

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

★ November 23, 2007

Texas' Premier Outdoor Newspaper

Volume 4, Issue 7 ★

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Gifts for the outdoorsman



Ideas for him and her
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The Texas Clipper, a 473-foot, 7,000-ton vessel, is now an artificial reef near South Padre Island.

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Big bucks bowing up

Acorns, pecans hurt some action in first month

The abundance of acorns, pecans and other food on the ground and thick brush made the hunting difficult during the Texas deer season's first month.

Activity near feeders slowed to a crawl in most areas, and the thick brush made deer hard to spot.

But a bright spot in many regions has been increased deer activity as the days shorten, especially in the northern part of the state.

"Our deer started moving three weeks ago with the harvest moon," said Mike Ford, who operates Rio Rojo Ranch in Red River County. "They are really moving now, and I have never seen the acorns so thick. They are falling in clusters."

Farther south, the deer are just starting to move. "It's starting to pick up," said Kendall White with Golden Triangle Outfitters, who guides hunters in Uvalde County. "This little cold spell is helping, and it's also resulted in the deer starting to come to the corn."

Ford also has hunted near Cotulla for the past 17 years. "The deer aren't moving at all down there," he said. "The best day to hunt there is Christmas Day — if you can get away with it."

In Coleman County, Amber

See DEER, Page 17



EARS DOWN: Bucks are moving more, and aggressive behavior is signaling the rut in much of the state. Photo by David J. Sams.

Pheasants on the upswing

Hunters ready to head for the Panhandle

BY CRAIG NYHUS

The pheasant opener Dec. 2 in the Texas Panhandle has hunter's hopes flying high.

"It's stupid," said Rick Jones of High Flying Outfitters in Dumas of the number of birds in the area. Jones hunts pheasants in Moore County. "There's a lot of cover right now, so we need some weather."

Jones isn't worried about the weather, though. "We still have a few weeks," he said. "We could have two blizzards by then up here."

Jones hunts CRP fields, milo, corn and wheat stubble.

See PHEASANTS, Page 25



ROOSTER: A good pheasant hatch has Texas hunters primed for the season opener on Dec. 2.

Fresh water changes bay fishing tactics

Influx of nutrients brightens future

BY HAL BROWN

Fishing in the Coastal Bend hasn't really been bad this year, it's just that an extra helping of water in Corpus Christi and the Aransas Bay area rearranged the sportfishing terrain and fish weren't to be found at the usual spots.

"We had high tides the whole year," said Gary Einkauf, who has guided in the area for 30 years and runs Shallow Water Charters in

Port Aransas. "For some reason now every September we get high tides that last six to eight weeks. That's been going on this year. It was a foot to 2 feet above normal from Labor Day until that norther hit about Oct. 20. We caught fish, but it was a different kind of fishing. You couldn't flats fish, you couldn't sight fish — the water was too high."

There have been fish around,

See LEVELS, Page 25

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NATIONAL

Wildlife officer injured in shootout with hunter

Matt Flowers, a five-year wildlife officer with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, was injured during a shootout with a man suspected of illegal hunting. Flowers, of Maumelle, was shot once in the chest during an altercation with a man suspected of illegally hunting in North Little Rock's Burns Park.

Flowers was checking Phillip

Kelly, 36, of North Little Rock, to see if he had been hunting in the area when the struggle broke out. Flowers returned fire and hit Kelly with several shots.

Flowers was taken to an area hospital where he was treated for his injuries and released. He was wearing body armor that prevented any serious injuries. Kelly was able to get away from Flowers and

flee from the scene to a nearby house.

Kelly has been charged with attempted capital murder in the shooting. He is presently in a Little Rock hospital where he is under guard and recovering from his injuries.

— Arkansas Game and Fish Commission report.

Illegal trade in foxes, coyotes uncovered

A multi-state covert investigation involving the illegal buying, selling, possession and transportation of foxes and coyotes resulted in arrests being made across the Southeast and Midwest.

Conservation Police Officers with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries conducted a statewide inspection of 41 foxhound training facilities, shutting down 36 for violations of their permits.

The investigation began in 2006. Foxes and coyotes were trapped and sold in western states and illegally transported to Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia for use in foxhound training facilities.

"From what I learned, this is a closed society with access to the facilities limited to a very few people," said VDGIF Chairman James W. Hazel.

— Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries report.

Parasite likely cause of scaup, coot deaths

Trematodes, a small intestinal parasite, are believed to have killed about 3,000 waterfowl on Lake Winnibigoshish, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The parasites have a complex life history and require two intermediate hosts, such as snails, for the parasites to develop. Waterfowl then consume the infected snails, and the adult trematodes attack the internal organs or blood of the birds. Infected birds appear lethargic and have difficulty diving and flying before eventually dying.

Dead and sick birds were first observed on Oct. 28 on the west shore of the lake.

Staff from the Minnesota DNR and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services removed about 1,000 dead scaup from Lake

Winnibigoshish on Nov. 3.

In previous cases of waterfowl die-off caused by trematodes, ducks usually died three to eight days after ingesting a lethal dose of the trematodes.

Avian predators and mammalian scavengers, particularly bald eagles and raccoons, have been feeding on the sick and dead birds. There appears to be no threat that they are at risk from feeding on carcasses, however.

Avian trematodes are not known to be a health risk to humans, but the DNR recommends that hunters not consume sick waterfowl and use standard precautions, such as wearing rubber gloves and thoroughly washing hands when cleaning waterfowl.

— Minnesota Department of Natural Resources report.

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Design Editor: DUDLEY GREEN
Associate Editor: MARK ENGLAND
Business/Products Editor: MARY HELEN AGUIRRE
Advertising Sales: BOB COLE
LEE GRESHAM
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CONSERVATION

Shikar-Safari recognizes Bryant as officer of year

Game Warden Jarrod E. Bryant of Marshall has been named "Texas Wildlife Officer of the Year" for 2007 by the wildlife conservation and hunting organization Shikar-Safari Club International.



JARROD E. BRYANT

Bryant continues his game warden career where it began in Harrison County. Bryant's career has emphasized youth outreach and community involvement. He has mentored local college students interested in wildlife law enforcement and cultivated positive attitudes about wildlife conservation enforcement through community policing.

As a certified Hunter Education instructor, Bryant assists other local hunter edu-

cation instructors and presents programs to many schools, civic groups and agricultural meetings.

Bryant apprehended a number of suspected illegal deer hunters who had hunted deer without landowner consent in a coal-producing part of Harrison County. This private land has long been the scene of state jail felonies involving deer hunted without consent, deer hunted at night, conspiracy, death threats to witnesses and illegal drug sales and drug abuse. For 12 months, Bryant investigated suspected deer poachers, with his work yielding 10 criminal cases. The largest mounted deer seized from this illegal operation was a 32-point whitetail buck scoring 208 5/8 inches.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report.

Service grants, donations aid in recovery of Siberian tiger

The population of the Amur tiger, also known as the Siberian tiger, is showing signs of recovery.

During the past 100 years, the Amur tiger population was decimated in the Russian Far East by forest destruction, trophy hunting and poaching for tiger body parts for use in traditional Chinese medicine. By the 1940s the number surviving had dwindled to an estimated 50.

Contributions of more than \$1 million, including more than \$600,000 in U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grants along with partner donations and in-kind contributions, spurred the recovery.

Service grants have helped pay for vehicles, uniforms, fuel and even salaries for Russian game wardens who have had success in deterring poachers.

Recent surveys indicate that between 331 and 370 adult tigers and 100 young — about 450 tigers in all — are living in the Russian Far East, representing 95 percent of the total population.

Amur tigers, which can weigh up to 600 pounds at maturity, are loners that travel enormous distances in search of prey, such as elk and wild boar.

— U.S. Fish and Wildlife report.

Group out to restore waterfowling heritage

Delta Waterfowl is seeking to restore Canada's waterfowl hunting heritage.

"Canada had more than 500,000 waterfowl hunters back in the 1970s," President Rob Olson said. "In recent years that number has shrunk to less than 170,000."

Delta teamed with the Manitoba Wildlife Federation and Manitoba Conservation to

hold the country's first-ever mentored youth duck hunt.

Working with several partners, Delta biologist Carly Michie recently held Canada's first women's duck hunt, as well as a hunt for university students.

— Delta Waterfowl report.

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HUNTING

On the grow

Stickers' B&C score climbs

By BILL MILLER

Stickers, the Medina County breeder buck widely known as the biggest deer in Texas, is a newsmaker once again.

His antlers recently earned a Boone and Crockett score of 352 1/8, up from his score last year of 335 1/8.

Stickers' steady diet of a new feed called Record Rack and a life's work of breeding might sound like deer Nirvana.

But Sammy Nooner of Hondo, who owns Stickers, said the big headline ought to be that this 6-year-old buck is still standing.

That's because he has survived the stress of having changed homes twice in the past year, the new diet, and the rigors of creating baby monarchs — all factors that should have shrunk his score.

"He's just a laid-back deer," Nooner said. "If he was a stressed deer, he couldn't have endured."

Stickers' name has been associated with some of the top deer breeders in Texas.

He was born in 2001 on the Glen Morgan ranch at Uvalde, the offspring of a doe impregnated by artificial insemination from an Ohio legend named Redoy Ben.

Tommy Dugger of Three Rivers, one of the state's top breeders, owned him

briefly, but then sold him to Nooner in February for a price that's being kept between them.

Meanwhile the buck's reputation has percolated on the Internet.

Gene Naquin, Nooner's ranch manager, said Stickers has sired a 2-year-old buck whose rack carries an estimated Boone and Crockett score between 250 and 260.

He also has a yearling son that's reported to be close to 185, Naquin said.

Stickers' growth spurt is remarkable, he explained, because breeding can be dangerously stressful on a buck.

A breeding operation doesn't just involve mating does. Semen is collected and sold for artificial insemination. To do that, a buck must be anesthetized.

That brings more stress, said Bob Zaiglin, a wildlife consultant who also chairs the wildlife biology department at Southwest Texas Junior College in Uvalde.

Zaiglin, an official scorer for the Boone and Crockett Club, certified the latest score on Stickers by measuring his antlers, which were removed from the deer as part of the breeding process, while some of his students observed.

"It's very hard on them," Zaiglin said. "Not only are they drugged, but

See **STICKERS**, Page 17



B&C BOOST: Stickers, known as Texas' biggest buck, was moved twice and had his diet changed this year. Despite the changes, he upped his B&C score to 352 1/8. Photo by David J. Sams.



SIZING UP: Hunter Uzzle of Orange gets fitted for his new shotgun. Photo by Chuck Uzzle.

IF THE GUN FITS SHOOT IT

Big shotguns often ruin youth's form

By CHUCK UZZLE

Texas hunters do everything big — including purchasing their firearms.

The bigger is better theory has some merit, but not when it comes to smaller hunters, namely women or children.

When the first dove, duck or even a Canada goose comes in to range and it's time to take the shot, the smaller hunter's pull of the trigger may be followed by a howl of agony and an "Oh, no," from the hunting companion.

An improperly fitted rifle or shotgun

will do more damage to a novice hunter than just about anything.

Guns that are too big or heavy cause any hunter to compromise his or her form to compensate for the pain when the weapon is fired.

And flinching before the trigger is pulled is the most common result of a bad recoil experience. Gunsmiths and shooters say that fitting the right gun to each hunter is the best prevention of flinching.

Overzealous dads are the worst, and "He'll grow into this one," is not what you

See **FITS**, Page 16

'Daddy Ray that's him'

Hunter downs big buck 'Ear and a Half'

At Ray Murski's 1,850-acre ranch in Bosque County, he had been watching the buck he named "Ear and a Half" for six years.

