

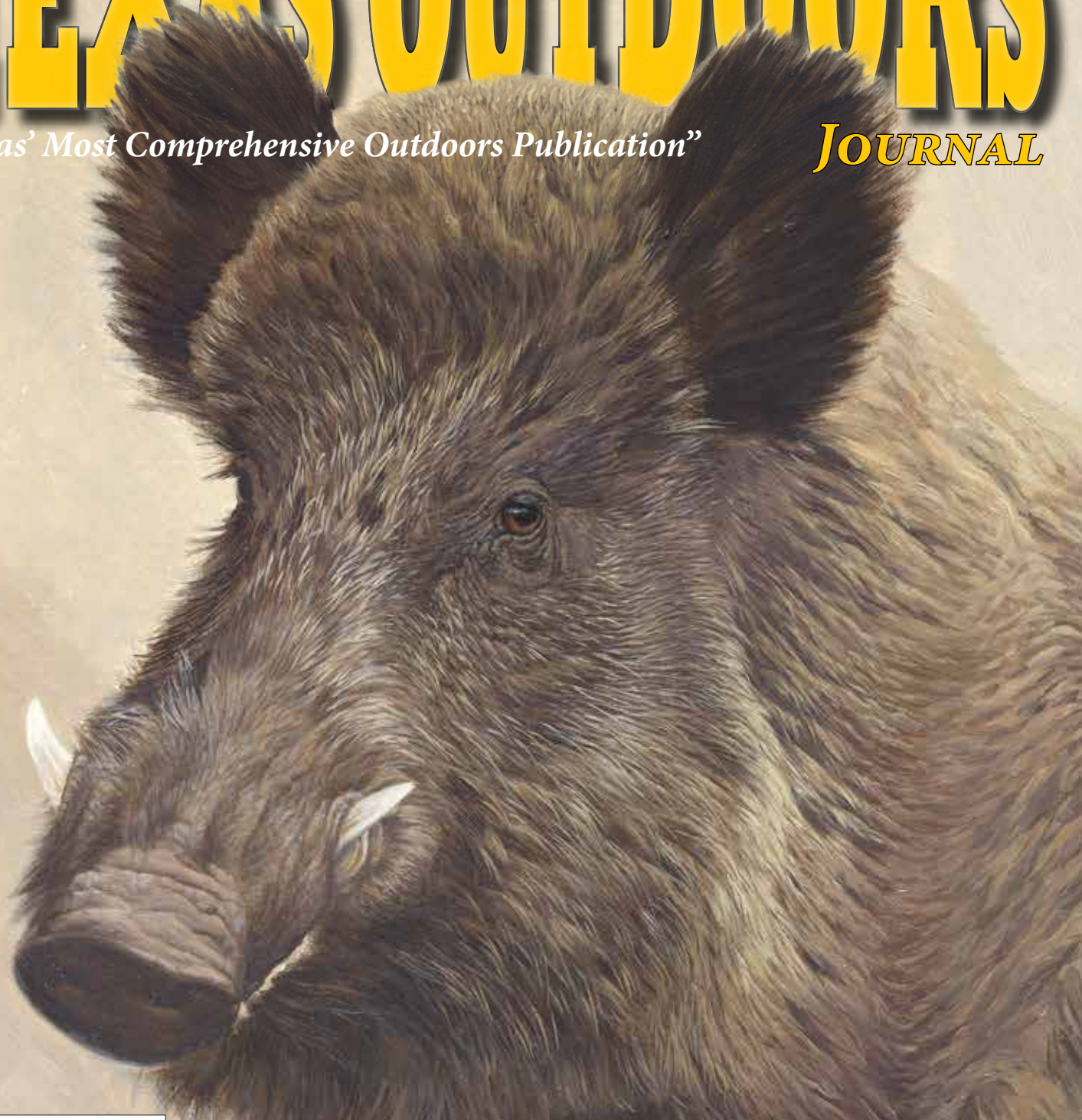
#1 Outdoor Magazine in Texas
(see page 75, #1 for more information)

Hog Problems & Solutions

TEXAS OUTDOORS

"Texas' Most Comprehensive Outdoors Publication"

JOURNAL



May 2018 / \$3.99

0 74470 81224 1 05 >

texasoutdoorsjournal.com

Lone Star Fishing Vacations | Hogs Are Here To Stay
Giant Salvinia - The Green Giant | To Chocolate & Beyond
'Trap Them Specks & Reds | Texas Hogs vs. Slow Glow et al.

COASTAL & LAKE FORECASTS | TIDE & SOLUNAR TABLES



Where customers reap the benefits.

**More than \$750 million returned in
the last 10 years.**

At Capital Farm Credit, we're a cooperative. That means we're owned by the same farmers, ranchers and landowners we serve. Based on our 2017 earnings, we've returned a total of \$163.8 million – \$77.5 million in cash and \$86.3 million in allocated equities for future disbursement. Join the partnership that really pays.

Together we're better.
Partnership that really pays.



capitalfarmcredit.com | 877.944.5500
NMLS493828

TEXAS OUTDOORS

"Texas' Most Comprehensive Outdoors Publication"

JOURNAL

May 2018

For Hunters . . .

16 Just Shooting
—Kerry O'Day
Pig Hunting - The Perfect Calibers

24 Hog Problems & Solutions-
New technology and techniques help deal with the burgeoning swine population. —Bill L. Olson



36 Hogs Are Here To Stay- *Though environmentally detrimental, wild swine satisfy the demand for hunting and provide an economic asset, while controlling their numbers.* —Bob Zaiglin

44 Texas Hogs vs. Slow Glow, et al.- *New swine hunting equipment and techniques are put to the test.* —Tom Claycomb III

56 Guns N Stuff
—Harold Gunn
Here Piggy, Piggy!

64 Just Hunting
—Mike Holmes
Muzzleloading Handguns - Perfect for Hogs

70 Field Tips & Techniques—
Bill L. Olson & Danno Wise
In the Beginning - Squirrels

For Everyone . . .

4 Editor's Insight – Bill L. Olson

6 TOJ Notebook – TOJ Staff

10 Lone Star Fishing Vacations
—Danno Wise
Whether fresh or saltwater Texas boast a plethora of angling options and sightseeing adventures.

Freshwater

14 Just Fishing
—Matt Williams
Land of Giants: Fork's Monster Bass & Crappie Bites

18 The Green Giant- *Giant Salvinia leaves more footprints in East Texas — boaters and duck hunters are encouraged to clean up their act.* —Matt Williams



Lake Roundups — Pros Forecasts

28 Central – John Jefferson

48 East – Matt Williams

50 North – Brian Hughes

62 South - Danno Wise

63 West – TOJ Staff

63 High Plains – TOJ Staff

34 Just Fishing
—Brian Hughes
Crankbait Fishin'

68 Tackle Tips & Techniques
—Danno Wise
Little to Big Tugs

For Anglers . . .

Saltwater

22 Saltwater Journal
—Mark Sosin
The Game Plan

30 To Chocolate and Beyond- *Areas in and around lower West Galveston Bay are perfect places to hide from the wind and freshwater runoff.* —Nate Skinner



CoastWatch – Danno Wise

40 Upper Forecast

42 Louisiana Forecast

58 Lower Forecast

60 Middle Forecast

52 'Trap Them Specks & Reds- *Lipless crank baits will catch a surprising variety of coastal gamefish.* —Robert Sloan



66 Tackle Tips & Techniques
—Danno Wise
Making Noise to Catch Fish

On the Cover . . .

"Wild Boar - Portrait"

For more information on "Wild Boar - Portrait" and other fine works of art by Manuel Sosa, visit www.manuelsosa.com/en, or email him at sosa.arte@gmail.com

Editor's Insight | Bill L. Olson



MOTHER AND SACRIFICES

This month we celebrate two special holidays — Mother's Day and Memorial Day. Like so many holidays originally created with good intentions to recognize, I often wonder why a "special day" exists? In most instances, and particularly these two, instead of a single day the contribution should be acknowledged much more frequently — if not daily.

Mother's Day was created by Anna Jarvis in 1908 and became an official US holiday in 1914, designating the second Sunday in May to honor our mothers. Interestingly, Jarvis would later denounce the holiday's commercialization and spent the latter part of her life trying to remove it from the calendar. This year we honor our mothers on May 13.

Obviously without our mothers none of us would be here. That is an obvious physiological fact. However, stereotypes have long tried to relegate women to domestic chores and maternal nurturing of the children. When it comes time for "manly" tasks many say the "weaker sex" should leave that to the men.

History recounts countless strong women that have made a difference and many while filling tasks usually shared by man and woman. In this modern day innumerable households have a woman as its head and the one that juggles all of the responsibilities — not just a few.

I was fortunate to have grown up with a strong father and equally strong mother. Plus my two sisters and I were blessed that when we came home from school each day, mother was there to greet us.

I give my dad the vast majority of credit for introducing me to the outdoors. Hunting and fishing, even camping were not mother's cup-of-tea. That is until she was introduced to snow skiing. That resulted in another story and passion that exists to this day.

Instead, mother instilled a different perspective to the outdoors for which I am thankful. She encouraged us to use our eyes and imagination to see momentary subtleties or "images" in clouds or pick out familiar figures duplicated within a variety of formations across God's landscapes.

This broadened my passion to the outdoor world while further connecting me to our Creator. It helped serve as a constant reminder that someone much larger than any individual orchestrated all that surrounds us and guides our life.

The first Memorial Day or Decoration Day occurred May 30, 1868. Commander in Chief John A. Logan of the grand Army of the Republic issued a General Order that declared it to be "for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land." In 1971 Congress adjusted this holiday to occur on the last Monday in May of each year.

When we honor those lost in combat in defense of our freedom we not only recognize the men that gave their lives but we also remember the women that served and died as well. Today, in an ever-changing society where women want to be recognized as equals and be able to serve in combat and front-line duties this reflects the "other strength" of the "other half" of our country.

Both of these holidays occur during a month when many are preparing for summer outdoor plans. The month truly reflects a period of transition on so many levels as we head toward a time when special outings are shared with family and friends.

As we move through the next 31 days let's remember both our mothers as well as those that gave their lives protecting all we as Americans are blessed. Where would we be without either of them?

Until next month: Pursue all of your outdoor activities in a safe and ethical manner.

CAUTION: All technical data in this publication, especially for handloading, reflect the limited experience of individuals using specific tools, products, equipment and components under specific conditions and circumstances not necessarily reported in the article and over which Texas Outdoors Journal has no control. The data have not otherwise been tested or verified by Texas Outdoors Journal. Texas Outdoors Journal, its agents, officers and employees accept no responsibility for the results obtained by persons using such data and disclaim all liability for any consequential injuries or damages.

FOUNDER/PUBLISHER/EDITOR

Bill L. Olson

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Adala Ruhge

CONTRIBUTING OUTDOORS EDITORS

Tom Claycomb III

Harold Gunn

Brian Hughes

Mike Holmes

John Jefferson

Kerry O'Day

Bill L. Olson, Jr.

Nate Skinner

Robert Sloan

Mark Sosin

Matt Williams

Danno Wise

WHITETAIL DEER EDITOR

Bob Zaiglin

ART/PRODUCTION EDITOR

Sunni Gonzales

ADVERTISING SALES

713/957-3997, 713/957-3996 (fax)

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Call 1-800-222-4TOJ (4865); In Houston, 713/957-3997 to charge your subscription by phone. Subscription prices: one year \$18.95, two years \$29.95, three years \$39.95. Mail inquiries/changes of address to:

TEXAS OUTDOORS Journal

1706 West Sam Houston Parkway North
Houston, Texas 77043

TEXAS OUTDOORS Journal (ISSN 1082-5940) is a publication of Texas Outdoors Journal, Inc. Editorial and advertising offices are located at 1706 West Sam Houston Parkway North, Houston TX 77043. Phone (713) 957-3997. Fax (713) 957-3996.

E-MAIL ADDRESS: toj@airmail.net

TOJ Online: www.texasoutdoorsjournal.com

TEXAS OUTDOORS Journal is published monthly. Photographs and manuscripts for publication consideration are welcomed, but the publisher assumes no responsibility for such material while in transit or in the office of the publication.

Copyright 2017 with all rights reserved. Reproduction or use of editorial or graphic content in any manner without permission is prohibited. Views expressed by TEXAS OUTDOORS Journal contributors do not necessarily express the views of Texas Outdoors Journal, Inc. Publication of advertising in TEXAS OUTDOORS Journal does not constitute endorsement of products or services advertised.

Volume 27, Number 5

THE WINNER TWO YEARS RUNNING. AND HAULING. AND TOWING.

Last year, Super Duty. This year, F-150. Ford F-Series is proud to score back-to-back Golden Calipers.



**FORD F-SERIES.
2017 & 2018 MOTOR TREND
TRUCK OF THE YEAR.®**





Jacobsen Reclaims World Elk Calling Championship

Corey Jacobsen captured his ninth career title at the 2018 World Elk Calling Championships held March 16-17 in Salt Lake City, Utah, presented by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and the International Sportsmen's Expositions.

"The RMEF World Elk Calling Championships have always been a solid foundation for exposing people to elk hunting and elk calling," said Jacobsen. "With the new head-to-head format, I think it will continue to become more engaging for spectators, which will help us grow and promote something we are passionate about – and that is the fact that hunting is conservation."

Jacobsen also topped the professional division in 2015, 2014, 2011, 2003 and 1999. In 2013, he won the Champion of the Champions Invitational, a competition between the champions over the event's first 25 years. Jacobsen also won the men's division in 1998 and the adult division in 1995.

The 2018 competition featured

competitors matched up in a one-on-one, bracketed format with \$14,000 in cash split between winners of six divisions. The top three finishers also earned prize packages. The original field included 105 callers, the largest in recorded history.

2018 World Elk Calling championships winners:

Professional Division

1. Corey Jacobsen, Donnelly, ID
2. Tom Diesing, Loveland, CO
3. Beau Brooks, La Center, WA
4. Jason Neitzel, Rigby, ID

Men's Division

1. Matt Toyn, Plain City, UT
2. Chris Pastor, West Haven, UT
3. John Simper, Tooele, UT
4. Brayden Langley, McMinnville, OR

Women's Division

1. Marisa Pagano, Rexburg, ID
2. Jessi Sletten, Loveland, CO
3. Lydia Smith, Rigby, ID
4. Amy Morris, Springville, UT

Voice Division

1. Hannah Holiday, Northglenn, CO

2. Samuel Jacobsen, Donnelly, ID
3. Kailee Brimmer, Keno, OR

Youth Division

1. Jacob Simper, Tooele, UT
2. Joseph Simper, Tooele, UT
3. Carson Hill, Idaho Falls, ID
4. Dakota Dunlap, Aumsville, OR

Pee Wee Division

1. Isaac Simper, Tooele, UT
2. Gavin Langley, McMinnville, OR
3. Fisher Lewis, Herriman, UT
4. Ava King, Fruita, CO 🏆🌟

Dallas Safari Club Members To Serve On Conservation Council for Dept. of Interior

In mid-March the Department of the Interior appointed the members to its newly-formed International Wildlife Conservation Council.

Demonstrating the depth and commitment of DSC to conservation, education and hunter advocacy, eight of the 16 council appointees are DSC Life Members:

Cover Art

In recent May issues of TOJ we have dedicated our hunting editorial to wild hogs in Texas. It is appropriate that this May we are pleased to showcase our first international artist. Manuel Sosa a revered wildlife artist and biologist from Spain offers his "Wild Boar – Portrait." It captures the coarse coat, ivory tusk, long muzzle, and beady eyes of this prolific breed animals that was first brought to the North American continent by Spanish explorers in the early 1500s.

Take time to review Sosa's website and understand as outdoor enthusiasts we are only separated by an Ocean. Many of the mammals, birds and landscapes could easily pass for close relatives we often see or of vistas we view here in America. His art also provides an unspoken invitation to visit this part of the world where a variety of game animals await.

For more information on "Wild Boar - Portrait" and other fine works of art by Manuel Sosa, visit www.manuelsosa.com/en, or email him at sosa.arte@gmail.com. 🏆🌟



"Wild Boar - Portrait"

Paul Babaz, Bill Brewster, Ivan Carter, Peter Horn, Chris Hudson, Mike Ingram, John Jackson, and Denise Welker.

This council will provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary, and will focus on increased public awareness domestically regarding conservation, wildlife law enforcement, and economic benefits that result from U.S. citizens traveling abroad to hunt.

Secretary Zinke said, "The conservation and long-term health of big game crosses international boundaries. This council will provide important insight into the ways that American sportsmen and women benefit international conservation from boosting economies and creating hundreds of jobs to enhancing wildlife conservation."

The Council will advise the Secretary of the Interior on the benefits that international recreational hunting has on foreign wildlife and habitat conservation, anti-poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking programs, and other ways in which international hunting benefits human populations in these areas.

The duties of the Council will be solely advisory. **T★J**

TPWD Increases King Mackerel Recreational Bag Limit

On March 16, 2018 the king mackerel recreational bag limit increases from two to three fish per person, per day. In January, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission adopted a temporary exception that increases the daily bag limit of king mackerel from two to three fish in state water.

This exception is effective until Aug. 31, 2018 at which time a new statewide regulation currently under review may also increase the daily bag limit from two to three fish.

Recently, the federal government increased the bag limit on king mackerel in federal water to three fish per person, per day.

To be consistent with federal regulations and reduce confusion for anglers fishing in state and federal waters, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Coastal Fisheries Division recommended also increasing the daily bag limit for king mackerel in state water.

By making the daily bag limit in state waters and federal waters identical, additional angling opportunities will

be available to the public while also enhancing compliance, administration and enforcement. **T★J**

TPWD, Partners Launch Arundo Awareness Campaign

Arundo donax, an invasive, non-native plant, is devastating Texas waterways. It causes erosion, increases the risk of fire, worsens flooding and harms native aquatic life.

For several years, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and partners have been working to manage invasive Arundo on creeks and rivers in the Hill Country, offering treatment at no cost to landowners in priority areas, and expanding efforts to new areas. But help from key allies in roadside maintenance, fill material supply, road and bridge construction is needed to support these efforts and stop the spread of this aggressive invader into our waterways.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is launching a new awareness and prevention campaign developed in partnership with the Nueces River Authority, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the Texas Department of Transportation. The

2018 STATE OF TEXAS ANGLERS' RODEO
 MAY 26 - SEPT 3 ★ 12 DIVISIONS ★ 18 BOATS ★ 5 TRUCKS ★ 3 UVs
\$1,000,000 IN PRIZES & SCHOLARSHIPS



Game On!

CCA Members Ages 6-17 Fish STAR FREE!

Including StarKid and StarTeen Divisions

By entering the CCA TEXAS STAR you have a chance to win a 2018 FORD F-150 "TEXAS EDITION" XLT SuperCab, Boat, Trailer, Scholarships and more!

PHOTOS ARE FOR REPRESENTATION PURPOSES ONLY



For more information: **713.626.4222** ★ ccatexas.org ★ startournament.org

campaign is calling on construction and road maintenance personnel to watch for Arundo and learn how to properly treat this invasive plant at the source to prevent its spread. Arundo, sometimes known as giant reed, giant cane or carrizo cane, is easy to spot when it's full grown – it looks a lot like corn or bamboo, but has thick stalks that can reach up to 30 feet tall and forms large, dense colonies that are often found along roadside rights of way.

Its roots and fragments, which can contaminate construction fill dirt and other aggregate material, are harder to identify. Keeping the invasive plant out of waterways depends on learning to recognize and treat Arundo so that mowing and construction activities don't introduce it and cause an infestation.

"We encourage everyone providing fill dirt or aggregate to familiarize themselves with Arundo, look for it growing on their facilities and learn how to properly treat it so that fragments don't find their way into supply loads," said Angela England, TPWD aquatic invasive species biologist. "Getting rid of Arundo at the source and taking care not to spread it is much more doable than treating a full-blown infesta-

tion caused by these fragments. After Arundo is established – especially in a river or riparian area – it is very difficult and expensive to control."

While herbicides are the best way to treat mature Arundo plants at the source, if roots or fragments are spotted in fill dirt and aggregate materials, they should be removed and disposed in a landfill so they don't take root on-site. In addition to finding its way into fill dirt and aggregate materials, Arundo can spread at construction sites and along roadways by hitching a ride on earthmoving and mowing equipment. "It's important to remember that Arundo should never be mowed, bulldozed or cut – that's what distributes the small pieces and fragments that cause such big problems," England said.

For help in making an Arundo management plan, call (512) 389-4444 and ask for an aquatic invasive specialist, or email HealthyCreeks@tpwd.texas.gov. 🌿🌿

TPW Commission Expands CWD Containment Zone in Panhandle

Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission has approved expansion of the state's

chronic wasting disease Panhandle Containment Zone following the discovery of the disease earlier this year in a roadkill white-tailed deer.

The Containment Zone 2 now encompasses that portion of the state within the boundaries of a line beginning where I.H. 40 enters from the State of New Mexico in Deaf Smith County; thence east along I.H. 40 to U.S. 385 in Oldham County; thence north along U.S. 385 to Hartley in Hartley County; thence east along U.S. 87 to County Rd. 47; thence north along C.R. 47 to F.M. 281; thence west along F.M. 281 to U.S. 385; thence north along U.S. 385 to the Oklahoma state line.

"The decision to expand slightly the Panhandle Containment Zone is a direct result of the test positive roadkill discovery," said Dr. Bob Dittmar, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department wildlife veterinarian. "The state's wildlife disease management response focuses on an early detection and containment strategy designed to limit the spread of CWD from the affected area and better understand the distribution and prevalence of the disease."

The test positive roadkill was among 10,104 deer, elk and other susceptible exotic game animal samples collected from a variety of sources by TPWD personnel for CWD testing during the 2017-18 collection year. In all, TPWD collected 2,203 samples from roadkills, with the rest obtained through mandatory and voluntary hunter harvest submissions.

For the 2017-18 collection season, TPWD surpassed its statewide goal of 6,735 CWD samples. Sampling objectives were established by TPWD wildlife biologists based on deer densities within each of the 41 Deer Management Units in Texas and other factors to establish sufficient confidence of detection if CWD were present within those localized populations.

Since 2012 when the state first discovered the disease among mule deer in a remote mountain area along the New Mexico border, Texas has recorded 100 confirmed cases of CWD. Of those, 64 were discovered in captive deer breeding pens, 11 were hunter harvested on breeder deer release sites, and 2 were elk from a breeder release site.

Of the remaining positives, 20 were free-ranging mule deer, 1 was a free-ranging elk and 2 were free-ranging white-tailed deer. 🌿🌿

**BECAUSE...
HUNTING
IS
CONSERVATION**

HOUSTON CHAPTER BANQUET
SATURDAY JUNE 02, 2018 5:00PM
SPJST HALL, 1435 BEALL ST · HOUSTON TEXAS 77008
WWW.RMEFHOUSTON.COM
CONTACT TOM GRAHMANN: (281) 389-0488

The long and short of Outdoor News from across the state and nation.



TEXAS OUTDOOR NEWS



with **Bill L. Olson & Harold Gunn**

Featuring interviews with expert hunters, anglers, industry and political leaders.

Also, catch our weekly Best Bets for fishing, hunting, and more!

NOW IN OUR 25TH YEAR AS TEXAS' MOST HONORED OUTDOOR RADIO PROGRAM.

**BROUGHT
TO YOU BY:**



BEST IN TEXAS
www.texasford.com



Listen to us anywhere!



www.texasoutdoornews.com



Saturdays, 7:00 - 8:00 a.m.



Saturdays, 4:00 - 5:00 a.m.



Saturdays, 6:00 - 7:00 a.m.



Saturdays, 7:00 - 8:00 a.m.



Sundays, 7:00 - 8:00 a.m.



Saturdays, 7:00 - 8:00 a.m.
Sundays, 11:00 a.m. - noon



Sundays 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.



COMANCHE, BROWN
EASTLAND, COLEMAN
Saturdays, 7:00 - 8:00 a.m.



Saturdays, 7:00 - 8:00 a.m.



CENTER, NACOGDOCHES
Saturdays, 8:00 - 9:00 a.m.



CENTER, NACOGDOCHES
Saturdays, 7:00 - 8:00 a.m.



Saturdays, 7:00 - 8:00 a.m.

For information on advertising on Texas Outdoor News, call 713-957-3997
Let us bring your product or service to life!

Lone Star Fishing Vacations



*Story and Photography by
Danno Wise*

**Whether fresh or saltwater
Texas boasts a plethora
of angling options and
sightseeing adventures.**



May is the time when most people begin scheduling their summer fishing vacations. Whether it's with families, couples, singles or groups of friends, most people who enjoy fishing like to plan a summer vacation somewhere they can get time on the water.

They also know that they can't spend every waking fishing moment so they like to incorporate other activities into the foray. It's no surprise that Texas offers a myriad of vacation spots that offer fine fishing along with other activities. Which destination you choose is largely dependent on how you like to fish and what you like to do during the hours not spent fishing.

Here is just a handful of fishing vacation destinations to consider within the Lone Star State. However, keep in mind there are dozens more worth exploring throughout Texas.

SALTWATER

Port Isabel/South Padre – Although they are quite different, the towns of Port Isabel and South Padre are connected by geography, a water body and a bridge. Both offer excellent access to fishing the Lower Laguna Madre which is sandwiched between them.

Typical summer fare in the Lower Laguna includes speckled trout, redfish and flounder. However, anglers can also find good fishing for snook, tarpon and mangrove snapper around jetties during summer.

Offshore fishing offers a variety of species ranging from red snapper to sailfish is available within a relatively short run. In fact great offshore fishing can begin as close as the farewell buoy out from the jetties on to the Continental Shelf and beyond.

Visitors to the Lower Laguna Madre area generally spend time in both cities, regardless of which one they are actually staying in while on vacation. Port Isabel, one of the oldest towns on the Texas coast, is rich in history, including historical attractions such as the Point Isabel Lighthouse. It is also filled with quaint restaurants, shops and art galleries. South Padre Island, by contrast, is one of the youngest towns along the coast and is full of modern attractions, high rise condos, restaurants, clubs and, of course, the beach.

Port Mansfield – This is the perfect



A variety of accommodations can be found along Texas coast including the all inclusive, renowned Getaway Lodge in Port Mansfield.

destination for those who want to get away from it all. Port Mansfield is literally located at the end of the road — in this case, the terminal end of Texas State Highway 186.

Port Mansfield is famous for its outstanding fishing in the shallow waters of the Lower Laguna Madre. Summer affords anglers a variety of bay fishing options such as drifting for trout and sightcasting to redfish in these pristine waters.

During the summer months, anglers can also head out to the East Cut jetties, where they will find bull reds and tarpon. Port Mansfield is also close to offshore fishing grounds for red snapper and kingfish. And, for DIY (do-it-yourself) fishermen, there is a park with a fishing pier, drive-and-wade access, and kayak launch areas.

What Port Mansfield lacks in nightlife, it makes up for in nature watching – especially deer.

There are so many whitetail deer roaming Port Mansfield, it is popular for visitors to feed and pet them. And, some of the bucks that come within hand-range are quite impressive.

There is also a park with birding trails and lookouts. The town offers several rental options – fishing lodges such as Getaway Lodge, home rentals, or camper sites available at R&R RV Park.

