

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Celebrating 5 Years!

September 11, 2009

Texas' Premier Outdoor Newspaper

Volume 6, Issue 2



Virile young bucks
Less-dominant bucks account for more breeding than hunters think. **Page 6**

Inside



HUNTING

Too cold for snows

The summer was too cold in one Canadian study area for snow geese to reproduce.

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Uncertain timberland

A timber company in East Texas has not said if it will continue public hunting leases.

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FISHING

Abroad on the water

It's time to hit the road (or take to the skies) to find new fishing destinations.

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Finding fat snapper

Anglers catch many red snapper off the Texas coast, but finding large ones is another story.

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Hit or miss results for dove opener

Some take quick, easy limits; others struggle

By Thomas Phillips
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Dove hunters' success on opening weekend depended mostly on where the hunters — and the dove — were. Pleasant temperatures weren't good

for all as cool fronts leading up to the opener pushed birds out of some areas and into others. Some hunters saw fewer birds, while others had no trouble taking limits.

See DOVE, Page 27



Man overboard — for tarpon

San Antonio men forego boat in favor of snorkels for tarpon

By Thomas Phillips
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Fly line drifts in the water as Richard Negley Gill strips it from his rod. It takes the form of a nebula beside his body, on the side of his stripping hand. Both are underwater, and the scene is framed in blue.

Moments later, a small tarpon darts into view on the video. Once, making a nervous jab at the fly. A second time, taking it.

From there, the fight is on. Except here, Gill, 25, doesn't brace himself against a casting platform or position his feet like a

football player on a boat's deck. Here, underwater off the shore at a lodge in Belize, Gill kicks his fins in a dog paddle and lifts his head above water to share one of his wildest moments fishing.

"It was really cool," Gill said earlier this month from San Antonio, where he lives.

Gill had the idea to mix things up after a day on the water catching permit. Guides at the lodge told him tarpon would roll in the water off the shore, and Gill and his brother-in-law, Peter French, who shot the video, saw them while snorkeling.

The curious tarpon would approach them in the water, and it didn't take long for Gill, who spends his summers guiding salmon anglers in Alaska, to think like a fisherman.

Gill couldn't easily walk across the coral on the shore at the lodge, so he had

See TARPON, Page 23



BOATLESS: Richard Negley Gill holds the tarpon he caught with a fly rod while snorkeling at a fishing lodge on the Belize coast. For the hookup, Gill popped his head above water to cast and then submerged to strip his fly. Photo by Peter French.

Lost at sea and found again — after 8 days drifting in Gulf

Marlin fisherman spots Texas anglers after Coast Guard calls off search

By Mark England
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

After surviving eight days in the Gulf of Mexico atop a swamped boat with two buddies, James Phillips of Blessing is an overnight sensation.

He and Curt Hall of Palacios and Tressell Hawkins of Markham have appeared on the "Today Show"

and in newspapers across the nation. All it took was the bilge pump to fail on the catamaran Phillips had bought to resell.

His first outings on the 23-footer were day trips. "I got tired of fishing off the bottom, though," said Phillips, whose Born Again Repair buys and sells boats and heavy machinery. "I wanted to do topwater."

His mechanic, Hall, and Hawkins, a trucker, joined him on an Aug. 21 trip 80 miles offshore to an oil rig called Tequila. They set off with 164 gallons of gasoline, two 2006 150-hp engines and a Garmin navigation system. Arriving at Tequila, they drifted and set up their rigs for swordfish.

See LOST, Page 30



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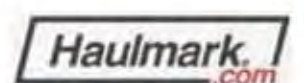
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CONSERVATION

Texas charter boats fined for snapper violations in Gulf

Lack of permit is main charge

Seven Texas charter boats are accused of operating without federal charter boat moratorium permits for snapper fishing and have been fined more than \$100,000 total.

The charges culminate a year-long investigation by state and federal officials. After receiving multiple complaints about illegal charter boat trips, undercover agents with the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and investigators with Texas Parks and Wildlife's Special Operations Unit chartered trips on vessels across the Texas Gulf coast. The undercover agents and investigators documented violations on each vessel.

In 2003, a federal moratorium was placed on red snapper permits to limit access to the fishery in an effort to maintain sustainability of snapper.

Since the moratorium went into effect, the only way to obtain a permit was to purchase one from an existing holder. The moratorium raised the value of the permits to between \$8,000 and \$10,000, according to NOAA authorities.

"Business is being taken away from legal charter boat companies because the illegal companies can charge much less for trips," said Charles Tyer, a NOAA special agent based in Galveston.

Also documented on the undercover operations were several other federal fisheries violations including undersized fish, harvesting fish during a closed season, filleting fish at sea, con-

cealing fish from enforcement and failure to use venting tools, dehookers and circle hooks to fish for reef fish.

Texas-based boat operators charged were based along the Texas coast from Sabine Pass near the Louisiana border to Corpus Christi. They were Capt. Alan Manica and the *Carolyn Jane* out of Freeport, owners Mark and Cindy Kuchera of Sabine Adventures out of Sabine, owner and Capt. Mark Yamaguchi of Saltwater Advantage Charters out of Galveston, owner and Capt. Michael Hillman of the *Whitehawk* out of Galveston, Capt. Chad Hartman of Extreme Island Adventures out of Galveston, Capt. Josh Davis and owner Richard Callais of the *Cuda Too* out of Sabine, owners Ronald and Janet Melvin and Capt. Keith Stamper of the *Backlash* out of Port Aransas.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report



CRACKING DOWN: Federal and state agents chartered trips to catch boats operating without federal snapper permits. Fines exceeded \$100,000. Photo by David J. Sams, LSON.

Outdoor News in Brief

Reef deployed off of Freeport

Recreational Fishing Alliance recently began deploying the Jack Cowan Reef near Freeport.

"Artificial reefing in Texas waters will create additional fish habitat with relatively easy access for Texas recreational fishermen and divers," said Jim Smarr, RFA's acting-chairman. "This is important because the Texas coast has relatively few close-in reefs or structures of any kind to attract and hold marine life."

RFA has been promoting the construction of artificial reefs in Texas waters (within 9 miles of the coast) as a means of creating more habitat and breeding areas for marine shellfish and finfish and as an aid to sportfishing and the economies of Texas' coastal communities.

Named for the famed Texas outdoor artist, the reef is located about 8 miles offshore in Texas waters on a bearing of 213 degrees from the Freeport jetties. The latitude/longitude coordinates of the reef are 28 47.656 N. and 95

20.809 W.

Cowan was an outdoors artist for three decades and was an avid saltwater fisherman and quail hunter.

— RFA Texas report

Grants given to target ranges

Sport shooters near Kerrville, Waco and San Antonio will benefit from \$240,000 in matching grants from the state to continue previously funded construction and renovation projects at three target ranges.

Grant recipients include the Hill Country Shooting Sports Center near Kerrville. The facility will receive \$60,000 for the final phase of a four-year construction project to complete parking and storage at its Air Hall.

The Central Texas Rifle and Pistol Club near China Spring, west of Waco, will receive \$90,000 for enhancements to berms, baffles and other safety features on new and existing ranges.

The Bexar Community Shooting Range will receive \$90,000 for new facilities and to enhance existing facilities.

— Texas Parks and Wildlife report



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<p>Publisher/Editor Craig Nyhus Operations Manager Mike Hughes Design Editor Thomas Phillips Associate Editor Mark England Business/Products Editor Mary Helen Aguirre Accounting Nancy Halphen Web site Bruce Soileau Founder & CEO David J. Sams</p>	<p>Contributors Dan Armitage Kyle Carter Bob Hood Diana Kunde Kendal Larson Wilbur Lundeen Bill Miller</p> <p>Erich Schlegel David Sikes Brandon Shuler Scott Sommerlatte Kyle Tomek Chuck Uzzle Ralph Winingham Danno Wise</p>
<p>Distribution Bruce Andreen, Metrogate Communications Budget Distribution Services</p> <p>Victor Cantu, South Texas Circulation Jeff Bulpin Paul Fletcher</p>	<p>Advertising Call (214) 361-2276 or e-mail editor@lone staroutdoornews.com to request a media kit.</p> <p>Subscription www.LSONews.com (866) 361-2276</p>



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HUNTING

Baby snows? Not this year

Snow geese completely unsuccessful at breeding because of cold summer

By Craig Nyhus

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Snow goose hunters might expect a tougher season this year, based on observations in the birds' Arctic breeding grounds.

If so, cold weather will be the cause, said Robert F. Rockwell with the American Museum of Natural History in New York and professor at City College of New York. Rockwell is in charge of the Hudson Bay Project,

which looks at snow goose habitat degradation and rehabilitation, goose numbers and nesting success.

"We had the coldest summer in history in this part of the Arctic," Rockwell said. "And we looked at weather data back to the 1700s — there is still ice on parts of Hudson Bay."

The problem wasn't that the geese didn't show up on their traditional nesting grounds. They showed up en masse, only farther south than normal.

"Normally all the staging geese, for both us and farther north, stage from the Broad River to Cape Churchill, and some gather up along the Churchill River as well," he said. "This year 5 to 10 million geese were stuck south of the Owl River."

"We took our normal survey flight. We found a stag-



COLDEST SUMMER: Snow geese stopped farther south than their traditional nesting and staging area this summer because it was covered with snow and ice. Photo by R. F. Rockwell.

See **GEESE**, Page 34



YOUNG BUCKS: A recent study debunks the idea that dominant bucks do nearly all of the breeding, showing that nearly one-third of white-tailed deer offspring are sired by 1 1/2- to 2 1/2-year-old bucks. Photos by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

Who's your daddy?

New study bucks assumptions about males' mating patterns

By Craig Nyhus

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Deer hunters often watch younger bucks chasing does during the rut. But when it comes to the actual breeding of the does, many believe the more dominant, older bucks will step in and do the job.

Not so, according to a recent study published in the *Journal of Mammology*.

"People tend to think a few dominant bucks are siring most of the does," said Randy DeYoung of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute in Kingsville, one of the lead investigators. "That's not the case."

Previously, studies of the mating

habits of deer focused on behavioral observations, and it appeared that a few dominant, mature bucks obtained most of the matings and therefore sired most of the offspring each year.

But the new study, conducted on free-ranging wild deer populations at the King Ranch, Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge in Mississippi and the Noble Foundation Wildlife Unit in Oklahoma, used genetic paternity tests rather than observations.

A total of 1,219 deer were genotyped from the three populations, and total DNA was extracted from either blood or ear-tissue samples. Antler material was collected and processed as well.

The research found a wider dis-

tribution of age and physical maturity among fathers of white-tailed deer.

According to the study, physically immature males (1 1/2 to 2 1/2 years of age) were found to have fathered 30 to 33 percent of offspring in the populations examined, even where larger, mature males were present.

"There are many more bucks involved than previously thought," DeYoung said.

DeYoung felt the time and effort it takes for a dominant buck to locate and breed does was a factor.

"A mature buck still has to find and stay with a doe for 24 to 48 hours," he said. "The maximum number of does a single buck can sire is limited. And while he's busy

with that, other (younger) bucks are doing the same thing."

The sexual activities of does also surprised the researchers and could make finding a mate easier for male deer of any age.

"Does are more promiscuous than previously thought," DeYoung said. "It's a ripe area for further study, but most of the funding of studies has to do with bucks."

What do these results mean for white-tailed deer managers and hunters?

"Don't make too many assumptions what individual bucks are doing," DeYoung said. "But the mature bucks are still more likely to breed — and bucks can't breed after being shot."



Forest buyer might end leases

Temple-Inland successor mum on plans for timberland

By Thomas Phillips

LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

When Temple-Inland sold its 2 million acres of Southern timberland in 2007, public hunting opportunities on the company's former East Texas land came into question.

Temple-Inland had already been cutting back the amount of land it leased to the state for public hunting, from a high of 89,000 acres in 2004 to 46,000 today. So things were changing before the sale.

The question now is will the new owner, The Campbell Group, continue the public hunting leases?

Representatives of the Campbell Group told Texas Parks and Wildlife officials the company might phase out the public hunting leases over a five-year period.

"Obviously, that concerns us, and

46,000

Number of acres Texas Parks and Wildlife has leased from The Campbell Group for public hunting in East Texas.

See **FOREST**, Page 14



TIMBER TROUBLE: Fewer acres of East Texas timberland are available for hunters after Temple-Inland sold its 2 million acres in 2007.

Outdoor News in Brief

Hunting, fishing license sales increase for year

Texas Parks and Wildlife expected to end the license year with a slight boost in license sales, the department's executive director said Aug. 26.

Sales revenues were up 1.3 percent over 2008 as of Aug. 19, Carter Smith said, though the number of licenses sold was up only about 1 percent.

The increased revenue is likely because of a pending increase in the price of lifetime licenses. TPW decided this spring to increase the price of lifetime licenses, giving hunters until Sept. 1 to buy a license under current rates.

As of Sept. 1, resident lifetime fishing and hunting licenses jumped from \$500 to \$1,000, and the lifetime combination license increased from \$1,000 to \$1,800.

"There has been, suffice to say, a lot of interest," Smith said.

TPW sold 1,672 lifetime licenses last year. This year, it expected to sell 6,000.

"People are definitely taking advantage," Smith said.

— Staff report

Change considered for violator compact strategy

Texans who violate fish and game regulations in other states might have to pay for their crimes at home too — even if the criminal act is permitted in Texas.

In working to enter the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact, which allows states to punish residents who commit fish and wildlife violations in other states, Texas Parks and Wildlife earlier this year considered selective punishment when it comes to other states' regulations.

For instance, if a Texan is caught baiting deer in California, where it is illegal, the hunter would not have been punished as severely in Texas, where it is legal. Instead, TPW now plans not to be selective. If a Texan is convicted of something in another state, Texas would enforce the full penalty.

— Staff report

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FISHING



WHERE ARE THEY? A new study is examining whether Texas has a population of older, larger red snapper, though surveys show that anglers generally catch younger ones. Photo by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

The hunt for big red snapper

Most caught in Texas are young, but big ones may lurk in open Gulf

By Brandon D. Shuler
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

The average age of red snapper caught and located in the western Gulf of Mexico is believed to be between 2 and 6 years old. Since red snapper have a life span of 40 to 50 years, officials and some researchers suggest such young populations reflect that the population may be overfished.

But others suggest that since the numbers of red snapper in Texas waters are high, there must be a "mother lode" of older, bigger fish somewhere to produce such a healthy number of younger fish.

They just haven't been found, and a grant for a new tracking study may help change that.

Andrew Fischer of the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences at Louisiana State University studies fish aging.

"Errors in age estimation could result in inflated estimates of total allowable catch and production resulting in over-exploitation of a stock," he said.

Greg Stunz of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies in Corpus Christi said a paradox exists as it relates to recruitment into the Texas snapper fishery.

"Recruitment levels are much higher than the historical average," he said. "But the stock size is estimated to be at historical lows."

Fischer's research suggests that Texas red snapper populations are reaching smaller maximum sizes faster than snapper of the northern Gulf, which would indicate that younger snapper are being culled

from the population as they reach recreational size limits. The relative speed of Texas snapper growth and the abundance of smaller fish creates a sensitive management issue.

But Stunz suggests that a sub-set of unfished, older snapper are breeding in the western Gulf of Mexico, and they are maintaining the high larval supply that is responsible for the good recruitment numbers.

Stunz calls this hypothesis the "mother lode."

"We have a population of fish that are hiding in plain sight. We simply need to find them," he said.

Stunz said that in an ongoing shark study, longlines are being run in the open Gulf away from structure.

"They are picking up very large sow snapper like crazy," he said.

Further investigation

Stunz and the Harte Research Institute received a grant this year to begin acoustically tracking red

snapper in hopes to find this mother lode. Stunz's hopes are the internally planted tracking tags will give valuable insight into the migratory pattern of red snapper and supply Texas Parks and Wildlife scientists and fishery managers a better picture into the recruitment and stock assessments of the western Gulf's snapper population.

The possibility also exists that the Texas and Louisiana red snapper population may be a separate population from that of the eastern Gulf.

"The Gulf Council is looking into the possibility of managing the Gulf of Mexico as a western and eastern population," said Roy Crabtree, regional administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Institute. "The Mississippi River would be the dividing line between management decisions."

Debate over the method of regulating red snapper springs from the

See **SNAPPER**, Page 27

Here's the scoop on a new spoon

Cooper guide attaches sinker to aid with casting, action

By Craig Nyhus
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Tony Parker, who guides at Cooper Lake for hybrid striped bass and white bass, stumbled onto a modification of an age-old spoon-fishing technique. And it works.

