 885-4804

**March 26**  
**Colorado Valley Coastal Conservation Association**  
 Fundraiser  
 La Grange  
 Knights of Columbus Hall  
 (713) 626-4222

**Uvalde National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 Oasis Restaurant  
 (830) 591-0742

**March 27**  
**Heart of the Hills Coastal Conservation Association**  
 Fundraiser  
 Waring  
 Don Strange Ranch  
 (713) 626-4222

**Cooke County National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 Gainesville Civic Center  
 (940) 902-3144

**Lake Whitney National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 Meridian Civic Community Center  
 (254) 635-4071

**March 28**  
**Dallas Woods and Waters Club**  
 Annual banquet  
 Plano Centre  
 (214) 570-8700

**Texas Redfish Series**  
 Tournament  
 Port Aransas  
 www.redfishseries.com

**Corpus Christi Knights of Columbus**  
 Bay fishing tournament  
 Port Aransas  
 Woody's Sport Center  
 (361) 739-5035

**Hood County National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 DeCordova Bend  
 (817) 573-7700

**April 1**  
**Houston Safari Club**  
 Monthly meeting with speaker Bill Carter  
 Omni Hotel  
 (713) 623-8844

**April 2**  
**Grand Prairie Ducks Unlimited**  
 Fundraiser  
 Ruthe Jackson Center  
 (214) 957-2449

**South Texas National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 Bee County Expo Center  
 (888) 740-2220

**Brazoria County Coastal Conservation Association**  
 Fundraiser  
 Lake Jackson Civic Center  
 (713) 626-4222

**Cat Springs Coastal Conservation Association**  
 Fundraiser  
 Cat Springs Hall  
 (713) 626-4222

**Texas A&M Coastal Conservation Association**  
 Fundraiser  
 Brazos Center  
 (713) 626-4222

**April 3**  
**Cross Timbers National Wild Turkey Federation**  
 Fundraiser  
 Decatur Civic Center  
 (940) 627-4200

**Texas City Coastal Conservation Association**  
 Fundraiser  
 Nessler Center  
 (713) 626-4222

**April 4**  
**Bass Champs Central Region**  
 Tournament  
 Lake LBJ, McNair Park  
 (817) 439-3274

**Dallas Safari Club Gray Thornton Big Bore Shoot**  
 Texas Pistol Academy  
 Whitewright  
 (903) 364-2076

**Redfish Bay Coastal Conservation Association**  
 Fundraiser  
 Port Aransas Civic Center  
 (713) 626-4222



## Artist

Continued from Page 6

often paints animals in pairs, trying to show the relationships animals share, how humans have similar relationships and how humans and animals are linked through these relationships.

"To me, it's fascinating, totally fas-

inating," she said.

Admirers at the Dallas Safari Club's annual Convention and Sporting Expo appreciate the pairings and have become some of her top collectors, she said. The receptive crowd has given her a niche.

"It encouraged me to do larger, more intense pieces because I had an audience there," she said.

## Winter Texans

Continued from Page 1

On Feb. 27, Tucker landed the first black drum, a 42-incher. After landing and releasing the air from the fish's bladder, the fish was released. Regulations require all fish over 30 inches in length be released.

Winter Texans are known for keeping fish to eat, but not this group.

"I've never caught one under 30 inches," Tucker said. "I just like catching them."

His friends from Fresno, Calif., introduce themselves as brothers, but their names give them away — Jerry Cole and Kevin Walch.

"We just tell people we're brothers," Walch said. "We worked together and we're both retired (from the U.S. Postal Service). We're both divorced. We share expenses and travel together."

The friends, who all pull their RVs to Port A for the winter, used to fish at the South Jetty.

"We had a group of 20 to 30 guys for eight years," Cole said. "We called it the Society of South Jetty Fishermen. Most stayed at the Island RV. They came from all over, even Canada."

The society had a prize, the Golden Pole Holder.

"It's a 2-inch piece of PVC pipe," Cole said. "The guy who caught the biggest fish each week would write his name, date and the size of the fish on the pipe. Each week we would have a new holder of the Golden Pole."

The group has since broken up.

"Some guys passed away, and oth-

ers got too old to come back," Tucker said. "One guy, Rich, he always had his German shepherd with him. He died and had some of his ashes scattered off of the South Jetty."

Not all anglers on the seawall are winter Texans, though. Phil Cooper, a local, joins the group many mornings.

"Who do you think taught these guys how to fish?" Cooper asked.

Just up the seawall, Jim Hartji of International Falls, Minn., the town famous as the coldest place in the nation this time of year, was fighting another big black drum.

But there was a problem. A freighter was coming down the channel, and its huge wake would likely push the fighting fish into the rocks, allowing it to break free.

Hartji hurried to bring in the fish, but it wasn't cooperating. Just as the wake was about to hit, he brought the 43-inch, 43.8-pound fish close, and his friend, another Minnesotan, was able to get it in the net.

Other winter Texans still head to the South Jetty, where Gary Benson of Branson, Mo., and George Bowen of Crawford, Colo., were catching and keeping a few sheephead.

Both were regulars to the jetty, even with big south winds spraying saltwater over the rocks.

"I caught two reds yesterday," Benson said. "One was 32 inches and the other was 35. And George caught one that went 38."

Their advice for fishing the rocks?

"Bring plenty of tackle, you break off a lot," Benson said. "I'm a trout fisherman from Colorado. I don't like that part."

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3/12	12:29p/6:40p	9:15a/3:04a	12:35p/6:46p	9:21a/3:10a
3/13	12:54a/7:06a	9:38p/3:27p	1:00a/7:12a	9:44p/3:33p
3/14	1:18p/7:29p	9:55a/3:44a	1:24p/7:35p	10:01a/3:50a
3/15	1:45a/7:57a	10:17p/4:06p	1:51a/8:03a	10:23p/4:12p
3/16	2:09p/8:21p	10:33a/4:23a	2:15p/8:27p	10:39a/4:29a
3/17	2:39a/8:51a	10:55p/4:44p	2:45a/8:57a	11:01p/4:50p
3/18	3:03p/9:15p	11:13a/5:02a	3:09p/9:21p	11:19a/5:08a
3/19	3:33a/9:45a	11:35p/5:24p	3:39a/9:51a	11:41p/5:30p
3/20	3:58p/10:10p	11:56a/5:45a	4:04p/10:16p	12:02p/5:51a
3/21	4:28a/10:40a	---/6:07p	4:34a/10:46a	4:28a/6:13p
3/22	4:53p/11:06p	12:18a/6:31a	4:59p/11:12p	4:53p/6:37a
3/23	5:22a/11:34a	12:15p/6:55p	5:28a/11:40a	5:22a/7:01p
3/24	5:47p/---	1:11a/7:24a	5:53p/---	5:47p/7:30a
3/25	6:14a/12:00a	1:36p/7:49p	6:20a/12:06a	6:14a/7:55p
3/26	6:39p/12:26p	2:08a/8:22a	6:45p/12:32p	6:39p/8:28a
3/27	7:04a/12:51a	2:35p/8:49p	7:10a/12:57a	7:04a/8:55p
3/28	7:28p/1:16p	3:10a/9:24a	7:34p/1:22p	7:28p/9:30a
3/29	7:50a/1:38a	3:39p/9:54p	7:56a/1:44a	7:50a/10:00p
3/30	8:14p/2:02p	4:15a/10:30a	8:20p/2:08p	8:14p/10:36a
3/31	8:34a/2:22a	4:45p/11:01p	8:40a/2:28a	8:34a/11:07p