Corpus Christi & Coastal Bend – The Texas Coastal Bend Region is comprised

of Corpus Christi and a collection of surrounding communities, including Aransas Pass, Port Aransas, Rockport, Fulton and Ingleside.

Each of these townships are within easy driving distance of each other, allowing the possibility for a myriad of day trips after spending time on the water.

When it comes to spending time on the water in the Coastal Bend Region, there is no shortage of options. There are a variety of different bays to fish in the area, all of which offer good fishing for trout, redfish and black drum during the summer months.

In addition to the many top-notch guides around the Coastal Bend, the region also features a great walkup and drive-up access.

This area is also well known for kayak accessibility and has plenty of public boat ramps, giving do-it-yourself fishermen plenty of choices.

Each of the communities in the Coastal Bend has its own unique charm. Corpus, obviously, is the largest city and has a wide variety of attractions such as the Texas State Aquarium and USS Lexington as well as numerous other attractions, restaurants and shops. The smaller communities filling out the Coastal Bend each offer quaint shops, a great art scene, restaurants, clubs, historic homes and buildings, beaches, nature trails and more.

Galveston – The big island has plenty



Port Mansfield is one of those "end-of-the-road angling destinations that also offers some impressive terrestrial residents as well.

of fishing opportunities for both inshore and offshore for fishermen. It also offers lots of shore-side fun as well, with attractions such as the Galveston Pleasure Pier, Historic Strand District and more.

When it comes to fishing, there are plenty of good guides, launch areas for boats and walk up access for DIY anglers throughout the sprawling Galveston Bay Complex. Bay fishing for trout is outstanding during summer.

The Galveston Jetties are full of fish this time of year, including trout, reds, bull reds, and shark. Typically, summer also sees good speckled trout fishing along the beach-front and offshore fishing also an option.

Due to its close proximity to Houston, Galveston is easy to reach from a variety of Texas cities, making it a good choice for either a long vacation or a quick weekend getaway. There are plenty of accommodations in Galveston ranging from condos to beach houses to campsites. And, very nearby is Bay's Landing Fishing Lodge, which caters to those wishing to fish the Galveston area.

FRESHWATER

North Brazos River – Just outside Weatherford,

the Brazos River runs clear and offers a great way for anglers to spend some time with fly or light tackle searching for panfish, catfish, white bass or largemouth bass.

Those more familiar with the deeper, darker water of the river closer to its mouth are often surprised at the clarity of the river in this area as well as the striking scenery surrounding it. This is largely what helped inspire John Graves' classic book, "Goodbye to a River."

One of the most unique ways to enjoy a vacation on the Brazos River in north Texas is to stay at the Double F River Ranch. This 350 acre ranch features hiking trails as well as great access to the river, that includes a pair of rapid runs.

Visitors to Double F River Ranch have two distinctly different choices for their sleeping quarters – The Farmhouse and the Sundancer Tent.

The Farmhouse is a mid-1900s era functioning farmhouse that has been updated and now features a full kitchen, two baths and two bedrooms. The adjacent barn has also been modified to function as a sitting area and extra bedroom for large groups.

The Sundancer Tent is one of the

most unique overnight accommodations in Texas.

This three-room safari-style tent is nestled right next to Comanche Creek. While rugged on the exterior, the tent is equipped with central air and heat and is appointed as well as most luxury hotels.

This stretch of the Brazos River is also located within a short drive of Weatherford and Grandbury. Both towns feature a variety of shops and restaurants.

Coletto Creek – Somewhat centrally located (just outside Victoria), Coletto Creek is a great spot for fishermen of all skill levels. This fishermen-friendly lake offers outstanding black bass fishing, but also features a variety of panfish and catfish options for those so inclined, as well as white and hybrid striped bass.

With family friendly with camping facilities both near the lake, as well as campsites on the lake and a variety of rental cabins, Coletto Creek not only offers great fishing for a variety of species but also cool places to stay and enjoy nature. The lake is not so large as to be intimidating and doesn't have much in the way of open water, making it safer to navigate.

When not on the water, bird and nature watching are popular pastimes. The



PHOTO BY BILL L. OLSON

Amistad Reservoirs waters beckons a variety of water-sports enthusiasts including anglers, snorkelers, swimmers plus sightseers.

lake is also popular for a variety of water-sports. Restaurants, shops and attractions can be found in nearby Victoria, as well as the historic town of Goliad, which is just a short drive away.

Amistad Reservoir — Although it's located in a fairly desolate area, Lake Amistad offers families a complete outdoor adventure vacation. The lake is legendary for producing giant largemouth bass, but also offers anglers the opportunity to tangle with smallmouth bass, white bass and catfish.

Amistad is also the best known house-boating destination in Texas and many vacationing families opt to rent a house-boat and spend their entire trip exploring the lake.

Kayaking, canoeing, water skiing, diving, snorkeling and swimming are other popular water sports available in Amistad's clear, deep waters.

There are plenty of land-based activities as well. For starters, fishing families will find plenty of launch points, as well as endless shore fishing opportunities. Since Amistad is almost entirely surrounded by the Lake Amistad National Recreation Area, practically every inch of shoreline is public access. The LANRA also offers great camping and wildlife viewing op-

tions.

Outdoor-oriented families will also want to visit nearby Devil's River State Natural Area and Seminole Canyon State Park & Historic Site. Both locations offer hiking, camping and wildlife viewing.

Seminole Canyon SP contains some of the oldest Indian pictographs and cave dwellings in North America.

Whether it's fresh or saltwater, summer is an outstanding time to take a fishing vacation in the Lone Star State. **T★J**



At the Double F River Ranch in north Texas, the Sundancer Tent offers unique accommodations in its three room safari-style tent nestled next to Comanche Creek.



The northern portion of the Brazos River offers clear water to fish in a tranquil setting.

Land of Giants: Fork's Monster Bass & Crappie Bites

One of the neat things about fishing is the uncertainty of what the next cast might bring. Most anglers will fish for a lifetime for that one big bite that never comes, whereas others seem to have all the luck.

Ask John LaBove or Craig Carpenter and they'll be quick to admit that they'd rather be lucky than good, any day.

LaBove is a casual bass angler from Greenville. Last March, he was enjoying an afternoon of bass fishing at Lake Fork when he made an ordinary cast towards the shallows that produced an extraordinary bass.

The fish weighed 15.48 pounds. It is the biggest bass reported from Lake Fork since February 2013, when Richard Scibek of Granbury caught a 16.04 pounder and the third largest reported from public waters statewide in the last six years. The fish ranks No. 48 on the Texas Top 50 list.

LaBove's big bass came after he made a snap decision to switch baits and stick with his fishing spot a little longer rather than giving it up for the day. He'd caught

several fish on a Chatterbait, but that bite had waned. That's when he tied on black/blue 3/8-ounce Berkley jig tipped with a Baby Brush Hog trailer. He dipped the tail of the Brush Hog in garlic scent just for good measure.

"It was about 5 p.m. and I was actually about to leave when she hit," LaBove said. "I'm glad I decided to stick around."

LaBove said he hadn't moved his jig far after it settled to bottom when he felt the bite.

"She grabbed it and I felt a little tick," he said. "The line moved about five feet and I set the hook. It came right towards the boat but didn't really fight that hard. The fish rolled on its side and that's when I got a look at how big it was. It was huge."

LaBove said he managed to land the fish alone. He didn't have a scale so he approached an angler in a nearby vessel to see if he had a scale to weigh it, which he did. The scales read 12.9 pounds, LaBove said.

"I was about ready to release it, but the guy who weighed the fish told me he thought his scales were wrong - that the fish was much heavier than 12.9," said LaBove. "He thought it was a Toyota ShareLunker for sure and convinced me to have it reweighed."

The angler transported the bass to Minnow Bucket Marina, where store manager Tony Parker said he weighed it at 15.24 pounds on certified scales. Parker subsequently contacted Toyota ShareLunker's Kyle Brookshear, who retrieved the bass and weighed it again at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens.

Brookshear said the fish was weighed twice at the Minnow Bucket, first at 15.14 and a second time at 15.24.

"They did have slight photo documentation of the 15.14 but did not have photo documentation of the 15.24," he said. "Their desire was to keep the 15.24 but we were unable to use that without documentation. So I instructed them that we would reweigh the fish in the Lunker Bunker. When we weighed her she tipped the scales at 15.48 pounds, the official

recorded weight."

The LaBove bass took the driver's seat as the first (and biggest) Lunker Legacy entry since the ShareLunker program format was restructured earlier this year to include four entry categories instead of one.

The "Lunker Legacy" category is reserved for bass that carry on the heart and soul of ShareLunker, a spawning and genetics research program dating back to Nov. 1986. These fish weighing 13 pounds or more must be caught during the Jan. 1 - March 31 window and loaned to the state for spawning. Fish as small as eight pounds are eligible for entry in the Lunker Class category.

Anglers who enter fish in either of the four categories are automatically registered in drawings for cool prizes including fishing licenses and \$5,000 shopping sprees to a national outdoor retailer. Also, each angler who enters earns a Toyota ShareLunker Catch Kit including fishing tackle, commemorative decals and ShareLunker branded merchandise. Enter a 13 pounder and you get a free replica of the fish. Lunker Legacy donors also get VIP access at the Toyota Bassmaster Texas Fest. For more info, texassharelunker.com.

Lake Fork's golden reputation for producing big bites and giant bass is well known, but the 27,000-acre reservoir near Quitman also kicks out some bragging-size crappie on occasion.

Carpenter knows all about Fork slabs. He and his fishing partner, Kirk Grounds of Sachse, were soaking jigs and shiners around underwater stumps and treetops in the mid-lake area at about 10 a.m. on Feb. 4 when Carpenter hooked and landed the biggest white crappie ever reeled in at Lake Fork and the heaviest crappie of any kind caught in Texas since 2003.

The 17 1/2 inch fish reportedly tipped the certified scales at Oak Ridge Marina to 3.55 pounds (3 pounds, 8.8 ounces). It measured 16 1/4 inches around the girth. Carpenter's whopper crappie eclipses the 3.34 pound lake record white crappie that was caught by Donna Wooldridge in December 2015.



COURTESY PHOTO

Craig Carpenter of Wylie with his 3.55 pound white crappie caught Feb. 4 at Lake Fork. Carpenter said the fish was suspended in a treetop 22 feet down in 37 feet of water.

“We fish for crappie a lot, but neither of us has ever seen anything like it,” said Carpenter. “Some of the people who saw it jumped back and asked what it was when we pulled it out of the livewell. They couldn’t believe it was a crappie.”

Carpenter and Grounds compete in several crappie tournaments throughout the year and they finish high the standings fairly often. That’s because they have developed a knack for finding the big ones.

“Kirk does a lot of idling around and looking with his electronics,” he said. “If we see a tree and there’s not fish around it we don’t even drop a bait. We don’t necessarily look for big groups of fish, either. What we look for this time of year are stumps or treetops with just one or two fish. We believe those are usually going to be your bigger fish.”

That’s what the men were looking for that Sunday morning as Grounds idled around some scattered timber in 37 feet of water. When his Humminbird electronics showed a single fish suspended about 22 feet beneath the surface, both anglers dropped their baits on it. Grounds was soaking a live shiner and Carpenter

was using an 1/8 ounce pink jig tipped with chartreuse/white body on a 10-foot crappie pole.

“We’d been fishing for about three to four minutes before she tapped my jig,” he said. “That 10-foot pole loaded up pretty good and I told Kirk I had something pretty big. I thought it might be a catfish, but then we saw it roll on its side. Kirk said right away it was a new lake record.”

Carpenter, a Top 10 finisher in the Lake Fork Crappiefest tournament the last two years, offered up a humble theory as to why the big fish chose his jig over his partner’s shiner.

“In my mind, 9/10ths the credit goes to



TPWD PHOTO

John LaBove of Greenville with the 15.48 pound Toyota ShareLunker he reeled in on March 2 at Lake Fork. The big bass took a black/blue jig in about four feet of water.

luck and the other 1/10th goes to Kirk,” he said. “He’s a guru with electronics. I just ride in the back and fish. I was just lucky on the pole that day!”

Carpenter said decided to retain the fish instead of releasing it, just in case there were any questions about the authenticity of the catch down the road. He is having the fish mounted to preserve the memory. 🌟



www.frontierboats.com



ROCKPORT
Rockport Marine
(361) 729-7820

HOUSTON
Red Wing Boats
(713) 921-0656

LAKE CHARLES
Lake Area Marine
(337) 433-7019



Pig Hunting – The Perfect Calibers

Is there a perfect caliber to use for hunting pigs? The answer is “yes,” use the gun in your hands at the time you see one. Sure, a 22 Long Rifle is not going to be the best caliber, but neither is a 375 H&H, but they both will kill pigs.

Using the right caliber will depend on how you are hunting. If you have been trapping pigs, then a small caliber handgun at close range will do the job.

Most of my pig or wild hog hunting has happened while hunting something

else. Many times I have been hunting in South Texas for whitetail deer or nilgai and run across a big porker that just had to be shot. Many hunting ranches are so overrun with wild pigs that they will ask you to shoot as many as you can after your initial hunt is over.

So unless you are carrying two guns, the best caliber to use is the one in your hands.

Big boars have an armor shield of bone under the hide around their neck which hunters worry about penetrating with

the bullet.

I have never had this problem except one time when I shot a huge trophy boar with a 357 Mag revolver using a light 125 grain hollow point bullet. The shot did not penetrate through his armored-covered shoulder. If it had been a smaller pig or a heavier 158 grain soft point bullet, I don't think that one would have gotten away.

There are all different types of special wild swine hunts these days. With over six million pigs in Texas and the number growing every month, outfitters have found ways to make money selling hunts for these prolific breeders.

The first few times I hunted wild boar was with dogs, the same way you would hunt a mountain lion. The plan is to drive around looking for big tracks. When big tracks are found, the guide lets the dogs go, they smell up the pigs and the chase is on. I used to be able to run and keep up with the dogs on a hunt like this.

When the dogs catch the hog, you aim for the hog and do your level best not to hit the dogs.

When they are all together fighting the hog; sorting out pig from dog is tough. You have to have the patience to wait until the dogs separate enough for a clean shot. This is where a big caliber handgun works best.

I have killed pigs with 454 Casull, 45 Colt, 357 Mag, and 44 Mag. The 44 Mag seemed to work best for me and after having a bad time using a 357 Mag on a really big hog, I decided to never use one again.

The 44 Mag worked every time, it didn't matter if I used a heavy hollow point or a heavy soft point bullet, the result was the same - just a dead pig.

I have never been a fan of light 180 grain hollow point bullets in a 44 so I never use them.

One of the newest ways to hunt pigs is at night with special equipped AR-15 rifles set up with night vision. If you have a ranch with pigs on it, this is the way to eradicate them.

My friend, Jimmy Galindo, is a pro at setting up night hunts for pigs. His



This wild boar weighed 450 pounds. Most mature wild hogs will weigh from 150 to 200 pounds.

**OUTDOORS AND OUT OF CELL COVERAGE?
STAY IN TOUCH WITH A SATELLITE PHONE**

RENT or BUY

From a top Texas Service Provider

Globalstar or iridium

Call us today 877 614 2666

 **G-COMM** www.g-comm.us



caliber of choice is the 6.8 SPC, 300 Black-Out Supersonic and the 7.62x39.

All three of these calibers shoot 110 to 130 grain bullet at about 2,200 to 2,400 feet per second which is perfect for killing pigs.

At night many times you can kill more than one pig in a bunch if you are quick on the trigger or using a suppressor to soften the noise of your gun.

It is not unusual for his customers to shoot 20 to 30 pigs a night.

Jimmy also provides hog hunting by helicopter. You take an hour long class teaching you how to sit, hold on, where to shoot and what not to shoot at. He loads you up with an AR-15 and magazines holding about 1000 rounds of 5.56 ammo and off you go for the time of your life. Flying 30 MPH just over the tree tops of a ranch, shooting at pigs with a AR-15 in 223/5.56 is great fun, but your hit ratio is about 100 shots fired to one pig hit. A good shot can hit 10 to 15 pigs with a thousand rounds of 223 ammo. It is so much fun there should be a law making it mandatory for you to do this.

If you really want to kill pigs - the best way is to use a 12 gauge shotgun shooting buckshot out of the helicopter.

Your hit average will go way up and flying at tree top level, you will see hundreds of pigs.

Depending on the type of pig hunting you're doing will determine what the best caliber is to use. If you are hunting them by chance a 30-30, 30-06, 7mm or 35 Whelen will all work great.

If you are handgun hunting hogs then a 44 Mag, 460 or 500 Smith revolver or single shots in 30-30 or 35 Remington work great.

In a semi-auto rifle the 300 Black-Out, 7.62x39 or 6.8 SPC work best.

If you really want to shoot a bunch of hogs the 12 gauge shotgun using buckshot is the king of them all. Let the pig thinning begin. **T★J**



The author's wife, Carol O'Day with a javelina, or collared peccary. Many think javelina and wild hogs are related, but they are not. One of the biggest difference is a javelina has sweat glands that help dissipate the heat where a hog does not have sweat glands and wallows in wet areas to cool itself.



Nice pig shot with a custom Taurus 44 Mag. This pig is a perfect size for the BBQ pit.

	S&D Whitetails Whitetail Deer & Dove Hunting
	Adventure packages to fit every lifestyle and experience level. 4,500 acres in Brown, Mills & Comanche Counties
	Basic Whitetail Deer Hunts and Trophy Hunts to 240 Class One-on-One Guided Hunts • 99% Success Rate Corporate Groups Welcome
	Dove Hunting Mourning and White-Wing
Dale Storch, Owner & Outfitter (325) 642- 7596 www.sdwhitetails.com	

The GREENGIANT

Giant Salvinia leaves more footprints in East Texas — boaters and duck hunters are encouraged to clean up their act.

Story by Matt Williams



TPWD PHOTO

A duck blind on Caddo Lake is engulfed by giant salvinia. The plant was first discovered in the natural lake in 2006 and it has since cost the state millions of dollars trying to control it. Experts say more than 300,000 salvinia weevils have been released onto the lake and they appear to be showing promising results.

Like an aquatic monster with no apparent agenda other than quietly taking a passel of water bodies hostage, giant salvinia continues to sneak its way across eastern Texas. It doesn't discriminate against size, either. Large or small, no freshwater reservoir, river or stream in these parts is "salvinia proof."

Giant salvinia is an invasive, free-floating fern native to South America that can spread incredibly quick. Left unchecked under the right conditions, the plant can choke off access and block out sunlight critical to a watery ecosystem.

Experts believe it was brought to the United States on cargo vessels carrying tainted shipments of tropical plants or fish. It was likely introduced to public waters when someone dumped a contaminated fish aquarium into a lake, or when a water garden or pond overflowed, spilled into a creek and subsequently drained into a watershed.

The plant was first discovered in Texas in the late 1990s on Toledo Bend and it has since invaded a long list of East Texas lakes that seems to grow larger every year. It has also been found in Louisiana and several other southern states.

The Newest Footprints

Texas infestations date back for years on lakes Caddo, Fork, Martin Creek, Murvaul, Toledo Bend, Sam Rayburn and Naconiche. It also has a history on Lake O' the Pines, Palestine, Wright Patman, Gilmer, Texana, Sheldon, Brandy Branch and Welsh.

Also known as *Salvinia molesta*, the plant's most recent footprints landed on 2,200-acre Lake Nacogdoches and 1,800-acre Lake Athens. Local anglers made the initial finds on both lakes.

On Nacogdoches, it was hoped that the plant might be confined to Yellow Bank Creek cove but a subsequent investigation conducted by Texas Parks and Wildlife's aquatic invasive species team showed the noxious plant is much better established and more widespread than originally believed.

That's the word from John Findeisen, TPWD's point man when it comes to dealing with aquatic invasives on Texas waters. According to Findeisen, crews located a heavy infestation along a northwestern bank near the mouth of Little Loco Creek and a smaller patch along the eastern shore in the vicinity of

the Hayter Hunting Club camp house.

The biologist estimates the total coverage area to be about 30 acres.

"It's mixed in with the cut grass and torpedo grass (hay grass)," Findeisen said. "My guess is it has been there since last summer. Possibly since last spring."

At Athens, the plant was discovered in a one-acre area near the Lake Athens Marina boat ramp. Containment booms were deployed to prevent the plant from spreading. Findeisen is hopeful the problem can be remedied at Athens using herbicide, but that's not the case on Lake Nacogdoches.

Nacogdoches: To Spray or Not to Spray

The biologist says eradication using herbicides isn't a possibility there, mainly because of the collateral damage that chemical treatment could do to the cut grass, torpedo grass and types of vegetation that are helping to contain it. Cut grass and torpedo grass are native emergent plants that root to bottom in shallow water and grow beyond the surface. Both provide valuable fish habitat.

Giant salvinia, on the other hand, doesn't root to bottom. Instead, it floats on the surface and drifts wherever the wind or current takes it. The plant clings to boat trailer bunks, duck decoys or anything else it comes into contact with. This means it can be easily transported from one lake to another. The plant can withstand sub-freezing temperatures and reproduces by vegetative fragmentation.

Findeisen has learned from experience that there are certain situations when using herbicide is not the best option for treating giant salvinia infestations.

The Clipper brand herbicide TPWD uses contains flumioxazin. The biologist says herbicide kills aquatic plants down to the water's surface, but doesn't harm rooted plants below the surface, allowing for regrowth in time. It is usually

dispersed from airboats.

In some cases - like the one at Lake Nacogoches - Findeisen thinks herbicide treatment can actually do more harm than good because it eliminates the natural barriers (cut grass and torpedo grass) that are helping to keep the plant contained.

"The situation at Lake Nacogdoches is similar to what we ran into at Lake Murvaul two years ago," Findeisen said. "We thought we could eradicate the salvinia on Murvaul without hurting the cut grass too bad. But what we ended up doing is taking the cut grass out. That gave the salvinia that didn't get hit with herbicide free rein to float all over the lake."

"The torpedo grass and cut grass are great habitat," Findeisen added. "If we could eradicate the salvinia with herbicide it might be an option, but knowing we can't eradicate it there is no reason to destroy that habitat."

Findeisen says the department has been successful in eradicating Giant salvinia infestations in the past, but it doesn't happen very often. Often times, it shows back up a few years down the road. Recent cases at Brandy Branch Reservoir near Longview and Lake Fork come to mind.



TPWD PHOTO

Lake Nacogdoches recently joined a sizable list of East Texas reservoirs that are battling Giant salvinia, an invasive fern native to South America. This Google Earth image indicates the location of the heaviest infestation (in the upper right corner) on the 2,200-acre lake.



TPWD PHOTO

Giant Salvinia weevils are introduced to lakes by harvesting weevil-infested giant salvinia plants from greenhouses. The vegetation is then transported to infested lakes in tubs and dumped on existing salvinia mats, as illustrated here by TPWD crews.

"It's rare for us to be able to eradicate it," Findeisen said. "We managed to do it at Brandy Branch when it showed up at the boat ramp. We learned about it early and were able to get it taken care of with herbicide before it was able to spread.

"The first time it showed up at Lake Fork a couple of years ago we were able to contain it in Chaney Branch with booms and knock it out," he added. "Then it showed up again last fall in White Oak Creek in an entirely different part of the lake."

TPWD news releases indicate the plant occupied about 12 to 15 acres when it

was found at Lake Fork last fall. About 90 percent of the infestation was confined to White Oak Creek by booms. The rest of the plants dispersed to other areas and could not be contained.

The Weevils are Coming

Since eradication is out of the question at Lake Nacogoches, Findeisen says the department's main goal in dealing with it is the same as on every other lake where it has taken hold: Try to prevent the plant from spreading to other areas of the lake, including the city water intake.

The biologist says the aquatic invasive species team will continue monitoring the

reservoir and rely on herbicide to treat any mats isolated away from other vegetation.

The biologist says the department also will be releasing giant salvinia weevils at Nacogoches.

"The weevils are one of the natural control vectors for giant salvinia over in Brazil," Findeisen said. "We've used them with good success on Dam B (Steinhagen Lake), Sheldon Lake and areas of Caddo Lake."

Findeisen says the weevils are about the size of a pin head. The insects eat the plant and reproduce on the leaves. When the eggs hatch the larvae burrow into the plant's stem. This stops the plant from moving nutrients and causes it to die, the biologist said.

TPWD has its own weevil source stock. The insects are grown in greenhouses in Karnack, Jasper and Brookeland. Findeisen says the department also has access to weevils produced in canals operated by the Lower Neches Valley Authority near Anahuac.

The bugs are introduced to lakes by harvesting weevil-infested giant salvinia plants from greenhouses. The vegetation is then transported to infested lakes in tubs and dumped on existing salvinia

**DON'T LET YOUR
SUBSCRIPTION RUN OUT!**

EASILY CHECK YOUR LAST ISSUE DATE:

27965 0817

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

JOHN SMITH

1414 TEXAS AVE

FIRST TWO DIGITS ARE THE MONTH
LAST TWO DIGITS ARE THE YEAR

mats.

Findeisen says the department usually has access to about 360,000 - 660,000 adult weevils each year. Those bugs are divided among multiple lakes where infestations have been documented. He added that it takes about 450,000 adult weevils to wipe out one acre of giant salvinia in 6-12 months..

"You have to remember that wherever we introduce adult weevils we are also introducing larvae and eggs that are on the plants," Findeisen said.

Down the Road

On a brighter note, TPWD fisheries biologist Todd Driscoll doesn't look for the plant to cause any significant problems on the lake.

The biologist says salvinia tends to thrive in shallow, isolated pockets but doesn't do very well once it breaks away into big, open water. When big rains come, the vegetation usually gets flushed out where it gets beaten up by waves.

"It's going to be there (Lake Nacogdoches) from now on, but I don't look for it to do a whole lot," Driscoll said. "It'll probably be similar to what we've seen in Hausen Bay on Toledo Bend. It will grow in the upper end and then it will occasionally get blown out by wind and runoff.

Lake Nacogdoches is big enough that the waves will kill it if it ever makes it out on the main lake," he added. "Eventually, it'll scatter around the bank and be growing inside the torpedo grass all around the lake. Of course, we don't want it there. But I don't think it will ever be a significant problem."

With the height of the late spring and early summer fishing seasons upon us, Findeisen says anglers and boaters who access infested areas on any lake can do their part to help prevent the spread of the plant by making sure their trolling motors and outboards aren't carrying plants before they move to a different area.

Furthermore, the recent find underscores the importance making sure boats, trailers, tires, duck decoys and outboard engines are free of any vegetation before leaving the boat ramp. Possession or transport of giant salvinia, hydrilla or other prohibited aquatic vegetation in Texas is a Class C misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$500 per plant.

Clean up your act, folks. 🇹🇽🌿



TPWD PHOTO

This aerial photo taken at the upper reaches of Toledo Bend shows how dense a giant salvinia coverage area can become in short order. The plant is extremely aggressive and can double in size in 4-10 days in optimum growing conditions.



PHOTO BY LSUAGCENTER

TPWD plans to release Giant Salvinia weevils at Nacogdoches and several other east Texas lakes this spring. The insects are host specific to Giant salvinia and are one of the natural control vectors for the plant in South America. The state has several greenhouses where the weevils are produced.