"I was trying to come up with a way to make it easier for the novices, and for me, to be able to make a long cast," Parker said. "Especially when it's windy, it can be harder to cast a spoon without more weight attached."

Parker took the Strike King Sexy Spoons he had been using and attached a bell sinker to the split ring connecting the spoon and the treble hook.

"With the 5.5-inch spoon I use a 3/16-ounce sinker," he said. "And with the 4-inch spoon I'll use the 1/8-ounce if it's not too windy."

See **SPOON**, Page 25



SPOONING HYBRIDS: Tony Parker landed this 7-pound hybrid at Cooper Lake with a bell sinker attached to his Sexy Spoon. Photo by Craig Nyhus, Lone Star Outdoor News.

Reds show themselves during freshwater 'spawn'



FALSE SPAWN: Manny Martinez landed this redfish at Calaveras Lake on a gold spoon in shallow water. Thousands of redfish go through the motions of spawning in late summer and early fall. Photo by Ralph Winingham, for LSON.

South Texas lakes are site of inland phenomenon

By Ralph Winingham
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Sleek, powerful monsters lurk in the shallows of Calaveras Lake in the late summer and early fall, just waiting to slam a gold or silver spoon placed in the right spot at the right time.

The big bull redfish are well known for their line-stripping battles versus saltwater anglers, but Calaveras Lake is one of the few places in Texas where "spawning" reds test the skills of freshwater anglers.

The big fish, which have been stocked in Calaveras and the nearby Braunig Lake, go through the motions of spawning, but are unable to reproduce in fresh

water.

A little less than a year ago, veteran guide Manny Martinez tied into one of the underwater titans, and after a 25-minute battle, landed the Calaveras Lake record red drum. The big bull, caught Oct. 2, weighed 30 pounds and was 41 inches long.

"I saw a slick come up just off the dam and chunked my spoon right into it," Martinez said. "He hit, I set the hook, and the red took off for 50 yards like blue smoke."

"I was by myself, and my net broke in half when I tried to land him, but I still got him in the boat. That's when I realized how big he really was."

Calaveras and Braunig are two City Public Service power plant discharge lakes, both south of downtown San Antonio. They are home to thousands of lunker redfish.

Martinez, who has been fishing the lakes for more than 26 years, specializes in hauling in big reds — preferring to

take advantage of the shallow-water action in the late summer and early fall.

"It is 100 percent more fun (in the late summer and early fall)," he said. "When the big reds are schooled up, you will see them in the hundreds."

"I have seen a lot bigger fish than my record — there must be some 50-pounders out there."

Shallow-water spots

When the spawn is on, the tails of the redfish can be seen in about any shallow-water cove or along the rocks of Calaveras Lake dam, Martinez said. He has also found good spawning redfish action at Braunig Lake. Sight-casting silver or gold spoons to slicks made by feeding reds is one of his keys to fishing success.

Since Texas Parks and Wildlife began stocking fingerlings and fry redfish in freshwater lakes in the late 1970s,

See **FRESH REDS**, Page 14

Kayak clubs help with education, outings

By Kendal Larson
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Houston a hub for learning, fishing

Paddlers outnumber soccer players in America, according to the Outdoor Industry Association. The statistic probably comes as a surprise to the many moms and dads who constantly ferry their children to the weekend soccer games.

The Bayou City is home to uncounted numbers of kayakers who consider paddling and fishing a way a life.

Houston, unique among Texas cities in part because of its close proximity to large bodies of both fresh and salt water, claims legions of kayakers and kayak anglers.

As a result, the Houston area boasts many canoe and kayak clubs and, unusual for most cities, not just one but a number of kayak specialty stores.

Multiple fishing opportunities can be enjoyed within a very short paddle, a fact well-known by the members of Paddling Anglers in Canoes and Kayaks.

Founded in 1998 and numbering more than 300 paid members, PACK is the largest Houston kayak fishing club. It holds outings twice a month both locally and throughout Texas.

"These outings take the form of either a day trip or an overnight camping trip and are organized by assigned trip leaders, who have had experience organizing paddling outings," said previous PACK President Ken Jennings. "While we have outings throughout Texas, we find our local outings are big hits with new paddlers, as we volunteer our personal boats to allow them to try a variety of hulls to learn what might best suit them."

Although clubs are a great way for new paddlers to gain experience,



KAYAK KINSMEN: Fellow kayak anglers around Houston can instruct new paddlers to the ways of the water and how to catch fish from the boats. The city has several outlets for education and opportunities to go fishing with experienced paddlers. Here, Walker Mangum holds a redfish caught nearby. Photo by Kendal Larson, for Lone Star Outdoor News.

the area's kayak specialty stores offer rentals, and most also hold "Demo Days" to let prospective paddlers try a variety of makes and models.

Novices and experienced paddlers learn a great deal about fishing from kayaks by visiting the granddad-

dy of Texas kayak fishing Web sites, www.texas-kayakfisherman.com.

TKF has more than 10,000 members. Its members do not hold meetings, but they are quick to offer assistance online to anyone interested in wetting a line from a kayak. Hous-

tonians have the strongest presence on the board.

Kayakers say it's the water that makes Houston special. Be it saltwater marsh, freshwater lakes, meandering rivers or the bayous, the unseen bonanza within the water is

Groups

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Houston Area Sea Kayakers
www.hask.org

Paddling Anglers in Canoes & Kayaks
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the fish and the fishing.

Walker Mangum, a long-time Houston angler and avid saltwater fly-fisherman, has fished the area for more than 30 years.

"Houston holds a dear place in my heart due to the diversity of fishing opportunities it offers," he said. "Be it paddling and fishing Armand Bayou or the salt marsh of Bayou Vista, I find peace and happiness in fishing these waters."

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GAME WARDEN BLOTTER

LIGHTS OUT DRAWS ATTENTION TO BASS CAST-NETTERS

Webb County Game Warden Colt Gaulden saw a boat operating on Lake Casa Blanca after sunset without lights. Gaulden stopped the boat to perform a water safety inspection. During the inspection, multiple black bass were found in the boat without hook marks. The three occupants of the boat admitted to catching the bass using a cast net. Citations were issued for fishing without a license, illegal means and methods, undersized bass and operational and equipment violations.

PATROL REVEALS POT IN BOATER'S SHORTS

While patrolling the shores of Falcon Lake, Game Warden Jake Cawthon observed three men using a cast net. None of the men had fishing licenses. While Cawthon was writing one of the violators a citation, he saw that the violator was acting abnormally and favoring his right hip. Cawthon then asked for the violator to empty his pockets, which the violator did but only emptied the left pocket of his shorts. Cawthon saw a large object in the right pocket of the violator and frisked him. When Cawthon crushed the object in the pocket of the violator, he noticed that it sounded like dried leaves. Cawthon had the subject slowly remove the object from his pocket. The object turned out to be a small baggie containing a green leafy substance believed to be marijuana. The violator was booked into the Zapata County Jail. Charges are pending.

WARDENS HELP DURING HOSTAGE SITUATION

A call for assistance came out from Winters as Capt. Malcom Wilkes and Game Warden Jarret Barker were in Ballinger to deliver supplies to Game Warden Lane Pinckney. The Winters police on duty requested

Man caught selling flathead cats

Bowie County Game Warden Shawn Hervey, Marion County Game Warden Rob Furlow, Morris County Game Warden Michael Serbanic and Red River County Game Warden Daniel Roraback teamed up to work the Wright Patman spillway for illegal fishing activity.

Roraback and Serbanic worked in plain clothes as spotters, and Hervey and Furlow were in a marked unit to stop violators. The spotters saw a male snagging fish. The man moved right next to the spotters and continued to snag fish.

The two spotters started a conversation with the man, and he bragged about all the flatheads he had caught and showed them pictures on his phone. When asked what he did with all that fish, he replied, "Sell them."

He also said flatheads were the highest-priced fish in the river. The spotters told the man they were having a fish fry but were not able to catch anything. He then offered to sell the fish. He stated he had over 200 pounds in his freezer he would sell.

The wardens followed the man to his residence, where he only

had about 40 pounds of flathead frozen in a freezer. The wardens placed a call to the marked unit, which had followed them to the residence.

It was decided to have the man deliver the fish to a store parking lot in Bowie County. The seller agreed, and a price was set at \$1 per pound.

The seller was very surprised to learn he was delivering the fish to game wardens.

The violator received three citations and was fined \$900. His pole, cell phone and fish were all taken as evidence.

antler mounts. Using game camera surveillance, Fitzpatrick identified two vehicles involved in the activity. After numerous interviews, confessions to four different criminal episodes were obtained, and the stolen property was recovered and returned to the owners. In all, 30 charges were filed. The charges included hunting without landowner consent, criminal mischief, criminal trespass and theft.

UNRULY GROUP STILL RECEIVE CITATIONS

A caller reported men using a cast net to catch fish on the San Jacinto River. Upon arrival, Montgomery County Game Warden Dean Fitzpatrick saw the men taking channel catfish and black bass with a cast net. When Fitzpatrick spoke to them, the men were uncooperative. The men received citations for no fishing license and taking game fish by illegal means and methods; and warnings for numerous short fish.

OUT-OF-GAS BIKE NOT BORROWED

San Augustine County Game Warden Jeff Cox was returning from Sam Rayburn Lake when he saw a motorcyclist on the roadside in a remote area of a national forest. Cox stopped to investigate, and the rider said he was waiting on a buddy to bring gas. He claimed the bike belonged to his buddy, and he was trying it out. However, he was unable to remember his buddy's name. An ID check revealed he was wanted for assault in Montgomery County. A closer inspection of the bike revealed the ignition had no key and had been tampered with and the vehicle identification number was filed away. Cox located a secondary VIN, and the bike was reported stolen in Montgomery County. The man was arrested, and the bike was seized. The man has a lengthy history of assault and auto theft.

all available assistance in an ongoing hostage situation. While in route to the call, the wardens learned that one of the local banks had been robbed. When the Winters officer and a Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission officer responding to the silent alarm entered the bank, the robber grabbed a clerk, held a knife to her throat and left the bank through a back door using the clerk as a shield. Officers at the scene reported that witnesses said the suspect flagged down a car and went to a nearby apartment complex. As the game warden units entered the city, officers called for assistance at the apartment complex. Upon arriving at the scene, Pinckney, Barker and Wilkes assisted the officers in entering and clearing the apartment. Wilkes and the Winters officer found the suspect hiding in a closet in the back bathroom. He was arrested without incident.

BOAT FLOATING WITHOUT PROPER PAPERWORK

Two men fishing from a small boat in rough waters were contacted by

Collin County Game Warden Todd Long for a water safety inspection. The inspection revealed that neither had fishing licenses, IDs or a certificate of registration. The boat's registration numbers were fictitious, the registration decal number returned to a different vessel, and the hull serial numbers were missing or removed. In addition, the operator said he had placed a trailer tag from another boat trailer onto his to get to the lake that morning. Another game warden assisted Long at the boat ramp. The boat operator had a felony drug warrant out of Tarrant County. The driver was arrested, and the boat was seized. The operator was also cited for tampering with identification numbers, and both men were cited for fishing without a valid license. Cases are pending, and the investigation is ongoing.

ARGUMENT NO WAY TO SOLVE THEFT DISPUTE

The manager of a store near Walter E. Long Lake in Travis County witnessed one of two females walk out of the store with an unpaid item.

Travis County Game Warden Christy Vales was fueling her patrol boat at the store when she saw the manager and customers arguing in the store parking lot. Vales interrupted, and one female confessed. She received a citation for theft under \$50 and a warning for criminal trespass.

DEER SEASON DOES NOT START AT 3:30 A.M.

Hays County Game Warden James Michael located two Dripping Springs men at 3:30 a.m. who had been hunting from the road for deer. The two men were arrested and transported to the Hays County Jail; cases pending.

WARDEN DEPLOYS SPY CAMERA TO CATCH BURGLARS

Six people were suspected of breaking into two local hunting clubs. Montgomery County Game Warden Dean Fitzpatrick investigated for four weeks before making arrests. Once on the property, the burglars hunted without consent and stole multiple items, including two deer feeders, ATV ramps and European

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Observers trained for lead vs. non-lead study

Data must be gathered on distance, angle, choke, contact

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

The simple pleasure of bagging a few birds became a whole lot more complicated for participants in a dove lethality study conducted here on the Central Zone opener.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife study is an unprecedented effort by any governmental or independent agency to determine the effectiveness of lead and non-lead shot on doves.

"We want total, solid science to be sure that no one will be able to question our results," said Tom Roster, a veteran of 30 years of research on shotgun ammunition effectiveness on game and clay targets.

"This will be the most reliable data possible. We are training our observers on how to observe accurately — then we test them. We will accept a degree of accuracy of no less than 95 percent," he said.

Explaining the effort during a training session at the Cedar Creek Ranch, Roster said that ensuring that the observers who are watching volunteer hunters bag birds can accurately record all the necessary data is a tedious but important process.

Thirty observers, most of them TPW biologists, were brought in from across the state Aug. 27-30 for training. They observed 34 randomly selected volunteer hunters starting Sept. 1 during morning and evening hunts.

This is the second year of the study that may cost as much as \$1 million.

The extensive training for the hunter watchers was designed to help raise their observation and investigative skills to a heightened sense of awareness that would make Sherlock Holmes nod with acknowledgement.

Observers are instructed on how to record data such as the distance a shot was taken; the angle of the shot; the choke used, whether the bird was dead, mobile, visibly hit but not retrieved or



WATCHFUL EYES: Study leader Tom Roster swings on a dove while observers were being trained to record extensive details about each shot as part of an unprecedented study of dove lethality involving both lead and non-lead shot. Photo by Ralph Winingham, for Lone Star Outdoor News.

missed; what the hunter saw or thought he saw; and a multitude of other information.

All of this takes place in the split second required for a hunter to knock down — or miss — one of the tiny aerial acrobats that fill the skies each fall.

Although rangefinders play an important part in the data-collection process, the observers' skills in determining where and how a bird was hit or missed must also be dependable and accurate, Roster said.

The observers are instructed on how to watch the birds to make sure each shot that connects is recorded with the utmost precision, and one of the most often asked question of the hunters is, "Do you think you hit that bird?"

"We maintain a master list and go through the data obtained by every observer every night to find any mistakes," he said. "Last year, our accuracy rate was 96.3 percent."

Collected birds are tagged by the observers so that the shot data can provide base-line information when necropsies are performed to determine the effectiveness of the test ammunition.

"Back at my lab, the birds are X-rayed on their back and lying on their left side (to determine if any shot remains in the bird or if there are any broken bones), and then a necropsy is performed," Roster said.

As part of the necropsy, every wound is recorded, including the entrance and exit; depth of penetration; whether the shot struck the heart,

lungs or brain; caused broken bones, etc. The process takes about an hour for each bird.

"We are collecting a huge body of data. When we are done, we will have objective data that is unchallengeable," he said.

No one, from Roster and others coordinating the study to the shooters and their observers, has any knowledge if the particular test ammunition used in that day's hunt is lead or non-lead shot.

While the test loads have been color-coded and numbered by the manufacturer, the codes are a secret that will not be revealed until after the study has been concluded. Other than different colored brass (used to keep test ammunition from being mixed in the field) all the test ammunition is identical in appearance.

Roster would not even reveal how many different loads were being tested.

"All I can tell you is that there is at least one lead shot load and at least one non-toxic shot load," he said.

Only one-shot kills are used for the study, with 580 birds collected last year and officials hoping about 1,000 birds will be gathered as part of the study this year.

After the birds are collected and examined, results of the study are not expected to be released until at least 2012 or 2013, officials said.

"We did not feel that we could ask the 300,000 to 400,000 people in Texas who hunt doves with lead shot to trust us to switch to more expensive non-toxic shot without good evidence to back us," said Vernon Bevell, small game and habitat assessment program director for TPW.

"The world is waiting on our results, and everyone is anxious to hear about what we are doing," he said. "We want the people who make the big decisions to have the best information we can provide at multiple levels."

TPW's Corey Mason said the research team collected about 750 birds during hunts Sept. 1-3, which is about half of what they had expected to harvest. Apparently the dry weather had moved a lot of the birds out of the hunting areas, Mason said.

The study team will review the effort and decide later this year on whether to conduct another hunt next year. The team wants about 1,700 birds for the study.

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Forest

Continued from Page 6

we want to find suitable replacement acreage if at all possible," said Carter Smith, executive director of TPW.

