

LAKE FORK "The Big Bass Capital of Texas"



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

2 Sections

www.fishguidenews.com

Free

Vol. 20

December, 2018

No. 232

"Merry Christmas"

"May All
Your Fishes
Come True"



TPWD Eagle Count is scheduled the first part of January and as always volunteers to help in the count are appreciated. Rains County Eagle Fest will be held on January 19th.

Lake Fork Year End Review

By Don Hampton

It was a good year on Lake Fork during 2018 with one of the most exciting times coming with the Lake Fork Sportsman Association being inducted into the Texas Fishing Hall of Fame. With all of their

committed hard work "Preserving, Protecting, and Promoting" the legend that is Lake Fork, they are quite deserving!

You are always going to find those anglers who haven't been lucky on the lake and complain but those were overlooked this year.

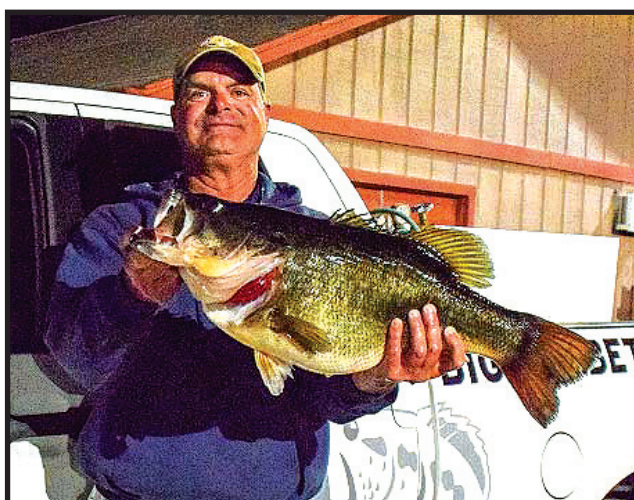
There were a lot of big bass weighed in during the course of the year!

With the new rules for the TPWD/ShareLunker Program regulations only bass 13-pounds or over are only accepted to be spawned out January 1 through March 31. (See Lake Fork....

Continued on Page 4-A)



John LaBove from Greenville, TX caught the first ShareLunker from Lake Fork weighing 15.48-lbs.



Michael Terrebone from Cut Off, LA caught the 2nd ShareLunker from Lake Fork weighing 13-lbs.



Alex Finch from N. Richard Hills, TX caught the 3rd ShareLunker from Lake Fork weighing 13.06-lbs.

"Bubba' Do's and Dont's For Shopping Could Save Your Christmas!"

By Don Hampton

When buying for your Bubbette this Christmas, take some advice from Bubba on gift selection. Bubba is not the smartest man in the world but he is a quick learner.

Bubba's suggestions of what not to buy:

- 1.) Don't buy her anything that can be construed or used as a weapon for inflicting pain if she doesn't like it.
- 2.) Don't buy her anything you could use if she doesn't like it, (see #1).
- 3.) Garden tools, lawnmower, or a chainsaw is definitely a no-no, (see #1).
- 4.) No new tires or parts for the automobile, (see #1).
- 5.) A new trolling motor will get you hurt, (see #1).
- 6.) A cover for the boat, (see #1).
- 7.) Don't buy her any household or kitchen appliances – ever! (#1 could apply).
- 8.) Tickets to boat shows, fishing seminars or the Bassmasters Classic, (paper-cuts really hurt, see #1).
- 9.) A gift certificate from a tackle store, (see #8 & #1).
- 10.) A replica of the biggest fish you've caught this year, (see #1).

With all ten of these don'ts, Bubba has assured me they have been tried and true...but, for the ten don'ts Bubba suggests he has come up with ten do's. These are called the "Bubba Do's learned by paying his dues!"

Bubba has it down to a fine art now and suggests you try these do's:

- 1.) Go with the heart.
- 2.) Consider her need for relaxation. This will make it easier for you to relax.
- 3.) Buy jewelry...it always works.
- 4.) If you buy her clothes, know her size; if not, buy a smaller vs. a larger size, (see #1, don'ts list).
- 5.) Listen for clues, hints, and suggestions. There will be plenty.
- 6.) Ask her friends, mother, or sister what she wants.
- 7.) Think of her unspoken wants and be daring and romantic.
- 8.) Don't be afraid to buy from a store she frequents. Wal-Mart's are everywhere!
- 9.) Buy what she wants, but that she wouldn't buy for herself.
- 10.) Make sure she knows where the gift is from, so she discreetly can return it.

For the last few Christmases, Bubba has practiced these do's and don'ts. I

do believe they are working because I haven't seen any bumps or lumps on his head after Christmas. Those all appear after New Year's Eve, but that is an entirely different story.

Try some "Bubba Knowledge" shopping this year for your Bubbette. It could save you a lump sum!

Bubbette's suggestion for shopping for Bubba is simple..."Get some new stuff...Bubba likes stuff especially when it is fishing stuff!"



"Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from our family to you and yours! May God bless you throughout the year!"

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Public Notice on Outbreaks of Avian Paramyxovirus in Texas

Recently, a number of Eurasian collared doves near El Paso have tested positive for avian paramyxovirus, specifically Pigeon Paramyxovirus-1, or PPMV-1. Dead doves have also been reported in Alpine.

Past outbreaks have been observed in the vicinity of many of the larger urban centers of the Trans-Pecos and Panhandle regions such as Midland, Lubbock, and Alpine, but outbreaks may occur elsewhere within these regions. The majority of PPMV-1 outbreaks in wild birds in the United States have involved Eurasian collared doves and rock doves (pigeons).

Symptoms include

doves becoming lethargic and reluctant to move, producing green diarrhea, or having difficulty in standing or holding their head upright. The virus can cause conjunctivitis (pink eye) in humans, therefore, if you encounter multiple dead or dying doves, do not handle the birds without hand and eye protection. There is no known risk to cats or dogs from PPMV-1, but we recommend keeping pets away from infected birds.

Some strains of PPMV-1 have been shown to cause disease and death in domestic poultry. Chickens can contract the disease from indirect contact such as dove feces in chicken

feeding areas. Therefore, backyard chicken owners may want to take precautions to minimize potential contact between chickens and doves.

If an outbreak occurs in your area, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department recommends discontinuing bird feeding and watering activities to decrease possible transmission between doves and other birds. If multiple sick or dying doves are located in your area, please contact a local TPWD biologist or Don Kahl (don.kahl@tpwd.texas.gov; 806-475-1308). Additionally, please advise the use of protective gloves, masks, and glasses if handling sick or dying birds in these areas.



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Lake Fork Year End Review (Continued from Page 1-A)

Of all the lakes in Texas there were only six entries. Of those six entries three came from Lake Fork. The first came on March 2nd, caught by John LaBove from Greenville, Texas that weighed 15.48-pounds. The second one was caught by Michael Terrebone from Cut Off, Louisiana and weighed 13-pounds. Alex Finch from North Richland Hills, Texas caught the third one to be entered from Lake Fork weighing 13.06-pounds. There were also many double-digit bass entered from our great reservoir into the remainder that runs each year through December 31st.

During the 10th Annual Mega Bass tournament hosted by BassChamps and held March 17, 2018 on Lake Fork, this lake showed how great it really is. Among all the other big bass over the slot weighed in there were three that went over 11-pounds. Garrett Hall won the tournament overall with a bass weighing 11.38-pounds. Owen Rowland won \$15,000 hourly with a bass weighing 13.34-pounds and Byran Toombs won \$15,000 hourly with his bass weighing 13.13-pounds.