The Game Plan

You have a choice. No one can deny that a day spent poking around on the water with no specific goals or plans may capture your fancy as it relaxes your mind and refreshes the soul. It's fun to do as long as you really don't care whether or not you catch fish in the process.

Anglers who are consistently successful in catching fish approach the project like athletic coaches who boast winning records. They never begin a day on the water without a detailed game plan. Part of the enjoyment these veterans derive from fishing centers on the mental exercises of figuring out where the fish might be and the best ways to catch them. This procedure begins long before these experts walk down the dock, load their boats, and crank the engines.

Based on your own knowledge and experience, it isn't very difficult to develop a game plan for your day on the water. If you know someone who fished yesterday and they will share information with you such as the depth at which they found fish, you have a good start. Marina

operators where you keep your boat or near where you will launch usually stay abreast of up-to-date information. A nearby tackle shop can also be a valuable source. Otherwise, the task begins with a process of elimination. Select your primary targets and then work the game plan from there.

Back when we were shooting television episodes of Mark Sosin's Saltwater Journal, our game plan started in one of two ways. Either we selected a location first or we settled on the species we wanted to film and then looked for the best location. Once we did that, we came up with a second and a third option. If we failed to catch enough of the primary species, we would settle for number two and then number three. Our game plan for each show was never limited to one species.

Many of the top fishermen keep detailed logs of every day they spend on the water. Those logs not only contain information on where they caught fish, but include details of weather conditions, tides, water depth where the fish were, and

so forth. The more detailed the log, the more valuable it becomes. Studying the log the night before helps you plan your day on the water.

Tides are critical on the inshore grounds. They may also have an effect offshore, but not as much as they do along the beaches and in the estuaries. Most species that inhabit the inshore grounds are affected by the flow of water. That also holds true where tides sweep the shallows and pull water (and fish) into the inlets. Unless you focus on stages of the tide, you may enjoy some beautiful weather and fresh air, but fall just a bit short when it comes to catching fish.

If you fish the offshore grounds, currents become the important determination where the fish might be. One reason is that currents often carry food and fish instinctively know this. It's important to work both sides of a current. And, if you are bottom fishing around underwater structures, check out the area in front of it first and then the backside. Usually, drifting a bait toward an underwater structure with the tide produces results. While you are looking for offshore currents, keep alert for color changes in the water. Fish might be on the darker side or the bluer side.

Your game plan for the day should include the tackle you will need. Nothing is more frustrating than to suddenly discover you left an important item at home. If, for example, your game plan covers three different species or three types of water, you should include the needed tackle for all the alternatives. One benefit of a well-developed game plan is that it allows you to rig tackle at home the night before.

Setting a game plan in concrete constitutes one of the more common failings. To be effective, the program you establish must remain flexible



Anglers who are consistently successful in catching fish approach the project like athletic coaches who boast winning records. Grab a chart or two, collect information from reliable sources and resources then develop a primary plan along with two or three alternatives.

and you have to be willing to modify it as conditions dictate. Sometimes, an angler gets so determined to follow the original plan that he fails to notice that things on the water have changed or that the basic game plan is not working.

Establishing an effective game plan gives you a start to finding fish and it often guides you through the day. It's important, however, to be ready to discard it if it isn't producing results. After a reasonable time, you must experiment with other possibilities and push the original plan aside. Simple variations in weather conditions or tides can easily make the basic plan ineffective. When you make these changes, be sure to add them to your log for next time.

Periodically, most of us enjoy fishing other waters or taking a trip to some distant hot spot. Again, it makes sense to formulate a plan before you go. Do a little research to determine the peak periods for the species you seek. At the same time, find out about favorite baits, lures, tackle, and where the fish are most likely to be. Studying a chart of that area in advance will make you familiar with the names of places when you hear others talk about

specific areas.

Catching fish is not always easy. The reason that some anglers usually seem to be successful is simply that they are forever thinking about their approach and

the necessary techniques. By eliminating spots and methods that aren't working on that day, they eventually uncover patterns that will work. That's when they score. Follow this system and you can, too. **T★J**



When fishing the offshore grounds, currents become the important determination where the fish might be. A chart will also help locate offshore structure and combined with knowledge of the current will provide a plan to best present baits when drifting this structure. It is best to have the bait drift toward the structure where gamefish await to ambush and easy meal.



www.blackjackboats.com

BlackJack 224



ROCKPORT
Rockport Marine

HOUSTON
Red Wing Boats

LAKE CHARLES
Lake Area Marine

HOG

Problems & Solutions



New technology and techniques help deal with the burgeoning swine population.

PHOTO BY BOXIE KALLINA

This hog is “snorkeling” as it puts its head underwater to feed. At a baited stock tank using a Slow Glow L.E.D. light a hog will get a mouthful of mud, water and corn and strain everything out but the corn.

Story by Bill L. Olson

Texas we have a problem and it's in the form of a destructive non-native animal. The presence of wild feral hogs on this continent can be attributed to centuries of man-made introduction — some intentional and some by accident.

According to numerous sources the

first introduction to this continent occurred on Christopher Columbus second voyage in 1493. However, in 1539 Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto brought 13 pigs to the area around Tampa Bay, FL, and is often credited as being most responsible for the introduction of *Sus scrofa* to North America.

Reports state that within three years of their introduction DeSoto's hogs had multiplied to over 700 animals. This estimate did not include the number that had been eaten by his men or those that escaped.

Other explorers contributed to the on-going introduction of wild hogs to

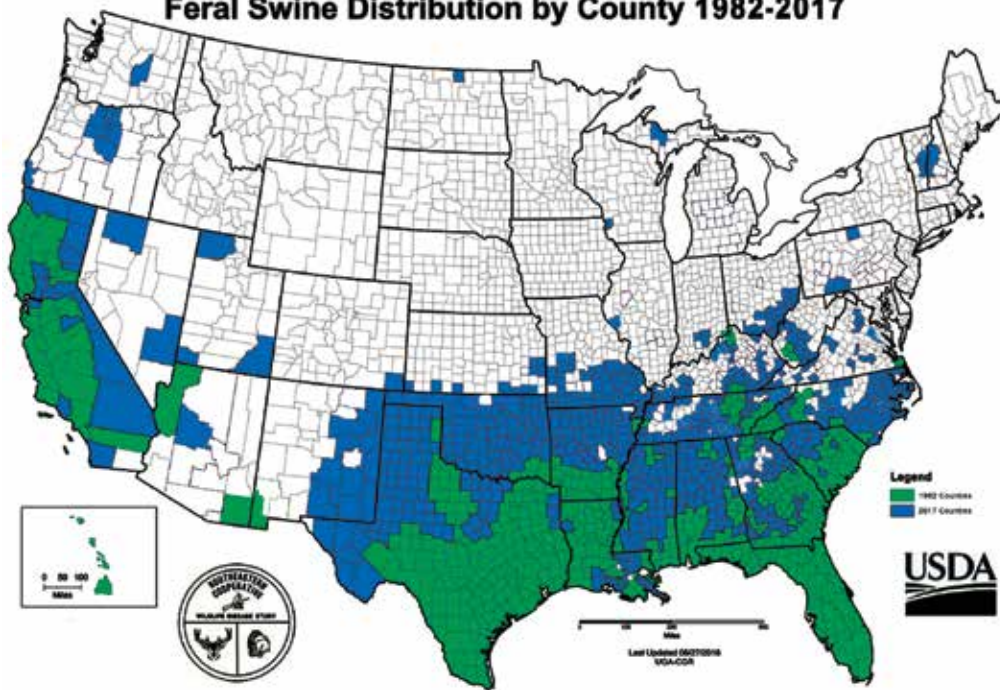
this continent. New Mexico had them introduced by Cortez in 1600. Sir Walter Raleigh brought pigs to Jamestown Colony in 1607. With a thriving population of free-range pork favored by immigrating settlers, and an acquired taste by Native Americans, the hog expansion continued during the country's westward growth in the 1700 and 1800s.

In the early 1900s Eurasian boar were brought to America and released for hunting purposes. The Eurasian stock soon escaped and bred with the domestic hogs to create a hybrid most often encountered today.

At the Fort Bend County Feral Hog Coalition seminar held in early March, Derrick Banks Prairie View A&M Extension Service agricultural and natural resource agent for Fort Bend County stated, "hogs can quickly revert to and adapt to wild ways within three generations. Further compounding the situation is the fact hogs become sexually mature at eight months and have multiple litters over the course of a year. The gestation period of a hog is 3-3-3 — three months, three weeks, and three days. The average litter size is four to eight piglets."

No one really knows the number of wild hogs in North America or in Texas. The number most often used for Texas' population is two million free-range wild

Feral Swine Distribution by County 1982-2017



COURTESY SCWDS, USDA-APHIS, AND QDMA

swine. However, that two million number has been offered for well over 10 years.

Banks said, "In order to just maintain the wild hog population in Texas at current levels, at least 60 percent of the population would have to be harvested each year. If we were to try and reduce the population then something between 80 to 90 percent would need to be taken."

Another issue that contributes to the ever-increasing population is the fact that about 97 percent of the land in Texas is privately owned. There are landowners that recognize feral hogs as destructive

pests while other owners enjoy having them as an animal available to hunt year round.

When it comes to hunting, and the fact we have unfortunately become a litigious society that is quick to file lawsuits against anyone, many landowners are reluctant to allow hunting

on their property. The fear is if someone had an accident a lawsuit would follow and the landowner could be held liable.

Another contributing factor to the ever-increasing hog problem is the lack of an orchestrated or concerted effort by all applicable agencies. Banks confirmed his small grant only affords enough funds for information seminars. Texas Parks & Wildlife cites budgetary restrictions that inhibit accurate surveys of hogs and other non-native exotic wildlife. Furthermore, any introduction of a poison or other controlling substance has been met with significant resistance from the general public.

So what options are available to thwart an adaptive and smart exotic animal? For the foreseeable future any solutions or "line of defense" lies solely at the feet of landowners in their capacity as land stewards, along with hunters and trappers.

Credited by many as an intelligent quarry, new techniques are regularly being devised by hunters and trappers to combat increasing hog numbers. Here are a couple of proven tactics that have recently been used.

In mid-February TOJ's contributing Hunting Editor Tom Claycomb III and I were invited to field test Slow Glow Hunting Products motion activated L.E.D. lights, along with other products during a four day Hill Country hog hunt. This adventure would take place



PHOTO BY CLINT CHOATE

This photo captured the momentary lighting flash that illuminated the area to show how close these hunters were to a sounder of wild hogs while they are hidden behind a Slow - Glow L.E.D. Hunting Light.

on the picturesque 1,350 acre Reville Peak Ranch located northwest of Burnett and overlooking the waters of Lake Buchanan.

Owned by Vol Montgomery, the Reville Peak Ranch is a diverse working cattle operation that also allows special operations programs on site for a number of Texas law enforcement agencies. The most prominent opportunity for the public to visit the ranch is on its mountain bike trails, runs and obstacle course races. It is also the home of the Upper Highland Lake Nature Center.

There is no commercial hunting allowed on the ranch and some might consider this gneiss rock covered gem to have a hog problem. Montgomery counters and says, "The rooting and damage is minimal even though we have a number of hogs. Some consider them a nuisance but I like having them on the property to allow family and friends to hunt them year round and provide a



PHOTO BY CLINT CHOATE

The photographer is shielded by the bright light of the Slow Glow and the axis buck and fallow deer are unaware of his presence.

healthy source of food. To me hogs are like lemons, and because they are on my ranch I make lemonade."

Murray Choate, owner of Slow Glow is one of those likeable guys you instantly know you are going to love hunting with and being around. He is also one of those really smart individuals that are always thinking up new ideas or improvements on old ones.

He has three degrees in biomedical engineering and a deep background in electrical engineering. Slow Glow is simply a result of his hunting passion and a 10 year project to develop the ultimate hog hunting light. Because of his hunting background and knowledge of available components, he set out to design the most efficient method of utilizing the limited power available from traditional feeder batteries. The result is the brightest hog light on the market.

Slow-Glow L.E.D. light is motion activated which slowly increases the light from a base "training mode" up to 60 percent of its full illumination over a two minute time span. A long-distance remote allows the operator to move to full illumination affording plenty of light for shots to be taken from firearms with open sights, scoped firearms, AirBows to pins on

a bow. There is no need for the expensive thermal or night vision optics.

The fun part of using this light is it allows the hunter to hunt. Preparations are needed in advance of that night's foray. Wind direction is critical and the Slow-Glow — that mounts on a t-post — needs to be repositioned.

Stock tanks or feeders need to be refilled. Additionally a pathway is cleared to a shooting position behind this "bright light field" that puts the hunter within mere feet of the quarry.

"What occurs is this system and technique defeats the three primary senses a hog or other exotic game animals rely upon for their protection," Choate stated. "This includes their sense of smell, sight and hearing."

And work well it did. On several stalks as many as four or five grown people made their way to within less than a couple of dozen feet of a sounder of hogs where a shot was taken. Additionally the Slow Glow illuminates an area with enough light that a rifle hunter can easily use a normal 40 mm objective scope to put a hog down at 100 yards and there have been reports of successful shots taken at 200 yards.

Slow-Glow offers a light color change from red to green or green to red by simply reversing the polarity of the connections on the battery. Choate says the red and green light used is located right in the middle of the wave-length for each color.

Furthermore, Slow Glow allows a change in how large or small of an area is illuminated. On one side there is a 60 degree convex lens that acts as a spotlight. Reverse the lens to the 120 degrees side and it is more of a flood light to cover a larger area.



PHOTO BY BILL L. OLSON

With the Slow Glow and a natural blind positioned on the tank dam, Murray Choate scatters a small amount of corn around the water's edge with the majority going into the pond. Hogs will spend considerable time "snorkeling" to get the corn in the water.



PHOTO COURTESY PREMIER FEEDERS

A variety of traps, doors and configurations are available to catch hogs. The best advice is to keep them baited and reposition the traps as needed.

“The only limiting factor of different ways to set up to use this light to hunt hogs is your own imagination,” Choate explained. “Feeders and blinds are obvious option. So is a Hog Log or five inch diameter, four foot long pvc pipe with half inch holes cut into it. Tether it on one end and a hog will roll it around the anchor point gobbling up the kernels of corn as they dribble out.”

One modification learned was to spread a small amount of corn around the edge of a stock tank or other water source, but put the majority out in the water. “We call it snorkeling,” Choate laughed. “Hogs will get out there and literally put their heads underwater to get to the corn. While in the water they are stepping on the corn pushing it down into the mud and making a lot of noise squealing and splashing that further masks any sound of a hunters’ stalk. The hog gets a mouthful of mud, water and

corn and strain out everything but the corn. It is pretty comical to observe.” The results are impressive.

The highly educated inventor is “wired a bit differently” than most and always thinking. While on the hunt we tested prototypes of an alert system, that indicates which station is being hit by hogs. This is going to be a real asset to the advancement of this type of hunting scenario when multiple stand locations are set up with Slow-Glows as we experiences at the Reveille Peak Ranch. Plus this same system can be use to hunt exotic game, predators or any other game that can be legally hunted at night, under a light.

While the Slow Glow L.E.D. light is another tool in a hunter’s arsenal the use of traps continues to play a vital role in controlling hog numbers. Bob Baker is a part-time hunter and trapper that presented his perspective on trapping hogs at the March seminar.

“It is an effective tool,” he stated. “In 2017 I trapped over 1,100 hogs and that generated between \$55,000 to \$60,000 dollars of additional gross income to me.

“A lot is made about hogs becoming trap shy, but I keep my traps baited, move them as needed and continue to catch singles, doubles to

multiple hogs from a simple four foot by eight foot trap.

“I’ve used just about every trap that has been designed and still use all of them. Swinging door, guillotine, or rooting door it doesn’t matter. I’ve never seen a hog push a door open to escape.

“Now I have seen the same 240 pound boar hog climb out of a five foot trap on several occasions. It was run over on the highway before I could catch him.”

Besides his regular job with the City of Wharton, he serves as a buyer to collect live hogs for Southern Wild Game. “At one time they had 35 buying stations across Texas. We’d weight the hogs and write a check right on the spot to the trapper.

Then about once a week they’d pick them up and take them to Devine. Those hogs are shipped around the country and world for both human and livestock products.” As of early April the going market rate ranged between .10 cents to .30 cents per pound.

Baker’s final trapping tip is he uses regular deer corn. “I’ve tried all sorts of flavors and additives. I’ve soured corn and while it may attract hogs I’ve see them eat the corn that was not soured first.”

As is the case in most predator and prey relationship new technology and techniques will continue to play a vital role in helping to check hog numbers. For hunters and trappers it provides new opportunities.

For more information on Slow-Glow L.E.D. Hunting Light visit www.slow-glow.com. For information on a variety of private and corporate activities on the Reveille Peak Ranch visit www.rprtexas.com. **T★J**



PHOTO BY CLINT CHOATE

Compact and affordable the Slow Glow is a great tool to battle the increasing hog population while providing exciting up-close hunting opportunities.



Lake Roundup

CENTRAL TEXAS



By John Jefferson

Like a basketball player dribbling around in the closing seconds of a game for one last shot at the buzzer, a Huntsville lady named Stacy Spriggs waited until the last possible day to catch a bass that qualified for the Toyota ShareLunker Legacy Class. Fishing in the Stanley Burgay Memorial Tournament on **Sam Rayburn Reservoir** on Saturday, March 31, Stacy tossed a Carolina rig into eight feet of water and scored big.

She wanted to loan the fish to TPWD for breeding program, but biologists were concerned about its condition, and

returned it to Big Sam, instead. TPWD declared Stacy eligible for all Legacy Lunker prizes, though, and the bass will be entered into the ShareLunker records.

That fish brings the total for 2018 to six, only the fourth time since the turn of the century that six or less have been entered. The highest has been 33. The average number was about eight or nine. But the last three years have produced six, five, and six. Is there a trend developing?

The first three unsurprisingly came from **Lake Fork**, but there were two surprises. One came from little **Lake Kurth**, near Lufkin, the lake's first lunker. The other surprise Lunker Lake-landing this season came from Twin Buttes Reservoir, near San Angelo – its first since 1989.

Conspicuously missing from the list of Lunker Lakes this year are all of the Central Texas lakes — especially **Lake Austin**. Austin had several years of fame a few years back and drew a circus of travelling bass boats. Then, a massive stocking of grass carp ate the bass out of house and home. Fishing went down like the sun on a winter day. There hasn't been a 13-pounder caught there since 2014. But I hear it's coming back. Oops! I'm not supposed to be talking about that,

yet. So strike that from the record — Instruct the jury to disregard it. Austin Bass Fishing forum confirms the flaccidity of LA by the absence of catch reports. It's still a beautiful stream to fish, though, and right here at home for many Cen-Tex readers.

We're going into the post-spawn era of 2018 and bass fishing will be spotty. But don't discount late-bedding bass.

The cold, winter weather may have messed up some of the bass's inner clocks.

I'll toss a bright lizard near any bedded bass I can locate. If that becomes too much like an Easter egg hunt in high grass, I'll tie on a spinner bait or a Rat-L-Trap and cover as much water as I can. Some think bass will be nearer the surface, so a Teckel Sprinkler frog splashing up the surface with its spinning, motor-boat propeller of a tail just might induce a reaction strike. If nothing else, it'll entertain its operator who will be watching for that violent strike the lure is known for producing.

Post spawn or not, May and June are the last two months of semi-nice temperatures, so take advantage of it. I try to fish as much as possible those two months in hope of burning out my desire to fish before it gets so blisteringly hot. That's never worked, but maybe this year...

Every day, I check the levels of lakes **Travis** and **Buchanan**. For the last few months, they have shown slow, steady declines.

My deer hound, "Whoop", woke me up with a nervous nudge on my arm at 1:40 the last Tuesday of March. Then I saw a flash of lightening and heard a rumble of thunder. Storms terrify him, and he has to have someone hold his paw and rub his head.

Outside, the rain on the metal roof sounded like fishes and frogs were bouncing off it. As I kept reassuring Whoopie that everything was going to be OK, I thought for once the weather men had hit it: maybe the **Colorado River** watershed would catch enough rain water and runoff to raise the lake levels in Trav and Buc, the two Central Texas orphan lakes that are destined to rise and fall with fate so the constant-level lakes — **Inks, LBJ, Marble Falls, Austin, and Lady Bird** can remain the same level.

But the lakes got very little water. Our rain gage read "3 inches." Bergstorm IAB had a rain storm record of nearly six. The Austin American Statesman boasted about this being a drought-breaker of a thunderstorm. It mentioned several encouraging totals. They were all east of I-35. Seeing nothing in the paper about



PHOTO BY JOHN JEFFERSON

The TPWD Toyota ShareLunker Legacy Class season ended March 31. But the Lunker Legend Class will accept 13-pound entries through December 31. The Lunker Elite Class (10-12.99 lbs.) and the Lunker Class (8 lbs. or over, or 24 inches) is also open until year-end.

watershed totals, I called Bob Rose, weather guru for the Lower Colorado River Authority.

“The **Colorado River** above Austin received about two inches,” he dolefully stated. “That will raise the lakes about two inches,” he said. But, trying to be positive, I said that will make up for several recent weeks of decline. Rose commented that the high totals all fell south of Lake Austin.

Then, also trying to be positive, he added that at least it went into the Colorado River. Since the new dam — backing up water into what will be called **Arbuckle Reservoir**, east of Lane City near El Campo and the Wharton-Matagorda County line — will take some of the irrigation and domestic drain off the Highland Lakes. It will be completed and filled in six to eight months. For that, I guess we should be thankful. Once filled, it will catch some of the Central Texas rain that misses the Highland Lakes, and lessen the lowering of Trav and Buc through downstream irrigation.

Chris Freeman and I fished Sandy Creek in late March. Or tried to. A front had blown in, and white bass fishing went south. The water was murky; the wind was high. We prematurely ran out of creek about a mile upstream from the Jonestown boat ramp due to low water in Travis.

As Chris backed down the ramp, I could see he was nearing the end of the pavement. That brought back memories of a friend named Glenn who backed his boat trailer off the end of a ramp once at the coast. Not knowing how much of a drop-off existed at the end of the ramp, he activated his four-wheel drive and gave it the gas, tearing the axel off his trailer. He stripped to his skivvies and dove for parts while three old men sat on a bench and spit and whittled . . . and tried to out do each other make witty comments about my friend. Needless to say, it was a fishless fishing trip.

It won't be long before the Jonestown ramp and others on Travis and Buchanan begin closing due to low water. Set out below are the ramps and the lake levels at which they close. The Austin American Statesman shows the lake levels everyday on the page with the weather forecast. Check it and compare it with the table below before you drive to the lake. Fish while you can and let me know what you catch. 🎣



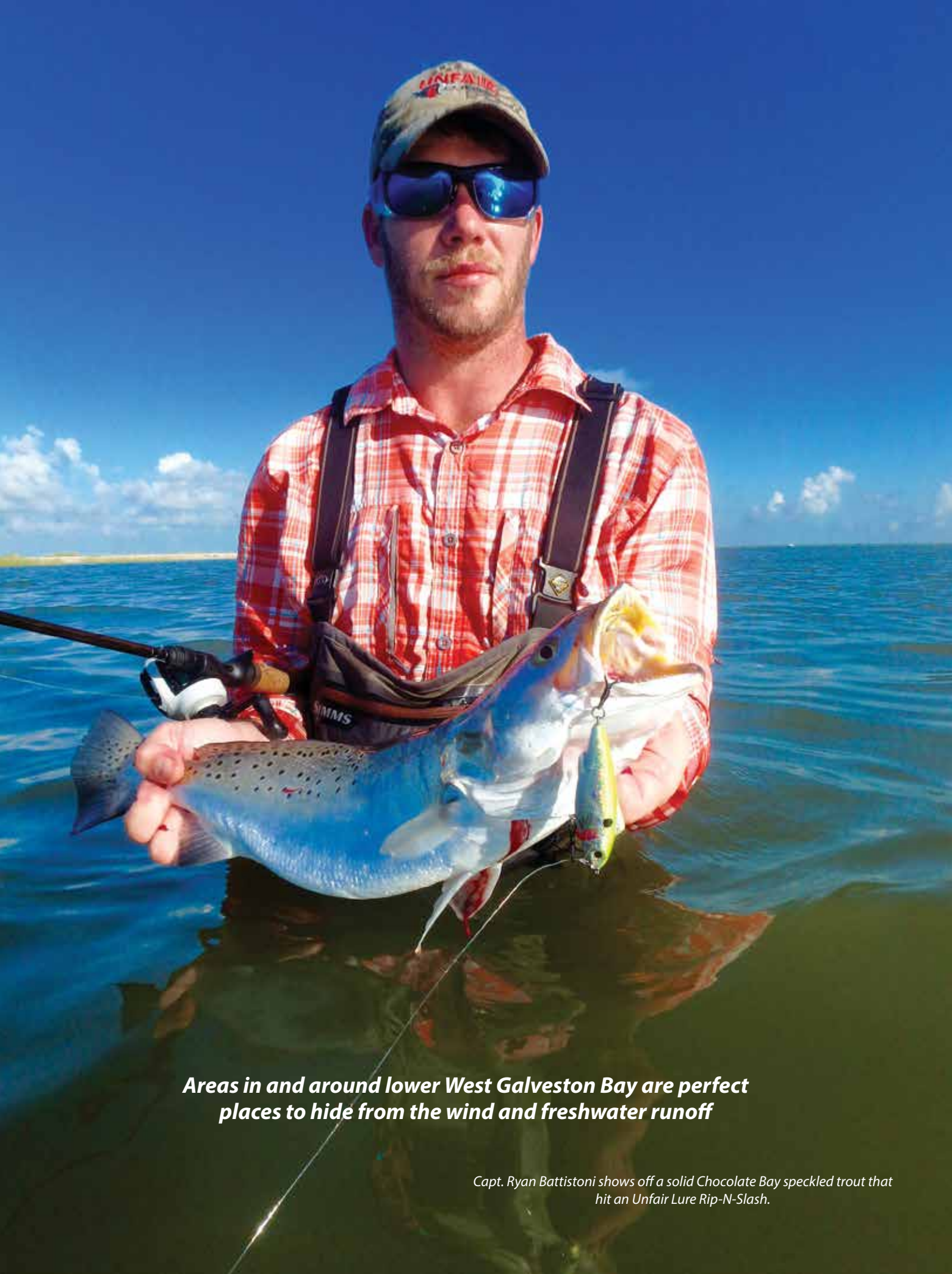
PHOTO BY JOHN JEFFERSON

This inviting fishing hole actually tells a disheartening story. Taken this year on March 30, it illustrates how much Lake Travis has fallen in recent weeks. There is a rock retaining wall in front of a large oak tree about mid-frame that extends off the right side of the image. Last fall, the lake came up to that rock workpounds and 10 ounces.