### Tides

	High	Low	High	Low	Freeport	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
<b>Sabine Pass</b>													
3/11	3:46 a.m.	10:59 a.m.	4:13 p.m.	10:52 p.m.	3/11	3:47 a.m.	10:29 a.m.	4:14 p.m.	10:22 p.m.	3/11	3:55 a.m.	10:07 a.m.	4:22 p.m.
3/12	4:58 a.m.	11:45 a.m.	4:27 p.m.	11:33 p.m.	3/12	4:59 a.m.	11:15 a.m.	4:28 p.m.	11:03 p.m.	3/12	5:07 a.m.	10:53 a.m.	4:36 p.m.
3/13	6:09 a.m.	12:33 p.m.	4:37 p.m.	---	3/13	6:10 a.m.	12:03 p.m.	4:38 p.m.	11:45 p.m.	3/13	6:18 a.m.	11:41 a.m.	4:46 p.m.
3/14	7:22 a.m.	12:15 a.m.	4:38 p.m.	1:26 p.m.	3/14	7:23 a.m.	12:56 p.m.	4:39 p.m.	---	3/14	7:31 a.m.	12:34 p.m.	4:47 p.m.
3/15	8:40 a.m.	12:58 a.m.	---	---	3/15	8:41 a.m.	12:28 a.m.	---	---	3/15	8:49 a.m.	12:06 a.m.	---
3/16	10:12 a.m.	1:46 a.m.	---	---	3/16	10:13 a.m.	1:16 a.m.	---	---	3/16	10:21 a.m.	12:54 a.m.	---
3/17	12:46 p.m.	2:41 a.m.	---	---	3/17	12:47 p.m.	2:11 a.m.	---	---	3/17	12:55 p.m.	1:49 a.m.	---
3/18	2:37 p.m.	3:47 a.m.	---	---	3/18	2:38 p.m.	3:17 a.m.	---	---	3/18	2:46 p.m.	2:55 a.m.	---
3/19	3:14 p.m.	5:01 a.m.	---	---	3/19	3:15 p.m.	4:31 a.m.	---	---	3/19	3:23 p.m.	4:09 a.m.	---
3/20	3:15 p.m.	6:11 a.m.	---	---	3/20	3:16 p.m.	5:41 a.m.	---	---	3/20	3:24 p.m.	5:19 a.m.	---
3/21	3:00 p.m.	7:08 a.m.	11:05 p.m.	9:01 p.m.	3/21	3:01 p.m.	6:38 a.m.	11:06 p.m.	8:31 p.m.	3/21	3:09 p.m.	6:37 a.m.	10:53 p.m.
3/22	2:56 p.m.	7:55 a.m.	---	8:40 p.m.	3/22	2:57 p.m.	7:25 a.m.	---	8:10 p.m.	3/22	3:05 p.m.	7:03 a.m.	---
3/23	12:30 a.m.	8:34 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	8:49 p.m.	3/23	12:31 a.m.	8:04 a.m.	3:01 p.m.	8:19 p.m.	3/23	12:39 a.m.	7:42 a.m.	3:09 p.m.
3/24	1:40 a.m.	9:10 a.m.	3:06 p.m.	9:11 p.m.	3/24	1:41 a.m.	8:40 a.m.	3:07 p.m.	8:41 p.m.	3/24	1:49 a.m.	8:18 a.m.	3:15 p.m.
3/25	2:45 a.m.	9:46 a.m.	3:13 p.m.	9:39 p.m.	3/25	2:46 a.m.	9:16 a.m.	3:14 p.m.	9:09 p.m.	3/25	2:54 a.m.	8:54 a.m.	3:22 p.m.
3/26	3:48 a.m.	10:24 a.m.	3:17 p.m.	10:11 p.m.	3/26	3:49 a.m.	9:54 a.m.	3:18 p.m.	9:41 p.m.	3/26	3:57 a.m.	9:32 a.m.	3:26 p.m.
3/27	4:50 a.m.	11:05 a.m.	3:19 p.m.	10:47 p.m.	3/27	4:51 a.m.	10:35 a.m.	3:20 p.m.	10:17 p.m.	3/27	4:59 a.m.	10:13 a.m.	3:28 p.m.
3/28	5:53 a.m.	11:47 a.m.	3:16 p.m.	11:28 p.m.	3/28	5:54 a.m.	11:17 a.m.	3:17 p.m.	10:58 p.m.	3/28	6:02 a.m.	10:55 a.m.	3:25 p.m.
3/29	7:00 a.m.	12:31 p.m.	3:07 p.m.	---	3/29	7:01 a.m.	12:01 p.m.	3:08 p.m.	11:44 p.m.	3/29	7:09 a.m.	11:39 a.m.	3:16 p.m.
3/30	8:13 a.m.	12:14 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	1:14 p.m.	3/30	8:14 a.m.	12:44 p.m.	3:01 p.m.	---	3/30	8:22 a.m.	12:22 p.m.	2:48 p.m.
3/31	9:37 a.m.	1:08 a.m.	---	---	3/31	9:38 a.m.	12:38 a.m.	---	---	3/31	9:46 a.m.	12:16 a.m.	---
<b>Port Bolivar</b>					<b>Pass Cavallo</b>					<b>South Padre Island</b>			
3/11	6:01 a.m.	11:46 a.m.	6:28 p.m.	11:39 p.m.	3/11	5:04 a.m.	10:17 a.m.	5:31 p.m.	10:10 p.m.	3/11	3:39 a.m.	10:24 a.m.	3:57 p.m.
3/12	7:13 a.m.	12:32 p.m.	6:42 p.m.	---	3/12	6:16 a.m.	11:03 a.m.	5:45 p.m.	10:51 p.m.	3/12	5:03 a.m.	11:20 a.m.	3:43 p.m.
3/13	8:24 a.m.	12:20 a.m.	6:52 p.m.	1:20 p.m.	3/13	7:27 a.m.	11:51 a.m.	5:55 p.m.	11:33 p.m.	3/13	6:26 a.m.	12:23 p.m.	3:20 p.m.
3/14	9:37 a.m.	1:02 a.m.	6:53 p.m.	2:13 p.m.	3/14	8:40 a.m.	12:44 p.m.	5:56 p.m.	---	3/14	7:54 a.m.	---	---
3/15	10:55 a.m.	1:45 a.m.	---	---	3/15	9:58 a.m.	12:16 a.m.	---	---	3/15	9:35 a.m.	12:05 a.m.	---
3/16	12:27 p.m.	2:33 a.m.	---	---	3/16	11:30 a.m.	1:04 a.m.	---	---	3/16	11:37 a.m.	12:56 a.m.	---
3/17	3:01 p.m.	3:28 a.m.	---	---	3/17	2:04 p.m.	1:59 a.m.	---	---	3/17	1:21 p.m.	1:53 a.m.	---
3/18	4:52 p.m.	4:34 a.m.	---	---	3/18	3:55 p.m.	3:05 a.m.	---	---	3/18	2:24 p.m.	2:59 a.m.	---
3/19	5:29 p.m.	5:48 a.m.	---	---	3/19	4:32 p.m.	4:19 a.m.	---	---	3/19	3:05 p.m.	4:10 a.m.	---
3/20	5:30 p.m.	6:58 a.m.	---	---	3/20	4:33 p.m.	5:29 a.m.	---	---	3/20	3:29 p.m.	5:16 a.m.	---
