

Teal fill skies in some areas



IT'S TEAL TIME: An early teal season hunter picks up his first duck of the season, a green-winged teal, shot near Italy. Photo by David J. Sams.

Success ranges from light to 'it's been almost too easy'

BY CRAIG NYHUS

American Airlines announces firearms policy American Airlines an-nounced an official policy that will no longer allow firearms as part of checked baggage on international travel. The official language reads, "Effective with tickets pur-chased on/after September 24, 2007, American Airlines

24, 2007, American Annines will no longer accept firearms in checked baggage to/from any European or Asian desti-nation (except for military/government personnel with proper documenta-

> INSIDE FISHING

Tarpon Tomorrow, a nonprofit conservation group in Corpus Christi, is holding two fishing

tournaments within the next

month to help researchers tag tarpon to study their behavior

Shawncy Perez of Corpus Christi

caught the shark of a lifetime at September's Sharkathon at Padre Island National Seashore

HUNTING

Liberal limits and large flocks

spreads draw the hunters to

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tion)."

The early teal season brought success to many hunters in prime areas, but hunters in some parts of the state discovered that an overabundance of water and birds don't always mix. In much of North and

Central Texas, reports of scattered birds and only a few early flights were common, but hunters in West Texas and the Coastal Prairies enjoyed a banner opener. Near Katy, Travis Fowler of

Double J Outfitters said the teal opener was one of the best in more than 10 years. "We had 17 hunters

opening day and they all had limits by 8:30," he said. "And on Sunday nine hunters had limits by 8:15."

Bluewings filled the bag, with a few greenwings mixed in. "We also got two cinnamon teal and two banded bluewings," Fowler said. Some of the birds have moved

out. "There a lots of birds near Port

Lavaca and Lissie," he said. "But we're getting new birds in every day.

Easy limits were also reported near Winnie in Chambers County, in Wharton County, and near Galveston's West Bay. Hunters in other areas of Texas

See TEAL. Page 25



ALL SMILES: Courtney Townsend, 16, of Pharr, caught this 34-inch snook while fishing with Capt. Gilbert Vela. The fish was released. Photo by Paul Townsend.

Hunters shelling out more for ammunition

BY BILL MILLER

Bruce Moon's quest to create the ultimate hunting cartridge has become more challenging in recent months, thanks in part, to the Chinese

The Chinese economy, hungry for

raw materials, and the War on Terror have dramatically cut supplies of materials used to make ammunition, Moon said.

Consequently, hunters who usually buy two boxes of ammo a year – one to zero in, the other to hunt — are in for some sticker shock this fall. See AMMO, Page 26

Measuring up Jumbo snook appearing in LLM

By Danno Wise

A decade of mild winters has resulted in increasingly good snook fishing in the Lower Laguna Madre. In fact, thanks to a local guide, an ambitious junior angler and Texas Parks and Wildlife's relatively new catch-and-release record category, 2007 will literally go down as a record year for Texas snook. On Aug. 19, 14-year-old Joe Jamail of Houston and his father, Dahr, set out with South Padre Island guide Capt. Emilio Villarreal. According to Villarreal, a few subpar days of fishing for speckled trout and redfish prior to the Jamail's visit led the trio to make the 20-mile run to the Port of Brownsville. "Fishing in the bay had been OK,

but not great that week," said See SNOOK, Page 25

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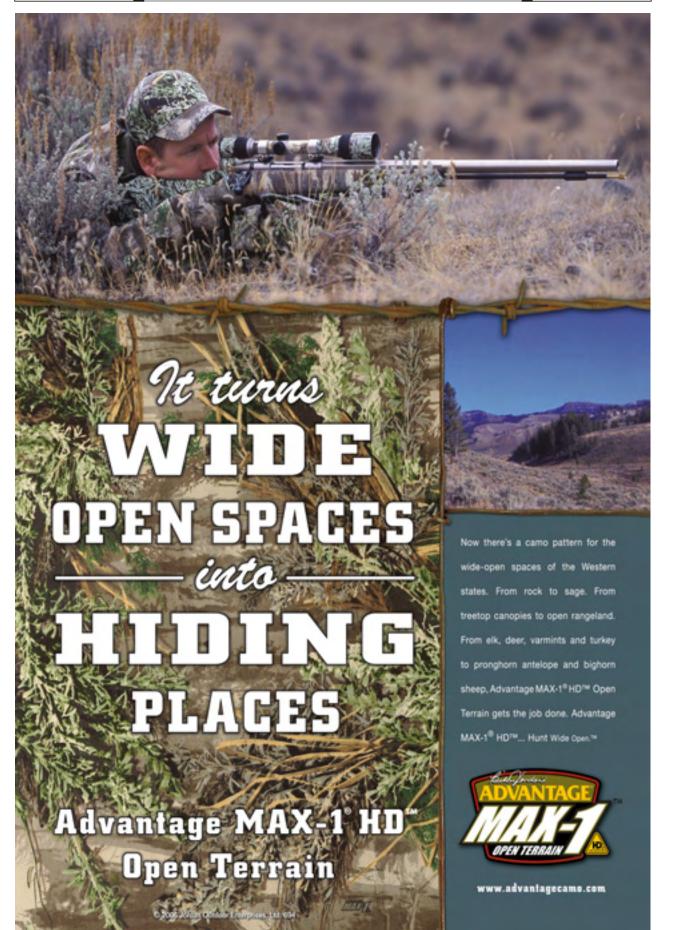
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CONSERVATION Commission announces funding for wetland projects

The Migratory Bird Conserv tion Commission recently approved more than \$18 million in federal funding for the protection and management of nearly 175,000 acres of wetlands and asso-ciated habitats that will benefit ducks and waterfowl nationwide under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act.

The Commission also approved \$6.8 million to protect and manage more than 4.1 million acres of wetlands in Canada and nearly \$10 million for the purchase of 4,542 acres of wetlands for inclusion in the National Wildlife Refuge

System. The \$6.8 million approved for NAWCA's Canadian Grants NAWCA's Canadian Grants Program will support 13 conserva-tion projects in 12 Canadian provinces. Combined with matching partner funds, these projects will secure more than 16,500 acres of wetlands and associated uplands, enhance more than 19,000 acres, and manage more than 4 million

and manage more than 4 minor acres of wetlands. The funding will support 21 projects in 16 states. Partners in these projects will contribute an additional \$36.9 million in matching funds to help conserve nearly 175,000 acres of habitat.

The Commission's approval of refuge acquisitions secured resting and feeding habitat at eight National Wildlife Refuges located in six states.

The fund receives revenue from Duck Stamp sales, import duties on firearms and ammunition and right-of-way payments to the refuge system. Refuges that will secure additional wetlands

include: Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge, Liberty County, Texas — Acquisition of 1,598 acres of bottomland hardwoods for migrating, wintering and breeding waterfowl. Cache River National Wildlife Refuge, Woodruff County, Ar-kansas — Acquisition of 1,140 acres of mature bottomland hardwood

forest and tupelo/cypress swamp Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge, Crittenden County, Arkansas – Acquisition of 141 acres of habitat for wintering migratory waterfowl and breeding for resident wood ducks. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service report.

Congressional report shows need for farm bill Sodsaver provision

U.S. taxpayers are paying for the destruction of native prairie grasslands. A Gov-ernment Accountability Office report released recently links farm program payments to the loss of prairie grasslands. "The report further con-

firms our findings that native prairie destruction is rapidly increasing," said DU Executive Vice President Don Young. "Unfortunately, taxpayer funded farm pro-gram payments are fueling this ecological disaster. Ducks Unlimited said the report justifies the need for the U.S. Senate to include a strong Sodsaver provision in the next farm bill to slow

grassland loss. The Sodsaver provision would remove all federal financial support on any land that doesn't have a cropping history. Farmers could still put the land into production but at their own risk. A Ducks Unlimited report.



federal farm protection payments are speeding up

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NATIONAL

Volunteer hunter education instructor recognized

Rick Stafford of Wagoner, wedding."

Okla. has made his career as a volunteer hunter education Such dedication recently led the Wildlife Department to recognize Stafford as the 2007 Oklahoma Hunter instructor into a family affair "He has gotten his entire Education Instructor of the family involved in hunting and hunter education," said Lance Meek, hunter educa-Year for his nearly 25 years of service to new sportsmen. tion coordinator for the Stafford became a volunteer Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. "He hunter education instructor in 1985, and since that time very conscientious about his job, has a great attitude and works very hard." Hunter Education is a free program offered by the Wildlife Department and is credited for a 70-percent decrease in hunting-related

unteer," Meek said. "He is

Survey: Many hunters don't join outdoors groups

Many hunters and target shooters do not belong to sportsmen's or conservation organizations. According to a recent poll of 1,388 sportsmen and women bv HunterSurvey, about onethird of the respondents were not members of such a group. Offered a selection of reasons why, the most common reason given was not being aware of any groups

effectively advancing the issues important to the respondents (22 percent), followed by not willing to spend the money required to be a member (20 percent). A Huntersurvey.com report.



ers, as well as local archery clubs and associations stepped up to help. The Utah Bowman's Association, Bowhunters of prosecution of the person or persons who committed this crime. Later, with help from an anonymous tip, two juve-Utah, Hoyt and Easton con-tributed reward funds that totaled \$6,000. The reward niles admitted guilt in shoot-ing at least nine cattle with was given to anyone provid-ing information leading to



management program Oklahoma Wildlife competitive prices. Funds gen-

Conservation Commission ap-proved a plan for a pilot paddlefish research and caviar processing program scheduled to begin operating in February, 2008. Wildlife Department person-nel will collect eggs from sports-

The

even proposed to his wife at a hunter education course and

taught a class the day of his

men-caught female paddlefish and process them into caviar, which will then be sold by the Department to wholesalers for erated from caviar sales will then be put back into paddlefish management in Oklahoma.

has certified more than 2,100 students. "Rick is a very special vol-

The primary functions of the paddlefish research and pro-cessing center will be collecting important data for the Department's paddlefish man-agement plan, processing paddlefish meat for anglers and salThis would be the first ven-ture of its kind for the Wildlife Department, but other state wildlife agencies such as Montana and North Dakota have been successful in operating paddlefish processing cen-ters for their fisheries management programs. An Oklahoma Wildlife Conserva-

Cattle deliberately shot with arrows

the arrest and successful

Six cattle were shot with arrows near Clyde Creek in

Strawberry Valley, Utah. "This is one of the most disturbing acts I've witnessed in my 16 years of wildlife law enforcement," said Sgt. Paul Davis of the Division of Wildlife Resources.