The Campbell Group, which has not changed the amount of acreage it has under lease with TPW since the purchase, declined to say what it will do with the property.

The 46,000 acres still under lease with The Campbell Group is located in San Augustine, Sabine, Jasper and Newton counties.

The Oregon-based investment company manages 2.85 million acres of timberland, according to its Web site. The Web site of its lease-management company lists property available for hunting in 21 Texas counties at a rate of \$7 per acre.

If The Campbell Group ends its leases with

the state, TPW is working on a backup plan, Smith said.

"Our biologists are out actively looking for additional (public) hunting land to lease," he said.

Any new land would not necessarily be in East Texas, Smith said. TPW's search for new land is not necessarily a response to potential changes in East Texas. The department is constantly looking for new land for recreational uses.

TPW does not have records on how many hunters use The Campbell Group land for hunting, said Linda S. Campbell, TPW's program director for private lands and public hunting.

The sites are open to anyone holding TPW's Annual Public Hunting Permit, and on-site registration is not required, Campbell said.

Fresh reds

Continued from Page 8

Calaveras has received about 7.5 million reds, with Braunig receiving about 4.5 million. The other top stocking sites have been Tradinghouse Creek Reservoir with about 6 million and Fairfield Lake with about 5 million.

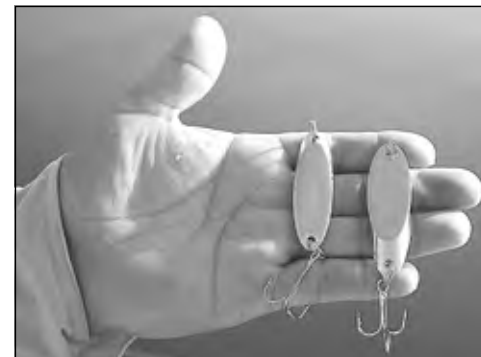
Only the warm waters of Calaveras and Braunig, which are loaded with calcium and other dissolved minerals, appear to provide the right conditions for redfish to make their freshwater spawning attempts.

The Braunig Lake record redfish (30.25 pounds, 35 inches long) was also brought in during the fall. That record red was landed Oct. 14, 1989, by Jack Talbert.

"The spawn is definitely the time for hooking into bigger fish," Martinez said. "It is nothing to catch a limit of 15- to 20-pounders."

Bill Tyus, who holds the Fairfield Lake record with a 36.83-pound, 44-inch redfish caught May 22, 2001, is a former fishing guide. He is not aware of any freshwater red drum spawning action at that facility in Northeast Texas, nor at Tradinghouse Creek Reservoir near Waco, he said.

The state minimum for keeper reds at



REDFISH GOLD: Spoons cast into slicks are the ticket for hooking redfish in the freshwater Calaveras Lake. Photo by Ralph Winingham, for LSON.

Guide connection

Guide Manny Martinez of L&M Guide Service (210) 386-6695 gonefishing210@hotmail.com

Calaveras and Braunig is 20 inches, with a three-fish per day limit. Unlike saltwater redfish, which can be no longer than 28 inches without requiring a special trophy redfish tag, there is no maximum size limit for freshwater reds.

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ADVENTURE



NORTHERN EXTREME: Left, Lake Nueltin holds trophy northern pike and lake trout in its clear, glassy waters. Above, northern pike run shallow in the lake's coves and will eagerly take flies. Nueltin Fly-in Lodge is one of the best places to catch trophy pike on a fly. Photos by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.



UNSPOILED SPLENDOR: Left, fishing guide Ralph Thompson boats and releases fish for anglers, and at midday he prepares lunch, bottom center, on the lake shore. One small fish per day is allowed on this catch and release lake. Above, the remote lodge awaits anglers returning from a day of landing trophy lake trout and pike on Nueltin Lake.

Nueltin is no joke

Canadian lake is cold, clear and full of trophy fish

By **Richard H. Sams**
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

The lake is so far north that only now is the ice cover breaking up, and it's mid-July. Large oval rafts of it drift imperceptibly southward into the glacial melt waters. The glassy white blocks barely rise above the water level, hiding a layer beneath. Yet even deeper than the floating ice cruise a school of lake trout, each the size of an all-night campfire log. Freed at last from the canopy of ice above, they are hungry, too.

As the boat trolls slowly past the ice raft, the flash of the blue and white spoon catches more than one searching eye. Impulsively, a fish lunges for it and a battle begins.

"I'm hung on a rock," I said. "No, it's moving."

The lake trout writhes its massive body at the other end of the line. Images of the wall mounts in Lake Nueltin's lodge begin to dance in my head as I struggle to land it. Except for my boat partner, the excitement is really not contagious. Guide Ralph Thompson has rehearsed the scene thousands of times. He knows his role all too well in securing a safe landing for the trophy fish. He makes a quick scoop into the water and there it lies almost doubled up in the seemingly huge net. The prize is momentarily won. Measure it, take photos, and then release it back to its lair.

This is an all-day routine at Nueltin, but at noon we beach our boat long enough to watch amazingly as Ralph quickly builds a camp-

Getting there

After spending the night in Winnipeg, Nueltin's charter plane will take anglers directly to the lodge, about a 3-hour flight. The lake is located in far northern Manitoba and straddles the province's border with Nunavut province.

For more information, call Shawn and Amanda Gurke at (800) 361-7177 or visit www.nueltin.com.

fire and prepares us a shore lunch of trout — caught less than an hour before — french fries, corn, beans and onions.

Watching him work at cooking lunch is entertaining. He wastes no moves. From the forward hatch in our boat he produces a large, long-handled frying pan, a bag of spiced corn meal, and what looks like a whole pound of lard. In short order, the lard is melted. In go the potatoes that he has pared on a board in the backseat of our boat while we were casting lures. When they're done, he follows them with the sliced onion, and finally strips of freshly filleted trout or pike depending on what we had just caught. Cans of corn and beans are set in the coals of the fire to warm, and in less than 45 minutes, voila! Our lunch.

Once again the boat shoves off from a sandy beach and heads for a cove full of northern pike. Our guide takes us only a short distance before

we pull into a small, shallow recess of the lake shore once more. The water is amazingly clear, the shoreline broken with patches of thin grass and erratic granite boulders. He slows the motor to a low troll and points to the shallows. We cast, and the shallow water explodes. Not once, but sometimes on repeated casts or even multiple times within one retrieve. Large northern pike are so plentiful that we begin to count our catches in groups of 20 per boat at each stop along the lake's shoreline.

Lake Nueltin's Treeline Lodge in northwest Manitoba, Canada, offers the finest in fishing and accommodations. Roughly 2,000 miles north of Texas, its fish are more often than not either trophy catches or at least cocktail-party bragging size. Unlike some places that tout only their finest catches on their promotional brochures, Nueltin's photos are no joke.

QUICK TRIPS

Port Isabel

What to catch?
Redfish, trout, snook

Who to call? Area code 956
Jaime Alaniz 341-3549
Danno Wise 371-4099
Carlos Garcia 433-6094
Eric Glass 761-2878

Where to stay?
White Sands Motel
and Marina 943-2414
Port Isabel Yacht Club
943-1301



Falcon Lake

What to catch?
Largemouth bass

When to go?
Fall, winter, spring

Who to call?
Roberts Fish N' Tackle
(956) 765-1442
Falcon Lake Tackle
(956) 765-4866
D&D Marina & Tackle
(956) 765-3550
Charles Whited
(512) 557-6772



ADVENTURE



Much underwater, on menu in Venice, La.

Several species within easy reach offshore

By David J. Sams
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Some anglers call it the end of the world, and a sign once stood in town that said so. Most call it paradise.

The newly rebuilt community of Venice sits at the tip of the Mississippi River waiting to take adventurous anglers out to sea. On any given day you can load up in a catamaran with guys named Peace Marvel and Devlin Roussell and Hunter Caballero.

Anglers have time to learn about these captains on the run out through the pass before they tell you it's time to hold on. The runs are short: 400-foot water can be found less than 6 miles off-

shore, and water 1,000 feet deep arrives 10 miles out.

The captains race to their favorite rig to be the first to call "fish on" over the radio. Their competition is fierce but friendly, as are the bets between anglers.

On a less-than-calm day, our boat traveled to rig after rig and caught 10 different species of fish from the common sand trout to an 85-pound yellowfin tuna. From bottom bouncing to floating live bait, it is all fun. Bull reds tug, jack crevalle rip, kingfish smoke and the tuna, well hold on.

On one rig anglers will catch bait, and at the next they will troll deep Bomber baits. At another rig the captain holds the boat feet from the poles of a platform

so the cut baits drift just right. The current is moving, and the fish are biting. Sometimes on the runs from rig to rig are pods of baitfish and sport fish beneath them — dolphin, wahoo or kings.

At more than 50 miles offshore sits a massive floating oil production rig anchored in thousands of feet of water. Sport boats school downwind, drifting and trolling baits. Some are catching. Others are wishing.

The fish graph shows the quarry. Tuna below! The live bait swims for its life.

The ride home promotes naps in the beanbag chairs and the thoughts of good Cajun cooking are dancing in the fishermen's heads. Once back on land, the bragging continues as the social hours develop. Red drum dip is the top appetizer, and a big pot of something Cajun is always cooking on the stove.

Getting there

Fish with ...

- **Capt. Peace Marvel**
(504) 481-1327
- **Capt. Hunter Caballero**
(504) 610-1686
- **Devlin Roussell**
(504) 481-1327

Sleep at ...

- **Lighthouse Lodge**
(504) 534-2522
www.lighthouselodgervenice.com
- **Cajun Fishing Adventures**
Ryan Lambert
(985) 785-9833
www.cajunfishingadventures.com
- **Redfish Lodge of Louisiana**
Capt. Mike Frenette
(504) 782-0924
www.venicefishing.net

RIGS GALORE: Hundreds of offshore rigs are only miles away from Venice, providing anglers with action for several saltwater species, including yellowfin tuna, above left, and kingfish, bottom right. Cajun cooking and comfortable lodging top off the trip. Photos by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

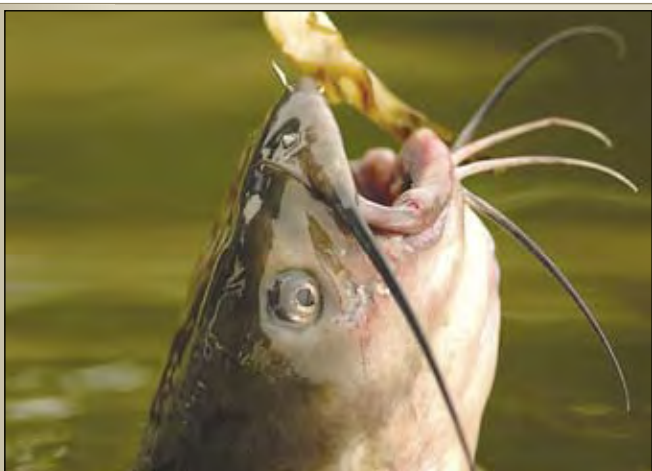
Tawakoni

What to catch?
Catfish

When to go?
Year-round

Who to call?
Jim Taylor
(903) 355-4176

Where to stay?
Anchor Marine, Cabins/
RVs (903) 447-2256
Lake Tawakoni State
Park (903) 560-7123



Brazos River

What to catch?
Largemouth, smallmouth
and Guadalupe bass

When to go?
Fall, spring, winter

Where to rent a canoe?
Below Possum Kingdom
Lake: Rochelle's
(940) 659-3341
Below Lake Whitney: Dick's
(254) 622-8364

Who to call?
Chris Shafer (254) 836-8864



QUICK TRIPS

Rhino Safety Recommendations and Guidelines



The Rhino is a serious off-road vehicle and should be driven only by those 16 years of age or older with a valid driver's license. All Rhino drivers and passengers should wear a seatbelt, helmet, eye protection, gloves and over-the-ankle boots at all times. Passengers must be tall enough to reach the handholds with their back against the seat and their feet flat on the floorboard. The Rhino was designed for off-road use only, and should never be operated on public roads or paved surfaces. Please drive responsibly.



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If your Rhino* does not have doors, you may be entitled to a free set, along with additional passenger handholds that will be installed at no charge. Please see your local Yamaha dealer for details.



The Rhino 700 FI shown with optional accessories. Specifications subject to change without notice. *2004-2007 Rhino 450 and Rhino 660. ©2009 Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A. Cypress, CA 90630. For the Yamaha dealer nearest you, call 1-800-88-YAMAHA.



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LEARN MORE ABOUT THE YAMAHA RHINO REPAIR PROGRAM

Yamaha, in cooperation with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), is offering specific free repairs for all Rhino Side X Side vehicles. All Rhino owners are urged to contact their local Yamaha dealer to make arrangements to receive these free repairs, which include the installation of spacers on each of the rear wheels and removal of the anti-sway bar. Please visit www.yamaha-motor.com to find your nearest Yamaha dealer. All Rhino owners are encouraged to have repairs done before continuing use of their vehicle. And remember, there is no substitute for safe, responsible use of any off-road vehicle.

DATEBOOK

Sept. 11-12

Legends Dove Hunt and Concert
Abilene
www.legenddovehunt.com

Sept. 12

IFA Redfish Series
Tournament
Port Aransas
(478) 836-4266

Sept. 16

Purina Wildlife Series Event
Katy
(979) 885-2967
www.AntlerMax.com



Sept. 17

Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation
Hall of Fame Conservation banquet
Dallas, Union Station
(214) 720-1478
www.tpwf.org

San Angelo Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
Cain's Cove
(325) 234-2364

Dallas Safari Club

Monthly meeting,
Patti Roberson on leopard
Royal Oaks Country Club
(972) 980-9800



Fayette County Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
La Grange KC Hall
(979) 966-3367

Cameron County Friends of NRA

Fundraiser
Rancho Viejo, Case Grande
(956) 541-3159

Orange County Coastal Conservation Association

Fundraiser
Bridge City Community Center
(409) 988-3667

Lake Ray Roberts Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
Pilot Point, Redfearn Gym
(214) 796-8147

Sept. 18-20

Big Country Celebrity Dove Hunt
Abilene
(325) 677-6815
dkelly@driabilene.org

Sept. 19

Texas Big Game Awards
Sportsman's Celebration
Abilene, Frontier Texas!
(800) 839-9453

National Fishing Lure Collector Club

Show, swap meet
Fort Worth, Marriott Hotel and Golf Club
(817) 223-0645

Sept. 23

Wise County Ducks Unlimited
Fundraiser
Wise County Fairgrounds
(940) 577-2910

Sept. 24-25

South Texas Wildlife Conference
Jones Auditorium at Texas A&M-Kingsville
(979) 764-8385 or jdreibelbis@texas-wildlife.org

Sept. 24

Pearland/Friendswood Ducks Unlimited
Sportsman's Night Out
Billy Griffin's Place
(713) 907-4264

East Bernard Delta Waterfowl

Fundraiser
Riverside Hall
(979) 398-0632



Lake Grapevine Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
Grapevine Concourse
(817) 368-7310

Purina Wildlife Series Event

San Antonio
(830) 426-3313
www.AntlerMax.com

Round Rock Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
Dell Diamond, United Heritage Center
(512) 694-6585

Beaumont Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
IBEW Hall
(409) 658-2113

Sept. 25

Second Annual Field Day
Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch
Roby
(325) 653-4576
rvnaga@ag.tamu.edu

Coastal Conservation Association

Redfish Shoot Out
Rio Brazos Hunting Preserve
(713) 703-7452



Sept. 26

Whitesboro Ducks Unlimited
Fundraiser
Don's Bar-B-Que
(903) 564-6012

Sept. 29

Bonham Ducks Unlimited
Fundraiser
Legacy Ridge Country Club
(903) 583-9768

East Wharton County Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
Hungerford Hall
(979) 532-3175

Sept. 30-Oct. 1

Texas Quail Study Group
Cat Spring, Ag Society Hall
cary@acountryliferealestate.com

Sept. 30

El Campo Ducks Unlimited
Fundraiser
El Campo KC Hall
(979) 332-0657

Oct. 1

San Antonio Ducks Unlimited
Fundraiser
Alzafar Shrine Temple
(210) 616-6876



Northeast Tarrant County Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
Colleyville Community Center
(817) 283-6082

Oct. 3

Texas Youth Hunt
Inaugural fundraiser
Kerrville, Buckhorn Lake Resort
(830) 367-7611

Jefferson Delta Waterfowl

Fundraiser
Kellyville Community Center
(903) 576-0775

Oct. 6

Corsicana Ducks Unlimited
Fundraiser
Star Hall
(903) 872-0000

Navasota Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
Grimes County Fairgrounds
(979) 204-4525

Oct. 8

Coastal Conservation Association
Barbecue and fundraiser
Houston Farm & Ranch Club
(713) 626-4222

Fort Worth Ducks Unlimited

Fundraiser
Lockheed Martin Recreation Association
(817) 832-8694

Oct. 10

Operation Game Thief
Sporting clays shoot in Edinburg
(512) 332-9880
www.ogttx.com

Deer Fest

Wichita Falls
(940) 704-2984

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DSC, other groups opposing federal nominee

Harvard professor has opposed hunting, wanted to give animals right to sue

By Thomas Phillips
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

One of President Barack Obama's nominees to lead a federal agency has hunters scratching their heads.

