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"The Fisherman's Guide, News You Can Use" "Lines To Get Hooked On"

2 Sections

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November, 2017

No. 219



Joe Carathers won 1st Heavy Bass in the Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork 36th Semi Annual Open with this nice bass weighing 8.76-pounds. (See Story on Page 10-A)



Allen Teague from Athens, Texas won the 12th Annual Berkley Big Bass Tournament on Lake Fork for the heaviest bass over the slot weighing 9.95-pounds. Allen topped over 1100 anglers and for his catch he took home \$1,000 in 1st place hourly pay and a 2017 Skeeter ZX 200, powered by a Yamaha SHO 200hp, equipped with Lowrance Electronics, and Powerpole.



Darwin Dykes from Waco, Texas is a long time avid bass fisherman and has been fishing 50+ years to catch a bass of this caliber. He caught this hawg measuring 24.25" on a shakey head using 10-pound test line in 18.5' of water. If at first you don't succeed "Fish and Fish Again".



DeAris Williams (aka Fish Vibes) from Reno, Texas lived up to the name he's known by on the lakes by winning the heaviest bass under the slot of 16" weighing 2.77-pounds. He also topped over 1100 anglers in the 12th Annual Berkley Big Bass Open and won \$1,000 in 1st place hourly pay and a 2017 Skeeter ZX 190, powered by a Yamaha SHO 150, equipped with Lowrance Electronics. Present to help him celebrate his win was his wife Amanda and three children. When awarded he sent out a "Big Thank You" to 'Momma Kathy' at Brannan's Bass City. (See Full Story on Page 4-A)

Bubba Thinks Everyday Should Be Thanksgiving

By Don Hampton

The four most important things in Bubba's life are God, family, country and of course, fishing. Imagine the last one!! I know this to be true because I have seen a sign in his house that reads "Fishing isn't a matter of life or death, it is much more important than that!" Bubba doesn't fish to live, he lives to fish! According to Bubba that is the order of importance in his life. The way he feels, if he loves the first three with all his heart and unwavering dedication, fishing is allowed. Always, no matter how strong the desire to be on the lake, the first three always come first.

In most everyday situations, if you asked Bubba what he would do, unless extremely serious, he would say, "Have a BBQ sandwich, drink a few beers and celebrate life." If it were a semi-serious situation he would counsel you... saying something like, "Go fishing, relax, give it some thought and the answer will come to you!" In matters of extreme importance he has only one answer, "Trust in God and country, for the Lord helps those who help themselves!" This is probably the best answer anyone could apply to any given situation.

Bubette has told Bubba many times that he does have a way at times of being painfully honest. Just recently in a conversation he was having with another fellow fisherman he remarked, "I love all bodies of water except those darn pity-puddles. A lot of people swim in them but nothing can survive and prosper in them. They are always filled with self-remorse and pity. People sink into them and expect others to pull them out. At that time they quit helping themselves and just become dependent." To my way of thinking this was the most profound statement I had ever heard from Bubba.

Bubba has a way of comparing life and situations with fishing. He proved this to me by adding, "The only thing you can catch from a pity puddle is blame. People that swim in them want to blame everyone and everything in life for their problems. What people in these puddles need to do is take swimming lessons or grab their ears and pull themselves out." (Well, that is not quite how Bubba said it, but you get my drift!) Bubba opened my eyes that day and gave me some food for thought that nourished my spirit. I believe in Bubba's way of thinking. If more people did, the enjoyment of living would be ever present. This shines in

Bubba everyday. Whenever you see him he has a smile and happiness to share. As a matter of fact, sometimes he smiles so much people wonder what he's up to!

To Bubba life is not a mystery that he has to go in search for the answer, it is a gift. Every morning when he opens his eyes for another day, it is Thanksgiving and he is thankful for the gift of life.

Maybe we all should make "Thanksgiving" an everyday ritual. "That's what Bubba does!"



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First TPWD Lifetime License Winner Passing it On

As the first winner of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Lifetime License Drawing this fall, Frankston sportsman Michael Bennett is helping to ensure a strong future for Texas' outdoor heritage.

Opting to pass it on to the next generation of Texas hunters and anglers, Bennett is giving away his lifetime license to his nephew. For Bennett, this marks the third lifetime license he's handed down.

"I have a son and bought him one several years ago and a grandson I bought one for and I'm 74 so I figured, 'Who would get the most use out of this one?' and decided to transfer it to my

nephew," said Bennett.

The recipient of Bennett's generous gift is 27-year-old Justin Young of Vidor.

There is still a chance for two more lucky winners of an \$1,800 Lifetime Super Combo license this fall and those who entered prior to the first drawing are still eligible. The next two winners will be drawn Nov. 1 and Dec. 1.

Entries for the drawing cost \$5 each and may be added to yearly license purchases at retailers, by phone 1-800-895-4248 and online at www.tpwd.texas.gov/licensedraw. There is no limit on the number of entries that may be purchased.

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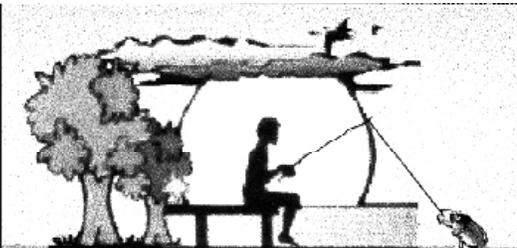
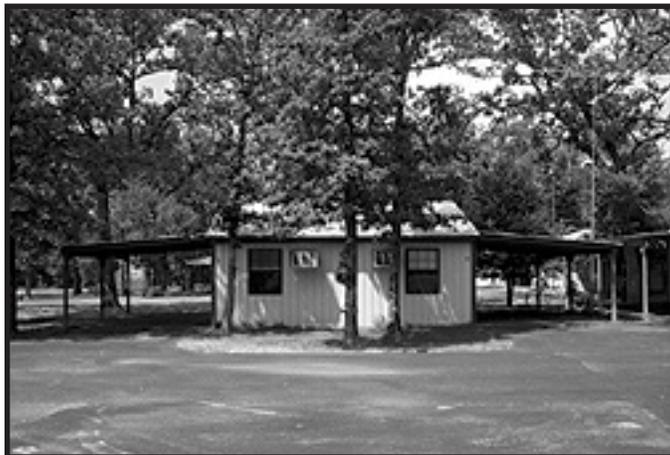
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Berkley 12th Annual Big Bass Tournament on Lake Fork

By Don Hampton

High winds, choppy water, white caps, rain, and a northern pushing through could not dampen the spirits of over 1,100 anglers from multiple states that came to Lake Fork to fish the 12th Annual Berkley Big Bass Tournament. The tournament is put on by BassChamps and what a great job they do. Anglers and spectators were entertained through the week-end of October 21st and 22nd and even get a chance to see themselves on television when the tournament airs on WFN.