3/21	5:15 p.m.	7:55 a.m.	---	9:48 p.m.	3/21	4:18 p.m.	6:26 a.m.	---	8:19 p.m.	3/21	3:38 p.m.	6:13 a.m.	---
3/22	1:20 a.m.	8:42 a.m.	5:11 p.m.	9:27 p.m.	3/22	12:23 a.m.	7:13 a.m.	4:14 p.m.	7:58 p.m.	3/22	3:36 p.m.	7:03 a.m.	11:33 p.m.
3/23	2:45 a.m.	9:21 a.m.	5:15 p.m.	9:36 p.m.	3/23	1:48 a.m.	7:52 a.m.	4:18 p.m.	8:07 p.m.	3/23	3:28 p.m.	7:48 a.m.	---
3/24	3:55 a.m.	9:57 a.m.	5:21 p.m.	9:58 p.m.	3/24	2:58 a.m.	8:28 a.m.	4:24 p.m.	8:29 p.m.	3/24	1:15 a.m.	8:33 a.m.	3:19 p.m.
3/25	5:00 a.m.	10:33 a.m.	5:28 p.m.	10:26 p.m.	3/25	4:03 a.m.	9:04 a.m.	4:31 p.m.	8:57 p.m.	3/25	2:34 a.m.	9:21 a.m.	3:07 p.m.
3/26	6:03 a.m.	11:11 a.m.	5:32 p.m.	10:58 p.m.	3/26	5:06 a.m.	9:42 a.m.	4:35 p.m.	9:29 p.m.	3/26	3:47 a.m.	10:16 a.m.	2:52 p.m.
3/27	7:05 a.m.	11:52 a.m.	5:34 p.m.	11:34 p.m.	3/27	6:08 a.m.	10:23 a.m.	4:37 p.m.	10:05 p.m.	3/27	4:59 a.m.	11:23 a.m.	2:27 p.m.
3/28	8:08 a.m.	12:34 p.m.	5:31 p.m.	---	3/28	7:11 a.m.	11:05 a.m.	4:34 p.m.	10:46 p.m.	3/28	6:14 a.m.	10:38 p.m.	---
3/29	9:15 a.m.	12:15 a.m.	5:22 p.m.	1:18 p.m.	3/29	8:18 a.m.	11:49 a.m.	4:25 p.m.	11:32 p.m.	3/29	7:36 a.m.	11:25 p.m.	---
3/30	10:28 a.m.	1:01 a.m.	5:15 p.m.	2:01 p.m.	3/30	9:31 a.m.	12:32 p.m.	4:18 p.m.	---	3/30	9:10 a.m.	---	---
3/31	11:52 a.m.	1:55 a.m.	---	---	3/31	10:55 a.m.	12:26 a.m.	---	---	3/31	10:51 a.m.	12:20 a.m.	---
<b>San Luis Pass</b>					<b>Port O'Connor</b>					<b>Port Isabel</b>			
3/11	4:55 a.m.	11:28 a.m.	5:22 p.m.	11:21 p.m.	3/11	6:27 a.m.	1:30 p.m.	6:55 p.m.	---	3/11	4:54 a.m.	10:38 a.m.	5:21 p.m.
3/12	6:07 a.m.	12:14 p.m.	5:36 p.m.	---	3/12	8:10 a.m.	12:50 a.m.	6:18 p.m.	2:10 p.m.	3/12	6:06 a.m.	11:24 a.m.	5:35 p.m.
3/13	7:18 a.m.	12:02 a.m.	5:46 p.m.	1:02 p.m.	3/13	9:54 a.m.	1:37 a.m.	5:40 p.m.	2:46 p.m.	3/13	7:17 a.m.	12:12 p.m.	5:45 p.m.
3/14	8:31 a.m.	12:44 a.m.	5:47 p.m.	1:55 p.m.	3/14	12:14 p.m.	2:22 a.m.	4:52 p.m.	---	3/14	8:30 a.m.	1:05 p.m.	5:46 p.m.
3/15	9:49 a.m.	1:27 a.m.	---	---	3/15	4:49 p.m.	3:09 a.m.	---	---	3/15	9:48 a.m.	12:37 a.m.	---
3/16	11:21 a.m.	2:15 a.m.	---	---	3/16	5:27 p.m.	3:59 a.m.	---	---	3/16	11:20 a.m.	1:25 a.m.	---
3/17	1:55 p.m.	3:10 a.m.	---	---	3/17	6:12 p.m.	5:00 a.m.	---	---	3/17	1:54 p.m.	2:20 a.m.	---
3/18	3:46 p.m.	4:16 a.m.	---	---	3/18	6:58 p.m.	6:16 a.m.	---	---	3/18	3:45 p.m.	3:26 a.m.	---
3/19	4:23 p.m.	5:30 a.m.	---	---	3/19	7:44 p.m.	7:46 a.m.	---	---	3/19	4:22 p.m.	4:40 a.m.	---
3/20	4:24 p.m.	6:40 a.m.	---	---	3/20	8:27 p.m.	9:08 a.m.	---	---	3/20	4:23 p.m.	5:50 a.m.	---
3/21	4:09 p.m.	7:37 a.m.	---	9:30 p.m.	3/21	9:07 p.m.	10:14 a.m.	---	---	3/21	4:08 p.m.	6:47 a.m.	---
3/22	12:14 a.m.	8:24 a.m.	4:05 p.m.	9:09 p.m.	3/22	9:39 p.m.	11:08 a.m.	---	---	3/22	12:13 a.m.	7:34 a.m.	4:04 p.m.
3/23	1:39 a.m.	9:03 a.m.	4:09 p.m.	9:18 p.m.	3/23	---	11:55 a.m.	---	---	3/23	1:38 a.m.	8:13 a.m.	4:08 p.m.
3/24	2:49 a.m.	9:39 a.m.	4:15 p.m.	9:40 p.m.	3/24	3:50 a.m.	12:41 p.m.	8:26 p.m.	11:16 p.m.	3/24	2:48 a.m.	8:49 a.m.	4:14 p.m.
3/25	3:54 a.m.	10:15 a.m.	4:22 p.m.	10:08 p.m.	3/25	5:50 a.m.	1:31 p.m.	6:53 p.m.	11:44 p.m.	3/25	3:53 a.m.	9:25 a.m.	4:21 p.m.
3/26	4:57 a.m.	10:53 a.m.	4:26 p.m.	10:40 p.m.	3/26	7:26 a.m.	2:45 p.m.	4:56 p.m.	---	3/26	4:56 a.m.	10:03 a.m.	4:25 p.m.
3/27	5:59 a.m.	11:34 a.m.	4:28 p.m.	11:16 p.m.	3/27	9:03 a.m.	12:19 a.m.	---	---	3/27	5:58 a.m.	10:44 a.m.	4:27 p.m.
3/28	7:02 a.m.	12:16 p.m.	4:25 p.m.	11:57 p.m.	3/28	11:08 a.m.	12:57 a.m.	---	---	3/28	7:01 a.m.	11:26 a.m.	4:24 p.m.
3/29	8:09 a.m.	1:00 p.m.	4:16 p.m.	---	3/29	2:46 p.m.	1:41 a.m.	---	---	3/29	8:08 a.m.	12:10 p.m.	4:15 p.m.
3/30	9:22 a.m.	12:43 a.m.	4:09 p.m.	1:43 p.m.	3/30	4:14 p.m.	2:31 a.m.	---	---	3/30	9:21 a.m.	12:53 p.m.	4:08 p.m.
3/31	10:46 a.m.	1:37 a.m.	---	---	3/31	5:18 p.m.	3:28 a.m.	---	---	3/31	10:45 a.m.	12:47 a.m.	---