RAMP NAME	LOCATION	PHONE
Arkansas Bend	661	(512) 854-7275
Bob Wentz Wendy Point	653	(512) 854-7275
Camp Creek	667	(512) 473-3366
Cypress Creek	666	(512) 854-7275
Gloster Bend	662	(512) 473-3366
Jonestown	645	(512) 267-3243
Mansfield Dam	633	(512) 854-3375
Muleshoe Bend	660	(512) 473-3366
The Narrows	658	(512) 473-3366
Pace Bend- Collier Cove	653	(512) 264-1482
Pace Bend- Tatum Cove	653	(512) 264-1482
Pace Bend- Tournament Pt.	631	(512) 264-1482
Sandy Creek	648	(512) 854-7275
Buchanan Dam	1004	(512) 593-4746
Cedar Point	1007	(512) 473-3366
Llano County Park	1006	(512) 793-6181
Shaw Island	994	(512) 470-1138
White Bluff Park	993	(512) 715 4112

Electric Outboard Propulsion for Green Lakes

TORQUEEDO SOUTH WEST
 TEL: 855 448 5100
 www.torqeedosouthwest.com



Areas in and around lower West Galveston Bay are perfect places to hide from the wind and freshwater runoff

Capt. Ryan Battistoni shows off a solid Chocolate Bay speckled trout that hit an Unfair Lure Rip-N-Slash.

To Chocolate and BEYOND

Story and Photography by Nate Skinner

Here we go, again. The past few months have seemed somewhat like “deja vu” for anglers fishing the Galveston Bay Complex.

In recent years, spring rains have inundated Texas’ largest estuary with significant freshwater inflows. The most intense effects of which have been experienced in the upper reaches of the system that lie to the north and east of the Texas City Dike.

This spring presented anglers with more of the same. Certain areas within Trinity and East Galveston Bays are holding water with low salinity levels. This means the fish in these bays are going to be stacked up with their bellies on the bottom where the saltiest water is located. When conditions go fresh these spots are well known for concentrating dense numbers of fish under less-than-salty conditions.

Hoads of anglers will flock to the same stretches of water to target speckled trout and redfish using techniques that have been successful over the past several years during the annual transition from spring to summer. That’s right — this pattern is no longer a secret and the crowds of boats fishing in specific proven locations are proof.

Anyone with a similar mindset would harbor little enthusiasm toward this recurring scenario that has persisted for several years in a row.

Instead of battling crowded open waters when targeting spotted sea trout there is another option. Luckily lower West Galveston Bay provides a variety of diverse angling opportunities void of the effects of freshwater inflows.

Hot spots within Chocolate Bay and

around the San Luis Pass are located far enough away from major freshwater sources to give anglers a vast playing field from which to find success.

Plus this area affords protection from when strong winds blow while still allowing a variety of angling strategies to be employed in diverse locations.

From back bay marshes to shallow sand bars lined with guts, this entire area represents the perfect fishing grounds during a late spring to early summer transition on the upper coast.

The Chocolate Bay area does receive some freshwater runoff from Chocolate Bayou, New Bayou, and Hall’s Bayou.

However, when compared to the likes of the Trinity and San Jacinto Rivers which pour into the upper portions of Galveston and Trinity Bays, these secondary creeks are much more minor source of freshwater inflows.

When locally heavy rain events flood Chocolate Bayou, New Bayou, and Hall’s Bayou, the fish within Chocolate Bay simply push towards the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) and out into lower end of West Galveston Bay towards San Luis Pass. With the pass constantly providing this section of West Bay with salty Gulf water, the salinity rebounds much more

quickly than it does in other areas of the Galveston Bay Complex.

Veteran Galveston Bay fishing guide, Captain Greg Verm of Fishing Galveston TX Charters, confirms that Chocolate Bay and the waters within lower West Bay are some of his favorite areas to target trout, redfish, and flounder during the month of May.

“Stretches of water from Chocolate on down to the San Luis Pass are teeming with bait this time of year,” he explained. “In the marshes and bayous anglers will find swarms of shrimp and plenty of finger mullet.

“On the flats around the pass there



The author caught this flatfish while fishing near Amerada Cut in Chocolate Bay.

will be acres of glass minnows, shad, and mullet."

Verm also states that there's a good variety of structure to fish over and around in these areas.

"The lower portion of West Bay from Chocolate to the San Luis Pass contains a little bit of everything," he stated. "From protected bayous, back lakes, marsh drains, and oyster reefs, to shallow flats with sand bars surrounded by guts that hold clean salty water from incoming Gulf tides, this area has it all."

When winds are up, Verm prefers to hide in the bayous and marshes. Here most of his customers find fast action while fishing with live shrimp under a popping cork.

"The flats and points along Chocolate Bayou, New Bayou, and Hall's Bayou can all be extremely good this time of year," he confessed. "One thing that I have noticed recently is the flats and sandbars of these bayous are beginning to grow grass in their shallowest areas. I haven't seen underwater grasses growing in these places in over a decade, but in the past year or so they seem to have returned. These grasses act like a filter and tend to keep the water clean along the flats of the bayous. Any flats or bars that contain shallow

grasses are going to be prime spots for finding fish."

Inside Chocolate Bay proper, anglers can plan to find redfish along just about any stretch of shoreline chasing shrimp along the marsh grass. Banks around small marsh drains typically concentrate the most fish during an outgoing tide.

Drains within Chocolate are also premier locations to target flounder. Like redfish, flatfish tend to feed best at the mouths of marsh drains during a falling tide.

However, moving water is better than stagnant water and a decent bite can be

encountered during an incoming tide as well. Areas around Nymph Point, Amerada Cut and the Narrows connecting Hall's Lake to Chocolate Bay are all excellent starting points.

Oyster reefs within Chocolate Bay are prime hotspots to pursue speckled trout. Almost the entire length of the channel running from the Chocolate Bayou bridge at FM 2004 to the middle of Chocolate Bay is lined with spoils composed of live oysters.

Last spring I drifted these spoils with Captain Ryan Battistoni of Battistoni's Guide Service. The action for keeper sized specks was nonstop.

The southeast portion of Chocolate Bay is also chocked full of small oyster reefs and scattered shell. Often times these stretches of open water are covered with diving seagulls hovering

over balls of shrimp being pushed to the surface by schooling trout and reds.

Alligator Reef and Alligator Point lie on the southern rim of Chocolate Bay and are two more locations anglers should consider.

They contain plenty of heavy shell and are outstanding areas to wade fish. The best action in these spots typically takes place along their southern edges towards the ICW.

To the southwest, on the other side of the ICW from Chocolate Bay lies plenty of open water. Anglers can expect to find outstanding action when drift fishing. Mid-mornings in May will see a lot of bird activity after the sun rises in this area, while slicks and nervous baitfish will also reveal where schools of gamefish are feeding.

The southwestern most corner of lower West Galveston Bay is composed of flats, guts, and sand bars that make up the San Luis Pass "delta." The pass is the main reason this region of the Galveston Bay Complex is thriving after significant springtime precipitation.

Verm refers to the San Luis Pass as a "trophy trout Mecca."



This part of the bay boasts plenty of areas to wade fish for speckled trout, redfish and flounder.



Big redfish cruise the flats and shorelines near San Luis Pass.

"In my opinion, it is the best place to consistently find monster trout in the entire Galveston Bay estuary," he stated.

Captain Ryan Battistoni agrees with that statement.

"Anytime I'm fishing the pass, I feel like the fish of a lifetime is merely one cast away," he boldly confessed. "San Luis Pass is a special place."

Perhaps what makes the pass unique is it is constantly changing, month after month and year after year due to the continuous strong flow of water running in and out of the area to and from the Gulf.

"The pass is just plain fun to fish," explained Battistoni. "Every year you sort of have to relearn it a little bit, which always makes for a rewarding adventure. Plus it always seems to develop a new feature that holds fish. My list of hotspots to target in this area continues to grow."

Battistoni spends his time during the late spring and early summer focusing on a variety of locations around San Luis Pass.

He prefers to wade fish the area by



The author launches his boat at the Chocolate Bayou Bridge boat ramp off of FM 2004.

targeting flats along the west bank near Mud Cut, as well as around Bird Island Flats plus the sand bars on the southern edge of the pass.

I spent a few mornings fishing San Luis Pass with Battistoni last May and June.

The topwater action was absolutely phenomenal and according to him, that is typically the norm.

Wadefishermen should exercise caution when fishing the pass as strong currents flow through the area regularly. The shallow flats and sand bars are adjacent to some deeper guts. Wearing a PFD is always recommended and anglers should also be sure to stay in shallow enough water to keep their footing, especially during periods of swift tides.

Navigating San Luis Pass by boat is also tricky and requires some patience for those

exploring the area for the first time. Referring to a chart is a good starting point. For a detailed look at Chocolate Bay, lower West Galveston Bay, and San Luis Pass, anglers should refer to Hook-N-Line chart F127.

Comparing notes with recent satellite images on Google Earth is also helpful. Keeping a logbook with detailed notes will begin to build a library of information on this area.

Two convenient boat ramps to access these waters are located off of FM 2004 in Brazoria County.

One is located under the FM 2004 Chocolate Bayou Bridge and puts boaters directly into Chocolate Bayou and Chocolate Bay. The other is on Hall's Bayou and can be reached by heading south on Landrum Road from FM 2004.

A reliable depth finder and GPS will enable boaters to determine a safe path to navigate these fishy areas as long as they take their time. Idle around and gain some knowledge of the area before running at higher speeds on plane. This will prevent dangerous situations from occurring, not to mention to help avoid the chance of major damage to one's vessel.

A late spring to summer transition is taking place right now on the upper coast. Phenomenal action in portions of lower West Galveston Bay awaits anglers willing to try something new to get away from freshwater runoff.

It's time to get out and explore Chocolate and beyond. **T★J**



Starting with a Hook-N-Line Chart F127 is a good place to begin building a plan to fish the lower portion of West Galveston Bay, Chocolate Bay and around San Luis Pass.

Crankbait Fishin'

Crankbaits have come a long way since the lures were first offered to anglers. The Creek Chub Bait Company introduced the first crankbait way back in 1915. They called it the "Wiggler," it was made of wood and had two sets of treble hooks. A metal diving lip made the bait unique at the time.

Also unique were the two line ties on the bait. One at the lip, much like a modern bait, and one on the back of the lure. By changing the location of the line on the lure, different depths and actions were available to the angler.

Things went well for Creek Chub and they introduced new models, including what may be the most famous crankbait ever. The "Fin Tail Shiner Lure" was first introduced in 1924. This glass eyed, wooden lure was what George Perry used in 1932 to catch the current World Record bass of 22 pounds and 4 ounces.

In the intervening years, every aspect of the crankbait has been modernized, manipulated, or customized. Lure materials, paint schemes, and hooks, have all seen advancements due to technology. We know that sometimes anglers complicate things by over-thinking, and with all of the innovations, a crankbait is still just a lure designed to run below the surface in order to catch fish.

So what does the angler need to know

in order to select the proper bait at the right time? There are several factors that go into selecting a crankbait, but the first should be depth. Crankbaits are designed to dive to a determined depth. There are baits that run from mere inches below the surface, to over 25 feet deep.

The main factor in achieving a certain depth is the size and shape of the lip on the front of the bait. Other factors such as lure shape, lure material, and so forth, will have a small bearing, but the lip is the thing. You're first consideration must be how deep you want the bait to get in the water column.

Let's start at the beginning, or shallow water if you will, and work our way deeper.

The first baits to look at are the "wake" baits. These are designed to run super-shallow, barely below the surface. With a tiny lip on the nose, they will make a "wake," or bulge, on the surface of the water as they are retrieved. These are rather specialty baits that require a clean bank, free of grasses and other obstacles that might get them hung. They'll work anytime bass are shallow, but are especially effective in the spring, fall, and at night.

Next in the lineup is the shallow-runner. I define a shallow bait as one that runs from one to 12 feet deep. These are usually, but not always, smaller baits. This

category includes the lipless crankbait, which can be manipulated by the retrieve to work anywhere in the above range. However, most shallow-runners will have a lip of some sort.

Shallow baits are perfect for pre-spawn and spawning bass. Run them just outside bedding areas, and make sure they dig into the bottom. This creates a dirt or silt cloud that will get the fish's attention.

Another favorite location for these baits is rocky shorelines. Texoma, Belton, Whitney, and similar impounds, set up perfectly for running these baits along the shore and crashing them into the rocks. They'll take a beating for sure, but some of that beating will be from the bass.

The gear for these two categories is simple. A medium or medium-heavy rod with a 6.4-1 gear ratio reel, spooled with 15 pound mono or fluorocarbon line. I might go as light as 10 pound test if there is little or no cover present.

That brings us to the deep diving baits. Lately there has been a boom in the use of these ultra-deep baits. Baits that run 20 feet and more have been popularized by the tournament pros, and television shows.

They are usually gargantuan in size, although there are some big lips on smaller profile baits out there. These are designed to mine the depths of the lake and fish offshore structure like pond dams, humps, and channel edges. They also become more effective when retrieved through cover like standing timber. It takes a little work to use these baits, and some stout gear.

I recently had a pro angler change my opinion of what is best in the way of reels for this technique. Like many anglers, I thought that a slower gear ratio was better for keeping the bait down longer. It was pointed out to me however that the bait is made to run deep, and the faster ratio reel will get it down sooner, which gets it into the strike zone sooner.

I now use a 7.3-1 ratio reel on a medium-heavy or heavy rod that is 7'6" in length. I also use a 20 pound fluorocarbon line. Although sacrificing some depth, I figure any fish hitting these monster baits



A shallow diving crankbait on the left with a small lip and a wake bait on the right designed to fish just under the surface.



Medium divers are perfect for those in-between depths.

will be a good one and I'm not taking any chances.

There are several things to know about crankbaits that will help make them more effective. First, try different retrieves. While the name crankbait comes from the fact that you can cast them out and just crank 'em back in, you'll find that changing up your retrieve will catch more fish. Try a stop-and-go, with pauses of varying lengths between the retrieving. You can also add action by occasionally giving your line a "pop," or quick snap, as you retrieve the bait. This will make the bait jump, which gives the bass a sense of urgency, resulting in a strike.

Another factor is contact. Crankbaits work much better when you make contact with whatever cover you are fishing. Be it a boat dock, brush pile, timber or rocks, a bait bouncing off the cover triggers more strikes than a bait that runs clear to one side or the other. Once you've spent some time fishing crankbaits, you'll learn how to use the bait in heavy cover.

Timber for example, requires a little finesse to the retrieve. Reel the bait into the timber and when you feel it make contact immediately stop reeling. This allows the bait to rise a bit, moving away from the cover. Resuming a slow retrieve will usually bring the bait right past the obstruction.

This leads us right into line size. All else being equal, you'll get more depth and action from a bait fished on smaller line. Ten pound test will let a bait get deeper,

and impart more action, than 15 pound test. Having said that, if you're making contact with cover as you should, some consideration should be given to the real possibility that you could get hung on that cover.

Many anglers choose braid in order to get more strength and smaller line diameter, and therefore more action and depth. I'm not a fan of braid for crankbaits. I prefer to use one of the many lure retrievers on the market to free hung baits.

Hooks play a big role in the actual catching of the fish and many anglers like to change the hooks on a crankbait.

Some will go to a larger size when adding new hooks. This is fine as long as you understand that the bait was designed to work with the hooks that come on the bait. Get too big, or heavy, and the new hooks can take away some of the action that makes the bait effective.

Since you should be making contact with cover you'll also want to be checking both your line and the hook sharpness frequently. Frayed line and dull hooks are both a recipe for lost fish.

As for colors, I have a few suggestions. To get started, pick natural shad colors. Pick a couple of baits that have chartreuse accents, and for darker days go with a little darker colors, maybe some shades of red. Crawfish patterns work well for me too.

And finally, I highly suggest you consider painting your own lures. If you really like fishing crankbaits, the time spent creating your color schemes and personalized patterns will bring a satisfaction that a factory finishes can't match!

Just a side note: In researching this article I checked on record bass on the world-wide web. The story of the latest world record bass caught my attention. In July of 2009, Japan's Lake Biwa gave up a 22-pound, 4.97 ounce largemouth to angler Manabu Kurita. The fish was caught on a live bluegill. The IGFA (ruling authority on world record fish) rules require a record catch of less than 25 pounds to be surpassed by at least two ounces. So Kurita's fish is ranked as a tie with George Perry's. 🌟



Deep diving crank baits can be large or small, but they all have big lips to dig in and dive deep.

HOGS

Are Here To Stay



Though environmentally detrimental, wild swine satisfy the demand for hunting and provide an economic asset, while controlling their numbers.

Story and Photography by Bob Zaiglin

As my hunter and I worked our way to the edge of a 20-acre oats patch, I was hoping to see a 170 inch caliber buck I had observed feeding on the succulent grain only a week earlier. It was a comfortably cool mid-December afternoon, and we were on a huge spread located in the heart of the Golden Triangle — Dimmit County. Stealthily approaching the grain field, we used the maze of blackbrush and guajillo to break our outline from its

visitors. We were focused on deer and deer only, hoping to catch a glimpse, if not harvest, the tall 10-point I was confident frequented the field.

Only yards from the field we were forced to crawl on our hands and knees over a mine field of sticker burrs until we arrived at the edge. Upon our arrival, several bucks scoring in the mid 150's, along with several doe, were engulfing the verdant grain, but the buck we were after was nowhere to be seen. We then got

comfortable as I remained confident the big 10 would show up before dark.

As additional deer entered the field, the anticipation of the larger buck's arrival escalated, but the appearance of a hog on the extreme northwest portion of the field stole the show. It was the largest bodied hog I had ever seen on the ranch, and complemented by a large set of ivory-white cutters, it was a sight to behold.

Suddenly my attention was solely on this dirty tan-colored hog. I had to



The hog's ancestry is reflected in both color and conformation.

remind myself that the buck we were after would appear at any moment, but that failed to keep my eyes off the massive canine-clad pig. Suddenly I decided that I had to hunt this hog, and as it casually reentered the brush, I knew that my best chance of getting the animal was then and now.

After making a few arrangements for my hunter's evening hunt, I grabbed my rifle and entered an elevated blind in the center of the patch. With little over an hour of shooting light remaining, I was confident the bruin would return, but as the sun dipped below the horizon, I

became a little pessimistic. As the evening light waned, the hog reappeared like an apparition at the brush line and I realized a sudden surge in adrenalin as I carefully and quietly placed my 7mm on the window sill of the blind in preparation for a shot. With the crosshairs of my 7mm on the bear-sized hog's shoulder, I squeezed the trigger, shattering the quiescent evening and the animal plummeted to the grain-littered soil.

With the excitement paralleling that of taking an outstanding buck, I rushed out across the plowed field to a trophy of a lifetime. It wasn't a deer, but a hog, albeit a very special one, as it took four individuals to load him into the bed of my truck. Hogs may be considered pests to some people, but when the right one shows up, it can represent an adrenalin-enriching outdoor experience.

This was not the first time a hog interrupted a hunt I was on. I have seen many in the past and easily ignored them, but this time was different and I collected a remarkable brush country survivor.

The first hogs arrived on the Texas scene 300 years ago as escapees from Spanish explorers who retained them for gustatory purposes. Today an estimated one million hogs occur in Texas, and two million would be a more accurate estimate. More importantly, they are expanding their range at a rapid pace, and nowhere is this more evident than the thorn scrub of South Texas.

Swine were initially introduced in



Feral hogs are not only abundant, they occur throughout much of Texas, thus available to sportsmen, representing an excellent opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors.



Although aerial gunning of hogs continues to increase in popularity, trapping the animals remains most effective.

the U.S. along the Florida Gulf Coast in 1539 by explorer Fernando Desoto. As he explored some 3,000 miles of southern U.S., some stock escaped and flourished in the nutritionally rich environment.

The sporting value of hogs over the last century has led to the introduction of European wild boars into the feral herds existing on the coastal islands

of Georgia and North Carolina (A.P. Cannon, 1957), and the Tennessee Game and Fish Department actually released European wild boar in an attempt to establish hunting populations.

Although problematic, hogs represent a highly desirable recreational entity, and nowhere is this more noticeable than in Texas. The release of hogs for hunting

purposes across Texas is another reason hogs now exist throughout much of the state.

Another contributing factor to the increase in regions formerly void of swine is the distribution of feed such as corn in the form of baiting by hunters throughout the hunting season. Tons of corn are distributed throughout Texas during the hunting season. Much of it is slung on ranch roads to increase deer sightings, but the grain is equally attractive to hogs, providing the invasive species a quality supplement.

The feral swine's highly varied ancestry is reflected in both color and conformation. Some exhibit a semblance of their ancestral razorback characteristics, but most have a scrub domestic hog appearance. They are extremely alert, making them challenging to hunt with long, pearl-white canine teeth of males, enhancing their trophy value.

Considered non-game, no season or limit restrictions apply to hogs, thus they can be hunted throughout the year, providing hunters additional time outdoors. More importantly, they are affordable to hunt.

Hogs, however, are destructive. Searching for grub worms, tree roots, tubers, etc., they perforate the soil with their tough, virtually callous-skinned noses, creating deep holes detrimental to vehicles, crippling to horses and virtually devastating to crop land.

The feral hog is also considered one of the most destructive creatures in the timber industry. Researcher Wahlenberg back in 1946 noted that hog damage on long-leaf pine seedlings was much greater than that caused by any other animal. They have been documented to destroy 8,320 two-year-old long-leaf pine seedlings per acre at rates estimated at 200 to 400 trees per day. This rate was doubled, even tripled, over short periods when stands were readily accessible and rooting easy. According to Wahlenberg, a single hog could obliterate an acre of planted pines in a single day.

Feral hogs are particularly problematic for deer managers when it comes to supplemental feeding programs. Hogs have no competition when it comes to food. Animals like deer rapidly relinquish their ground in a subordinate fashion and allowing these rogues first choice of a feed source. As a result, managers are forced

WE HAVE THE
cleanest corn
IN SOUTH TEXAS.

COTTONSEED * MILO * DEER CORN * PEAS * PROTEIN
CUSTOM BLENDS * 50 POUND BAGS & BULK DELIVERY AVAILABLE

Find what you need for all your hunting purposes at Speer Ag. Your #1 direct supplier of quality assured wildlife feed.

Call us at 830-591-3241 or 830-591-8036 or visit us online today and let us help you save!

DEALER OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

BRUTON FEEDER TRAILER SALES
OR RENTAL WITH CORN PURCHASE

UVALDE, TEXAS • WWW.SPEERAG.COM

to construct expensive fences around feed stations in order to inhibit them from taking over the site.

I have witnessed hogs make mad dashes at the sounds of a timed release corn feeder in order to engulf most if not all of the grain.

It is not a happy individual who spends a substantial amount of time and money planting crops only to see hog rooting down each planted row—a sight I have witnessed too often.

Although hogs are considered herbivores, they will eat meat. I can recall one situation in particular while hunting in East Texas when I shot a doe and remained in the blind in hopes of shooting another when I observed a large boar walk up to my harvest and rip it open with its razor sharp canines and begin consuming the animal before I intervened. Hogs will also kill newborn fawns and root up quail and turkey nests consuming the eggs.

Another concern is the reservoir of diseases hogs can potentially transmit to man, livestock, and wildlife.

Hog populations must be controlled, and hunters are required to accomplish the task. The ultimate control mechanism is harvest by either hunting or trapping, which could provide some compensation to landowners.

By taking advantage of a hog's voracious appetite, hogs are easily lured into live traps. The conventional hog trap is rectangular to circular in shape, at least four feet wide, and twice as long and constructed from wood or metal. The entrance to the traps is hinged so hogs can root or push it open, but cannot reopen it once inside, facilitating multiple captures. Once trapped, these animals can be sold to certified meat processors.

If the feral hog has a predator, it is the domestic dog. Hunting hogs with dogs is possibly the most effective means of hog control. Even if the population is not substantially reduced, they will leave an area if disturbed too often by the canines.

Feral hogs are destructive, but exude several positive attributes. A marinated ham roasted over mesquite coals for six hours is a treat for even the most discretionary palate. Another attractive attribute is the fact that hogs can be employed to alleviate harvest pressure on the buck segment of a deer herd.

They are not only abundant, hogs represent an economic way of enjoying

the outdoors throughout the year with no limit to the number that can be legally harvested. Make no mistake about it—hogs are here to stay, and as detrimental

as they are to the environment, satisfying the demand hunters have for the species could make them an economic asset while controlling them at the same time. 🐖🌟



With a keen sense of smell, feral swine represent an excellent challenge to sportsmen with a minimal outlay of cash.





Lake Roundup

The spring season is a time of transition along the Upper Texas and Louisiana Coasts. And, to that end May is the ultimate transition month.

Spring's final full month sees fish complete their transition into summer

fishing patterns. Temperatures have risen enough to stir fish from their lethargic winter ways. Plus, many species which spent the winter months elsewhere have returned. As a result, May is a slightly cooler version of June or July when it comes to fishing patterns.

Inshore, May really combines the best of both worlds. The warm, but not hot, temperatures make for a comfortable day on the water. For the same reasons fishermen are more comfortable on the water this month, the fish are also more comfortable and aggressive on the shallow flats or in the back lakes. Fish will be feeding in relatively shallow water throughout the majority of the day.

Since they will be in shallower water and feeding more aggressively, fish will be susceptible to a variety of lures, baits and techniques. This makes May one of the few times of the year when fishermen can target fish on the flats throughout the entire day.

May is also the first month when the beachfront and offshore action becomes a realistic possibility. Shark, kingfish, and snapper are just a few of the big water species that Texas and Louisiana anglers will target starting in May. **T★J**



PHOTO COURTESY TOMMY COUNTZ

Mary Covington shows off a big Matagorda speckled trout she caught while wadefishing with Capt. Tommy Countz.



UPPER COAST

PT-7 freshwater and saltwater

Made in USA

New

Walk where no other topwater has walked before!

Compact, durable and rattles, the PT-7's aerodynamic body casts like a bullet, rattles like crazy and skips into tight places where others can't. 3 inches in length and 5/8 oz., this soft plastic minesweeper detonates explosive strikes like no other topwater on the market today. Seatrout, snook, and redfish to lunker largemouth bass find its "walk-the-dog" action simply irresistible. Pre-rigged with a single premium 7/0 EWG hook, it keeps the big fish on where standard trebles fail. Available in 12 realistic colors.

www.doalures.com

D.O.A.TM
"The Unfair Advantage"
 FISHING LURES

Matagordaguide Capt. Tommy Countz says he can't wait for May to arrive.

"May just might be my favorite month to fish Matagorda," said Countz. "Our bays are alive with activity plus the water and air temperatures are usually perfect. Most mornings you can find me wading a shell lined shore in West Matagorda Bay slowly bouncing a topwater across the water's surface attempting to entice a speckled trout or redfish to explode on it. If that doesn't get you excited then you need to get rid of all of your fishing gear and take up curling.

"If my topwater bite is slow, and it usually isn't, then I like to switch to soft plastics rigged on a light lead head. My go-to bait is a MirrO lure Lil' John, preferably in glo or chicken-on-a-chain. This bait rigged with a 1/16th ounce head is ideal for wading shallow water grass beds. As you wade along be sure to scan the water around you reading it for slicks and bait activity. Reading the water is one of the most important keys to a successful fishing trip.

"If my day has me spending time fishing from the boat, I'll most likely be in East Matagorda Bay drifting some big mud flats on the eastern end. Once again I key on bait and slicks and mainly tossing plastics rigged on heavier lead heads. A quarter ounce allows you to cast farther from the boat and quickly get your bait down closer to the bottom. If artificials aren't your preference then use live shrimp under a popping cork. When using bait, I like to use a three-foot long leader to get the shrimp farther down in the water column.