In the 14th Annual Legend of Lake Fork Big Bass Tournament held on May 18, 19, 20, 2018 history was made. A 13.18-pound bass had won in a previous year, but that weight was beaten and a new record set for the heaviest bass to win in a tournament on Lake Fork. Lane Shaw set the new record when he brought a bass weighing 13.78-pounds to the scales. There were nineteen bass brought to the

scales over the 24" slot and the tournament was represented by anglers from 26 states and two countries.

June was also a big month on Lake Fork! At the 24th Annual Wood County Kidfish on June 2nd, presented by the Wood County Sheriff's Department, Game Warden's Association, and Sabine River Authority over 400 youth and their parents or guardians attended for a fun filled day of fishing and good eats. The following week the 25th Annual Skeeter Owner's Tournament was held on Lake Fork. Over 2,300 anglers came to participate from various states across the nation. During this tournament 25 bass over the 24" slot came to the scales, several being double-digits. The heaviest bass under the slot of 16" weighed 3.02-pounds. Charles Doss from Ft. Worth won the tournament with his bass weighing 11.19-pounds.

July and August had big fish being caught. Because of the hot weather most were reported being caught night fishing especially during the full moon cycles.

In September, Lake Fork once again got busy with the 32nd Annual Sealy Outdoors Big Bass Tournament that was held on September 21, 22, 23, 2018. During this tournament there were 2,398 entries and 24 bass over the 24" slot came to the scales. Winning the tournament grand prize was Charles Blundell from Gilmer, Texas with a bass weighing 11.15-pounds.

On October 20th and 21st, 2018 BassChamps put on the 13th Annual Berkley Big Bass Tournament on Lake Fork. Between the northerners blowing in

and the lake turning over, conditions were made difficult for the anglers. This did not dampen the spirits of the 1,151 anglers that came to compete. Zach Fowler from Aledo, Texas won the grand prize with a bass that weighed 8.95-pounds and Thomas Young from Eros, Louisiana won heaviest under the slot of 16" with a bass weighing 2.60-pounds.

In November as a result of the lake not settling down after the turn-over fishing was not at its best, but big bass were still being caught. December might show some big bass delivered to anglers fishing deep on the points and in creek channels.

Throughout the year crappie and catfishing has been excellent from all the reports. As good as the bass fishing is on this great reservoir, other species rate right up there with them.

If you are looking to catch a lunker or a great place to bring the family to fish, you couldn't choose a better place than Lake Fork.

For tournaments anglers wishing to get in on some of the 2019 action Mega Bass by BassChamps will be March 16th; The Legend of Lake Fork Big Bass Tournament May 17th, 18th, 19th; Skeeter Owners June 7th, 8th, 9th; Sealy Big Bass Splash September 20th, 21st, 22nd; Bass Cat Owners October 5th, 6th; Berkley Big Bass October 19th, 20th.

We hope to see all of you at the tournaments or on the lake. Have a terrific and blessed 2019.



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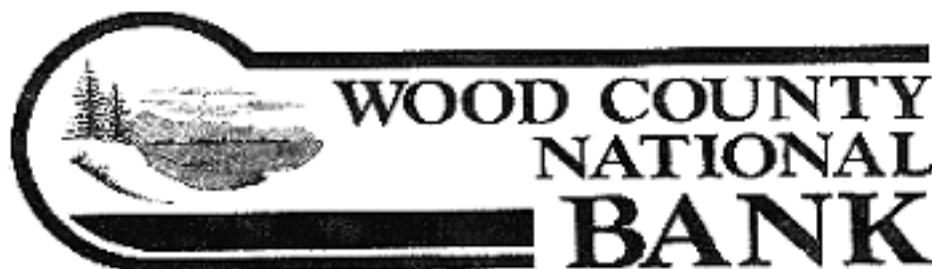
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Celebrate the Holiday Season at a Texas State Park

Fifty-two Texas State Parks are spreading holiday cheer with more than 75 seasonal events happening now through Christmas. This holiday season park visitors can enjoy special hikes, ornament workshops and trails of lights, just to name a few.

In Northeast Texas, Atlanta State Park is hosting Christmas in the Park at 9 p.m. Dec. 14-15. Visitors can enjoy a drive through the decorated park and get a chance to see Santa, Mrs. Claus, the Grinch and Smokey the Bear. Any camper who participates by decorating their campsite will have their fees waived. Refreshments and treats will be served at the event.

Step back in time and see how the holidays would have been celebrated on the Battleship Texas at its Yuletide Texas event 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dec. 8 at the Battleship Texas State Historic Site near Houston. Staff on the historic ship will recreate classic Christmas traditions the crew would have experienced during their time afloat while the ship was in service. Younger visiting sailors will also have a chance to take a photo with Santa and transmit a message directly to the North Pole from the ship's post office.

Fort Richardson State Park and Historic Site in North Texas is recreating what Christmas would have looked like in the 1870s during their Ghosts of Christmas Past event 5-7 p.m. Dec. 8. Once the sun sets, visitors can stroll through

the buildings and glimpse into the holiday festivities of the past. The historic buildings will be filled with soldiers and their families reveling in the evening Christmas celebrations of a nineteenth century U.S. military post.

Warm up by the fire at Indian Lodge in Davis Mountains State Park during their fire-side stories of black bears program at 4 p.m. Dec. 8 and 15. Staff will tell tales of the bears in the Davis Mountains including an unbelievable story about the hunt for a grizzly.

In Wichita Falls, Lake Arrowhead State Park is hosting a Prairie Dog Christmas Scavenger Hunt 8 a.m.- 5 p.m. Dec. 15. Christmas-themed prairie dogs will be hidden around the park for visitors to find. Anyone who finds three prairie dogs wins a prize. Use #laspchristmas to share a photo of you and the prairie dog to Facebook and Instagram.

The 49th annual tree lighting at Lyndon B. Johnson State Park and Historic Site Dec. 16, from 5-8 p.m. is a Hill Country tradition started by the President and First Lady Johnson, which has continued for nearly a half century. The event highlights the German holiday traditions of the region. The evening also features carolers, a live nativity, Santa Claus and refreshments. Revisit the past at the Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm. The farm will be decorated the way families would have

celebrated the holidays in the early 1900s.

For more information about holiday activities at Texas State Parks, visit the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department website. A full calendar is available online on the TPWD calendar page.

Photos of past holiday events are available on the TPWD Flickr page.

Want to bring Texas State Parks home for the holidays? Commemorate parks and the holidays with a Texas State Park ornament. For more than 15 years, the annual park Christmas ornaments have featured some of the most recognizable Texas State Parks landscapes. This year, the ornaments depict the historic buildings at Fort Richardson State Park and Historic Site, the tropical dwarf palmettos of Palmetto State Park and the iconic dunes of Monahans Sandhills State Park. Starting Dec. 3, the wooden ornaments are available for purchase for \$8.95 each or \$19.95 for the set of three. To purchase them, call 512-389-8900.

Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine is also offering a special subscription deal for the holidays. Anyone can give two gift subscriptions to the magazine for just \$15. Don't want to feel left out? Give yourself the gift of the outdoors for an additional \$5. Subscriptions can be ordered online <http://bit.ly/TPWMagholiday18>.