### Sun and Moon

	Houston	Dallas	San Antonio	Amarillo
3/11	7:36a/7:27p	7:44a/7:33p	7:48a/7:40p	8:03a/7:51p
3/12	7:35a/7:28p	7:42a/7:34p	7:47a/7:40p	8:02a/7:52p
3/13	7:34a/7:28p	7:41a/7:35p	7:46a/7:41p	8:00a/7:53p
3/14	7:32a/7:29p	7:40a/7:35p	7:45a/7:42p	7:59a/7:54p
3/15	7:31a/7:30p	7:38a/7:36p	7:44a/7:42p	7:58a/7:54p
3/16	7:30a/7:30p	7:37a/7:37p	7:43a/7:43p	7:56a/7:55p
3/17	7:29a/7:31p	7:36a/7:38p	7:41a/7:43p	7:55a/7:56p
3/18	7:28a/7:32p	7:35a/7:38p	7:40a/7:44p	7:53a/7:57p
3/19	7:26a/7:32p	7:33a/7:39p	7:39a/7:45p	7:52a/7:58p
3/20	7:25a/7:33p	7:32a/7:40p	7:38a/7:45p	7:50a/7:59p
3/21	7:24a/7:33p	7:31a/7:40p	7:37a/7:46p	7:49a/7:59p
3/22	7:23a/7:34p	7:29a/7:41p		

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# Deer stands that stand test of time

## Company built on men's knowledge and values

Rob Griffin and Bill Dellaughter's partnership began long before they went into business together to form Southern Deer Stands.

The Denton County residents became friends through their church's men's ministry.

"We really clicked after a men's camping retreat to Oklahoma and two trips to Biloxi, Miss., to assist with Hurricane Katrina recovery," Griffin said.

From there the two began hunting together. Both have backgrounds in the construction industry, so the company's formation was inevitable.

Dellaughter suggested they build deer blinds from insulated aluminum panels, for themselves, not as a company.

The insulated aluminum used in the blinds doesn't rust, rot or otherwise deteriorate, and they became a hot topic among the pair's friends.

"Of course, everyone wanted to know where we got the blinds, and as a result Southern Deer Stands was born," Griffin said.

Few other blind manufacturers use insulated aluminum, which has added value beside longevity. They are light, typically weighing less than 150 pounds. The light weight makes set up and moving easier.

Customers have a wide variety of stands to choose from. In addition to free-standing blinds, also available are trailer blinds, handicap-accessible blinds, duck blinds, camp houses for hunting and fishing and walk-in coolers — all made from the same aluminum insulated panels.

The company's offerings do not end with its standard products. Custom blinds

and fabrication, towers, ancillary parts such as deer-blind doors and windows, setup and delivery are also available.

"Give us a challenge, and we will do our best to provide a quality solution," Griffin said.

Griffin and Dellaughter each bring a unique business perspective to Southern Deer Stands. Griffin owned a cabinet shop and made custom reproduction furniture and cabinetry. He also worked as a technology and business consultant for more than 15 years.

Dellaughter, an Air Force veteran, owned a construction company and worked in the structural panel industry for more than 15 years.

They decided early on that their core business philosophy and business model would live inside their faith and values.

"Our faith plays an important role in how we do business," Griffin said. "From our vendor partners to our customers, we do business in the same manner we want to be treated, while providing a quality product and service."

The future of Southern Deer Stands will encompass all aspects of these goals: providing quality products in a way that corresponds with the men's values. More products are planned. The values will stay the same. The service will continue.

"We have some products on the horizon that we are developing and a growth strategy we believe is both realistic and in alignment with our core values," Griffin said. "We want to provide our customers with a quality product, service and relationship that lasts."

For more information, call Southern Deer Stands at 214-551-1530 or visit [www.southerndeerstands.com](http://www.southerndeerstands.com).

**TOP:** Two satisfied customers of Southern Deer Stands. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Rob Griffin aids in setup. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Trailer stands and several other products are also available.



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# All the elk you could want – and hunt

## Let's Tree It offers one-on-one hunts for top bulls

Yes, Reserve, N.M., is tiny and far-removed from the rest of the West (it's a 100-mile drive to the nearest Walmart). But many elk — and big ones — live in the surrounding Gila National Forest.

"When they're in the full rut, I can stand in my shop in downtown Reserve, which isn't very big, and hear them," said Debbie Boyer, who co-owns and operates Let's Tree It Outfitters with her husband, Tom.

The Boyers are taking clients after some of the biggest elk in the country. Their hunters likely see at least one bull per five-day hunt scoring 400 on the Boone and Crockett scale and perhaps 10 bulls the rest of the day scoring 350.

Recent harvests have included bulls scoring 375, 370 and 350, the latter two going to a hunter from Dallas.

"The elk don't have to migrate, and the winter's not so hard, so we have huge horn growth," Debbie Boyer said.

She estimated that 45 percent of the B&C elk harvested in the world come from in and around Gila National Forest.

The terrain is not difficult to hunt, either, like elk grounds in much of the Rocky Mountain West. Around Reserve, it's rolling hills covered in juniper, not sky-scraping, steep mountains of towering pine and fir.

Hunters are encouraged to apply now for their fall elk hunt. New Mexico's deadline for submitting tag applications is April 8.

Boyer suggested hunters apply through their company.

"In New Mexico, when you use an outfitter, you're in a separate pool, and you have a higher chance of drawing a hunt," Boyer said.

She also encouraged hunters to apply for an easier-to-obtain archery license.

Hunters with Let's Tree It, which also offers hunts for bear and mountain lion, stay in a motel in Reserve and travel, generally, less than 10 miles from town to hunt. After that, they walk maybe two miles per day.

The Boyers make all the accommodations: arranging the motel, transportation and meals. Breakfast is served by the Boyers, who also pack a lunch for hunters. At the end of the day, it's back to the Boyers' for dinner.

Debbie Boyer is a taxidermist, and the company works with a separate meat processor.

The company prides itself on its attention to customers. All of its hunts are guided one-on-one, one hunter per guide.

And that attention starts at the top. "Tom and I are the outfitters, and I guide elk hunters," Boyer said. "And the guides we have are all professional."