"May is also the month that tripletail fishing shifts into high gear. The best way to catch one is to be standing in my boat with your check in my pocket.

"Actually, I almost forgot about fishing the surf. We have 25 miles of beachfront accessible by automobile to the north of our jetties and 21 miles accessible only by boat. Every mile of it can be outstanding trout fishing when the conditions are right.

"What ever your preferred fishing method, you can't go wrong planning a May trip in the Matagorda Bay Complex."

Freeport guide Capt. Mike Segall of Reel Threel Charters says May will see warmer water and increased action.

"We all always wait for May for our fishing to really kick off," said Segall. "As the water warms up, the fish will be getting more active.

"We will be doing things a little differently this month, especially when fishing for speckled trout. In May, we'll catch trout along the beachfront on lures and shrimp. Live croaker will also work well in between the guts and the sand bars. Really, all our inshore action starts to heat up in May, not just speckled trout, but also redfish, sheephead and sand trout.

"In addition to all those species, I will also be doing a lot of near-shore trips within one to three miles of the beachfront for bull reds and a variety of sharks, like blacktip sharks, bonnethead sharks and bull sharks. In May, they start to come in as the water warms along the beachfront. We will also be chasing behind shrimp boats for the larger black tip sharks.

"In the offshore waters, we'll have good action for kingfish, Spanish mackerel and cobia. Once they start to show up, we'll be targeting a lot of cobia around the buoys and oil platforms. State water areas will also be good for kingfish, Spanish mackerel, red snapper, mangrove snapper and sharks. We'll be using sardines either drifting or trolling, as well as deep divers for the kingfish."

Galveston guide Capt. Greg Verm of



PHOTO COURTESY REEL THREEL CHARTERS

The first kingfish of the season show up in May. These happy anglers experienced this offshore optios out of Freeport with Capt. Mike Segall last year.

THE FISHING BOAT CLUB

JOIN THE CLUB

get a fleet

We help anglers create epic moments with 24/7 premium watercraft.

Limited Memberships Available

CURRENT FLEET	FUTURE FLEET
	
21' Center Console 150HP	12' Fishing Kayak
	
23' Center Console 225HP	19' Aluminum Center Console
	
25' Center Console 300HP	24' Fishing Pontoon

CONTACT US: 832-846-FISH || membership@fishingboatclub.com || fishingboatclub.com

Fishing Galveston TX Guide Service says May's stable weather will provide anglers plenty of good fishing opportunities.

"During the month of May, the weather will become more stable," said Verm. "In particular, we'll have more light wind days in May than we have been having.

"This month, speckled trout along the jetties will be hot. Also, slot-size redfish

will be appearing as well. Live shrimp freelined and live croakers will begin yielding nice specks as well.

"Also, during May, the back lakes will be loaded with reds and flounder along with some specks. Live shrimp under popping corks will be the ticket there. Flounder gigging on oyster reefs will be getting good in May as well."

On the Texas/Louisiana border, Sabine Lake guide Capt. Randy Foreman says the fishing should be heating up right along with the water during May.

"Our shrimp migration starts in May, which is a big deal," said Foreman. "That totally changes how we fish. For one, it means the birds will start working. Most of this activity will take place from the south end to mid-lake. And, the fishing will be best on a falling tide.

"Although the bird action will be really good in May, I won't be fishing under birds all the time. I'll still be fishing over mussel beds and shell flats. If we have moving water, I'll also be fishing

those eddies along the shoreline.

"Once the shrimp migration starts, I mostly throw glow/chartreuse Down South Southern Shad. This is almost all I use on sunny days when the fish are feeding on shrimp. But, if it's cloudy, I'll switch to a dark color.

"Most of the time, we are fishing for trout during May. But, we will also be catching some reds and flounder. In fact, a lot of times there will be redfish under the trout under the birds. But, if you want to catch redfish under the birds, you have to get beneath the trout to catch them. For those fish, I use a 1/2 or 3/4-ounce spoon with a yellow bucktail. I'll let it sink down past the trout. Once that spoon is on the bottom, I just 'slow-roll' it – reel it real slow, so it stays near the bottom.

"Flounder fishing should be good in May. The last couple weeks of April and first couple of weeks of May are always good for flounder on Sabine. When I'm fishing for flounder, I'll concentrate on the points and humps along the Sabine Channel or the points and bayous along the Louisiana Shoreline. Again, I'll focus on the eddies when I can find them. The best fishing will be on an incoming tide. I'll use the same baits I use for trout, but I almost always tip my lures when fishing for flounder." **T★J**



PHOTO BY NATE SKINNER

In the back lakes and marshes redfish and flounder will be caught. Speckled trout will even enter into the mix as the month of May progresses.



Lake Calcasieu guide Capt Nick Poe of Big Lake Guide Service says May is one of the year's most anticipated months for Louisiana saltwater fishermen.

"We look forward to May every year," said Poe. "Some of our heaviest boxes of fish will come at this time of year. Traditionally, trout will be found throughout the estuary by May. All your summer fishing holes, as well as fall fishing holes, will produce some fish.

“However, early May can be somewhat challenging due to the fish making their transition to summer patterns. This is typically when we start fishing birds and busting fish. Oyster reefs on the north end of Calcasieu are also very productive at this time, but predominantly southerly winds make fishing the north end of the lake difficult. On light south or north winds getting on oyster reefs around Turner’s Bay can produce some epic topwater and soft plastic action.

“Toward the end of the month, trout will start to make an appearance on the ship channel, jetties, beach, and close rigs. This is my absolute favorite way to fish trout. Often times the action is fast and the fish are big. We beg for light north winds and incoming tides to make the surf an option. Seven pound trout on topwater are pretty common if green water and calm seas are present in the surf.

“They’re also present at the jetties when water clarity is good and mullet are present. The close rigs offer customers the opportunity to load the box with solid two pounders as fast as they can get their bait to the fish. Just talking about it fires me up and can’t wait for it to get here!”

May sees anglers fishing out of Venice facing a variety of inshore and offshore options. On the inshore side, the water



PHOTO BY NATE SKINNER

Big Lake Guide Service Capt. Nick Poe shows off a solid speckled trout caught from the short rigs. In May he says there are plenty of options inside of Lake Calcasieu, around the jetties as well as the nearshore rigs.

temperatures will have risen sufficiently enough to see speckled trout and redfish action kick into high gear. Trout will be found in areas like the Burias Canal, Redfish Bay and Blind Bay.

Trout will also be found around the shallow water rigs beginning in May. The rigs in 8 to 15 feet of water are the best bet for trout. Once the trout show at the rigs, they usually remain there through summer. Often times in May anglers will find redfish mixed in with the trout. However, good concentrations of redfish will also be found in the marshes and back

lakes, as well as in areas like Yankee Pond and the Wagon Wheel.


Offshore, there are a couple outstanding options as well. The prime option is chasing tuna around the deep water floating oil platforms. Tuna up to 50 pounds will be common catches around the “floaters” during May.

Once the water temperature warms above 80 degrees, blue marlin will begin showing up as well. And, for the growing number of dedicated swordfishermen in Louisiana, May has proven to be one of the year’s better months. **★J**




Red Wing Boat Co., Inc.

“Celebrating Over 63 Years in Boating”




BLACKJACK BOATS

224 & 256 NOW AVAILABLE. Carolina flare bow shape. Self-bailing deck, hand-laid hull & cap. Locking & storage, premium upholstery. 100% composite construction. No wood to rot!




Gulf Coast

180, 200, 220, Veriside 23' & Highside 200 draw only 9 1/2" of water. 10-year transferable hull warranty.




Parker

29 Years of custom boat building with common sense. Center Consoles from 18' to 22' Lake & 21' to 24' Bay Boats. Packages Available.



Ranger

Still building legends, one at a time. 22' - 25' models available. We also carry saltwater bass boats by Ranger.




Frontier BOATS

21'5" Mod V Hull 8'3" beam. Design Carolina flare bow shape. self-bailing deck, hand laid hull & cap. Locking rod storage, premium upholstery




EVINRUDE
E-TEC



YAMAHA



KEELGUARD
DON'T YOUR BOAT FOR BUBBLES



POWER-POLE
SHOCKLESS SWAYSTOP ANCHORS

Factory Authorized

★ Sales ★ Service ★ Parts ★ Repairs

HOUSTON'S LARGEST REPOWER CENTER!

713-921-0656

836 South 75th Street • Houston, Texas 77023

Mon-Fri 8 am - 5 pm • Sat 8 am - 12 pm

www.redwingboatco.com • fredrwb@sbcglobal.net



Texas Hogs vs. Slow Glow, et al.

New swine hunting equipment and techniques are put to the test.

Story and Photography by Tom Claycomb III

It's funny how chance encounters can result in friendships plus outdoor opportunities. I first met Bill Olson, editor of Texas Outdoor Journal years ago at the Dallas Safari Club's annual Convention and Expo. One thing led to another and we've become fast friends. So, when he called and asked if I wanted to go on a Texas hog hunt with him the answer of course was, Yes.

The plan was to fly into Austin and he'd pick me up after he finished a meeting that Saturday morning down on North Padre Island. I have a niece & nephew in the area so that worked great as we met for coffee and had a good time.

When Bill arrived we filled the air canister Charging System for the Benjamin Pioneer Airbow at Tom's Dive Shop in north Austin and then took off

for the Reveille Ranch near Burnet, Texas. There we met up with Murray Choate, the owner of Slow Glow L.E.D. Hunting Lights and his son Clint. They are some gung-ho hog hunters.

The plan was to grab a bite and then head to the ranch to get situated. Those plans were soon thrown out the window as Clint drew up plans for a night hog hunt as soon as we arrive. Forget the group hugs



and getting comfortable that first evening.

Slow Glow has an interesting history. Murray is an inventor and to enhance his hog hunting addiction he invented a motion activated L.E.D. system. Here's how it works.

The light is pointed toward a feeding area. When hogs come in it starts slowly illuminating over a two minute period. If it fired up right away the hogs would spook so it lights up slowly so they don't even notice. The theory is if you have the wind in your favor and kept the light between you and the hogs you could walk right up on them.

They were sure excited to show it to us. Now it was our time to go test it out.

At the first stalk Clint wanted to shoot his compound bow. I was planning on making a stalk on some hogs with the Benjamin Pioneer Airbow and Mossberg Patriot Revere rifle in 30-06 I had brought along. Bill had his .44 Magnum Dan Wesson pistol with him. If we were able to pull all of that off it would make this a productive, albeit busy hunt.

If you have ever hog hunted then you know how spooky they can be. We drove down a pasture road in the dark, soon parked and unloaded to begin our stalk. As we came over a rise you could see the eerie green glow of the Slow Glow at full power. Great — that meant we should

have hogs on the spot, or it could just be coons, deer or cows.

As we crept ever closer we could hear hogs grunting, squealing and rooting around. Clint knocked an arrow while Murray videoed the action. I didn't have very high hopes of getting close enough for a shot since there were four of us. We lined up behind each other and stalked in behind the light.

Oh my gosh, this was going to work! There was a good group of hogs fading in and out of the light and at least one good size boar. When a little pig would get too close he'd root under them and send it flying. They'd squeal and hustle off only to be back in a few seconds sneaking in for another bite of corn.

The boar was in back of a sow and the shot was blocked. We waited a bit and then a shooting lane cleared. Clint drew back then another hog moved in the line of fire. After what seemed like an eternity the lane opened and Clint ripped one loose. We could see the illuminatednock zip in and strike home.

At the sound of the bow, hogs squealed and shot off every which way. We walked the short "11 paces" and picked up the arrow.

Something was wrong! No blood?

Upon closer inspection we could see that the mechanical broadhead had expanded as it had some hair/fat on it but it had been driven back into the shaft.

We finally figured out. The arrow had hit the hard shoulder plate and bounced off. Wow — big boars are tough. Right then I decided I'd use a fixed broadhead for the Airbow. It appeared to me that an expandable broadhead might to easily deflect off bone, not penetrate into the vitals or as in this case — get stopped.

The next night, 8-time NHRA Champion (Top Fuel Class) Tony Schumacher showed up to hunt with us. Clint and I had a great



Hogs are the beast of the outdoor world. The author took this Texas hog with a Mossberg rifle chambered in 30-06 and shot Hornady's 165 grain SST loads.



A knife that will stay sharp is needed to skin a hog with its coarse hair and tough hide. A Diamond Blade Surge took care of field dressing, skinning and quartering this hog, plus was still sharp and ready for more.

time taking him on a nighttime stalk while Bill and Murray took his girlfriend, Summer Penland on a pistol hunt.

Tony had been going to use his AR but we talked him into using my Airbow. When we arrived I'd mounted the scope and sighted it in. I shot a Robin Hood so we were set. Everyone was impressed with its accuracy. Tony shot it to get comfortable. Then Summer, who had never even shot a bow tried her hand with it and shot a Robin Hood off-hand. She was the new camp hero.

At dark we took Tony to stand #115 which was located on a stock pond. Daniel Myle, a friend of Clint's had run down before dinner and put out 50 pounds of corn. We set up right after dark a few hundred yards away to wait for the light to go on indicating our quarry had arrived.

After an hour Clint and Dan went down to see what the deal was. Wow, in the short amount of time between

5:30 and dark a big sounder of hogs must of come in because the bait was cleaned out. Before midnight Tony had to head back home as his three kids needed to get to school once the sun came up. Everyone shook hands and off they went

The next evening Clint and I hit the high tower at dusk to hunt another

afternoon all stands were rebaited and preparations made for that night's hunts. When the sun went down it was time game-on.

The next evening we hit a secluded pond we had baited but by the time we arrived the hogs had already been there and "vacuumed up" the golden kernels.

location it overlooked. I had my Mossberg chambered in 30-06 with me. Hogs had been in the area and sure enough, as soon as we arrived we spooked some but they soon returned.

Clint filmed the action for a few minutes and then gave me the thumbs up. The 165 grain Hornady SST hit a big old sow and off she shot — but not very far.

We did a number of other stalks the rest of the night but didn't connect. About 3:00 a.m. we finally hit the sack. Dang, these hog hunters take their sport serious.

There was no idle time setting around drinking lattes under the shade tree. In the



The Slow-Glow Team has a unique way of baiting. They throw corn in the water so the hogs have to root around and dig for it thereby making a lot of noise so it's easier to sneak up on them.



Summer Penland with her "Robin Hood" she obtained with her first two shots. The Benjamin Pioneer Airbow is super accurate and has an effective range out to 75 yards.

corn on the bank but the bulk of it they sprinkle in the water. They say the hogs will wade out in the water and scoop up a mouthful and let the mud and water run out of their mouths and chomp on the corn.

Feeding in this manner raises the noise level to a low roar in conjunction with their normal grunting and squealing which makes it easier to stalk in really close. It's awesome when you're sneaking in on a site and right over the dam 20 yards away you can hear them slopping and grunting in the water. Talk about

exciting.

A hog's best line of defense is its nose. You always have to play the wind because one wrong gust and you're busted — game over.

We ate dinner and headed down to our blind before dark. We had learned from Tony's experience that if we waited too long they might come and go before we got there if we waited until dark.

Dusk slowly started to settle in. The shadows grew longer and longer until finally it was pitch dark. We thought we heard a squeal or two but couldn't be sure. Then we both heard a squeal for sure. There were hogs not far away.

Clint looked over at me and whispered, "Think we ought to try the FoxPro"? We both quickly agreed. He fired up the Shockwave playing Hog Feeding Frenzy-1. Not two minutes later a sounder of hogs came streaming over the dam. Soon there were at least 15 hogs feeding in front of us.

Before long the Slow Glow was fully illuminated. Clint filmed for a few minutes and then gave me the thumbs up. I had the Airbow propped up on the shooting sticks and had put on a Wasp Hammer, a stout broadhead that should do the trick.

There was a big boar on the backside but two sows were between us. Finally, he walked down by the edge of the water. I touched off the arrow and it looked like he'd been hit with a telephone pole. It flattened him. Then he rolled down into the water thrashing.

Then surprisingly he jumped up and took off. Wow, hogs are tough. We went to where he'd been hit. The arrow has passed clean through him and stuck in the dam. There was a lot of blood. We waited a bit and then started tracking.

What a great hunt and memorable four days learning some new hog hunting tricks. You Go, Slow Glow! 🌟🌟

Off in the brush about 50 yards we could hear a few hogs grunting indicating they had only gone off a little ways to bed down.

Ugh, I wish we had Bill's FoxPro Shockwave game caller. He had loaded it with a few hog sounds. I bet we could have called them back in. With the FoxPro that sounder of wild swine would've thought another group of hogs was feeding in their zone.

The next day I told Clint it was all or nothing for the Airbow. I had to kill a hog with it.

About noon we went down to blind #115 since we'd seen a big group of hogs there the first night. It seemed they were coming in from across the county road behind the dam so we set up an Ameri-step Throwdown blind across the pond under a willow tree. We then baited the hole and headed back to the cabin.

The Slow-Glow boys have a unique way of baiting. They sprinkle a little



When this mechanical broadhead struck the thick shield of a mature wild boar it was driven back into the shaft and never penetrated into the vital area. This incident convinced the author to use a fixed broadhead on the Airbow.



Lake Roundup

EAST TEXAS



By Matt Williams

NACOGDOCHES - May is just another word for post spawn among bass anglers around here. It's a good time to break out the finesse gear, but it would also be good idea to keep a topwater and a swim jig at arm's reach.

Translation: If you are coming to Nacogdoches this month it would be wise to think shallow. Not necessarily dirt shallow; two to eight feet would be a good range to try because there going to be quite a few fish up there guarding and feeding on fry, patrolling bream beds and lounging around hydrilla beds, torpedo grass and new growth pads waiting for an unsuspecting meal to swim dangerously close.

Grass is abundant up and down the lake, but some of the better stuff is north of the power lines on flats and shorelines adjacent to Big Loco and Little Loco creeks. Unfortunately, the upper reaches of Little Loco is also where you'll find one of the newest infestations of giant salvinia to find its way into an East Texas water body. The coverage area has been estimated at close to 30 acres. You can read more about it in a feature story in this issue.

Finesse baits like a wacky worm, Senko or floating worm are always good choices during the post spawn, particularly when the fish seem reluctant to chase something moving. Toss them around outside grass edges, holes in the grass or over shallow flats and sooner or later you'll find a few

takers.

Topwaters including poppers, prop baits, frogs and buzz baits will also be worth a try, especially if you see wakes and boils that could signal a big fish having its way with spawning bream. A Whopper Plopper or Bill Lewis Stutter Step will also be good choices.

It's hard to go wrong with a swim jig, swim bait, spinnerbait or square bill crank in a shad or bluegill pattern when fish are up shallow and willing to chase. Be on the lookout for dimpling on the surface around docks, grass, anchored boats or any other object in the shallows. This a reliable sign that a shad spawn is in progress. It's a great time to capitalize on aggressive bass that may be homed in on the dinner buffet. Shad spawn at night on into the low light morning hours. It's important to be on the water at first light.

As crappie fishing goes, the fish should be in transition from shallow to deep. It's a good time to probe around the outside grass edges using a small hair jig on light line paired with a spinning outfit. Main lake and secondary points will definitely be worth a look, but you could also find them around grassy straight-aways. The main thing is to cover water and stay on the move.

TOLEDO BEND - Veteran Toledo Bend fishing guide Tommy Martin says May can be a hit or miss month for bass on the big lake, mainly because the fish will be in a post spawn mode and in transition from their late spring to early summer patterns. Think of it like the pre-spawn except in reverse; the fish will often times utilize the same areas going out that they used coming in.

"Early May can be tough," Martin said. "You'll still have some fish shallow but you'll also have some that are beginning to set up out deeper. During the early part of the month I'll spend a lot of time fishing underwater points in three to eight feet, mostly in the mouths of spawning pockets."

Any number of baits will catch fish. Martin will almost always have a Texas rigged Zoom lizard or Brush Hog handy, but he'll also make use of a topwater like

a Pop-R, Zara Spook or frog if he comes across the right stuff.

Later in the month is when Martin suggests getting off the bank and looking to deeper structure for fish beginning to set up around summertime sweet spots. The bass won't be everywhere, but making the right cast to right structure from the proper angle can get you bit multiple times in short order, often times by some pretty solid fish.

"It's seems like there is always a little two-week window in there where you can catch them really good on a crankbait," Martin said. "Then they start getting used to it and you have to switch to plastic. A Zoom Trick Worm in a redbug or junebug pattern always seems to work pretty well over here."

May crappie fishing be outstanding at times. As always, one of the big keys to success is finding the prolific panfish. With the hydrilla out of the equation on most of the lake, brush piles at mid-range depths are going to be serious player.

Charlie Shivley at Bill's Landing says there will be a few fish on Sabine River, but the big groups aren't near as concentrated as they will be later in summer. "They'll always be suspended, too, usually six to 12 feet down in about 15 feet of water, right on the shelf of the river," he said. "It can be pretty tough at times. You've got to stay on the move and pick up one here and there."

SAM RAYBURN - It's been an eventful spring around Sam Rayburn with some huge sacks brought to the scales by tournament anglers on different trails.

Perhaps the most noteworthy event was the Bass Champs team event held on March 10. The Top 4 teams weighed in five-fish limits weighing in excess of 30 pounds. Danny Bennett of Huntsville and Michael Bennett of Lucas won it with 35.23 pounds, while Justin Morton of Etoile and Randy Turner of Lufkin took second with 33.64.

Kevin Wolford and Michael Dorsey, both of Orange, finished third with 33.57; Kenneth Cates and Delia Degnan of Zavalla had 31.38. Fifth place went to Dalton Soliz and Jack Tindel, both of Orange, with 29.90.

The following weekend, Clint Wade and Stacy Spriggs of Huntsville brought 37.80 pounds to the scales in the TTZ northeast division event.

Indeed, Sam Rayburn has been fishing better in 2018 than it has in years. The good news is the banner fishing will likely continue as spring gives way to early summer. Although the tournament weights probably won't be as high, there are still going to be some good quality fish to be caught by anglers who make the right adjustments.

"It's should be wide open as far as the ways you can catch them," says TPWD fisheries biologist and local tournament angler Todd Driscoll of Brookeland. "There are still going to be a lot of fish shallow in two to eight feet of water, but there also could be some fish starting to group up out there away from the bank."

Driscoll says there should be a variety of baits that will produce shallow ranging

from topwaters to sub-surface moving lures and soft plastics.

"Topwaters, swim jigs, jerk bait, crank baits, Senkos... you name it and you should be able to get bit," Driscoll said. "If the lake stays full there may even be some grass to flip in 10 feet. The lake is full of good quality fish right now and the habitat (hydrilla and torpedo grass) is in great shape."

The biologist says May crappie fishing prospects are looking equally bright. With the grass in such good shape, there should be plenty of fish holding along outside edges waiting to move deeper for the summer. Strolling a 1/8 ounce or slightly lighter jig behind the boat at slow speed is a good way to cover water and locate fish.

CONROE - Houstonians looking to stick close to home and sack up a few fish for the freezer might want head to Lake Conroe this month. There should be plenty of hungry mouths to feed,

especially for those who want to target crappie and channel cat.

"May is really a good month," says fishing guide Butch Terpe. "Now is when the crappie start settling in their summer patterns and that means they'll be grouped up around brush piles, bridges pilings and tree tops in the 12-20 foot range. The fish are going to be suspended for the most part, mainly in the 12-18 feet deep."

The key to fast limits of channel cat are baited holes. The idea is use a soured grain to appeal to the catfish's keen sense of smell and ultimately lure them into a small area so they can be easily exploited using punch bait, cheese bait or night crawlers. Soured maize or chicken scratch will work but Terpe likes to use cattle range cubes because they are cleaner. A good depth range is 15-22 feet.

May bass fishing prospects also can be good to fair as the fish make the transition from shallow to deep. Terpe says the fish will be relating most to brush piles in eight to 13 feet. You can refine the search by keying in brush piles found on pond dams and points.

"We don't see a lot of big fish this time of year, but the numbers can be pretty fair at times," Terpe said. "You can't hardly go wrong throwing a Carolina rig, but a crankbait will also catch some fish."

Terpe says Conroe is also producing some decent fishing for white bass and hybrids at times. During May, he looks for the fish to be mixed and holding around main lake humps in water about 25 feet deep, suspended about 18-20 feet down. Slabs or live bait are main orders of the day.

PALESTINE - When May rolls around on Lake Palestine, fishing guide Ricky Vandergriff will start looking away from the bank to get bit. It's not just a bass deal, either. Crappie and white bass will be getting into their early summer patterns, as well.

"It's all going to be post spawn," Vandergriff said.

Vandergriff says bass anglers might draw a few strikes on topwaters and frogs at first light, but after that he'll key mostly on main lake points in six to 12 feet of water at the south end of the lake using a crankbait and Carolina rig. "You'll also have some fish hanging around some of the deeper, main lake boat docks with brush," he said. "I'll use a Texas-rig worm



PHOTO BY BUCK PAYNE

Billy Payne of Navasota shows off a 12 pound 4 ounce bass he caught on a Whopper Plopper from one of his managed private lakes. Bass will be in a post-spawn pattern in May hitting a variety of topwater offerings.

or a Big Eye Jig trailed by a Pocket Craw trailer to fish those areas.”

Lake Palestine crappie patterns will follow suit with those of just about every other lake in the region. The fish will be in a post spawn and holding at mid-range depths. With no grass to relate to they'll be hanging tight to brush piles. Vertical fishing with a shiner will be the way to go.

“Finding brush at the best depth and how deep the fish are suspended around it are the main things,” Vandergriff said. “Brush in about 15 feet of water is usually the best. Watch your depthfinder. That will tell how deep you need to fish.”

As for white bass, Vandergriff says the fish will be relating primarily to main lake points in water ranging three to 15 feet deep.

He pointed to the shallow range as the best place to probe early in the day using lipless crankbait or maybe even a topwater if the fish are busting the surface. Once the sun gets up he'll move to the nearest drop and bounce spoons off bottom around concentrations of fish.

LIVINGSTON - There isn't much in the bass fishing world that will charge a guy's batteries much faster than a thick shouldered largemouth exploding on a buzz bait as it churns a path across a fishy looking flat with a little bit of ripple on the surface.

Perhaps that's why veteran Lake Livingston fishing guide Randy Dearman rarely leaves home this time of year without a trusty buzz bait tethered to his monofilament.

Dearman will be the first to admit that the buzz bait may be one of the least consistent bass lures on the market. But when it does produce, it can almost be like magic.

“When they get on it, there's nothing like it,” said Dearman. “The fish are coming off the spawn in May and they're usually pretty aggressive. When the conditions are right, they'll slam a buzz bait.”

All the textbooks say topwaters shine the brightest when skies are overcast. But that's not necessarily the case with buzz baits. Not on Lake Livingston, anyway. Dearman says some the best days he has had with a buzz bait have been when skies under big sun without a cloud in the sky.

If the bass won't hit the buzz bait, Dearman suggests tempting them with a 3/8 or 1/2 ounce Strike King spinnerbait

that is white or white/chartreuse in color or a shad pattern square bill.