When the big buck turned 6-1/2 years old, he decided it was time to seriously pursue the big buck with a short ear.

Spending 30 hours over four weeks, he felt like they had the buck patterned. Then things changed and he completely left the area where he had been living.

On Nov. 3, Murski's luck changed.

"My 9-year-old grandson, Harrison Murski came up to me just before we were leaving to do our evening hunt," Murski said. He said, "Granddad, I feel lucky tonight. I feel like I am your good luck charm."

Murski agreed and invited Harrison to go along on the evening hunt.

The pair got into the blind named Blind No. 1 about 5 p.m. "I had hunted that blind several times previously without ever seeing him," Murski said. "We had put out Acorn Rage and Buck Bran in six different locations around the food plot and a Remington corn feeder that we hoped would give us

a glimpse of him."

At 6 p.m., the corn feeder went off. A few does and fawns came to the food plot. And 10 minutes later things really started to happen.

"A good, mature buck came out around the Acorn Rage pile," Murski said. "Then came another and another and then a really big deer. Harrison said "Daddy Ray, that's him."

Harrison was right.

"We had the video camera going and Harrison and I were trying to keep each other calm," Murski said. "He kept telling me, 'Daddy Ray, it only takes one shot.'"

They waited and waited until the shot was right. Then Murski's Remington BDL 7 Mag fired the 175 grain Core-Lokt round and it was all over. "I have to admit it was an unbelievable feeling I have never experienced," Murski said.

Murski credits the ranch's management program for the big buck. "These are all native deer," he said. "We started our program in 1991, and we keep our buck-to-doe ratio at about 125 bucks to 60 to 70 does.

See **MURSKI**, Page 17



LONG-AWAITED: After pursuing him for four weeks, Ray Murski finally located Ear and a Half, the buck he had been watching for six years. Photo by Amanda Murski.



2007-08 TEXAS HUNTING SEASONS

WHITE-TAILED DEER

General

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| YOUTH SEASON | Jan. 19-20 |
| NORTH TEXAS (200 counties) | Nov. 3-Jan. 6 |
| PANHANDLE (6 counties) | Nov. 17-Dec. 2 |
| SOUTH TEXAS (30 counties) | Nov. 3-Jan. 20 |

Late Antlerless and Spike

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| EDWARDS PLATEAU (39 counties) | Jan. 7-20 |
| SOUTH TEXAS (30 counties) | Jan. 21-Feb. 3 |

Muzzleloader (23 counties)

| | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Antlerless and Spike Only | Jan. 12-20 |
|---------------------------|------------|

MULE DEER

General

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| PANHANDLE (36 counties) | Nov. 17-Dec. 2 |
| SOUTHWESTERN PANHANDLE (7 counties) | Nov. 17-25 |
| TRANS-PECOS (19 counties) | Nov. 24-Dec. 9 |

RIO GRANDE TURKEY

Fall Season

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| YOUTH SEASON | Jan. 19-20 |
| NORTH TEXAS (122 counties) | Nov. 3-Jan. 6 |
| SOUTH TEXAS (26 counties) | Nov. 3-Jan. 20 |

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Brooks, Kenedy, Kleberg and Willacy counties | Nov. 3-Feb. 24 |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------|

DOVE

North Zone

CLOSED

Central Zone

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Dec. 26-Jan. 4 | Bag limit 12 birds per day, 24 in possession |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------|

South Zone

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Dec. 26-Jan. 12 | Bag limit 12 birds per day, 24 in possession |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------|

Special South Texas Zone

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Dec. 26-Jan. 8 | Bag limit 12 birds per day, 24 in possession |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------|

QUAIL

Statewide

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Oct. 27-Feb. 24 | Bag limit: 15 birds per day, 45 in possession. |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------|

PHEASANT

Panhandle (37 counties)

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Dec. 1-30 | Bag limit: 3 roosters per day, 6 in possession. |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Chambers, Jefferson, Liberty counties | Nov. 3-Feb. 24 |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|

DUCK

High Plains Mallard Management Unit

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| REGULAR | Oct. 26-Jan. 27 |
|---------|-----------------|

North Zone

| | |
|---------|---------------------------|
| REGULAR | Nov. 3-25; Dec. 8-Jan. 27 |
|---------|---------------------------|

South Zone

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| REGULAR GUN | Nov. 3-25; Dec. 8-Jan. 27 |
|-------------|---------------------------|

Duck Bag Limit:

The daily bag limit shall be 5 ducks with the following species and sex restrictions — scaup, redhead and wood duck — 2 ducks; only 1 from the following aggregate bag: 1 hen mallard, or 1 pintail, or 1 canvasback, or 1 "dusky duck" (includes mottled duck, Mexican-like duck, black duck, and their hybrids); all other ducks not listed — 5 ducks.

Possession limit: Twice the daily bag limit.

GOOSE

West

| | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| LIGHT AND DARK GEESE | Nov. 3-Feb. 5 |
|----------------------|---------------|

Bag Limit:

Light Geese — 20 in the aggregate;
Dark Geese — 3 Canada and 1 white-fronted goose.
CONSERVATION ORDER Feb. 6-March 30

East

| | |
|-------------|----------------|
| LIGHT GEESE | Nov. 3-Jan. 27 |
|-------------|----------------|

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| WHITE-FRONTED GEESE | Nov. 3-Jan. 13 |
|---------------------|----------------|

| | |
|--------------|----------------|
| CANADA GEESE | Nov. 3-Jan. 27 |
|--------------|----------------|

Bag Limit:

Light Geese — 20 in the aggregate;
Dark Geese — 3 Canada and 2 white-fronted.
Possession Limit: Twice the daily bag limit for dark geese, no possession limit for light geese.
CONSERVATION ORDER Jan. 28-March 30

SANDHILL CRANE

Zone A: Nov. 3-Feb. 3

Zone B: Nov. 23-Feb. 3

Zone C: Dec. 22-Jan. 27

(Seasons on other species may be found on the TPW Web site — tpwd.state.tx.us/)



Waterfowl Migration Reports

Reports from Avery Pro staffers to the north indicate the waterfowl migration is on its way.

Mike Hungle in Regina, Saskatchewan said the snows are mostly gone, and lesser Canadas have arrived. Cold mornings have the small and medium-sized potholes ice-covered. Hungle said it has been the strangest and most delayed migration ever.

John Traiforos said the snows are migrating out of the Saskatoon, Saskatchewan area. Mallards and Canada geese are still around, though.

On the Bighorn River near Billings, Mont., new mallards and geese are arriving daily, with little hunting pressure since deer, elk and pheasant seasons are open.

Rick Frisch in Devils Lake, N.D., said birds are mostly gone from the area. But in South Dakota, Martin Hesby near Brookings and Brad Fontaine near Watertown report rising duck numbers and good snow and Canada goose numbers.

Kirk Steffensen near Lincoln, Neb., reports little or no migration and slow hunting, and near Emporia, Kan., Nick Liseac said they are still hunting local birds.

TPW Weekly Migratory Bird Hunting Report

High Plains Mallard Management Unit: Unseasonably warm temperatures have prompted geese to remain on roost ponds longer, reported several outfitters. Hunters near Amarillo, Spearman and Dumas have seen concentrations of geese, including an estimated 40,000-50,000 on Lake Etter, but the flight has been somewhat limited. When the birds do fly, Canadas have readily decoyed over corn and plowed ground. Snow geese have been decoy

shy. The region needs rain to recharge playa lakes. Duck hunting has been good for teal, gadwalls, pintails and a few mallards. Sandhill crane hunting has been good over decoys. Prospects are fair to good.

North Zone Waterfowl: Despite warm conditions, hunters in Northeast Texas have fared well on lakes and reservoirs. The region needs rain to fill sloughs and creeks littered with acorns. Gadwalls, teal and spoonies have made up the brunt of the bag. Those hunting wooded areas have taken their limit of wood ducks early. Lake Tawakoni was solid for limit shoots. Toledo Bend, Lake Fork and Lake Palestine have been good for greenwings and gadwalls. Closer to the coast along the IH-10 corridor, teal, gadwalls, pintails and shovelers have been good for half-limits near Nome, China, Hampshire, Winnie, Sealy and Brookshire. Prospects are fair to good.

South Zone Waterfowl: The coastal prairies and marshes continue to be the hot bed for waterfowl hunters in Texas. Prairie ponds near El Campo, Eagle Lake, Wharton, East Bernard, Lissie, Chesterville and Sealy have produced steady limits of greenwings, bluewings, gadwalls, pintails and shovelers. The High Island marsh has been good for teal, gadwalls and spoonies. Hunts in Trinity Bay have been fair at best. Port O'Connor has been solid for gadwalls and wigeons for those able to scout and willing to move. Rockport has been good for redheads, pintails and wigeons on the bay, and teal, wigeons, pintails and spoonies in the freshwater marsh. Goose numbers are good on the rice prairies, but high skies and light winds have hurt decoying action. The bright spot is the number of specklebellies willing to decoy in hot feeding fields. Prospects are good.



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FISHING

Tree cutter dives right in



WET AT WORK: Colin Irons exits the water in a Northeast Texas pond with his sealed hydraulic chainsaw.

Underwater worker clears way for boaters

By MARK ENGLAND

Colin Irons builds roads for anglers and boaters.

Armed with a sealed hydraulic chainsaw and a diving suit, he topples underwater trees to create lanes for them to access docks or venture out on lakes.

The process is similar to cutting timber on dry land — but more dangerous.

"The visibility is usually so poor I can't see my hand in front of my face," said Irons, whose company is based in Aubrey. "I put my forehead on the tree, take my alignment stance and start cutting. You have to be aware the tree can fall on you even though you're underwater. Fortunately, I can usually make it fall the direction I want by applying pressure with my forehead.

"Every now and then you get the odd tree that just floats to the surface. That can be

See CUTTER, Page 14

TEXAS CLIPPER SUNK AS ARTIFICIAL REEF



DOWN SHE GOES: The Texas Clipper made its final journey Friday, Nov. 16. Spectators watched as the Texas Clipper went under in a controlled sinking near South Padre Island on Saturday, Nov. 17 — creating

A ship with three lives — World War II troop transport, New York City luxury liner and sea cadet training vessel — made her final journey Saturday Nov. 17, when the Texas Clipper was sent to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico to become an artificial reef.

"It would make a good movie, the twists and turns in this story," said TPW Artificial Reef Program Coordinator J. Dale Shively. "There were times when we thought for sure the project was dead."

Ship sent to bottom of the Gulf

But nearly a decade after the state first applied for the transfer of the Texas Clipper as part of the artificial reef program, the goal was accomplished. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency certified on Oct. 1 that the ship was free of hazardous materials.

On Nov. 16, she was towed to a site 17 nautical miles from South Padre Island. The next morning,

workers opened valves to flood the ship and allow her to settle 134 feet to the hard sand bottom. Two days later the site was open to the public for diving and fishing.

The 473-foot, 7,000-ton vessel was launched on Sept. 12, 1944 as the USS Queens, a WWII transport and attack ship. She carried troops and wounded from Pacific battlefields and was the first attack

transport arriving at Iwo Jima.

After the war until 1958, she was recommissioned as the SS Excambion, one of the post-war Four Aces for American Export Lines. She carried cargo and passengers in grand style between New York City and Mediterranean ports.

From 1965-1994, she sailed as the USST Texas Clipper, a Texas

A&M University-Galveston maritime training vessel. Former cadets who once sailed on the Clipper were present when she went out for the last time.

As an artificial reef off South Padre Island, the ship could generate up to \$30 million annually in fishing and scuba diving tourism for local economies more than 50 years. The structure is expected to form the foundation of a vibrant community of corals and fish.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report.