The harsh weather may have effected the big bite but it didn't keep lots of fish from coming to the weigh-in. With 20 places paid each hour of the tournament and a 2017 full-

ly outfitted Skeeter bass boat going to the heaviest over the 24" slot and one for the heaviest 16" under the slot, anglers were determined to get a piece of the payload. All anglers when they checked in received a complimentary weight bag with Berkley baits and a T-shirt. The baits inside proved very effective for two of the anglers.

Weigh-ins began on the top of each hour of the two day tournament and lasted for 30 minutes with the first one beginning at 8 a.m. and the last one at 2 p.m.

Due to inclement weather conditions during the course of the tournament, only 6 bass over the 24" slot came to the scales.

During the first hour of the tournament Allen Teague from Athens, Texas weighed in a hefty 9.95-pound bass. Afterwards

throughout the tournament Brian Sanders from Burleson, Texas weighed in an 8.22-pound; Larry Thomas from Millsap, Texas weighed in an 8.22-pound; Troy Hicks from Lewisville, Texas weighed in a 7.74-pound; Victor Venegas from Waco, Texas weighed in 6.91-pound; and Raymond Newton from Nacogdoches, Texas weighed in a 6.15. All of these anglers took home a \$1,000 check for 1st Place in their hours.

During the course of the tournament with the exception of one hour, it took at least a 2-pound bass or more to land in a money chair. The top 10 places of each hour were money chairs with 11 through 15 winning a Abu Garcia Revo Reel and 16 through 20 winning a Abu Garcia Rod.

(Continued on Next Page)



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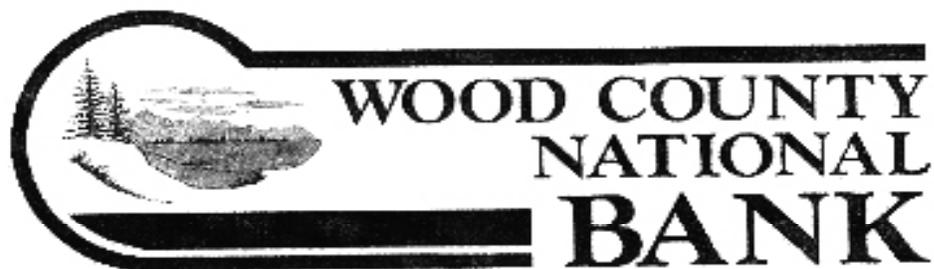
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With a bass weighing 9.95-pounds being weighed in during the first hour of the tournament anglers knew there was a chance to top that weight. Most anglers were basical-



ly targeting the heaviest bass under the slot of 16" and the grand prize that went with it. Jonathan Niziol had it for a short time when he weighed in a 2.65-pound bass during the last weigh-in hour of the first day. His hopes were soon dashed as Alex Finch weighed in a 2.66-pound bass later in the same hour. His hopes were vanished dur-

ing the 8 o'clock hour of the 2nd day when DeAris Williams brought to the scales a bass under the slot weighing 2.77-pounds.

In the ladies division Kathleen Wheeler from Harleton, Texas won 1st Place with a 2.55-pound bass; 2nd Place with a 2.24-pound bass was Toni Jones from Yantis, Texas; 3rd Place with a 2.09-pound bass was Holly Reding from Van, Texas. In the Junior Division Bryson McMurtrey from Big Spring, Texas won 1st Place with a bass weighing 2.33-pounds; 2nd Place with a bass weighing 2.06-pounds was Luke Collins from Liberty, Texas; 3rd Place was Arik Sanko from Forney, Texas with a bass weighing 2.06-pounds.

For the heaviest bass over the slot winning the Grand Prize of a 2017 Skeeter ZX 200, powered by Yamaha, equipped with Lowrance and PowerPole was Allen Teague with his 9.95-pound bass he weighed in the first hour of the tournament. He also re-

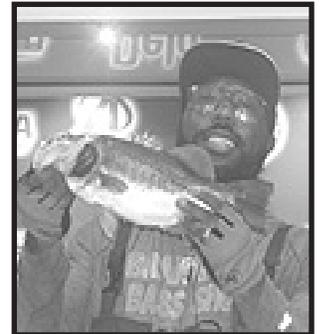
ceived a check for \$1,000 for the hourly.

Winning the heaviest bass under the 16" slot and winning a 2017 Skeeter ZX 190, powered by Yamaha, equipped with Lowrance was DeAris Williams (aka Fish Vibes) with his 2.77-pound bass he weighed in the first hour of the second day of the tournament. He also received a check for \$1,000 for the hourly.

Both anglers caught their fish on the Berkley Frog over lily pads that was in the complimentary bag received at check-in.

The 12th Annual Berkley Big Bass Tournament concluded the 2017 Bass-Champs Season. "We will look forward to seeing everyone as we kick off the 2018 Season." said Chad Potts.

To learn more about Bass Champs and their schedule check them out at www.basschamps.com or call 817-439-3274.



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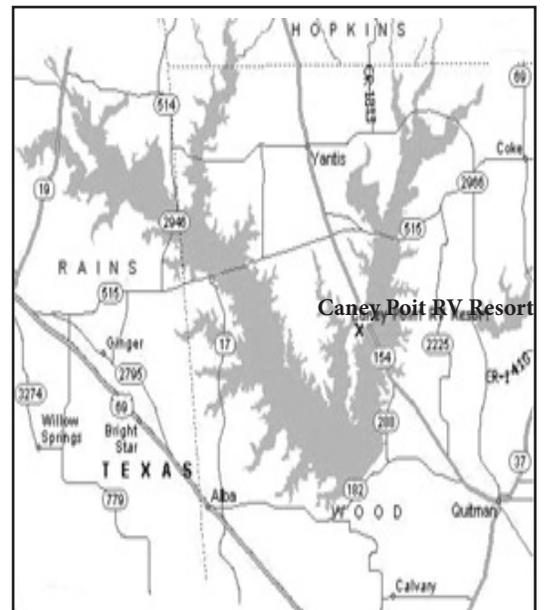
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Fall Fishing on the Fork

By David Ozio

"Fall is knocking at our door and the major cold fronts are starting to roll in. This sets the stage for some outstanding bass fishing on Lake Fork and November sends the signal to the monster bass that it's time to feed up for the winter. The lake turn-over is on it's way out and the water is beginning to stabilize which prompts the big bass to think "all systems are go" for the food fest. This being said, let's consider our options to bag a true giant.