Obama wants Cass Sunstein, a Harvard law professor, to lead the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

The office advises the White House on federal regulations, including rules pertaining to wildlife.

Sunstein, however, has publicly commented against hunting and has advocated for animals having the right to sue in cases of animal cruelty.

"He's been on record I think a number of times opposing hunting and I believe firearms as well," said Ben Carter, executive di-

rector of the Dallas Safari Club. "So he's not a friend of the outdoors, especially not a friend of the hunter."

DSC and 14 other conservation and sportsmen organizations, including two others based in Texas, sent a letter to each U.S. senator Aug. 25 asking them to oppose Sunstein's nomination.

In the letter, the organizations express reservations about Sunstein's views on animal rights and hunting.

Sunstein has been quoted as saying, "We might ban hunting altogether, at least if its sole purpose is human recreation." He has also had discussions about offering animals the rights to sue humans.

The groups' letter makes clear that as the head of the OIRA, such views "raise serious concerns about the agenda Mr. Sunstein will

carry with him into this position if he is confirmed by the U.S. Senate."

"I think his agenda is to not have hunting as an activity Americans participate in," Carter said.

The nomination runs counter to other moves by the Obama administration, Carter said, citing cooperation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal personnel with hunting groups.

Sunstein's controversial views caused two senators, John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Saxby Chambliss, R-Georgia, to temporarily place holds on his nomination. The move prevented the nomination from moving forward before Congress' August recess.

Cornyn and Chambliss removed their holds after Sunstein agreed not to push his beliefs through his office.

"Sen. Cornyn had placed a hold on Cass Sunstein's nomination because he had not had the chance to speak with him and wanted to be assured directly by Mr. Sunstein that he would not pursue an agenda simi-

lar to some of his past writings, particularly on the animal rights issue," said Tina Gray, Cornyn's press secretary.

Carter said DSC is not likely to change its position on Sunstein.

"I would rather see someone else lead the office," Carter said. "What is it, cats don't change their spots or something?"

The groups signing the letter are DSC, the Houston Safari Club, Texas Wildlife Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Whitetails Unlimited Inc., Wild Sheep Foundation, Pope and Young Club, U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance, National Shooting Sports Foundation, Conservation Force, Fur Takers of America, Masters of Foxhounds Association of North America, Mule Deer Foundation, National Trappers' Association and Shikar Safari Club.

Congress returned from its August recess earlier this month.

With Cornyn and Chambliss removing their holds, the Senate could schedule a vote on Sunstein anytime.

National News in Brief

Hunters to help control Fla. pythons

Florida recently asked hunters to help stop the spread of Burmese pythons in the state. The pythons have spread in South Florida in large part because of people releasing them into the wild.

Permits were issued to 13 python experts to capture and euthanize the non-native species in specific state-managed lands in South Florida. So far, the permit holders have caught 17 of the reptiles.

The program is being expanded to include hunters.

"Beginning with the first hunt of the 2009-10 season, hunters on specific wildlife management areas in South Florida may take any reptile of concern they encounter during the course of their hunting excursion," wrote Rodney Barreto, chairman of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. "If it's archery season, they may take a python with a bow and arrow and any other instrument that's legal to possess on the area during that season. If it's muzzleloader season, they may use that type of gun to take the species."

The commission is asking the hunters to provide information about any reptiles of concern they kill to compile more complete information about the species.

— Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission report

Bighorn-eating lion killed in Arizona

A mountain lion known to be preying heavily on bighorn sheep was lethally removed in the Kofa Mountains Complex Predation Management Area in southwestern Arizona.

The lion was taken in the Eagletail Mountains, located about 90 miles northeast of Yuma.

The action was taken in an effort to help restore the struggling Kofa bighorn sheep population, whose numbers declined more than 50 percent from an estimated 815 in 2000 to a low of 391 in 2006. The most recent survey, taken in 2008, indicated an estimated population of 436.

The lion, a male fitted with a telemetry collar, was known to have killed 15 bighorn sheep, 11 within the predation management area, since being collared in late February.

"This one lion was averaging a bighorn sheep kill every 10 days," said Pat Barber, supervisor for the Arizona Game and Fish office in Yuma. "At that rate, an estimated 37 bighorn sheep would have been lost to this lion in a year."

Barber said the goal is not to remove all mountain lions from the area.

— Arizona Game and Fish report

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Texas Coast Tides

Sabine Pass, jetty

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Sep 11	3:49 a.m.	3.0H	2:18 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 12	4:00 a.m.	3.2H	3:31 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 13	3:34 a.m.	3.2H	4:45 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 14	2:25 a.m.	3.2H	5:55 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 15	2:34 a.m.	3.0H	6:55 a.m.	2.9L	10:47 a.m.	3.0H
Sep 16	2:47 a.m.	2.9H	7:27 a.m.	2.5L	12:32 p.m.	3.0H
Sep 17	3:02 a.m.	2.9H	8:08 a.m.	2.0L	1:58 p.m.	3.0H
Sep 18	3:17 a.m.	2.7H	8:52 a.m.	1.4L	3:17 p.m.	3.0H
Sep 19	3:32 a.m.	2.7H	9:36 a.m.	1.1L	4:32 p.m.	3.2H
Sep 20	3:46 a.m.	2.7H	10:19 a.m.	0.7L	5:47 p.m.	3.2H
Sep 21	3:57 a.m.	2.9H	11:04 a.m.	0.4L	7:03 p.m.	3.2H
Sep 22	12:14 a.m.	2.7L	3:58 a.m.	2.9H	11:50 a.m.	0.4L
Sep 23	12:40 p.m.	0.4L	10:03 p.m.	3.2H		
Sep 24	1:37 p.m.	0.5L				
Sep 25	12:30 a.m.	3.2H	2:43 p.m.	0.5L		

Galveston Bay entrance, south jetty

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Sep 11	4:36 a.m.	2.4H	2:44 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 12	4:47 a.m.	2.6H	3:57 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 13	4:21 a.m.	2.6H	5:11 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 14	3:12 a.m.	2.6H	6:21 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 15	3:21 a.m.	2.4H	7:21 a.m.	2.3L	11:34 a.m.	2.4H
Sep 16	3:34 a.m.	2.3H	7:53 a.m.	2.0L	1:19 p.m.	2.4H
Sep 17	3:49 a.m.	2.3H	8:34 a.m.	1.6L	2:45 p.m.	2.4H
Sep 18	4:04 a.m.	2.1H	9:18 a.m.	1.1L	4:04 p.m.	2.4H
Sep 19	4:19 a.m.	2.1H	10:02 a.m.	0.9L	5:19 p.m.	2.6H
Sep 20	4:33 a.m.	2.1H	10:45 a.m.	0.6L	6:34 p.m.	2.6H
Sep 21	4:44 a.m.	2.3H	11:30 a.m.	0.3L	7:50 p.m.	2.6H
Sep 22	12:14 a.m.	2.1L	4:45 a.m.	2.3H	12:16 p.m.	0.3L
Sep 23	1:06 p.m.	0.3L	10:50 p.m.	2.6H		
Sep 24	2:03 p.m.	0.4L				
Sep 25	1:17 a.m.	2.6H	3:09 p.m.	0.4L		

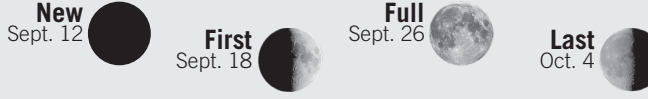
San Luis Pass

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Sep 11	5:06 a.m.	1.5H	3:40 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 12	5:17 a.m.	1.5H	4:53 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 13	4:51 a.m.	1.5H	6:07 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 14	3:42 a.m.	1.5H	7:17 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 15	3:51 a.m.	1.5H	8:17 a.m.	1.4L	12:04 p.m.	1.5H
Sep 16	4:04 a.m.	1.4H	8:49 a.m.	1.2L	1:49 p.m.	1.5H
Sep 17	4:19 a.m.	1.4H	9:30 a.m.	0.9L	3:15 p.m.	1.5H
Sep 18	4:34 a.m.	1.3H	10:14 a.m.	0.7L	4:34 p.m.	1.5H
Sep 19	4:49 a.m.	1.3H	10:58 a.m.	0.5L	5:49 p.m.	1.5H
Sep 20	5:03 a.m.	1.3H	11:41 a.m.	0.3L	7:04 p.m.	1.5H
Sep 21	12:38 a.m.	1.1L	5:14 a.m.	1.4H	12:26 p.m.	0.2L
Sep 22	1:36 a.m.	1.3L	5:15 a.m.	1.4H	1:12 p.m.	0.2L
Sep 23	2:02 p.m.	0.2L	11:20 p.m.	1.5H		
Sep 24	2:59 p.m.	0.3L				
Sep 25	1:47 a.m.	1.5H	4:05 p.m.	0.3L		

Freeport Harbor

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Sep 11	3:58 a.m.	2.1H	2:41 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 12	4:09 a.m.	2.2H	3:54 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 13	3:43 a.m.	2.2H	5:08 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 14	2:34 a.m.	2.2H	6:18 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 15	2:43 a.m.	2.1H	7:18 a.m.	1.4L	10:56 a.m.	2.1H
Sep 16	2:56 a.m.	2.0H	7:50 a.m.	1.3L	12:41 p.m.	2.1H
Sep 17	3:11 a.m.	2.0H	8:31 a.m.	1.0L	2:07 p.m.	2.1H
Sep 18	3:26 a.m.	1.8H	9:15 a.m.	0.7L	3:26 p.m.	2.1H
Sep 19	3:41 a.m.	1.8H	9:59 a.m.	0.5L	4:41 p.m.	2.2H
Sep 20	3:55 a.m.	1.8H	10:42 a.m.	0.4L	5:56 p.m.	2.2H
Sep 21	4:06 a.m.	2.0H	11:27 a.m.	0.2L	7:12 p.m.	2.2H
Sep 22	12:37 a.m.	1.4L	4:07 a.m.	2.0H	12:13 p.m.	0.2L
Sep 23	1:03 p.m.	0.2L	10:12 p.m.	2.2H		
Sep 24	2:00 p.m.	0.3L				
Sep 25	12:39 a.m.	2.2H	3:06 p.m.	0.3L		

Moon Phases



Port O'Connor

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Sep 11	6:09 a.m.	1.2H	5:30 p.m.	0.1L		
Sep 12	7:02 a.m.	1.3H	6:54 p.m.	0.1L		
Sep 13	7:58 a.m.	1.3H	8:18 p.m.	0.1L		
Sep 14	8:56 a.m.	1.3H	9:33 p.m.	0.1L		
Sep 15	10:03 a.m.	1.2H	10:37 p.m.	0.2L		
Sep 16	12:44 p.m.	1.1H	11:33 p.m.	0.3L		
Sep 17	4:14 p.m.	1.0H				
Sep 18	12:24 a.m.	0.5L	6:50 a.m.	0.8H	11:21 a.m.	0.7L
Sep 19	1:11 a.m.	0.7L	5:50 a.m.	0.8H	12:18 p.m.	0.5L
Sep 20	1:56 a.m.	0.8L	5:06 a.m.	0.9H	1:08 p.m.	0.4L
Sep 21	1:56 p.m.	0.3L				
Sep 22	3:35 a.m.	1.2H	2:45 p.m.	0.2L		
Sep 23	4:13 a.m.	1.2H	3:37 p.m.	0.3L		
Sep 24	4:58 a.m.	1.3H	4:37 p.m.	0.3L		
Sep 25	5:44 a.m.	1.3H	5:50 p.m.	0.3L		

Rockport

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Sep 11	7:37 a.m.	0.56H	6:54 p.m.	0.16L		
Sep 12	8:50 a.m.	0.59H	8:00 p.m.	0.17L		
Sep 13	10:05 a.m.	0.61H	9:04 p.m.	0.18L		
Sep 14	11:15 a.m.	0.61H	10:03 p.m.	0.21L		
Sep 15	12:25 p.m.	0.60H	10:52 p.m.	0.25L		
Sep 16	1:41 p.m.	0.56H	11:29 p.m.	0.32L		
Sep 17	3:25 p.m.	0.52H	11:44 p.m.	0.39L		
Sep 18	6:07 a.m.	0.45H	11:18 a.m.	0.42L	6:27 p.m.	0.48H
Sep 19	4:50 a.m.	0.50H	1:07 p.m.	0.37L		
Sep 20	4:27 a.m.	0.56H	2:12 p.m.	0.32L		
Sep 21	4:38 a.m.	0.61H	3:05 p.m.	0.29L		
Sep 22	5:08 a.m.	0.65H	3:55 p.m.	0.28L		
Sep 23	5:54 a.m.	0.67H	4:47 p.m.	0.28L		
Sep 24	6:55 a.m.	0.67H	5:44 p.m.	0.30L		
Sep 25	8:09 a.m.	0.67H	6:47 p.m.	0.33L		

Port Aransas, H. Caldwell Pier

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Sep 11	4:29 a.m.	2.0H	2:23 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 12	4:40 a.m.	2.1H	3:36 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 13	4:14 a.m.	2.1H	4:50 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 14	3:05 a.m.	2.1H	6:00 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 15	3:14 a.m.	2.0H	7:00 a.m.	1.2L	11:27 a.m.	2.0H
Sep 16	3:27 a.m.	1.8H	7:32 a.m.	1.1L	1:12 p.m.	2.0H
Sep 17	3:42 a.m.	1.8H	8:13 a.m.	0.8L	2:38 p.m.	2.0H
Sep 18	3:57 a.m.	1.7H	8:57 a.m.	0.6L	3:57 p.m.	2.0H
Sep 19	4:12 a.m.	1.7H	9:41 a.m.	0.5L	5:12 p.m.	2.1H
Sep 20	4:26 a.m.	1.7H	10:24 a.m.	0.3L	6:27 p.m.	2.1H
Sep 21	4:37 a.m.	1.8H	11:09 a.m.	0.2L	7:43 p.m.	2.1H
Sep 22	12:19 a.m.	1.2L	4:38 a.m.	1.8H	11:55 a.m.	0.2L
Sep 23	12:45 p.m.	0.2L	10:43 p.m.	2.1H		
Sep 24	1:42 a.m.	0.2L				
Sep 25	1:10 a.m.	2.1H	2:48 p.m.	0.2L		

South Padre Island

Date	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height
Sep 11	12:00 a.m.	1.9H	2:17 p.m.	-0.1L		
Sep 12	1:29 a.m.	2.0H	3:31 p.m.	-0.1L		
Sep 13	2:27 a.m.	2.1H	4:46 p.m.	-0.1L		
Sep 14	3:08 a.m.	2.1H	5:58 p.m.	0.0L		
Sep 15	3:32 a.m.	2.0H	7:05 p.m.	0.2L		
Sep 16	3:39 a.m.	1.9H	8:10 a.m.	1.6L	12:00 p.m.	1.8H
Sep 17	3:36 a.m.	1.7H	8:22 a.m.	1.3L	1:54 p.m.	1.8H
Sep 18	3:28 a.m.	1.5H	8:52 a.m.	1.0L	3:28 p.m.	1.9H
Sep 19	3:15 a.m.	1.4H	9:29 a.m.	0.6L	4:53 p.m.	1.9H
Sep 20	2:58 a.m.	1.4H	10:10 a.m.	0.3L	6:15 p.m.	1.9H
Sep 21	10:54 a.m.	0.1L	7:39 p.m.	1.9H		
Sep 22	11:40 a.m.	0.0L	9:11 p.m.	1.9H		
Sep 23	12:31 p.m.	0.0L	10:55 p.m.	1.9H		
Sep 24	1:29 p.m.	0.2L				
Sep 25	12:33 a.m.	2.0H	2:34 p.m.	0.3L		