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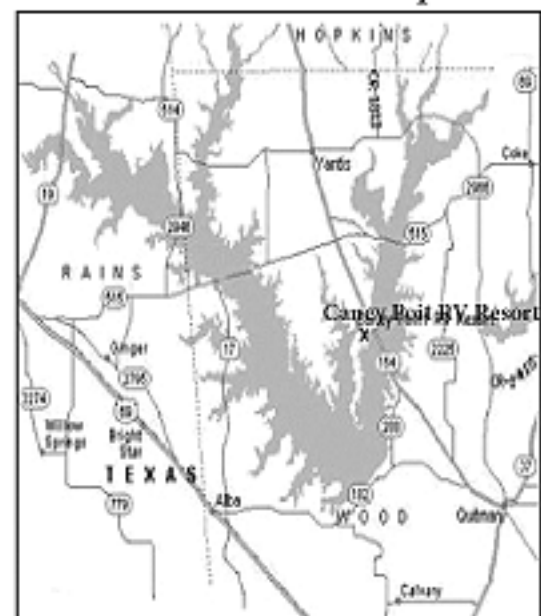
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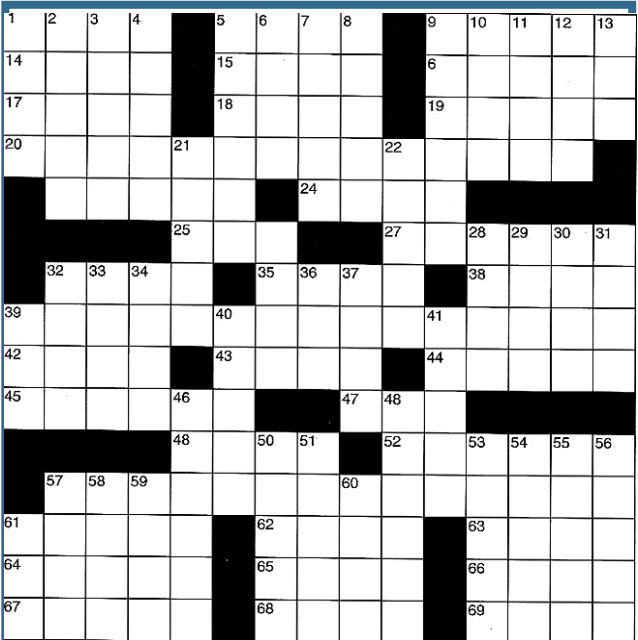


December Means Colder Temps in Forkland

By David Ozio

“Water temps at Forkland are plummeting and you know what that means, Old Man Winter is perched at our doorstep. From one perspective, this is a good thing. Shad are starting to migrate to the backs of the creeks and hungry bass are stocking up for the cold days ahead. Fork is starting to stabilize from an extended lake turnover with main lake water temps hovering around the mid-fifties. These temps may drop a slight bit more in January but we shouldn’t see a major drop as witnessed throughout November. This spells awesome fishing on the near term horizon.

The abundance of rain to date has the lake rising to a half foot over pool. This has



- CLUES ACROSS
1. Mythological mountain

5. Afflicts

9. Traps

14. College army

15. Annoyance

16. Old Irish alphabets

17. From a distance

18. Soluble ribonucleic acid

19. _____ but goodie

20. Studs _____ Terkel's _____

23. Yellow-fever mosquitos

24. Muslimism

25. By way of

27. Visual sense

32. A plant fiber used in making rope or sacks

35. Having little substance

38. Fill up

39. Deductible item for some

42. Awry

43. Helios

44. Coal tar product

45. Richard _____, actor

47. Substitute

49. Honey and carpenter

52. Type of mission

57. Spiteful withholder

61. Designed chairs

62. A circle of light around the sun or moon

63. Swiss river

64. Related on the mother's side

65. Augury

66. The destroyer (Hindu)

67. Selenes

68. Oceans

69. _____ Blyton, children's author
- CLUES DOWN
1. Towards the mouth or oral region

2. Bulgarian capital

3. A crosspiece between the legs of a chair

4. Having a strong sharp smell or taste

5. St. Francis of _____

6. Japanese waist pouch

7. Scottish waterfalls

8. Hideaway, slang

9. Expression of praise

10. A way to look

11. Burden

12. Utter sounds

13. Compass point

21. Lucky number

22. Keeps tickin'

26. Used when listing items

28. Type of spread

29. Bridges organ parts

30. Romanian city

31. Arabian Gulf

32. Joins wings, pl.

33. Exploiter

34. Rank

36. Signing, abbr.

37. Flat tableland with steep edges

39. Humbug

40. Ruhr River valley city

41. Ancient city in S.W. Jordan

46. Waders

48. Gamboges

50. The distinctive spirit of a people or an era

51. Bring dishonor upon

53. Ribonuclease

54. Besides

55. Pertaining to nerves

56. Causing fear

57. Irish mother of gods

58. Arabian sultinate

59. Usually with wooden soles

60. Ancient Greek City

61. Moray, for one

Answers on Page 21-A

helped the shallow bite to date but the cooler water temps aren’t allowing the big bass to gang up deep as of this writing. This changes our focus to mid depth water patterns and this will continue into December while we are searching for the next ShareLunker. Provided the water continues to slowly cool heading into Santa month, good electronics will play a key roll in the search of these groups of monster green fish and the best place to start your search will be at the mouth of the major creeks, Birch, Penson, Mustang, Williams, Wolfe and Dale. Focus on the shad and scan for hooks that are surrounding the clouds of bait. All these bass will be suspended so target these fish with a flutter spoon if the wind is an issue or a weightless fluke if the water is calm. Count the bait down to the level where you marked them at the rate of a second per foot. At that point, twitch the fluke or rip the spoon. Stay in touch with the shad and see what happens. Any flutter spoon will do the trick if you are in the mouth of a creek that is inundated with timber. Let it flutter to the bottom and experiment with different retrieves to isolate what the fish favor. A standard spoon in the same silver or gold works better if you are in open water with no ob-



structions. Pay close attention to your graph and direct your efforts in areas where there are schools of sand bass or bar fish. All year, the big black bass have been mixed in with the schools feeding on the unwitting small bar fish. C-rigs and drop shots have worked well also using redbug and junebug Talon Carolina Worms. Locate the baitfish and go to work.

The shallow bite will still be relevant if the water temps stay above 60 degrees. Rattletraps, squarebills, chatterbaits and spinnerbaits will all answer the call to duty. Look for vegetation in the skinny water and pay attention to any baitfish activity. There will also

(See December Means.....
Continued on Page 20-A)

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"The Moon Report" "Year End Crappie on Lake Fork!"

By Terri Moon

Well this year is winding down fast! We went from summer to winter in the blink of an eye! I was disappointed that fall only lasted about a week – our water temperatures plummeted and I think it rained more than half of the month of November. Along with the rain were ridiculous winds. Then if things weren't tough enough, they kept opening the flood gates and we all know what that does to Lake Fork fishing!

Typical patterns went out the window this year! I'm just so grateful for all the equipment I have to help me locate and stay on fish when we find them. From my Lowrance HDS Carbon Units, to my MinnKota Ultrex Trolling Motor (the spotlock is priceless) and especially this "Beast of a Boat" – my Skeeter Solera 205. It's amazing how it handles the rough water we've had with these crazy winds! But, in spite of difficult conditions, we have been catching some really nice crappie.