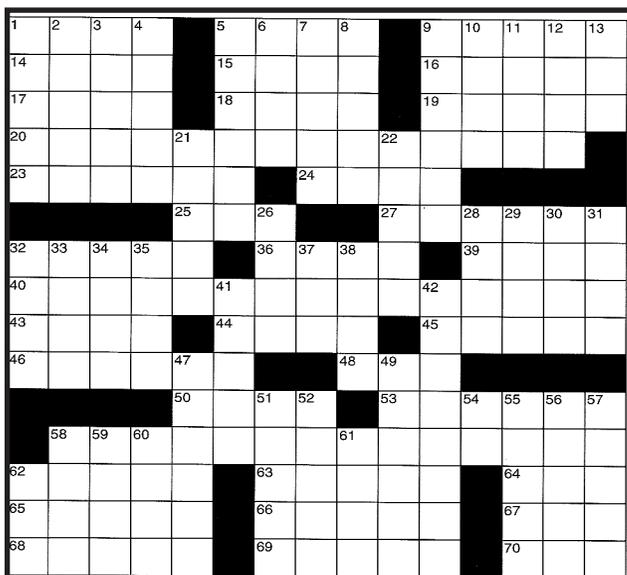
The water quality is in excellent condition due to the lack of fall rains. Water clarity ranges from somewhat clear down south to lightly stained in the backs of the main creeks that feed the lake. How you approach the bass will depend upon

where you prefer to fish and how far down in the water you can see your lure before it disappears. With this in mind, the shallow bite is ramping up and big bass can be caught in all parts of the lake. Let's start the morning searching for top water fish. Shallow vegetation is key to your success and now that the water is back up, bank grass, milfoil, alligator grass and hydrilla will dominate the skinny water. In extreme off color water, use a noisy bait that stirs up the water. Prop baits are excellent choices in this case. If the water is only slightly stained in the backs of the creeks and pockets, tie on a Zara Spook, Yellow Magic or a Sammy and start covering water. Shad are also moving to the backs of these areas and big bass are right on their tail. Focus on using shad colors on most any lure you throw and hang on for some jolting strikes. Pick out secondary points or small points of vegetation. All should hold fish. Also, don't be afraid to chunk a Spro frog around any vegetation you encounter. Huge bass can't resist the way they move through the water.

As the sun eases it's way higher into the sky, switch your strategy to baits that descend into the water column. If the water is heavily stained, throw the chatterbait, spinnerbait or squarebill in the same areas. If the water is slightly stained, use



a five inch swimbait, swimjig or chatterbait. Hydrilla or milfoil will change the game slightly, use a lipless crankbait and key on the outer edges of the grass. As the water temps degrades throughout the month, switch your lipless colors to gold or red. Now that you have photo's of several great fish during the morning, migrate your way out to deep water and graph the usual haunts, humps, ridges, roadbeds and structure. Fall on Fork has always been great fishing for these patterns during the afternoon hours. Flutter spoons, jigging spoons, Carolina rigs, drop shots and football jigs will be the "go to" baits when you locate bass stacked up on



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Gull-like jaeger of northern seas
- 5. Make move
- 9. Marten
- 14. Compact
- 15. Field
- 16. Electronic communication
- 17. Businessmen
- 18. Egyptian goddess
- 19. Elias __, Nobel prize chemist
- 20. Swizzlesticks
- 23. Inactiveness
- 24. Graphite
- 25. Soviet labor camp inmate
- 27. Crystals
- 32. African title of respect
- 36. Inflammatory disease
- 39. Ancient Greek City
- 40. Couple's decision
- 43. Prevarication
- 44. Pastries
- 45. Awkward
- 46. Separates with an instrument
- 48. Jawless fish
- 50. Arthropod genus
- 53. Chordophones
- 58. Laws
- 62. Expression
- 63. Anchorage
- 64. Cookie
- 65. Emil von __, Czech engineer
- 66. Enameled metalware
- 67. Give temporarily
- 68. Helicopters
- 69. Type genus of the Otididae
- 70. Thomas __, British composer, 1700

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Attacks
- 2. Expressed gold
- 3. Shade
- 4. Niche
- 5. Fabric finish
- 6. Kiln
- 7. Run
- 8. Turn out
- 9. Break up
- 10. Egyptian god of life
- 11. Cartoon prankster
- 12. Consists
- 13. Town in Cambridgeshire
- 21. Indian title
- 22. David __, U.S. playwright
- 26. Japanese persimmon
- 28. 13 to 19
- 29. Protocist
- 30. Brainstorm
- 31. Flavor
- 32. Bacon-lettuce-tomato snacks
- 33. Harm
- 34. King of Huns (Scandinavian)
- 35. 1
- 37. After B
- 38. Birthplace of Constantine
- 41. Recesses
- 42. Sunk in the sea
- 47. Curatives
- 49. Homes
- 51. Novo seaport
- 52. Traveling by foot
- 54. City in North Zambia
- 55. Panelist
- 56. Water
- 57. Rock
- 58. Turkish brandy
- 59. Wife
- 60. Venice beach
- 61. Colombian Town
- 62. Seasoner

Answers on Page 21-A

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(See Fall Fishing.....
Continued on Page 20-A)

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Carryover Birds Expected to Bolster Prospects for Quail Season

The 2016 Texas quail season served as a renaissance reminder of how good hunting can be when all the right elements converge. Specifically, weather and habitat aligned to create a "super boom" year for quail production that led to exceptional hunts the likes of which had not been seen in many years.

Quail enthusiasts are hoping some of that magic will carry over this fall when the season gets under way Saturday, Oct. 28. For that to happen, a sizable per-

centage of last year's birds will have to carry over as well, according to wildlife biologists with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

This year's quail production, although not as robust as last year's, is expected to be adequate to sustain populations in areas having suitable habitat. Heading into 2017, average amounts of late winter and spring rainfall set up sufficient nesting cover, winter forage and enough insects to trigger nesting. A lack of

timely rainfall during the summer, however, may have hurt chick survival. "Portions of South Texas and the Rolling Plains regions were in moderate drought during mid-summer, which may have negatively impacted brood survival," said Robert Perez, quail program leader with TPWD. "Hunters will likely see more adult bobwhites in the bag compared to more productive years."

TPWD projections are based on annual (See Carryover Birds... Continued on Page 14 -A)



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**"The Moon Report"
Fork's Best and Worst of November**

By Terri Moon

The best part of this time of year is that the water temperatures have started to drop triggering the fall migration that sends the crappie into "feeding frenzy" mode. They will follow the baitfish back up the creeks following the same routes they took in the spring. So, if your crappie have disappeared, you might want to look shallower.

The worst parts of this time of year are the "wicked" fronts that are moving through along with the crazy wind! Personally, the WIND is the toughest obstacle to deal with and we've had more than our fair share of it lately! Then when you combine it with those mornings with temperatures in the 30's - it HURTS! - That's when I'm grateful that some of these crappie are showing up in the coves out of the wind. I'm targeting 10-18 ft. depths, in 12 to 24 ft. of water. Look for the baitfish and target timber, creek channels and flats around secondary points.

The crappie we're catching have been definitely on a feeding pattern. I can't believe the size of the shad in their bellies! So, it might not hurt to go to larger bait like a 3" shad colored bait and it



doesn't hurt to stick a Berkley power nibble on it either! On the flip side, if the fish are finicky and not feeding, go to smaller bait like a "ity-bit" and work it "slow motion" to "no motion." It's critical to not take your eyes off your line because I promise you will see the bite before you feel it! I'm amazed at the amount of bites people miss. So I do my best to help watch their line so I can let them know when a crappie is knocking! The crappie have been pushing the bait up so watch for slack line - it could be a giant!