Archery gear manufactur-

TODAYII

their archery equipment over a two-week period. A Utah Division of Wildlife

HUNTING

Doves scant in many South Zone areas

By Ralph Winingham

The South Zone dove season opener was one of the worst-ever in northern parts of the region, but the Rio Grande Valley area picked up the slack.

Opening day was a success for 6year-old Mason Johnson of Victoria, but it was fish and not fowl that brought a big smile to his face.

"We only saw two doves and my dad got one, but I caught a big catfish — bigger than my dad's," the youngster said.

The success of Mason and his father, George Johnson, who were attending the 15th annual Karnes City Lonesome Dove Fest, was typical of the opening day across much of the area.

Mourning and white-winged doves that had been seen by the thousands in the normally productive hunting areas just a few days before the Sept. 21 opener seemed to vanish into thin air.

The elder Johnston said his son had been practicing with a .410 shotgun, but never got a chance to shoot at a bird.

Similar reports were received from across the area. "One group of hunters would

"One group of hunters would come in and say they were able to get a limit with no problem, and See SOUTH. Page 15

See South, Pa



SLIM PICKINGS: David Sweet shows a dove taken in the South Zone. The opener was one of the worst on record for hunters in the northern part of the zone, but was excellent in the Rio Grande Valley.



MEASURING EDUCATION: Students study hunter education and safety as part of the "Deer School" at Childress High School. Photo by Russell Graves.

Deer on course with education

Whitetail becomes centerpiece of class

By Mary Helen Aguirre

The course? You could call it "Whitetail Deer: 101."

The teaching tools: Two bucks, four does, 88 acres of land that's been reverted to its native state and one very savvy teacher

teacher. "I've always had a passion for the outdoors and I want to share that passion with my students," said Russell Graves, an agricultural science instructor at Childress High School.

Graves has taught in this southeast Graves has taught in this southeast Texas Panhandle town for 15 years. This school year, he kicked off what he calls "Deer School."

The 30 students enrolled in three courses (Intro to Wildlife Management, Range Management and Advanced Wildlife Management) will study such topics as food plot plantings, soil management, plant identification, forage management, hunter education and safety, plus, of course, deer biology.

Although Graves has taught these same subjects in the past, this is the first year he's made the whitetail the centerpiece of his classes.

"Now, we can gear everything toward the whitetail," he said. "This gives it more context. We can see firsthand how these management issues of habitat affect the whiteail deer."

Graves, a three times Texas Agriscience Teacher of the Year recipient, explained the choice of the whitetail deer as his focus: "It's the most zealously hunted and economically important species of wildlife in our county and state."

See SCHOOL, Page 18

CALL OF THE NORTH Bird hunters head to Canada for early start

BY CRAIG NYHUS

Each September, Texas goose and duck hunters looking to get a jump on the season head for Saskatchewan, Canada, and several top guides start their season in the northland. Liberal limits and large flocks not accustomed to decoy spreads draw the hunters, and the shoots, while not guaranteed, are often nothing short of incredible.

South Texas guides and champion callers Chris Swift and Ward McGee operate Frontline Waterfowl, and headed north early for some pleasure hunting with friends James Prince of Port O'Connor and Derek Spitzer of Hockley.

Spitzer, who also has guided in the past, made his first trip north. "I don't know how to describe it if you haven't been up there," he said. "It was all dry-field hunting in wheat or pea fields from layout blinds with full-bodied Greenhead Gear goose and duck decoys. The geese were mostly resident Canadas — big ones — as the migration hadn't started yet, and the ducks were everywhere "

"The season opened on Saturday, Sept. 1, but there's no hunting there on Sunday, so we started on Sept. 3," Prince said. "We took limits of mallards (8 each), Canada geese (8 each), and we shot a few Ross' geese."

The champion callers often didn't need their skills. "Not a whole lot of calling was necessary," Spitzer said. "But with these guys, I kept my call in my pocket."

The birds came right in," said Prince, a champion specklebelly caller. "Except for the specks. They are usually the easiest geese to call in. We had three champion callers hollering at them, and they just ignored us."

Swift couldn't believe it. "They See CANADA, Page 18



CANADA: Derek Spitzer of Hockley shows four Canada geese taken in September in Saskatchewan. Photo by James Prince.

Hair-raising adventure Big Time winner gets first chance at hunting alligators

By MARY HELEN AGUIRRE

Garrett Taylor is hooked on gator

"I can't wait to go back," said Taylor, who won his first chance to hunt alliga tors from Texas Parks and Wildlife's Big Time Texas Hunts program.

Taylor invited his father. Gene Taylor, to be his guest on the all-

expense paid trip. "I don't think he's stopped talking about it since," he said. Earlier this month, they drove from

San Antonio to the J.D. Murphree Wildlife Management Area in Port Arthur. The WMA comprises 24,250 acres of wetlands along the upper coast of Texas, where visitors will find a healthy population of American alliga-tors. It also is a nesting ground for some species of ducks and teal plus home to such mammals as the nutria, swamp rabbit, river otter, coyote, armadillo and bobcat. The Taylors arrived on a Friday after-

noon just following Hurricane Humberto's brief visit to the area. That night, they set traps baited with

2-inch hooks with raw chicken. Rope from poles were attached to each hook.



HEAVYWEIGHT HAUL: Gene Taylor of San Antonio shows his gator taken at the J.D. Murphree WMA as part of the Big Time Texas Hunts won by his son, Garrett

"Everything we did, we did off the airboat," Taylor said about the 13-foot flat-bottomed boat they used to traverse both water and marshy land. They were guided by Jim Sutherlin, area manager of the WMA, and Tucker

Slack, wildlife biologist. "They're great

people. They know their stuff," Taylor said. Saturday morning, they went to

check their traps. A gator had taken the bait.

"You pull up on a rope to pull the gator in," Taylor said.

Then, it gets exciting. "The head popped out of the water. It was like a dinosaur popping out. I was expecting a small gator," said Taylor, who instead found himself face to face with a powerful 9-footer that weighed an estimated 185 pounds.

"It makes the hair stand up on your head (knowing) anytime he can jump out at you," he said, adding he found it just a little creepy staring into those reptilian eyes. Once he'd drawn the gator close

enough to him, he delivered the coup de grace using a 12-gauge shotgun.

One of the more difficult tasks? "After you shoot him, you jump the water and wrestle him aboard the airboat," Taylor said, who looked around while in the water in case other

alligators decided to show up. On Sunday morning, it was his dad's turn. He got a 9-foot, 8-inch alligator that weighed 206 pounds. "My dad hasn't hunted for 25 years.

To do that with him was pretty amazing," he said. In between, the two men also did a

little fishing and some teal hunting. "There was a little gator about 20

yards away when we were teal hunting Everyone kept an eye on him," he said. In addition to the guided hunting, accommodations and meals, the trip also included processing of the alliga

tor meat. Each man received about 40 pounds

of prime meat. "I fried some last night," Taylor said, who made 'gator nuggets.' "The boys (who are 7, 5 and 2) loved it."

He and his dad also are planning to get the alligators' heads mounted and the hides tanned.

"It's an experience of a lifetime," he said. "I can't wait till my boys get old enough so I can take them."

It costs \$10 per entry to enter to win one of seven Big Time Texas Hunts (including the Grand Slam, Premium Buck Hunt, Waterfowl Adventure, Exotic Safari, Big Time Bird Hunt, Whitetail Bonanza and Gator Hunt). Proceeds benefit con-servation, wildlife management and public hunting opportunities in Texas. Deadline to apply is Oct. 15, two weeks earlier than previous years. For more information, call (800) 895-4248.



A wet 2007 following two years of extended drought could mean larger litter sizes and more far-ranging herds of feral hogs.

By conservative estimates, Texas has 1.5 to 2 million feral hogs. The animals are descended

from domestic hogs, said Billy Higginbotham, Extension wildlife specialist. 'Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that

an increase in available nutrition for feral hogs will have a similar effect as it does with domestic swine."

Domestic hogs will produce larger litters when food supplies increase, said Jodi Sterle, Extension swine specialist. "Pigs actually respond very quickly to increased feed resources," Sterle said.

For example, in the case of domestic swine, a particular breed may have an average litter size of eight. But with food resources the average litter size might increase to more than nine. "In domestic pigs, if you increase their ener-

gy (nutrition reserves) just prior to mating — we call that 'flushing' — they will actually ovu-late more eggs," she said. "It's especially effec-

tive if they are in a lower plane of nutrition Feral hogs typically have litters of four to six

pigs, Higginbotham said. Just as domestic swine do, they have a 114-day gestation period and can produce two litters a year "And it's possible for a female born in the

See HOGS, Page 24

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Tarpon tag

Catch-and-release tournaments set for study

By Mark England

For Scott Alford, there is no fish like the tarpon. "They're an acrobatic fish," he

"They're an acrobatic fish," he said. "They jump and fight real hard. There's also an aspect of hunting them as much as fishing them. They can live in virtually stagnant water since their biology permits them to roll and gulp oxygen. Finding them and getting them to bite is a challenge."

The population of tarpon in Texas' waters has rebounded in recent years, with some guides exclusively targeting the fish.

However, scientists and anglers alike agree it's not like it was in the first half of the last century when Port Aransas was called "The Tarpon Capital of the world." To ensure sustainable levels of tarpon in Texas, Tarpon Tomorrow, a nonprofit conservation group in Corpus Christi, is holding two fishing tournaments within the next month to help researchers tag tarpons to study their behavior. "If a researcher goes out with an

"If a researcher goes out with an angler, he might catch a fish," said Alford, tournament committee chairman. "He might not. If he goes out with 30 boats, all communicating, all tarpon fishing, there's a good chance someone is going to catch one so he can get a tag on it." The uncomment for the second second second second second the second second second second second second second the second second second second second second the second second second second second second the second second second second second second second the second second

a good chance someone is going to catch one so he can get at ag on it." The upcoming tournaments — Sept. 29-30 in Port Aransas and Oct. 20-21 in Port Isabel — will hand out trophies and prizes, but science and tarpons will be the real winners.

Money raised will help pay for the tags, which cost \$3,500 each. "They're about the size of a good



TAGGING TARPON: A tarpon is brought boatside to be tagged — as part of a project by Tarpon Tomorrow to study the fish's behavior. Photo by Steve Fornterhouse

Cuban cigar with a float on the end," said Jerald Ault, professor of Marine Biology and Fisheries at the University of Miami. "They're really a computer."

ly a computer." A tag contains sensors, memory chips and transmitters. Attached behind a tarpon's head, it records water temperature, depth, salinity and even helps pinpoint a fish's location. At a predetermined time, the tag pops off, floats to the surface and transmits the data to a

satellite — and, ultimately, to Ault. "It communicates like E.T.," Ault said. "It phones home."