Many outfitters will put two hunters with one guide, but that doesn't fit with the Boyers.

"You can't hardly hunt two people with one guide," Boyer said. "It's not fair."

One-on-one hunts are a luxury not provided by larger outfitters, she said. The company doesn't take a lot of clients, and the Boyers' priority is helping clients fill their tags.

"If you're looking for a large operation, that's not us. We're more concerned about the quality of the hunt."

For more information, call Let's Tree It Outfitters at 575-533-6472 or visit [www.letstreeit.com](http://www.letstreeit.com).



Hunters with Let's Tree It Outfitters can pursue several animals, including black bear (above) and trophy elk (left).

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**Puzzle solution**  
from Page 16

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# FISHING REPORT

## HOT BITES LARGEMOUTH BASS



**BASTROP:** Very good on watermelon and watermelon red spinnerbaits, crankbaits, Rat-L-Traps and soft plastics.  
**CONROE:** Very good on pumpkinseed soft plastics and spinnerbaits.  
**GRANBURY:** Very good on chartreuse/black soft plastics and Rat-L-Traps over grass.  
**HOUSTON COUNTY:** Very good on brown/chartreuse Senkos and spinnerbaits near the marina in 6 feet.  
**SAM RAYBURN:** Very good on Carolina-rigged green pumpkin soft plastics, crankbaits and spinnerbaits.

## WHITE, HYBRID, STRIPER



**BROWNWOOD:** White bass are excellent on L'il Fishies, Rat-L-Traps and shad crankbaits.  
**TAWAKONI:** Striped bass and hybrid stripers are excellent on 4" Bass Assassins dead-sticked with a 1 oz. jighead.  
**AMISTAD:** Striped bass are good on slabs, crankbaits and Sassy Shad. White bass are good on slabs, crankbaits and Sassy Shad.  
**BOB SANDLIN:** White bass are good on slabs.  
**CEDAR CREEK:** White bass are good on slabs.  
**COOPER:** White bass are good on slabs.

## CATFISH



**BRAUNIG:** Channel catfish are excellent on liver, shrimp, cheesebait and cut bait near the dam and the discharge. Blue catfish are good on cut bait in 15-20 feet.  
**CALAVERAS:** Channel and blue catfish are excellent on liver, shrimp and cheesebait near the railroad trestle.  
**FALCON:** Channel and blue catfish are excellent on frozen shrimp and cut bait.  
**LIVINGSTON:** Blue catfish are very good on shad.

## CRAPPIE



**SOMERVILLE:** Excellent on minnows and on green/black jigs.  
**HOUSTON COUNTY:** Very good on live minnows near the dam 2-3 feet off the bottom.  
**LIVINGSTON:** Very good on minnows.

**ALAN HENRY:** Water lightly stained; 50 degrees; 0.10' low. Black bass are good on white spinnerbaits and shad-colored crankbaits along creek channel bends and fair on chartreuse soft jerkbaits, black/chartreuse ringworms or jigs and live baits suspended in trees. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair on live baits.

**AMISTAD:** Water clear; 60 degrees; 2.18' high. Black bass are good on senkos, spinnerbaits, crankbaits, nightcrawlers and soft plastic lizards in 3-25 feet. Crappie are fair on minnows in Devil's River above Rough Canyon in the trees. Catfish are good over baited holes in 60-120 feet.

**ARROWHEAD:** Water lightly stained; 56 degrees; 6.78' low. Black bass are fair on shallow-running lipless crankbaits or swim blade jigs off secondary points. Crappie are good on minnows. White bass are fair trolling. Blue catfish are good drift fishing with cut shad or cheese baits.

**BASTROP:** Water lightly stained. Crappie are good on minnows and black/blue tube jigs over brush piles. Channel and blue catfish are good on stinkbait, shrimp and nightcrawlers.

**BELTON:** Water clear; 58 degrees; 3.32' low. Black bass are good on Rat-L-Traps and spinnerbaits. Hybrid stripers are good on live shad. White bass are good on live shad. Crappie are good on minnows in 28-30 feet at night under lights. Channel and blue catfish are good on shrimp and hot dogs.

**BOB SANDLIN:** Water fairly clear; 53-59 degrees; 0.3' high. Black bass are fair to good on wacky rigs, spinnerbaits and Senkos (bass are on beds in the coves). Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair to good on trotlines.

**BRAUNIG:** Water stained; 64 degrees. Black bass are good on crankbaits and dark soft plastic worms in the reeds and near the jetty and dam. Striped bass are good on liver and shad at Dead Tree Point and near the pier. Redfish are slow.

**BROWNWOOD:** Water stained; 55 degrees; 5.53' low. Black bass to 5 pounds are fair on Hot Tomato Bass Hog spinnerbaits, Brownwood craw jigs, black/blue Bass Hogg jigs, perch and craw colored RJA custom crankbaits and chrome/blue Rat-L-Traps along the shorelines in 3-5 feet. Hybrid stripers are slow. Crappie are fair on L'il Fishies and tube jigs over brush piles in 5-22 feet.

**BUCHANAN:** Water clear; 63 degrees; 15.79' low. Black bass are fair on jerkbaits, pumpkin jigs and Carolina-rigged JDC lizards along break lines and bluff ledges in 10-25 feet. Striped bass are good drifting live bait in 25-35 feet and trolling white/chartreuse stripers and crankbaits. White bass are fair on artificial minnows, slabs and trolling crankbaits at the mouths of larger creeks. Crappie are fair on minnows over brush piles in 12-15 feet.

**CADDO:** Water off-color; 52-59 degrees; 0.53' 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 stained; 64 degrees. Black bass are good on dark soft plastic worms, spinnerbaits and crankbaits in reed beds and near the dam. Striped bass are good on spoons and jigs near the dam and the crappie wall in 15-20 feet. Redfish are slow. Crappie are slow.

**CANYON LAKE:** Water clear; 61 degrees; 11.83' low. Black bass are fair on jerkbaits, black/chartreuse hair jigs and Texas-rigged worms on shaky jigheads in 20-25 feet. Striped bass are fair to good trolling white stripers and vertically jigging artificial minnows and Spoiler Shads. White bass are fair jigging artificial minnows. Smallmouth bass are good on smoke/red flake tubes, tomato red curl tail grubs and tomato red drop shot worms over rock piles in 12-25 feet.

**CEDAR CREEK:** Water lightly stained; 53-60 degrees; 2.95' low. Black bass are fair on medium running shad pattern crankbaits, Texas rigs and drop-shot rigs. Hybrid stripers 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; 65 degrees; 6.01' low. Black bass are good on watermelon and pumpkinseed soft plastic worms and lizards and on jigs over grass. White bass are fair on small spinnerbaits and Rapalas from 99 Bridge north. Crappie are slow. Drum are slow. Channel and blue catfish are good on stinkbait and shrimp. Yellow catfish are fair on live perch.

**COLEMAN:** Water clear; 63 degrees; 6.35' low. Black bass are good on chartreuse soft plastics, spinnerbaits and crankbaits. Hybrid stripers are good on silver and chartreuse stripers jigs. Crappie are fair on minnows and blue tube jigs. Channel and blue catfish are good on stinkbait, shrimp and cut bait.