November has always been a "BIG FISH" month so don't miss out on it. Also, November is Lake Fork Marina's customer appreciation month and rooms are \$55 a night and in their new incredible store, their tackle, clothing and gifts are

25% off. They've got some great gift selections for all the fishermen in your family—so keep them in mind for your holiday shopping!

I want to send a sincere "thank you" to everyone who generously donated to the "Buddy...camp dog" fund. Buddy wandered into our lives several months ago at Lake Fork Marina

(Continued on Next Page)

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The Moon Report (Continued from Page 8-A)

and has stolen the hearts of everyone he meets. He would beg sweetly for a snack and sit patiently for you to pet him. Buddy had an injury to his back leg and we knew he needed to

see a vet. So, thank you to "Scuba Steve" who helped me load this 97 lb. scared pup in my truck! Thanks to Emory Vet Clinic we learned Buddy needed to be treated for heart worms plus

all of his shots. In addition x-rays showed his back leg was out of socket and would discuss possible surgery in a couple of months. Buddy is such a "sweet boy" and deserves a lot of

love. A special thanks to Scuba Steve and his big heart for stepping up and making sure Buddy gets fed and meds given and a warm bed and thanks to all of Buddy's friends who con-

tributed to the continuing care of this awesome dog who has adopted us all! Happy Birthday to Brother John - wishing you all the best with love. Happy Fall Fish-

ing to you all!

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By Don Hampton

Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork held their 36th Semi Annual Bass Tournament on

Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork Open October 7th

October 7th hosted out of Oak Ridge Marina.

This was a five fish stringer tournament paying the top five places and three places for big bass. Pay back was 80% of all entries for heavy stringer and 100% pay back for big bass giving the winning anglers a good check for a day of fish-

ing. Fishing hours were from 6 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Big bass of the tournament was over the slot weighing 8.76-pounds and was caught by Joe Carathers. He also won 1st Place heavy stringer with a weight of 10.79-pounds. Winning 2nd Place Big Bass and heavy stringer was Kenny LaDuke

with a 2.33-pound and a stringer weight of 8.54-pounds. Placing 3rd Place with heavy stringer was Rich Michaels with a weight of 7.46-pounds. David Pitre won 4th Place heavy stringer with a weight of 7.35-pounds. He also won 3rd Big Bass with one that weighed 2.02-pounds. Coming in 5th Place heavy stringer was Rodney Ellis with a

weight of 7.12-pounds.

At the end of the tournament there was a raffle for some nice prizes furnished by the clubs local sponsors. On behalf of Texas Trails I would like to thank all of our sponsors; Custom Angle Rods, Lake Fork Country Store, Lake Fork Marina, Sartin Marine, Service Marine, Fisherman's One Stop, Angels Barber Shop, Lake

Fork Trophy Lures, and Lake Country Insurance.

If this club sounds like one you'd like to set your hook in, give me a call, Don Hampton at 903-360-6994 or 903-383-7748 or Rodney Ellis, President at 903-714-6473. For more information go to www.texastrailsbassmasters.com.

I hope to be fishing with you this year!

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Top 5 winners in the Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork 36th Semi Annual Open were (lt to rt) 1st Place Joe Carathers, 2nd Kenny LaDuke, 3rd Rich Michaels, 4th David Pitre, and 5th Rodney Ellis.

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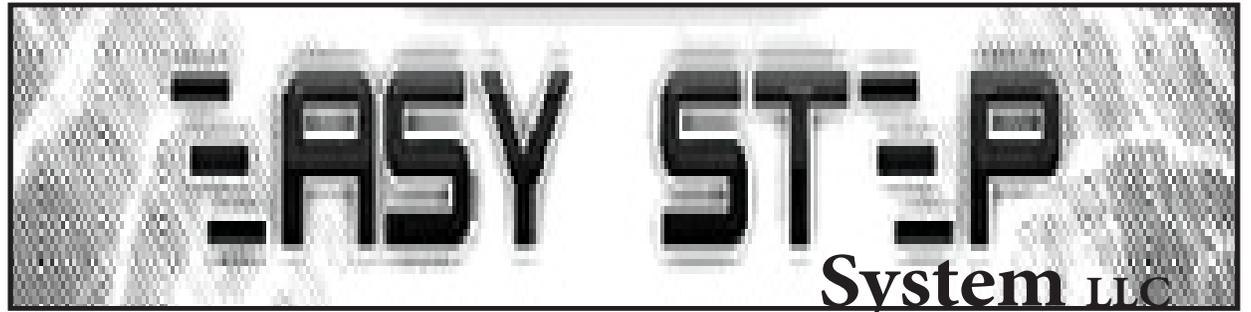
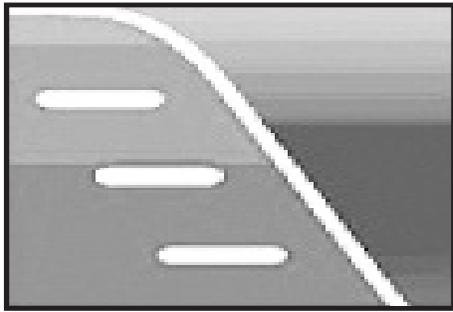
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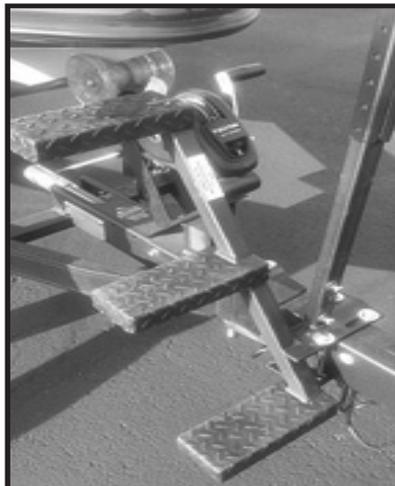


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"Knowing What To Look For!"

By Michael McFarland

In late Fall/Early Winter and all through the winter months, shallow grass flats can be a great place to find big bass. These shallow grass flats can be very intimidating

due to their size and difficulty in picking apart the key areas within the flats.

These tend to be the areas that are just a bit deeper and the bass will choose to use often when feeding. By using your sonar to find and

pinpoint hard bottom areas, as you can see in the image below to the right, you can break down these flats by using waypoints to mark the hard areas. These are also the areas that create edges for bass to ambush the

bait moving through and hiding in the grass. These are the areas you will want to target specifically, allowing you to eliminate all the non-productive grass. It is important that you make a multitude of waypoints while

you're covering the entire flat before you fish it.

What to look for specifically when graphing a flat see the chart below.

If you're interested in learning how to get the very most info out of your fish-

ing graph, please contact Mike@mcfarlandfishing.com or call 602-826-1524 for an on the lake session with your electronics.

Wishing you all good fishing!