Through the Tarpon Tomorrow tournaments, six tarpon were tagged in Texas last year. At the two tournaments held so far this year, nine tarpon were tagged. A tarpon is considered tagged when it is lip gaffed and handed to a tag boat, where researchers attach a tag. Tarpon Tomorrow hopes to tag 25 tarpon in all this year. Theories on why the number of tarpon in Texas dropped vary. Some researchers note the damming of coastal rivers to build reservoirs, thereby reducing freshwater inflow, and the surging of bay shrimping, which reduces the fish's food supply.

fish's food supply. Also, tarpons are still harvested commercially in Mexico and Central America.

"They're a long-lived (up to 80 years) and late maturing fish," said

Mike Ray, deputy division director of Coastal Fisheries for Texas Parks and Wildlife. "It takes them a long time to get to be sexually mature and reproduce. They're easily overharvested with that kind of life history."

Tagging tarpons has already given scientists intriguing insights into the fish. For example, it was thought tarpon preferred shallow water

See TARPON, Page 17

Shark takes angler for a ride Sharkathon struggle earns Corpus Christi man title

BY DAVID SIKES

Shawncy Perez of Corpus Christi caught the shark of a lifetime at September's Sharkathon at Padre Island National Seashore.

The 83-inch female bull shark, although not the largest shark he's ever taken, was enough for first place at the catch, release and photograph event, along with \$4,200 in cash, a kayak, rod and reel.

Wayas, not all offer. "We were on our third and last move of the trip," Perez said. "We set up at a hole that my friend Chris Romo and I had scouted a few weeks earlier. We had put out a rig with a 6inch whiting and were tying baits in the shade when I saw one of the rods bounce twice. I jumped on the tower on the Yukon (a fish-fighting platform built by Perez for shark angling) and reeled in the slack."

and reied of the slack." The fight was on. "His first run was about 150 yards," Perez said. "Then I started to make up some ground but it was no use, the second run was 500 yards."

After a third run, the giant got to the back side of the sand bar, but took off and headed south down the beach. Perez decided to make the fighting tower mobile to get the fish in more quickly and ensure a healthy release. "I yelled at Chris to get in the truck, and he put the Yukon in reverse and we followed the fish down the beach." But the fish still had more left. "I

But the fish was about done so I thought the fish was about done so I let my guard down a little," he said. "He made one more run that about pulled me off the tower, I had to grab the rod rack and hold on."

Once the fish reached the beach, the fight continued. His friend Chris Massey roped the tail of the shark and Perez tried to sit on it while the hook was removed. "She tossed me right off the first time," he said. After the stainless 12/0 J-hook was

After the stainless 12/0 J-hook was easily removed, they dragged the bull into the deep wade gut. "She took off like nothing ever happened," Perez said.

During its brief history, the Sharkathon surf-fishing tournament has earned a reputation as a conservation event that has improved the image of an often-misunderstood segment of angling culture.

It seems to be working for this live-See SHARKS, Page 17





BATTLE ON THE BEACH: Shawncy Perez fights his shark on his homemade fighting tower while Chris Massey follows the fish down the beach. The 83inch bull shark earned Perez first place at the Sharkathon. Photos by Chris and Arthur Romo.



Matsubu's mule of 8-13 gives him 14-1 victory in final Elite event

mats.

Ben Matsubu of Hemphill won the final Bassmaster Elite series event of 2007 with a monster fish and a monster catch on the final day. Matsubu placed a 25-pound, 5-ounce

sack on the rain-soaked scales, crushing the field by more than 14 pounds at the Sunshine Showdown, presented by Allstate Boat Insurance at Lake Toho. Matsubu, who pocketed \$111,000 for his week's effort, worked the sweetest of sweet

spots for the majority of the week, tallying more than 66 pounds in four days of fishing, anchored by an 8-pound, 13-ounce giant; a long skinny fish most observers believed would weigh nearly 13 pounds in a healthy pre-spawn stage. "It was the spot," Matsubu said. "Along

the whole two-mile stretch of matted grass, there were only two small areas where the scattered grass made a point. I still haven't really figured out if the fish are coming in from the open water, or coming out of the Matsubu said he marked the submerged grass clumps with his Humminbird side

imaging electronic system. "Some days they were cruising in between the grass, some days they were in the grass," he said. "Today, they were right up in there. But wherever they were, they were spitting up two- to three-inch bluegills."

Matsubu said the presence of a surprising amount of clean water in his spot — a 30- to 40-yard stretch, punctuated by grassy areas varying in size from small clumps to 20- by 30-foot beds — turned the fish onto a Carolina-rigged, off-brand finesse worm

with a relatively light 1/4-ounce weight. "When the water was dirtier, the fish really wanted a chartreuse crankbait. Today I

threw all around my spot twice and never got a bite," Matsubu said. "All of the fish were caught on the light Carolina rig, which is something I've done well with in Florida. It doesn't tear up the grass."

Matsubu also put co-anglers on the sweet spot. Mary Delgado of Del Rio fished with Matsubu on day two, catching 14 pounds, 7 ounces to jump into third place, but fin-ished 10th after failing to weigh a fish on the final day.

Harry Potts, the unofficial leader of the 12 bass junkies charged with towing boats from venue to venue for BASS, took the co-angler title, fishing with Matsubu on the final day.

Potts, a 67-year-old retired military man, caught a first-day total of 20 pounds, 8 ounces — the highest one-day weight in the tournament by a co-angler or professional. — An ESPNOutdoors.com report.



AT THE TOP: Ben Matsubu tallied more than 66 pounds in four days of fishing, anchored by an 8-pound, 13-ounce fish

BASSMASTER **Reese reels in top** angler honors

Skeet Reese of Auburn, Calif. captured the Bassmaster Angler of the Year title on the third day of the tour's final event, the Sushine Showdown at Lake Toho,

near Kissimmee, Fla. Reese finished the event in 14th place, while Kevin Van Dam, the runner-up in the Angler of the Year points standings leading in to the event, fin-

ings leading in to the event, fin-ished 19th. "If you're going to win, you want to beat the best," Reese said. "I definitely beat the best in modern day bass fishing in Kevin

VanDam. My hat is off to Kevin for making it interesting and giv-ing me a heckuva battle all year."

An emotional Reese reflected on his season. "I had the season of my life," Reese said. "It's unbe-lievable what I've done this year. It's been a conquest for me per-sonally. It was a challenge I want-ed to put myself up to."

"No matter what I do the rest of my life in tournament fish-ing," Reese said, "I can always say I was the Angler of the Year on the BASS trail." An ESPNOutdoors.com report.



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MAN SAYS HE ONLY GETS TO HUNT DOVE ONCE A YEAR

•Val Verde Game Wardens Jason Huebner, JC Flores, Michael Durand, and Marcus Vela issued a total of 11 citations on two differ-ent ranches for hunting dove over a baited field. The hunters were from Houston and Louisiana. One of the Louisiana hunters remarked they only get to hunt dove once a year. Cases and restitution are pending.

NOPE, YOU CAN'T SHOOT

DOVE FROM YOUR VEHICLE Pecos County Game Wardens Chris Amthor and Lance Lindley were working outside of Ft. Stockton when they spotted a vehicle driving right in front of them, and the occupants shooting doves out of their vehicle. Citations were given to the hunters.

THERE'S TOO MANY DOVES IN THAT BUCKET •Wichita County Game Warden

Pat Canan apprehended an indi-vidual in possession of 15 doves over the limit. The doves were found in a 5-gallon bucket in tall weeds at the edge of the field. Cases pending.

51 DOVES SEIZED FROM 4-WHEELER HUNTERS

•Houston County Game Wardens Eddie Lehr and Zak Benge cited a group of hunters for hunting over bait. The hunters were observed hunting from a 4wheeler and using the 4-wheeler to rally the dove. The hunters were using unplugged shotguns and were over the bag limit. Fifty-one doves were seized. Cases

GAME WARDEN BLOTTER WARDEN, THESE DOVES WERE GIVEN TO US

•Tarrant County Game Wardens Chelle Mount and David Solis, while patrolling a heavily hunted area near Haslet, came upon two dove hunters. During the first inspection of their vehicle,

pending.

45 FISH AND NO LICENSE •Cherokee County Game Warden Brian Bearden cited a fisherman behind the dam at Lake Palestine for exceeding the bag limit on white bass (45 in possession), and having no fishing license.

WARDEN HAS CLOSE CALL

 Maverick County Game Warden Armando Guzman had a close call on opening day of the Special South Texas Zone when a dove hunter, whom Guzman was approaching, accidentally dis-charged his shotgun, striking the ground very close to Guzman's feet. The hunter had no explana-tion for the incident, and failed to exercise caution and safe gun handling when he kept his finger on the trigger as he was being approached by the warden. The hunter was remorseful and apologetic

BOATER REAR-ENDS PATROL BOAT, ONE RECEIVES BWI

•San Saba County Game Warden Brad Reeves and Lampasas County Game Warden Jeff Hill had their patrol boat on Lake LBJ when they noticed a boat passing them to their right with no bow lights on. The wardens stopped approximately 20 doves over the limit were found. When asked why they had so many doves, one of the hunters said they were given to them, but he could not say by whom or give a description

the boat to tell them to turn their bow lights on. The operator of the vessel smelled strongly of alcohol and could not correctly complete any of the water sobriety checks. The operator was told to put on a life jacket and board the patrol boat. A female passenger took control of the vessel, and was advised to stay behind them to the boat ramp to avoid being run over in the crowd of boats. Another boat was with them, and they were also advised to follow. As the patrol boat was nearing the boat ramp, the occupants of the rear boat began watching the fire-works show and weren't paying attention to their surroundings and rear-ended another patrol boat occupied by three wardens. No one was injured in either boat. The original operator was arrested for felony BWI.

BUT WE HAD NO IDEA FIELD WAS BAITED

Colorado County Game Warden John Kohleffel and Austin County Game Warden Sonny Alaniz cited three individuals for hunting migratory birds over a baited area while working in Austin County. The hunters claimed they had no idea that the area was baited; however, they had two dove Mojo decoys set in

of the vehicle. Upon further inspection, the two hunters were found to be in possession of 84 mourning doves. The other doves were found hidden in the cab of the truck. Citations are pending.

the bait. The trail of bait, which was corn, was spread from the gated entrance of the property and trailed a good distance to where they were hunting. Charges are pending.