**CONROE:** Water murky; 1.30' low. Striped bass are fair on minnows and silver stripers jigs. Crappie are good on minnows and tube jigs. Catfish are good on stinkbait, cut bait and frozen shrimp.

**COOPER:** Water lightly stained; 52-58

degrees; 0.50' high. Bream are slow.

**GRAPEVINE:** Water off-color; 53-60 degrees; 8.25' low. Black bass are fair on jigs, Texas rigs, crankbaits and spinnerbaits. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair to good on cut bait and nightcrawlers.

**HOUSTON COUNTY:** Water stained; 59 degrees; 0.50' high. Bream are slow.

**HUBBARD CREEK:** Water lightly stained; 55 degrees; 2.87' low. Black bass are fair on white spinnerbaits, baby bass or firetiger crankbaits and live baits along grass lines. Crappie are good on jigs and minnows. White bass and hybrid stripers are good on live baits. Catfish are good on prepared baits and minnows.

**LAKE O' THE PINES:** Water stained; 52-59 degrees; 0.19' high. Black bass are slow to fair on Texas rigs, weightless flukes or 5" Yum Dingers and Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are good on nightcrawlers and cut shad. Bream are fair on red wigglers.

on live baits.  
**POSSUM KINGDOM:** Water stained; 56 degrees; 2.99' low. Black bass are fair on white spinnerbaits, dark-colored soft plastic worms or watermelon soft plastic lizards on southern end of reservoir. Crappie are fair on minnows and yellow jigs in Rock, Caddo and Bee Creeks. White bass are fair. Stripers are good on live shad below the dam. Catfish are good on live shad, cut baits and liver.

**RAY HUBBARD:** Water off-color; 53-59 degrees; 2.42' low. Black bass are fair on spinnerbaits, crankbaits and Texas or Carolina rigs. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on small Bass Assassins. Hybrid stripers are good on 4" Bass Assassins. Catfish are fair to good on cut shad and nightcrawlers.

**RAY ROBERTS:** Water murky; 51-57 degrees; 3.03' low. Black bass are slow, but improving on warm days, on chartreuse/white spinnerbaits and red rattle baits. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs on isolated trees in 10-14 feet near creek channels. White bass are good on points on spoons.

**RICHLAND CHAMBERS:** Water off-color; 54-59 degrees; 5.23' low. Black bass are fair on medium running shad pattern crankbaits, Texas rigs and spinnerbaits. White bass and hybrid stripers are good on slabs, Bass Assassins and live shad. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are good on nightcrawlers and cut shad.

**SAM RAYBURN:** Water lightly stained; 64 degrees; 6.13' low. White bass are good on live minnows and watermelon jigs. Crappie are fair on minnows and green tube jigs. Bream are fair on worms. Catfish are good on frozen shrimp, liver and cut bait.

**SOMERVILLE:** Water fairly clear; 3.36' low. Black bass are slow. Hybrid stripers are slow. White bass are slow. Channel and blue catfish are fair on stinkbait.

**STILLHOUSE:** Water clear; 60 degrees; 5.74' low. Black bass are good on minnows and soft plastics. White bass are slow. Crappie are fair on minnows. Channel and blue catfish are good on minnows and shrimp.

**TAWAKONI:** Water stained; 51-57 degrees; 5.04' low. Black bass are fair on red Rat-L-Traps, spinnerbaits, jigs and Texas rigs. Crappie are fair on minnows. White bass are good — follow the birds. Catfish are fair on prepared bait.

**TEXOMA:** Water off-color; 52-58 degrees; 0.08' high. Black bass are fair on chatterbaits, spinnerbaits, crankbaits and Texas rigs. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Striped bass are good on slabs and large Road Runners over humps. Catfish are fair to good on cut and live shad.

**TOLEDO BEND:** Water clear; 63 degrees; 3.13' low. Black bass are good on watermelon and watermelon red soft plastics, spinnerbaits and Rat-L-Traps. Striped bass are fair on live bait. White bass are fair on minnows and white spinnerbaits. Crappie are good on minnows and red tube jigs. Bream are good on worms. Channel and blue catfish are fair on frozen shrimp and stinkbait.

**TRAVIS:** Water clear; 58 degrees; 27.33' low. Black bass are good on brown jigs, smoke grubs and crawfish crankbaits in 8-20 feet. Striped bass are fair on white spoons and minnows in 20-38 feet. White bass are fair on white spoons and chrome crankbaits in 20-35 feet. Crappie are fair on minnows and pink tube jigs in 15-28 feet.

**WHITNEY:** Water clear; 10.32' low. Black bass are fair on jerkbaits and Carolina-rigged soft plastic lizards along break lines in 10-20 feet. Striped bass are fair drifting live bait in 25-35 feet and on stripers jigs and crankbaits. White bass are fair on artificial minnows and slabs. Crappie are fair on minnows over brush piles in 20-25 feet. Catfish are slow.

**WRIGHT PATMAN:** Water lightly stained; 54-61 degrees; 3.82' high. Black bass are fair on Rat-L-Traps, flukes, Texas rigs and slow rolled spinnerbaits. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair to good on prepared bait and cut shad.

## HOT SPOT



**Port Aransas**  
 Sand trout, sheephead and redfish are good at the jetty on shrimp. Redfish and black drum are fair to good around the Lydia Ann Channel on Gulps and shrimp. Photo by Craig Nyhus, LSON.

degrees; 7.03' low. 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 stripers are fair to good on slabs and live shad. Catfish are fair on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

**FALCON:** Water clear; 68 degrees. Black bass are good on soft plastics and spinnerbaits in shallow areas.

**FAYETTE:** Water clear; 61 degrees. Black bass are good on watermelon red, green pumpkin and redbug Carolina-rigged soft plastics off deep points and on spinnerbaits, Rat-L-Traps, Senkos, flukes and soft plastics in shallow areas.

**FORK:** Water lightly stained; 53-61 degrees; 0.81' low. Black bass are fair to good on soft plastics and spinnerbaits in the shallows and off the first drop — target pre-spawn and bedding bass. 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 good on chartreuse soft plastics, spinnerbaits and Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are fair on minnows and pink tube jigs. Catfish are good on frozen shrimp, cut bait and stinkbait.

**GRANBURY:** Water clear; 1.97' low. Striped bass are fair on silver stripers jigs and minnows. White bass are fair on minnows. Crappie are good on minnows and black tube jigs. Catfish are slow.

**GRANGER:** Water murky; 58 degrees; 3.64' low. Black bass are fair on jigs and spinnerbaits around stumps along the river channel. White bass are fair on white grubs in the river below Dickerson's. Crappie are fair on minnows upriver under lights at night near the primitive boat launch and Fox

**LAVON:** Water stained; 54-61 degrees; 4.56' low. Black bass are fair on Texas rigs, spinnerbaits and shallow slow-running crankbaits. White bass are good on slabs. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs around bridge columns. Catfish are fair to good on cut shad and nightcrawlers.

**LBI:** Water stained; 63 degrees; 0.18' low. Black bass are slow. White bass are fair on 1/4 oz. jigs and artificial minnows. Crappie are slow.