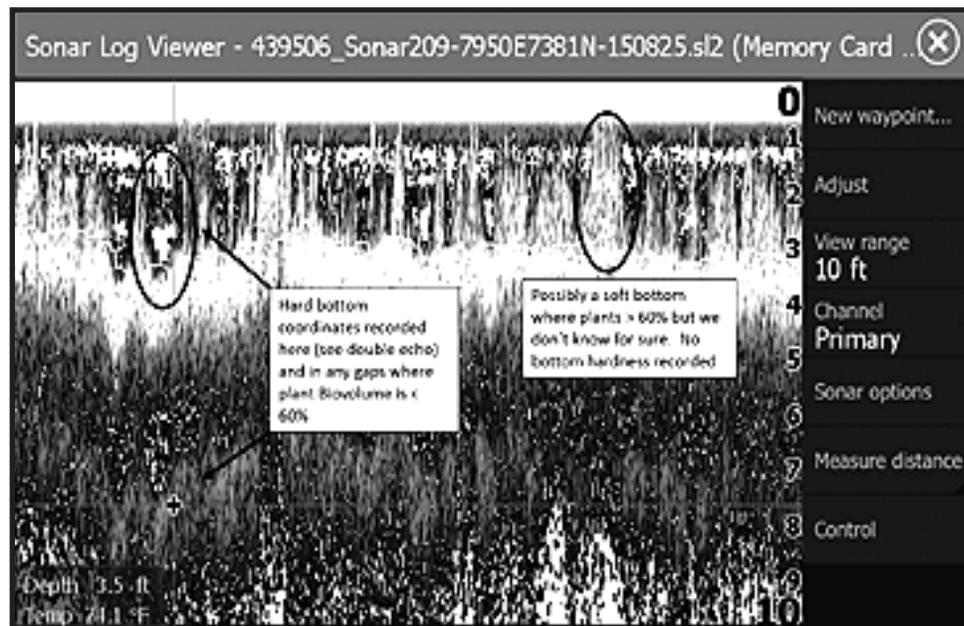
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Carryover Birds Expected to Bolster Prospects for Quail Season Continued from Page 7-A)

statewide quail surveys that were initiated in 1978 to monitor quail populations. This index uses randomly selected, 20-mile roadside survey lines to determine annual quail population trends by ecological region. This trend information helps determine relative quail populations among the regions of Texas. Comparisons can be made between the mean (average) number of quail observed per route this year and the long term mean (LTM) for quail seen within an ecological region. The quail survey was not designed to predict relative abundance for any area smaller than the ecological region. A regional breakdown of this year's TPWD quail index survey, including highlights and prospects, is available online. Quail hunting season runs through Feb. 25, 2018. The daily bag limit for quail is 15, with 45 in possession. Legal shooting hours for all non-migratory game birds are 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. The bag limit is the maximum number that may be killed during the legal shooting hours in one day.

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Waterfowl Hunting Season Prospects Bright

All things considered, this year's Texas waterfowl hunting season is looking pretty favorable, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

"Currently, and potentially surprisingly, we are looking pretty good regarding the upcoming waterfowl season," said Kevin Kraai, TPWD waterfowl program coordinator, "and that is really the entire state. Good rainfall late this summer and even more recently has conditions in the High Plains playas, Rolling Plains and Oak Prairies stock ponds and reservoirs, and even far eastern Texas habitats in better than average conditions."

The general duck hunting season got under way the weekend of Oct. 28-29 in the Texas Panhandle (High Plains Mallard Management Unit) and resumes Nov. 3 through Jan. 28, 2018. In the South Zone, duck season runs Nov. 4-26 and resumes Dec. 9 through Jan. 20, 2018. Duck hunting in the North Zone opens Nov. 11-26 and resumes Dec. 2 through Jan. 28, 2018. Hunters are reminded that "dusky ducks" are off limits dur-

ing the first five days of the season.

Goose hunting also kicks off Nov. 4 statewide and runs through Jan. 28, 2018 in the East Zone and Feb. 4, 2018 in the West Zone.

With the Texas gulf coast serving as winter home to 25 percent of the Central Flyway waterfowl population, habitat conditions in the wake of Hurricane Harvey were an obvious concern for waterfowl biologists.

"The Texas coast obviously endured some extreme weather recently and we surprisingly saw decent early teal hunting in many places this past month," Kraai noted. "Habitat conditions are in fair to very good shape across much of the coast just a few weeks after the storm. Recovery of these habitats has been more rapid than many of us envisioned. Waterfowl foods are abundant and improving by the day."

Wintering waterfowl supplement their diet on second growth rice crops on the coastal prairies and fortunately, much of this year's rice crop was harvested just before the storm. It, too, is recovering and starting its second growth,

which will be very beneficial to wintering ducks and geese. Planted acres of rice have once again rebounded in the Lower Colorado River drainage now that restrictions have been removed after the filling of the Highland Lakes.

While habitat conditions across the coastal region are much-improved, hunters will be looking to weather forecasts of cold fronts to help push the birds southward heading into the season.

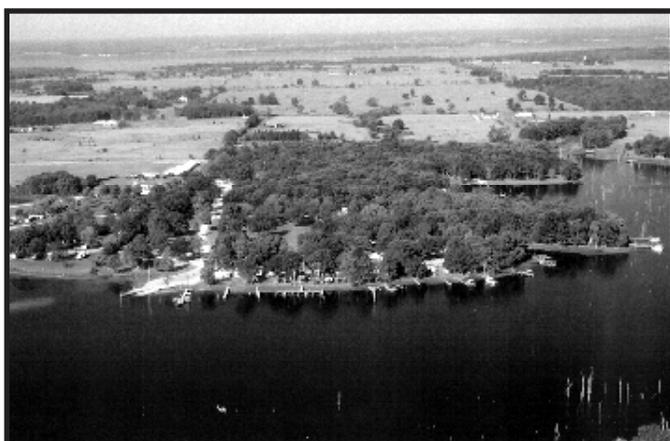
"This scenario of abundant fresh water and foods across most of the state make me confident that Texas duck and goose hunters will have the opportunity to see lots of fowl this winter," Kraai predicted. "Now we just need Mother Nature to give us a few good cold fronts and make sure our wet spots stay wet."

Hunters are encouraged to review hunting rules and requirements in the 2017-18 Waterfowl Hunting Digest before heading afield. Printed copies of the digest are available wherever hunting licenses are sold and for download online from the TPWD web site.

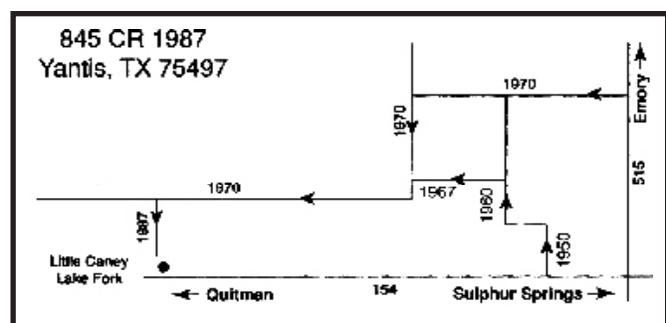
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Behind the Holiday: The Truth About Thanksgiving

The Pilgrims never held an autumnal "Thanksgiving feast," but they did gather to eat and share in the bounty of a plentiful harvest. Before you start mixing the stuffing, take a look at the origin of Thanksgiving Day – the truth behind the tradition may be surprising.