FISHING IN THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME

 El Paso County Game Wardens Robert Newman and Dustin Barrett were patrolling in Hudspeth County and found three individuals fishing on a pond on private property. Once the fishermen observed the wardens approaching, they threw the stringer of fish in the water. The wardens made contact with the individuals and found that they did not have permission to be fishing on the pond. The stringer of fish was retrieved by one of the suspects and 13 catfish were released. The landowner was contacted and criminal trespass charges were filed on the fishermen

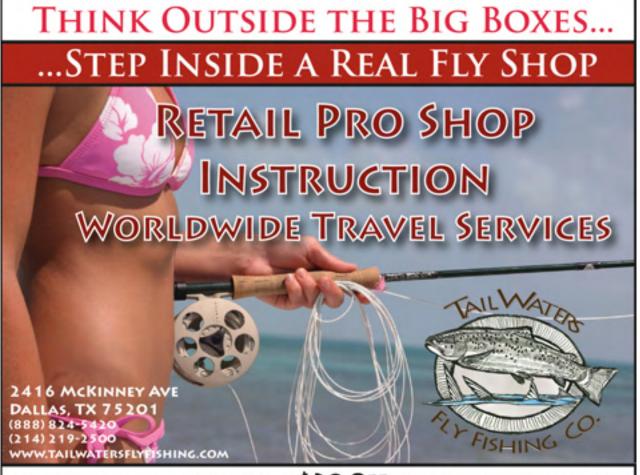
EVIDENCE SEIZED IN SMUGGLING INVESTIGATION

•El Paso Game Wardens Mike Legarretta, Robert Newman and Dustin Barrett assisted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on a search warrant on businesses and homes in the El Paso area as a result of a two-year investigation on smuggling into the United States. Several pickup loads of evi-dence were seized, including sea turtle boots and skins, anteater skins and endangered exotic skins

FIRST TIME TO GO HUNTING NOT SO LUCKY

•Hill County Game Warden Douglas Volcik received a complaint of hunters trespassing and hunting from the back of a truck near Alvarado. Volcik went to the area only to find the hunters had left. Volcik returned to the area hoping to find someone during the evening hunt, and observed a hunter shoot a dove from the back of a truck. The man said that this was his first time to go hunting. Citations for hunting with an ille gal shotgun (unplugged) and failing to produce a hunter education certificate were issued. Cases are pending.

TAKING THE DUCKS TO THE ZOO? •During the lunch break of a Regional meeting, Harris County Game Warden Susan Webb and Communications Officer Marina Berzosa were on their way to eat when they noticed two males on the side of the road acting peculiar. The two men were found to be chasing and collecting baby black-bellied whistling ducks alongside the bayou. The bed of their pickup contained 12 baby ducks (and one undersized red fish). The men said they were just about to take the ducks to the zoo. The ducks were released back to the bayou where an adult pair of black-bellies was waiting. The two men were issued several citations.



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A Father-Son Day

Andy McSwain and his 11-year old son, Stewart, enjoyed a whitewing hunt near their Waco home. Stewart brought down his first white-winged dove on the hunt. The morning birds flew as high as 75 yards, clearly out of range. It didn't stop Stewart, how-ever, until his father said. "Son, you're going to have to stop shooting at them, they're too high." Friends accused father Andy of being more concerned about the cost of the shells Stewart une finer.

Stewart was firing. The birds accused rather Andy of being hole concerned about the Cost of the shells Stewart was firing. The birds stayed in range in the evening, and the hunters able to make both hunts managed 12-bird limits, including one banded whitewing — with one bonus Eurasian collared dove. After the hunt, the hunting party dined alfresco on grilled whitewings, sausage, and fresh gulf shrimp, no plates or silverware required. When asked whether he would like a potato or a salad, young Stewart said, "No, thanks. We're eating man food."

Ranch Hour

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South

Continued from Page 8

the next group would say they only got six or seven birds between four hunters," said Tracy Witte, who was helping coordinate the festival.

"Everyone is saying the birds are really scattered," he added. Judy Jurek from Markham said that two days before the South Zone opener, she was concerned that the number of birds sitting on her power lines might cause the wires to break.

"We went out opening day and didn't see anything," she said, adding that her hunting lease near Whitsett was also devoid of doves. A lack of birds was also the story in another typical wing shooters' hot

"This is just a very unusual year. I had cornfields where I did not see a single bird. A lot of our sunflower crop just rotted out because of all the rain. That might be one of the reasons the birds are so scattered."

- FOARD HOUSTON

spot farther to the southwest, where Devine hunter and guide Foard Houston said he had never experi-enced so much trouble locating

birds. "This is just a very unusual year," Houston said. "I had cornfields where I did not see a single bird. A lot of our sunflower crop just rotted out because of all the rain. That



DOVE HUNTING: At the Lonesome Dove Festival in Karnes City, Janet McDougall, Ladies Sporting Clays champion, and other celebrity shooters competed in a five-stand competition. Photos by David J. Sams

might be one of the reasons the birds are so scattered. Judging from the success of hunters in the Rio Grande Valley, the birds moved south. "We were

hunting sunflower fields east of Brownsville," said Jeffrey Loop of Whitewing Ranch. "Our birds come from three directions: the north, the west and from Mexico. We had 90-95 percent of our 250 hunters get limits of a combo of whitewings and mourning doves." The rest of the hunters didn't have

very good excuses. "The ones that didn't fill, each shot more than 100 shells," Loop said. Jack Overly of Westminster took a

group of 18 hunters on an annual dove/teal trip near El Campo. While the teal hunting was below average, the group took quick limits of

whitewings on the season's first two days hunting a milo field near the city limits. Although the bird hunting was

slow, the nearly 10,000 people who attended the two-day Lonesome Dove Fest appeared to be taking the

low bird count in stride. The festival is the largest two-day, family-oriented event of its kind held to celebrate the opening of the Texas South Zone dove season.

Hunters and their families came from across the state to watch a Lone Star BBQ Society sanctioned cook-off featuring 54 teams; more than 60 five-person teams partici-pate in a five-stand competition; and a celebrity shootoff featuring media representatives and other top-notch competitors. "We are really doing well, raising

about \$20,000 each year for youth scholarships and other local charities," said Cletus Bianchi, one of the Karnes County Rotary Club members putting together the annual event.

Bianchi said he believes that record rainfall this summer has been the main obstacle for hunters trying to bag a limit of the aerial acrobats that normally fill the skies each fall.

"Since September last year, I have had 74 inches of rainfall at my house. I can't even get my cattle to come to my (truck) horn. They just stand where they are and chew the grass

"I think the dove situation is the same," Bianchi said, "There is just so much for them to eat and so much water, they don't have to go anywhere."



CAMO CONTEST: Corbyn Wright, 8, won 4th place in the Camo Contest at the Lonesome Dove Festival.

The Best Deer Blind Ever Made"



HOW "GETTIN' CLOSE" GETS IT DONE. \mathbf{c} Nikon



larpon

Continued from Page 10

"We've learned they're a deep-diving fish," Alford said. "They've gone down to 500 feet in some places. That's beyond what anyone expected. Also, biologists knew tarpon spawned offshore, but no one knew the mecha-nism. Now it's believed that shortly before tarpon spawn, they dive very deep. It's believed it assists the spawning, but, at this point, we don't know how."

Tags have also shown tarpon to be first-class world travelers. "In some cases, we've had them migrate

more than 2,000 kilometers in 30 days," Ault said.

Information on the two remaining tagging tournaments can be found at the Web site tarpontomorrowproam.com. Alford said anglers should print out an entry form from the site and bring it with them rather than mail it given the short time frame.

Participants in the last two tournaments could help answer a big mystery regarding tarpons in Texas, Alford said. Where do they go in the winter?

"We know where they are in the spring," he said. "But where do they go in late January and early February? We don't know. Some of the tags we place in Port Aransas and Port Isabel are going to answer that question."

IFA Redfish Tour Texas anglers take gold spoons to school for show and tell

Rockport anglers Paul Braly and John Bremser located a huge school of redfish and quickly landed their limit of two fish weighing 15.08 pounds. The total was enough to take top honors at the IFA Redfish Tour presented by Cabela's final Texas Division event of the year, topping runners-up Hunter Morgan and Hoga Morgan by less than 1/2 pound. Kyle Ross and Brent

Kyle Ross and Brent Waldren finished third with 13.65 pounds. "We left Rockport and headed straight for Corpus Christi Bay and the Point of

Mustang, a known staging area for reds this time of year," Braly said. "We immediately got onto a school that had upwards of a thousand fish in it, and strategi-cally worked the sides so as

not to break them up. "I'd cast in advance of the school and let my bait lie on the bottom, waiting for the first several fish to pass over it before raising my tip and beginning the retrieve. It was then that John would cast his bait into the group. We'd both have fish on instantly, but we never landed both during the same hook-up," he said.

One fish landed during

first two casts their their first two casts weighed 7.77 pounds. The other keeper in their limit, at 7.32 pounds, came on the fourth approach.

The winning team was tossing gold-colored Johnson Sprite spoons in one-quarter and one-half ounce sizes.

For the win, the pair was awarded a fully-rigged Ranger Banshee, valued at \$20,000 as equipped with a \$0 HP, 4-stroke Yamaha outboard, Loadmaster trailer, Power Pole shallow water anchor, Minn Kota trolling motor and Humminbird electronics. An IFA Redfish Tour report. and





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Sharks

Continued from Page 10

release contest. Before this year's Sharkathon in September, folks at Padre Island National Seashore, which hosts the annual event, had nothing but praise for the contest and its organizers

"Oh yes, we like them here," said a smiling PINS ranger Sharon Mason, who tended the National Seashore entrance during Day 1 of the tourna-ment. "They have a wonderful image,

and they're very well respected." Each year, Sharkathon has given back by donating \$1,000 toward a reward program that encourages park visitors to report poaching and other rule violations within the National Seashore.

Tournament organizers have attracted an impressive number of Sharkathon faithful during its brief history. In its first year, the 2004 event attracted about 50 contestants. For the 2007 contest in September, 370 anglers registered in categories that included sharks, redfish, trout and tarpon. They also have a kids division

This concept was born on the beach, as most might expect. During an evening about five years ago, Sharkathon board member Pat Jordan of Eagle Lake said several future founders sat around their Padre Island campsite after a day of surf fish-ing. A conversation about dead sharks, sustainable fisheries and maintaining their way of life evolved into a plan-ning session for what would become a

non-profit conservation movement. They hammered out the tourna-ment's framework that night. While tournament rules do not forbid killing a fish, they expressly prohibit entering a fish that has not been suc-cessfully released alive and swimming. And there are no live wells. If you'd like

And there are no live wells. If you'd like to keep a few fillets, it's OK. But the rules clearly state Sharkathon is a catch, photograph and release contest. They encourage the use of circle hooks to boost the chances of survival and anyone caught or reported wasting game is disqualified.