**LEWISVILLE:** Water off-color; 53-59 degrees; 4.54' low. Black bass are fair on slow-rolled spinnerbaits, chatterbaits, Texas rigs and Carolina rigs. White bass and hybrid stripers are fair to good on slabs. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are good on cut shad and prepared baits.

**LIVINGSTON:** Water fairly clear; 58 degrees. Black bass are good on crankbaits, spinnerbaits and soft plastics. Striped bass are fair on soft plastics upriver. White bass are good on soft plastics upriver.

**MONTICELLO:** Water fairly clear; 75-88 degrees; 0.89' low. Black bass are fair to good on topwaters early, later switching to weightless flukes, Texas rigs, spinnerbaits and chrome Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are good on minnows. Catfish are fair to good on prepared bait.

**O.H. IVIE:** Water lightly stained; 59 degrees; 12.71' low. Black bass are good on live baits and large profile green pumpkin or black neon soft plastics, such as 10-inch worms or tube baits, along tree and grass lines. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on live baits and brown crawfish crankbaits. Smallmouth bass are good on minnows and white spinnerbaits. Channel catfish are good

## SALTWATER SCENE

**NORTH SABINE:** Trout and redfish are good in the river on live shad. Redfish are good in the marsh on gold spoons and small topwaters.



**SOUTH SABINE:** Bull redfish are good at the jetty on crabs and shrimp. Sheephead are good around the rocks on live shrimp.



**BOLIVAR:** Redfish are good in Rollover Pass on natural baits. Sand trout and croaker are good on shrimp on the edge of the Intracoastal.

**TRINITY BAY:** Trout are fair to good in 4-9 feet of water while working slicks and pods of mullet. Redfish are fair to good around the spillway on natural baits.

**EAST GALVESTON BAY:** Trout are fair to good while drifting shell on soft plastics. Sand trout are good in the Intracoastal Waterway on live shrimp and fresh dead shrimp.

**WEST GALVESTON BAY:** Trout have been caught while drifting shell and mud. Bull redfish and sharks have been taken at the jetty on a variety of natural baits. Bull reds are good in state waters around wrecks.

**TEXAS CITY:** Bull reds, black drum and sand trout are good on shrimp in the channel. Redfish are good in the holes in Moses Lake.

**FREEPORT:** Bull redfish are good at the jetty on shrimp and crabs. Redfish and black drum are fair to good at San Luis Pass and Cold Pass on soft plastics tipped with shrimp and mullet.

**EAST MATAGORDA:** Trout are fair while drifting over shell and mud. Redfish are fair to good on the west end on soft plastics.

**MATAGORDA:** Trout are fair on the south shoreline of West Bay over sand and grass on Bass Assassins, Sand Eels and Trout Killers. Redfish are good in the Diversion Channel on shrimp.

**PORT O'CONNOR:** Bull redfish are good at the jetty on crabs, finger mullet and live shrimp. Trout are good over shell and mud in San Antonio Bay on soft plastics and live shrimp.

**ROCKPORT:** Trout are fair to good over shell and mud for waders working topwaters and soft plastics. Redfish are good on live shrimp under a cork while drifting the drop-offs.

**CORPUS CHRISTI:** Redfish are good in the channels and deep holes on natural baits. Trout are fair on the reefs in Nueces Bay on live bait.

**BAFFIN BAY:** Trout are fair to good around the rocks and on the edges of the spoils on Corkies and small topwaters. Trout and redfish are good on the edge of the channel on soft plastics.

**PORT MANSFIELD:** Trout are good around pods of bait on topwaters and soft plastics. Redfish and sheephead are good at the jetty on shrimp and other natural baits.

**SOUTH PADRE:** Redfish are good on the flats on DOA Shrimp. Snook are good in the Brownsville Ship Channel on shrimp.



**PORT ISABEL:** Trout and redfish are good on the edge of the Intracoastal. Redfish are good around the spoils on live shrimp.

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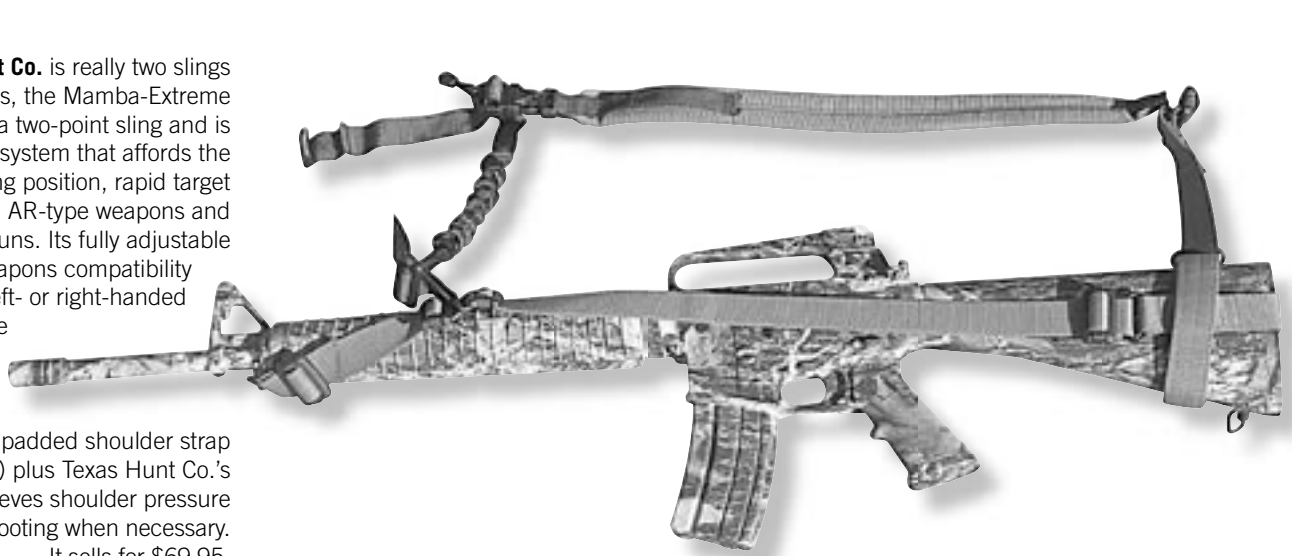
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## Conroe

Continued from Page 1

on different areas of the lake.

Tyler was casting a rattle trap over hydrilla while fishing in a tournament with his father. They were catching them on about every cast, Tyler said.

And then he boated the big one. "I could hardly fish after that," he said.

The team continued fishing until about noon then went to the weigh-in. They won the tournament and the big-bass award. Their stringer weighed more than 31 pounds.

"So we had some other pretty good fish, too," said Mark, who owns an appliance repair business.

Next came Nitschke's fish, which

also helped win a tournament.

He and Tyler were the only minors in the open tournament that day, Dec. 13. They found a spot and hoped to catch one or two fish there before moving on.

Their first weighed 6 pounds, and they caught several more in the same spot, including Nitschke's 13.07-pounder.

The bass had hit a shad-colored crankbait in 6 to 8 feet of water.

At first, they didn't realize how big it was. Tyler was still organizing their boat when Nitschke hooked on, but he caught a glimpse of it.

"He asked how big it was, and I said, 'I don't know, it's a freak,'" Tyler said.