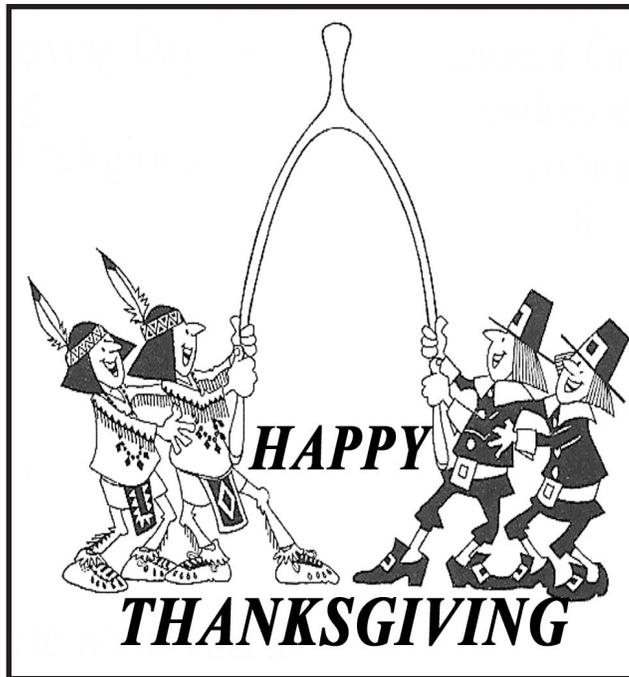
The holiday originated not as a day of religious observation but as a traditional English harvest. The autumn of 1621 yielded bountiful crops and the Pilgrims gathered together with the Massasoit, a nearby group of American Indians, to enjoy the products of their hard work. The original Pilgrim feast consisted of many items that were common back then, including eel, shellfish, oysters and boiled pumpkin. Milk, cheese and butter were not available because there were no cows. There were no pre-packaged biscuits or ready-made pie crusts, only breads made from corn. Turkey was not the star of the Pilgrim harvest feast, but rather a selection of

duck, goose, partridge and venison. Historians believe that the meal took place outdoors because there wasn't a building available large enough to house the settlers and the nearly 90 Massasoit who dined.

The Pilgrims were not the first to have a celebration of this kind. Many civilizations held annual har-

vest festivals. The ancient Greeks and Romans sacrificed to the gods and goddesses of the harvest, and originated the idea of the cornucopia – horn of plenty. The Jews celebrate the holiday Sukkot, which honors the rewards of the harvest; and the Chinese participate in the celebration of the Harvest Moon. Even Americans commemorate the harvest long before Thanksgiving arrives. Pumpkins, apples, and corn are abundant in town markets beginning in September.

Today, uncles, aunts, grandparents, and other relatives come together to enjoy the food and spirit of the autumnal season. And a good after-dinner football game doesn't hurt the tradition a bit. These family-centered traditions included in the present day Thanksgiving are what keeps the holiday evolving. After all, "pass the turkey" sounds much better than, "pass the eel" – well, to most anyway. Gobble, gobble!



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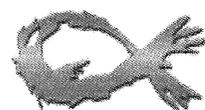
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'Pack of Knowledge' The When, Where, and How of Jig Fishing

By Andrew Grills

The one technique that I'm asked about most often is still jig fishing. It's still one of my favorite ways to catch bass. However, many anglers are confused about when, where, and how to fish a jig.

These factors are extraordinarily important when jig fishing, especially on Lake Fork. The vast amount of standing timber can make it seem like searching for a needle in a haystack. There are also times to put the jig down and opt for a different approach. My goal is to help you narrow it down and simplify

what many find to be a difficult technique to learn.

In my opinion, fish seem to bite jigs best during the colder months leading up to the prespawn period. A football jig is a major player here throughout the summer, however we are focusing on a traditional pitching jig for now. I usually check the jig bite in late October, but it doesn't seem to become a viable pattern until mid-November. The early jig season is usually very productive because the fish aren't seeing jigs go by on a daily basis and don't seem as conditioned to the technique.

I continue to fish a jig regularly throughout most of March, but when the water warms and fish are comfortable venturing from ledges towards spawning areas the effectiveness of the technique seems to wane. An increase in fishing pressure may have something to do with it or it could be a transition in their primary forage base. I have had customers catch some really big fish later in the spring on jigs, however the numbers of bites are much lower and there seems to be better ways to catch them.

As for determining where to fish a jig, I try to imagine the lake has zero standing timber and look for structure bass should be relating to in the winter and early spring. The stumps are just a bonus as cover. Fish use areas such as points, secondary points, and creek channels as they stage on their way to bedding areas. They then use the stumps as cover for safety and ambush of prey, but keep in mind they are there because of bottom contour, not cover.

I find that sharp breaks are most productive throughout the cold periods. Bass seem to want to be close to deeper

water as cold fronts are passing through on a regular basis during the winter. You will find this on the edges of points and secondary points, but most importantly along the creek channels. Creek channels are highways for the bass and baitfish as they travel to their springtime haunts, and they provide deep water access as well. Ditches and drains are just as important to pay attention to. Any area with a low spot where water would run to the original channel prior to impoundment is likely to hold some fish.

Often, the hardest channels to read are the best. We can usually look at the standing timber and get a good idea where the creek channel is. The gap in heavily timbered areas, leaning stumps (as leaning stumps often lean over the creek), and the presence of live oak stumps can help you identify the original creek channel. Live oaks are often the biggest stumps in a given area and grow near a water source. Built in maps or map chips on your depth finder can sometimes point you in the right direction, however they are rarely accurate as to the exact location of the channel. I also pay attention to where the trot lines and jug lines are set if I am in an unfamiliar area, as they can sometimes help lead you to the channel. Learning how a particular channel runs takes time and patience, but it is worth the effort.

Being near the creek channel, drain, or ditch isn't enough. I have found that boat positioning is a critical factor in success. I like to keep my boat in the deeper channel and cast to the top of the ledge and bring the jig back as it rolls

(See Pack of Knowledge...Continued on Page 21-A)



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60-Year-Old Alligator Gar New Brazos River Record

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department research biologists have confirmed the new alligator gar bow fishing water body record for the Brazos River is 60-years-old, among the oldest fish aged and documented by the department.

Angler Isaac Avery of Longview caught the 197 pound, 7.39 foot alligator gar bow fishing in the Brazos River Sept. 9 - beating the previous record by more than 4 pounds.

After noticing a TPWD research tag left of the fish's dorsal fin, Avery called TPWD Inland Fisheries district biologist Michael Baird, who previously tagged the fish in March 2012. According to Baird, tags returned by anglers provide biologists with information on harvest, abundance, size structure and survival.