There is no magic spot right now. We will catch a few in a spot, then move on and catch a few in another spot, and so on! The crappie are just starting to bunch up and transitioning to deeper water. Right now we are targeting 25 – 35 ft., but, as water temps continue to drop, start checking up to 40 ft. depths and follow the baitfish. Check bridges, main creek channels, main lake points, deep water



humps and road beds. Look for stump beds or any structure.

The colors working for us have been L.S.U. purple/gold, chartreuse/blue and black/chartreuse.

By the way, don't forget December 1st to March 1st you have to keep the first 25 you catch (no culling).

If this wind ever lies down, there should be some awesome fishing this month now that lake levels and water temperatures are stabilizing. Just bundle up and go have some fun! The bonus right now is that the fall foliage is at PEAK colors and it's a sight to see!

Another tip for this time of year is doubling up on your jigs. Tie them about a foot apart, and then work them off the bottom. It's really fun when you catch them two at a time!

Once again, many thanks to all of you who fished with me this year and I'm looking forward to seeing you all again in the coming year. Don't forget to check out Lake Fork Marina for your holiday shopping for the fishermen in your life. They've got some great gift ideas and gift bas-

kets.

Now for those of you that follow "Sweet Buddy" the Lake Fork Marina Camp Dog on my facebook, I want to thank you for all your help putting the word out to look for him when he disappeared for 3 days. It was great to learn pieces to the puzzle of Buddy's past and what an incredible journey he's had. We are all just glad he's back and resting comfortably. Thanks again to Quitman Animal Clinic for fixing up his injury he got while he was gone and thanks to the Hopes for looking after Buddy while he was MIA from us. It was great to hear that Buddy and the Hopes were "old friends", (she said they called him "Biscuit")! So, Buddy went to a SAFE place when the storm hit the night he disappeared. At least now I know where to look for him when he goes on one of his adventures. I'm grateful to all of Buddy's friends that have helped him along the way.

I wish everyone a "Wonderful Holiday Season" and many blessings to you all and especially to my family!

(Continued on next page)



Lake Fork Crappie Guide Terri Moon caught this hawg while crappie fishing using ultra-light equipment. Quite an accomplishment. C.P.R.



Dale Sandvall was fishing Lake Fork with guide Whitt Smith when he caught this hawg over the 24" slot. Weight not provided. C.P.R. (Courtesy Photo Whitt Smith Guide Service)



Lake Fork Guide Whitt Smith caught this hawg over the 24" slot while fishing on Lake Fork. Weight not provided. C.P.R. (Courtesy Photo Whitt Smith Guide Service)



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Iconic Whooping Cranes Making Way to Texas Coast

With the first sightings recently of iconic, endangered whooping cranes along the Texas coast, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is reminding Texans to be on the lookout for these impressive birds as they move through the state.

Whooping cranes face a harrowing, 2,500 mile journey from the breeding grounds in the marshy taiga of northern Alberta's Wood Buffalo National Park to the coastal marshes of Texas each year. The migration south to Texas can take up to 50 days with the population typically travelling in small groups. Man-made structures like power lines, communication towers, and wind turbines pose signifi-

cant threats, as do more natural perils like predators and harsh weather.

Along the way, whooping cranes seek out wetlands and agricultural fields to roost and feed in, and they often pass large urban centers like Dallas/Fort Worth, Waco, and Austin. Though they rarely stay in one place for more than a day during migration, it is important that they not be disturbed or harassed at these stopovers; in fact, as a federally protected species, it is illegal to do so.

The first whooper pair of the season was just spotted at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge on October 22. Recent heavy rains brought much needed freshwater to the area

and should result in improved numbers of blue crabs and Carolina wolfberries, preferred whooper foods in coastal marshes.

The tallest bird in North America, the whooping crane, is also one of the rarest. With a current population of around 505 individuals, whooping cranes are slowly returning from the brink of extinction thanks to coordinated conservation efforts. Out of 87 nests this summer only about 24 chicks fledged, a low number compared to recent years, likely due to the unseasonably cold, wet weather.

The Aransas-Wood Buffalo population, the only "natural" flock of whooping cranes in the world, spends each

winter in and around the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge near Rockport. However, with population expansion in recent years they have begun spending time in more untraditional areas, venturing some distance from the refuge to find food and other resources.

"These iconic, endangered species deserve our respect as they migrate through the central flyway, and we ask the public to avoid disturbing them if spotted," states Wade Harrell, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Whooping Crane Recovery Coordinator. "Along with whooping cranes migrating from Canada, Texas has had a few visiting whooping cranes from a reintroduced

population in southwest Louisiana. These cranes are all marked with leg bands and have been most commonly spotted in southeastern Texas, near Beaumont."

With sandhill crane and waterfowl hunting seasons opening and whooper migration in full swing, TPWD urges hunters to be extra vigilant. Whooping cranes are sometimes found in mixed flocks with sandhill cranes, which are gray and slightly smaller. With their all-white body plumage and black wingtips, whooping cranes may also resemble snow geese, which are much smaller and have faster wing beats. There are several other non-game species that are similar in appearance such as wood

storks, American white pelicans, great egrets and others, but a close look will reveal fairly obvious differences.

The public can help track whooping cranes by reporting sightings to TPWD's Whooper Watch, a citizen-science based reporting system to track whooping crane migration and wintering locations throughout Texas. More information about Whooper Watch, including instructions for reporting sightings, can be found online and by downloading the iNaturalist mobile app. These observations help biologists identify new migration and wintering locations and their associated habitats.



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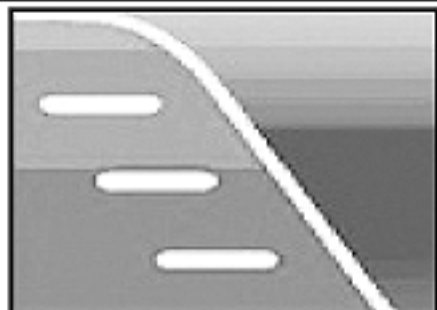
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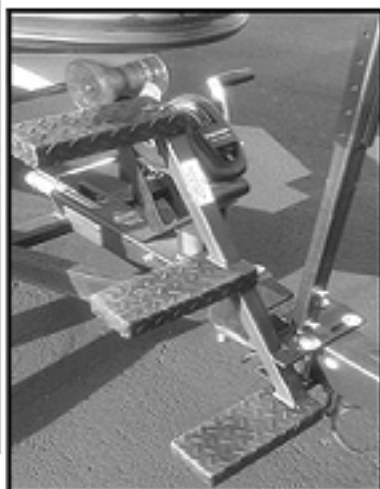
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"Knowing What To Look For!"