Solar | Sun times | Moon times

Houston

2009	A.M.	P.M.	SUN	MOON
Sep-Oct	Minor Major	Minor Major	Rises Sets	Rises Sets
11 Fri Q	11:30 5:16	-----	5:45 7:03	7:32 12:11a
12 Sat	12:07 6:16	12:31 6:46	7:03 7:30	12:11a 2:55p
13 Sun	12:59 7:14	1:29 7:44	7:04 7:29	1:15a 3:50p
14 Mon	1:55 8:09	2:24 8:39	7:04 7:28	2:23a 4:39p
15 Tue	2:47 9:01	3:15 9:29	7:05 7:27	3:33a 5:22p
16 Wed	3:37 9:50	4:03 10:16	7:05 7:25	4:43a 6:00p
17 Thu >	4:24 10:37	4:49 11:02	7:06 7:24	5:50a 6:36p
18 Fri >	5:12 11:24	5:37 11:49	7:06 7:23	6:56a 7:09p
19 Sat N	6:02 -----	6:26 12:38	7:07 7:22	8:00a 7:44p
20 Sun >	6:54 12:42	7:19 1:07	7:07 7:21	9:05a 8:20p
21 Mon >	7:50 1:37	8:15 2:02	7:08 7:19	10:09a 8:58p
22 Tue	8:47 2:34	9:13 3:00	7:08 7:18	11:12a 9:41p
23 Wed	9:45 3:32	10:11 3:58	7:09 7:17	12:13p 10:28p
24 Thu	10:42 4:29	11:08 4:55	7:09 7:16	1:09p 11:18p
25 Fri	11:36 5:24	-----	5:49 7:10	2:00p NoMoon
26 Sat Q	12:03 6:15	12:27 6:40	7:10 7:13	2:46p 12:11a
27 Sun >	1:36 7:03	1:14 7:26	7:11 7:12	3:27p 1:06a
28 Mon	1:35 7:46	1:58 8:09	7:11 7:11	4:03p 2:02a
29 Tue	2:16 8:27	2:38 8:49	7:12 7:09	4:36p 2:58a
30 Wed	2:55 9:05	3:16 9:26	7:12 7:08	5:06p 3:53a
01 Thu	3:32 9:42	3:53 10:03	7:13 7:07	5:35p 4:48a

Dallas

2009	A.M.	P.M.	SUN	MOON
Sep-Oct	Minor Major	Minor Major	Rises Sets	Rises Sets
11 Fri Q	11:36 5:21	-----	5:51 7:07	7:39 NoMoon
12 Sat	12:12 6:21	12:36 6:52	7:07 7:37	12:07a 3:10p
13 Sun	1:04 7:20	1:35 7:50	7:08 7:36	1:11a 4:04p
14 Mon	2:00 8:15	2:30 8:44	7:09 7:34	2:21a 4:51p
15 Tue	2:53 9:07	3:21 9:35	7:09 7:33	3:33a 5:32p
16 Wed	3:42 9:55	4:09 10:22	7:10 7:32	4:45a 6:09p
17 Thu >	4:30 10:42	4:55 11:08	7:11 7:30	5:54a 6:42p
18 Fri >	5:17 11:30	5:42 11:54	7:11 7:29	7:02a 7:14p
19 Sat N	6:07 -----	6:32 12:44	7:12 7:28	8:08a 7:46p
20 Sun >	7:00 12:47	7:25 1:12	7:12 7:26	9:15a 8:20p
21 Mon >	7:55 1:42	8:21 2:08	7:13 7:25	10:21a 8:57p
22 Tue	8:53 2:40	9:19 3:06	7:14 7:24	11:26a 9:39p
23 Wed				



SUSPENDED DISBELIEF: Richard Negley Gill strips line to retrieve his fly while trying to hook a tarpon on the Belize coast. Photo by Peter French.

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Tarpon

Continued from Page 1

someone string up an 11-weight rod for him and tie on a chartreuse and black tarpon toad fly.

When he reentered the water, he swam to a ledge where the water drops from about 25 feet deep to 150.

He and French, 33, had seen about 20 tarpon before retrieving the fly rod. But when they returned, the fish had left.

Remembering the fish's curiosity, the men began splashing and kicking their fins. Soon enough, the fish returned.

Gill cast once, but nothing hit.

The fly was tied on a loop knot so it would undulate. Gill could see it moving through the water, and he gained a new insight into fishing.

"It was amazing how much motion there is vertically," he said. "You know, you can't really get a sense of it when you're above water."

With the second cast, Gill let the fly sink a little before beginning his retrieve. Then, a strike, and fish on.

"I told him, 'You better keep that drag at zero 'cause if you don't, you're going to get dragged to Ecuador,'" said French, who also lives in San Antonio.

The fish pulled, Gill said, but this one was small, maybe 20 or 30 pounds.

It takes only seconds for Gill to "land" the fish, and the experience was different — for the fish — from landing a fish from a boat, he said.

"He was really calm when he got up close to us," Gill said.

After that, Gill and French returned to the lodge. The sun was setting, and they feared sharks would take an interest in their fishing. (Sharks are known for snatching tarpon from anglers' lines.)

Thus ended the "most aggressive fishing experience" of French's life, he said.

"That was the only snorkeling fish we caught," he said.

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64 dove seasons for Bryan hunter; 55 for his gun

At 88 years old, Stasny has seen a few changes in how people hunt

By Thomas Phillips
LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Charles Stasny bucks the stereotype of today's dove hunter. He took awhile to warm up to camouflage. Only wore it when someone insisted. He shoots a 16-gauge because it's a good gun, though finding low-cost shells for it anymore is tricky.

Stasny is not a high-tech guy who drains his wallet for gear and uses GPS to track downed game.

He will be 88 this dove season, but it will still be a season for hunting.

"I'm just an average person that likes to go out occasionally," Stasny said from his Bryan home.

Stasny started hunting when he was 14, shooting doves, squirrels and other small game with his father. He used a single-shot 20-gauge that first season.

"We didn't get to hunt real often," he said. "(My dad) was a city fireman here in Bryan, and he didn't get that much time off."

Together they would sometimes walk the Navasota River and try to jump a duck.

When Stasny's sons came along — he has three — he taught them to shoot using a single-shot, bolt-action 20-gauge, too. The bolt action took longer to reload than pump shotguns and automatics.

"That taught them to make that first shot count," he said.

When Stasny came of age, he graduated to a pump, the same 16-gauge, Remington 870 he carries today. He bought it new in 1954. The price: \$80.

"And I still shoot it," he said.

Over all these years, he never wanted to buy a new one, he said.

"No, that shoots too well," he said. "And it fits me."

Stasny has not changed his gun, but he did change his attire. And that, reluctantly.

His sons insisted he begin wearing camouflage — when he was in his 70s.

"I think that under certain conditions I could see where it would be beneficial," he said. "But before they ever thought about camouflage, I shot my limit plenty of times."

He recalled one limit harvested from a farmer's field near Hearne. The field had a large patch of native sunflowers in it, and Stasny started walking from the north end, headed south. By the time he reached the south end of the field — without wearing a stitch of camo — he had his limit.

He told a neighbor his story, and the neighbor invited himself for a return trip. They went back two days later, but a cold front had blown through. They shot no birds.

Those days of extra-quick limits might be gone in the Brazos Valley, Stasny said. He hasn't seen many birds the last several years.

He attributes part of the decline to modern agriculture. Ranchers, wanting to improve their pastures, have cut back on dove weed, a favorite for the birds. They have also filled in bare spots in the ground, where dove like to feed.

"When I started hunting, people didn't mow pastures; they didn't fertilize," said Stasny, who is retired from working for the U.S. Postal Service. "They didn't do this."

The decline of recent years means his son Greg did not have an opening-day hunt planned.

Charles and Greg Stasny hunted with four others the first Saturday of the season in a field west of Bryan. Though his trusty 16-gauge was ready to go, Charles Stasny took no birds, and the group only shot two.

The elder Stasny has become a tagalong, not the main driving force, for family hunts, Greg Stasny said.

Like his weathered 16-gauge, which has lost all its bluing over the years, Charles Stasny is showing his years. He still drives — and catches catfish in the Brazos River — but he doesn't walk "as erect and robust as he used to," Greg Stasny said.

"He's fine with that," he said. "But I'm not going to portray him as Superman."

He is showing signs he is about to be 88.

"We're certainly proud of him, and we encourage him," Greg Stasny said. "But he's not so prideful. Last year he was having trouble getting down the riverbank and said, 'You know, I'm not going to be able to do this anymore. One of you guys is going to have to go with me.'"

STILL PUMPING: Charles Stasny, 88, poses with his 55-year-old shotgun, which he bought new in 1954. He still uses the 16-gauge Remington 870 for hunting today. Photo by Patrick Clayton, for Lone Star Outdoor News.



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Spoon

Continued from Page 8

Parker said the technique of fishing the spoon humps in the lake and close to the dam.

"You cast and let it go to the bottom," he said. "As soon as it hits, you burn it seven to 10 rotations. Then you immediately push the button on the reel and let it go back to the bottom. As soon as it hits the bottom, do it again."

Parker believes the technique works so well because of the spoon's behavior on the fall.

"The spoon goes back at the fish when you let it sink," he said. "The fish hit it on the fall or when you start to reel after it stopped on the bottom. It works. It works big-time."

The only other guide regularly on the lake, Steve Pebley, caught on to the technique, too.

"I got it from him," Pebley said. "It works. Some spoons are real fluttery, and it takes them forever to get to the bottom. The Moe's Kahuna Spoon I use is real heavy, so I use a lighter weight."

"They hit it real hard. It's like when they are hitting the shad on top. They try to knock the shad out before they swallow it."

Maybe the best thing about the technique?

"If you are fishing with your buddies, you can rig it up and not tell them," Parker said. "Chances are you'll catch the most fish, and they won't even see what you're doing."

Pebley said the spoons work best when the water is about 85 degrees at the lake.

"Spoons and slabs work best in the summer," he said. "When the water gets in the 70s, swimbaits work the best for the hybrids."

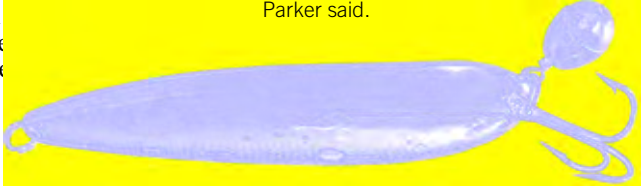
One thing anglers don't have to worry about at Cooper? Crowds. There aren't any.

"You'll see five or six other boats, and that's on the weekends," Parker said.

While anglers have a tendency to try to protect their spots, these guides worry that the lack of crowds will cause the numbers of fish stocked in the lake to drop or disappear.

"We need more people out here," Parker said. "If I could design the perfect hybrid fishing lake, this would be it."

WEIGHTY SPOON: Tony Parker attached a sinker to his spoon so clients could cast it farther. The weight also changes the lure's action and attracts more fish, Parker said.



On Cooper

Tony Parker's Guide Service
(903) 348-1619
tawakonifishing@yahoo.com

Steve Pebley, Cooper Lake Guide Service
(214) 240-0801
spebley1@yahoo.com

Cooper Lake State Park has boat ramps and cleaning stations at two locations:

- **Doctor's Creek Unit**
(903) 395-3100
- **South Sulphur Unit**
(903) 945-5256

STAR tournament leaderboard

The Coastal Conservation Association's State of Texas Anglers Rodeo tournament ended on Labor Day. Leaders of each category will now wait to be awarded their big prizes and scholarships at the awards ceremony on Oct. 8 at the 27th Annual CCA Texas BBQ. Nine tagged redfish qualified for truck-boat and boat packages.

Ten more were caught but did not qualify.

- Texas Ford Dealers Redfish Division**
- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Truck-boat package | Boat package |
| ■ John Sendejas | ■ Ty Howard |
| ■ Sam Campos | ■ Charles Maresh |
| ■ David Raska | ■ Benjamin Bo Patrick II |
| ■ Ronald Scheck | ■ Nico Espinosa |
| ■ Keith McLaren | |

Starkids Scholarship Division
Ages 6-10 \$50,000 Scholarship

- **Flounder:** 6 pounds, 6 ounces
Anthony Skrobarczyk, 9, of Corpus Christi
- **Sheepshead:** 9 pounds
Rodolpho Ibarra III, age 9, of Dayton

■ **Gafftop:** 7 pounds, 8 ounces
Jeremy Chessher, 10, of Warren

Academy Sports & Outdoors Starteens Scholarship Trout Division (Ages 11-17)
6-pound min., \$20,000 scholarship

■ **Speckled trout Upper Coast:**
8 pounds, 11 ounces
Cory Cobler, 16, of Lake Jackson

■ **Speckled trout Mid-Coast:**
7 pounds, 14 ounces
Jeremy Patrick, 13, of Corpus Christi

■ **Speckled trout Lower Coast:**
8 pounds, 2 ounces
Jacob Adams, 14, of Willow Park

Time Warner Cable Starteens Scholarship Inshore Division (11-17)
\$20,000 Scholarship

■ **Flounder:** 6 pounds, 1 ounce
Cody Meineke, 15, of Spring

■ **Sheepshead:** 9 pounds, 4 ounces
Nicholas Pantoja, 16, of Highlands

■ **Gafftop:** 7 pounds, 10 ounces
Bryce Darder, 16, of Nederland

Ford / Tilson Home Corp. Leader Board
■ **Speckled trout Upper Coast:**
9 pounds, 2 ounces
Harold Riley of Webster

■ **Speckled trout Mid-Coast:**
9 pounds, 2 ounces
Robert Hibbert of Houston

■ **Speckled Trout Lower Coast:**
10 pounds, 7 ounces
Robb Sherron of Corpus Christi

■ **Kingfish:** 52 pounds, 12 ounces
Jeffery Wagen of Seabrook

■ **Dorado:** 46 pounds, 2 ounces
W. R. Trey Buford III of Harlingen

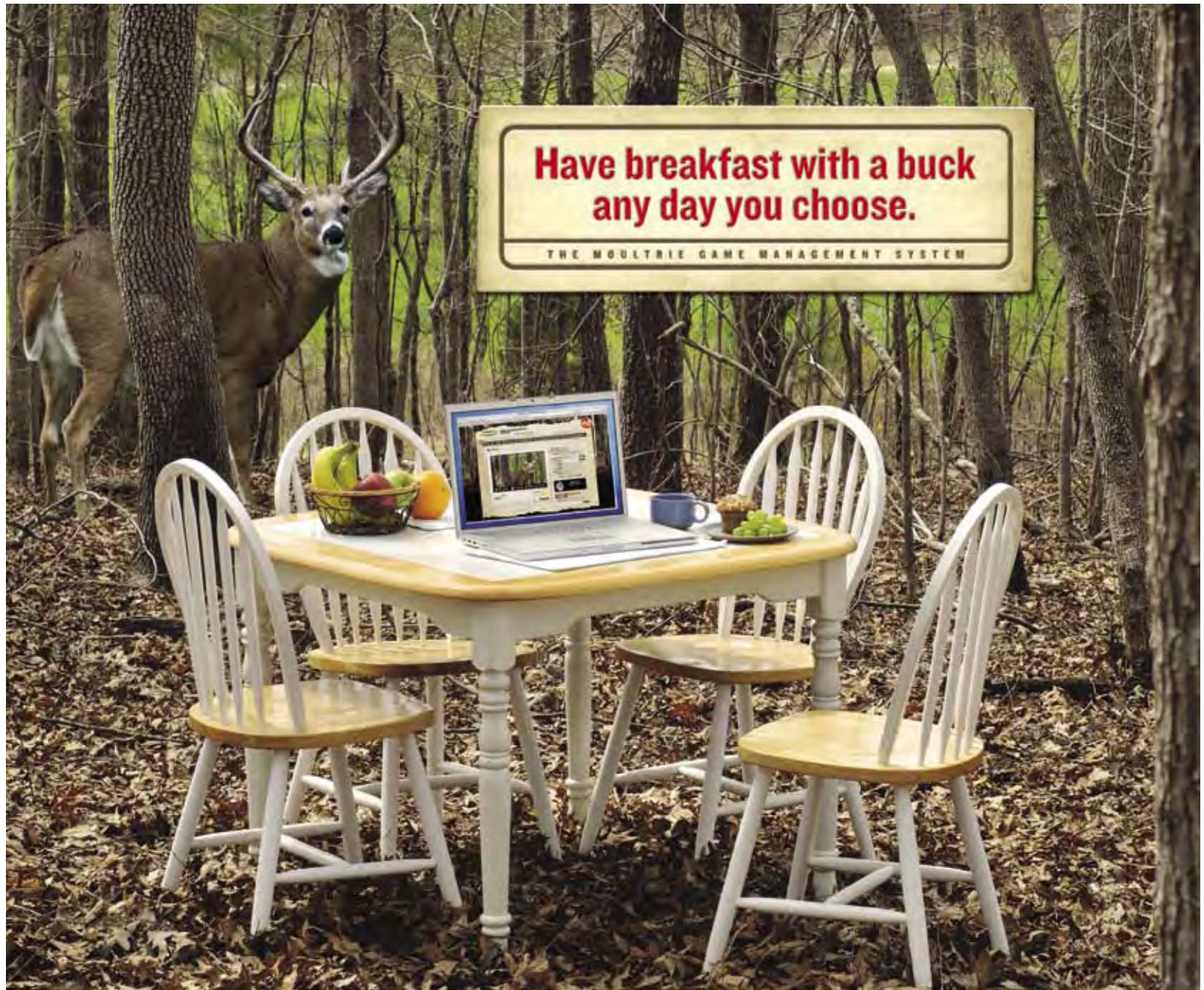
■ **Ling (cobia):**
79 pounds, 3 ounces
Steven A. Richards of Porter

■ **Flounder:** 6 pounds, 14 ounces
Joseph Jackson of Corpus Christi

■ **Sheepshead:** 10 pounds, 3 ounces
David Martin of Baytown

■ **Gafftop:** 7 pounds, 11 ounces
Amanda Darder-Hebert of Nederland

Results are as of Sept. 7. For more information, visit www.ccatexas.org. Proceeds from STAR go to CCA Texas.