"I tagged this fish near Tawakoni Creek, a large Brazos River tributary

just down from Waco, back in March 2012 while doing a mark-recapture study," Baird said. "It appears she hadn't moved much since we tagged her in 2012, and she grew approximately 65 mm (2.55 inches) since tagging."

Baird assisted the anglers with locating a scale big enough to weigh the fish at the Brazos Feed and Supply Store. After weighing the fish, taking measurements and collecting the otoliths (bony structures found in the alligator gar's inner ear), the data was sent to the Heart of the Hills Fisheries Science Center (HOHFSC), where researchers are conducting studies to learn more about key population characteristics of alligator gar. Researchers then used the otoliths to age the fish by counting growth rings similar to those on a tree.

"We aged the fish at 60, which indicates it

hatched in 1957," said research biologist David Buckmeier. "I looked at the gauge data from Waco around that time and sure enough there was a huge flood from April to July in 1957. What we've seen is that fish over the age of 50 typically come from times when these huge flood pulses occurred, and those events likely create giant year classes of these fish."

According to Buckmeier, alligator gar typically do not spawn every year but prefer spawning habitat created by seasonal inundation of low-lying areas of vegetation - like the floods of 1957. Research on the Trinity River confirmed that the years of highest reproductive success of alligator gar coincided with years of good spring rains.

As big as this fish was, other Texas rivers and lakes hold trophy alligator gar that are even

bigger. Angler Marty McClellan set the state bow-fishing record for alligator gar in 2001 with an 8 foot, 290 pound fish from the Trinity River - a record that still stands to this day. The world record, caught in Mississippi in 2011, measured 8 feet 5 inches and weighed 327 pounds. TPWD researchers examined otoliths from that fish and estimated its age at 95 years.

HOHFSC biologists are conducting several stud-

ies to learn more about Texas alligator gar populations with the goal of providing management recommendations for the sustainability of this species for present and future anglers. Past and ongoing research projects include sampling alligator gar populations in five river systems, tagging individual fish and recording their movements, and working with gar anglers to learn how they use the fishery.

Currently, Texas per-

mits the harvest of one alligator gar per day with no minimum length limit. Bow fishing, rod and reel and jug lines are all legal methods for harvesting the limit of one fish per day.

For images of the record catch, visit the TPWD News Images online. To learn more about alligator gar, view range maps or explore previous news releases, magazine articles and YouTube videos, visit the TPWD news



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Fall Fishing on the Fork *(Continued from Page 6-A)*

any of these features. Pitch out a marker buoy and go to work. Gold is a great color for the spoons and a ten inch worm will get the job done on the C-rig. Blue fleck, redbug, green pumpkin and bamabug are all great colors to start with. The same colors apply to the football jig and I favor the Talon Carolina Worm in redbug for my drop shot. Barfish are the key to these deep spots. Find those on your graph and the bass will be mixed in with them.

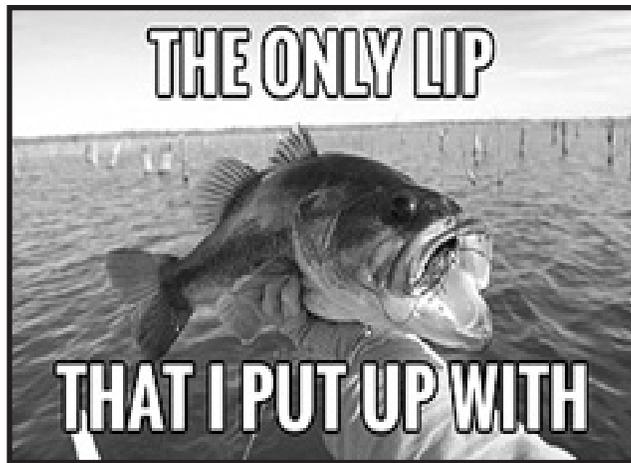
If you are headed out to Lake Fork in November searching for the trophy of a lifetime, I would

love to be a part of this trophy quest. I still have a few dates open in November and some in December. I also have gift certificates available if you have friends or loved one's who have dreamt of landing a huge bass. You can contact me at 409-782-4269 or e-mail me at skeet21c@aol.com. You can follow me on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/LakeForkGuideDavidOzio>. I would like to thank Okuma Fishing and Talon Lures for making my job the blast that it is. A special shout out to Nautical Mile Marine in Tyler for all their help in keeping me on the water seven days a week, no issues. I hope to see a lot of you on the water. Romans 10:13. "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved". I wish all of you a blessed day."

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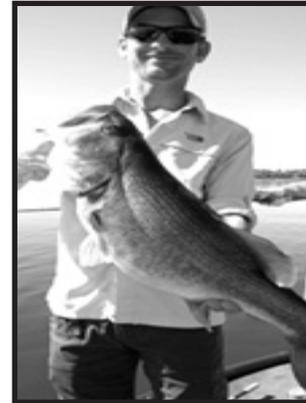
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Pack of Knowledge (Continued from Page 18-A)

over the tree roots descending down into the channel. If the low spot or channel is too narrow I will position the boat outside of the channel and cast across it, making sure to work down the outside bends. The outside bends often have the steepest ledge due to the original current flow prior to impoundment. I always get excited when fishing the outside of hard channel bends, as these seem to be prime big fish hangouts.

Creek channel fish can be in a wide range of depths. In any given creek, I believe there will be small wolf-packs of prespawn females staging in various areas along the way. Some may feel comfortable where the channel is 8' deep and the top side of the ledge is 4-6', and others may be in areas where the channel is as deep as 25' closer to the mouth of the creek. The key is the ledge.

I feel that the presentation is a matter of confidence. Most anglers I have guided or fished with tend to fish a jig much faster and with more of a hopping motion than I do. I find that an extremely slow crawl works best for me. Even though I'm creeping the jig along, I still feel the bite is a reaction bite, in that most of my strikes come as the jig rolls over a root or branch. With the slow approach, it gives you the opportunity to sneak the jig up to the bass without it feeling or hearing it coming. Often, if I work through an area slowly garnering a few bites, I will go back through it with a more aggressive "stroking" type retrieve to see if I can pick up a few more reaction bites.