NOT POPULAR, BUT FUN: The freshwater drum is usually caught on baits near the bottom.

Lowly drum excellent light tackle sport

Few anglers intentionally fish for them

By JOHN N. FELSHER

About 12 feet down, the big fish grabbed the live shad and started running for deep water, making the drag scream.

The angler envisioned breaking the state bass record as a huge fish appeared in the greenish waters. Indeed, it weighed more than the state champion bass, but it didn't make the record books. In fact, it didn't even make the livewell.

Large, abundant and barely

tolerated, freshwater drum offer outstanding sport on light tackle, but few people intentionally fish for them. Most anglers catch them by accident, and then utter a few choice words. Drum, though, can offer anglers opportunities to catch really big fish with relative ease.

"Freshwater drum are an overlooked and underappreciated species," said fishing guide Jerry Crook. "Often, when people catch drum, they are pleasantly surprised by how much fun it is. A 15- to 25-

pound drum doesn't even raise an eyebrow. Sometimes, we catch more than 300 pounds of drum a day. It's fun fighting big fish."

Benny Hull landed the world record, a 54.5-pound fish in Tennessee. In Texas, Billy Walker pulled the state record, a 34-pound, 11.2-ounce tackle-buster from Lake Texoma in 1995.

Close relatives of redbfin and black drum of estuary fame, freshwater drum closely resemble their marine cousins with

large silvery to bronze or brownish bodies. Color largely depends on the habitat.

Freshwater drum inhabit almost every body of water in the state, except parts of the Panhandle and extreme West Texas. They prefer large rivers with little to moderate current, but also thrive in deep reservoirs.

Freshwater drum spend most of their time rummaging like aquatic pigs near hard bottom structure. Opportunistic feed-

'Freshwater drum are an overlooked and underappreciated species.'

— JERRY CROOK

See DRUM, Page 14



PROMOTING PADDLING: Kayak anglers have a new organization promoting their favorite sport.

New kayak anglers organization has big plans for collegians, veterans

A group of avid kayak anglers and veterans of the U.S. armed forces have formed the Kayak Anglers Society of America.

Based in San Antonio, KASA will be devoted to increasing access to and participation in kayak angling throughout the United States. The notion of forming a new "umbrella" organization to promote kayak fishing and advocate for greater access and resource conservation grew after KASA Executive Director Brad Newman talked with the founder of one of the nation's largest competitive fishing organizations.

"He told me how concerned he was about the declining number of anglers in his organization across the country," Newman said. "He attributed the decline to the cost of fuel, insurance and the increasing costs associated with buying and maintaining a power boat. His words: 'I want to get folks back to the basics,' and he thought kayaks were the way to do that."

Newman and fellow board members Kendal Larson and Jim Dolan say they plan to develop intercolle-

giate kayak fishing clubs on college campuses.

"We want to get these men and women hooked young," said Larson, a professional photographer based in the Houston area. "If we can help them get connected with our inland and coastal public waters, they are going to become champions of the resources that make kayak fishing and paddling in general such a special experience."

An early meeting with ArmyBassAnglers.com's Maj. Cody Roberson led to a second emphasis for KASA: wounded warriors in rehab at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. Larson and Dolan both are United States Air Force vets and said it was a natural fit.

As part of its outreach to disabled veterans, KASA organizers said, the organization will be working to provide adaptive paddling instruction as well as sponsored trips. The kayak angling trips will operate under a program called "Heroes on the Water."

— Kayak Anglers Society of America report.

Curtis qualifies for Forrest Wood Cup

David Curtis of Trinity finished third with a two-day total of 16 pounds in the Stren Series Championship on the Mobile Delta. As the highest finisher from the Texas Division of the Stren Series, Curtis qualified for the Forrest Wood Cup in Columbia, S.C., next August.

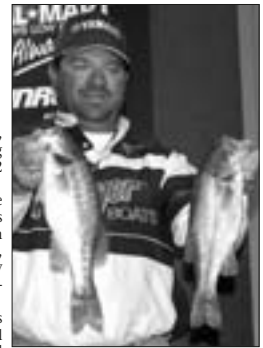
Curtis made a 110-mile run up the Alabama River where he was fishing an outlet pipe from a paper mill.

"That pipe is constantly flushing out current, so fish live around it all the time," he said. "And I was just throwing a green-pumpkin Zoom Trick on a Gigi-Head on 8-pound test line."

Mike Jackson of San Mateo, Fla., won the event. Jackson topped Greg Bohannon of Rogers, Ark., by 2 pounds.

Keith Honeycutt of Temple won the Co-angler Division with a five-bass limit weighing 6 pounds, 12 ounces on the third and final day. On day two, Honeycutt sat in 47th place with only two fish in the livewell. Then his fortunes changed.

"My pro, Ott Defoe, pulled up to this one log, and then the most unreal thing happened," he said. "We started catching one fish after another; we caught 14 bass in the next 30 minutes." — FLW report.



PAIR OF WINNERS: David Curtis holds fish that helped him qualify for the Forrest Wood Cup. Photo by FLW.

GAME WARDEN BLOTTER

AND UP WALKS MAN'S BEST FRIEND

Harris County Game Warden Derek Spitzer checked a group of duck hunters with a black lab. As Spitzer was talking to the hunters, the dog was run-

ning around and disappeared. After a few minutes, the dog returned with a hen pintail and delivered it to Spitzer's hand, which made

the group over the limit of pintails. One of the hunters admitted to hiding the pintail as Spitzer drove up. Case pending.

MAN GETS DOUBLE WHAMMY FROM GAME WARDEN, POLICE

•Freestone County Game Warden John Thorne and Lt. Trey Shewmake stopped a man heading to his deer lease and issued a citation for displaying fictitious license plates on his 4-wheeler trailer. Two days later, the man was stopped by the Fairfield Police Department and found to be in possession of a deer with no proof of sex. The deer turned out to be a doe for which he did not have a valid permit. The deer was seized and charges filed.

MAN DETAINED WITH LIST OF STOLEN ITEMS

•Wise County Game Warden Chris Dowdy received a call from a local rancher stating he was in pursuit of two men on an ATV. When Dowdy arrived on the scene, the rancher had the pair detained. A set of bolt cutters and a magnet were found on the ATV. When Dowdy searched one of the men, he found a letter in the man's pocket stating that the ATV was stolen along with a list of other items the men intended to steal that night. Cases pending.

MAN LEASED PROPERTY THAT IS NOT HIS

•Leon County Game Warden Danny Flores was called regarding a possible trespass incident. The investigation revealed that a man was found to be leasing out property he did not own to hunters. The man had to repay the hunters. Case pending.

STOLEN ITEMS FOUND IN BED OF TRUCK

•Angelina County Game Warden James Barge received a call that someone was spotlighting on the caller's property. Barge located a vehicle occupied by two men in possession of two guns and a spot-

light. The bed of the truck was full of items stolen from the caller's property. Charges of hunting without landowner consent and theft were filed. Cases pending.

INTOXICATED POACHERS FACE FELONY CHARGES

•Van Zandt County Game Wardens Steve Stapleton and Adam Clark were notified of poachers at a local ranch. A retired county deputy heard shots from his house and drove to the location to see a truck parked sideways shining its headlights into a field. The occupants of the truck were so intoxicated that the witness was able to approach the vehicle and get a complete description of all three men and the truck's license plate number. The wardens recovered a rifle, spotlight, night vision scope and two deer. Felony and Class A misdemeanor charges were filed.

HUNTER SHOOTS DECOY, DAMAGES MOTOR

•Robertson County Game Wardens Russell Murden and Jason Bussey worked a decoy deer off of a county road where a deer carcass had been found the previous week with its head cut off. The decoy was no more than 50 yards from where the previous deer had been found. At approximately 9:45 p.m., a truck stopped abruptly, and the driver got out and fired a shot at the deer. The shooter hit the decoy in the neck and destroyed the motor. The

vehicle, with three occupants, was stopped. A .22-caliber Marlin rifle was seized. Cases and restitution for damage done to the decoy are pending. Investigation of the previous deer killed at the location is still pending.

WARDEN STOPS JUVENILES FROM BURNING DOWN SCHOOL

•Denton County Game Warden Ron VanderRoest was returning home after checking hunters when a call was sent out regarding three juveniles attempting to set the local school on fire. VanderRoest was nearby and was able to apprehend the three juveniles and put out the fire without damage.

ANTLER RESTRICTION CHARGES FILED

•Leon County Game Wardens Dwight Myers and Danny Flores, and Henderson County Game Warden Audie Hamm discovered a quartered buck in an ice chest, and the antler spread measured only 11 inches. Charges of violating the antler restriction and civil restitution are pending.

STOLEN ITEMS RECOVERED FROM DEER CAMP

•Freestone County Game Warden John Thorne and Lt. Trey Shewmake, from one deer camp, recovered a stolen Polaris Ranger, a Yamaha 4-wheeler, a John Deere tractor with front-end loader, a 30-foot travel trailer, and seized a sawed off shotgun.

in edible condition. Charges were filed.

SIX APPREHENDED HUNTING ON MAN'S LAND

•Travis County Game Wardens Josh Koenig and Cody Jones responded to a call from a landowner who was on his property with his son when they saw a truck with occupants carrying rifles riding in his pasture. Jones blocked the gate, and Koenig went onto the property to find the truck. Six men were apprehended and each had a rifle or shotgun with slugs, including a Browning 9 mm that was stolen. The men admitted to shooting a hog but were unable to find it. Several of them also had no hunting licenses. Cases pending.

LANDOWNER REPORTS FINDING DEER FEEDER ON HIS PROPERTY

•Montgomery County Game Warden Ernie Garcia received a call from a local landowner who had located a deer feeder on his property. Garcia located a deer stand on the adjacent property. He observed the feeder on opening morning with no activity. The property owner called later that evening when he saw two people walking on his property near the feeder. Garcia arrived and located a man and woman who tried to evade, but were captured. The couple had a .22 cal and .30-30 rifle. Cases pending.

DEER DECOYS ATTRACT ONLOOKERS, NO SHOOTERS

•Val Verde County Game Wardens JC Flores, Jason Huebner, Marcus Vela and Michael Vela conducted a two-day decoy deer operation. They used the decoy each day and at night. They had plenty of lookers but no shooters. One individual even got out to take pictures.

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12⁹³

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13⁴⁹

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- #47



9⁹³

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5⁶⁷

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5⁷⁹

WILDLIFE INNOVATIONS FEEDER FIBRE 5 1/2-LB. BAG

- #77



TPW passes 'Party Boat' license rules for inland waters

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission approved regulations that would require party boat operators to be licensed and their boats inspected and insured.

According to the regulations approved by the commission, party boat means "a vessel rented or leased for a group recreational event for more than six passengers that operates on inland waters of this state."

Not included in the definition are boats less than 30 feet in length, sailboats, livery ves-

sels or any vessel used for training purposes.

According to the rules, a party boat is subject to an annual inspection; requires the operator to be at least 21 years of age, licensed and to have completed a boater safety course; imposes limits on the number of passengers; and requires a minimum amount of liability insurance.

Enforcement of the regulations will begin by June 2008.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report.

Drum

Continued from Page 10

ers, they slurp crawfish, snails, cut fish, various invertebrates and many other natural baits. They also eat shad, minnows and other baitfish.

"Drum can be caught in droves by drifting a live minnow, shad or shiner on just a hook and a split shot," Crook said. "We also catch drum catfishing with cut bait or stinkbait."

In sandy or muddy areas with isolated rocks or shell beds, they overturn rocks to search for morsels. With crushing plates in their throats, freshwater drum can smash snails or mussel shells. Anglers sometimes "bait" an area with cracked clams to attract drum.