Each contestant is provided an official ruler and a log sheet to record the size and species of their catches for research purposes. Contestants are responsible for their own digital cam-

The rules are carefully crafted to prohibit the use of motorboats or personal watercraft either as a fishing vessel or as a means of carrying baits. Surfboards, paddle-craft, swimming or casting would all be acceptable means of transporting baits into the Gulf

All fish must be caught from the beach

Jordan said he'd like Sharkathon's image to include this message: play hard; kill only what you eat; pack out at least as much as you bring in; and leave a legacy that honors the

Conservation comes in many forms and can be found in some unlikely places.

SHARKATHON RESULTS

Entries — 370 contestants Total Awards — \$18,000-plus and about \$10,000 in kayaks, rods, reels, tackle.

Shark Division

- Shawncy Perez - 83 inches 1st 2nd - Brandon Sellers - 79 inches 3rd - Chris Talbert - 67 inches

Redfish Division

1st — Dennis George — 30.5 inches 2nd - Blavne Mozisek - 30 inches 3rd - Scott Nelson - 29 inches

Trout Division

1st - J.C. Norris - 23 inches 2nd — Eric Ozolins — 22 inches 3rd — Steve Welp — 21 inches

Kids Division

1st — Dustin Hickey 2nd — Edward Davidson 3rd — Jacob Renck

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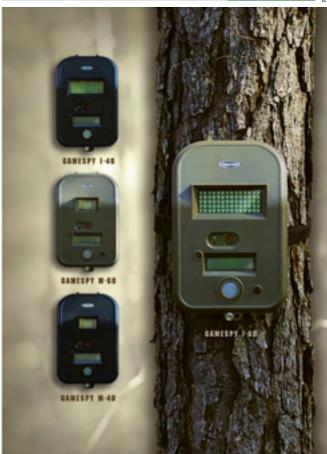


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Canada

Continued from Page 8 didn't even react." he said.

Hunters headed north need to be ready for anything, from different types of hunts to all types of weather. "It changes from day to day," Swift said.

"One day, you'll need to focus on dark geese. The next, ducks. The great days are when you can get both."

The snow geese hadn't started their migra-tion in early September, but after a few cold fronts and one snow, they were moving. "We aren't seeing a lot of young snows," Swift said. "Snow goose hunting has been fair at best so far, but the ducks are saving the hunts, and the dark goose numbers are still good."

While several outfitters operate in the area, most hunting a few hours north of Saskatoon, hunters also can head up on their own. "The people there are amazing, the friend with the owner the people you would ever meet," Prince said. "Some prefer to allow hunters without guides or not affiliated with an outfitter on their property. But you better allow time to sit down for coffee

Michael Holman operates Saskatoon

School

Continued from Page 8

Camp Cooley

Ranch

His teaching campus is 80-plus acres of land that the school purchased in 2003 with grant money. Earlier in February, Graves received six whitetail that were removed from the 1,200-acre Southwest Research Institutue in San Antonio.

The school's six deer, the maximum number permitted by Texas Parks and Wildlife to be enclosed in the limited area, are penned in 22-acres. Sixty-plus additional acres are home to free-ranging whitetail and mule deer that the students also can study.

In addition to classroom work, the school has game cameras so students can monitor the whitetail from afar. But, Graves advocates the close-up and personal approach, too.

Only three weeks into the program, student Jennifer Early has gotten some hands-on

experience. "So far, I've gotten to drive a tractor, feed and water wild hogs, and measure food plots for the deer on the land," said Early, who

Waterfowl Outfitters, and headed north after dove season of sopening weekend in Traxas. "It's been different this year," he said. We had a light snow two weeks ago, then it was in the 80s for a week, and now it's in the 50s."

Swift also felt the heat wave, "It was so darn hot, then the wet cold front came, and the migration was on," he said.

Hunting for Holman's groups throughout the month has been outstanding as well. "There are plenty of birds. We had a good push of sandhills, and lots of mallards. The birds are migrating every night; we saw at least 10,000 pintails today.

Most of the Canada geese taken have been the local larger birds, but the lesser are starting to show. "We're still waiting on the big push of Canadas, but they should be here soon Most hunters come home with sore shoul-

ders and trip-of-a-lifetime memories.

INFO: Saskatoon Waterfowl Outfitters (877) HUNT-SWO (979) 218-4833

Frontline Waterfowl (281) 204-7834 (281) 642-6596

turned 18 last month.

The senior said she has already learned that wild animals can sometimes be gentle. "Hopefully, later on in the year I will learn more

As the year progresses, students will be able to chart antler growth and reproductive rates. Long-term, Graves wants his students to tackle such questions as:

1) Will free-range deer go as readily to sup-lemental protein as penned deer?

2) What effect do age and nutrition have on antler growth?

3) What are the effects of Boone & Crockett

"The variety of research projects we'll be able to carry out in the name of whitetail and wildlife management is phenomenal," Graves

An avid hunter, Graves wants his students to appreciate the role of hunting in wildlife conservation. As they move into adulthood, he'd like for them to be good advocates for sound and scientific wildlife management practices.

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FISHING REPORT HOUSTON COUNTY: Water clear, 82 degrees; near conservation pool. Black bass are good on cotton candy Brush Hogs, electric blue soft plastic lizards, and 8° black soft plastic worms in 4-14 feet early and late. Channel and blue catfish are good on trotlines baited with perch. JOE POOL: Water of Cloar, 78-82 degrees; 1.49 high. White bass are fair to good on RJR Slabs over mid-lake humps and trolling Hellbender/Pet Spoon

HOT BITES LARGEMOUTH BASS



CHOKE CANYON: Black bass are good n large sott n 10-20 fee RAY ROBERTS: Black bass are ex

lent on buzzbaits, 1/4 oz. Super Spots and Booyah (triple blade) spinnerbaits. SAM RAYBURN: Black bass are good on watermelon red and tequila sunrise on watermelon red soft plastic worms





LBJ: Striped bass to 24" are good Creme Lures 2" Spoiler Shads and Fishies at night RAY HUBBARD: White bass are good to excellent on topwaters and slabs. Hybrid striper are good on 2 oz. slabs.



BELTON: Channel and blue catfish are good on hot dogs. Yellow catfish to 14 pounds are good on trotlines baited with live perch.

CALAVERAS: Channel and blue catfish are excellent on liver, shrimp, cheese-bait, and shad near the railroad trestle, 181 Cove, and the discharge. TRAVIS: Channel and blue catfish to 7 pounds are good on nightcrawlers and bloodbait in 22-40 feet.



CADDO: Crappie are good on minnows and jigs around cypress trees and in the river bends. GRANGER: Crappie are excellent on minnows and tube jigs in 10-20 feet WHITNEY: Crappie are good on min-



ATHENS: Bream are good on bits of nightcrawlers in 4-6 feet. HOUSTON COUNTY: Bream are good on live worms over grass beds and off TOLEDO BEND: Bream are good on

ALAN HENRY: Water lightly stained; 81 degrees. Black bass are fair on shad-colored spinnerbaits, black neon tubes and orange crawfish jigs with some top-water action early in day.

water action early in day. AMISTAD: Water fairly clear; 83 degrees; 8.40' low. Black bass are good on towaters and Oldham's jigs in grass. Catifsh are fair on cheesebain, night-crawlers, and shrimp over baited holes. ARROWHEAD: Water lightly stained; 80 degrees; 8' low. Black bass are good early in day on white Fluke jerkbaits, topwater lures and Texas-rigged soft plas-tic worms near shallow egetation. Catifsh are good on punchbait or juglines baited with cut shad or carp.

batted with cut shad or carp. ATHENS: Water fairly clear, 78-84 degrees; 0.09 high, Black bass are fair on soft plastics in 2-10 feet around heavy brush. Catfish are good on punchbait and fresh cut bait in 15 feet. BASTROP, Water clear. Crappie are good on minnows and blue tube jigs. Channel and blue catfish are good on shrimp, nightcrawlers, and punchbait.

Criantee and once Cattism are good on snmmp, nignetrawnes, and punchoatt. BELTON: Water rainy clear, 89 degrees; 20.34 'high. Hybrid stipper are good on white Riversides and Sassy Shads at night under lights. White bass are good on white Niversides and Sassy Shads at night under lights. BOB SANDLIN: Water clear; 78-84 degrees; 0.06' low. Black bass are good early on topwaters, later switching to drop shot rigs and finance uiter

finesse jigs BRAUNIG: Water stained: 87 degrees. Channel catfish are excellent on liver, shrimp, cut bait, and cheesebait near the dam and the discharge. Blue catfish are good on cut bait.

oah aho the discharge, blue catish are good on cut bait. BROWNWOOD: Water clear, S0 dagress, 0.42 how. Black. S0 dagress, 0.42 how. Black. Hybrid striper are good trolling heilbenders near the Woodsman of the World camp. White bass are good on I'll Fabiles aft ighted docks at night. Corapie are good on L'll Fabiles and inghter crawlers over baited holes in 12-20 feet.

BUCHANAN: Water clear: 83 BUCHANAN: Water clear, 83 degrees, 2.60' low. Striped bass are fair casting and jig-ging Spoiler Shads and drifting or free liming live bait from Striper Island to the dam in 28-42 feat a daylight. White bass are fair on Tiny Traps and 2' plastic swim baits along the river channel and deep creates

twer channel and deep creaks in 25 feet. Channel catfish are good on live bait upriver. CADDO: Water stained; 72 8/6 degrees, sightly above conservation pool. Black bass are good on black/ved or watermeion Senkos on the grass and along the edges of liv pads and on soft plastic frogs over grass and liv pads. Catfish are good on limblines with cut bait. CALAVERAS: Water stained: 87 degrees. Redfish are good down

spoons with green grubs between the crappie wall and the dam in 15-20 feet, and on perch and tilapia along the shoreline.

and on perch and tilapia along the shoreline. CANYON LAKE: Water clear, 84 degress, near conservation pool level. Striped bass are fair to good but small jigging blade baits and trolling Gizz 4 crankbaits over and around humps in the lower end of the lake. CEDAR CREEK: Water lightly stained; 78-83 degrees; 0.14' low. White bass are fair early on Hundingers, midday switching to Helbender with Pet Spoon rigs. Caffsh are good drifting cut shad and on chartreuse nightcrawlers (use Worm-Glo).

CHOKE CANYON: Water lightly stained; 90 degrees; 0.03' high. Drum good on live worms. Channel and blue catfish are excellent on punchb

COLEMAN: Water clear; 83 degrees. Black bass are good on watermelon red spinnerbaits, crankbaits, and soft plastics. Channel and blue catfish are good on shrimp and minnows. COLETO CREEK: Water murky: 90 degrees (99 degrees at discharge); 0.06' low. Crappie are good on minnows in 12-18 feet.