Well I will start by wishing you all a belated happy Thanksgiving and many merry holidays to come. One of my favorite times of the year to fish for big bass on Lake Fork are the holidays. Starting in late fall (when the water drops be-

low 55 degrees) I will almost always stick with an Alabama rig and I won't put it down until late January or even February. The colder the water gets the better. In fact ultimately a winter shad kill is optimum, this will happen when water

temps get below 49 degrees. First what I'm looking for with my sonar is a pile up of bait and fish together, preferably in a ditch or valley. This attached image is the perfect Alabama rig scenario. The stack of bait and fish are

piled up between 2 shell bed islands or humps one might call them. You can see the bright shell beds and double echoes. The valley between is a deep ditch or drain and its loaded. Find this on your sonar, cast right down the middle, let the rig sink to the bottom then snap your rod and slow roll your Alabama rig right through all of it. Seriously now, hang on tight! Many times the bites will be violent and even produce multiple fish at the same time, you can literally have the rod jerked out of your hands. Master this technique in the fall/winter and you're in for some real fun days of great numbers and always a high chance for a double digit bass on the the World's famous Lake Fork. If you would like to learn more about this technique, please inquire about a fully furnished teaching guide trip, we have openings. Thank you and I wish you all great fishing,

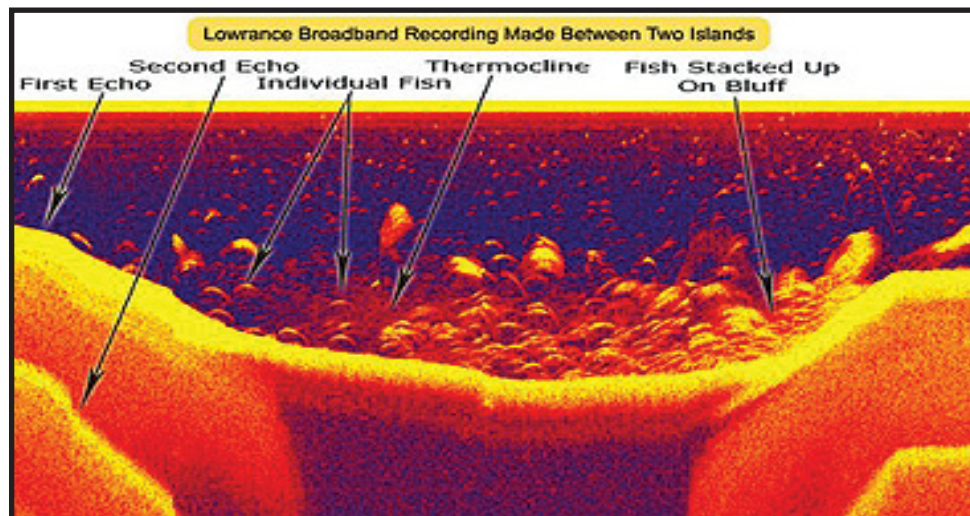


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Blanco River Named 2018 "Water to Watch" by National Fish Habitat Partnership

The Blanco River is one of the primary river networks that Central Texas communities depend upon for drinking water, flood abatement, agricultural production and recreation. Thanks to collaborative conservation work conducted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), landowners and other local partners, the Blanco River was named one of 20 "Waters to Watch" by the National Fish Habitat

Partnership in 2018.

The "Waters to Watch" are voluntary, locally-driven projects representing some of the top conservation activities in progress implemented by regional Fish Habitat Partnerships throughout the country. The conservation projects are designed to conserve freshwater, estuarine and marine habitats essential to the many fish and wildlife species that call these areas home.

Conservation work being done on the Blanco River includes restoring riparian habitat to stabilize flood-damaged river banks and reintroducing a genetically pure population of native Guadalupe bass, the official state fish of Texas. Additionally, TPWD and other partners provide onsite technical guidance to streamside landowners to encourage best management practices that eliminate invasive species like Arundo and support native fish and plant communities.

"After historic flooding in 2015, Blanco River banks experienced heavy erosion, which impacts water quality, water quantity and favors exotic species," said Ryan McGillicuddy, TPWD Conservation Ecologist. "Our conservation work on the Blanco River since then has focused on organizing and engaging a network of riparian landowners to restore healthy plant communities that are more resilient to the effects of flooding and benefit native aquatic life like Guadalupe bass."

"Our state fish is a highly sought after sport fish for river anglers, so in addition to providing ecological value to the native aquatic life that call the river home, this work could provide future economic value to the region by enhancing recreational angling opportunities on the Blanco River," he added.

Primarily funded by Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership, conservation work on the Blanco River is also supported by state invasive species funds to combat the spread of invasive species that degrade in-stream and riparian habitats.

Partners on the Blanco River include TPWD, The Nature Conservancy, Hill Country Alliance, Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, Fredericksburg, TreeFolks and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

To learn more about Blanco River conservation work, visit: <http://www.fishhabitat.org/waters-to-watch/detail/blanco-river-texas>.

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Seasonal Rainbow Trout Stocking Began Statewide Nov. 30

After a long, hot summer, many Texans are looking forward to going outside and enjoying the long-awaited cool weather this holiday season. On Nov. 30, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department began stocking thousands of cold weather-loving rainbow trout at ponds, lakes and rivers statewide so that family members of all ages can enjoy the crisp seasonal air and catch a feisty, colorful sport fish for fun or to prepare a tasty meal.

With 170 locations being stocked throughout the state, from El Paso to Texarkana and everywhere in between, most Texas anglers are likely to find a place close to home to enjoy catching these fish and spending time in the outdoors.

For urban and suburban families in major cities, Neighborhood Fishin' lakes offer some of the best opportunities to catch rainbow trout this winter. TPWD manages 19 Neighborhood Fishin' lakes statewide in most major urban centers, including Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio. These lakes are stocked with rainbow trout every two weeks and offer plenty of amenities so that family members of all ages can enjoy a fun and relaxing day fishing and connecting in nature.

Families looking to spend a day or weekend exploring a Texas State Park can add fishing to their list of activities, as 22 state parks

throughout the state will receive periodic stockings of rainbow trout this winter. Many state parks offer excellent fishing amenities such as fishing piers and shoreline access, cleaning stations, and equipment rentals for tackle and kayaks or canoes. As a bonus, state parks are the only locations in Texas that anglers can fish for free without a fishing license.

For anglers interested in tailrace fishing, TPWD will be stocking rainbow trout below several dams and spillways, which often have very cool water and provide excellent conditions for trout fishing. This year, TPWD will stock rainbow trout into the Canyon Tailrace on the Guadalupe River below Canyon Lake, the Lewisville Tailrace located on the Elm Fork of the Trinity River below Lake Lewisville, and the Possum Kingdom Tailrace on the Brazos River below Possum Kingdom Lake. Other stocking locations include dozens of local city and county managed park ponds, the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center casting pond, and several rivers including the Frio, South Llano and Guadalupe rivers and the Clear Fork of the Trinity River.

Rainbow trout can be caught on a variety of baits and lures. Depending on an angler's experience level and interest, they can be caught using simple, light tackle or on hand-tied flies using a fly rod. Other tips

to consider when trout fishing include arriving early to stocking sites on stocking days, maintaining a safe and courteous distance from fellow anglers, keeping an array of baits and lures nearby and having ice available when harvesting trout to keep fish fresh.

TPWD will be stocking a total of 322,568 rainbow trout at all locations from Nov. 30 through the beginning of March. Because rainbow trout are unable to survive in Texas after the winter, anglers are encouraged to keep up to their daily bag limit of five trout. Rainbow trout are an attractive, tasty fish found on many restaurant menus, and anglers can easily find recipes to prepare these fish online.