"If anglers know where to find good clam beds, they can probably find plenty of drum," said longtime angler Chris Berzas. "Ledges near sandbars provide the major thoroughfare for drum to find forage. Fishing the downstream side of a bar and casting near the drop-off as the sandbar tapers into the depths can be a successful tactic."

In the days before electronic wonders, anglers

found drum by listening.

Although people call them gaspergou, grunts, grinders, thunder pumpers or bubblers, biologists call them "Aplodinotus grunniens."

In Latin, "grunniens" means "grunting." A drum makes sounds by vibrating muscles against its swim bladder. They also croak like bullfrogs when taken from the water.

Occasionally, drum feed near the surface. Anglers seeing water boil might think they found stripers or largemouths chasing shad. When feeding on shad, drum may hit silver, blue or grayish crankbaits, Rat-L-Traps, white spinnerbaits or a chrome jiggging spoons. Infrequently, they hit small jerkbaits or topwaters.

"Drum get up on the top and suck shad down," Crook said. "We can hear drum slurping shad in around dams. It's like bluegills eating mayflies. We either use live shad or put several frozen shad on one hook and drop them next to the dam."

On the bottom, drum often hit plastic worms, jigs, grubs or creature baits. They relish soft plastic minnows, tubes or crawfish, especially baits with built-in scent.

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Cutter

Continued from Page 10

alarming since I don't know where the tree's gone."

Irons has 10 years of experience as a commercial diver. He's certified in advanced technical diving and is also a scuba instructor.

He learned his trade performing potable water tank inspections.

"Basically, I was diving into your drinking water," he said.

Irons migrated into cutting boating lanes after hearing at a dive shop about an East Texas man who was spending his weekends trying to clear a path to his boathouse.

It took Irons a day to finish the job.

"Most people think their only option is to cut off the tops of trees or, if they have a pond, drain it and go out and cut the trees with a conventional saw," Irons said.

Irons uses a chainsaw with two hoses: One sends hydraulic fluid to the chainsaw, and the other takes it away. After donning a diving suit, full-face mask, weights and harness, he dives into his work.

"I cut most trees as far down as I would on dry land," he said. "I produce a similar stump. Usually I'm touching bottom. It's much harder trying to cut a tree while floating. I've done it. I wrapped my legs around the tree and reached up and cut it with the chainsaw. I was concentrating too much to be unnerved."

Although cutting boat lanes can be dangerous, not doing so can be even more hazardous.

"If you're going slow and bump a stump, it's probably not going to hurt you or your boat," said Mike Carr, facility manager at Toledo Bend Reservoir for the Sabine River Authority. "If you're going fast, though, it can tear up your boat or toss you out."

Carr said Toledo Bend has built 185 miles of boat lanes since 1990. They lead onto the lake and even crisscross it. Before, people had to trailer to most

'I cut most trees as far down as I would on dry land. I produce a similar stump. Usually I'm touching bottom.'

— COLIN IRONS

places on the lake, he said.

"Now you can go almost anywhere," Carr said. "It was like building an interstate."

Irons cuts boat lanes mostly for owners of private lakes or ponds — though he has worked on lakes owned by water districts. Many public Texas lakes, including those owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, don't permit property owners to build boat lanes.

"You have to remember ours are public lakes," said Mike McInnis, chief of natural resources, recreation section, for the Corps' Fort Worth office. "We don't usually approve projects that are for the exclusive benefit of someone."

Many of his clients are victims of circumstance, Irons said.

"Sometimes they don't realize where the water level is going to end up, said Irons ([940] 367-5621). "Or their pond will get filled up before they get around to cutting down the trees and, then, it's too late."

He works year-round, Irons said — including winter.

"As long as the ice isn't too thick, and I can break through, I can go to work," he said. "I wear a lot more insulation under my suit, and it makes my time spent there more miserable. If I plan right, I can pretty much work all day."

He adds a caveat, though.

"Just don't go encouraging people to only call me when their lake or pond is iced over," he said.

Age of former world record blue catfish Splash revealed

Scientists at Texas Parks and Wildlife's Heart of the Hills Fisheries Science Center near Kerrville determined that Splash, the former world record 121.5-pound blue catfish caught from Lake Texoma in 2004, was at least 23 years old when she died in December 2005.

Fish are aged by counting annual growth rings in small ear-bones, called otoliths, that fish use for balance and hearing.

The official age estimate of 23+ years indicated that the big fish may have been as old as 25. Heart of the Hills

researcher Dave Buckmeier said the two years Splash spent in captivity at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens may have been responsible for "fuzzy" growth rings on the outer edges of her otoliths.

Splash's memory will live on in an exhibit at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, where her skeleton will be displayed along with the story of her life. During the two years she was at the center, Splash was the main attraction.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report.

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Texas shooters clinch NSCA national championships

Dan Carlisle of Austin won the 19th NSCA National Championships at the National Shooting Complex in San Antonio. The competition was the largest in NSCA history with more than 1350 competitors shooting for the title.

A former world champion and Olympic medalist, Carlisle, using his Beretta DT10,

topped the entire Main Event field with a final score of 283/300. World F.I.T.A.S.C. Woman's Champion Diane Sorantino topped the ladies field in the Main Event with a 245/300. Janet McDougall of San Antonio fired a 75/100 to take the ladies Five-Stand title.

— Beretta USA report.

Fits

Continued from Page 8

want to say or think when buying a gun. "I see it all the time," said longtime gunsmith Ray Perry of Bridge City. "A guy gets a gun for his wife or child, and it doesn't fit properly so they aren't comfortable shooting."

"These guys try to make the person fit the gun instead of the other way around. What do you think happens when your wife or child bruises her shoulder or breaks her nose on a scope when she shoots?" he asked. "They don't shoot any more."

The prospective gun buyer has a world of different youth model shotguns to choose from, and every major brand of gun manufacturer has a youth model shotgun from a .410 to a 12 gauge.

An overlooked factor regarding youth model shotguns is weight, as some weigh nearly as much as the regular models. The weight of the guns compared with the size of the shooter can become disproportionate. "If the youngster is carrying the same weight as the man is carrying, it can be really tough on the kid," said Ron Rutledge of McClelland's Gun Shop in Dallas.

Youth model shotguns fall into three groups: single shot, pump action, and semi-automatic. The safest of the three is the single shot where you cock the hammer and pull the trigger.

The pump shotgun is the most popular model for smaller hunters, and the youth model Remington 870 is the standard. Other companies like Mossberg also make good

pump shotguns for smaller shooters, with interchangeable stocks. As the young hunters grow, they can change out the small stock for a standard size model.

The single-shot and pump shotguns have a drawback, though, in the felt recoil. "They are about the same," Rutledge said. "Those, as well as over/unders and side-by-sides, have direct recoil. If the length of pull of the gun is too short or too long, it will slide on the shoulder and kick pretty hard."

The semi-automatic models are more expensive but offer added benefits. The felt recoil on the semi auto is much less thanks to the gas being channeled into service as it helps to eject the spent shell and load the next round.

A popular model for a young shooter comes from Charles Daly; the youth model 20 gauge weighs in at just more than 5 pounds. The youth model comes in full camo or black synthetic with three screw-in chokes and is chambered for 3-inch shells to handle heavy waterfowl loads. The light weight makes the gun easy for smaller hunters to swing leading to better shots.

Another option for smaller hunters is to have a regular-sized shotgun cut down to fit by a gunsmith. Gunsmiths advise that if you do have a gun cut down, to be sure to purchase another full-sized stock to replace it later.

Gunsmiths recommend keeping these things in mind when you decide to buy a shotgun for your child or spouse. It may be the determining factor that either keeps them hunting with you or sends them in search of a new hobby.

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GOOD LUCK CHARM: Ray Murski's grandson Harrison predicted success just before the evening hunt. Photo by Amanda Murski.

Murski

Continued from Page 8

"We're very selective. We don't kill any trophies until they are six and one-half," he said. "And we don't shoot any management deer until they are at least three. Some of the

deer that looked small when they were young turned out much differently. Our management deer pull at least 150."

Ear and a Half's score that night was 220 2/8 B&C. The buck was rescored later at 226 1/8. "He had two drop tines broken off from previous game camera shots. I know he lost about nine or 10 inches," Murski said. "I'll bet they grow back by the time he gets on the wall."

Stickers

Continued from Page 8

their antlers are cut off.

"And any time you move a deer into a different area, I don't care how laid back he is, it's tough.

"If he can grow a little bigger after all of that, I have to tip my hat to him. That means a lot."

Deer industry observers have said there may be one or two other bucks in the nation larger than Stickers, but not in Texas.

"I doubt there's one bigger," Zaiglin said of the Texas bucks. "I promise you, if there was one, you'd have heard of him."

Deer

Continued from Page 1

Waska of Houston saw tons of nuts on the ground, but most were pecans. "It makes the deer hunting pretty difficult," she said. "The deer stayed close to the river where all the pecans were. We tried to get into the thick brush, but we really could use a freeze."

Waska said the deer have been unusually active. "We saw quite a few active deer," she said. "At first, we thought it was a false rut, but there were several good-sized deer moving, and only one buck was still hanging back in the brush. The bucks moving did appear to be younger, though."

Not all Texas hunters are seeing a bumper crop of acorns.

Hunters in areas of Blanco County reported much different conditions, with very few acorns on the ground and the deer readily coming to feeders.

Billy Higginbotham, wildlife specialist

with the Texas Cooperative Extension Service in Gilmer, said the presence of oak trees doesn't necessarily guarantee an acorn crop; it depends on the species of oak.

But, he said, "I haven't heard from anyone from any region in the state with oak trees that aren't pretty consistent with acorns."

"And some species (of oak trees) are just hitting their stride," he said. "Some people have been saying that live oak acorns in the Hill Country have already fallen, but it's not true. I was in the Hill Country last weekend — high winds put a lot of acorns on the ground but there weren't a lot in the trees."

Increased activity, cooler temperatures and the coming rut have deer hunters hoping for more deer making their presence known.

Higginbotham said the rut is bound to spur bucks out from under the trees; alternatively, he added, hunters can get out their blinds and go in after them.

"Get out from behind the plexiglass and plywood and get into the woods and see what's going on," he said.

— Staff reports.

'This little cold spell is helping, and it's also resulted in the deer starting to come to the com.'

— KENDALL WHITE

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HEROES



JILL FIELDER, left, and **COLLEEN HOLDEN** show two red drum they caught while fishing near Rockport.



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GARY GIUDICE of Floydada shot his first deer, an antlerless yearling buck, in Coke County.



STEVE KLEPFER of The Colony shot this Black Buck on the Lammert Ranch southeast of Menard. It measured 18.5 inches.

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GARY GIUDICE shows his largest bass of the day. He caught it at Lake Mateos in Mexico.