CONROE: Water clear; 0.45' low. Black bass are very good on pumpkinseed and tequila sunrise soft plastics, Senkos, crankbaits, and Rat-L-Traps. Crappie are

good on minnows. FAIRFIELD: Water fairly clear; 84-92 degrees. Black bass are good on Senkos, weightess flukes and Texas rigs. Catfish are fair to good on cut and prepared bait. FALCON: Water stained; 87 degrees, 12⁴ tow. Black bass are fair to good on brown/orange jigs with a frailer, Texas rigs and spinnerbaits. Channel and blue catfish are very good on cut bait and chartrouse (use Worm-Gio) ngihtrawilers.

causar are very good on cut bait and chartreuse (use Worm-Glo) nightcrawlers FORK: Water fairly clear; 78-83 degrees; 0.2' high. Black bass are fair on buzzbaits and Yellow Magics early, midday switching to Carolina rigs and 34 oz. jigs with trailers. Catrish are good on cut shad and chartreuse (use Worm-Glo) nightcrawlers.

GIBBONS CREEK: Water clear. Black bass are good on pumpkinseed and

nightcrawlers and shad.

GRAPEVINE: Water fairly clear; 78-83 degrees; 6.78' high. White bass are good to excellent all over the lake.

GREENBELT: Water lightly stained; 79 degrees; 22.1' low. Crappie are good on jigs and minnows. White bass are good on live bait. Catfish are good on



Trout and redfish are good on live shrimp under a popping cork and live shrimp on the bottom in the Intracoastal. Redfish are beginning to school on the flats.

O.H. IVIE: Water lightly stained; 82 degrees; 10.05' low. Crappie are good on min-nows and jigs. White bass are good on live baits and shallow crankbaits along rocks. Channel catfish are good on Inte bans.
PALESTINE: Water lightly stained; 78-82 degrees; 0.29' low. White bass are fair to good on Humdingers. Catfish are fair to good on chartreuse night-rownlers (use Worn-Glo) and chaese bait.
PALO DURO: Water lightly stained; 79 degrees; 20' low. Crappie are good on igs and minnows. Channel catfish are fair on minnows and prepared baits.

LAKE O' THE PINES: Water lightly stained; 78-83 degrees; 1.24' high. Catfish are fair to good on chartreuse (use Worm-Glo) nightcrawlers and Danny King's Punch Bait.

LAVON: Water lightly stained; 78-82 degrees; 1.08' low. Crappie are fair on cwvvvr, ware: ugmty stanned; /3-82 degrees; 1.08 low. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs around structure.
LBJ: Water stained; 83 degrees; 0.06 low. White bass are fair to good on L¹¹ Tshies at night. Crappie are fair to good on Cu¹⁰ to good on Cu¹⁰ crappie are fair all lew minnows over brush piles in clear water. Channel catfish are good on minnows and dip bait.

LEWISVILLE: Water off color; 77-83 degrees; 2.92' high. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs over brush piles. White bass are good on Humdingers and slabs. Catfish are good on chartreuse (use Worm-Glo) nightcrawlers.

LIVINGSTON: Water fairly clear; 82 degrees; 0.59' high.

clear; 82 degrees; 0.59' high. White bass are good on pet spoons, hellbenders and slabs. Blue catfish are good on shad. MACKENZIE: Water lightly stained; 80 degrees; 1.72' low. Crappie are good on minnows and jigs. Catfish are fair on prepared baits.

MEREDITH: Water lightly stained; 80 degrees; 35' low. Crappie are good on jigs and

NASWORTHY: Water lightly stained; 79 degrees. Crappie are fair on minnows and jigs. White bass and striped bass are fair on live baits.

are fair on live balts. NAVARRO MILLS: Water murky; 86 degrees; 0.08' low. Black bass are good but small on minnows. White bass are good on Silver Dollar lures and Little Georges. Crappie are good on minnows and tube jigs near Liberty Hill Park. Channel and blue catfish are good on frozen shrimp. DH IVIE: Water Librity

POSSUM KINGDOM: Water stained; 85 degrees; 1.5' low. Catfish are excellent on set lines or rod and reel baited with shad, works or cut baits in the upper

end of reservoir PROCTOR: Water murky; 82 degrees; 1.55' high. Channel and blue catfish are

RAY HUBBARD: Water lightly stained; 78-82 degrees; 0.04' low. Catfish are ed bait

gwou on prepared uan: **RAY ROBERTS:** Water clear; 79-83 degrees; 2.01' high. Crappie are good on minnows and Road Runners over brush piles. White bass are good (sporadic schooling) on C.C. Jegging Spoons. Catfish are fair to good on chartreuse (use Worm-Gio) nightcrawlers.

to allow and success and success with odds of the second s

TRAVIS: Water clear; 84 degrees; 0.35' high. Black bass are good on buzzbaits, crawfish crankbaits, and red shad soft plastic worms in 4-18 feet. WaITER E. LONG: Water clear; 96 degrees (92 dt clicshage). Black bass are good trolling Storm Thundersticks. Crappie are good on minnows and white

SALTWATER SCENE

NORTH SABINE: Trout are good in the Sabine and Neches Rivers on live shad and pepper/chartreuse plastics. Heavy rains from Hurricane Humberto could muddy the river and slow the bite. Trout and redfish are good in the marsh with the bitder.

the high tides. SOUTH SABINE: Bull redfish are good at the jetty on live bait and cut mullet. Trout are good along the rocks on bone Top Dogs and live shrimp. Croaker and sand trout are good on fresh dead

shrimp. BOLIVAR: Redfish are good in the surf and at Rollover Pass on finger mullet. Croaker are good on fresh dead shrimp at Rollover Pass.

at Rollover Pass. **TRINITY BAY:** Trout are fair to good around the wells on live shrimp. Redfish, trout and sand trout are good at the Spillway on live bait and red/white and pearl/chartreuse Hogies, Trout Killers, Sand Eels and Bass

Assassins. EAST GALVESTON BAY: Trout are good over shell on live shrimp and pumpkin-seed/chartreuse and pepper/chartreuse Bass Assassins, Trout Killers, Stanley Wedgetails and Sand Eels.

WEST GALVESTON BAY: Trout, redfish sand trout and croaker are good at the unu uout and croaker are good at the causeway and railroad bridge on live bait and fresh dead. Bull redfish are good at the jetty on finger mullet and cut bait.

Texas Texas CITY: frout Dolar Reef on live bait and glow soft plastics. Redfish are good in Moses Lake on live shrimp under a popping cork. Trout, redfish, sand trout and croaker are good at night under the lights off the dike.

lights off the dike. FREEPORT: Tout, Spanish mackerel and redifish are good on live bait at the Sursidie and Quintana right. Tout, red-fish, croaker and flounder are good at night from the piers near San Luis Pass on live shrimp, mullet and glow plastics. **EAST MATAGORDA:** Trout and redifish are good on the shorelines on Top Dogs. She Dogs. Super Spooks and red shad Bass Assassins and Norton Sand Eels. MATAGORDA. Berlith are good on top.

Bass Assassing and Norton Sand Eels. MATAGCRDA: Redifish are good on top-waters and live shrimp in Oyster Lake and the north shoreline of West Bay around Shell Island. PORT OCONNOR: Trout and redifish are good on the reefs in San Antonio Bay on live shrimp and gold and silver spoons. Buill redifish are good on multet and shrimp at Pass Cavallo. Trout and red-fish are good in the back lakes on live shrimp and topwaters.



mullet and live shrimp. Redfish are good on topwaters in Copano Bay and on the backside of Mud Island.

PORT ARANSAS: Redfish are staging on the East Flats. Big schools are hitting gold spoons, topwaters and live shrimp. CORPUS CHRISTI: Bull redfish are good

CURVOS CHRISTI: Bull redriss are good on the beach on finger mullet and cut bait. Gafftop are good on fresh dead. BAFFIN BAY: Trout and redfish are good on live bait and strawberry touts along the Intracoastal. Flounder are fair to good on shrimp and jigs tipped with shrimp at the mouth of the Land Cut. snrimp at the mouth of the Land Cut. PORT MANSFIELD. Tout, redish and flounder are good on live shrimp under a popping cork and shrimptails on the grass beds near the channel. Tout and redish are good in East Cut on mullet and piggy perch. Redish are beginning to school on the flats. SUITH PANDEF. Trut are good on the

to school on the Hats. SOUTH PADRE: Trout are good on the edge of the channel on live shrimp and DOA Shrimp under a popping cork. Tarpon are showing at the jetty. Snook are good on shrimp in South Bay.

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RICHLAND CHAMBERS: Water off color; 78-83 degrees; 0.07' low. Black bass are fair to good on topwaters and spinnerbaits early, midday switching to Carolina rigs and drop shot rigs. Catfish are good on prepared baits and cut

shad. SAM RAYBURN: Water stained; 86 degrees; 2.50' low. White bass are good on minnows and white/gold spoons. Crappie are good on live minnows. Bream are good on nightcrawlers. Catfish are good on live bait, shrimp, and punchbait. STILLHOUSE: Water murky; 83 degrees; 11.88' high. Crappie are good on minnows at night. Channel and blue catfish are good on chicken livers, night-crawlers and minnows.

TAWAKONI: Water lightly stained; 78-83 degrees; 0.65' low. Catfish are good on nightcrawlers and prepared bait. White bass are good on Humdingers and

rupwaters. TEXOMA: Water fairly clear; 77-83 degrees; 1.89' high. Striper bass are early on topwaters and Sassy Shad (still around the shoreline), later swit to slabs and sticking with Sassy Shad.

and chartreuse tube jigs near the dam.

WEATHERFORD: Water stained; 78-82 degrees; 0.88' low. Crappie are go on minnows and jigs in the crappie house and over brush piles. Bream are WHITNEY: Water murky; 0.43' high. Black bass are good on

pumpkinseed/white Rat-L-Traps, spinnerbaits, and crankbaits on main lake points and flats. Striped bass are good on minnows and green striper jigs. Caffish are good on shrimp, stinkbait and live bait.