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HEROES



MAKAYLAH ANDERSEN shot this doe near Sonora the first time she used a rifle for hunting. She was 13 at the time of the hunt.



NICHOLAS CARRISAL IV caught this 31 1/2-inch redfish at Calaveras Lake in San Antonio.



ALEJANDRO CARRALES, 5, caught redfish while fishing with his father, **Frank**, in the Laguna Madre.



SETH WILLIAMS, 8, of Lavernia caught his first red fish this summer wade fishing in Corpus Christi Bay. Seth's fish measured 33 inches and was caught using live piggy perch.



BRANDON SANCHEZ, 12, of Odem shot this buck — his first — with a .243 while hunting with his grandfather, **Robert**, in Jim Wells County.

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EMILY BALLER, 13, of San Antonio harvested a 10-point buck that scored 140 on a family hunting lease in McMullen County. See the rest of Emily's hunting story and other SnapShot winners online at LSONews.com.



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10x42 Monarch ATB



Dove

Continued from Page 1

"We had a lot of birds," said Brad Dickey, who hunted Sept. 1 south of Putnam, near Abilene.

About half of the hunters in his group shot limits, with the limiting factor being shooting ability, he said.

The birds were young, too, with no white-winged dove or Eurasian collared dove taken, he said.

"I've never seen so many small birds," said Dickey, of Lubbock.

The hunters positioned themselves in three large fields and at a tank, though the hunters at the tank didn't do as well, Dickey said. The fields had shredded sunflowers.

Tom Haddock of Dallas had his limit by 8:30 a.m. near Throckmorton. But to make that happen took a last-minute change of venue.

His original, intended location wasn't producing when scouted before the season.

"We didn't have birds," Haddock said.

He and his five hunting partners called a guide, who put them on 10 to 15 acres of milo and millet.

"By far, the fields that had sunflowers were the fields holding the birds.

That first morning near Throckmorton, lows were in the 60s, with a north wind blowing. The cool conditions had the birds moving slowly, Haddock said.

When afternoon came, Haddock had to watch as a warm wind came out of the south.

"And the shooting was a little more fast and furious," he said.

Birds were following lanes cut in fields, and were going to water as the morning or evening became later.

Dario Abrego with All Around Outfitters saw no change in dove numbers — or the temperature — around San Antonio for the opener.

Half to 75 percent of his clients are shooting limits, but it's not for



FETCHING FRIEND: David Deveny's chocolate Lab, Quinn, retrieves a dove on opening day. An abundance of grass burrs resulted in the Lab wearing boots to protect his paws. Photo by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

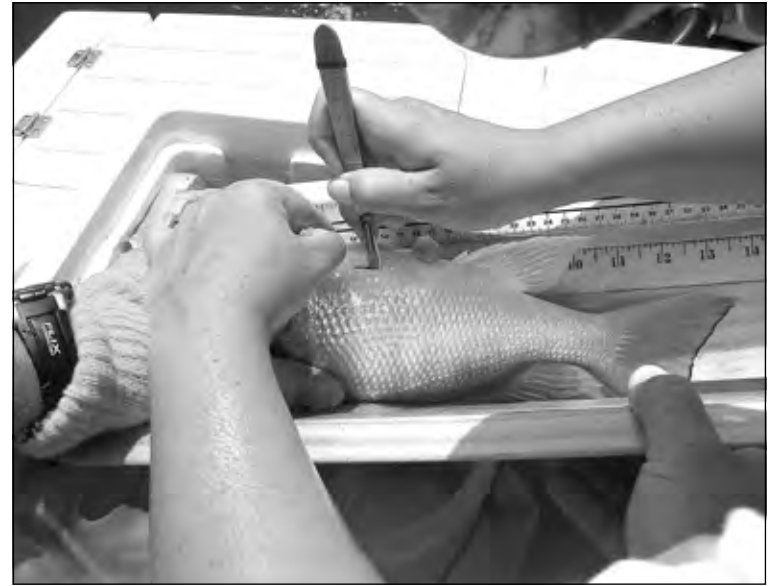
lack of opportunity, he said.

South Texas' drought has kept birds concentrated around food, water and shelter, Abrego said.

For opening weekend, hunters took many birds near the Hearne airport Saturday morning because of little recent rainfall in the area,

one of them said.

Outside the loop in southern Waco, the Friday-evening hunt was less good, apparently because of 2 inches of rain that morning. A group of four hunters took eight birds in one field, and two hunters split a limit at a nearby gravel pit.



SNAPPER SURGERY: Researchers surgically implant a tracking device into a red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico.

Snapper

Continued from Page 8

reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act in 2006, which stated that all federal regulated fishes that were in overfished status end by 2011. Currently, all Gulf states have mirrored the federal red snapper regulations with the exception of Texas. Florida recently complied with the act. Texas's reluctance, however, to comply with regulations is based on the relative abundance of red snapper in Texas waters — from the beach to 9 nautical miles offshore.

On one side of the issue whether to mirror the federal regulations, Jim Smarr of the Recreational Fishing Alliance said, "Texas territorial waters are simply not to be compromised to appease the federal government. The existing 12-month red snapper fishery is vital to maintain coastal fishing villages infrastructure all along the Texas coast."

Conversely, Terry Gibson, fishing editor for *OutdoorLife* and recreational fishing outreach coordinator for

the Pew Trusts said, "The Pew Trusts' stance is to follow the reauthorization of the MSA and end overfishing. We hope to see TPW join the rest of the Gulf states and mirror federal fisheries management plans for the health of the fishery and to alleviate any confusion on the parts of recreational fisherman."

Gibson's concern over angler confusion and the natural instinct of some that they won't get caught catching fish in federal waters and returning to state waters with more generous limits may have gained traction with the announcement by federal fisheries regulators of a one-year sting that resulted in numerous violations of charter boat captains fishing out of season and out of territorial waters.

The Coastal Conservation Association also supports "federal compliance with all fishery related issues," said Communications Director Ted Venker.

Another round of scoping meetings on whether to mirror the Gulf Council's Fishery Management Plan will begin in November.

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GO GREEN

Long-run, quick-hit tuna fishing out of Freeport

Summer bite begins a few hours from coast

By Robert Sloan
FOR LONE STAR OUTDOOR NEWS

Long-range, fast-run tuna fishing trips are the in thing out of Freeport. The action seems to be great year round, according to Curtis Thorpe, a tuna-fishing fanatic from Beaumont. Thorpe runs a 36-foot Contender powered by three 250-horsepower Yamahas.

"On a good day, with decent seas, I can run at 32 knots and be fishing within 4 to 5 hours, well past the 100-mile mark," Thorpe said. "I keep my Contender, the *Muy Loco*, at the new Surfside Marina. I can call the marina, and by the time I get there it's in the water, iced up, loaded with fuel and ready to make a tuna run."

Thorpe and his tuna-fishing friend Kevin Harmon made a recent run to the Diana rig, located about 123 miles out. They basically fish two rigs — Diana and Boomvang.

Diana sits in 4,657 feet of water. Boomvang is 150 miles from Houston and sits in 3,453 feet of water. Both are long runs, but the action is worth the effort.

Harmon, a tuna-fishing pro, said the night bite is usually best for blackfins. But at times the yellowfins will show up and hit spoons, live baits, topwater chuggers and chunk baits.

"What I like to do is stop at the rigs about 15 to 25 miles out and catch live baits like hardtails or but-

Right rigs for tuna

Locations

■ **Diana rig**
123 miles from Freeport
4,657 feet of water

■ **Boomvang**
150 miles from Houston
3,453 feet of water

Tackle

■ For blackfins
8 1/2 to 10 1/2-ounce spoons, blue- or pink-silver
J hooks in size 5/0 to 7/0, rigged at top of the spoon

■ For yellowfins
Skinless, poker-chip-size chunks of a small blackfin's fillets, rigged on a 6/0 black circle hook

terfish," Harmon said. "It's tough to beat live baits."

Thorpe said his crew will usually begin by fishing Shimano Butterfly jigs anywhere from 100 to 300 feet deep.

"I'll slowly circle a rig until I see a wad of baitfish on the bottom finder," Thorpe said. "Once I determine what depth is best, we lower the spoons and begin jigging. I like the 8 1/2- to 10 1/2-ounce spoons in blue-silver or pink-silver."

Shimano Butterfly spoons come unriggered.

"I'll rig them up with a pair of J-hooks at the top of the spoon," Thorpe said. "You want to rig them with 5/0 to 7/0 Owner Dancing Stinger hooks. There are two ways to fish this type of spoon. One is to work it up with a slow but steady yo-yoing motion. That allows the

spoons to sweep from far left to far right. The other option is to reel it like crazy with occasional jerks of the rod tip. The second tactic is usually most productive."

Thorpe and Harmon prefer to fish at night. They'll run hard during daylight hours, reach the rigs at sundown and begin fishing.

"It's rare when you don't find blackfins at either Diane or Boomvang," Thorpe said. "The yellowfins are a totally different story. And they can be very finicky."

Harmon said the best way to fool finicky yellowfins is to chunk with fresh blackfins.

"What I'll do is fillet a blackfin in the 5- to 8-pound class and cut up skinless chunks about the size of a poker chip," he said. "Next you make a slice in the chunk and push the 6/0 black circle hook in. Set the reel so that line can be hand-released with the clicker. It's very important to allow the chunk baits to float freely with the current. Once a yellowfin takes the bait, click the reel into gear and hang on."

Harmon's favorite rig for live bait and chunking is a 6 1/2-foot rod with 750 yards of 80-pound-test braided line that is spliced to 200 yards of 80-pound mono and a 16-foot, 60-pound-test fluorocarbon leader.

"It's all stand-up tackle, so don't forget the fighting belts," he said.

"If you really want to have some fun, try fishing big chuggers around the rigs at night," Harmon said. "Two of the best chuggers are the blue-chrome, 4 3/4-inch Yo-Zuri Hydro Popper and the 8-inch Yo-Zuri Surface Bull Plug. Work them on a fast retrieve with spinning tackle."



TUNA TIME: Curtis Thorpe, left, and Kevin Harmon show a pair of yellowfin tuna that hit chunk baits at the Diana rig 123 miles from Freeport. Photo by Robert Sloan, for LSON.

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FISHING REPORT

HOT BITES

LARGEMOUTH BASS



LAKE O' THE PINES: Excellent on topwaters early, later switching to shallow running crankbaits, Texas rigs and spinnerbaits.

BRIDGEPORT: Good on topwaters early, later switching to medium dicing crankbaits, Carolina rigs and shaky head rigs.

CEDAR CREEK: Good on topwaters early, later switching to jigs, Carolina rigs and DD 22s.

GRANGER: Good on black Power Worms in 3-6 feet.

LIVINGSTON: Good on spinnerbaits and crankbaits.

WHITE, HYBRID, STRIPER



BRAUNIG: Striped bass are excellent on liver and shad off points near the pier and down rigging silver and gold spoons near the jetty and dam.

CEDAR CREEK: White bass are excellent on topwaters, Humdingers and slabs.

BROWNWOOD: White bass are good on L'il Fishies off lighted docks at night.

COOPER: White bass are good on rooster tails. Hybrid striper are good on Sassy Shad and live shad.

PROCTOR: Striped bass are good on silver spoons. White bass are good on slabs.

CATFISH



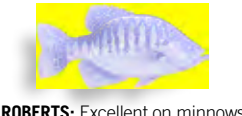
CALAVERAS: Channel and blue catfish are excellent on liver, cheesebait and shad near the railroad trestle and 181 Cove.

FALCON: Channel and blue catfish are excellent on stinkbait.

BUCHANAN: Yellow and blue catfish are very good on rod/reel, juglines and trotlines baited with goldfish and perch upriver.

LB: Channel catfish are very good on nightcrawlers, liver and dipbait. Yellow and blue catfish are very good on trotlines baited with goldfish and perch.

CRAPPIE



RAY ROBERTS: Excellent on minnows and jigs over brush piles.

ALAN HENRY: Water lightly stained; 83 degrees; 1.70' low. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are good on live bait.

AMISTAD: Water clear; 86 degrees; 1.83' low. Black bass are good on topwaters, soft plastics, jigs, crankbaits and spinnerbaits. Striped bass are slow. White bass are slow. Crappie are slow. Catfish are fair on cheesebait, shrimp, chicken livers and nightcrawlers over baited holes in 15-45 feet. Yellow catfish are good on trotlines, juglines and drop lines baited with live perch.

ARROWHEAD: Water lightly stained; 83 degrees; 6.38' low. Black bass are good on hollow-body swim baits suspended 5-10 feet off rocky points and on topwater baits early in day. Crappie are fair on jigs suspended 12-15 feet. White bass are good trolling with some surface action early and late in day. Blue catfish are good drift fishing with cut shad or cheese bait on flats at 12-15 feet deep and on juglines baited with shad.

BOB SANDLIN: Water fairly clear; 77-84 degrees; 0.08' high. Black bass are good on Yellow Magics early, later switching to weightless 5" Yum Dinglers, Rat-L-Traps and drop-shot rigs. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs under the 21 and railroad bridges and over brush piles. White bass are fair to good on slabs. Catfish are good on bait.

BRAUNIG: Water stained; 87 degrees. Black bass are slow. Redfish are fair on perch, shad and silver spoons and down rigging spoons near the jetty and dam. Channel catfish are excellent on liver, shrimp, cut bait and cheesebait near the dam. Blue catfish are fair on cut bait.

BRIDGEPORT: Water fairly clear; 78-83 degrees; 10.33' low. Crappie are fair on jigs and minnows over brush piles and around bridge columns. White bass and hybrids are good on Storm WildEyes, Humdingers and topwaters. No reports on hybrid striper.

BROWNWOOD: Water clear; 87 degrees; 6.87' low. Black bass are fair on Bass Hogg spinnerbaits and Pig Sticker Shaky Heads with redbug or green pumpkin worms near the docks and over brush piles in 12-15 feet and good on frogs and topwaters. Hybrid striper are slow. Crappie are good on L'il Fishies and minnows over brush piles in 10-18 feet and off lighted docks at night. Channel catfish are good on cut bait and nightcrawlers over baited holes in 12-20 feet. Yellow catfish are good on trotlines baited with perch in 12-20 feet.

BUCHANAN: Water clear; 88 degrees; 28.41' low. Black bass are fair on Pop-R's, shad flukes and watermelon red soft plastics rigged on jigheads along deeper creek points and ledges in 6-15 feet at daylight. Striped bass are fair on Spoiler Shads plastic swim baits on the surface at first light and drifting or free lining live bait. White bass are slow. Crappie are fair on pink/white and chartreuse crappie jigs and live minnows. Channel catfish are good on liver, minnows and dipbait.