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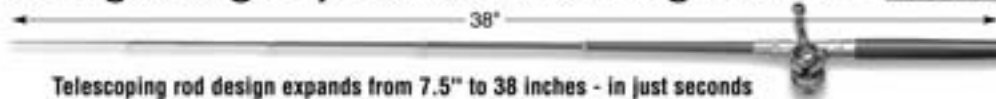


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| Freeport | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. |
| Corpus Christi | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. |
| Port Bolivar | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. |
| Port O'Connor | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. |
| San Luis Pass | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. | 10:59 p.m. | 7:19 p.m. | 10:21 3:35 p.m. | 8:27 a.m. |

SOLAR TABLE

| | Houston | Dallas | San Antonio | Amarillo |
|-------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 10:21 | 7:57a/1:44p | 7:39a/1:47p | 8:05a/1:50p | 8:49a/1:55p |
| 10:22 | 8:22a/1:50p | 7:56a/1:50p | 8:24a/1:50p | 9:04a/1:54p |
| 10:23 | 8:44a/1:50p | 8:19a/1:50p | 8:46a/1:50p | 9:29a/1:54p |
| 10:24 | 9:12a/1:50p | 8:53a/1:50p | 9:20a/1:50p | 10:00a/1:54p |
| 10:25 | 9:44a/1:50p | 9:31a/1:50p | 9:56a/1:50p | 10:37a/1:54p |
| 10:26 | 10:20a/1:50p | 10:13a/1:50p | 10:36a/1:50p | 11:17a/1:54p |
| 10:27 | 11:00a/1:50p | 10:58a/1:50p | 11:12a/1:50p | 12:00a/1:54p |
| 10:28 | 11:44a/1:50p | 11:47a/1:50p | 11:52a/1:50p | 12:47a/1:54p |
| 10:29 | 12:32a/1:50p | 12:40a/1:50p | 12:34a/1:50p | 1:39a/1:54p |
| 10:30 | 1:24a/1:50p | 1:31a/1:50p | 1:14a/1:50p | 2:41a/1:54p |
| 10:31 | 2:20a/1:50p | 2:26a/1:50p | 2:06a/1:50p | 3:50a/1:54p |
| 10:32 | 3:20a/1:50p | 3:15a/1:50p | 2:52a/1:50p | 5:03a/1:54p |
| 10:33 | 4:24a/1:50p | 4:18a/1:50p | 3:22a/1:50p | 6:20a/1:54p |
| 10:34 | 5:32a/1:50p | 5:24a/1:50p | 3:46a/1:50p | 7:41a/1:54p |
| 10:35 | 6:44a/1:50p | 6:35a/1:50p | 4:06a/1:50p | 9:05a/1:54p |
| 10:36 | 8:00a/1:50p | 7:90a/1:50p | 4:22a/1:50p | 10:32a/1:54p |
| 10:37 | 9:20a/1:50p | 8:28a/1:50p | 4:34a/1:50p | 12:03a/1:54p |
| 10:38 | 10:44a/1:50p | 9:50a/1:50p | 4:42a/1:50p | 1:38a/1:54p |
| 10:39 | 12:12a/1:50p | 11:16a/1:50p | 4:46a/1:50p | 3:17a/1:54p |
| 10:40 | 1:44a/1:50p | 12:44a/1:50p | 4:46a/1:50p | 5:00a/1:54p |
| 10:41 | 3:20a/1:50p | 1:26a/1:50p | 4:42a/1:50p | 6:37a/1:54p |
| 10:42 | 5:00a/1:50p | 3:12a/1:50p | 4:34a/1:50p | 8:19a/1:54p |
| 10:43 | 6:44a/1:50p | 5:02a/1:50p | 4:22a/1:50p | 10:05a/1:54p |
| 10:44 | 8:32a/1:50p | 6:56a/1:50p | 4:06a/1:50p | 11:55a/1:54p |
| 10:45 | 10:24a/1:50p | 8:54a/1:50p | 3:86a/1:50p | 1:49a/1:54p |
| 10:46 | 12:20a/1:50p | 10:56a/1:50p | 2:62a/1:50p | 3:47a/1:54p |
| 10:47 | 1:20a/1:50p | 13:02a/1:50p | 1:34a/1:50p | 5:40a/1:54p |
| 10:48 | 2:24a/1:50p | 15:12a/1:50p | 0:00a/1:50p | 7:28a/1:54p |
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| 10:52 | 7:20a/1:50p | 24:32a/1:50p | -5:40a/1:50p | 1:08a/1:54p |
| 10:53 | 8:44a/1:50p | 27:02a/1:50p | -6:52a/1:50p | 1:41a/1:54p |
| 10:54 | 10:12a/1:50p | 29:36a/1:50p | -7:50a/1:50p | 2:04a/1:54p |
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| 10:58 | 16:44a/1:50p | 40:32a/1:50p | -9:92a/1:50p | 2:03a/1:54p |
| 10:59 | 18:32a/1:50p | 43:26a/1:50p | -10:00a/1:50p | 1:83a/1:54p |
| 11:00 | 20:24a/1:50p | 46:24a/1:50p | -10:84a/1:50p | 5:57a/1:54p |
| 11:01 | 22:20a/1:50p | 49:26a/1:50p | -11:44a/1:50p | 10:06a/1:54p |
| 11:02 | 24:20a/1:50p | 52:32a/1:50p | -12:50a/1:50p | 14:10a/1:54p |
| 11:03 | 26:24a/1:50p | 55:42a/1:50p | -14:02a/1:50p | 18:10a/1:54p |
| 11:04 | 28:32a/1:50p | 58:56a/1:50p | -15:10a/1:50p | 22:06a/1:54p |
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| 11:09 | 40:12a/1:50p | 75:26a/1:50p | -19:80a/1:50p | 36:08a/1:54p |
| 11:10 | 42:44a/1:50p | 78:64a/1:50p | -19:54a/1:50p | 37:30a/1:54p |
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| 11:13 | 50:84a/1:50p | 89:82a/1:50p | -21:82a/1:50p | 36:56a/1:54p |
| 11:14 | 53:72a/1:50p | 93:76a/1:50p | -22:40a/1:50p | 36:18a/1:54p |
| 11:15 | 56:64a/1:50p | 97:74a/1:50p | -23:14a/1:50p | 35:30a/1:54p |
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| 11:17 | 62:60a/1:50p | 105:82a/1:50p | -24:40a/1:50p | 33:24a/1:54p |
| 11:18 | 65:64a/1:50p | 109:92a/1:50p | -25:22a/1:50p | 32:06a/1:54p |
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| 11:20 | 71:84a/1:50p | 118:24a/1:50p | -26:74a/1:50p | 29:40a/1:54p |
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| 11:25 | 88:04a/1:50p | 139:74a/1:50p | -29:54a/1:50p | 18:00a/1:54p |
| 11:26 | 91:40a/1:50p | 144:16a/1:50p | -30:24a/1:50p | 15:52a/1:54p |
| 11:27 | 94:80a/1:50p | 148:62a/1:50p | -30:80a/1:50p | 13:44a/1:54p |
| 11:28 | 98:24a/1:50p | 153:12a/1:50p | -31:22a/1:50p | 11:36a/1:54p |
| 11:29 | 101:72a/1:50p | 157:66a/1:50p | -31:50a/1:50p | 9:28a/1:54p |
| 11:30 | 105:24a/1:50p | 162:24a/1:50p | -32:14a/1:50p | 7:20a/1:54p |
| 11:31 | 108:80a/1:50p | 166:86a/1:50p | -32:34a/1:50p | 5:12a/1:54p |
| 11:32 | 112:40a/1:50p | 171:52a/1:50p | -32:50a/1:50p | 3:04a/1:54p |
| 11:33 | 116:04a/1:50p | 176:12a/1:50p | -32:52a/1:50p | 0:56a/1:54p |
| 11:34 | 119:72a/1:50p | 180:76a/1:50p | -32:40a/1:50p | -1:12a/1:54p |
| 11:35 | 123:44a/1:50p | 185:44a/1:50p | -32:14a/1:50p | -3:20a/1:54p |
| 11:36 | 127:20a/1:50p | 190:16a/1:50p | -31:84a/1:50p | -5:28a/1:54p |
| 11:37 | 131:00a/1:50p | 194:92a/1:50p | -31:40a/1:50p | -7:36a/1:54p |
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| 11:41 | 146:60a/1:50p | 214:36a/1:50p | -29:44a/1:50p | -14:88a/1:54p |
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| 11:43 | 154:64a/1:50p | 224:32a/1:50p | -27:22a/1:50p | -16:24a/1:54p |
| 11:44 | 158:72a/1:50p | 229:36a/1:50p | -25:90a/1:50p | -16:42a/1:54p |
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| 11:46 | 167:00a/1:50p | 239:56a/1:50p | -22:84a/1:50p | -15:68a/1:54p |
| 11:47 | 171:20a/1:50p | 244:72a/1:50p | -21:10a/1:50p | -14:86a/1:54p |
| 11:48 | 175:44a/1:50p | 249:02a/1:50p | -19:22a/1:50p | -13:64a/1:54p |
| 11:49 | 179:72a/1:50p | 253:46a/1:50p | -17:20a/1:50p | -12:02a/1:54p |
| 11:50 | 184:04a/1:50p | 258:04a/1:50p | -15:04a/1:50p | -10:00a/1:54p |
| 11:51 | 188:40a/1:50p | 262:76a/1:50p | -12:74a/1:50p | -7:58a/1:54p |
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| 11:59 | 224:72a/1:50p | 305:56a/1:50p | 6:50a/1:50p | 12:42a/1:54p |
| 12:00 | 229:44a/1:50p | 311:54a/1:50p | 8:16a/1:50p | 15:40a/1:54p |

SUN AND MOON

| Sunrise/set | | Moonrise/set | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Houston | Dallas | San Antonio | Amarillo |
| 10:21 | 8:05a/1:50p | 7:56a/1:50p | 8:49a/1:54p |
| 10:22 | 8:22a/1:50p | 7:56a/1:50p | 9:04a/1:54p |
| 10:23 | 8:44a/1:50p | 8:19a/1:50p | 9:29a/1:54p |
| 10:24 | 9:12a/1:50p | 8:53a/1:50p | 10:00a/1:54p |
| 10:25 | 9:44a/1:50p | 9:31a/1:50p | 10:37a/1:54p |
| 10:26 | 10:20a/1:50p | 10:13a/1:50p | 11:17a/1:54p |
| 10:27 | 11:00a/1:50p | 10:58a/1:50p | 12:00a/1:54p |
| 10:28 | 11:44a/1:50p | 11:47a/1:50p | 12:47a/1:54p |
| 10:29 | 12:32a/1:50p | 12:40a/1:50p | 1:39a/1:54p |
| 10:30 | 1:24a/1:50p | 1:31a/1:50p | 2:41a/1:54p |
| 10:31 | 2:20a/1:50p | 2:26a/1:50p | 3:50a/1:54p |
| 10:32 | 3:20a/1:50p | 3:15a/1:50p | 5:03a/1:54p |
| 10:33 | 4:24a/1:50p | 4:18a/1:50p | 6:20a/1:54p |
| 10:34 | 5:32a/1:50p | 5:24a/1:50p | 7:41a/1:54p |
| 10:35 | 6:44a/1:50p | 6:35a/1:50p | 9:05a/1:54p |
| 10:36 | 8:00a/1:50p | 7:50a/1:50p | 10:32a/1:54p |
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| 10:40 | 1:44a/1:50p | 1:02a/1:50p | 5:00a/1:54p |
| 10:41 | 3:20a/1:50p | 1:44a/1:50p | 6:37a/1:54p |
| 10:42 | 5:00a/1:50p | 2:32a/1:50p | 8:19a/1:54p |
| 10:43 | | | |

OUTDOOR DATEBOOK

HAVE AN EVENT?

E-mail it to
editor@lonestaroutdoornews.com

Nov. 29-Dec. 2: The Challenged Outdoorsmen of America will host its 7th Annual Deer Hunt at Wright Patman Lake, open to all persons with disabilities at no charge. Contact Inez Jackson at (903) 671-2437 for information.

Nov. 29: The Sweetwater DU dinner will be held at the Elks Lodge. Call Jackie Rose at (325) 338-4681 for information.

Dec. 1: The Rita Blanca Quail Unlimited chapter dinner will be held in Dalhart. Call Derek Lepke at (806) 377-6234 for information.



Dec. 1: Orvis endorsed fly-fishing guides Rob Woodruff and Doc Thompson will present a program on the basics of fly selection at the Dallas store at 10 a.m. and at the Arlington store at 3 p.m. For information, call (214) 265-1600 (Dallas) or (817) 465-5800 (Arlington).