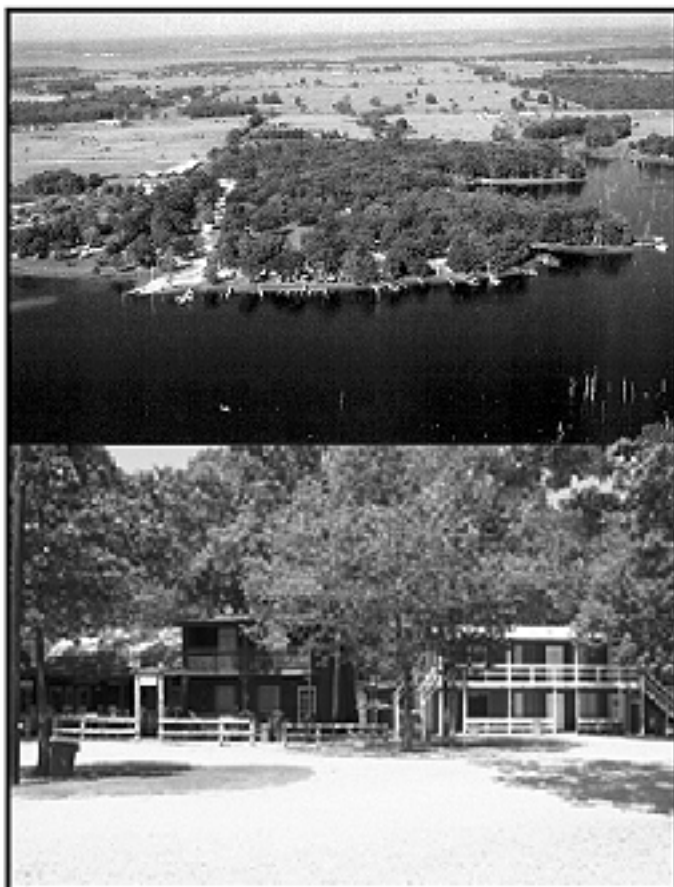
In Texas, children under 17 fish for free, but a fishing license is required for adults in the family.

An angler fishing in a Community Fishing Lake or from a dock, pier or jetty within a Texas State Park may use no more than two poles. The statewide bag limit is five trout, except on parts of the Guadalupe River where special limits are in effect.

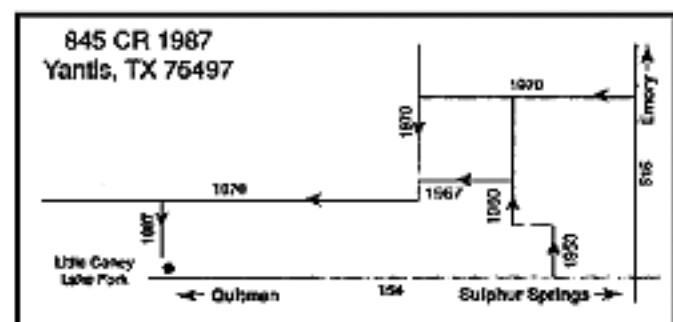
For more winter trout stocking program angling tips, to find a rainbow trout fishing location near you, or to find stocking dates visit tpwd.texas.gov/troutstocking.

For pictures of trout stocking, visit Flickr here: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmmTggvN>.

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Waterfowl Hunters Reminded to Help Prevent Spread of Giant Salvinia

More than 20 lakes in East Texas are currently infested with giant salvinia, including Caddo Lake, which is considered a wetland of international importance for waterfowl habitat. With waterfowl seasons opening across the state, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is urging hunters to be aware of invasive giant salvinia and to help prevent its spread by cleaning, draining and drying all equipment before leaving any water body.

"The expansion of giant salvinia at Caddo Lake and others is a big concern -this year we added six new lakes to the infested list and treated over 12,000 acres of it throughout East Texas," said John Findeisen, TPWD aquatic invasive species team lead. "Not only does this invasive plant form thick mats that block access for hunters to prime waterfowl hunting areas, it can also outgrow and replace the native plants that waterfowl rely on for food and habitat."

Findeisen said hunters can prevent spreading giant salvinia by cleaning and removing all visible plant material from equipment before leaving any body of water, draining water from all equipment before transporting it anywhere, and drying anything that came in contact with wa-

ter before entering another water body.

"We are currently treating giant salvinia infestations with herbicides and biocontrol measures like giant salvinia weevils, but prevention is the most effective and cheapest management tool we have. We need hunters to do their part and take these steps to keep it from spreading further and getting introduced into new lakes," Findeisen said. "Giant salvinia could be hiding undetected in any body of water, so proper cleaning, draining and drying procedures should be done before leaving any lake - even those that aren't known to be infested."

Hunters should be mindful that boats and trailers aren't the only ways giant salvinia can spread - it can also be harbored in waders, decoys and marsh sleds. A video to help hunters properly clean, drain and dry boats and equipment can be found at bit.ly/HunterCleanDrainDry.

In addition to harming the recreational experience at lakes and damaging aquatic ecosystems, the transport of aquatic invasive species can result in legal trouble. In Texas, transporting prohibited invasive species is punishable by a fine of up to \$500 per violation. Boaters are also required to

drain all water from their boat and onboard receptacles before leaving or approaching a body of fresh water in order to prevent the transfer of aquatic invasive species. Because early detection is an important part of reducing or eliminating the presence of giant salvinia, TPWD encourages hunters to report new sightings to (409) 384- 9965 or via the online report form.

Text TPWD GS or TPWD ZM to 468-311 for updates on giant salvinia (GS) or zebra mussels (ZM).

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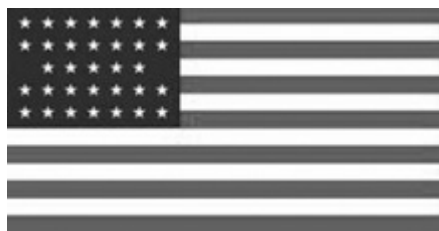
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Texas Game Wardens Honored for Life-Saving Heroics at Annual Law Enforcement Awards

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Executive Director Carter Smith honored several men and women for their outstanding acts of service at the 14th annual Law Enforcement Division Awards Ceremony.

The ceremony recognized Texas game wardens, non-commissioned TPWD employees, first responders from other agencies and members of the general public.

"We are extremely proud of our game wardens, our fellow first responders and members of the public who exemplify professionalism and service by assisting our citizens," said TPWD Law Enforcement Division Director Col. Grahame Jones. "Our game wardens routinely respond during highly stressful situations and are often times the first to arrive during natural disasters or search and rescue scenarios."

This year's award recipients include game wardens who showed outstanding displays of teamwork and leadership in response to medical emergencies. Among the many heroic efforts recognized, include: During a March 2018 shooting incident in Bowie County, a game warden's quick and heroic actions saved the victim's life. After being told the victim was dead and the suspect barricaded inside a house, the game warden saw

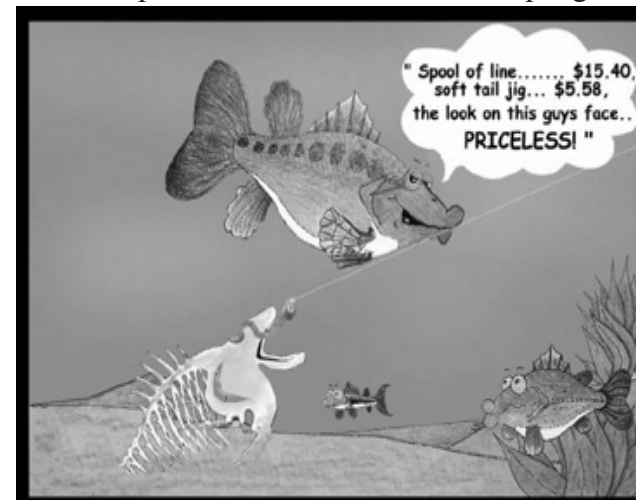
the victim move and make sounds. The warden instructed a local police officer to cover him and, without regard to his own personal safety, pulled the victim out of harm's way, and provided critical first aid until EMS arrived on the scene. The warden then returned and coaxed the suspect to surrender peacefully.