In the event the fish don't want something moving, he'll switch to a Texas rigged black/blue Rage Craw. The guide says the best areas will be shallow flats bordering major and secondary creeks up around the lake.

“They'll be holding to the edges like always,” Dearman said. “Anytime you come across some wood like a stump, lay down or brush at the edge of a creek you need to fish it. That's what a lot of these fish will be relating to. 🌟🌟”



By Brian Hughes

FORK — May can be magic on Lake Fork. “Magic Shad” that is. The LFT Magic Shad can be fished all day during May and will catch a lot of bass from this premier fishery. Use it with an un-weighted 4/0 to 6/0 hook, depending on bait size, and you can start the day shallow.

Fish it fast and high in the water for a near topwater bite. Next slow your retrieve to work the two to six foot range through the same areas. You can still fish fairly fast to cover a lot of water. Finally, use a weighted hook to fish deeper along break lines and channels.

For those that want a little more diversity, May offers the opportunity to fish most any bait you like. Start with buzzbaits, Yellow Magic poppers, or frogs around the emergent vegetation early in the morning. As the sun moves higher in the sky transition to the sub-surface moving baits. Spinnerbaits, Senkos and bladed jigs will all work along the banks. White or white chartreuse in the spinnerbait, watermelon-red in the Senko and Browns or reds in the bladed jig are your color options.

One note on the bladed jig. These baits have been working tremendously well with a swimbait as a trailer. I use the Gary Yamamoto Zako in the brown-orange color.

May bass tend to suspend anywhere from six to 10 feet deep, over as much as 15 feet of water. Crankbaits designed to reach that six foot plus depth can be effective here, as can a big tail spinner, with a slow retrieve. Deep running swimbaits on large weighted hooks will also get down and get you a fish.

Spend some time in both the east and west arms of the lake at about the mid-lake mark.

The sand bass fishermen will want to look at the points and 2946 or 515 roadbeds, using slabs and spoons, traps and small plastic swimbaits on a 1/4 oz. jighead. Staying with the shad colors is recommended.

Don't forget catfishing on Fork. Known as a bass lake, it has a great number of catfish as well. By May the cats will be moving toward the shallows.

Look to the timbered points, along creek channels leading to the shallow water. Bait a hole and set-up on these timbered edges near the channel and you should intercept a fair share of the roaming cats.

LAKE O THE PINES — Lake O the Pines is probably one of the best, little known lakes in Texas. It has good fishing for crappie, bass and catfish. It is a fishing lake with relatively little recreational traffic. The locals fish it quite a bit, but the crowds are nothing like other, better known, lakes.

For bass you'll want to focus on the creeks and creek mouths up and down the lake. Johnson and Copeland creeks in the lower third of the lake are good places to start.

Topwaters early, such as a buzzbait or frog, will get the day going. Other options include the Whopper Plopper and a Zara Spook. Stay with primarily natural colors, unless we get a lot of rain and the lake is muddy. Then try darker colors, even black.

Once the topwater bite is over move on to spinnerbaits, Traps, and chatterbaits. Again natural colors like whites and white with chartreuse in the spinnerbaits. “Traps should be blue/chrome, black/chrome, or firetiger, while bladed jigs can be shad colors or black/blue.

The middle third of the lake has some submerged roadbeds around the Pops

Landing/Alley Creek area. Carolina rigs and drop-shots will be the ticket here. June bug, watermelon, black/blue and red shad are good color choices. Moving up the lake above the 155 Bridge, the Texas rig or jig-and-pig will be the lure choices as there are ample amounts of timber to pitch and flip. Try to find a second element such as a creek channel or roadbed to add to the attraction and you should find the bass.

Crappie fishing on Lake O'the Pines in May will involve finding cover in eight to 10 feet of water by using the side imaging feature of your electronics. Look for stumps, laydowns or brush on secondary creek channels. Throw a 1/16 or 1/8 oz crappie jig across the cover and let it fall on a tight line. You'll get the strike as the bait pendulums back to the boat. Cinnamon/blue, chartreuse/red and white/black are good colors.

As the largest structure on the lake, the 155 Bridge is probably the most popular location for crappie fishing. Be sure your bait is presented on the cross members at the pillars to maximize your opportunities for fish.

PURTIS CREEK — Anyone that knows me knows that I spent an awful lot of time and energy fishing this little bass factory. Located near Cedar Creek, just outside Eustace, Purtis Creek is a 365 acre state park lake. It has undergone many changes over the years, including the introduction of grass carp to control the vegetation. While it has changed, it still remains a good place to catch fish.

I used to suggest you fish it like you would Lake Fork. Now that the grasses are gone it fishes more like an Eagle Mountain or even Cedar Creek.

You will still want to start with topwater baits early around the timbered banks on the west side of the lake, or around the island area in the back of the lake. I like the Ribbit frogs and Mogambo grubs I've mentioned before, as well as buzzbaits.

Next up will be the Senko in watermelon-red (dip the tail in chartreuse dye), or a trick worm in Glimmer Blue with a tail dip. Work the banks and any shoreline reed grasses you might find.

To the south of the island is a channel with quite a bit of submerged timber running along it. You can Carolina rig this area with a fry or lizard in red shad or watermelon/red, or you may also want to use deep-diving crankbaits here, if you know how to fish them in timber without

getting hung on the trees.

Bass will start to school by the end of the month and you can spot them near the dam, over the deeper water. "Traps, spoons and tailspinners will get you bit, as will the clear Tiny Torpedo.

Crappie fishermen will want to fish the timber at the channel, from the trees to the dam with crappie jigs and minnows.

Catfishermen do well both on the dam and on the western bank, from the dam to the first cove area. Most fish with cut and prepared baits.

Sand bass fishermen will want to watch for schooling sandies near the overflow control outlet at the dam. If they are not schooling, spoons and slabs will catch the deep ones, while 'Trap-style baits and tail-spinners in shad colors will get the schooling sandies as well as the bass.

ATHENS — So a bit of bad news from Lake Athens. The following press release was issued in February.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) inland fisheries staff found in total, less than one acre of invasive giant salvinia in multiple locations near Lake Athens Marina boat ramp Feb. 19. The day following the giant salvinia discovery at Lake Athens, the TPWD Brookeland aquatic habitat enhancement team (AHE) surveyed the impacted area and deployed a containment boom from just west of the boat ramp across the cove to the Athens Municipal Water Authority (AMWA) office. According to Brookeland AHE team lead John Findeisen, the boom will contain as much of the giant salvinia infestation as possible, assisting with the management of this aggressive, non-native plant. "The containment boom is a critical component of our rapid response efforts to eradicate giant salvinia at Lake Athens," Findeisen said. "Concentrating giant salvinia in an area helps prevent further spread and increases the efficiency and effectiveness of herbicide treatments, which is the next phase of our response at Lake Athens. Following that we should know fairly soon if eradication is a real possibility at the lake."

While we wait to see what will transpire, anglers are cautioned to be sure to clean, drain and dry your boat before leaving Lake Athens, to prevent the spread of salvinia to other water bodies. It would also be a good idea to check your main motor, and trolling motor, before you move around on Athens as well. Simply remove any salvinia that may be clinging

to the motors.

As for the fishing, it is still fantastic. You'll want to look to the vegetation other than the salvinia for your bass fishing. East of the one bridge over the lake, you'll find plenty of hydrilla where you can fish a Ribbit Frog across the top. White with a touch of chartreuse on the feet is my favorite color, but watermelon/red will also work. A Senko worked around and over the top of the grass is also a good plan. Watermelon/red or bubblegum are the two colors I use the most.

A Texas-rigged worm or lizard in the 8" length will catch some bigger fish. Try red shad and black/blue.

There are so many boat docks at Athens that they are a natural form of cover for bass there. Try a Zoom Trickworm in blue glimmer to work alongside, and between, the docks. Under the dock takes a little skill with the art of bait-skipping. Once mastered this technique can put a jig, or Texas-rig, far back under the dock, where bass don't normally see a bait. Use a small 3/16ths ounce jig in black/blue or green pumpkin, and a small Yamacraw trailer, in a matching color.

A small finesse bait like the shakey-head can also be used under these docks. Best fished on a spinning reel, this also sets up perfectly for the skipping technique, as skipping with a baitcaster takes quite a bit of practice.

The main lake will likely see some schooling action in May. If not early in the month, certainly by the end of the month bass will be schooling near the points in the middle section of the lake, and maybe up by the dam as well.

Several baits can be used here including a tailspinner. In ¼ ounce, the tailspinner can be cast a long distance and reeled at whatever pace is called for. If the fish are on top, reel as fast as you can. When they are deeper in the water column reel slower. Count down the bait at about two feet per second on your cast. When you hit the number where the fish are holding simply reel the tailspinner slowly back through the school. Of course, the Tiny Torpedo, 'Trap, spoons and slabs will also work on schooling fish, as will the shallow diving crankbait, Zara Spook and the A-rig.

All in all, May shapes up to be a great month this year in North Texas fishing. Most of our lakes have all of what it takes to have a great day. Plenty of water, plenty of cover and plenty of fish. 🌟🌟🌟

Trap THEM SPECKS & REDS

Lipless crank baits will catch a surprising variety of coastal gamefish.

Story and Photography by Robert Sloan



Back in 1991 I was fishing with Joe Garcia on Sabine Lake. It was October and we were chasing birds that were feeding on shrimp and shad. The fishing wasn't that good and the birds were downright spooky. Just getting within casting distance was a task.

We were trying to make longer and longer casts. I was just about ready to give up when Garcia made a cast with a chrome and blue Rattle Trap. I thought that was kind of stupid until he made a couple of cranks on the reel handle and suddenly bowed up on a big trout.

"What's the matter?" he said. "You've never seen anybody catch a trout on a 'Trap?'"

Actually, I hadn't, but it didn't take long for me to get another one out of his tackle box and get in on the catching. Garcia was a bass fisherman from South Carolina and he brought along a few of his go-to lures that might be a crossover for catching trout. But using a 'Trap made all the sense in the world. It was kind of matching the hatch. A chrome 'Trap looked just like a shad or menhaden. It's loaded with rattles and had a tight wobble—everything you needed to attract the attention of trout and reds. To this day I don't leave the house without a few lipless cranks.

A few years back I came across a Bomber Super Pogy. It was 3-1/2 inches long, weighed 1 1/4 ounces and was built with a high-pitched rattle. Plus, it was big and looked like it would be a natural in the surf. One of the color patterns was a pinfish. That's a live bait I use a lot at the jetties and in the surf. Come to find out it was a big trout producer in the surf and would also catch big reds cruising the jetties.

I fish the Port O'Connor jetties a lot. A few of my customers like fishing the rocks with nothing but lures. I had a couple of anglers in from Dallas one morning. I handed them Super Pogy's. They looked at me like I was a little whacko, but not for long. I kept the boat in position

with the tolling motor and within about three hours those guys had caught five slot reds. All were on lipless cranks.

I first got the idea for cranking up jetty reds while talking with Roland Martin one day at a redfish tournament on Sabine Lake. He and his partner were in second place after the first day and narrowly missed winning the tourney. I asked him what lures they used. He reached in the boat and opened up a plastic box that was full of big cranks.

"We were fishing them along the rocks about 10 to 12 feet deep," he said. "Reds can be caught on just about anything, especially lipless and deep diving cranks. After the first day we had to rebuild our cranks with stronger split rings and bigger hooks. The reds were tearing all of our cranks up."

That's one good thing about the Super Pogy's – they are built well and come with sturdy No. 2 treble hooks. They are made in three color patterns that include pinfish, spot tail pogy and mullet.

There is one particular Rat-L-Trap that's made for fishing the surf and offshore. It's called a Magnum-Force and is four inches long. That one, and the Super Pogy, are perfect for fishing the jetties and within a few miles offshore. You can troll with them or cast them into pods

of baitfish that are being munched on by king mackerel. These lures definitely need to be rigged up with wire leaders when being used to catch toothy kings.

Just about any fish you can find offshore will hammer lipless cranks. With the smaller 'Traps, 1/2 to 3/4 ounce, I've caught dorado, snapper and ling around shrimp boats, rigs and along weed lines.

Once, while fishing out of Venice, La., we used the big Super Pogy's to catch black fin tuna and small yellowfins. One night we were fishing around a floater rig in about 3,000 feet of water. The tuna were ripping into hardtails on the surface. I tied a Super Pogy on to one of the heavy duty spinning rods and ended up catching several black fins and one yellowfin. The trick was to wait until a tuna blasted bait on the surface, then cast to the action. Talk about a jolt. Try reeling a lipless crank and having a tuna latch on to it. Just make sure you've got a firm grip on the rod.

When fishing the surf with lipless cranks you never know what's going to hit the lure. It could be anything from a big shark to a jack. That's why I usually rig the lures with a wire leader. I like a leader that's about 12 inches long. You can buy the premade wire leaders or build your own.

The smaller lipless cranks are best



The Cotton Cordell Super Spot in the upper left hand corner has caught so many fish the paint is wore off. But even at that the bone colored base is still a producer. The pinfish colored Rat-L-Trap on the right is great in the surf. The Bomber Super Pogy is perfect for fishing the surf, jetties and offshore.



PHOTO BY BILL L. OLSON

This redfish inhaled this 'Trap.

for trout. I like the Cotton Cordell Super Spots and 'Traps. They are built with multiple rattles that create a lot of noise. The difference between the two lures is that the 'Traps are built for fishing in saltwater while the Spots are not.

A half ounce Super Spot that's 3 inches

long is perfect for fishing the jetties and the surf for trout. You can cast them a country mile.

Three of the best Spot colors for fishing semi-clear water are chrome/blue, chrome/black and the blue shiner. In the 'Trap lineup I've had the best luck with the

chartreuse/flash and solid chrome.

One very good way to fish the jetties for trout is to position the boat about 20 feet off the rocks and run a Super Spot or Rattle Trap about 10 feet deep parallel to the jetty. Fishing parallel to the rocks is a good way to fish various depths.

It's a fact that trout will suspend on the down current side of rocks. Once you catch a trout the best thing to do is try to hold your position and work that area really well. Where you catch one trout there are probably more in that same area.

Believe it or not lipless cranks are good at night along the jetties with a full moon. One night two of us were fishing the Louisiana side of the east Sabine jetty on a full moon. It was really bright. We were fishing ¾ ounce glow 'Traps about three to six feet deep and filled up a cooler with some pretty nice trout.

Any time you can find structure like concrete or rocks the lipless cranks are a very good option.

For example, there are two rock revetment walls on the north and south ends of Sabine Lake. They are like trout and redfish magnets. The key is to fish parallel to the rocks in four to six feet of water. Make long casts with the lures and reel them just fast enough to keep them about two feet off bottom.

Another very good place to fish this type of lure is in the Intracoastal Waterway. I've done best while fishing them right along the drop from the shallows to the deeper water about 15 yards off the bank.

A lot of people think that when you are drift fishing the only lures you want to use are soft plastics.

But there have been many days on Sabine, East Matagorda Bay and East Galveston Bay when I've used a ¾ ounce 'Trap to catch trout over scattered shell. You can either reel the lures in on a steady retrieve or yo-yo them back. Trout are especially good at whacking the lure on the fall. That's a good tactic on East Matagorda Bay.

Lipless cranks are not worth a darn on the flats where you have two to three feet of water and scattered grass. They excel in deeper water, four to 10 feet, on most days. Keep in mind where they do produce best — along the jetties, rock walls, the surf, and offshore.

They are one of the very best lures you can use when fishing under the birds.

Let our team of creative professionals help you with your marketing and graphic design needs!

713-957-3997

www.texasoutdoorsjournal.com

That's a situation that often requires long casts to keep from spooking the fish.

Keep in mind that a lot of the lipless cranks are not built for saltwater use. But with a little work you can change out the split rings and add saltwater grade treble hooks and you are good to go. I've found that a No. 4 treble hook is best up front, with a 1/0 treble on the tail.

Something else you can do is custom paint these lures. One of the best color patterns you can use on Sabine Lake, where the water is often stained, is chartreuse with a black belly. Or you can use sand paper to knock off some of the factory paint and add spots or whatever gives you a little confidence boost, which is a big part of fishing. **T★J**



One of the best colors to fish a lipless crank bait is chartreuse, especially in slightly stained water like Galveston Bay and Sabine Lake.

TEXASOUTDOORSJOURNAL.com

Check back often for the latest outdoor news from across Texas, the United States, and around the world.

- Stay informed in between issues
- Latest outdoor updates and news
- Links to all your favorite resources
- Information for hunters and anglers
- Tide Tables
- Hunting & Fishing times
- Read issues online for subscribers
- And much, much more!

Stay OUTDOORS informed!



Follow us on Facebook!
Texas Outdoors Journal

Updates, News, Giveaways and More, delivered straight to your newsfeed!



"Texas' Most Comprehensive Outdoor Publications"

HOME ABOUT US CONTACT US ADVERTISING SUBSCRIPTIONS HELP US HELP US

- HOME
- ABOUT US
- CONTACT US
- ADVERTISING
- SUBSCRIPTIONS
- HELP US HELP US



LOGIN STATUS

You are not logged in.

Username:

Password:

Remember Me Register

REGISTERED SUBSCRIBERS

CLICK HERE to access Texas Outdoors

Here Piggy, Piggy!

The pigs are winning! There are so many sources with so many estimates as to the wild hog population in the U.S. and Texas in particular. Google the report you favor. The estimated U.S. population run six to nine million. By all estimates, Texas has by far the most of any state with a population of two and a half to three million destructive tasty pigs.

The annual mortality rate in the state from hunting, trapping and road kill is around 750,000. That reduction is not enough to maintain the status quo. What this also means is we have a vast number of targets of opportunity that can be hunted year round. Our state needs us so we need to get busy.

The best swine solution is a fast handling carbine with a big hole in the barrel. Yes, you can dispatch pigs with a variety of cartridges. I once dropped a 200 pound sow in her tracks with one round through the ear from a .22 pistol. This was not planned, we just happened to bump into each other.

Another instance while hunting hogs, I took a quartering shot with a .44 Magnum jacketed hollow point and the bullet skittered along the gristle flack jacket they grow over their shoulder with no penetration.

There is no substitute for accuracy, but a large wound can save the hunt. The industry has heeded the cry with

many choices of firearms and ammunition tailored for punching pork.

Sturm, Ruger & Co. has now chambered the Ruger Gunsite Scout Rifle in .450 Bushmaster. This offers big-bore, high-energy performance in a compact and handy rifle. Weighing just 6.6

pounds, it features a 16.10", 11/16"-24 threaded barrel with a 1:16 twist rate with controlled round feeding from a 4-round detachable box magazine. Other features include a cold hammer-forged, medium-contour, alloy steel barrel with a matte black onyx finish that is thread and fitted with a Ruger Precision Rifle Hybrid Muzzle Brake. This can be removed to attach other threaded barrel accessories such as the included thread protector.

The rifle's trigger guard and magazine well are formed of glass-reinforced nylon. The magazine release is a push-forward Mini 14 paddle in front of the trigger guard.

The protected, non-glare, post front sight and receiver-mounted, adjustable, ghost ring rear sight are useful as is or as backup to a scope. The forward-mounted Picatinny rail allows shooters to customize the rifle by mounting a variety of optics for "both eyes open" fast target acquisition or standard mounting with integral scope mounts and



Hornady offers 13 caliber choices in their Full Boar lineup.

included scope rings.

The American Walnut stock, with "Gunsite Scout Rifle" engraved on the grip cap, is equipped with sling swivel studs and features a checkered grip and forearm. A soft rubber recoil pad with three, 1/2" spacers allows the length of pull to be adjusted to the shooter's needs.

Hornady's .450 Bushmaster round pushes a 250 grain FTX Black bullet at 2,200 f.p.s. at the muzzle with 2686 foot pounds of energy. The Ruger Gunsite Scout Rifle in .450 Bushmaster is handy, powerful, good looking and retails around \$1,000.00

Savage Arms swine special is the Model 110 Hog Hunter. A variety of calibers are offered but I am zeroing in on the powerful .338 Federal.

A rugged olive drab synthetic stock holds the 20-inch, medium contour, carbon steel barrel, which features iron sights and is threaded for a suppressor. The oversized bolt handle allows for fast follow up shots and the rounds are fed from a detachable box magazine.

Length-of-pull is easily customized and the user-adjustable AccuTrigger provides a light, crisp pull. The rifle is built on Savage's solid 110 platform that always delivers an accurate rifle right out of the box.

Federal's Vital-Shok line includes a .338 load that carries a 210 grain Nosler Partition bullet out the barrel at 2,630



Fun practice with the Pregame Splattering Target from Birchwood Casey.

f.p.s. and 3,225 foot pounds of energy. A package as tough as the target the Savage Model 110 Hog Hunter retails for around \$594.00.

The great American lever-action rifle cannot be ignored when it comes to pig hunting. It set the standard for fast handling.

The leader of the pack has long been the Winchester Model 94. For our hog hunting pleasure they have delivered the Trails End Takedown in .450 Marlin. The takedown feature allows the rifle to come apart quickly for ease of transportation. It is reassembled just as quickly by putting the barrel and stocked receiver together, give the magazine tube a few turns and you're back in business with a repeatable zero.

The 20 inch barrel is ported to reduce muzzle jump and recoil and is topped with an adjustable semi-buckhorn rear sight and a Marble Arms front sight. The receiver is drilled and tapped for scope mounts if we have the need.

The stock has a comfy Pachmayr Decelerator recoil pad. This rifle is also available in the venerable .30-30. Due to manufacturing costs this rifle carries an m.s.r.p around \$1,400.00.

Hornady's LEVERevolution lineup offers the .450 Marlin with a 325grain Flex Tip bullet. It has a muzzle velocity of 2,225 f.p.s and a whopping 3,572 foot pounds of energy.

Another lever action option is the Marlin 1895 SBL chambered in the time honored .45-70 Gov't. This great looking carbine features a stainless steel "John Wayne" big-loop lever (great with gloves), receiver, barrel and 6-shot magazine tube complemented by a black/grey laminated hardwood pistol-grip stock with fluted comb, cut checkering, deluxe recoil pad, and nickel-plated swivel studs.

The 18.5" stainless steel barrel has deep-cut six groove Ballard-type rifling and is topped with the excellent XS LeverRail with ghost ring rear sight and front sight post. Optics can easily attach if we must. Sticker is around \$1,100.00

When packing for pork we need ammunition that can be counted on and several manufactures have gone pig specific. Hornady has their "Full Boar" Ammunition that features their GX bullet designed for deep penetration and weight retention. These are monolithic copper-alloy bullets delivering controlled

expansion and 95+ percent weight retention. Full Boar is available in 13 popular hunting calibers from .223 to .300 Win. Mag.

Winchester's answer is the "Razor Boar XT." Up front is a solid gilding-metal bullet with a hollowpoint that was designed for delayed expansion. Its solid construction allows it to stay together so it will drive deep, while a unique beveled profile promotes delayed expansion before expanding to double its original diameter for maximum energy transfer. They have five choices from .223 to interestingly the 7.62 by 39

Remington's solution is their "Hog Hammer" ammunition. These cartridges are topped with the legendary Barnes TSX bullet. This all copper hollow-point bullet is designed with four "cutting petals" that expand to twice the bullets original diameter for a long wide wound channel. The Hog Hammers offer several choices from .223 to .308.

As previously mentioned in these pages, my favorite pig puncher is the mighty .45-70. My two favorite loads are the Winchester Ballistic Silvertip and Garrett Cartridges of Texas Hammerheads.

The Winchester sends a 300 grain bullet to the target at 1,880 fps. When I'm really serious I go to the Garrett that drives

a 540 grain super-hard cast bullet at 1,550 fps and 2,880 foot pounds of energy. That will take down anything on the planet.

Practice puts pork on the platter. While punching holes in a circle target may be great for setting that zero it gets boring after awhile. It is time to spice up practice.

Birchwood Casey has added a new Boar target to their popular Pregame Splattering Target series. While the Pregame Boar target works great for sighting in rifles, handguns and muzzleloaders, it is the splattering feature that brings on the fun. The target has a full color graphic image of a mature boar hog for a realistic shooting experience. Bullet holes "splatter" on impact making it easy to see your shots.

The vital area is clearly marked in red and hits there react with a highly visible fluorescent red circle. Shots outside of the vital area react with a white ring so it is easy to see if your gun and you are dialed in. The Boar Target measure 16.5" x 24" and comes in packs of three for \$12.70, or in multiples of 100 for \$3.40 each. Visit www.birchwoodcasey.com.

Pig hunting is available year round, affordable, fun, exciting, and the population needs to be controlled. Go forth and fill your freezer. 🐖🌟



The Savage Model 110 Hog Hunter in .338 Federal.



The Marlin 1895 SBL in .45-70 Gov't.



The Ruger Gunsite Scout in .450 Bushmaster.



CoastWatch | Danno Wise

The last Monday in May signals the 'official unofficial' start to summer. Although the calendar says summer won't start until late June, the summer-like temperatures will arrive along the Texas coast well before Memorial Day — as will the summer-like crowds. Rising temperatures mean increased inshore action along the Lower and Middle Texas coast. May also sees the first legitimate offshore action of the year for many pelagic species.

Across Lower and Middle Texas Coast bays, May tends to be one of those special months when temperatures are high enough for the fish to be plenty active, but not so overbearingly hot to cause fish and fishermen to become lethargic. Additionally, May is the first month when the beachfront and offshore action 'busts wide open' along the Texas coast. Tarpon, kingfish, and snapper are just a few of the big water species that Texas anglers will target starting in May. **T&J**



PHOTO BY DANNO WISE

Captain Steve Ellis of Getaway Lodge in Port Mansfield admires a solid speckled trout he caught. He says, "I like to find clean, shallow water to do most of my fishing in May... it's where the better fish are caught."



Fishermen in the Port Isabel/South Padre Island area have plenty to look forward to during the final full month of spring. There will literally be active fish throughout the bay, starting with lots of quality speckled trout along the bars and spoil islands right in front of Port Isabel.

The entire western half of the bay will be producing good catches of trout — from Laguna Vista all the way up to Cullen's. Redfish will also be found along the west side, although most people serious about searching for reds will be on the east side in areas like Gas Well Flats. Those looking for spot tails on the west side will find the largest concentrations south of Cullen's.

The entire stretch of the ICW will be holding trout along the edges. There will also be decent numbers of flounder landed along the narrow flats between the spoils and the ICW. Finally, the shacks up north will be producing drum, trout, flounder, sheepshead and a few mangrove snapper.

Snook will be transitioning from the ship channel areas into the bay and around the jetties this month. May is also the time of year when anglers start keeping an eye out for the year's first tarpon, which will usually appear toward the end of the month. And, those looking to run offshore will be able to target kingfish throughout the month and should begin getting into sailfish by month's end.

In Port Mansfield, Capt. Steve "JR" Ellis of Getaway Lodge says there will be plenty of fish and plenty of angling options on the upper half of the Lower Laguna Madre in May.

"In May, fishing will be good, but you should expect to have very high winds,"



PHOTO BY DANNO WISE

Solid redfish will be found on both the west and east side of the Lower Laguna Madre in May.

said Ellis. "Everybody things that March and April are windy, but over the past several years May has actually been the windiest month of the year for us. So, we can expect plenty of windy days. But, that is also a time when the water temperatures are getting just right, so we'll still have plenty of areas holding a lot of active fish.