Dec. 1: The Caddo Lake "Christmas Dinner" DU event will be held at the Recreation Hall at Caddo Lake State Park in Karnack. Call Michael Turner at (903) 930-0092 for information.

Dec. 1-2: A basic hunter education class will be offered at Gander Mountain in Houston. Call instructor Casey Stawicki at (713) 569-6791 for information and registration.

Dec. 6: The Amarillo DU dinner will be held at the Amarillo Civic Center. Contact Scott Mitchell at (806) 674-1839 or amitch3@suddenlink.com for information.



information.

Dec. 6: The Metrocrest DU Sponsor dinner will be held at Chamberlain's Steak House in Dallas. Contact Rob Gokey at (972) 234-3933 or rob@triplefoods.com for information and reservations.

Dec. 6: The Woodlands DU Waterfowl Gala will be held at The Woodlands Marriott Waterway. For information, contact Kyle Cronan at (281) 381-3562 or kyle.cronan@agedwards.com.

Dec. 7-9: The Texas Hill Country River Region will host its "Trout Days" program with stocking of rainbow trout in the Sabal, Frio and Nueces rivers. For information, call Ken Cave at (800) 210-0380 or visit www.thcrr.com.

Dec. 8 and 10: A Texas boater education course will be offered at Cabela's in Fort Worth. Reservations



are required. Call (972) 263-6989 to register.

Dec. 8-9, 15-16: Cabela's in Buda will host Santa for photos with children. Call (512) 295-1100 for information.

Dec. 11: The Rusk County DU Duck Hunter Information Evening will be held at Lupes Mexican Restaurant in Henderson. Call Matt Ellis at (903) 658-7285 for information.

Dec. 11-13: A hunter's safety education class will be held at the Corsicana Gander Mountain store. Call (903) 874-2500 for information and registration.

Dec. 13: The Dallas Safari Club holiday party will be held at the Dallas World Aquarium. Call (972) 980-9800 for information and reservations.

Dec. 13: The Dallas Woods and Waters Club meeting will be held at the



Wyndham North Dallas Hotel, featuring Gary Roberson of Burnham Brothers Game Calls. Call (214) 570-8700 for information and reservations.

Dec. 15: Fishing Tackle Unlimited in Houston will hold a Fly Fishing Expo featuring fly-fishing guides and manufacturer representatives. For information, call Camille Null at (281) 481-6838, ext. 209.

Dec. 15: Cabela's in Fort Worth will hold a Boy Scouts Archery Fun Shoot for all first- through fifth-grade students at Lone Star Lake in front of the store. Prizes include holiday turkeys for each grade level. For information, contact Stephanie Perry at (817) 337-2400 or Stephanie.perry@cabelas.com.

Dec. 15-16: A Spanish hunter education class will be offered at Cabela's in Buda. To register, call Texas Parks and Wildlife at (512) 389-4999.

OUTFITTERS

Advertisement

Poco Loco Lodge an outdoors adventure in luxury

Michael and Susan Yuras, owners of Poco Loco Lodge in Port O'Connor, are prepared to give the hunter or angler an experience they won't forget.

Maybe that's why people come from all across Texas and such states as North Carolina, South Carolina and Utah to take advantage of what Poco Loco Lodge has to offer.

"One of our big draws is our unique and surprising accommodations," Michael Yuras said. "The rooms are the nicest and cleanest in this area and the amenities are special and unusual. Once you stay here it's hard not to come back."

The lodge has eight individual rooms with cable TV and cooking utensils are provided in rooms with a full kitchen. "And they come loaded with complimentary Starbucks coffee, snacks and drinks. And you hear them say, 'We don't have to pay for all this stuff?'"

A unique Spanish dish is also offered. "We cook a paella for groups of six or more," Yuras said.

Other amenities offered include a boat wash-down area including motor flush, two outdoor gas grills, three outdoor picnic tables, outdoor gas fish cooker, outdoor gas pots for crawfish boils, basketball hoop, ping pong table and plenty of security lighting for parking.

Duck season is in full swing after a slow start, Yuras said, "it's starting to improve. They're coming off the



ADVENTUROUS PARADISE: The amenities at Poco Loco Lodge in Port O'Connor are special and unusual and they are on the "house." And the duck hunting and redfish angling is top-notch.

prairie right now.

"We have lots of pintails, red-heads and some flocks of green-wing teal all on the bay area flats. And duck hunting in this area is real well-known."

The lodge has 12 of the finest and most comfortable blinds in strategic areas, and hunters can choose guided or non-guided hunts.

There is transportation by flat-bottom boats and a custom-built airboat. It's safe, fast and will carry eight hunters comfortably.

"It's kind of a treat," Yuras said. "We can put you right in the blind even with your slippers on."

For the angler, fishing is excellent. The lodge offers guided trips or customers are welcome to bring

their own boats. "We have lots of redfish," Yuras said, adding "and the flounder run has begun and will continue to improve the colder it gets. Most people going out now are getting their limit."

The lodge also offers a special opportunity for companies to put on a recognition event. Ideal when staying two nights, the event

includes drinks and snacks upon arrival. The next morning the fishing starts around 6:30 a.m. and goes until 2 or 3 p.m., followed by shish-ka-bobs, a crawfish boil or a shrimp broil.

So when it comes time for that special adventure, put the Poco Loco Lodge on your calendar and enjoy hunting and fishing in luxury.

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SILVER & SLEEK: While mamas might be merely content with their low-tech dome tents, they'd much rather set up camp in this. The 17-foot **Safari Sport** by Airstream boasts that classic curvy design and is just big enough to house all those things a tent can't: such as an air-conditioner, stove, shower and toilet. Plus its interior is more comfortable. It costs around \$30,000, depending on amenities. For information and dealers, visit www.airstream.com.



FORM & FUNCTION: Whether she's stalking lions in Zambia or hunting for bargains in the Metroplex, she will be comfortable in this elegant **safari shirt** from **SHE Safari**. Made of French twill, this short-sleeve shirt with the pleated bodice is designed for ease of movement and shaped to flatter the female form. Available in khaki (shown), light olive and dark olive, it costs \$55. To order, visit www.SHESafari.com or call (281) 448-4860.



PRETTY & PINK: She might be your fisher girl, but she's foremost a girl. So, give your little princess a pretty fishing rod that she'll happily tote on your next outing. From **Fisher Girl**, the **Minnow Rod** (about \$20) is a 2.5-foot pole perfect for the littlest angler. The freshwater one-piece fishing rod has an ABS spool with metal ball bearings. The company also makes the 5-foot Tadpole (about \$25; shown) and the 6-foot Mermaid two-piece combo (about \$40). To order, visit www.fishergirl.com.



FAST & FUN: Looking for a first rifle for the chip off the old block? Consider **Cabelas' Outfitter Series Air Rifle**. The .177-caliber air gun has a cocking effort of 28 pounds and is capable of producing speeds up to 1,200 fps using PBA ammo. Features include a hardwood stock, ventilated rubber recoil pad, muzzle brake and scope. The 44.5-inch gun weighs a little more than 8 pounds and comes with 100 rounds of ammo. It costs about \$180. For information, visit www.cabelas.com.

PERFORMANCE & FLASH: Coming in December is the **Yamaha Rhino 700 FI Auto 4x4 SE** in Midnight Armor. It has all the features consumers have come to appreciate in this ATV line, plus adjustable piggyback shocks, one-piece cast aluminum wheels, injection-molded suntop, and blow-molded doors. This model also boasts a special black water-dipped body with flames and special graphics treatment. Its MSRP is \$11,999. For dealers or to view all of its specs, visit www.yamaha-motor.com.



NO FLASH, NO PROBLEM: **Moultrie's Game Spy I-40 Digital Trail Camera** is infrared so there's no visible white flash to startle skittish game. The 4 MP scouting camera is equipped with a rapid trigger time and its infrared field extends to 50 feet. It has a battery life of 150 days. Features include an easy-to-read photo strip, day or night video clips, plus more. It costs about \$240. For retailers, visit www.moultriefeeders.com or call (800) 653-3334.



BOLD & GLITZERY: Anglers and non-anglers alike will love this beautiful lure with pink sapphires from **MacDaddy's Fishing Lures**. And while it can be fished, most women will opt to wear this as a pendant. Part of the company's Pink Ribbon Collection, the pendant is available in platinum and pink sapphires (\$4,995), 14-karat white gold and sapphires (\$995, shown), sterling silver with cubic zirconia stones (about \$60), and more. Ten percent of sales from the Pink Ribbon collection will be donated to Casting for Recovery, a non-profit group that uses fly-fishing camps to provide therapy to breast cancer survivors. To view the entire collection, visit www.macdaddysfishinglures.com or call (805) 473-9282.



EASY TO GRIP & EASY ON THE EYES: **Nikon Sports Optics' new Trailblazer 10x50 binoculars** offer a slim profile with a full-size view. The company incorporates its Eco-Glass (made without the use of arsenic or lead) for the lens and prism elements; its multi-coated lenses offer maximum light transmission and image quality. The full-size roof prism binoculars boast a 294-foot field of view at 1,000 yards. The waterproof and fogproof binoculars feature generous eye relief. They are ergonomically designed and have a rubber-armored exterior for an easier grip. The 30.3-ounce binoculars cost about \$180. For retailers, visit www.nikonportoptics.com or call (800) 645-6687.



WHAT THEY REALLY WANT THIS CHRISTMAS? Many would just rather pick out their own stuff! So, find out what where your favorite hunter or angler shops and swing on by for that gift card. Retailers who have Web sites make it easy. Here are three of the biggies: www.academy.com; www.cabelas.com; and www.gandermountain.com. Just click on to the "gift card/certificate" category, pick the amount, pay, and the gift card will be mailed right out.

FISHING REPORT

HOT BITES

LARGEMOUTH BASS



AMISTAD: Black bass are good on topwaters, spinnerbaits, crankbaits, and soft plastics.
ATHENS: Black bass are good on topwaters, Texas rigs and Rat-L-Traps.
CALAVERAS: Black bass are very good on dark soft plastic worms, spinnerbaits, and crankbaits around reed beds.
STILLHOUSE: Black bass are very good on watermelon green, watermelon red and green pumpkin soft plastic worms.

WHITE/HYBRID/STRIPER



COLEMAN: Hybrid striped are good on live minnows and chartreuse Rat-L-Traps.
CADDO: White bass are good in the main channels on small spinners, spoons and slabs.
GREENBELT: White bass are good on live baits and chrome/black jerkbaits along dam and riprap.
TOLEDO BEND: Striped bass are good on silver spoons and striper jigs. White bass are good on minnows and silver spoons.

CATFISH



ARROWHEAD: Blue Catfish are good on punchbait around flooded brush in the mid-lake.
BOB SANDLIN: Catfish are good on Punch Bait in 2-8 feet close to deeper channels.
FALCON: Channel and blue catfish are excellent on cut bait and stinkbait up the river.
FORK: Catfish are good on chartreuse nightcrawlers, punchbait and live shad.

CRAPPIE



HOUSTON COUNTY: Crappie are very good on live minnows near creek channels in 15-20 feet.
O.H. IVIE: Crappie are good on minnows and jigs.
SOMERVILLE: Crappie are very good on minnows and green/black jigs.
TAWAKONI: Catfish are good on live shad and nightcrawlers.

ALAN HENRY: Water lightly stained; 62 degrees; 0.86' low. Black bass are fair on topwater lures briefly at daybreak, then shad-colored crankbaits and black neon soft tubes or jigs suspended among timber.
AMISTAD: Water clear; 74 degrees; 7.76' low. Catfish are good on cheesebait, shrimp, and nightcrawlers over baited holes in 40-100 feet. Yellow catfish are good on trotlines, drop lines, and throwlines baited with live perch.