If he didn't see the fish well, Nitschke could at least feel it.

"I knew it was a big fish when it



Mark Goetzman

was fighting," he said.

Mark caught his 13.13-pound lunker while he and Tyler were pre-fishing for another tournament.

He was casting a Carolina-rigged brush hog in about 3 feet of water,



Kyle Nitschke

and about 15 to 20 minutes before the big one hit, he boated one that weighed 7.5 pounds.

He, too, didn't realize how big the big one was, but he knew it was good. "It fought like crazy," Mark said.



Tyler Goetzman

## Galveston coming back, too

In Galveston, spring breakers driving only along the seawall may not notice a hurricane struck six months ago. Most hotels, clubs and restaurants are open and waiting for them.

"The only thing that wasn't flooded was along the seawall," Capt. David Harris said. "Everything else had 4 feet of water or more."

Boat ramps, including the Old RV Park at San Luis Pass, the 146 Bridge, Clear Lake at NASA Road 1, Sylvan Beach Bait and Port Anahuac are open.

Bait can be found at April Fool's, Boyd's One Stop in Texas City, Galveston Bait and Tackle (under the causeway), Sylvan Beach Bait and Fat Boy's. Eagle Point hopes to open in April.

Galveston Island State Park is set to open soon, and Texas Parks and Wildlife is seeking preliminary

bids for further repair work.

At Pier 19, Williams Party Boats is booking trips but still working on its building, and Galveston Party Boats next door is open for business with a remodeled building after five months of no power and six months of no phone service.

Business is picking up," said Andy Hernandez. "Our 30-hour tuna trip at the end of March is booked. We're trying to get the word out."

"Spring break is coming," Hernandez added. "We usually get a lot of kids at the last minute."

"It's all good to go," said Capt. Garrett King. "The only difference here is now instead of going to the beach and hanging out on our days off, we go home and work on the house."

— Craig Nyhus

## Bolivar

Continued from Page 8

"We're going to rebuild it all," said owner Jim Braddus. "I kind of feel like we have to."

Down the road, Ronnie Hornbeck of Hornbeck Seafood was luckier.

"We didn't have the damage others did," he said. "I'm in good shape. We have two corporate tournaments that bring in around 300 people to the weigh-ins scheduled."

Hornbeck has experience catching shrimp, and the boats were headed out to seek live bait.

"We should have it any day," he said.

Those planning a fishing trip to the peninsula should plan ahead.

"Call early, there's not near as many rent houses," said Anne Willis of Swede's Beach Properties. "We had 300 houses for rent before

the storm," she said. "We hope to have 50 by June."

Building, though, is booming. "A lot of people have ordered modular houses," she said. "And there are 50 permits for new houses."

Buyers looking for a fire sale on lots might be disappointed.

"For every lot that goes up for sale there are three or four buyers," she said. "Houses are selling for about what they did before the storm."

Willis offered a final tip. "Bring cash — some businesses don't have phone service to run a credit card machine, and there are only two ATMs here right now."

And one look at Bolivar's beaches shows why some residents aren't so quick to criticize FEMA.

"The beaches are prettier than ever," Willis said. "The sand was sifted for debris."

"And the water is prettier, too."

## Shark

Continued from Page 8

steel leader and tried to club it.

The third time Walters reeled the fish into the boat, about six hours after the fight began, the crew finally put it down.

"Everything hurt," Walters said.

But the work was far from over. It took another hour and 45 minutes and a sailor's ingenuity to boat the fish. The crew tied a rope to its tail, backed the boat into a wave and floated it in, at last.

"Within 30 minutes, everybody was sound asleep," Walters said.

When the boat arrived at Port Fourchon, La., 10 or 11 hours later, a marine biologist was waiting. The fish was almost dropped in the water after it arrived, and it sat on the dock another hour before it was weighed.

The fish might be a new Louisiana state record.

Bill Ford, fish records chairman for the Louisiana Outdoor Writers Association, which administers the state records program, said an

application had not been received as of March 4.

But if Walters' mako is certified, it would far surpass the previous rod and reel record of 765 pounds.

His fish could land at No. 3 on the list of largest fish caught in the Gulf of Mexico.

A hammerhead shark weighing 1,280 caught west of Florida in 2006 and a bluefin tuna weighing 1,152 pounds caught in 2003 rank higher, according to research conducted by the *Mobile Press-Register* in Alabama.

## Cedar Bayou

Continued from Page 8

pass. These include diminished water pressure and decreased flow through the pass created by the Intracoastal Waterway, the opening of other Gulf passes and reduced freshwater inflow from the damming of rivers.

Engineers involved with the reopening project believe that a slug of spoils deposited intentionally in 1995 at the mouth of nearby Vinson Slough also contributed to Cedar Bayou's shrinking flow.

Save Cedar Bayou proposes to create two cuts from Mesquite Bay, both 6 feet deep and 100 feet wide. These would merge into a single channel and continue to the Gulf of Mexico, creating the only Gulf access between Pass Cavallo at Port O'Connor and Aransas Pass at Port Aransas, about a 70-mile stretch. The path of the channels would measure about 7,500 feet.

Some of the dredge material would be used to create two sand shoals off the beach to help prevent the mouth of Cedar Bayou from silting in.

Computer models show that the configuration of channels and shoals will help maintain a free-flowing pass that is self-scouring, according to Hugo Burmudez with Coast & Harbor Engineering.

The obstacles from a variety of federal and state agencies, though, keep increasing the \$4.5 million price tag. Concessions added to the latest permit application include the planting of 6.5 acres of chordgrass to replace grass that has grown along the shrunken channel's path.

"This will cost an additional \$40,000 or so," said Charlie Belaire with Belaire Environmental, a firm that specializes in such mitigation work.

Because whooping cranes winter in the area, construction will be prohibited from Oct. 15 through April 15.

And because sea turtles might be in the area, a full-time trained turtle observer must survey the beach and

## Tell the Corps

The permit application to reopen Cedar Bayou is on file with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Permit Application No. SWG-2007-00813  
Comments (deadline March 26) must include the application number and should be submitted to:

Denise Sloan  
Regulatory Branch, CESWG-PE-RB  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 1229  
Galveston, TX 77553-1229  
Phone: (409) 766-3962  
Fax: (409) 766-3931

work areas daily from April 1 through Oct. 15. Monitors must travel in front of construction vehicles to watch for turtle nests and tracks.

Crews will have to attend a class that teaches them how to recognize endangered species. At the end of each work day, disturbed areas of the beach must be smoothed and then loosened to accommodate nesting sea turtles. If a turtle or nest is spotted, construction must stop and federal wildlife officials must be notified.

If construction occurs anytime between Aug. 1 and March 1, when the threatened or endangered piping plovers might be there, a trained bird monitor must be on hand to scan the area before work begins each day. This full-time observer must maintain a log to track this effort.

And lastly, the contractor will be made aware of the possibility that a West Indian manatee might be lingering in the construction area. If one is spotted, construction must cease and federal wildlife officials must be notified.

Project engineers believe the added concessions could boost the projected costs by about \$200,000.

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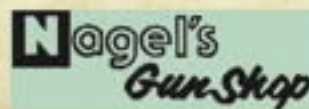
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