GIBBUMS CNEEK: Water clear: black bass are good on pumpkinseed and tequila surise Carolina rigged soft plastics, spinnerbahts, and RAI-LTaps. Crappie are good on minnows and chartreuse tube igis. Catfish are good on sinkbaht, shring and nightcrawlers. GRANBURY: Water lightly stained; 0.39' low. White bass are good on perch colored spinnerbahts and minnows. Crappie are good on minnows and pink tube igis. Catfish are good on stinkbaht, shrimp, and live baht. GRANDER: Water clear: 84 degrees; 10.7' high. White bass are excellent on slab spoons off main lake points. Channel and blue catfish are very good on

PRODUCTS

MORE FISHING SPACE: The Stratos 186XT is an 18-foot, 9-inch boat that has 15 additional inches of space in its front deck, giving

it the same fishing space of most 20-foot bass boats. Among its features are a recessed Minn Kota trolling motor, Humminbird electronics, a 7foot, 6-inch center rod locker, and an aerated livewell. It is rated for 115 horsepower and has a 23-gallon fuel capacity. The boat sells for \$16,995, with 90-HP outboard motor and trailer For dealers or additional features, visit Stratos Boats at www.stratosboats.com or call (877) 978-7286



WARM BUNS: Hunters sitting out in the cold can warm up with the PolarPad by PolarWrap. The 16-inch by 12-inch-long pad features "infused aerogel," an insulating material that was developed for NASA for use in spacesuits. PolarWrap president Bruce McCormick says the company tested its product by having people sit on a block of dry ice with only the PolarPad seat as a barrier: "No one felt the cold." The pad folds to 4 inches by 12 inches and is available in four models: black (with or without grommets) and cream (with or without grommets). The pad, which also provides a barrier against heat, sells for about \$25. For more information, call (800) 967-9727 or visit www.polarwrap.com.

flame, says the company. The primary blue flame is an oxygenated fuel mix while the secondary yellow flame burns directly on fuel to create a robust fire. Features include an adjustable flame dial, a built-in LED light and a child-safe button. It sells for about \$30. For retailers, call (814) 368-2700.

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ZIPPERED T-SHIRT: Sitka's Summit Zip-T is a dual-knit T-shirt that wicks away moisture and helps manage heat and sweat with such features as an anti-microbial treatment that protects against odors and a zipper for maximum ventilation. It is available in a Mountain Mimicry camo pattern in sizes medium to 4X large and in sizes medium to 4X large and is also offered in khaki, green, black. The Summit Zip-T sells for about \$75. To order or for dealers, visit www.sitkagear.com or call (877) 748-5264.

MULTI-SPECIES BAIT: The Sand Blaster from Strike King is a drop bait for anglers who want a lure that'll run true in tail race waters and rivers. Among its features: oversized eye for increased strikes: uniquely cut hook for less fouling; and in-line French blade for more flash and better depth control. It costs about \$3. For retailers, visit www.strikeking.com or call (901) 853-1455



BRIGHT LIGHT: Cabela's Alaskan **Guide** flashlight offers two light sources: the extreme brightness of a 50-lumen venon lamp and a longer lasting LED. According to the company, its 2-in-1 prefocus aluminum reflector intensifies the brightness of the beam to create more useful light at longer distances. The 4-ounce flashlight is water-resistant and corrosion-resistant. It is available in four LED colors: blue, green, white and red. The batteries (included) will last about 50 hours in LED mode or one hour in xenon mode. The flashlight sells for about \$70. To order, visit www.cabelas.com



A MUST-READ FROM MINITER: The Politically Incorrect Guide to Hunting (Regnery Publishing, \$19.95), a just-released work from former Outdoor Life senior editor and current

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Some of the chapters include "How to Talk to an Anti," "Why Vegetarians Owe Hunters," and "Hunting Is Good For Kids." In pullout fashion, Miniter Good for Kids. In pullout lasmon, Miniter also includes dozens of myth-busters under the headings "Myth Debunked," "Books You're Not Supposed to Read," and "Facts the Media Won't Tell You." The book is available at all major booksellers, amazon.com. and Cabela's.



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908	3.27 a.m.	30.59 a.m.	8.06 p.m.	-	9/28	3.28 a.m.	10.2F a.m.	6.05 p.m.	11.51 р.н.	978	3,36 a.m.	10.07 a.m.	613 p.m.	11:09 p.m.	30W	256/815	1130y8.29y	1.1
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19/7	2.59 a.m.	912 a.m.	1242 p.m.	8.58 p.m.	197	249am	R.M.am.		8-18 p.m.	107	248 a.m.	8:10 s.m.	1251 p.m.	7.46 p.m.	1913	7.3%1-Zlp		1
194	240 a.m.	919am	1.57 p.m.	9.18 p.m.	108	2.44 a.m.	8.47 a.m.	158 p.m.	840 p.m.	10%	252 a.m.	8.27 a.m.	206 p.m.	826.9.8.		15%/14h		
194	248 a.m.	9.37 a.m.	3.05 p.m.	9.52 p.m.	109	247 a.m.	9.07 A.M.	3.94 p.m.	922 p.m.	10/9	2.95 a.m.	845 a.m.	312 p.m.	9.00 p.m.	3015			
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OUTDOOR PUZZLER

when smoked

method

hear

26. A bullet code

8. A very large deer 11. Term for a deer scouting

12. Common name for the

A deer gun
 Consider this when fishing for

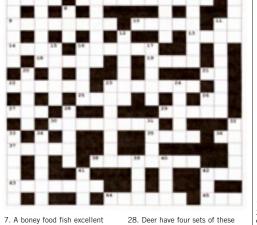
Pelts and furs
 Name for the Arizona whitetail
 Usual feeding time for bucks

crappie 17. A bow sound that game can

strawberry bass

ACROSS

- 1. A top predator fish 3. Main species of N. American
- deer
- 9. Using antlers as a lure for deer
- An icefishing lure
 Grains measurement abbreviation
- 13. Name for the sea bass 14. Shotgun model, ____ and
- under
- 16. A species of bighorn 18. Common home of the carp
- 19. Sportsmen clothing protection 21. Letters signify side by side
- barrels 22. Boneless slice of fish for the
- pan
- 23. Doe's act of having young
- Most game can, very well
 Signifies a soft-nosed bullet
 A female turkey
- 29. Estimating how old game
- tracks are 30. Deer hunter's early spring preparation
- 35. Buck's periods for seeking doe 36. Code for a boat-tail bullet
- 37. A deer food source
- A wingshooter's quarry
 Used on gun parts
- 43. A male pheasant 44. A substance for stove fuel
- 45. Male mountain goat
- DOWN
- 1. A fighting freshwater cod 2. A breed of gundog
- 4. The Canada goose 5. Cartridges and arrows
- 6. Term for a trophy-size game
- fish



- 28. Deer have four sets of these
 - glands 31. The outdoorsman's food
 - 32. A method of hunting and fishing
 - 33. Worn by the stream fishermen

For crossword puzzle solution, see Page 24

- 34. A method of fishing39. Quail prefer this field habitat
- 40. Term for a type of open sight 41. A group of decoys
- 42. Propels the fishing boat

Outdoor Puzzler, Wilbur "Wib" Lundeen

WILD IN THE KITCHEN **Charcoal Grilled Shrimp**

Makes 30 appetizer servings

- 2 Pounds large shrimp in the shell 1/3 Cup safflower oil 1/2 Cup fresh lime juice 3 Tablespoons dry white wine or
- vermouth 1 Tablespoon minced shallots or green onions (white part only)
- Clove garlic minced
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 Teaspoons minced fresh dill or 1/2 teaspoon dried Several dashes Tabasco sauce

Place shrimp in a shallow ceramic or glass baking dish. Combine remaining ingredients and pour over shrimp. Cover and chill sev-eral hours or overnight. Drain shrimp and reserve marinade.

12 Large fresh mushrooms 3 to 4 Whole dove cooked and deboned

- 1 Cup shredded cheddar cheese 1 Serrano or jalapeno pepper, seeded 2 Bacon strips, cooked and crum-
- bled

Remove stems from mushrooms. In a food processor, com-



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Thread on skewers or place in a wire grill basket. Grill shrimp over hot coals, turning and brushing with reserved marinade, until pink and cooked through, about 8-10 minutes. Serve with wooden

Recipe from The National Fisheries Institute, www.aboutseafood.com.

bine the dove, cheese, serrano or bine the dove, cheese, serrano or jalapeno pepper, salt and pepper. Cover and pulse until finely chopped. Stuff mushroom caps with meat mixture and sprinkle with bacon. Place on a baking sheet. Bake at 400 degrees for 10-15 minutes or until cheese is melt-

Recipe from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Want to share your recipes? E-mail them to editor@lonestaroutdoornews.com

picks. Stuffed Mushrooms (with dove)

HEROES



MIKE SOLIS of Brownsville holds a kingfish he caught off South Padre Island.



MICHELA SWEET, 6, of The Woodlands, poses with a limit of white-winged doves that her dad shot near Hondo.

SHARE AN ADVENTURE

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ROBBY HOOD of Donna shows an 11 lb. 2 oz. largemouth caught using a worm on Falcon Lake.



TRAVIS HENDERSON of Angleton with a Texas Grand Slam he caught from East Matagorda Bay.



HUNTER JONES caught this striped bass while fishing with DAVID BEESON on the Red River below the dam at Lake Texoma.



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OUTDOOR DATEBOOK

HAVE AN EVENT? E-mail it to information. editor@lonestaroutdoornews.com www.bassfishingworld.com Oct. 2: The Taylor DU dinner will be held at the Taylor Knights of Columbus

Hall, For information, call John McDonald at (512) 365-3528

Oct. 2: The Uvalde DU dinner will be held at Uvalde Country Club. Call Bob Coble at (210) 394-6707 for information.



Oct. 4: The Dallas DU banquet will be held at Eddie Deens Ranch Contact Andrea Hight at (214) 372-3825 or ahight@canterburylaw.com for information.

Oct. 4: The CCA State of Texas BBQ and STAR Tournament Awards

will be held at the Edwin Hornberger Conference Center in Houston. For tickets and information.

call (800) 626-4222 Oct. 4: The San Antonio DU dinner and

dance will be held at the Leon Springs Dance Hall. Contact Carey Birmingham at (210) 262-8490 or cbirmingham@satx. rr.com fo

Oct. 5-6: Bassfishingworld.com will host its 3rd Annual Fall Brawl on Toledo Bend. For information, visit

Oct. 5: The Texas Parks and Wildlife EXPO Banquet and Conservation Hall of Fame celebration will be held at the Hyatt EXA PARES WILDLIFE Lost Pines Resort near Austin. Contact FOUNDATION Kelli Sellers by email ksellers@tpwf.org.

Oct. 6: The 8th Annual Wild Game dinner and fundraiser will be held in Johnson City, For more information, call (830) 833-5335 or e-mail pcw1@texas-.com

Oct. 6: The West Texas Quail Forever banquet will be held in Midland. Call Sara Lyda at (405) 612-6889 for information and location. Oct. 6: A Bluegill Tournament will be

held at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens. For information, call Barry St. Clair at (903) 670-2222. Oct. 6: The Texas City/Lamarque DU dinner will be held at the Doyle Center

For information, contact Michael Naschke at (409) 765-6177 or re.silkscreen@yahoo.com.

Oct. 8: The Hill Country DU dinner will be held at Johnny Finn's in Lakeway Call Chris Andre at (512) 653-3718 for information.