CADDO: Water off-color; 78-84 degrees; 1.34' high. Black bass are good on Senkos and flukes early, later switching to Carolina rigs. Crappie are good on shiners and jigs in the river channel. Bream are excellent on red wigglers and crickets — also on poppers with a fly rod. The white bass bite has slowed.

CALAVERAS: Water stained; 87 degrees. Black bass are slow. Striped bass are good on spoons and striper jigs near the dam and the crappie wall in 15-20 feet and on chicken livers and shad along the shoreline. Redfish are excellent down rigging silver and gold spoons and live bait along the crappie wall and the dam in 10-20 feet and on crawfish and tilapia along the shoreline. Crappie are slow.

CANYON LAKE: Water clear; 88 degrees; 16.00' low. Black bass are fair to good on topwaters and watermelon red soft plastics along grassy banks early and late and on Texas-rigged blue flake worms and drop-shot Devil's Tongues along break lines and ledges. Striped bass are slow to fair trolling crankbaits over and around humps and jigging 1-oz. artificial minnows at daylight. White bass are slow. Smallmouth bass are fair on smoke grubs and 3/16-ounce pumpkin jigs with matching craw trailers in 12-28 feet

early. Crappie are slow. Channel catfish are slow. Yellow and blue catfish are good on live bait.

CEDAR CREEK: Water lightly stained; 79-83 degrees; 1.28' low. Hybrid striper are fair to good on live shad. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs around bridge columns and over brush piles. Catfish are fair to good on prepared bait and fresh shad.

CHOKE CANYON: Water clear; 89 degrees; 9.35' low. Black bass are fair on spinnerbaits and large soft plastics early and late and on crankbaits and Carolina-rigged soft plastics in the grass. White bass are slow. Crappie are slow. Drum are fair on nightcrawlers. Channel and blue catfish are good on punchbait. Yellow catfish are good on live perch.

COLEMAN: Water clear; 88 degrees; 9.20' low. Black bass are fair on watermelon red and watermelon gold spinnerbaits, crankbaits and soft plastics. Hybrid striper are slow. Crappie are fair on minnows. Channel and blue catfish are good on stinkbait,

white buzzbaits and shad-colored spinnerbaits, pumpkin or watermelon soft plastic worms and live bait worked along grass and tree lines. Crappie are good on jigs and minnows. White bass are good on live bait and shallow crankbaits. Smallmouth bass are good on live bait and white crankbaits. Walleye are good on live bait. Catfish are good on live and prepared bait.

HOUSTON COUNTY: Water clear; 86 degrees; 1.28' low. Black bass are good on watermelon soft plastic worms near brush piles and drop-offs. White bass are slow. Crappie are fair on live minnows in small coves in 10-12 feet. Bream are good on live worms off piers and grass beds. Channel and blue catfish are good on perch.

HUBBARD CREEK: Water lightly stained; 79 degrees; 7.11' low. Black bass are good on white buzzbaits, white/chartreuse spinnerbaits and black/blue soft plastic lures worked along grass lines. Crappie are good on jigs and minnows. White bass and hybrid stripers are good

on live bait. Catfish are good on live. **LAKE O' THE PINES:** Water stained; 79-84 degrees; 2.11' high. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs over brush piles. Catfish are good on bait.

LB: Water stained; 88 degrees; 0.40' low. Black bass are fair to good on black/blue Erratic jigs, blue flake soft plastics and Texas-rigged Big Pigs around docks and laydowns in 5-12 feet early. Striped bass to 2 pounds are good on spoiler shads and L'il Fishies at night. White bass are fair to good on L'il Fishies at night. Crappie are fair to good on crappie jigs and live minnows over brush piles in clear water.

LEWISVILLE: Water off-color; 79-83 degrees; 1.93' low. Black bass are fair on watermelon seed tubes, drop-shot-rigged worms and chrome Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs around bridge columns and over brush piles. White bass are good on topwaters, Humdingers and slabs. Catfish are good on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

LIVINGSTON: Water fairly clear; 88 degrees; 0.10' low. Striped bass are fair on bone colored and spoons. White bass are good on troll tubes and pet spoons. Crappie are good on minnows. Blue catfish are good on shad.

O.H. IVIE: Water lightly stained; 81 degrees; 19.89' low. Black bass are good on white buzzbaits and spinnerbaits, live bait and black/blue jigs worked around timber. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on live bait. Smallmouth bass are good on live bait and shad-colored crankbaits. Channel catfish are good on live bait.

POSSUM KINGDOM: Water stained; 80 degrees; 4.42' low. Black bass are good on chartreuse soft plastics and chrome/black Rat-L-Traps on mid-lake points and grass beds. Crappie are fair on min-

nows and yellow jigs in Rock Creek area. White bass are good on silver jigging spoons suspended on humps. Stripers are good on silver spoons suspended in Broadway area. Catfish are fair on live shad. **PROCTOR:** Water stained; 87 degrees; 7.38' low. Black bass are slow. Crappie are slow. Channel and blue catfish are good on shrimp and stinkbait. Yellow catfish are fair on live bait.

RAY HUBBARD: Water fairly clear; 78-84 degrees; 1.06' low. Black bass are good on Yellow Magics and frogs early, later switching to Carolina rigs, shad pattern spinnerbaits and Texas-rigged Grande Bass Rattlesnakes. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs over brush piles and around bridge columns. White bass are good on topwaters early around Robertson Park, later switching to 1-ounce slabs fished off wind blown points, bends and over humps. Hybrid striper are poor on slabs. Catfish are good on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

RAY ROBERTS: Water clear; 80-84 degrees; 0.93' low. Black bass are fair on Bomber 2A crankbaits and Texas-rigged worms (slot removed Sept. 1; now a 14" minimum). White bass are good on topwaters early, later switching to jigging spoons. Catfish are excellent over baited holes.

RICHLAND CHAMBERS: Water off-color; 79-84 degrees; 4.09' low. Black bass are good early on buzzbaits, weightless flukes, Carolina rigs and shaky head jigs. White bass are good on Little Georges, slabs and topwaters. Hybrid striper are fair on large slabs and live shad. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs over brush piles. Catfish are good on prepared bait and fresh shad.

SAM RAYBURN: Water murky; 89 degrees; 3.94' low. Black bass are good on topwaters and watermelon soft plastic worms. White bass are fair on spoons over humps. Crappie are fair on minnows over baited holes. Bream are fair on nightcrawlers. Catfish are good on trotlines.

TAWAKONI: Water fairly clear; 79-85 degrees; 2' low. Black bass are fair to good on topwaters early, later switching to Carolina rigs, shaky head jigs and shallow running crankbaits. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on Humdingers and topwaters (while surface schooling). Striped bass and hybrid striper are fair on live shad and Sassy Shad. Catfish are good on prepared and cut bait.

TEXOMA: Water off-color; 78-83 degrees; 0.28' high. Black bass are fair to good early on buzzbaits and Zara Spooks, later switching to Carolina rigs and DD 22s. Smallmouth bass are fair to good on slabs and live shad around points with steep rocky drop-offs. Striped bass are good early on lures, later switching to live shad. Catfish are good on nightcrawlers, prepared bait and live shad.

TOLEDO BEND: Water murky; 88 degrees; 3.53' low. Black bass are good on topwaters and redbug soft plastic worms early and late. Striped bass are slow. White bass are good on spoons on ridges. Crappie are slow. Bream are good on crickets and nightcrawlers. Channel and blue catfish are good on trotlines.

TRAVIS: Water stained; 88 degrees; 49.37' low. Black bass to 3 pounds are fair on bone chuggers and watermelon worms in 15-28 feet. Striped bass are slow. White bass are good on smoke grubs and jigging spoons in 28-40 feet. Crappie are slow. Channel and blue catfish to 8 pounds are good on nightcrawlers and cut perch.

WHITE RIVER: Water lightly stained; 79 degrees; 24.44' low. Black bass are fair on white buzzbaits and spinnerbaits, live bait and brown crawfish crankbaits. Crappie are good on jigs and minnows. Walleye are good on live bait. Channel catfish are fair on live and cut bait.

WRIGHT PATMAN: Water stained; 78-83 degrees; 5.58' high. Black bass are good on topwaters, later switching to Rat-L-Traps and weightless 5" watermelon/red Yum Dinglers. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs over brush piles in 15-25 feet. Catfish are fair to good on nightcrawlers and dead shad.

SALTWATER SCENE

NORTH SABINE: Trout are good under slicks and birds on soft plastics. Redfish are good under rafts of shad on topwaters. Redfish are good in the marsh on small topwaters.

SOUTH SABINE: Trout are fair to good under birds and pods of shad. Trout are good at the jetty on live bait topwaters.

BOLIVAR: Trout are good on the outgoing tide at Rollover Pass on soft plastics and mullet. Redfish have been taken in the marsh with higher tides. Trout are good on the shorelines on Super Spooks and She Dogs.

TRINITY BAY: Trout are good for drifters working pods of shad and mullet on Bass Assassins, Trout Killers and Sand Eels. Trout and redfish have been caught under birds on the upper end of the bay.

EAST GALVESTON BAY: Trout are good on the south shoreline on topwaters and soft plastics. Trout are fair to good on the shell adjacent to the channel on live bait. Drifters have caught fish on live bait over shell.

TEXAS CITY: Trout are fair to good on the reefs and in the channel on live shrimp and croakers. Redfish and sand trout are fair to good in Moses Lake and Dickinson Bayou on shrimp.

FREEPORT: Trout are good at San Luis Pass on shrimp, topwaters and soft plastics. Trout, redfish, sand trout and sheepshead are good on live shrimp on the reefs in Christmas Bay. Offshore is good for kingfish and ling.

EAST MATAGORDA BAY: Trout are fair for drifters on live shrimp over mid-bay reefs. Waders have taken good catches on reefs on topwaters and plastics. Trout and redfish are good over mud on live mullet.

WEST MATAGORDA BAY: Trout are fair over sand and grass humps on soft plastics and topwaters. Redfish and black drum are fair to good at Shell Island on live shrimp. Offshore is good for ling and tuna.

PORT O'CONNOR: Trout and redfish are fair to good on topwaters and live bait over sand, grass and shell in San Antonio Bay. Trout and redfish are fair for drifters working the back lakes with live shrimp and small topwaters.

ROCKPORT: Trout are fair over grass while drifting with live shrimp and Gulps. Redfish are good on piggy perch and shrimp around Mud Island and Estes Flats.

PORT ARANSAS: Trout, redfish and sheepshead are fair to good at the jetty on shrimp and croakers. Trout are fair at Super Flats on small topwaters.

CORPUS CHRISTI: Trout are fair to good on the edge of the spoils on piggy perch, Gulps and live shrimp. Redfish are good in the potholes on shrimp and piggies.

BAFFIN BAY: Trout are good on topwaters and soft plastics around deep rocks and grass. Redfish are fair to good for sight-casters on the flats on small topwaters. Trout are fair to good on soft plastics under a popping cork.

PORT MANSFIELD: Trout are good on topwaters on the edge of the channel and around sand and grass along spoils. Redfish are good in skinny water on the sand on small topwaters and plum plastics.

SOUTH PADRE: Redfish are good on the Mexiquita Flats and in South Bay on live bait and plastics. Snook are good in the Ship Channel on DOA Lures and live shrimp.

PORT ISABEL: Trout are good at Three Islands on DOA Shrimp and topwaters. Redfish are good on the Gas Well Flats on shrimp and mullet.

HOT SPOT



West Galveston Bay

Sheepshead, redfish and black drum are good at the jetty on shrimp and crabs. Trout are good in the surf on live bait and topwaters. Trout are good for waders on the shorelines on topwaters. Offshore is good for kingfish, ling and dolphin. Tarpon have been cruising the beachfront.

nightcrawlers and liver.

CONROE: Water murky; 1.30' low. Black bass are good on chartreuse and watermelon red Carolina-rigged soft plastics, Senkos and Rat-L-Traps. Striped bass are fair on live minnows and green striper jigs. Crappie are good on minnows and pink tube jigs. Catfish are good on stinkbait and shrimp.

COOPER: Water lightly stained; 78-83 degrees; 1.47' low. Black bass are good on topwaters early, later switching to drop-shot rigs, Carolina and Texas rigs and Senkos. Crappie are good on jigs and minnows over brush piles. Catfish are fair on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

FALCON: Water stained; 84 degrees. Black bass are good flipping soft plastic worms and crankbaits in 2-8 feet. Striped bass are slow.

FORK: Water lightly stained; 78-84 degrees; 0.15' high. Black bass are good on Pop Rs and Stanley Ribbits early and late, midmorning switching to spoons, DD22s, drop-shot rigs and Carolina rigs. Crappie are good on jigs and minnows around the bridges and over brush piles. Catfish are good on bait.

GRANBURY: Water clear; 3.66' low. Black bass are fair on watermelon and chartreuse Rat-L-Traps and spinnerbaits and on watermelon/white soft plastics. Striped bass are fair on silver spoons and silver/white striper jigs. White bass are slow. Crappie are fair on minnows. Catfish are good on bait.

GRANGER: Water murky; 85 degrees; 4.36' low. White bass are fair on Gallow Blades and Rat-L-Traps along shallow roadbeds early and late. Crappie are good on chartreuse jigs tipped with Berkley Crappie Nibbles in 4-12 feet. Blue catfish are good on baits and shad.

GREENBELT: Water stained; 78 degrees; 30.67' low. Black bass are good on

on live bait. Catfish are good on live. **LAKE O' THE PINES:** Water stained; 79-84 degrees; 2.11' high. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs over brush piles. Catfish are good on bait.

LB: Water stained; 88 degrees; 0.40' low. Black bass are fair to good on black/blue Erratic jigs, blue flake soft plastics and Texas-rigged Big Pigs around docks and laydowns in 5-12 feet early. Striped bass to 2 pounds are good on spoiler shads and L'il Fishies at night. White bass are fair to good on L'il Fishies at night. Crappie are fair to good on crappie jigs and live minnows over brush piles in clear water.

LEWISVILLE: Water off-color; 79-83 degrees; 1.93' low. Black bass are fair on watermelon seed tubes, drop-shot-rigged worms and chrome Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are fair to good on minnows and jigs around bridge columns and over brush piles. White bass are good on topwaters, Humdingers and slabs. Catfish are good on nightcrawlers and prepared bait.

LIVINGSTON: Water fairly clear; 88 degrees; 0.10' low. Striped bass are fair on bone colored and spoons. White bass are good on troll tubes and pet spoons. Crappie are good on minnows. Blue catfish are good on shad.

O.H. IVIE: Water lightly stained; 81 degrees; 19.89' low. Black bass are good on white buzzbaits and spinnerbaits, live bait and black/blue jigs worked around timber. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. White bass are good on live bait. Smallmouth bass are good on live bait and shad-colored crankbaits. Channel catfish are good on live bait.

POSSUM KINGDOM: Water stained; 80 degrees; 4.42' low. Black bass are good on chartreuse soft plastics and chrome/black Rat-L-Traps on mid-lake points and grass beds. Crappie are fair on min-

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Fishing News in Brief

Local guide takes Rayburn BASS win

Sam Rayburn fishing guide Stephen Johnston of Hemphill led each day of the Central Open at his home lake, and he depended on the sunshine to do it. Johnston captured his first Bassmaster victory with a three-day total of 57 pounds, 5 ounces. Todd Faircloth of Jasper claimed second place with 47 pounds, and Kris Wilson of Montgomery finished third with 46 pounds, 14 ounces. Landon Ware of Jewett and Todd Castledine of Nacogdoches ended fourth and fifth, making the event a Texas sweep. Johnston abandoned his preferred

pattern during the second day after clouds moved in and was excited when he awoke for the last day. "When I woke up there was moon and stars shining, and I was smiling," Johnston said. Johnston said he needed the bright sunlight to drive fish back to a few bare ridges from which he snatched a first-day weight of 22 pounds. "What was happening was early in the morning the shad would come up and feed on the tops of those bare ridges, and the bass would follow them," Johnston said. "I was sitting in the deep water and casting on top of the ridge, and I was just hopping the baits over the edge of those ridges." — BASS report

Lost

Continued from Page 1

Phillips called it a night about 11 p.m. He awoke to cries the catamaran was taking on water. Hall tried calling the Coast Guard while Phillips threw his weight around hoping to balance the flailing craft.

"We didn't even have time to give our location," Phillips said. "Curt, on the radio, said, 'The boat's rolling over,' and the boat rolled over. It was that fast." After the catamaran flipped, the three anglers found themselves sitting on a deck between two pontoons in 2 inches of water. After numerous dives to retrieve a bag of flares, Lay's barbecue chips, peanut butter crackers and a pack of gum, the men signaled for help.