ARROWHEAD: Water lightly stained; 60 degrees; 1.56' low. Crappie are good on minnows off the derricks and state park docks, with some off rocky points and flooded brush 5-10 feet deep.

ATHENS: Water lightly stained; 63-69 degrees; 0.17' low. Crappie are good on live minnows in 12-15 feet around man-made brush piles. Catfish are good on fresh shad and punchbait in 2-12 feet.

BASTROP: Water clear. Crappie are good on live minnows. Channel and blue catfish are good on hot dogs, nightcrawlers, and stinkbait.

BELTON: Water stained; 77 degrees; 0.06' high. Black bass are good on Rat-L-Traps. Hybrid striped are good on minnows at night under lights. White bass are good on minnows at night under lights. Crappie are good on minnows in 15 feet just after dark. Channel and blue catfish are very good on hot dogs, frozen shad and live perch.

BOB SANDLIN: Water clear; 62-68 degrees; 0.77' low. Black bass are good on Ribbit Frogs, Texas rigs and jigs fished in and on the edges of hydrilla. Crappie are good on live minnows under the bridges and around brush in 12-15 feet.
BRAUNIG: Water stained; 70 degrees. Black bass are good on crankbaits and live soft plastic worms. Striped bass are good on liver and shad. Redfish are good on crawfish, shad, shrimp, tilapia, and silver spoons. Channel catfish are good on liver, shrimp, cut bait, and cheesebait near the dam and the intake. Blue catfish are good on cut bait.

BRIDGEPORT: Water lightly stained; 63-69 degrees; 2.63' low. Black bass are fair to good on Texas rigs, crankbaits and jigs. Channel catfish are good on punchbait over baited holes.

BUCHANAN: Water clear; 70 degrees; 2.51' low. Black bass are good on Shad Rat-L-Traps, topwaters, and Texas rigged weightless silver flake Whacky Sticks at daylight in 8-15 feet.
CADDO: Water stained; 64-71 degrees; 0.02' high. Black bass are good on Texas rigged worms and Senkos. Channel catfish are good on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

CALAVERAS: Water stained; 70 degrees. Channel and blue catfish are good on liver, shrimp, cheesebait, and shad near the railroad bridge and 181 Cove. Yellow catfish are slow.

CANYON LAKE: Water clear; 72 degrees; 0.09' high. Smallmouth bass are good on Smokin' Greenin Devil's Tongues on drop shots, smoke curl tail grubs on jigsheads, and 3/16 oz. pumpkin jigs with matching drop shot worms under cloud cover along ledges and over rock piles in 10-20 feet early. Crappie are fair on minnows and crappie jigs upriver.

CEDAR CREEK: Water lightly stained; 63-69 degrees; 0.98' low. Black bass are good on finesse worms, Carolina rigs and jigs. Catfish are fair to good on prepared bait and chartreuse nightcrawlers.

CHOKO CANYON: Water lightly stained; 71 degrees; 0.37' low. Black bass are good on watermelon red and teal/sunrise soft plastics in 15-25 feet. Crappie are good on minnows and blue tube jigs. Channel and blue catfish are good on nightcrawlers and stinkbait.

COLEMAN: Water clear; 70 degrees. Black bass are good on watermelon spinnerbaits and crankbaits. Crappie are good on live minnows.

COLETO CREEK: Water clear; 81 degrees (88 degrees at discharge); 0.24' low. Channel and blue catfish to 26 pounds are good on trotlines baited with live perch and stinkbait. Yellow catfish to 5 pounds are good on trotlines baited with liver and perch.

CONROE: Water clear; 1.01' low. Striped bass are good on live minnows and silver striper jigs.
COOPER: Water lightly stained; 62-69 degrees; 0.18' low. White bass are good on Humdingers and slabs. Hybrid striped are fair to good on slabs and live shad.

FAIRFIELD: Water fairly clear; 66-81 degrees. Black bass are fair to good on crankbaits, Senkos, Texas rigs and jigs in the warmer water.
FALCON: Water clear; 78 degrees. Black bass are fair on watermelon spinnerbaits and Brush Hogs in 5-12 feet.

FAYETTE: Water clear; 71 degrees. Black bass are good on watermelon gold, watermelon red, and plum Carolina rigged Finesse worms, and on topwaters over grass.
FORK: Water fairly clear; 63-69 degrees; 0.33' low. Black bass are good on Carolina rigs, heavy jigs and Lake Fork Tackle Flutter Spoons (Bar Fish pattern). Crappie are good on live minnows and jigs over brush piles and around bridge columns.

GRANBURY: Water clear; 1.10' low. Striped bass are good on live minnows. White bass are good on minnows, hellbenders, and pet spoons. Crappie are good on minnows and pink tube jigs. Catfish are good on shrimp and live minnows.

GRANGER: Water murky; 64 degrees; 0.17' high. Black bass are good but small on soft plastics and crankbaits. Crappie are good on chartreuse and orange tube jigs in 12-20 feet. Blue catfish are good on shad and prepared baits in shallow water.

GRAPEVINE: Water fairly clear; 62-69 degrees; 0.65' low. Black bass are good on Texas rigs, shak head rigs and topwaters (lots of small fish on topwaters in the backs of the coves with creeks).
GREENBELT: Water lightly stained; 56 degrees; 24.30' low. Crappie are

good on jigs and minnows. Catfish are good on minnows and prepared bait.

HOUSTON COUNTY: Water clear; 69 degrees; 0.11' low. Black bass to 5 pounds are good on watermelon/red flake craw worms between the islands and near Golden Acres subdivision in 8-14 feet. Channel and blue catfish to 9 pounds are very good on stinkbait near the marina.

JOE POOL: Water off color; 62-69 degrees; 1.39' low. Black bass are fair to good on Texas rigs, crankbaits and jigs.

LAKE O' THE PINES: Water lightly stained; 63-69 degrees; 0.23' high. Catfish are good on chartreuse nightcrawlers and live baits.

LAVON: Water lightly stained; 62-69 degrees; 2.82' low. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs.

LBJ: Water stained; 70 degrees; 0.07' low. Black bass are good on 1/8 oz. buzzbaits, watermelon topwaters, and wacky rigged green pumpkin Whacky Sticks. Crappie to 16" are good on crappie jigs and live minnows over brush piles in 12-15 feet.

LEWISVILLE: Water off color; 63-69 degrees; 0.35' low. Black bass are good on shak head rigs, jigs, drop shot rigs and crankbaits — numbers of smaller fish feeding on shad in the shallows. White bass are fair to good on slabs. Catfish are good on minnows and chartreuse night-crawlers.

LIVINGSTON: Water fairly clear; 72 degrees; 0.01' high. Black bass to 3.5 pounds are good on spinnerbaits and crankbaits. Crappie are good on minnows. Blue catfish are good on cut bait and shad.

MACKENZIE: Water lightly stained; 57 degrees; 72.86' low. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs.
NAVARO MILLS: Water murky; 65 degrees; 0.71' low. Black bass are good but small on minnows. Channel and blue catfish are good on minnows and stinkbait on the bottom.

O.H. IVIE: Water lightly stained; 64 degrees; 10.74' low. White bass are good on live baits and crankbaits along rocks. Channel catfish are good on prepared and live baits.

PALESTINE: Water lightly stained; 62-68 degrees; 0.38' low. Catfish are fair to good on prepared bait and chartreuse nightcrawlers.
POSSUM KINGDOM: Water stained; 66 degrees; 1.50' low. White bass are fair in the late afternoon on small crankbaits in 12-15 feet. Channel and blue catfish are good on cut shad and shrimp.

PROCTOR: Water clear; 70 degrees; 0.10' low. Black bass are good on purple, black/yellow, and black/chartreuse soft plastic worms. White bass are good but small on jigging spoons. Crappie are good on minnows in 12-15 feet. Channel and blue catfish are good on cut shad and shrimp.

RAY HUBBARD: Water lightly stained; 62-69 degrees; 0.45' low. Black bass are fair to good on Carolina rigs, crankbaits and drop shot rigs. White bass are fair on slabs. Catfish are fair to good on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

RAY ROBERTS: Water lightly stained; 62-67 degrees; 0.08' low. Black bass to 3.5 pounds are good on 7" worms, 5" Yum Dinglers and shad pattern crankbaits. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs around bridge pilings. White bass are good on Jigging Spoons. Catfish are good on live and prepared bait.

RICHLAND CHAMBERS: Water off color; 62-68 degrees; 1.17' low. White bass are good on slabs and live minnows. Hybrid striped are fair on large slabs and live shad.
SAM RAYBURN: Water stained; 68 degrees; 5.30' low. Black bass are good on pumpkinseed soft plastic worms, crankbaits, and watermelon topwaters in 20-35 feet. White bass are good on minnows and silver spoons. Catfish are good on stinkbait, shrimp, and minnows.

SOMERVILLE: Water murky; 0.62' low. Channel and blue catfish are very good on stinkbait, liver, and cheesebait.
STILLHOUSE: Water clear; 76 degrees; 0.30' high. Crappie are excellent on minnows early and late.

TAWAKONI: Water lightly stained; 62-69 degrees; 1.6' low. Black bass are good on shad pattern crankbaits, Rat-L-Traps and Texas rigs. White bass are fair on slabs.
TEXOMA: Water fairly clear; 62-69 degrees; 1.69' low. Black bass are fair to good on Texas and Carolina rigs, medium to deep diving shad pattern crankbaits and drop shot rigs. Striped bass are fair on slow-rolled Sassy Shad, with occasional larger fish on topwaters.

TOLEDO BEND: Water clear; 65 degrees; 4.39' low. Black bass are fair on watermelon red and chartreuse soft plastic worms and crankbaits in 20-30 feet. Channel and blue catfish are good on minnows and stinkbait.
TRAVIS: Water clear; 73 degrees; 0.77' low. Black bass to 6 pounds are good on white spinnerbaits, buzzbaits, and watermelon worms in 8-22 feet.

WEATHERFORD: Water stained; 62-68 degrees; 2' low. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs in the crappie house.
WHITE RIVER: Water lightly stained; 60 degrees; 28.19' low. Crappie are good on jigs and minnows. Channel catfish are good on live baits.

WHITNEY: Water stained; 4.92' low. Crappie are good on minnows and blue tube jigs. Catfish are good on bait shrimp and stinkbait.
WICHITA: Water turbid; 62 degrees; 1.10' low. Channel catfish are good drift fishing with punchbait and on trotlines baited with shad.

WRIGHT PATMAN: Water lightly stained; 62-69 degrees; 4.01' high. Black bass are good on Rat-L-Traps, pearl crankbaits and Carolina rigs. Catfish are good on prepared baits and chartreuse (use Worm-Glo) night-crawlers.

SALTWATER SCENE



NORTH SABINE: Trout are fair to good in the middle of the lake under the birds on strawber-ry and chartreuse tows, and on the bottom in live shad. Flounder are good on the Louisiana shoreline on mud minnows and grubs.

SOUTH SABINE: Trout and redfish are fair to good under the birds when the wind allows on shrimp/pails. Flounder are fair to good near North Levee Road and in Lighthouse Cove on mud minnows and shrimp.

BOLIVAR: Redfish and flounder are fair to good in the Pass and on the beachfront on cut-bait.

TRINITY BAY: Trout are fair to good while drifting four to six feet of shell on glow Bass Assassins, Trout Killers and Sand Eels.

EAST GALVESTON BAY: Trout are good under the birds on pumpkinseed and pearl/chartreuse Bass Assassins, Trout Killers, Sand Eels and Hogs.