"I really like finding clean, shallow water to do most of my fishing in May. You can catch some fish in the off-color water, but I always seem to get better fish in the cleaner, shallower water.

"As far as where to go, the East Cut is always holding plenty of fish that time of year. The East Cut is especially good early in the morning before all the boat traffic goes through there.

"May is also when we'll start seeing our fish really start moving up on the sand flats. All those sand flats on the east side – both north and south of the East Cut – will be holding plenty of fish in May. When we're not fishing the sand on the east side, we'll back out to a little deeper water and look for the color change. There are always plenty of trout along the color change.

"There will be some good fishing along the west side as well. That whole west shoreline can be really good at times. But, there are always a lot of guys out wadefishing that area, so try not to run along the shoreline.



PHOTO BY DANNO WISE

On a windy day a hammered copper spoon can be deadly on redfish when fishing the grass flats.

"Actually, the deeper water that runs parallel to the western shore is really productive in May. When you're fishing out in that deeper water, a FP3 cork with a GULP! Shrimp under it is the way to go.

"Another really good option in May is the Land Cut. That area is usually really good, but it is a longer boat ride and can be bumpy coming back. We'll also be catching fish around the submerged bars. May is when we typically see the submerged bars getting hot."

For anglers fishing out of Corpus Christi, the Upper Laguna Madre will

be producing good numbers of redfish during May. Thanks to the warmer water temperatures, reds will be spending much more time on the shallow flats this month, although there will still be some fish found along the channels and drops.

Trout, however, will be the main attraction, with Nueces and Baffin bays drawing most of the attention. Topwaters and soft-plastics will be the go-tos for lure fishermen, while bait fishermen will begin switching to croaker as soon as the baitfish are large enough to effectively use. Those willing to make a little longer run can



"THE COMPLETE PACKAGE"

Perfect for Couples, Friend & Family Gatherings, Business Events, Team Building
Trophy Speckled Trout, Redfish, Flounder, plus nearshore Red Snapper, Ling, Kingfish and more
Dove and Duck hunting, Cast & Blast (combination fishing & hunting, doves or ducks)
Men, Women and Children are ALL welcomed and accommodated
Fully remodeled lodge and scrumptious South Texas home cooking

Relax, we'll take care of the details!



GIVE US A CALL!
956-944-4000
www.GetawayPM.com

Ad created by Texas Outdoors Journal Design Services

score good catches of speckled trout and black drum at the Land Cut as well. 🌟🌟



In the Aransas area, May signals the start of “croaker season” as the multitudes of trout fishermen switch from shrimp and plastics to croaker as their bait of choice for speckled trout. Most of the waters around Aransas Pass and Port Aransas will be holding good numbers of trout during May. Nueces, Aransas, and Corpus Christi bays will all have plenty of fish this month.

Most of the trout will be over mid-depth flats and along the drops. Later in the month, the fish will be found around the deeper structure.

Redfish, on the other hand, will be plentiful on the flats and along the shorelines where they can be taken with topwaters, spoons or cut bait.

Croaker will also be the key in the Rockport-Fulton area, as trout fishing takes center stage during May.

Anglers can expect to find trout all the way from the mid-bay areas of Aransas Bay south to the Land Cut.

In addition to trout, redfish will be working along the edges of the flats and over the drops. Soft-plastics, live shrimp or cut mullet will suffice to take redfish in May.

Black drum should also be schooling in May. Anglers armed with fresh dead shrimp should be able to catch easy limits of drum on the flats this month.

In Seadrift, Capt. Nathan Beabout says the wind will often dictate when, where and how he fishes this month.

“For the most part over the last several days, our south shoreline remains to be gin clear,” said Beabout. “There are some small areas that have dirty streaks on them.

“These small areas of dirty streaks are holding bait, and a handful of fish, but some of the areas I have been concentrating on are windward banks of our outside shorelines. With the passing low pressure system, our wind forecast has had lots of east in the wind. Not too strong at times, but just enough to dirty up the north and west shorelines of the bays and certain pockets.

“Running to some of these areas can be rough to get to, but we have been leaving the dock a little early to make up for travel time.

“The windward areas have really been holding a lot of bait, with many solid trout and a crazy number of redfish hovering around them. Over the past couple weeks we have started to catch many solid trout from 22 to 28-inches, mostly on top waters. When there is just a small ripple on the water lapping the bank we have been throwing Spook Jr., but when there is a one or two-foot chop, the bigger One Knocker Spooks have been getting the job done.


“Most mornings I have been by passing the reefs, which are holding great numbers of trout, but the grass flats are holding much more solid fish that my customers are after.

“The reef trout have been anywhere

7th Annual Rock the Dock

**Admission: \$5.00 for Adults
kid free under 10.**

Portions of the proceeds to benefit Future Marine Mechanics Program and sponsored by the



May 11th thru 13th 2018

Tackle Electronics Local Artists Nautical Jewelry Great Food Live Music Much More!


**Fri., 12 - 7
Sat., 10 - 7 & Sun., 10 - 5**

In-Water Boat Show

Come Sea-Trial the boat of your Dreams!
13 Dealers with 50 Models and over 100 boats on site
Fishing Boats, Pleasure Boats, Off Shore Boats, Boats of ALL Sizes

FREE PARKING, GREAT FOOD, MUSIC & DOOR PRIZES

Sponsored in part by:



322 Huff Street, Aransas Pass 361-758-9000

from 16 to 18 inches and our best bite has been on heavy weighted jig heads and a dark color, either in the roach or pumpkinseed. The trout we have found are up on top of the reef before the sun comes up, and drop out to three to four feet of water after the sun breaks the horizon.

“My plan every morning will remain the same I will play the wind and leave early if I have to get past the boat traffic.

“This time of year you can’t be afraid to double back on an area after the boat traffic has gone in for the day. If you have the right ingredients and no pressure, fish should resume normal activity therefore that area should produce better.”

In Port O’Connor, trout will be holding over sand and grass during May.

And, when the conditions are right, there will be good numbers of specks caught along the beachfront.

Redfish will be along the shorelines and in the back lakes, as will black drum. There will also be good numbers of flounder taken along the shorelines and around the back lake drains. 🌟🌟



PHOTO COURTESY CAPT. NATHAN BEABOUT

Captain Nathan Beabout shows off a solid trout caught while wade fishing. He says in May he will concentrate on the windward banks of the outside shorelines.



PHOTO BY BILL L. OLSON

Anglers fishing out of Rockport or Fulton will run to the backside of St. Jo Island in May to fish the shorelines and back lake areas.

**BOOK NOW FOR SUMMER • GREAT INSHORE/OFFSHORE FISHING
VISIT MID-COAST ATTRACTIONS • SCHLITTERBAHN WATER PARK**



**YOUR BEACHFRONT OR CANAL-FRONT RETREAT LEADING TO
FAVORITE FISHING SPOTS ON THE UPPER LAGUNA MADRE IS WAITING!**

*Let our professionals help plan your next island vacation, getaway or tournament needs.
Call us for specials and availability.*

The Rental Management Company
TRMC
Gary Graham Realty
Professional Property Management and Sales
Serving North Padre Island since 1988

361.949.9050 OFFICE 361.949.9070 FAX
14613 S. PADRE ISLAND DRIVE, CORPUS CHRISTI, TX 78418
www.rentalmgmt.com



Lake Roundup

SOUTH TEXAS



By Danno Wise

Many South Texas lakes saw considerable fishing traffic during the spawning months of February, March and April. However, May will be the first month of truly heavy traffic on most bodies of waters across the lower portion of the Lone Star State. Warming weather will be encouraging fish to snap out of their post-spawn blues this month. The rising temperatures will also entice more anglers to head to the lake in May.

As if pleasant weather and increased fish activity weren't enough to overload most lakes, school will also be letting out towards the end of the fifth month, meaning families will have more time on their hands to spend a day or two on the water. Despite the increased crowds, there should be more than enough action to go around. In addition to better than average black bass action, catfish and a variety of panfish should also be active enough to keep anglers happy.

COLETO CREEK – Victoria bass pro Dennis Lala says that although May is a spring month, it actually signals the start of summer fishing on Coletto Creek.

"Starting in May, we'll be entering our warm water pattern," said Lala. "We'll have some good topwater action early. Later in the month, that topwater action will end after the sun gets up good. But, as long as the water's not too hot, those fish will keep hitting topwaters throughout the morning. This year, we may see that extend a little longer into May, because the

water was so late getting warm. Usually, when I'm throwing a topwater, I like something that makes quite a bit of noise, like a Frenzy Popper or a buzzbait.

"But, just because those fish turn off a topwater doesn't necessarily mean they're heading deep. In May, we can still catch a lot of fish with shallow running baits even after the topwater bite is over. Spinnerbaits are something you can throw dang near all day in May. You can fish 'em around points, along the shorelines or around any pads or grass beds you might be able to find.

"My favorite thing to do in May when those fish aren't hitting topwaters is to work the drops and points with a light Carolina rig. I'll use something like a 1/4 or 7/16 ounce weight, a fairly short leader and a Power Jerkshad. I like to throw it right up against the edge of the grass and let it fall down the face of the grass bed."

"We'll also still have some real good crappie fishing in May. A lot of fish will be caught up around the Colettoville bridge – especially at night. But, you can also find those crappie stacked up around some of the deep structure in the lake. Lots of little jigs will catch crappie, but it's really hard to beat a live shiner."

MEDINA – Because bass usually spawn a little bit later in the year on Medina than on other South Texas lakes, May will find a good deal of bass in the lake still in a post-spawn pattern, according to Jim Gallagher of Jim's Re bait Tackle. But, post-spawn fish aside, Gallagher says anglers have reasons to be optimistic if they plan on heading to Medina in May.

"May is a pretty good month to fish Medina," said Gallagher. "We'll actually be in one of the most productive periods of the year for us – late April through the middle of June. It's one of those deals where, the water is warm enough for the fish to be active, but not so hot that it pushes 'em deep. So, that's a good thing.

"Actually, even though this lake has a reputation for being kind of tough, May is a month when anybody can come down here and look good. During the summer and winter, the fish are really deep and you have to know what you're doing. At

that point, it really is technical fishing and if you don't have deepwater fishing skills, you won't catch fish. But, right now, you can usually get a pretty good topwater bite. You don't have to fish real slow and you can catch fish on baits that folks are used to throwing on other South Texas lakes.

"While the fish are more aggressive this month, this is still a small-bait lake. For whatever reason, big topwater baits just don't work on this lake. Spit'N Images and Pop'Rs are typically good topwater baits here. But, just about any topwater will work so long as it's not too big.

"After the topwater bite is over, you need to look around the main lake and secondary points.

"We usually catch most of our fish around main lake points, but this time of year secondary points and creek channels can also be real good.

"The whites and hybrids will be schooled up all over the lake. You just kind of have to keep an eye out. There's really no telling where they'll pop up. If you can spot a school, you can have some really good action."

CHOKO CANYON – In May, most of Choke Canyon's hydrilla beds will be at or near the surface. However, the grass won't be densely matted over as it is later in the year, offering anglers an excellent opportunity to work topwater plugs over the grass beds.

Typically, Choke Canyon bass prefer noisy topwater lures like buzzbaits. Artificial frogs are also effective since they are weedless and can be worked over the beds regardless of how matted they become.

During the first half of May, fishermen can expect an elongated topwater bite. As the water gets warmer during the back half of May, the topwater bite will begin to shut down earlier in the morning.

Once the topwater action shuts down, anglers should look for fish to be holding on deeper structure.

The outside edges of the grass beds will hold quite a few fish, as will humps, tank dams and points. Texas rigged plastics, crankbaits and jigs are the most effective tools for probing these areas. Again, early

in the month, fish won't be extremely deep. But, as the month wears on, expect the fish to begin backing down to deeper structure.

FALCON — As is the case on most lakes across "Tejas," the fish on Falcon will also be working shallow during much of May. However, instead of keying on grass, anglers on this border lake should look for brush.

Given the current lake level, there is no shortage of flooded brush on Falcon. In fact, there are several fish-holding areas that are inaccessible to anglers due to the density of the brush. However, there are still plenty of areas that anglers can get to that will be holding plenty of fish.

When the surface bite subsides, fishermen should continue working around the flooded brush. Spinnerbaits and crankbaits are effective when worked along the outside face of the flooded brush. Jigs and Texas rigged plastics can be worked back into some of the denser portions of brush.

Later in the month, anglers should spend more time concentrating on points, ledges and deep structure. Deep cranks, jigs, lipless cranks, creature baits and jumbo soft-plastics all produce plenty of big bass over deep structure in Falcon. **T★J**



AMISTAD — At the beginning of April "Big Friendly" was 23 feet below conservation pool. That is about the same level this popular border impound has been at, the past two years. However, last year by the time May rolled around the agricultural needs had drawn it down to 31 feet low. We will have to see if rainfall and downstream runoff offset this annual need.

Water temperature is running ahead of the past two year's. In early April the lake

had readings of between 72-76 degrees.

As is regularly mentioned, even at lower levels this lake has plenty of fishing opportunities for black bass. As the fifth month begins look for any late spawning activity to be in the main lake and on the deeper flats.

With most bass being in a post-spawn pattern, expect them to be working along the top of the first drops, or emerging vegetation. Rat-L-Traps, crankbaits and spinnerbaits are good options. So is fishing any flooded timber or rocky slide areas. Texas rigs and jigs will cover these areas.

Catfish should be up shallow and spawning. Look in water three to 12 feet deep. Live, cut, and prepared baits will all work well.

Stripers are in the summertime haunts in the deep water in front of the dam. Early and late they could be on the surface where topwater baits or large Rat-L-Traps will catch them. Otherwise watch your electronics to find the schools of fish around bait balls and use deep diving crankbaits and Rat-L-Traps.

O.H. IVIE — May is when this popular big bass producer really shines. The best pattern is to go after spawning black bass on deep water flats.

The perennial pattern is to set up drifts over flats in water 25 feet deep and deeper. Use float-markers to track your progress. When one drift is complete, come around and set over a few feet to drift again.

Use a Carolina rig with a 10" Power Bait and drag it behind the boat. Countless double digit bass, as well as a few ShareLunkers have been caught this way.

By the end of May look for bass to start to school. In these schools there will be black, white and smallmouth bass.

BROWNWOOD — At the beginning of May 2016 and 2017 anglers on this popular west Texas lake saw levels just inches either side of conservation pool. At the beginning of April 2018 this lake was almost four feet low.

Water temperatures are similar to 2017 and about 10 degrees warmer than 2016. Look for good post-spawn black bass action by fishing boat docks. Bass Hogg Gorilla jigs, green pumpkin soft plastics or white/chartreuse crankbaits have produced best.

Another option is to fish water three to five feet deep on top of the first drop.

Small shallow crankbaits, spinnerbaits and flukes are good options.

Crappie anglers will do well to fish the brush piles with minnows or small jigs. Best water depth early in May is usually 10-20 feet deep. By the middle of the fifth month of the year throw small-framed spinnerbaits in water one to eight feet deep during the crappie spawn. **T★J**

HIGH PLAINS



ALAN HENRY — At the beginning of April this lake was about six and a half feet low compared to a two foot deficit the past couple of years.

The lake has not been this low since it was just under 10 feet low in April 2015 before "the big fill" occurred in May 2015. Expect water temperatures to range either side of the 70 degree mark.

With lower water levels reorient to fish shallow structure and drop-offs. Best efforts for black bass will come from jigs, flukes and Texas rigs.

COLEMAN — At the start of April Lake Coleman was about two and a half feet low, however the fishing has been good at the start of spring. Look for that trend to continue through the month of May.

Best bass bites will come on red Rat-L-Traps, spinnerbaits and soft plastics or lizards. Fish the top of the first drop at first light and then work off the drop as the morning warms.

OTHER OPTIONS—**McKenzie Reservoir** remains about 74 feet low but the crappie bite has been good. Look for papermouths to have moved out of the shallows toward brush piles and vertical timber.

Stanford Reservoir is just a foot below conservation pool and will be a good option for black bass early in the month on buzzbaits.

Crappie will move into the shallows to spawn mid-month. **T★J**



Muzzleloading Handguns - Perfect for Hogs

In spite of a lot of print to the contrary, all hunting for feral hogs is not best done with a semi-automatic carbine. As an admitted “throwback” hunter/shooter, I actually prefer a single shot. While I do own and use both double and single action revolvers in calibers from .44 Magnum to .480 Ruger, most of my hogs in the past few years have been killed with a single shot Thompson Contender chambered for .44 magnum and equipped with a sound suppressor.

To be even more contrary (and because I shoot sub sonic loads so my suppressor will be even quieter), I prefer to use heavy hard cast .44 (actually .429”) bullets of 300 – 335 grain at about 1,000 fps. This combination is a close range proposition, for sure – but that is what handgun hunting is supposed to be all about. At up to 65 yards, I get complete penetration with shoulder or neck shots, and a couple of times have killed two hogs with one shot – and still not found the expended bullet.

When I recently had the chance to obtain a CVA Optima 2, 50 caliber muzzle loading “pistol”, I did not see any reason to wait until next year’s Texas muzzleloader-only deer season to try it out. This is a heavy gun, with a 14” barrel and all stainless steel construction. It is a break open action with a removable breech plug that aids in cleaning.

Mine came with a good base mount for optics, and after trying a red dot



This is a hefty sized boar hog that provides a challenge to hunt with muzzleloaders and provides great meat for the table.



A pair of muzzleloaders well suited to hog hunting is (top) a Mossberg 500 12 gauge pump fitted with a .50 caliber muzzle loading barrel and a 4x Nikon muzzle loader scope. Bottom is a Optima CV single shot pistol with a .50 muzzle loader barrel and a 2X Weaver muzzle loader scope. Both guns can be fitted with “standard” barrels. The Mossberg is a 12 gauge, while the Optima wears a .30/30 Ackely Improved barrel outside of the muzzleloader-only deer season.

I eventually mounted a Leupold 4X handgun scope. In most cases I prefer a 2X or so scope for handguns, but I have had the Leupold for many years and was comfortable using it.

Reviews had warned the recoil could be considerable but that it also “packed a pretty good punch”. The gun is rated by CVA for up to three 50 gram powder pellets, but 2 pellets is the recommended maximum.

For my testing, I found a box of 30 gram Hodgdon Triple 7 pellets to pair with the 50 gram stuff for a charge weight of 80 grams. For bullets, instead of “regular” muzzle loading bullets, I have been shooting hard-cast handgun bullets of .44 caliber encased in a plastic sabot – the same bullets I use in my Contender. Personally, I am a believer in large, heavy bullet traveling at moderate velocities for my type of hunting. High velocities – and lighter bullets – have their uses but in my experience are not a

good choice for close range hog hunting in sometimes thick brush.

I have killed hogs – a lot of them – with a .22 rim fire and a couple with a .300 Win. Mag. Other hogs have been taken with a .300 Savage, .30-06, .44 mag Ruger carbine, and with both buckshot or slugs from a 20-gauge shotgun. However for strickly hog hunting, a heavy hard cast .44 bullet from a handgun length barrel does everything I need.

Those familiar with muzzleloaders know that for close range hunting they can provide both the accuracy and the power for hog hunting. This set-up matches my Contender loads pretty well except it does take a bit longer to reload than even the single shot Contender, and it produces a lot of noise plus a BIG puff of white smoke with each shot.

It is best to make good shots and try for one-shot kills with this weapon, although I usually have a big bore sidearm with me for a needed coup de gras. I am comfortable with the heavy hard cast bullets, and try to make shoulder or head shots to produce “one shot kills”.

Hogs are a perfect game animal for muzzleloaders, as there is no closed

season and virtually no restrictions on the weapons used. Also, hog hunts with your muzzle loader will make you a more productive hunter with the same weapon in the muzzleloader only deer season.

The other muzzle loader I hunt with right now is a Mossberg 500 pump 12 gauge fitted with a .50 caliber muzzle loading barrel. With this adaptation, the action is opened to place a 209 shotgun primer in the end of the barrel by working the pump, then closing it to secure the primer. Just as in other in-line muzzleloader configurations the powder charge and then the bullet are loaded from the muzzle and tightly seated with a ramrod.

Most of the time I shoot .50 bullets in sabots or bullets with a plastic coated base over the brass casing. However, the same .44 bullets can be used in it with sabots and it is still a single shot in MZ mode. Teaming my CVA pistol with the Mossberg gives me two shots, so a backup revolver is not as necessary – hopefully.

I use the muzzleloaders for stand and still hunting, but probably not when using dogs when hunting and chasing hogs. Sitting in a stand over a pile of corn would give the hunter about as good a chance for a successful shot on a big hog as any method. Plus stand hunters can more easily have two different muzzleloaders ready for action.

This discussion will deal with the more “modern” In-Line muzzleloaders, rather than traditional flintlocks. However, those who prefer the traditional guns can certainly kill their share of hogs as well. There are traditional muzzle loading pistols that have the “power” to take

hogs at close range and a percussion-cap revolver might be an interesting “backup” handgun for a hog hunter.

As mentioned earlier, I use a 4X scope on my CVA pistol, and a “muzzleloader” scope on the Mossberg. Recoil is not excessive with either gun, so the scope life should be good. Of course, a muzzleloader cannot be fired more than a couple of times without cleaning the bore, so that “extra” gun might be a good option for more than just possible “second shots.”

There are “other” calibers available in modern muzzleloaders, but I have used a .50 due to several factors. Beginning with the fact that these are more common than other calibers, making components easier to find and buy. The ballistics of the big bullet are also “better” for big game animals.

This is true where bullet weight plus the other factors that come with the larger weight/caliber such as shocking power, good penetration, and limited deflection by vegetation between the shooter and target.

The modern in-line muzzleloader is a much more practical hunting weapon than the older flintlock or percussion weapons, and can be a good choice for many activities. For serious hog control, repeating firearms shooting cartridge ammunition is a more practical choice. For hog hunting, as opposed to elimination, muzzleloaders can increase the challenge of the hunt. Because hogs can and sometimes will “fight back”, it is probably best to have either a backup, a repeating firearm, or even better another shooter armed with one close by for safety.

I hog hunt with my single shot

Contender, however, a break-open single shot pistol can be rapidly reloaded by a shooter familiar with his weapon. When hunting from a raised box stand such firepower is probably more important for productivity, rather than safety.

While many hogs these days are shot and left in the woods, just to “get rid” of them, that can be a waste of good meat. The largest boar I have killed on my property had a live weight a bit over 300 pounds, before being field dressed, and was rangy — not fat. This particular hog had a sort of “sweet” smell when I hung him for cleaning. I later learned a cattle rancher down the road was putting out feeder “tubs” with a molasses flavored product that the hogs were competing with the cows for.

The back-straps, ribs, and hams of this big hog were well worth the effort to butcher him and prepare the meat. This included “curing” the hams and smoking them – which produced a real treat.

A big hog might not be as visually attractive as a trophy deer, but it can make an impressive, attention getting head mount. I have seen nice mounts done by taxidermists, but a Euro style skull mount can be a DIY project that is also an eye-catcher, especially with a boar carrying hefty tusks. A big boar mount can be an impressive addition to most any trophy room.

So, we have an animal that most property owners and land managers would prefer to be removed from their properties. Sometimes they will allow hunting access to get this done even on places that might be hard to get permission to hunt other species. Even paid hunting for hogs will be much more reasonably priced than a whitetail deer hunt.

These animals are not extremely difficult to hunt, provide a measure of excitement – even actual danger – that will not be found when hunting most other game animals in Texas, and can provide some excellent meat for the table. There are no closed seasons or bag limits, and they can be hunted by almost any means – day or night. Further adding to the “thrill” of the hunt for these critters is using archery equipment, spears, dogs and knives or muzzleloading firearms.

Although the state of Texas does not consider feral hogs to be “game animals”, possibly more Texas hunters should. **T★J**



Hogs are prolific breeders with sows beginning to breed at eight months and have several litters of pigs each year.

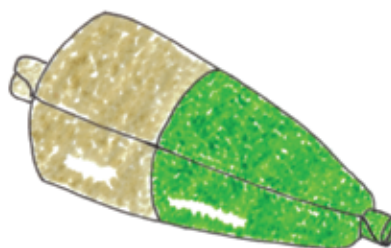


Making Noise to Catch Fish



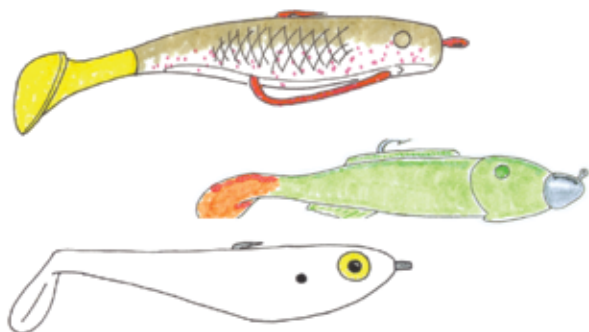
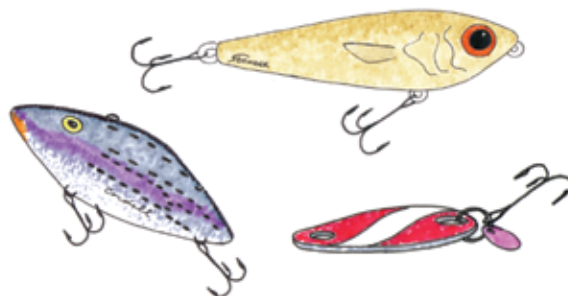
It always seems that spring gets windier each day before the seasonal blow gives way to the calm of summer. As a result, May is often a time when anglers need to “make a little noise” to attract the attention of speckled trout and redfish over the din of sound created by wind driven waves on the bay’s surface. There are a variety of ways fishermen can accomplish this task.

The most common noise-making device employed by Texas coastal fishermen is the popping cork. Today, popping corks have evolved tremendously since the days of the cup-faced, conical, slotted foam version. Alameda corks and a variety of wire-through versions are now the most regularly used. This is mostly personal preference, but as a rule, the deeper and darker the water, the more noise a cork needs to make.



In-line rattle weights have become used with increasing regularity along the Texas coast. These weights first became popular among live bait fishermen using croaker, shad or pinfish on the bottom. However, they can also be used under popping corks with live shrimp or lures. And, they are also effective when placed a foot or so in front of soft-plastic lures.

Various hard baits can also be effectively used to attract fish utilizing sound as well as vibration. Topwater plugs - whether they be dog-walkers, poppers, chuggers or prop baits will all do the trick, especially early in the day. When fish are deeper, lipless crankbaits provide both a rattle and wobble to attract fish in turbulent water. And, the wobble and vibration of the venerable spoon has long been used to draw fish from across the flats.



Soft-plastics can also be used to draw fish in when the water is murky and/or rough. To do so, however, these baits need to be fitted with a paddle-style tail, which gives off a vibration and “thump” that fish can sense from a good distance. The deeper or dirtier the water, the larger the paddle needed to attract the attention of fish in the vicinity.