Oct. 9: The Sabine DU dinner will be held at the Longhorn Arena. Contact Lynwood Sanders at (409) 670-6516 for information.

Oct. 9-11: A hunter's safety education class will be offered at the Corsicana Gander Mountain store. For information, call the store at (903) 874-2500.

Oct. 11: Texas Wildlife Association's Team Houston will hold a Fun Shoot and Membership Social at the West Side Sporting Grounds in Katy. To registe contact Iva Disher at (713) 966-5897 or idisher@linbeck.com

Oct. 11: The Inaugural South Texas Dallas

Safari Club meeting will be held at the Los Cazadores Restaurant in Pearsall, featuring guest speaker Larry Weishuhn. For information, call (972) 980-9800.

Oct. 11: The Fort Worth DU banquet will

be held at West Fork Ranch. Call George Hall at (817) 205-7122 for information. Oct. 11: The Denton DU dinner will be held at the Knights of Columbus Hall.

For information, contact Dick Fisher at (940) 566-6717 or dfisher@cdfinc.net

Oct. 11: The Cleburne Delta Waterfowl dinner will be held at the Cleburne Senior Center, Call Gre Williams at (817) 558-0249.

See.

Oct. 13: The Equine Angels Special Needs Foundation will host its 4th Annual Sporting Clay Fundraiser at Alpine Shooting Range in Fort Worth. Call (817) 478-6613 for information.

Oct. 13: The 10th Annual San Angelo Oct. 13: The 10th Annual San Angelo Sporting Clay Shoot benefiting Scottish Rite Hospital will be held at the San Angelo Claybird Association Range. Contact Melinda Wenk at (214) 559-8395 or Melinda wenk@tsrh.org for information information.

Oct 13. The Port O'Connor CCA dinner will be held at the Port O'Connor CCA dinne vill be held at the Port O'Connor Civic Center. Call (800) 626-4222 for information.

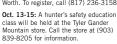
Oct. 13: The NWTF Women in the Outdoors event will be held at Camp Langston Ranch in Mt. Pleasant. For information, call Nanette Stockstill at (830) 796-0087.



Oct. 13: The Fairfield Delta Waterfow

dinner will be held at the VFW Hall. Call Russell Keaton at (903) 389-5665 for information.

Oct. 13-14: A Texas hunter's education course will be held at Cabela's in Fort Worth. To register, call (817) 236-3158.



Oct. 15-17: A hunter's safety education



Oct. 18: The Northeast Tarrant County DU dinner will be held at the Colleyville Center in Colleyville. For information, contact David Hornsby at (817) 283-6082 or dbhtx@vahoo.com

Oct 18. The Austin Heart of Texas Delta Waterfowl dinner will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Call (512) 653-6267 for information. Oct. 18: The Arlington DU dinner will be

held at Almosta Ranch in Arlington. Call Steve Barber at (817) 832-8078 for information



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RANGE ROVER: A wet summer brings more nutrition for feral hogs resulting in larger

spring to reach sexual maturity six to

Also, landowners should expect to see feral hogs ranging wider than they have in the last couple of years, he said. Feral hogs tend to stay near water sources and where there is vegetation small

One is the expected increase in the number of juvenile hogs. The smaller hogs can worm their way through the metal mesh of many traps. Higginbotham recommended that traps be made with mesh no larger than 4-inch by 4-inch squares.

that +-inch by 4-inch squares. "The smaller mesh will retain all the hogs trapped," he said. "Control of juveniles is essential if the landowner's goal is to reduce the hog oppulation." The other for the form."

The other factor is that a good to excellent acorn crop is expected this year, he said. Traps are usually baited with shelled corn, but hogs prefer acorns over corn and may ignore the traps once the acorns begin to fall. One solution may be to substitute soured corn (fermented corn) in place of shelled corn. A Texas Cooperative Extension report.



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eight months later, and produce a lit-ter before her first birthday," he said.



feral hogs is by trapping them, Higginbotham said. But two factors may make conventional methods less





Hogs Continued from Page 9

Snook

Continued from Page 1

Villareal. "So, I told them, 'let's do something dif-ferent today.' Once we got up there, I could tell it was going to be a good day. Joe actually caught another snook and broke off one more. But, when this fish hit, I knew it was a big one.

"Ilove seeing other people catch big fish — that's part of why I'm a guide. So, just being able to help Joe catch a snook that size — record or not — was really awesome."

For Jamail, who said he's fished salt water since he was 4 years old, it was a memorable day in several ways. Not only did the young fisherman set a new state record, he also recorded his first ever linesider.

"I caught two snook the day I caught the big one — the only ones I've ever caught," Jamail said. "I like catching fish. This fish was exciting to catch, but I didn't know it was a record until later that day. That was my first time to catch snook. Emilio knew it was a big fish, so we took pictures and measured

As little as three years ago, an oversized fish such as Jamail's 38 1/2–inch snook would not have been record eligible. However, in 2005 Texas Parks and Wildlife created a catch-and-release record category. According to program director Joedy Gray, Jamail's record is a perfect example of what the cat-egory was intended to accomplish.

"This program is an excellent way for people to set records without having to kill the fish or even weigh it, since the records are based on length," Gray said. "With this record category, anglers don't have to worry about having a certified scale which always seemed to be a problem. All we need is visible proof — a photo next to a measuring device. We're trying to make it easier for anglers to get recognized for their catches and this category has been excellent for that."

In Jamail's case, another fairly new category — the junior angler division — also came into play, as his snook has been recognized as both the junior division and overall catch-and-release state record. "That (junior division) has been great for the

kids," Gray said. "You should see the pictures we get of kids holding these fish and the smiles they have on their faces. That's what we've been trying to accomplish.

Of course, since the big linesider was over the legal slot limit, it had to go back in the water. However, Jamail says he wouldn't have it any other

"I like catch-and-release because it keeps the fish alive," said Jamail. "I also like catch-and-release because it protects the fish — it lets us have more fun because there are more fish to catch."



Making the catch

During the milder months of spring and fall, snook are often found on shallow flats throughout the Lower Laguna and in South Bay. These fish will readily take topwater

baits and soft plastics rigged on 1/8-ounce heads also produce well.

Deep water areas such as the Brownsville Ship Channel, Brazos Santiago Pass, Port of Port Isabel and Port of Brownsville will hold fish year-round. However, the densest concentration of

linesiders will be in these deep water haunts during the extreme temperature times — summer and winter.

times — summer and winter. Although snook will rise to swipe at top-waters during lowlight hours, when fish-ing deep structure anglers are best served to "go deep." Snook Guides: Capt. Emilio Villarreal (956) 343-5264 Capt. Gilbert Vela (956) 943-8595 Capt. Edic Curry (956) 943-8301 Capt. Eric Glass (956) 761-2878 Capt. Steve "JR" Ellis (956) 492-8472

Teal Continued from Page 1

didn't fare as well. Mike Pace of Magnolia hunted near Lake Conroe with little success. David Carroum of Dallas hunted near Italy, where birds flew before shooting time but then disappeared, and the group of five hunters managed only five

Jeff Moore of Weatherford hunted opening day in Callahan County. "We killed one duck," he said. "One group came over at first light and another pair took a look at

The next day, Moore and two

"The Haskell area had as many or more birds than I've seen at the coast the past four years. They were still landing as we were picking up the decoys."

- JEFF MOORE

friends hunted near Haskell and shot limits in less than one hour. "I usually hunt the opener at the coast," he said. "The Haskell area had as many or more birds than I've seen at the coast the past four years. They were still landing as we were picking up the decoys." North of Lubbock, the teal

were piling in, with limits report-ed in one hour of hunting followed by hunters watching the circling and landing birds. Scott Curtisinger with Longneck Outfitters in Lubbock doesn't guide teal hunters very often, but hunted with family and friends in Floyd and Crosby counties.

"It's been almost too easy," he id. "The majority of the playa said. lakes holding large numbers of teal are the ones that recessed in time for the pink smartweed to grow. Some of the lakes that stayed full aren't holding very many birds."

Curtsinger was surprised at the number of big ducks in the area. "The lake we hunted was holding 600-700 teal and more than 200 big ducks — mallards, gad-wall and widgeon. A lot of the big ducks stayed here all summer since there is so much water.'

But the teal kept coming, he said. "After we were finished teal hunting, we dove hunted nearby next to a tiny ten-by-ten stock pond with Mojo Dove decoys, and the teal were trying to land in there."



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Ammo

Continued from Page 1

But hobbyists like Moon, a Fort Worth lawyer who likes to experiment with "wildcat" rounds, have been feel-

with "wildcat" rounds, have been reel-ing the pinch for about 18 months. "I'm a speed junky, so I load my rounds three times as hot," said Moon. "I would call it an obsessive hobby.

"But the cost of components has gone up about 10 percent. Powders are up 5 to 10 percent; bullets, 10 percent or more; and it's about the same for primers " primers.

The shortage has been worsening since last year, and most media accounts attribute it to U.S. military

accounts attribute it to U.S. military operations in Iraq. Moon and his supplier, Mike Massey of Ultimate Firearms in Fort Worth, agreed that government orders for .223-caliber ammunition for military small arms certainly con-tributes to the shortage.

It has been widely reported that one vendor, ATK of Minnesota, is churn-

ing out 1.4 billion cartridges a year. But Moon and Massey said China's rapidly expanding economy also contributes to the ammo shortage. Manufacturers agree. "Seventy-five

maintacturers agree: Seveniy he percent of the lead market goes to making batteries," said Patrick Thomas with Rio Ammunition. "Ammo is only allocated five percent. China has a huge demand for car and scooter batteries. All the components in shot shells are going up, but lead is the main driver. Last year, lead was selling for 50 cents a pound. Now it is around \$1.60."

"China has flat out been buying just about everything that's used to make a bullet, especially copper," Moon said. "That's what forms the jacket."

A check of the New York Mercantile Exchange shows that copper roughly sells for three times more than it did three years ago, a sure sign of increased demand.

That's why shuttered copper mines

Another sign is the accelerating rates of scrap metal theft throughout Texas and the rest of the nation.

Who hasn't seen the news reports of church air conditioning units rifled for copper tubing, or the electrocution of robbers trying to sneak copper wire out of power lines?

To illustrate the consequence, Massey pointed to his inventory of 6 mm Remington, a decent whitetail

mm Remington, a teech minister round. "In January it cost \$23.95 (per box)," he said, "then it was \$27.95 and that does not include the 15-percent increase across the board that began Sept. 1. "Now it's at \$32.95."

The situation is no less worrisome for shotgunners, said Ron Farington, general manager of Nagels Gun Shop in San Antonio.

A 25-pound bag of shot sold for about \$18 in early 2006, he said, but it cost \$2 more by year's end and now it's at about \$38.

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