On Lake Tawakoni in April 2018, game wardens responded to a 911 call of a boat capsizing in heavy winds, with a man trapped under the bow of the overturned vessel. With aid from a DPS helicopter, wardens rescued the elderly man, who was soaked in gasoline and suffering from hypothermia. After loading the victim into an ambulance, wardens learned from the man that his brother was also onboard. They returned to the lake and located the brother clinging to a floating buoy, also bringing him to safety.

In December 2016 on Falcon Lake, game wardens responded to a shots fired call involving two boats on the U.S. side of the lake. With assistance from other law enforcement, wardens recovered a shooting victim onboard the vessel and then rescued one of the occupants who was discovered clinging to a buoy suffering from shock and hypothermia. Other heroic lifesaving efforts recognized

include the rescue of a U.S. Border Patrol agent and an undocumented alien suffering from heat-related injuries in a remote area of Brewster County; saving a 9-month-old in a near drowning incident; providing critical first aid and assistance to car crash victims; and several water-related rescues.

Also recognized was former Texas Parks and Wildlife Commissioner Margaret Martin for her ongoing commitment and dedication to Texas game wardens. Martin created the Texas Game Wardens Citizens Academy and serves as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation's liaison for the Gear Up For Game Wardens program.




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"Locating December Bass on Lake Fork!"

As we wind up another good year on Lake Fork, we are heading into one of my favorite times to fish. It's the quietest time of year on the lake, and the fishing can be pretty good for bigger fish.

As we transition from fall to winter, the numbers tend to go down, while the overall size average gets better. Bass fishing in the winter on Lake Fork is all about big bass, not numbers. While you can have some nice days where you catch quite a few, a bite an hour is about what I expect on an average day. The key is those bites will generally be quality bites.



I rarely fish deeper than 12' in the winter. Sure, there are tons of bass in the deeper water on the lower end of the lake. However, a lot of fish stay close to shallow water in order to warm up on sunny days. They will pull up and suspend on sunny days, or move to very shallow water on warm afternoons.

Bass like deeper water close by as well. I believe this gives big bass a feeling of safety. Always having an escape route and having some more comfortable water in case of severe cold snap is important. The term "deeper water" is relative. In some of the creeks on the upper end of a reservoir that could mean 6' deep. On other areas of the lake it might mean 25'. It just depends on the area and how deep the water gets in the vicinity.

Ledges become a key type of structure in the winter. This gives bass the safety of deep water access and access to more shallow water as well. They only have to move vertically to get comfortable. The main ledges I fish here on Lake Fork are the creeks, ditches, and drains that were present before the reservoir was flooded.

When searching for fish in creek channels and ditches, look for the areas that still have definition. Sometimes the creeks will silt

in over time. Not all are equal. Also, keep an eye out for sharp "horseshoe" bends in the creek. A bend will almost always mean there is a deeper, steeper, more washed out part of the channel. This will be on the outside of the bend.

Hopefully this helps point you in the right direction this month. As always, feel free to contact me if I can be of any assistance on your upcoming trip. Here's a good promise to leave you with. "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." Psalm 145:18



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Governor Abbott Appoints Three to Parks and Wildlife Commission

Governor Greg Abbott has appointed Arch "Beaver" Aplin and Oliver Bell and reappointed Dick Scott to the Parks and Wildlife Commission for terms set to expire on February 1, 2023. The commission manages and conserves the natural and cultural resources of Texas and provides hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Arch "Beaver" Aplin of Lake Jackson is president and CEO of Buc-ee's. He is a member of the Houston Methodist Hospital President's Leadership Council and lifetime Member of the Coastal Conservation Association and The 100 Club. He is the former board president of the Brazosport Independent School District and a former member of the State of Texas Small Business Council, Lieutenant Governor's Transportation Advisory Board, and the Brazosport Center for Arts and Sciences Board of Trustees. Aplin received

a Bachelor of Science from Texas A&M University.

Oliver Bell of Cleveland is CEO of Oliver Bell, Inc., a consulting firm that emphasizes teaching and developing leadership skills. He is also the founder of the Texas Labor & Employee Relations Consortium. Prior to founding his firm, he served as vice president of a large labor relations consulting firm and preceding that, worked for Mobil Oil's human resources group. He is a member of the National Association of Corporate Directors, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment Association, the Association of the United States Army, and is a volunteer with the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo Armed Services Appreciation Committee. He is a past member of the Board of the West Point Society of greater Houston and the Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity -The Boulé. He is a gubernatorial appointee to the Texas Southern University Board of Regents, former gubernatorial appointee and chairman of the Texas Board of

Criminal Justice, and former chairman of the Windham School District Board of Trustees. Bell is currently a doctoral candidate in leadership and organizational development at the University of Southern California. He is a graduate of the US Military Academy at West Point and was an Airborne-Ranger qualified Army officer.

Dick Scott of Wimberley is the former co-owner of Trans Global Solutions, Inc., and retired after almost 40 years. He is a member of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Board of Directors and a member of Boys and Girls Country Executive Committee. He is a volunteer contributor for the Hays County FFA and 4H clubs and lifetime member of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, and serves on their International Committee. Additionally, he previously served on the Lower Colorado River Authority. Scott received a Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting from Lamar University.



Dax Davis and Jay Shipe won the Legend Owner's Tournament for \$5,000 with a stringer weight of 8-pounds.



Jason Smith and Brian Harris won 2nd Place in Legend Owner's Tournament for \$1,200 with a stringer weight of 7.10-pounds.



Diane and Ray Vineyard won 3rd Place in the Legend Owner's Tournament for \$1,000 with a stringer weight of 7.04-pounds.

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December Means Colder Temps (Continued from Page 6-A)

be other patterns that will work during this time of the year, one being the jig and crawler fished on the creek bends where wood is present. Black and blue is my fav, especially on cloudy days. If the water is fairly clear, switch to watermelon red front to back. Work it slow, especially through the roots of the trees. Sunny afternoons during this season can also be a gold mine. As the water cools into the mid-fifties, chatterbaits and traps are the go to baits worked shallow and be sure to focus on the 2:00 to 5:30pm window. Wa-

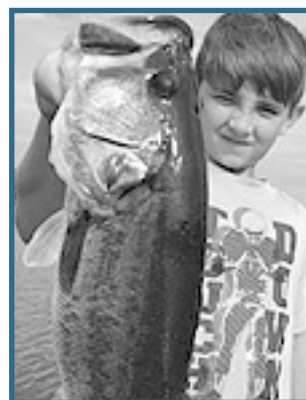
ter warms during the afternoon and the fish will move up for a free meal. Pay attention to any bird activity and they will lead you to the bass.

December/January is also a great month to catch numbers on the power plant lakes. If cabin fever has set in, give me a call and we can wear them out where the water temps are summer like. If you are headed out to Lake Fork in December 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 December and some in January. 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 post my daily trip results on this page. I would like to thank Okuma Fishing and Talon Custom Lures for making my job the blast that it is and 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."