"We shot one or two flares off," Phillips said. "When no one saw them, we pretty much knew we were gonna be there a few days." The Coast Guard began searching for the missing anglers after the Matagorda County Sheriff's Department contacted the agency, said spokesman Lionel Bryant. The men's families reported them missing when they didn't return Aug. 22.

The Coast Guard couldn't spot the men, though the men saw Coast Guard planes and a helicopter fly over them. "Once the boat overturned, it had a dark hull, which made it more difficult to find them," Bryant said. "All you can see really is their heads, which means you're looking for something about the size of a basketball. It's very difficult."

The men rationed the little food they had and drank water from a 30-gallon washdown tank. A few salvaged beers also provided libation. "It helped us survive, so I'm not gonna lie about it," Phillips said. Some days the men didn't see an-

other living thing. It became so bad that "seeing a bird fly by made our day," he said. Thanks to a starvation diet, the brutal sun and the inability to sleep well because of the waves running through the boat, the anglers began hallucinating. Hall, for example, saw Phillips take a big bite of air. "He asked me what I was doing, and I said, 'Man, I'm eating my biscuit.' I thought a man had swam up with a cup of coffee and a buttered biscuit and offered them to me. It was quite an ordeal." The men held on, sometimes linking hands and praying. Noting his company's name, Phillips said, "Prayer is nothing new to me."

On their eighth day at sea, the men saw an oil rig in the distance. They saw people on top of it, but again no one saw them. They made a pact to swim to it as a group when the seas calmed that evening. Then Corpus Christi car dealer Eddie Yaklin arrived. After fishing for marlin while aboard his 58-foot Riviera sportfisher, *A Ford Able Fantasy*, Yaklin noticed flags—made from the men's T-shirts—being waved at him. The lost anglers were found near the Gunnison rig 180 miles southeast of Matagorda.

Back home, "people were throwing parties they were so excited," said Rebecca Wright, who works at the Blessing Hotel Coffee Shop. "They were the talk of the town."

And the nation. Phillips and his wife, Shane, eventually checked into an undisclosed hotel to avoid being hunted down by the media. He surfaced long enough to tell everyone he'll be back on the water soon. "We might not stay overnight for a while, unless we're with Eddie on his yacht, but you can bet your butt we're going fishing again," Phillips said. "It's who we are."



Hawkins



Phillips



Hall

Puzzle solution from Page 22

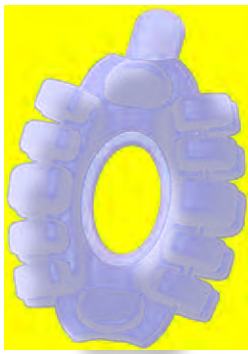
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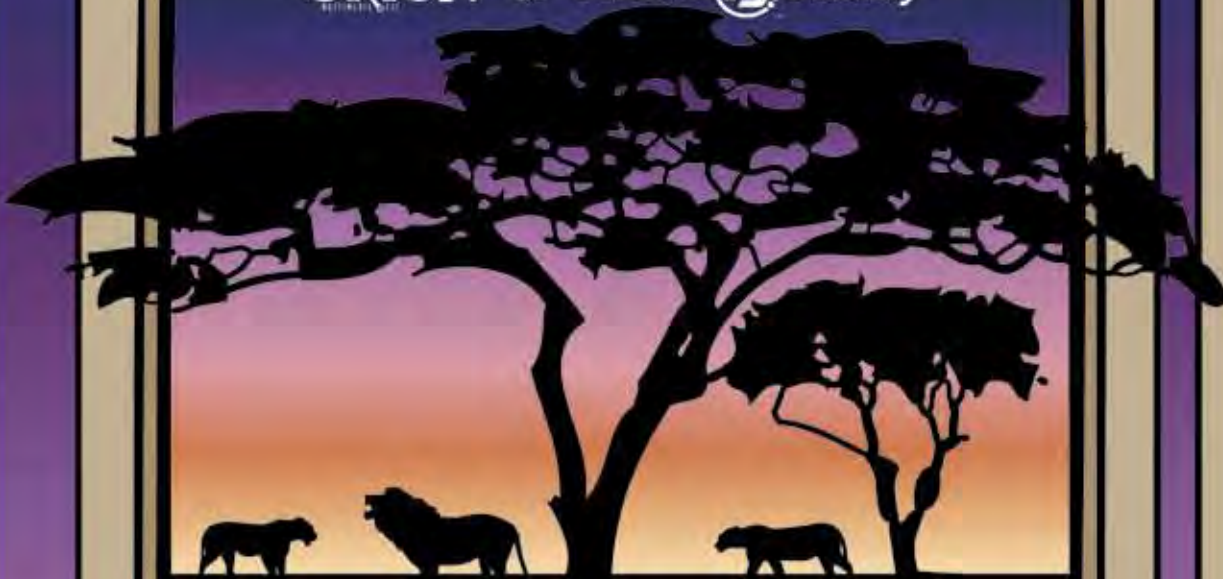


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Geese

Continued from Page 6

ing area inland from the Broad River. But on June 2, it had 100 percent snow cover."

The staging area farther south held incredible numbers of geese.

"The ground was just alive with geese," Rockwell said. "There was a stretch for 40 to 50 miles that was two miles wide. It was covered with mostly snows, but also Canadas, specklebellies and even Brandt. The pilot said it looked like a giant piece of meat with maggots on it."

But the snow and ice cover remained.

"It didn't open up to the north," Rockwell said. "The projected hatch date there is July 10 this year. That's three days later than ever."

The ice and snow resulted in almost no nesting success for the far-traveling birds.

"We looked at nest densities on June 30. In the study area, there was 100 percent failure," he said. "About 20 to 30 percent tried to nest (laid eggs), but those that did — there were so many predators around, they wiped them out."

Predators to the eggs and nests include herring gulls and jaegers, foxes, wolves and even polar and grizzly bears.

"The polar bears will pig out on the eggs," he said.

Why should Texas hunters be concerned?

Because most of the birds the researchers are watching migrate down through Manitoba and work their way down through East Texas, Louisiana or Arkansas.

"That is where they are getting shot," Rockwell said.

To the south of the large staging area, the news wasn't much better.

"They had about a 20 percent success rate," Rockwell said.

A large hunting camp in the area, Camp Nanuk, had no snow geese, unusual since the area's season opened Aug. 15.



TOUGH TIMES: Few juvenile snow geese this season may mean more difficult hunting for the wary adult birds. In the far northern Manitoba regions near Hudson Bay, the geese were forced to stage farther south than usual, near the Owl River. The normal staging areas between the Broad and Churchill rivers were covered with snow and ice in the region's coldest-ever summer. Photo by David J. Sams, Lone Star Outdoor News.

"Ten percent of my (band) recoveries each year come from that area. There are no geese there now," Rockwell said. "Stewart Weber at the camp said it is the worst season for snow goose hunting he has seen, with fewer than 50 snows taken."

Rockwell is even worried about some of the adult birds' ability to head south.

"Snow geese usually molt by July 1 and fly by Aug. 1," he said. "On Aug. 12, they were just dropping their feathers. They will just be flying on Sept. 1 — so they need a warmer-than-average fall."

"If there is a cold snap, they may not be able to feed and won't have the strength to fly back. But the good news is it does appear to be a warm fall: Temperatures along the Hudson Bay coast are in the 60s."

There also was a mystery in the population of geese that traveled up to the Broad River, about 100,000 in number.

"They got up and left," he said. "We thought it was a molt migra-

tion. But they didn't go south, and we know they didn't go to Saskatchewan according to the farmers and crop dusters. We don't know where they went."

Does the near-complete nesting failure mean the population will decrease, a goal of snow goose managers for years?

"No," Rockwell said. "The most efficient way to control the population is to kill adult birds."

Rockwell mentioned an inartful quote by a colleague years ago.

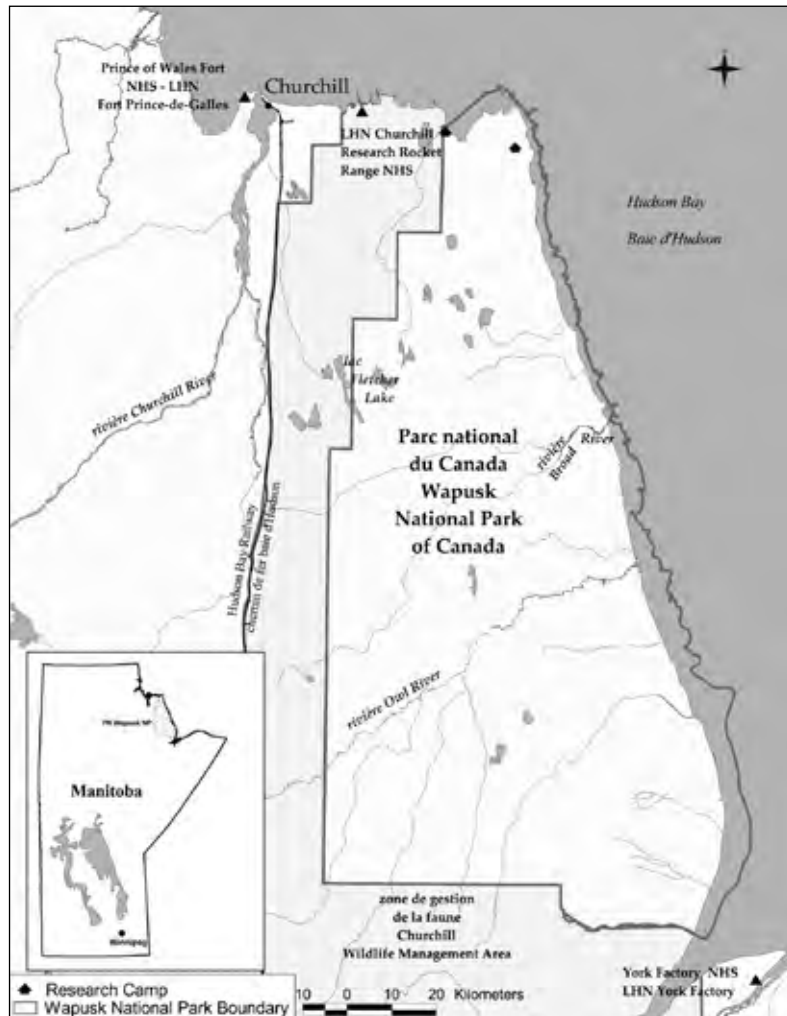
"He said you can kill mom or stomp on her eggs every year for seven years," Rockwell said.

Rockwell mentioned another problem created by the lack of juvenile birds.

"If there are no juveniles, they are a lot more difficult to hunt," he said. "So the harvest of adults could be disproportionately down — bringing the overall survival rate up."

"The loss of one year-class of birds won't mean squat. Overall, it might be worse."

Since a snow goose generally



lives about seven years, Rockwell said it only takes one good year out of seven for the birds to replace themselves.

"And last year was good," he said. "Taking averages over several years just doesn't work (in estimating populations). Some of us have been saying that for 10 years."

Habitat-wise, the cloud of the cold summer may have a silver lining, based on studies of recovery enclosures, fenced areas within freshwater marsh areas previously devastated by snow geese.

"We're looking to see what will

come back," Rockwell said. "We learned that 13 out of 18 areas were showing signs of recovery. The areas will recover as long as you keep the geese out."

North of the Broad River, the habitat got a rest this summer.

"There should have been 100,000 geese, but they all went somewhere."

Rockwell was perplexed by the extreme conditions. And he has studied snow geese for 41 years.

"This is an unprecedented situation with the cold summer and the late molt," he said.

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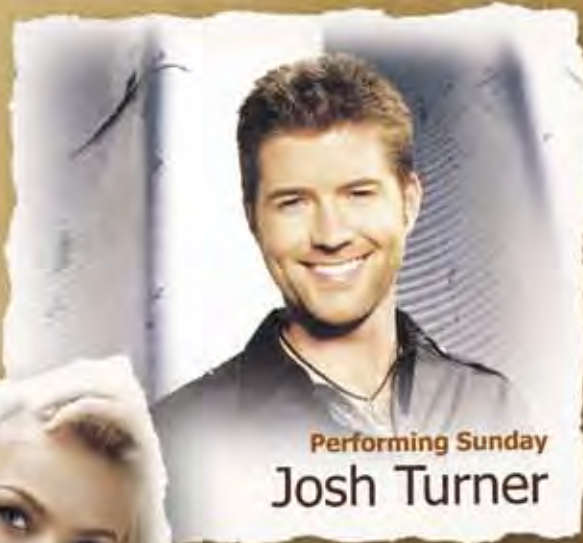
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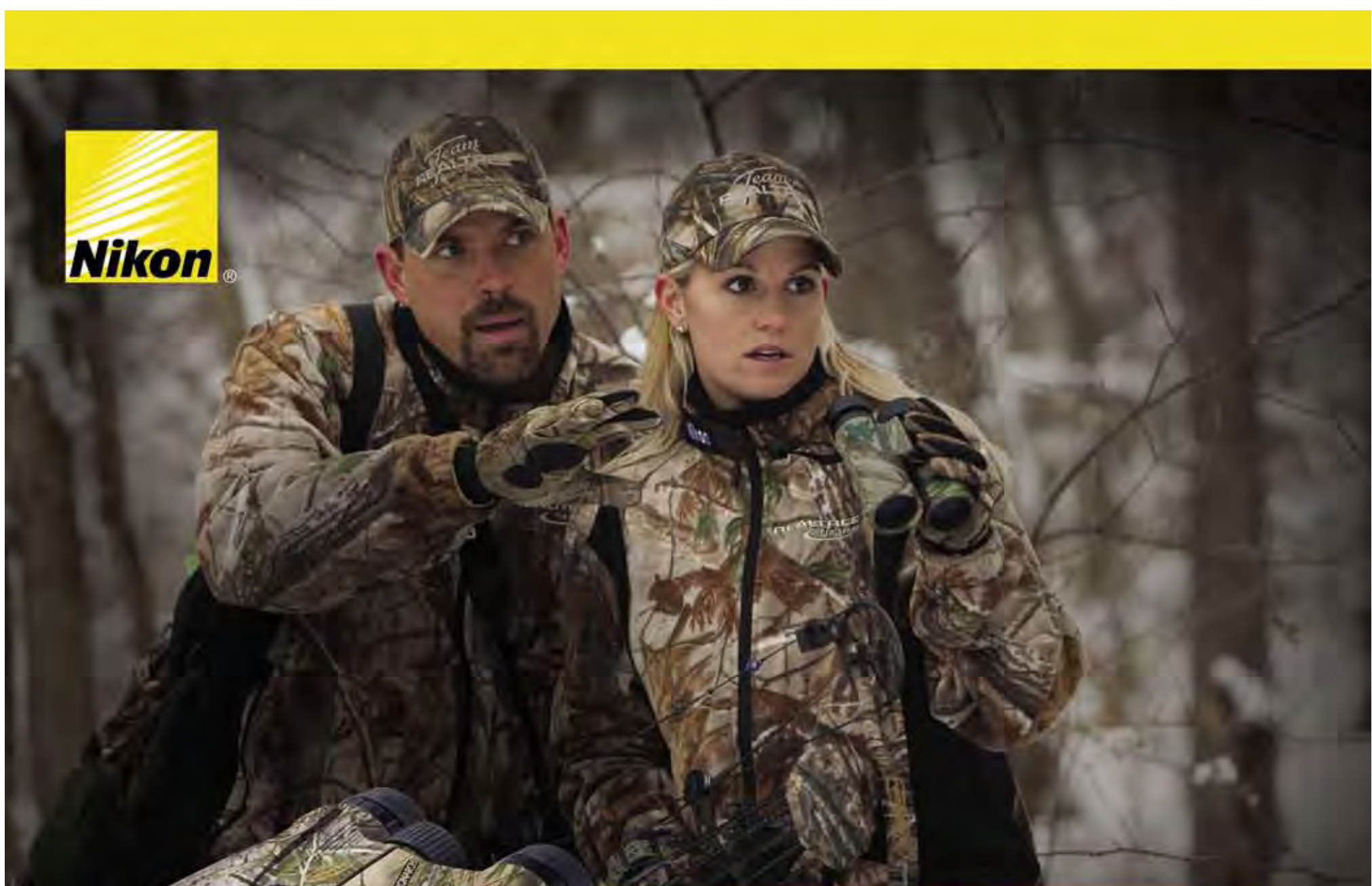
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