Guides, Gear & Getaways

SALTWATER

UPPER COAST | SABINE & GALVESTON

TROPHY TROUT • REDFISH • FLOUNDER
SABINE LAKE • 30 YEARS EXPERIENCE

Capt. Randy's Guide Service
www.fishsabine.com
YEAR ROUND FISHING
409-719-6067

CAPT. RANDY FOREMAN, U.S.C.G. LIC.
PORT ARTHUR, TEXAS



Galveston Bay Fishing
Since 1967

CAPT. TIM YOUNG 281.460.3872
www.timyoungoutdoors.com



Captain Greg Verm
Flounder Giggling | Bay-Jetty Fishing
Bayou | Bay fishing | Kid Friendly!
409-739-8526 | Greg@FishingGalvestonTx.com
FishingGalvestonTx.com



BATTISTONI'S GUIDE SERVICE
Galveston Bay Complex

Capt. Ryan Battistoni
Corporate & Family Trips
832-335-8339
www.fishgalvestonbays.com



REEL THREEEEL GALVESTON CHARTERS
Capt. Mike Segall
281-808-1310
reelthreeeel.com
www.reelthreeeel.com

Freeport/Galveston | Deepsea & Bay Charters | Lodging
USCG License | Federal & State Permitted | Bay & Offshore Boats

Tell 'em you saw
their ad in
**TEXAS
OUTDOORS
JOURNAL**

UPPER COAST | MATAGORDA

**YOUR AD SHOULD
BE HERE!**

CALL 713-957-3997
for GUIDES, GEAR & GETAWAY ADS




U.S.C.G. Lic.

Tommy's Guide Service
Matagorda Bays & Colorado River

TOMMY W. COUNTZ (281) 450-4037 - cell
PO Box 637 tcountz@sbcglobal.net
Matagorda TX 77457
www.matagordafishing.com

YOUR AD SHOULD BE HERE!

CALL 713-957-3997
for GUIDES, GEAR & GETAWAY ADS



**TEXAS
OUTDOORS
JOURNAL**

MIDDLE COAST | SEADRIFT



USCG Licensed Captain
NATHAN BEABOUT
Seadrift & Port O' Connor
Fishing & Hunting Guide

210.452.9680
nmsportsmansadventures.com



MIDDLE COAST | ROCKPORT

Renting luxurious 1, 2, and 3 bedroom condominiums on Aransas Bay, Rockport Texas.
Close to great launch ramps and excellent fishing hot spots.
1,000 foot lighted private fishing pier. Close to Downtown and more.



Laguna Reef
...on the Bay

1021S. Water Street www.lagunareef.com
2 Blocks South of Downtown Rockport (800) 248-1057 OR (361) 729-1742

Come fish our private pier - Exclusively for our guests!




Texas ROCKPORT-TX
by design

CUSTOM EMBROIDERY - GIFTS - GALLERY
Embroidered Apparel with Texas Flair!
(361) 729-8995

SPECIALIZING IN:
Embroidered artwork by renowned wildlife and sporting artists:
Calvin Carter, Casey Chase, Don Brecken and more.
Choose from a variety of outdoor shirt brands and fabrics
for all shapes and sizes of men and women.

Facebook: Texas by Design • 205 S. Austin St. • Rockport, TX 78382



the BOILING-POT

A Different Way to Dine
for the Whole Family!
FRESH, TANGY, CAJUN-STYLE SEAFOOD.
Try it our way!

Rockport
361-729-6972

LISTEN TO



**TEXAS
OUTDOOR NEWS**

with Bill L. Olson & Harold Gunn

ON **STITCHER**
SMART RADIO

Little to Big Tugs



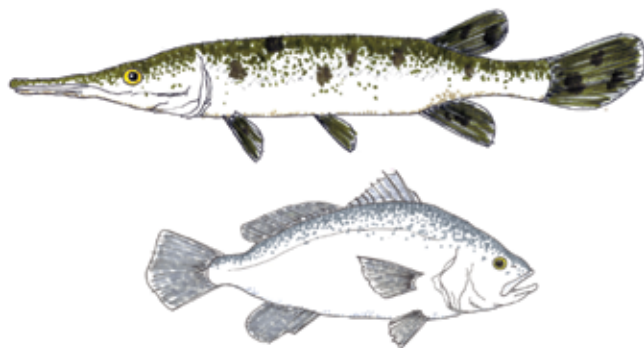
Panfish are always popular for anglers of various experience levels. Bluegill and crappie -- two of the most sought after panfish species -- are very active during May. Not only can panfish offer fast action, but they can provide plenty of tasty fillets for a fish dinner.

Late spring and early summer are great times to enjoy some simple yet productive fishing on Texas lakes, rivers, creeks and ponds. Natural baits and a basic terminal tackle can result in good catches of a variety of hard fighting, good tasting freshwater fish.



All three of the 'major' catfish species found in Texas -- channel, blue and yellow -- will be active this time of year as well. Although each species is found in slightly different types of water and prefer different baits and presentations, all can be caught on natural baits in most bodies of freshwater in the Lone Star State. Very often, catfish are the first 'big fish' caught by young anglers. And, all varieties of catfish are well-known for their fillets, making them a great target for anyone wanting to have a fish fry during late spring or early summer.

Other species that are less sought after, can be targeted to give anglers a thrilling fight. Gar and freshwater drum are two such examples. Although not necessarily as tasty as catfish or panfish, these species are certainly edible and are actually pretty good when prepared properly. Spotted gar are found just about everywhere. Freshwater drum can grow quite large and are strong fighters, while alligator gar are the true big game species of Texas freshwater fishing.



Each of these species can be caught using the very basic of basic fishing tackle -- a hook and sinker along with some sort of natural bait and possibly a cork, bobber or float of some sort. Every one of these species will hit live minnows and most will also devour live crawfish, nightcrawlers and grasshoppers, making it possible for anglers to easily catch both the bait and the fish.

Guides, Gear & Getaways

MIDDLE COAST | PORT ARANSAS

PORTARANSAS-TEXAS.COM
ACCOMMODATIONS
FISHING • DINING • AREA INFO

Managing Comfort in Port Aransas, TX

MIDDLE COAST | CORPUS CHRISTI-NORTH PADRE ISLAND

The Rental Management Company
TRMCO
 Gary Graham Realty

Professional Property Management and Sales
Serving North Padre Island since 1988

Luxury Vacation Rentals by Gulf Beachfront or on Canals leading to Upper Laguna Madre & your favorite fishing spot. Many with private boat docks.

Book online or call our rental specialist today!

361.949.9050 OFFICE 361.949.9070 FAX
 14613 S. PADRE ISLAND DRIVE, CORPUS CHRISTI, TX 78418
www.rentalmgmt.com

LOWER COAST | BAFFIN BAY

World class fishing off of Loyola Beach in Baffin Bay.

City of **Kingsville** TEXAS

For information on lodging, shopping and family activities in historic Kingsville, call 800-333-5032 or visit us at the Kingsville Visitors Center, www.kingsvilletexas.com

Texas Sportsman Baitwater Fishing Charters

Capt. Daniel Land
 Lower Texas Coast

Call to book your next hunting & fishing trips!
 (361) 876-7610
www.txsportsmancharters.com

Your Ad Should Be Here!

Call (713) 957-3997 for Guides, Gear & Getaway Ads

Be sure to check out texasoutdoorsjournal.com before your next hunting or fishing trip

LOWER COAST | PORT MANSFIELD

Getaway Lodge
 Port Mansfield, TX

"The Complete Package"
 Relax, we'll take care of the details!

- World Class Fishing
- Dove & Waterfowl
- Cast & Blast
- Inshore & Offshore
- Private & Corporate Events & Meetings

GIVE US A CALL!
 956-944-4000
www.getawayadventureslodge.com

MIDDLE COAST | CORPUS CHRISTI-NORTH PADRE ISLAND

Laguna Adventures
 Floating Cabin Rentals

BAY & OFF-SHORE FISHING • DUCK HUNTING

361-500-3559
LagunaAdventures@gmail.com

www.LagunaAdventures.com
 Laguna Madre • Baffin Bay • Land Cut

CHARTER FISHING

Captain Steve (JR) Ellis
 956.492.8472
 Laguna Madre Texas
 USCG 100 Ton Master Captain

Shallow Water, Wade & Fly Fishing Specialist

YOUR AD SHOULD BE HERE!

CALL 713-957-3997
 for GUIDES, GEAR & GETAWAY ADS

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!

News, Updates, Specials and more, delivered straight to your newsfeed!



TEXAS OUTDOORS JOURNAL

LOWER COAST | PORT ISABEL & SOUTH PADRE ISLAND

Capt. Austin Camacho
FISHING & HUNTING GUIDE SERVICE
 Trout • Redfish • Flounder • Dove Hunting

(956) 343-5816
 (956) 761-6655
 USCG Licensed
 Port Isabel / South Padre Island
www.captinaustin.com

In The Beginning - Squirrels



Long before big game animals were targeted many hunters honed their skills pursuing squirrels. Countless numbers of youngsters have earned their “hunting stripes” in pursuit of “Mister Bushytail.”

In 51 East Texas counties where the spring season is opened May 1 – 31, squirrel hunting use to be revered much like the September dove season or the general whitetail deer season in November. These same East Texas counties also have a fall hunting season that is open October 1 to about Feb. 25 each year.

In 157 other Texas counties there is no closed season and no bag limit. Of the 254 counties in the Lone Star State, only 46 counties do not have a squirrel season

Most Texas hunters pursue either the gray or cat squirrels. These small tree rodents are sometimes referred to as cat squirrels with antics that sometimes mimic a cat as they scratch and forage on the forest floor. The other specie is a fox squirrel

According to Texas Parks & Wildlife biologist when there is a good mast crop in the fall there is also a good crop of young squirrels in the spring. Hunters going after squirrels this May should find plenty of these critters scampering from tree to tree or playing amongst the tree limbs.

One of the best ways to hunt squirrels is to find a good hardwood bottom with oaks or other nut bearing trees. Look for “cuttings” where squirrels have fed on these acorns, tracks along side of creeks as well as listen for their barks and chatters. Squirrels will also eat the seeds from pine cones.

Many hunters will break out either a .22 rim fire rifle or a shotgun. When hunting in areas with heavy spring foliage a 12 gauge shotgun with a full choke loaded with #6 shot is a great option.

When hunting with the popular .22 enter the woods at first light, find a place to settle in and let things become quiet. Usually after 15-20 minutes any squirrels that were disturbed will soon figure the coast is clear and resume their normal activities.



If no squirrels appear it is time to still-hunt. This is where many hunters learned how to slowly and quietly move through the woods. When still-hunting no more than about 10 yards is covered in a minute.

Many times a hunter will rest up against a tree to observe a new portion of the forest for several moments before continuing to move forward with the hunt. This type of hunting teaches patience, the need to look for anything out of the ordinary in the trees or look for squirrel nests built of foliage within the limbs of the trees.



Squirrels can be called using a call with a billow-bulb on one end. Hitting it sharply will make a bark. Hitting the bulb quickly several times creates a squirrel chatter.

Another call is a round silver disk with a hole in the middle. Haydel’s Mister Squirrel call imitates the distressed sound of a baby squirrel and will many times draw the attention of several adult squirrels checking out the action and even barking at the sound.

To use the call place it to your lips and suck in five times. While doing this also use a small tree branch and hit the ground three times to simulate the wing flap of a hawk, owl or other bird of prey struggling with its quarry.

Squirrel hunting is a fun and rewarding way to rekindle hunting skills of your youth or to introduce a youngster to the sport. Squirrel also provide great table fair when chicken fried and served with some pepper-creamed gravy.



Outdoor Calendar

THROUGH MAY 13,

Spring Turkey Season — *North Zone, 101 counties*. For more information consult the TPWD Outdoor Annual, or call (800) 792-1112.

THROUGH AUGUST 31,

Javelina season, *South Zone (50 counties)*. For more information consult the TPWD Outdoor Annual, website, or call (800) 792-1112.

MAY 1 – 31,

Spring squirrel season, *51 counties*. For more information consult the TPWD Outdoor Annual, or call (800) 792-1112.

MAY 2,

West Houston Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *Houston*. For tickets and reservations call (713) 421-8854.

MAY 3,

Boerne Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *Boerne*. For tickets and reservations call (210) 535-3963.

MAY 3,

Texas State University Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *San Marcos*. For tickets and reservations call (281) 513-2388.

MAY 3,

Henderson County Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation Fundraiser Banquet, *Athens*. For tickets and reservations you can call (903) 286-

0974.

MAY 3,

Lee County Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation Fundraiser Banquet, *Giddings*. For tickets and reservations call (903) 227-2006.

MAY 3-13,

Louisiana Pirate Festival, Lake Charles Civic Center & Seawall, *Lake Charles*. The 61-year old 10-day festival is the oldest in Lake Charles and one of the oldest in Louisiana. Come and enjoy great live entertainment, sample great Louisiana cuisine, Family Night (alcohol-free); First ever Swash-buckler Pirate Party; Pirate Parade Extravaganza; Fireworks Display; a Children's, Bed Races, Pirogue Building Contest, Arm-Wrestling Contest, Boat Parade, and daily Pirate Parades plus much more. For more information visit www.LouisianaPirateFestival.com.

MAY 4,

Rains County Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *Emory*. For tickets and reservations call (903) 440-0304.

MAY 4,

Robertson County Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *Franklin*. For tickets and reservations call (903) 391-8374.

MAY 4,

Bellaire Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *Stafford*. For

tickets and reservations call (832) 594-3093.

MAY 10,

Lonestar Long Beards Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation Fundraiser Banquet, *Bryan*. For tickets and reservations call (979) 219-0286.

MAY 10,

Comal County Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *New Braunfels*. For tickets and reservations call (254) 485-5106.

MAY 10,

Plano Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *Plano*. For tickets and reservations call (903) 372-6089.

MAY 11,

Georgetown Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *Georgetown*. For tickets and reservations call (512) 567-6606.

MAY 11-13,

2018 In-The-Water Rock the Dock Boat Show, Redfish Bay Boathouse, *Aransas Pass*. Come sea trial the boat of your dreams at Conn Brown Harbor's Redfish Bay Boathouse. Boats of all sizes. Great food, LIVE Music and much more. FREE Parking. www.redfishbayboathouse.com

MAY 13,

Mothers' Day — Have some fun with Mom in the outdoors, *Statewide*.


MAY 17,

Greater Houston Area Chapter Mule Deer Foundation Fundraiser Banquet, *Houston*. For tickets and reservations call (832) 349-0473.

MAY 17,

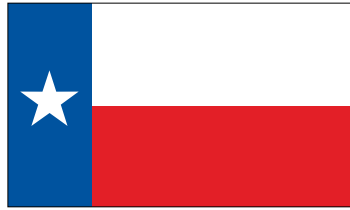
Alvin Chapter Ducks Unlimited Fundraiser Banquet, *Alvin*. For tickets and reservations call (281) 923-2398.

MAY 26 - SEPTEMBER 3,

C.C.A. S.T.A.R. Tournament, *statewide*. For more information call (713) 686-4222 or visit www.ccatexas.org. 

Mail your Outdoor
Calendar items to:

1706 W. Sam Houston Pkwy North
Houston TX 77043
Fax: 713.957.3996
Email: toj@airmail.net



Texans Are “Talking” ... About

TEXAS OUTDOORS JOURNAL

“Hunting AND Fishing every month! That’s great!”

“I love the new look of your covers.”

“I read TOJ from cover to cover every month.”

“Finally, a magazine that covers Texas like it should be covered.”

“I like it because it’s about Texas.”

“Best saltwater coverage of any magazine around.”

“It’s the best – and most useful – gift I’ve ever received.”

“I’ve cancelled all my other magazines except TOJ. Keep up the good work.”

“Your Lake Roundup even talks about some of the smaller East Texas lakes I fish.”

“Glad TOJ knows how to count to 12!! LOL!”

“Love the new look.”

“TOJ just keeps getting better, and better.”

**Isn’t it time YOU found out
what all the talk is about?**

To subscribe, call 1-800-222-4865 (4TOJ)
or go online at
www.texasoutdoorsjournal.com

Tide Tables

MAY 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		H7:13A 1.7 L1:08P 1.2 H4:25P 1.3 L11:56P 0.0 1	H8:04A 1.6 2	L12:31A 0.0 H8:56A 1.6 3	L1:08A 0.1 H9:51A 1.6 4	L1:49A 0.1 H10:50A 1.5 5
L2:37A 0.2 H11:48A 1.5 6	L3:32A 0.3 H12:39P 1.5 7	L4:36A 0.4 H1:17P 1.4 8	L5:46A 0.5 H1:45P 1.4 L8:50P 0.9 9	L12:47A 1.1 L6:55A 0.6 H2:06P 1.3 L8:38P 0.8 10	H2:09A 1.2 L7:57A 0.7 H2:23P 1.3 L8:46P 0.6 11	H3:15A 1.3 L8:53A 0.8 H2:37P 1.3 L9:06P 0.4 12
H4:14A 1.5 L9:46A 1.0 H2:50P 1.3 L9:36P 0.1 13	H5:09A 1.6 L10:37A 1.1 H3:01P 1.3 L10:11P -0.1 14	H6:03A 1.7 L11:28A 1.2 H3:12P 1.3 L10:50P -0.2 15	H6:58A 1.8 L12:20P 1.3 H3:25P 1.4 L11:35P -0.3 16	H7:56A 1.8 L1:17P 1.3 H3:38P 1.4 17	L12:23A -0.4 H8:56A 1.8 18	L1:16A -0.3 H9:58A 1.7 19
L2:15A -0.2 H10:59A 1.6 20	L3:21A 0.0 H11:52A 1.5 21	L4:37A 0.2 H12:36P 1.5 L7:34P 0.9 H11:25P 1.1 22	L6:02A 0.4 H1:10P 1.4 L8:01P 0.7 16	H1:20A 1.1 L7:26A 0.6 H1:37P 1.3 L8:32P 0.4 24	H2:50A 1.3 L8:41A 0.8 H2:00P 1.3 L9:02P 0.2 25	H4:01A 1.4 L9:47A 1.0 H2:19P 1.3 L9:32P 0.1 26
H4:59A 1.5 L10:46A 1.1 H2:34P 1.3 L10:00P -0.1 27	H5:49A 1.6 L11:41A 1.2 H2:45P 1.3 L10:28P -0.2 28	H6:32A 1.6 L12:35P 1.2 H2:49P 1.3 L10:57P -0.2 29	H7:13A 1.6 L11:27P -0.2 30	H7:53A 1.6 L11:59P -0.2 31		

JUNE 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					H8:35A 1.5	L12:34A 1.5 H9:19A 1.5
					1	2
L1:12A 0.0 H10:06A 1.4 3	L1:53A 0.1 H10:52A 1.4 4	L2:37A 0.2 H11:31A 1.3 5	L3:27A 0.4 H12:03P 1.3 L8:29P 0.7 H10:52P 0.8 6	L4:27A 0.5 H12:27P 1.2 L7:49P 0.6 7	H12:59A 0.9 L5:40A 0.7 H12:45P 1.2 L7:46P 0.4 8	H2:23A 1.1 L7:02A 0.8 H12:59P 1.2 L8:04P 0.2 9

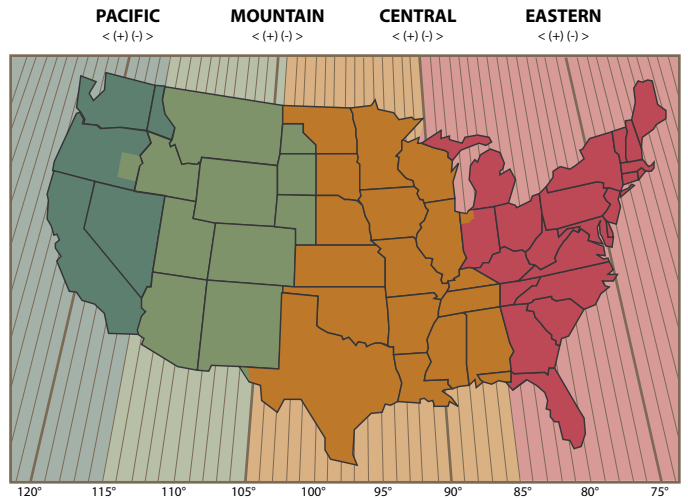
Times are for Galveston, Galveston Channel

TIME DIFFERENCES	High	Low
Calcasieu Pass, Louisiana	-2:14	-1:24
Sabine Pass Lighthouse	-1:46	-1:31
Sabine Pass Jetty	-1:26	-1:31
Sabine Pass	-1:00	-1:15
Mesquite Point, Sabine Pass	-0:04	-0:25
Galveston Bay ent. south jetty	-0:39	-1:05
Port Bolivar	+0:14	-0:06
Galveston Bay		
Texas City, Turning Basin	+0:33	+0:41
Eagle Point (1)	+3:54	+4:15
Clear Lake(1)	+6:05	+6:40
Morgan Point (1)	+10:21	+5:19
Round Pt., Trinity Bay (1)	+10:39	+5:15
Point Barrow, Trinity Bay	+5:48	+4:43
Gilchrist, East Bay	+3:16	+4:18
Jamaica Beach, West Bay	+2:38	+3:31
Alligator Point, West Bay	+2:39	+2:33
Christmas Point, Christmas Bay	+2:32	+2:31
Galveston Pleasure Pier	-1:06	-1:06
San Luis Pass	-0:09	-0:09
Freeport Harbor	-0:44	-1:02
Pass Cavallo	0:00	-1:20
Aransas Pass	-0:03	-1:31
Padre Island (South End)	-0:24	-1:45
Port Isabel	+1:02	-0:42

Tidal adjustments are not predictable for Port O'Connor, Matagorda Bay; Port Lavaca, Matagorda Bay; and Riviera Beach, Baffin Bay since they are driven by wind and weather. — NOAA

Fishing & Hunting Times

US TIME ZONES



MAY 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 ☉	2 ☉	3 ☉	4 ☉	5 ☉
		12:35P - 5:35P	1:30P - 6:30P	2:25P - 7:25P	3:20P - 8:20P	4:15P - 9:15P
6 ☉	7 ☉	8 ☉	9 ☉	10 ☉	11 ☉	12 ☉
4:40A - 9:40A	5:30A - 10:30A	6:15A - 11:15A	6:55A - 11:55A	7:35A - 12:35P	8:15A - 1:15P	9:00A - 2:00P
13 ☉	14 ☉	15 ☉	16 ☉	17 ☉	18 ☉	19 ☉
9:45A - 2:45P	10:35A - 3:35P	11:30A - 4:30P	12:30A - 5:30P	1:30P - 6:30P	2:30P - 7:30P	3:30P - 8:30P
20 ☉	21 ☉	22 ☉	23 ☉	24 ☉	25 ☉	26 ☉
4:00A - 9:00A	5:00A - 10:00A	6:55A - 10:55A	6:45A - 11:45A	7:30A - 12:30P	8:10A - 1:10P	8:50A - 1:50P
27 ☉	28 ☉	29 ☉	30 ☉	31 ☉		
9:35A - 2:35P	10:20A - 3:20P	11:05A - 4:05P	11:55A - 4:55P	12:45P - 5:45P		

JUNE 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 ☉	2 ☉
					1:35P - 6:35P	2:30P - 7:30P
3 ☉	4 ☉	5 ☉	6 ☉	7 ☉	8 ☉	9 ☉
3:25P - 8:25P	3:55A - 8:55A	4:45A - 9:45A	5:35A - 10:35A	6:20A - 11:20A	7:00A - 12:00P	7:40A - 12:40P

● BEST ☉ GOOD ☉ FAIR ○ POOR

Fish, game and all wildlife move in search of food in cycles relative to the moon's location to the earth. The time spans listed above are the prime times to start each day at and along each time zone meridian of longitude 75 degrees (Eastern) 90 degrees (Central) 105 degrees (Mountain) and 120 degrees (Pacific) during Standard time and Daylight Saving during the time it is in effect. To determine the feeding cycle time for best fishing and hunting in the area you plan to fish or hunt advance the sum of 4 minutes for each degree west and back up 4 minutes for each degree east. The next prime feeding cycle (not listed on the calendar) will be approximately twelve and one-half hours later. There are minor periods that occur between the prime or major periods. The minor periods are typically fair periods and last only about half as long as the prime periods.

Feeding Times by Dan Barnett have been proven by analysis of 124 - 3 day bass tournaments between 1967 through 1983 to be reliable and accurate in predicting wildlife feeding activity. The Feeding Times are not a cure-all. Weather and other environmental conditions affect wildlife feeding activity. Annual vest pocket books, which show all the major and minor periods, can be ordered by sending a check or money order for \$19.95 per book. For S&H, please add \$4.95 to an order of 1 to 4 books. Make check or money order payable to: Feeding Times. Send to: Feeding Times, P.O. Box 2240, Covington, GA 30015. After Oct. 1, please indicate book year. For questions or comments, you can call 404-373-7151.

Over 60 Years in Print

Feeding Times by Dan Barnett

17 Years Test Proven

TOP TEN REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE TO TEXAS OUTDOORS JOURNAL

1. On February 24, 2018, named #1 in major outdoor publication category. For 20 consecutive years, named one of the top fishing, hunting & outdoors magazines in Texas. No other major outdoor publication in Texas can equal this level of sustained excellence and recognition.
2. A year's subscription has 12 issues, not something less.
3. Both fishing and hunting coverage in every issue.
4. Covers Texas like it should be covered with timely reports from the field and on the water.
5. Proven solunar table of major and minor feeding periods of the day.
6. Tide table with adjustments for the entire Texas coast.
7. Written by top writers that have etched their names in the record books.
8. TOJ tells you where to go, what to expect when you get there and how to do it a little bit better.
9. Covers the Texas outdoors and outdoors interests of Texans.
10. Every cover is a work of art.

\$18⁹⁵

ONE YEAR SUBSCRIPTION
12 MONTHS OF TEXAS OUTDOORS JOURNAL
DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR EACH MONTH

\$18⁹⁵

Yes, I want to receive TEXAS OUTDOORS Journal. Sign me up for:

one year \$18⁹⁵
12 issues
(*47.88 on newsstands)

two years \$29⁹⁵
24 issues
(*95.76 on newsstands)

three years \$39⁹⁵
36 issues
(*143.64 on newsstands)

NEW
 RENEWAL
 GIFT
From _____

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

TEXAS OUTDOORS JOURNAL DOES NOT RENT OR SELL ITS MAILING LIST, NOR RELEASE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT SUBSCRIBERS.

Payment: Check/MO Enclosed Visa MasterCard American Express Discover
Account # _____ Exp. Date _____

CW2 (3-digit code on back of MC, Visa & Discover; 4-digit code on front of AmEx) _____

Signature _____

Mail this completed form to: TEXAS OUTDOORS JOURNAL, 1706 W. Sam Houston Parkway North, Houston TX 77043
Or call 1-800-222-4TOJ (4865) In Houston call 713-957-3997 to charge your subscription by phone.
Or order SECURELY online at www.texasoutdoorsjournal.com. Please allow 6-8 weeks for your subscription to begin.



FOR 20 CONSECUTIVE YEARS,
RECOGNIZED AS THE #1 MAJOR FISHING, HUNTING,
AND OUTDOOR PUBLICATION IN TEXAS

WWW.TEXASOUTDOORSJOURNAL.COM