My favorite jig style for the colder months is Santone's M-Series jig. The

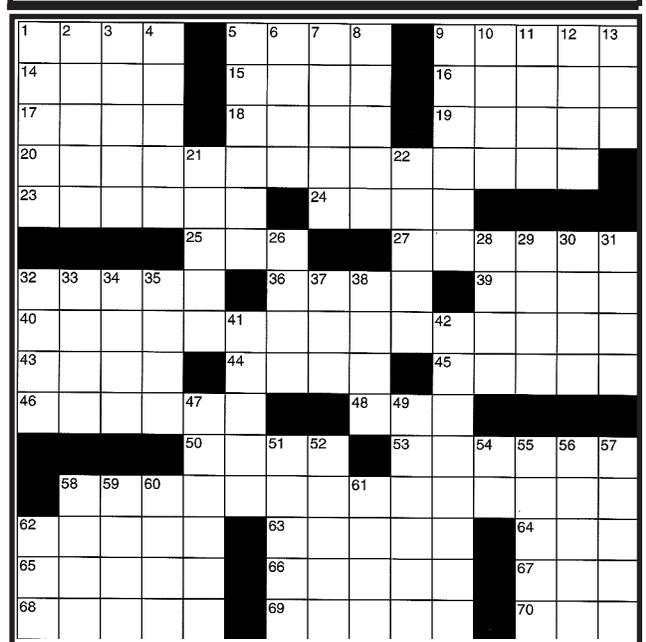
"arkie" style head design will hook fish right every time. Certain head designs naturally turn during the hookset. This results in poorly hooked fish. You don't get too many bites jig fishing, so you don't want to lose any. The M-Series solves that problem.

Hopefully this information helps give you some confidence in jig fishing.

Right now is a great time to catch a giant bass on a jig. As always, feel free to contact me if I can be of any assistance on your upcoming trip to Lake Fork.

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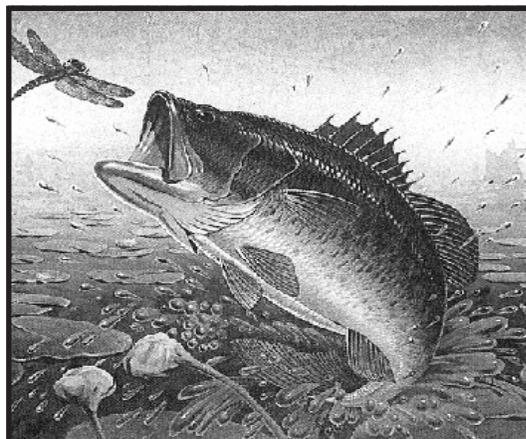


Grammar Find

There are 14 grammar-related terms hidden throughout the scrambled puzzle below. See how many you can find and circle. The words go horizontally and vertically, backward and forward.

APOSTROPHE	PHRASE
CLAUSE	PREDICATE
COLON	PUNCTUATE
CONJUNCTION	SENTENCE
OBJECT	SUBJECT
PARAGRAPH	SYNTAX
PERIOD	TENSE

X A T E N S E N T E N S
E P R E C N E T N E S N
T N U J O N O C L U S E
N E T A C I D E R P E T
Y A E T O C U J N U P R
R P E R N O D B E N T C
L O H P O R G U R C L O
D S P C L A U S E T E N
O T A L S U B J C U N J
I R R X A T N Y S A P U
R O G A P A R S A T R N
E P A T O N S N R E I C
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Big Time Texas Hunts Winners Announced

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has announced the 14 lucky winners of this year's Big Time Texas Hunts selected at random from entries in the drawing.

All told, hunters bought nearly 84,000 Big Time Texas Hunt entries. More than \$774,000 in gross sales was generated, and proceeds from the drawing go to support wildlife research, habitat management and public hunting.

This year's winner of the Texas Grand Slam hunting package, Marcus Dennis of Lindsay, TX, is making plans for four separate guided hunts for the state's top four premier big game species - desert bighorn

sheep, white-tailed deer, pronghorn and mule deer.

Following are the rest of the winners of this year's Big Time Texas Hunts. Ultimate Mule Deer Hunt - David Pulk, Double Oak Premium Buck Hunt - Hans Schroeder, Houston Exotic Safari - Franklin Catrett, Albany, GA Whitetail Bonanza - William Glover, Boerne; Clyde Kesling, McKinney; Sam

Lawless, El Paso; Chris Daniels, Magnolia, MS; Steve Howell, Blanco; and William Weiser, Lexington Big Time Bird Hunt - Thomas Blakeney, Canyon Gator Hunt - William Howard, Coppell Texas Waterfowl Hunt - Andrew Lillie, Houston Wild Hog Adventure - Gregory Wise, Edna All winners have been notified. Entries for next year's Big Time Texas Hunts will go on sale May 15, 2018.




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Zebra Mussels Discovered in Richland Chambers Reservoir

Invasive zebra mussels have been positively identified in Richland Chambers Reservoir, one of the state's largest inland reservoirs.

TPWD fisheries biologists confirmed the presence of six adult zebra mussels in the reservoir Oct. 18 after receiving an identification report from a couple of young anglers fishing near the dam. The young anglers identified the zebra mussels based on a warning poster they had seen advising boaters to clean, drain and dry.

"At this time it appears to be a pretty low density of zebra mussels and all of the specimens were of similar size, so at this time we cannot say there is a reproducing population in Richland Chambers Reservoir," said Brian

Van Zee, Inland Fisheries Regional Director. "That is why the lake is classified as positive rather than infested, but we do plan to continue to monitor for reproduction."

Richland Chambers Reservoir is a 44,000-acre impoundment controlled by the Tarrant Regional Water District, located less than 100 miles from Dallas, Waco and Tyler. It is the newest of several water bodies already found positive for zebra mussels in the Trinity River Basin, to include Lake Livingston, Lake Worth, Lavon Lake and Fishing Hole Lake.

The Trinity River Basin also includes several zebra mussel-infested water bodies - meaning they have established, reproducing populations - in-

cluding Lake Bridgeport, Eagle Mountain Lake, Ray Roberts Lake and Lake Lewisville - and the rivers below these lakes (or portions thereof) are considered positive.

The rapidly reproducing zebra mussels, originally from Eurasia, can have serious economic, recreational and environmental impacts on Texas reservoirs and rivers. Zebra mussels can cover shoreline rocks and litter beaches with sharp shells, clog water intakes, damage or increase maintenance on hydroelectric and other facilities using raw surface water, and damage boats and motors left in infested waters.

Although biologists do not yet know the full extent of the zebra mussel population in Richland

Chambers Reservoir, District Fisheries Biologist Richard Ott said boaters need to be diligent in cleaning, draining and drying their equipment every time they leave the water.

"The problem with zebra mussels is that the larvae are microscopic, and that's what makes it so important that people go through the clean, drain and dry process," Ott said. "You can't know for sure if you are carrying zebra mussels, so you need to proceed with an abundance of caution any time you are boating on posi-

tive or infested lakes."

In Texas, it is unlawful to possess or transport zebra mussels, dead or alive. Boaters are required to drain all water from their boat and on-board receptacles before leaving or approaching a body of fresh water in order to prevent the transfer of zebra mussels. Zebra mussel larvae are microscopic and both adults and larvae can survive for days in or on boats transported from a lake, especially during cooler fall months. The requirement to drain applies to all types and sizes of boats whether powered

or not: personal watercraft, sailboats, kayaks/canoes or any other vessel used on public waters.

TPWD fisheries biologists will continue to work with the Tarrant Regional Water District to monitor for zebra mussel reproduction and establish signage to notify boaters of the new infestation at Richland Chambers Reservoir.

More information about zebra mussels can be found online at tpwd.texas.gov/ZebraMussels.

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