Practice Safe Boating

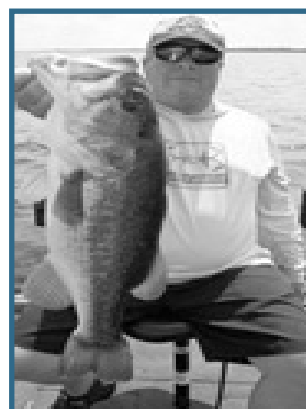
Fish Friendly



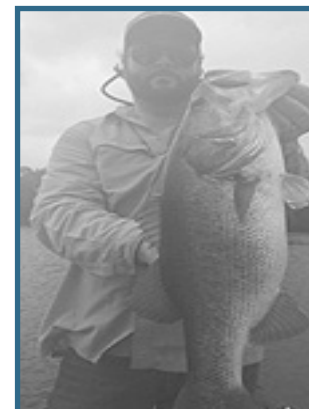
Kory James with David Ozio



Mike Masterson with David Ozio



Mark Spaeth with David Ozio



Zach Turner with David Ozio

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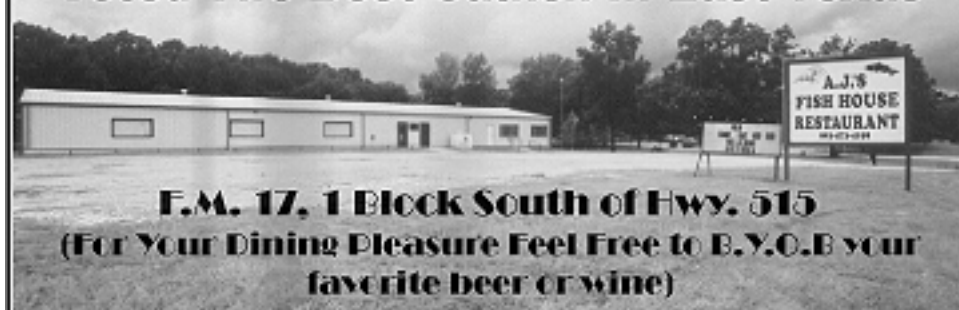
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Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork



By Don Hampton

Texas Trails Bassmasters is a highly motivated progressive bass fishing club with ties to the Wish to Fish Foundation and weight masters for the Wood County Annual Kid Fish. If you are thinking of joining a bass club, you can't go wrong with Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork.

Dues to join the club are regularly \$30 per year. Now is the time to join. They are starting their new year off and offering half price of \$15 for annual membership fee. Offer is good through February 28th. Cost for each tournament is \$25 with a \$5 Big Bass Option. There is also a progressive side pot that an optional \$5 for the first 7-pound or over bass. If you wish to join now our next tournament is December 10th on Lake Welsh and you can join at the ramp that morning

before 6 a.m.

For more information on joining this great club give Rodney Ellis, president a call at 903-714-6473 or me, Don Hampton, VP/Tournament Director at 903-

360-6994.

Fishing is going to be great! Come out and fish with us! Who knows you could catch a Share-Lunker for the season and finish in the tournament a big winner!

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Christmas Season Word Find

See how many words relating to Christmas Day that you can find and circle throughout the puzzle below.

ANGELS	DONNER	PRESENTS
BLITZEN	FROSTY	RUDOLPH
CANDY CANES	LIGHTS	SANTA CLAUS
CAROLERS	MANGER	SNOW
COMET	MISTLETOE	STOCKINGS
DANCER	ORNAMENTS	TREE
DASHER	PRANCER	

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R K A A N G E L S E W R
D I R P R E S E N T S U
O N O C B L I T Z E N D
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Inland Fisheries Staff Considering Alligator Gar Regulation Changes

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Inland Fisheries management staff are considering changes to regulations and harvest reporting requirements for alligator gar, Texas' largest and longest-lived freshwater fish species.

Inland Fisheries staff previewed the potential changes to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission at their meeting held recently in Mission.

"The commission expressed their concern to us about harvest of some smaller gar."

On the Trinity River, potential changes include instituting a 4-foot maximum length limit, meaning anglers could not harvest any alligator gar over that length, from the I-30 bridge in Dallas to the I-10 bridge in Chambers County. There would be no change to the 1-fish per day bag limit.

"This length limit would protect enough spawning-aged females to reproduction still allowing the

(Continued on Next Page)

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duce and provide plenty of large, recreationally-valuable fish for anglers to catch in the Trinity River," Terre said. "It would also allow all anglers the opportunity to harvest one alligator gar up to four feet daily."

The potential changes would also require anglers harvesting alligator gar statewide to report their harvest within 24 hours online or through a mobile app. Anglers would be required to submit the date, general location, size and method of harvest.

"Because relatively few alligator gar can be sustainably harvested each year, and interest in alligator gar fishing has increased, it is critical that we closely monitor harvest numbers and locations," Terre said. "This is a key piece of information that is difficult for us to gather in any other way than through a mandatory harvest reporting system. This information will be needed to further refine our management of alligator gar populations."

In a survey conducted by TPWD's Heart of

the Hills Fisheries Science Center this summer, anglers surveyed indicated the Trinity River was the most popular destination for alligator gar fishing. The Trinity is considered by many to be Texas' premier alligator gar fishery. Of nearly 3,500 people who offered opinions on regulations, around 75 percent of rod-and-reel anglers and a little over 50 percent of bow anglers indicated support for length limits and harvest reporting for alligator gar.

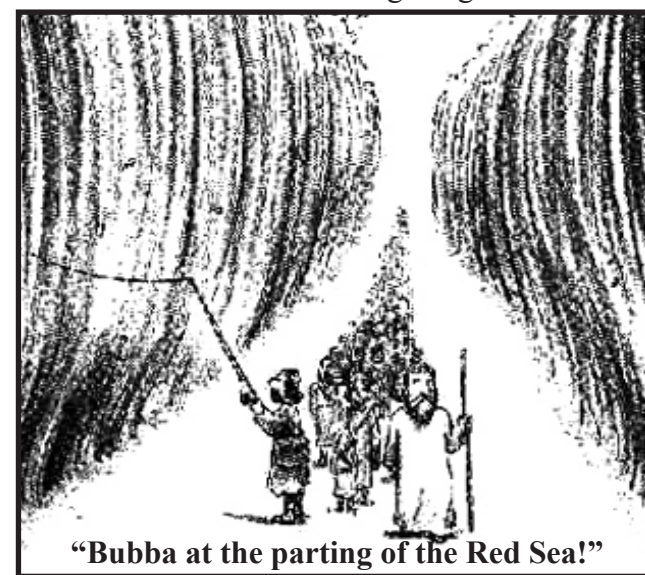
Statewide, a

one-fish-per-day bag limit would remain in effect. A daily bag limit of 5 fish and possession limit of 10 fish would remain in effect for Falcon Reservoir.

In January, Inland Fisheries staff will present regulation proposals on these possible changes to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission. If the commission agrees, they will give staff permission to publish the proposed changes

in the Texas Register, which begins the process of official public comment. Prior to that, anglers with comments on the potential changes can direct them

to Dave Terre Register, which begins the process of official public comment. The commission will meet in March to vote on all changes to fishing and hunting regulations.



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& 4 P.M. to 9 P.M. Sat. 5/18/19 ~ 5 A.M. to 6 A.M. & 4 P.M. to 9 P.M. - Sun. 5/19/19 ~ 5 A.M. to 6 A.M.

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SIGNATURE: _____

Entry Form Must Be Signed To Be Valid

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