WEST GALVESTON BAY: Trout and redfish are fair under the birds on the north shoreline on gold spoons. Flounder are fair to good around Confederate Cut and the railroad bridge on mud minnows and shrimp.

TEXAS CITY: Trout are fair to good at night under the lights on live shrimp, DOA Shrimp and tandem-rigged beetles. Croakers and sand trout are fair on dead shrimp.

FREEPORT: Trout are fair to good at night from the piers on shrimp and tandem-rigged DOA Shrimp. Flounder are fair to good in the cuts in Christmas Bay on live shrimp and mud minnows.

EAST MATAGORDA: Trout are good while drifting three to five feet of water over scattered shell on live shrimp and glow and bone Bass Assassins, Trout Killers and Sand Eels.

MATAGORDA: Redfish are fair to good in Crab Lake and Oyster Lake on live shrimp and black/chartreuse She Dogs. Trout are fair to good at Green's, Shell Island and Cotton's on black, glow and red shad plastics.

PORT O'CONNOR: Trout are fair to good in San Antonio Bay on She Dogs, Top Dogs, Super Spooks and glow plastics. Redfish are good at the jetty on mullet and cracked crabs.

ROCKPORT: Trout and redfish are fair to good on the Estes Flats on live shrimp and She Dogs. Flounder and black drum are fair to good on the edges of the Lydia Ann Channel on mullet and shrimp.

PORT ARANSAS: Trout and redfish are fair off the North Jetty on live shrimp and mullet. Redfish are fair on She Dogs, Super Spooks and live shrimp on the East Flats.

CORPUS CHRISTI: Redfish and black drum are fair to good on the shell in Nueces Bay on live shrimp under a popping cork.
BAFFIN BAY: Black drum and redfish are fair on shrimp and mullet in the Land Cut.

PORT MANSFIELD: Trout and flounder are fair to good under lights on glow beetles, DOA Shrimp and live shrimp. Redfish are fair to good while drifting the flats on Top Dogs and She Dogs.

SOUTH PADRE: Trout and redfish are fair to good at the Gas-Well Flats on glow Hogsies, Sand Eels, Bass Assassins and Trout Killers. Redfish and flounder are fair to good at the jetty on jigs tipped with shrimp.

PORT ISABEL: Bull redfish are fair to good at the jetty on mullet and shrimp. Trout and redfish are fair to good at Airport Cove on She Dogs, Top Dogs and Super Spooks. Redfish and flounder are fair to good on shrimp in the channels.

HOT SPOT



Walter E. Long

Water clear; 67 degrees. Black bass are good on minnows and dark soft plastic worms near the dam at night. Hybrid striped are good on minnows at night. White bass are good on cut shad and minnows near the power plant. Crappie are good on red wigglers. Channel and blue catfish are very good on shad and cut bait at the gravel pit.

the upper end. Catfish are good on set lines baited with shad along the river channel.

PROCTOR: Water clear; 70 degrees; 0.10' low. Black bass are good on purple, black/yellow, and black/chartreuse soft plastic worms. White bass are good but small on jigging spoons. Crappie are good on minnows in 12-15 feet. Channel and blue catfish are good on cut shad and shrimp.

RAY HUBBARD: Water lightly stained; 62-69 degrees; 0.45' low. Black bass are fair to good on Carolina rigs, crankbaits and drop shot rigs. White bass are fair on slabs. Catfish are fair to good on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

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Levels

Continued from Page 1

Einkauf said, but the volume of water in the bays changes things.

"If you want to go out and go fly-fishing or if you want to see a fine tail of redfish, it's hard to do when the water is 3-feet deep instead of being a foot or a foot and a half. That's been the main change over the last several years.

"There's still plenty of fish around, you have to fish differently," he said.

Joan Holt, director of the Fisheries and Mariculture laboratory at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute in Port Aransas agreed.

"I guess I've not heard that (fishing) was bad, just that people have had trouble finding them," she said. "When the water was up we had a lot of easterly winds that just kept pouring the water into the bay. We had lots of high water

and when you have high water fish are scattered all over the dam place."

"You go to the same place. You know it's a really great place to catch fish, but when you go there there's no fish," she said. "My guess is that it doesn't look that good to the fish right now because it's too deep or too brown or too shallow.

"They've moved around a lot but I don't think there's any question that they're here and they're doing well."

Rains and flooding earlier in the year didn't have much effect in the area, Holt said.

"Maybe in Matagorda (Bay), or someplace where the water gets really fresh, then the fish might move out. It wouldn't happen around Port Aransas. I think it would be good for us, get the salinity down and get a lot of nutrients in here."

There's plenty of hope for next year, she said.

"I can tell you there are going to be oodles of fish in the future because we are catching many, many small redfish in the nursery right now. This is the biggest catch we've ever seen, at least in the last 10 years or so. The salinity or the nutrients or whatever has certainly supplied a lot of food for them.

Young speckled trout are in abundance, too, Holt said.

"They were spawning late, I think, because it's been warm," she said. "There were a lot of little specks in there too, in the seagrass beds, so there are a lot coming up in the future."

Einkauf said the biggest change he saw this year was that "it was a miserable year for black drum.

"A lot of the places we catch them, you catch them on a low tide. We didn't have any low tides. There was decent fishing down the Kennedy Causeway and Baffin Bay. They caught a lot of drum, but that was over there."

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Pheasants

Continued from Page 1

"Wheat stubble can be great," he said. "Not many people like to walk it."

Danny Swepston, district leader for Texas Parks and Wildlife, said the biologists completed 44 routes of 20 miles each, and pheasants are definitely on an upward trend. "The conditions improved considerably this year," he said. "The early rains and more fields with milo, corn and wheat provided conditions for a good hatch."

Bo Adkins, TPW biologist in Pampa, said the birds in the northwestern side of the Panhandle are near record-levels. "In 2005, we had a year that we had to look back to the '80s to match," he said. "Then, in 2006, we had no spring rains and the birds tanked. We're not back to 2005 numbers, but we're close."

Adkins just completed a count in Dallam County. "I saw 108 birds in one corner of a section," he said. "It's dry, but we got rains this spring and that's all the birds needed."

Adkins plans to walk CRP with his father from North Carolina opening week. "The birds are thick in the CRP in the afternoons," he said. His father is used to hunting preserve birds with his 20 gauge. "I told him he might want to bring the 870," Adkins said. "When the wind blows up here the shots can get pretty tough."

Dane Swinborn operates Tule Creek Outfitters in Tulia, and expects a banner season. "It looks really good," he said. "It's one of the better bird crops we've had in the past four to five years."

Swinborn hunts CRP, milo and corn stalks and playa lake bottoms in Swisher and Castro counties. "The playa lake bottoms are often the best," he said. "There is a lot of pink smartweed and kochia that hold a lot of birds. We kicked up a lot of birds along a kochia fence row as well."

Swinborn also is hoping for a weather change. "It's been windy and dry, and many of the playa lakes have dried up," he said. "A little snow at the end of November would be great for pheasant hunting, although the cotton pickers might not like it much."

Jeff Bonner, TPW biologist in Pampa, said the bird numbers in the northeastern part of the Panhandle are also real high. "Go get your license, buy some shells, and come up here," he said. "I like number 4 lead."

Jones can't wait for the opener. "It'll be one for the books," he said.

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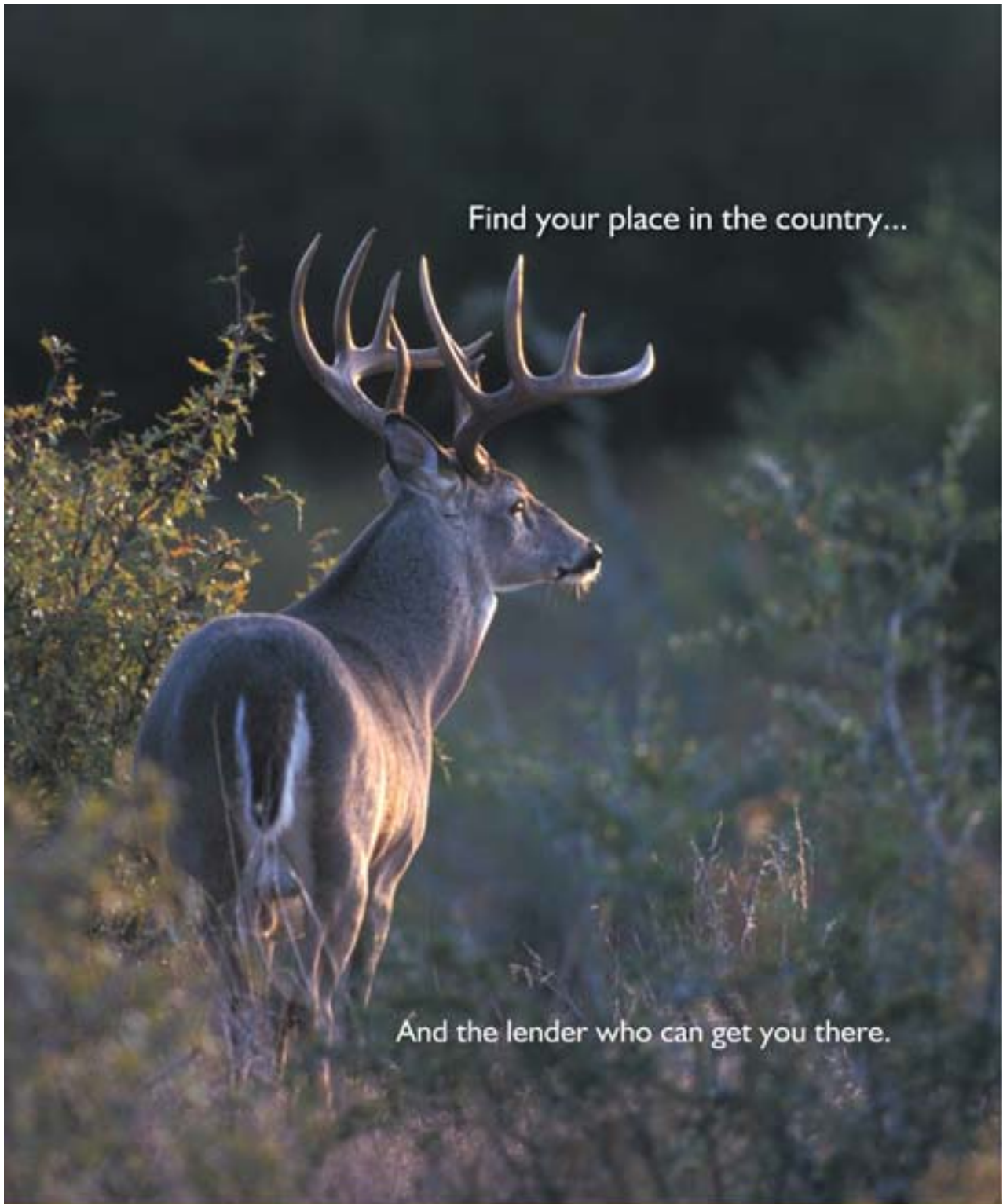
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About the artist ...

John Parsons grew up hunting the rolling farmlands of south-central Kansas. After a fall resulting in three crushed vertebrae in his lower back, ending his career as a firefighter, John turned his taxidermy hobby into a successful business. Over two decades of taxidermy experience and a variety of international hunting adventures have translated well to the art of sculpture. The subtleties of animal movement and behavior John observed during experiences in the field are reflected in the detailed artwork he creates. John's love for wildlife and the outdoors has dictated the course of his life since he was a young child. His goal is to share that love of wild things with others. John's artistry is a testament to the connection we share with the natural world.



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